

# FOCUS



The weekly newsletter of  
**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Sumter, South Carolina

March 7, 2023



**Daylight Savings Time  
Begins Sunday, March 12!**  
Please remember to set your  
clocks ahead one hour on  
Saturday night, March 11!!

## Sunday, March 12 ~ 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent

Offertory Anthem: Joy Ringers Ensemble will play "It Is Well with My Soul" arranged by Bill Ingram.

**Elders:** Liza Cooper, Missy Coulter

**Assisting in Worship:** Liza Cooper

**Deacons:** Jim Alexander, Suzanne Wates

**Youth Liturgist:** Cameron Coulter

**Jr. Ushers:** Ligon Ferguson, Caroline Thames

### LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

A Lenten Bible study is being offered at 4:00 p.m. in the Chapel for five Sunday afternoons (February 26-March 26). In response to a request from a church member, our pastor will lead us in exploring the Book of Romans in the New Testament. We will study the context of Paul's letter to the church at Rome, visit several passages, and then focus our study on the Christian life described in Romans 12. We would love to have you join us. The class is open to all who would like to come.

5:00 p.m. – High School Sunday School  
in the West Building

## Sunday, March 19 ~ 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

Offertory Anthem: Soloist John Michael Osteen will provide special music.

**Elders:** Bonnie Disney, Ann Geddings

**Assisting in Worship:** Bonnie Disney

**Deacons:** Gary Bratton, Virginia Hutchens

**Youth Liturgist:** Brogdon Hill

**Jr. Usher:** Adelaide McElveen, Charles Thames

5:00 p.m. – High School Sunday School  
in the West Building

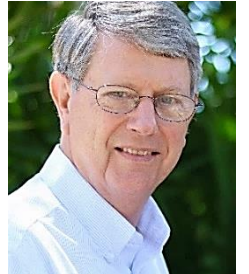
### MARK YOUR CALENDARS EASTER EGG HUNT Sunday, April 2

As we start preparing for this fun event, we need your help with Easter eggs. We need plastic eggs filled with individually wrapped candy or stickers. No chocolate, please – it melts, and no peanuts (due to peanut allergies). All donations are needed in the church office by Sunday, March 26.



Dear Friends in Christ,

We were surprised in staff meeting this morning to turn our calendars to April to see what was coming next, and we bumped into Palm Sunday on April 2 and Easter Sunday on April 9! Easter is just around the corner, and we look forward to celebrating the resurrection of our Lord. This year our mid-week service between Palm Sunday and Easter will be on Thursday evening at 7:00 as we remember Jesus' last supper with his disciples and his death on the cross. I hope you will mark your calendar and join us.



I would like to give you an update on two things that I mentioned in the last Focus. First, our newly elected Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC), which includes Jessica Bettinger, Dee Dailey (Mrs.), Chuck Fienning, Karen Ingram, John Jackson, Kimberly Land, and Jack Osteen, is being trained this week by New Harmony Presbytery. Gavin Meek, our presbytery executive, and Susan Holton, an elder at Swan Lake Presbyterian and a member of the presbytery Committee on Ministry, met with our PNC on Monday evening and discussed the process of calling a pastor. Gavin and Susan will then be with us during worship on Sunday, March 19, to pray for us and encourage us in the important work of seeking pastoral leadership for our church. Please thank the members of our PNC and pray for them as they seek our next installed pastor!

Secondly, our congregation is celebrating the preaching mission of our church by inviting former pastors to return to First Presbyterian Church and preach the sermon during our anniversary year of 2023. The first one to do so is Rev. Peggy Swann, who will preach on March 26. Peggy served our church as a Director of Christian Education and later went to seminary and was ordained as a minister of word and sacrament of the PCUSA. We are eager to welcome someone who loved us so well. We thank her for saying "yes" to our invitation to preach the gospel as part of our 200<sup>th</sup> celebration.

Good things keep happening for our church. Thanks be to God!

Love,

*Bob*

### 200<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

We are pleased to announce that Rev. Peggy Swann will be our guest preacher on Sunday, March 26. She recently retired from Townville Presbyterian Church in Townville, SC where she served as Pastor for the past 13 years. She served First Presbyterian Church as Director of Christian Education for several years prior to being ordained. We look forward to welcoming her back to FPC, Sumter and greeting her following worship in the Fellowship Hall at a reception in her honor.

200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Steering Committee

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY, MARCH 12

- 9:00 a.m. Joy Ringers .....Sanctuary
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 9:50 a.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary
- 10:30 a.m. Worship .....Sanctuary
- 4:00 p.m. Lenten Bible Study ..... Chapel
- 5:00 p.m. High School Sunday School..... West Bldg.

MONDAY, MARCH 13

- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting .....Parlor

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

- 4:00 p.m. Worship & Music .....Parlor

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

- 12:30 p.m. Preschool Staff Meeting ..... McLaurin Room
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary

SUNDAY, MARCH 19

- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 9:50 a.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary
- 10:30 a.m. Worship .....Sanctuary
- 5:00 p.m. High School Sunday School..... West Bldg.

MONDAY, MARCH 20

- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting .....Parlor
- 6:00 p.m. Coordinating Committee .....Parlor

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

- 6:30 p.m. Foreign Missions .....Parlor
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary

SESSION REPORT

From the February 28, 2023 Stated Meeting

At the stated February 28, 2023 meeting, the Session acted on the following items:

- The Presbyterian Women’s Birthday Luncheon to be held April 23, 2023 after worship service.
- The opening of the Cinderella Shop in the West Center March 17-19 and March 24 & 25.
- Rev. Lucy Youngblood to preach March 12, 2023 in Rev. Brearley’s absence.
- A donation of \$2000 to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) in direct support of the earthquake humanitarian relief in Turkey and Syria. This will be funded through the Nixon Fund.
- A request from Rev. Brearley to invite Gavin Meek and Susan Holton March 19 to give a Minute for Mission on the Pastor Nominating Committee.
- The first meeting of the Church Officer Nominating Committee (CONC) will convene March 1, 2023.
- The 200th Anniversary steering committee has recommended that community gifts be made to Sumter United Ministries and Habitat for Humanity on behalf of our 200th anniversary celebration. Both organizations will present project proposals for use of the gift.

The Session requests that you keep the PNC in your constant prayers as the committee begins the arduous but exciting process of finding the pastor that God has already chosen for our church. In the meantime, we will continue to work to serve the Lord through our church, our community, and our world.

Debby Williams, Clerk of Session



MINUTE FOR MEMORIES

The present church sanctuary was built and dedicated on November 10, 1907, during the pastorate of Dr. J. B. Marion. The membership was 650. Dr. Marion served as our pastor from 1906-1923. Two home missionaries were Cornelia McLaurin and Claudia Fraser ... sound familiar??

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

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This publication was delivered to USPS on 3/7/2023.  
Please notify USPS if you don’t receive it in a timely manner.

PACK YOUR BAGS!!  
The planning period for our  
summer mission trips to Costa Rica  
and Puerto Rico have begun!



These trips are for mission-minded congregation members, including youth ages 16-18 (accompanied by a parent). These trips can be a rare life-changing experience for you and your family. Currently, the Puerto Rico trip is scheduled for the last week in June and Costa Rica, July 6-13. For more information you can contact Gus Blum for Costa Rica 803-847-4397 and for Puerto Rico, Bill Richardson at 803-840-9879. There will also be a signup sheet at the welcome desk in front of the Friendship Hall.



2023 MONTREAT YOUTH  
CONFERENCES

This conference is for rising 9<sup>th</sup>-graduating 12<sup>th</sup> graders. It is a weeklong conference in June or July. If you are interested in getting more information or registering, please contact Debbie Jackson (803-775-4814 or [debbiejackson1954@gmail.com](mailto:debbiejackson1954@gmail.com)) as early as possible, but no later than March 31.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Tuomey: Wanda Casker  
Home: Jackie Osteen, Norma Abbott,  
Milo Abbott (grandson of Norma Abbott),  
Robert Stage II (Son of Marta Stage)



FOCUS ON FINANCES

Two Weeks Beginning February 19 & 26, 2023

	Received		2023 Budgeted
	Two Weeks	YTD	YTD
Revenue			
*Contributions	\$ 65,005.	\$238,129.	\$196,417.
Other Sources	\$ 22.	\$ 2,609.	\$ 10,174.
	\$ 65,027.	\$240,738.	\$206,591.

\*YTD contributions revenue includes \$73,152 of 2023 pledges prepaid by members in 2022, carried over and recognized as revenue in 2023.