

FOCUS



The weekly newsletter of
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Sumter, South Carolina

November 3, 2020



I AM A CHURCH MEMBER (Part 4)

“We appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.”
1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

October was Pastor Appreciation Month. When I searched online, it seems this idea was established in 1992 by a bunch of concerned clergy. Hallmark got word of it and made it a “thing.” In the passage above we hear from the Apostle Paul. He is writing to early churches doing the best they can to establish themselves. One way he suggests they do so is by giving honor and respect to church leaders. Now, it is unfair to compare pastors today with church leaders who were on the front lines cultivating the first century church. For them it was a 24 hour a day, grueling, challenging, exhausting and oftentimes, risky calling. These folks were in danger of being arrested or killed. Today, there are still church leaders who find themselves in the same boat. Many are missionaries in a foreign land operating within a government system that views them as an enemy of the state. In comparison, American pastors have it easy. It’s true, we Americans do have it easier, but being a church leader no matter where you live isn’t a cake walk – it is still a profession that carries with it a heavy burden. Believe me, I think about church almost all the time. It’s hard to let it go, even on a day off. I remember in seminary when a seasoned pastor made clear to me the spiritual and emotional weight of pastoral ministry. I was interviewing for my candidacy (one step in a long journey to becoming ordained). During the interview this particular gentleman spoke up and said, “You may have heard this before and wondered if it’s true. It absolutely is. If you can do anything else than become a pastor, do it.” I know for certain this gentleman wouldn’t have made a good salesman.

The fourth pledge of being a church member is simple and yet so very important. Thom Rainer invites the congregation to pray for their leaders. Pray NOT that they will be who you want them to be. Pray NOT for them to embrace your philosophies or ideas. Pray NOT for them to stop doing this or that. Instead, just pray for them. Pray that God will guide them. Pray for their mental, physical and emotional health. Pray for their families. Pray for them to discern the Holy Spirits leading. Pray, not only for your pastor, pray also for your staff and leadership. We are a denomination built not upon one individual, but upon a collective bunch of imperfect and yet willing servants. Pray for your Elders and Deacons. Pray for those who are serving in our preschool and on Ministry Teams. Pray. Rainer puts it this way, “This pledge requires discipline, but it does not necessarily require a lot of time. In fact, I have been asking church members for years to pray five minutes a day for their [leaders]. As church members, we must be willing to pray for the leaders in our church. Without our ongoing intercessory prayer, our churches will not be healthy.”

The Fourth Pledge

I will pray for my pastor and church leaders. I understand that the church leaders work is never ending. Their days are filled with numerous demands that bring emotional highs and lows. They must deal with critics. They must be a good spouse and parent. Because my church leaders cannot do all things on their own power, I will pray for their strength and wisdom daily. (Romans 15:30, Colossians 4:3)

Blessings,

Nick

WORSHIP MUSIC

November 8

Hamilton Stoddard, organ soloist, will play *Hear Us Now*, *Our God and Father* arranged by Mark Sedio.

November 15

The Joy Ringers Ensemble will play *Simple Gifts* and *There Is a Balm in Gilead* arranged by Bill Ingram.

IN-PERSON WORSHIP CONTINUES

Please don’t forget to RSVP by going to our website (www.fpcsumter.org) before 3:00 p.m. the Friday before worship. If you do not have access to the internet, please call the church office to make a reservation. The maximum number allowed per service will be 150. Please enter through the front doors on Main Street. Online services continue.

FPC’S CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES PICNIC & MOVIE ON THE LAWN

Sunday, November 8
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm



- Sign up is required by Friday, November 6
- Bring your own chairs/blanket
- Bring your family’s picnic meal
- You will need to sit with your own family. Children must stay with parents. Social distancing will be practiced. Masks are required when not eating.
- There will be a bathroom available in the West Building.
- If it rains, we will cancel. Please pray that it doesn’t rain.

Should you have any questions, need additional information or to sign up, please contact Kelly Hickey.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8

10:30 a.m. Worship Sanctuary
5:00 p.m. Children, Youth & Families Picnic & Movie
On the Lawn

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9

6:00 p.m. Deacon's Meeting Fellowship Hall

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10

10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting Fellowship Hall
6:00 p.m. Joy Ringers Ensemble Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11 ~ Veterans Day

Preschool Closed

6:00 p.m. Faith Formation Fellowship Hall
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15

10:30 a.m. Worship Sanctuary
5:30 p.m. Middle School Youth..... Fellowship Hall
7:00 p.m. High School Youth Fellowship Hall

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting Fellowship Hall
6:00 p.m. Joy Ringers Ensemble Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18

12:30 p.m. Preschool Staff Meeting ..Fellowship Hall
1:30 p.m. Discovery Class (Zoom)
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)

ADVENT WORKSHOP ALTERNATIVE

Since we are not able to host an in-person Advent Workshop this year, we are offering Advent crafts for your family to purchase and create at home. You may choose any of the following options:

- 1) Cinnamon Stick Tree Ornaments - \$3.00
- 2) Nativity with Popsicle Sticks - \$1.00
- 3) Cookie Dough with Cookie Cutter - \$5.00
- 4) Advent Wreath (includes Styrofoam ring and candles) – \$15.00

Pre-orders are due by November 8. Please visit FPC's website to pre-order on-line. Photos of each craft are also available through the on-line service. All orders will be available for pick-up after worship on November 15. Should you have any questions please contact Kelly Hickey or Robin Thames.



MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH PRAYER BREAKFAST

Wednesday, November 18
7:00 – 7:45 a.m.

Mary Ann's Deli
Please contact Taylor
(803-968-9655) to RSVP

Sunday, November 8

Youth and their families are invited to join FPC's Picnic and Movie on the Lawn.

- Bring your own chairs/blanket
- Bring your family's picnic meal
- You will need to sit with your own family. Children must stay with parents. Social distancing will be practiced. Masks are required when not eating.
- There will be a bathroom available in the West Building.
- If it rains, we will cancel. Please pray that it doesn't rain.

Sunday, November 15

5:30 p.m. ~ Middle School Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall
7:00 p.m. ~ High School Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

9 West Calhoun Street

Sumter, SC 29150

803-773-3814

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US, Postage Paid
Sumter, SC
Permit #22

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CHRISTMAS PIANISTS

It's time to plan for our young pianists to share their Christmas pieces with the congregation! Email the title and composer of the piece you that your child would like to

play at our Nativity service on December 20. Contact Joni at 803-773-3814 or jonibrown@fpcsumter.org.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Tuomey: Bill Scobee

Home: Carol Reese, Tiny Owens,

Serena Davell

(Marie Mills' Sister),

Brandon Hazen (Robin Thames' Brother-in-law),

Rick Parker (Lisa Bratton's Stepfather)

Charles King (Greg King's Father),

Ken Brown (Hope Alexander's Father)

St. Jude: Elizabeth Williams

West Chester, NY: Rhodes Danner

(Pam George's Nephew)

Austin, TX: Robert Cain (George Cain's Father)



CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY is extended to Nancy Leaird on the death of her father, John Herman Allen, who died on October 23 in Mocksville, North Carolina.

FOCUS ON FINANCES

**Two Weeks Beginning
October 18 and 25, 2020**

	Received		Budgeted
	Two Weeks	YTD	YTD
Revenue			
Contributions	\$19,816.	\$ 592,453.	\$ 687,442.
*Other Sources	\$ 0.	\$ 73,299.	\$ 120,212.
	\$19,816.	\$ 665,752.	\$ 807,654.

*YTD includes Endowments (\$47,866), Church Event Fees, etc.