



Focus on First

RHYTHMS OF GRACE—SABBATH PASTOR ANDY

The spiritual power of memory is captured in the command, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” The Psalmist commits to the exercise of spiritual memory when he sings,

- ¹¹ I will remember the deeds of the LORD;
yes, I will remember your wonders of old.
- ¹² I will ponder all your work,
and meditate on your mighty deeds.

In the rhythms of grace, God gave us the first day of the week to be nourished by his Word, his worship, and his people. This day is “God’s market-day for the week’s provision, wherein He will have us come unto him, and buy of him without silver or money: the Bread of angels, and Water of life, the Wine of the sacraments, and Milk of the Word to feed our souls: tried Gold to enrich our faith: precious Eye Salve to heal our spiritual blindness: and the white Raiment of Christ’s righteousness, to cover our filthy nakedness.” (Lewis Bayly, *The Practice of Piety*)

The Sabbath is more than just a day; Sabbath is a practice, a spiritual discipline. Sabbath is the discipline of rest and reflection for the purpose of refreshment.

Even athletes know that they need rest in order to recover from hard workouts. Indeed, many athletes and elite trainers will tell you that there are no gains to be made without rest and recovery.

Just the other day I was re-reading the history of the French Revolution and the implementation of the 10 day work week. This was done to liberate the people from a Christian worldview and embrace a new secular pattern. The hope was that productivity would increase. The exact opposite happened. This reminds me of

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WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Sunday

9:30 am Morning Bible Study
10:45 am Morning Worship
Live Streaming also available
Evening Study will begin 1st of the year

Monday

2:00 pm Women’s Study
Systematic Theology

Tuesday

9:30 am Women’s Bible Study
starting 3/18

Thursday

9:00 am Men’s Bible Study
6:00 pm Women’s Book Study

UPCOMING EVENTS

Deacons’ Meeting

Thursday, 2/20 10:30 am

Session Meeting

Tuesday, 2/18 8:00 am

Fellowship Luncheon

Sunday, 2/23 after morning worship

ON Group (Monthly Octogenarian/
Nonagenarian-see Bobby Duck)



NEWSLETTER PURPOSE:

- Communicate church events and activities
- Communicate community events of interest to our members
- Communicate life events of our members
- Provide discipleship and teaching
- Communicate regarding missions and ministries

**GOOD SAMARITANS
SOCIETY**
—CHAPEL TIME

In God's loving nature, He created the Church to house His family on earth. It is evident in my and Tracey's life.

I called FPC and told Andy about our circumstances and he very graciously gave me a month to take care of Tracey and to figure out what we are going to do next.

The Church family has been overwhelming, food, cards and very thoughtful support, which we thank our God and His family. Thank You.

God's in Charge
Dick 1/16/25

RHYTHMS OF GRACE—SABBATH

(Continued from page 1)

an old saying that in the end we really do not break the law of God, rather, when we disobey God's law, it breaks us.

The seven day work week, "six days you shall labor," is God's idea. The seventh day observed as a sabbath is the pattern of creation. As a part of the 10 commandments, sabbath observance is a moral command. And, because the sabbath is when the people of God gather, it is our market-day of the soul. What is more, this day is the day to enjoy the rest we have in Jesus and look forward to the rest we will have in heaven.

In summary, Sabbath is an antidote to a dysfunctional relationship with time and work. Observing Sabbath is a rhythm of grace that restores our awareness of God and our own soul. If you find that you are hurried and rushed, filled with anxiety and needing rest, this discipline is one of God's good gifts of creation and redemption that can restore the balance you are hopeful for in life.

I pray this exhortation will encourage you to practice the rhythm of grace that is Sabbath this Lord's day. I look forward to enjoying God's refreshing grace with you. Amen.

Pastor Andy

There will be a **Fellowship Luncheon**
after the worship service on **February 23.**

Sign up to bring **soup, salad, or dessert**
on the sheets on the table in the hallway.

There is also a sign up sheet for anyone willing to
help set up before and clean up after our lunch.

If you have any questions, please contact Beth McCrabb.



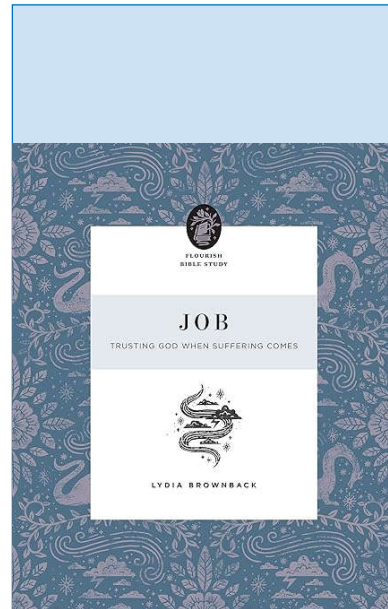
2024 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	<u>2024 BUDGET</u>	<u>2024 ACTUAL</u>	<u>% UNDER/OVER</u> <u>BUDGET</u>
Income:			
Tithes & Offerings	\$360,049	\$620,903	+72.4%
Deacons Fund Donations:	\$7,000	\$9,714	+38.8%
Investment Dividends & Interest:	\$0.00	\$56,846	N/A
Expenses:			
Administration	\$74,030	\$63,547	-14.2%
Inreach	\$2,750	\$3,778	+37.4%
Discipleship	\$10,500	\$11,213	+6.8%
Missions	\$55,936	\$52,945	-5.3%
Payroll	\$200,530	\$197,707	-1.4%
Worship	\$9,303	\$8,485	-8.8%
Capital Expenditures	\$7,000	\$3,740	-46.8%
Total General Fund Expenses:	\$360,049	\$341,415	-5.2%

Notes:

- 1) For income, + indicates more than budget in the % change column. For expenses, + indicates expenditure over budget and - indicates expenditure under budget.
- 2) Missions giving, including foreign missionaries, North American missionaries, local missions, & church planting within the TN Valley Presbytery, plus support to the PCA & the TN Valley Presbytery totaled 14.2% of the total budget.
- 3) We were blessed with \$9,714 in gifts to our deacon mercy ministry and distributed \$12,016, made possible with a carryover of funds from 2023. Distributions were made to individuals in need both within and outside our congregation, to local organizations we support in merciful needs, and to our PCA Disaster Relief arm helping people who have experienced loss from natural disasters such as the flooding in east TN & western NC. We have already distributed money in 2025 to help an individual.
- 4) Outside the budget, we have equity account balances of: \$89,093 that is used for operating & maintenance expenses of the Christian Education Center; \$94,133 for our Calvin Fellowship program; \$9,700 for special mission's needs; and \$216,787 in a building fund.
- 5) We also have an equity account balance of \$27,925 set up outside the budget to cover major maintenance expenses such as the replacement of our aging HVAC systems.
- 6) Total assets (not including property & facilities) increased from \$930,011 at the end of 2023 to \$1,122,680 at the end of 2024.
- 7) Dividends & interest are from our (very) conservative investments and increased from \$34,275 in 2023 to \$56,846 in 2024. The amount of dividends and interest will decrease in 2025 because we are using this money for renovations to the Christian Education Center plus interest rates are lower.

To God be the glory for His provision!



The Tuesday morning Spring
Women's Bible Study of
*Job: Trusting God
When Suffering Comes*
by Lydia Brownback will be
held **March 18—May 27**.

Until then, please read
through Job on your own.
A sign up sheet
is in the hallway.

MISSIONS UPDATE—

BRIAN & BECKY SCHRADER

First Presbyterian Church Identity and Mission

We belong to the family of the Redeemed. Transformed by the grace of Jesus' death and resurrection, we are delighting in the supremacy of God in all things as we reach up to Him in worship, reach in to one another with biblical teaching and shepherding care, and reach out to the world with Christ.

So that in everything Christ might be preeminent. —Colossians 1:18

Session:

Andy Aikens, Senior Pastor
Robert Berman, Bobby Duck
Forrest Marion, Clerk
Richard Parks, Jim Sparks

Deacons:

Dave Miser-Chair, Vince Grilley,
John Reed Secretary, Mike Tuuk

Staff:

Asst Pastor: Dick Gillen
Music Director: Matt Bundy
Finance / Admin: Holly Kisly

Ministry Support:

Treasurer: Bill Allbright
Technology Specialists:
Matt Bundy, Tom Buettner, Jeff
Nichols, Levi Powell
Accompanists: Matt Bundy, Robert
Berman, Scott Hewitt, Isabelle
Aikens

Sanctuary Flowers: Sherry Hewitt
Women's Ministry Committee:

Hope Aikens, Holly Kisly, April
Marion, Sandy Reed, Lory Wood
Men's Bible Study: Vince Grilley
Newsletter: Darlene Gendjar

Our Missions Family—International

Julian and Rachel Bacon, MTW
Brussels, Belgium. Lydia Goglein,
MTW Sophia, Bulgaria. Brian &
Becky Schrader, Pioneers in Africa.
Lee Leadbetter, RUF-International at
UT.

Our Missions Family—North America

Christ Church Pres in Powell
Plateau Pregnancy Services
Good Samaritans
RUF Tennessee Tech, Ryan Angel
Rural Church Dev., Corey Pelton
Myers Park Initiative, Greg Salazar
Occom Ministries, Native American
Initiative

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Seth and Elliana were off school for almost a month because of the shooting at Abundant Life Christian School in Madison, Wisconsin and Christmas break. They returned on Friday 1/10 for the first day back at school and are now doing their first full week. The school did an excellent job getting input and has worked hard to help everyone transition back well. We have been really blessed in how well they have handled everything. We praise God, our kids have been doing well through all of it. I asked Elliana after being back in school for a few days how her other classmates and teachers seemed to be doing, and from what she can tell, people have been responding well. The Lord has been gracious to everyone in this and has really been shining through so many testimonies.

Eden, (18 yrs) our oldest, just finished her classes for HS. She is technically done but won't formally graduate until the spring. She is currently applying to a Christian leadership and development training program in New York that would start in August if she is accepted. Seth (17 yrs old) graduates this May. He has now started his final semester and is looking to attend one of the local community colleges here in town after graduation.

Elliana just turned 16. She is getting lots of orthodontic work right now in preparation for a substantial jaw surgery. We don't know exactly when it will be as part of it depends on how this orthodontic work goes, but we anticipate it will be within the next 6 months. It is a fairly major surgery and will be done in Minneapolis, MN.

Because of all of these things, we have not yet returned to Chad but remain very engaged with the team on the ground and are helping to lead them through a number of things right now. One of the most exciting is the very early stages of partnering with a language development and Bible translation organization interested in beginning work with the Z. This is something we have been praying about for years and have been greatly encouraged at the prospect of working together.

In addition, I will be attending 2 different training courses being offered by Pioneers and Becky will participate in the second one. They are about how to receive new teammates well and help them thrive on the field in the first few years after they arrive and a peacemaking/conflict resolution training. Both are important topics for us where we are. I am leaving this Saturday (1/18) for that and Becky will leave the following week (1/24).

In addition, our entire North Africa Region is having a conference in March. Becky and I are both on the planning team for that and have been very involved preparing and are excited about what God will do in our region through that.

And then Abby, our youngest (8 yrs old) is in second grade at the local public school. She loves school and is doing really well.

Blessings,
Brian