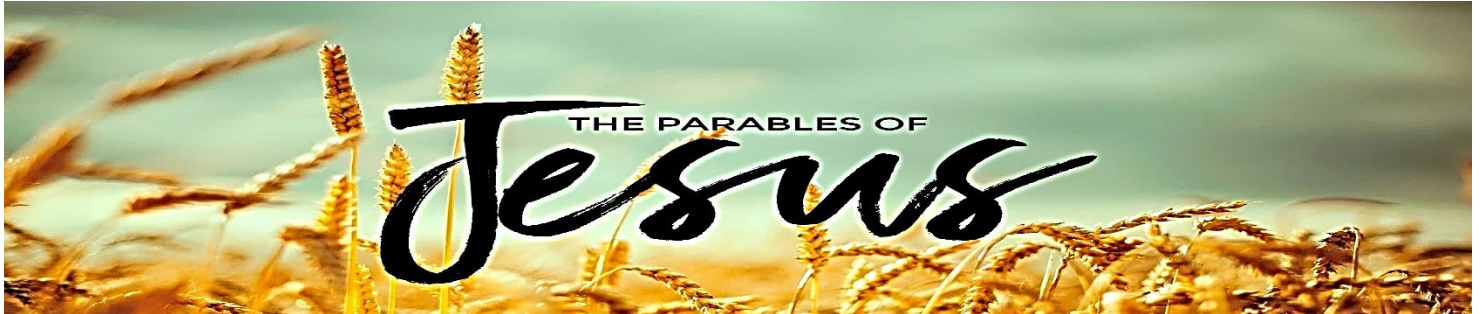


FOCUS



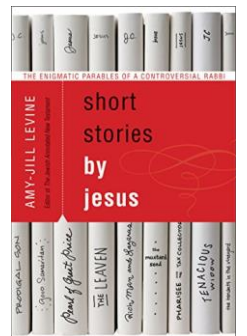
The weekly newsletter of
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Sumter, South Carolina

February 2, 2021



Jesus was a storyteller. He used stories to help people connect with God and with the world around them. These “stories” are often referred to in the Bible as “parables.” A parable is a succinct, didactic story, in prose or verse, that illustrates one or more instructive lessons or principles. It differs from a fable in that fables employ animals, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature as characters, whereas parables have human characters. The different characters allow the listener to identify with one or more of them. The Gospels record some 60 different parables taught by Jesus. Most of them include illustrations from everyday life: fishing and farming, house-keeping, weddings, banquets, etc. Though many parables are straight forward with an apparently clear meaning, other parables are intentionally obscure and require interpretation. For Lent, I will be preaching a sermon series on the Parables of Jesus.

In addition to the sermon series, I’ll be offering a “Noon-Zoom” book study. This study will be on the book, *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi*, by Amy-Jill Levine. Levine is a University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies and Mary Jane Werthan Professor of Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School and Department of Jewish Studies. The Noon-Zoom will be on Thursdays beginning February 25. To sign up, please email Shirley at shirley@fpcsumter.org. You can find the book on Amazon or Cokesbury. If you would like the office to order you one, please let us know and we’d be glad to.



Blessings,

Nick



SOUTH CAROLINA \$1 MILLION DOLLAR CHALLENGE

As Super Bowl Sunday approaches, so does the Souper Bowl of Caring Outreach Ministry that began in 1990. This ministry was born from a simple prayer delivered to a small youth group at Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina. The idea was to harness the energy and enthusiasm of Super Bowl weekend, a time when people come together for football, food and fun, to unite the nation for a higher good. Youth groups could collect dollars in soup pots and canned food for those in need and

send every dollar and food donation DIRECTLY to a local charity of THEIR choice. Since its birth 30 years ago, Souper Bowl of Caring has raised over \$163 million for local hunger relief in the US so far.

This year, Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Columbia, SC is inviting its members, as well as other churches, schools, Scouts, and service organizations throughout our state, to join together in tackling hunger in S.C. this winter. The invitation is in response to our state facing the global pandemic and its economic ramifications, causing more than 11 percent of the state’s population to be food insecure, meaning more than 600,000 of our neighbors are concerned about securing their next meal.

The invitation is to join them in the S.C. Million Dollar Challenge, which aims to raise \$1 million for hunger relief in our state! In addition, Eastminster Presbyterian Church is providing a 15% match of funds donated to SC hunger charities in communities across S.C. during February, to help reach the \$1 million goal.

As we recently learned about this amazing opportunity, our youth would like to invite FPC members and their friends and family to help. The youth will collect non-perishable food items and/or monetary donations of \$1 or more on Sunday, February 14 and Sunday, February 21. There are a few options for collecting donations: drive through food drive under the awning at the FPC Preschool entrance from 3:00 – 4:00 pm or place donated items on your front porch for someone to pick up between 1:00 – 2:00 pm. We are more than happy to come pick up donations, just be sure to contact Taylor (803) 968-9655 to let him know. Mask and social distancing guidelines will be followed. In addition, monetary donations can be mailed to the church office earmarked “Souper Bowl of Caring” and non-perishable food items can be placed in the bin marked Souper Bowl of Caring outside the church office. Please note the deadline for all donations has been extended to Sunday, February 21.

All donations will be given to local Food Banks.

We hope you will help with the South Carolina Million Dollar Challenge. Our neighbors need us.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Kelly or Taylor.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7
10:30 a.m. Worship (Online)
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8 ~ Preschool Closed
6:00 p.m. Deacon’s Meeting
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9
10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting (Zoom)
WEDNESDAY, February 10
6:00 p.m. Faith Formation (Zoom)
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14
10:30 a.m. Worship (Online)
11:30 a.m. Valentine Treat Drive Through
3:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. SouperBowl of Caring Drive Through Food Drive
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15 ~ Presidents’ Day
Office and Preschool Closed
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16
10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting (Zoom)
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17
1:30 p.m. Discovery Class (Zoom)
6:30 p.m. International Missions (Zoom)
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)

WORSHIP MUSIC

February 7
John Michael Osteen, baritone soloist, will sing “Still” by Reuben Morgan as the anthem. He will also serve as hymn leader.
February 14
Michelle Blassengale, soprano soloist, will provide special music and serve as hymn leader.

GIFT OF THE HEART KITS

As of Thursday, January 28, we have received \$4,310.00 in monetary donations to purchase supplies for Gift of the Heart Kits, along with several supplies and assembled kits. We have surpassed our goal by \$2,210.00+. We are now able to assemble and deliver at least 40 Clean Up Buckets, 40 Hygiene Kits and 40 School Kits. Please note, even though we surpassed our goal, you may still contribute. All donations need to be dropped off in the Fellowship Hall or mailed to the church office by February 7. A HUGE thank you goes out to all who have contributed to this Mission project. God is so good!!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
Valentine Treats
for FPC Children and Youth
(Preschool – High School)
Sunday, February 14

On Sunday, February 14, FPC children, youth and families are invited to drive under the awning at the FPC Preschool entrance to come by and pickup Valentines treats from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

We Need Your Help!

As the Faith Formation Team plans Valentines Treats for the children and youth of FPC, would you be willing to donate a bag of Valentine candy, valentine cards or small trinkets to help with this ministry? Please bring your donations to the church by Sunday, February 7. Please be sure all candy is NUT FREE. Should you have any questions please contact Kelly Hickey.

FROM THE PRESCHOOL

Registration for the 2021-2022 school year begins Monday, February 22, for all currently enrolled students, siblings, church members, and grandchildren of church members. Open registration begins Monday, March 1. Please contact the preschool/kindergarten office (803-773-9027) for additional information.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
9 West Calhoun Street
Sumter, SC 29150
803-773-3814

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Please note . . .
The Church office and Preschool will be closed Monday, February 15, in observance of Presidents’ Day.

Youth will meet temporarily via Zoom on Sunday evenings.
Middle School 5:00-5:45 p.m.
Senior High 6:00-6:45 p.m.
An email will be sent to parents each week with the Zoom link. Please contact Taylor with any questions or if you have any problems connecting to Zoom.



JOYS AND CONCERNS

Home: Laura Woodrum Hornsby (Glenn Woodrum’s daughter),
David McInnis, Sr.,
David R. Brown, Bill Scobee, Tiny Owens,
Serena Davell (Marie Mills’ Sister),
Charles King (Greg King’s Father)

West Chester, NY: Rhodes Danner (Pam George’s Nephew)
Austin, TX: Robert Cain (George Cain’s Father)

CONGRATULATIONS to Katie and Jeremy Cuttino on the birth of a son, Jeremy Sanders Cuttino, Jr., born January 18. Proud grandparents are Cathy Jo and Tom Cuttino. Proud great-grandfather (for the 18th time) is Richard Mey.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY is extended to Lark Haynie on the death of her mother, Irene Boney White, who died January 21.

FOCUS ON FINANCES

Four Weeks Beginning
January 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2021

	Received		2021 Budgeted
	This Week	YTD	YTD
Revenue			
Contributions	\$ 52,252.	\$ 52,252.	Budget
*Other Sources	<u>\$ 116.</u>	<u>\$ 116.</u>	Approval
	\$ 52,368.	\$ 52,368.	Pending

*YTD includes Endowments, Church Event Fees, etc.