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JUNE 2025

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# *The Messenger*

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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You have noticed by now that I often use for our "Affirmation of Faith" on Sunday mornings, one or more paragraphs from either our denomination's Book of Confessions or our Book of Order. These two documents form the constitution of our denomination. They help us articulate what it is we believe the Biblical witness is calling us to be and do as a community of believers in our time and in our place.

In his monumental book, "The History of Israel," Dr. John Bright writes, "The existence of Israel as a people rested in the memory of a common experience as handed down...Although we cannot control the details of the Biblical narrative it is unquestionably based in history. There is no reason whatever to doubt that Hebrew slaves had escaped in a remarkable manner from Egypt (and under the leadership of Moses) and that they interpreted their deliverance as the gracious intervention of Yahweh, the "new" God in whose name Moses had come to them... with that, a new society was founded where none had been before, a society based not in blood, but in historical experience and moral decision."

Picking up on Dr. Bright's idea of "the foundation of community based upon a shared/common experience" H. Richard Niebuhr, in his book, "The Meaning of Revelation," advances the following idea, "Where common experience is lacking, where [a people] do not share the same past there can be no real community. And where community is to be formed, common memory must be created.

That is a huge challenge to congregations today. The Christian narrative which had once been the "common memory" that helped bind and guide our nation no longer has such unifying power. And where once solid denominational boundaries have fallen like the Berlin Wall, (good on both accounts), this has also produced a situation where creating a sustaining "common memory" in a faith community is quite difficult in today's world.

The most important way we establish our "common memory" as a congregation is through our Sunday morning worship and in the various ministries, both internal and external, we have chosen to engage in as a faith community.

As we enter this "season of the Church" as I like to call it, where our focus is on the life of the early church, I hope you will take some time to prayerfully reflect on your participation in the life and witness of this congregation and are you contributing to and benefiting from the common memory of this congregation, which, with the Holy Spirit, binds us together, strengthens our witness and draws each of us closer to one another and to our Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer God. Now, who wouldn't want that?

Grace and Peace,  
Taylor



## **Lemonade on the Lawn**

### **Beginning Sunday, June 1**

We're excited to bring back this fun summer tradition! We will gather after the service for lemonade and cookies on the front lawn.



## **Women's Study Group**

Ruth: Storyteller

Sunday, June 1

5:00 pm

Library



## **Summer Schedule**

Beginning Sunday, June 1

10:00 am Sunday School

Coffee Cafe (9 am) and Worship (11 am) will remain the same.



## **FPC Booth @ First Fridays**

Friday, June 5

5:30 pm



**DownTown Youth**  
 Beach Trip  
 June 4-7



**Church Wide Workday**  
 Saturday, June 7  
 8:00 am



**RACE AMITY DAY 2025**  
 INSPIRE A NATION OF UNITY!!  
 Saturday, June 7

Saturday the 7th History Tours of West Florence, at 10am and 11 am, starting at W.C. Handy Museum Saturday the 7th 2 pm at Florence Library: Book Talk by Dennis Balch: "The Other Madisons" documents the bi-racial history of President Madison's family. Sunday June 8th at 2 p.m. Amity Concert, entitled "Lifting Our Voices for Unity and Friendship", in the Performance Center at UNA Guillot Center featuring combined choirs. Book displays at the Florence, Tuscumbia, and Russellville libraries From June 2 to 13 that support the themes of understanding and friendship among the many peoples who make up this great nation.

*All events are free and open to the public*





## Day of Pentecost

Sunday, June 8

On the Day of Pentecost we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit descending in a mighty rush of wind and flame to inspire the church's proclamation of Christ's rising and to empower its mission and ministry to the world.

(See Acts 2:1-13; see also Joel 2:28-32.)

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS TUESDAY, JUNE 10



## Committee Meetings

Tuesday, June 10

4:00 Congregational Care/Appleby

5:00 Christian Education/Library

5:15 Worship/Meade

6:00 Engagement/Meade

Mission/Appleby

Stewardship/Library



## Nashville in Harmony Concert

“Songs for a New South”

Saturday, June 14

3:00 pm

For more information visit the website:

[nashvilleinharmony.org](http://nashvilleinharmony.org)



## **Vacation Bible School**

July 8-1

[VBS 2025 Registration Link](#)

If you are unable to volunteer your time to VBS, consider donating to sponsor the purchasing of t-shirts! Contact Julie Bunt for details.



## **Florence Camerata**

Sunday, June 29 at 2:00 pm  
 Fellowship Hall





## Soup Kitchen

**Volunteers are desperately needed for Community Soup Kitchen, as we continue to serve more and more people!**

*Grace Episcopal Church served Community Soup Kitchen on Saturday, May 24. Approximately 140 meals were served. This was their second time to provide for Community Soup Kitchen. They did a fantastic job, with plenty of food and volunteers.*



## Mission Committee/Gleaning Project

Please help us fill the following dates:

June 14, 21, 28 and August-October.

Volunteers are needed on Saturdays to pick up produce at noon and deliver to Soup Kitchen around 12:30. Link to the volunteer sheet:

<https://volunteersignup.org/KCR73>



The Gleaning Project is a mission of FPC designed to help feed friends of the Shoals who may not have access to fresh vegetables. The project runs from May through October. We collect donations from farmers and patrons of the Farmer's Market each Saturday. The produce is distributed to those in need through the Soup Kitchen and The Help Center. Come lend a hand as local produce can help a family grow and prosper in the Shoals.



Downtown  
Youth

# JUNE IS HERE!!

We have many events this summer, so watch your GroupMe closely! We had a wonderful May with our youth. We had our youth lead worship at both churches, we got our skate on at the end of the year skate party, and we enjoyed supper together at Mugshots. We also managed to catch a movie together as well. As we transition into summer, our schedule will be different, but our purpose will be the same. Watch for new pics on the board by the stairs to see what all we are up to!

I am so thankful for this group. Tammy =)



CAMP

Please contact Tammy if you are interested in Camp. There are several opportunities available!  
NOTE: Tammy will be co-directing at McDowell June 13-20

BEACH TRIP  
JUNE 4-7  
Gulf Shores, AL

MIDDLE SCHOOL  
RETREAT  
JUNE 10-11  
Hendersons Lake  
House

YOUTH EVENT  
(TO BE  
DETERMINED)  
JUNE 22

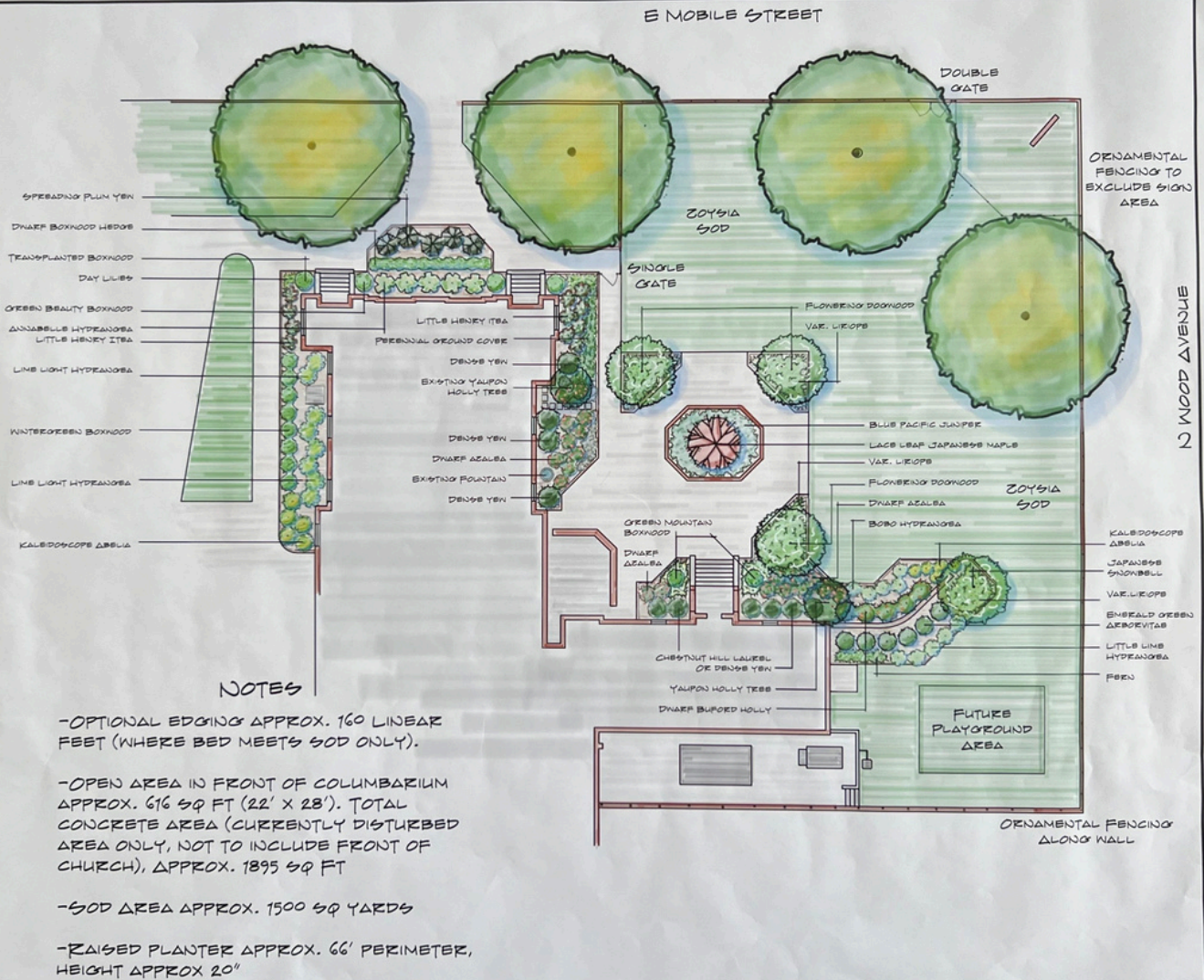




# COMING SOON

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## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT CONCEPT SKETCH



LANDSCAPE CONCEPT SKETCH IS  
LOCATED IN THE LIBRARY.  
STOP BY AND SEE THE PLANS.  
WORK WILL BEGIN SOON (WEATHER  
PERMITTING)

# Session Minutes April 22, 2025

**Clerk's Report:** The clerk reported two items: 1) A letter from the **Presbyterian Home for Children** asking that we donate a portion of the upcoming Pentecost offering to the home. This was sent to the Mission and Service Committee for consideration. 2) A proposal from **All Saint's ministry** to establish a physical presence at UNA via renting a home near the campus. This was sent to the Christian Education and Nurture Committee for consideration.

**Reception of a new member:** **Carl Gebhardt** expressed a desire to join the community of faith at First Presbyterian of Florence. Carl gave a brief history of his faith journey and answered questions from Session members. A motion was made by Tommy Bowser, seconded by Elba Barnes, and approved by vote to accept Carl into membership.

Pastor Nominating Committee Report: Dixie Carter, chair of the PNC, provided an update on the activities of the PNC. The Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP) that was crafted by the PNC was presented to the session for approval. A motion was made by Rob Tyree, seconded by Tommy Bowser, and approved by vote to approve the MDP in principle, with typos to be corrected.

## **Unfinished Business**

None

## **New Business**

Dissolve the Interim Pastor Search Committee – Given COM approval to engage in an installed pastor search, the need for the Interim Pastor Search Committee has ceased.

# Committee Minutes- May 13, 2025

## **Christian Education**

- CPR training and recertification will be June 21 on Saturday at First Presbyterian

## **Congregational Care**

Our prayerful focus was our response to the Cracraft family following the passing of Morris Cracraft, a sitting Elder and beloved member who dedicated many years of talent to First Presbyterian. He will be very missed.

Also, the bereavement of Sarah Kelley's family in the passing of her father, Chuck Kelley, was noted for the prayer list.

A celebration of life service will likely be held for Katrina Kelley, June 27 and plans will be made with Katrina sister, Bridgett Vinson in June for this service.

The committee was also focused on wrapping up the work of the past year in its update and revision of the church's pictorial directory which is now distributed or available for pick-up in the Welcome Center. This closes out a major project.

### **Mission and Service**

- Home Free Haven is seeking new leadership due to Will Willis taking a new job and stepping back as Director.
- The upcoming Pentecost Offering and the 40% retained by local church was approved to go to Children's Home in Talladega.
- Pride Fest is on June 14 at Veteran's Park for which the Mission Committee will provide attendance and agreed upon \$1000 support.
- All present were pleased to hear about the activities, progress, and focus by each committee.

### **Stewardship**

1. The committee expressed their sadness over the death of Morris Cracraft, who was passionate about Stewardship and Florence First Presbyterian Church.
2. The church's finances are currently stable, but uncertainties exist necessitating financial prudence.
3. The new addition continues to progress, and landscaping should be done soon. The support of the church has made this investment in our future possible.

### **Worship**

*No Moderator Notes*

## **June Committee Meetings**

**Tuesday, June 10**

**4:00 pm Congregational Care/Appleby**

**5:00 pm Christian Education/Library**

**5:15 pm Worship/Meade**

**6:00 pm Engagement & Fellowship/Meade**

**Mission/Appleby**

**Stewardship/Library**

**Committee minutes are due by 4:00 pm  
on the third Tuesday of the month.**

# WORSHIP SCHEDULE

## Ushers

**Linda & David Kennedy**

## Acolytes

**6/1 Emma Carter**

**6/8 Henry Morgan**

**6/15 Tiller Speaker**

**6/22 Marlie Rice**

**6/29 Charlie Morgan**

## Flowers

**6/1 Davis & Hutchinson**

**6/8 Carol Howdyshell**

**6/15 Thomas Bowser**

**6/22 Dianne Dodson**

**6/29 Horn & Ostberg**



3 Holly Harrell

5 Randy Pettus

7 Doug Tinkham

17 Maggie Marbury

18 Luke Reaves

19 Mary Lynn Fraser

20 Harland Dodson

21 Mary Elizabeth Johnson

21 Mary Ellen Redd

22 Jim Lawhern

25 Jordan Cracraft

27 Dave Marbury

30 Catherine O'Steen

30 Tiller Speaker



Pentecost Sunday, June 8

**Wear red!**



# Prayer List



Art work by Morris Cracraft

## Hospitalized

### Church Members in need of prayer

Family of Morris Cracraft  
 Family of Chuck Kelley (father of Sarah Kelley)  
 Rich Larkins  
 Kelly Larkins  
 Phyllis Nofzinger  
 Michael Hasty  
 John Palme  
 Nancy Palme, cervical spine injury

### Family & Friends in need of prayer

Sarah Swann, daughter of Robert & Rhonda Tyree  
 Teresa Rasch, cancer, friend of Dixie Carter  
 Rob Tyree, home, son of Robert & Rhonda Tyree.  
 Richard Thomas, recovering from hip surgery  
 Grace Carter, hospital/car accident, Grace is at Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation in New Jersey. Friend of Joni Willingham. Her parents are Bob & Marsha Carter.  
 Bill Lupton, doing better, brother of Allison Lupton, undergoing treatment for blood cancer  
 Cora McCluskey, mother of John McCluskey  
 Kerri Putman, Glioblastoma brain tumor, friend of Candace Lewis  
 Randy Perkins, cancer, brother-in-law of Jo Lynn McClure  
 Ken Patterson, cancer, father of Rhonda Tyree  
 Edna Carter, sister of Mary Young  
 Roger LaBiche, friend of Kelly LaBiche-Larkins  
 Ed Smith, father of Wilder Smith

### Homebound/Nursing Home/Rehab

Penney Griffin, Lauderdale Christian Nursing Home  
 Sara Elizabeth Doss, at home  
 Josephine and Uhland Redd's new address:  
 201 North Cedar Street, Florence, AL 35630 (Room 115) Visitors are welcome!

# June

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Lemonade on the Lawn  <b>5:00 Women's "Ruth" Study</b>	2	3 3:00 Staff meeting	4   5:30 Handbells 6:15 Choir	5   Downtown Youth Beach Trip	6   <b>First Friday VBS Booth</b>	7 12:00 Soup Kitchen
8 Lemonade on the Lawn	9 10:00 Caring Place  <i>FH reserved/Shoals Theater</i>	10 NAP 12:00 Ministerial Alliance 3:00 Staff meeting Committee Meetings	11   5:30 Handbells 6:15 Choir	12	13 Church Office Closed	14 12:00 Soup Kitchen  <b>3:00 Nashville in Harmony Concert</b>
15 Lemonade on the Lawn	16	17 12:00 <b>Messenger Deadline</b> 3:00 Staff meeting 4:00 <b>Committee Minutes due</b>	18   5:30 Handbells 6:15 Choir	19	20	21 12:00 Soup Kitchen
22 Lemonade on the Lawn	23	24 3:00 Staff meeting	25   5:30 Handbells 6:15 Choir	26	27 <b>Memorial Service for Katrina Kelley</b>  Church Office Closed	28 12:00 Soup Kitchen  FH reserved Camerata
29 Lemonade on the Lawn  <b>2:00 FH reserved Camerata</b>	30					