



Focus on First

OUR WORSHIP VALUES

PASTOR ANDY

We just launched our new website. I am so proud of our team that worked on this project. It looks great. Thank you to Matt, Holly and Hope for your work on this project. You did a great job.

One of the new features on the website is a posting of our philosophy of worship. In this statement are eight values that express the biblical principles that guide our worship at First Presbyterian Church. I plan to use this space over the next few months to highlight a couple of these values. The first value states:

We value a public worship form that communicates the supremacy of God. Therefore, we will attempt to design a service where we can hear God's call to worship him. We will listen as he speaks through his Word, and we will respond back to him. We will read the Bible, pray the Bible, sing the Bible, and preach the Bible to continually reorient our souls to worship him each Lord's Day.

Because of who God is, we desire to exalt the supremacy of God in all things. This is the priority of biblical worship. I pray that you find it refreshing to be reminded Sunday after Sunday that God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-wise, everywhere present, and all-good. No matter what we face, trials or triumphs, this is a comforting thought that reminds us we are safe in his hands.

We value seeking hard after God as an all-satisfying end in Himself. Therefore, we desire for the worship service to be a place where we can be in the presence of the Lord in an unhurried manner. He is the treasure, the pearl of great price, and we will come with an earnestness and wholeheartedness that desires God more than anything.

We were designed for a relationship with God (Genesis 1:26-27). The work of Christ (specifically his death and resurrection) achieves a restoration of what human beings lost in the Fall recorded in Genesis 3. When we grasp the magnitude of God's redeeming work in Christ, our hearts ought to overflow with gratitude that alters the direction of our lives. I pray that everyone who enters our doors will gain a sense of how great a treasure it is to know God through Christ.

As you prepare for this Lord's day, pray that these values will be your values. The bulletin will be posted ahead of time on our website. Go to the Media tab and scroll down until you find the word bulletins and click on it to see an archive of worship guides. Click on the date for the upcoming Sunday and use the bulletin to prepare your heart to gather with God's people and sing and read and pray and hear with your whole heart.

Until we get to glory,
Pastor Andy



WEEKLY SCHEDULE

- Sunday**
9:30 am *Morning Bible Study*
10:45 am *Morning Worship*
Live Streaming also available
- 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*

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Deacons' Meeting**
Thursday, 3/20 10:30 am
- Session Meeting**
Tuesday, 3/18 8:00 am
- ON Group** (Monthly Octogenarian/
Nonagenarian-see Bobby Duck)



Daylight Saving Time
SPRING FORWARD

Set your clocks ahead
Sunday, March 9th

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

Sunday, Feb. 2, '25 was my last sermon at GSS. After 12 yrs. of preaching, memorials, special occasions, fellowship after the service in the atrium. But mostly we'll (Tracey and I) miss the saints whom God surrounded us with.

The last service was memorable. The Sells were there (Dan and Robbie helped out for years). David Barcus (who used to lead the singing & sang special music) was there and led the singing and sang a memorable solo. Nita Eike was there (who used to sing special music). Betty Ruth Koeninger who played the and sang with her son, Bruce Williams, it was beautiful. FPC was there with Cecil and Roxanne Smith, Bobby Duck and Pat, and Jim Sparks.

Bobby Duck gave a goodbye at the end of the sermon, and I teared up – Jim Sparks said a very moving prayer at the end of the service.

A memorable service, indeed.

God's in Charge

Dick 2/12/ 25

PASTOR'S HEALTH UPDATE

Thank you so much for praying for me these past six months. Here is a brief update and a way for you to specifically pray. The left ventricle of the heart is responsible for pumping or ejecting blood to the body. An ejection fraction is the measurement of the left ventricle's ability to do this. The left ventricle of an average person walking around is able to eject about 55 to 60 percent of the blood that it receives. In September my ejection fraction was at 20. This was measured by an echocardiogram. By December the ejection fraction had improved to 33. That is trending in the right direction,

and my cardiologist was very happy about the amount of improvement. However, he wants it to be above 40 in order to avoid surgery. So, in May I will have another echocardiogram. Please pray that between now and May that my heart health will improve so that my ejection fraction *will be well above 40*. God has used this in my life to teach me the importance of depending on him for everything. We take nothing for granted. May God be glorified in my life through this trial. By extension, may he be glorified in all our lives as we pursue the assignment we each have received. *Non Nobis Domine*

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCH

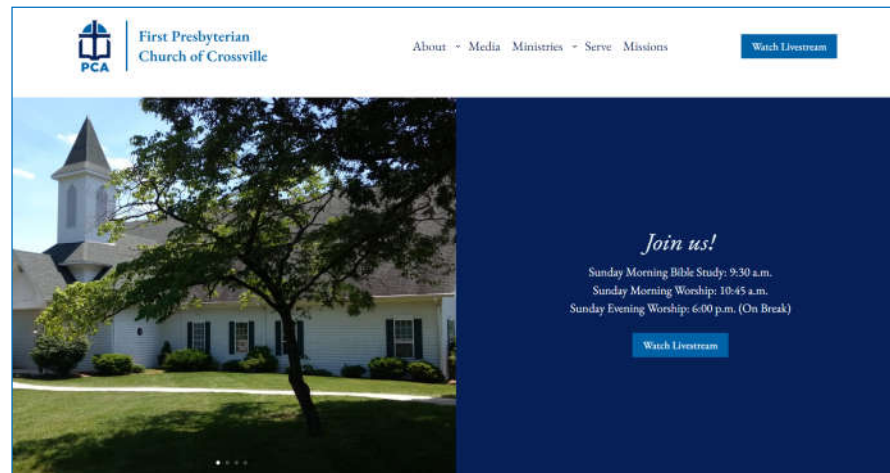
I have some exciting news; our new website for the First Presbyterian Church of Crossville launched on Saturday, **February 15**. I invite you to visit <https://firstprescrossville.org> and enjoy our new features:

- an embedded Spotify playlist that you can use without a personal subscription
- a link to our sermon page on YouTube
- a bulletin, which will be available each week on Friday, so that you can prepare your heart and mind for the coming service
- an archive of previous bulletins and newsletters

MATT BUNDY

If you use the website to watch our livestream, there is a button in the upper right-hand corner to join the worship service online. I'm hopeful that this is a seamless transition, but I do ask for your patience if you experience any growing pains. Please let me know of any technical difficulties you may have, and I'll address the concern. Thanks for your understanding.

It is my prayer that this new website represents our assembly well, and that it informs and assists us as we seek to glorify our creator, reaching up to him in worship, in to one another with biblical teaching and shepherding care, and out to the world with Christ.



SESSION NOTES

The session met on Tuesday morning, January 21, for its regular monthly meeting.

Pastor Andy led a devotional on an aspect of the Holy Spirit's work. In Genesis 1:2 and Deuteronomy 32:11, the same Hebrew verb is used, rendered in English as "hovers" or "flutters" (these are the only places in Scripture where the verb is found). The Genesis passage is in the context of *creation*, the Deuteronomy passage in the context of *redemption* (Israel coming out of Egypt and preparing to enter God's promised land, which is a picture of redemption for believers who have been bought out of slavery to sin, and into Christ). Believers do well to meditate upon this reality, that the Spirit brings *order* into the creation and into the life of the church.

The following agenda items may be of interest:

- a. The Session welcomed Ruling Elder Richard Parks, who was installed as an FPC RE during the worship service on January 19, 2025. Session noted with thankfulness the ordination/installation of Deacon Mike Tuuk also on Jan. 19.
- b. The Session approved Deacon Cecil Smith to be designated as Deacon Emeritus, with thankfulness for his many years of service.
- c. Pastor Andy led discussion of the plans for a new playground on the Christian Education Center side of Rock Quarry Road and CEC

parking lot requirements. The current playground on CEC side will become additional parking space. The new playground will be located farther from the road (for added security) between the industrial plant and the pole barn, inside a fenced area. The Session approved to communicate to Deacon Mike Tuuk to continue to study our options with a rough budget of \$120,000.

- d. The Session approved a \$2,700 Calvin Fellowship scholarship to Noah Aikens for completion of his master's degree (Master's of Theological Studies).
- e. The Session approved a \$1,200 Calvin Fellowship scholarship to FPC's former intern, Ryan Angel, for the completion of his M.Div. We also encourage everyone to support Ryan and Charlie in prayer as he completes his studies this spring and pursues ordination.
- f. The Session approved Ruling Elders Rich Parks and Jim Sparks to serve as commissioners to the Tennessee Valley Presbytery meeting to be held on Feb. 8, 2025, at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Chattanooga.

Upon completion of the agenda, the elders spent a season of prayer for the Shepherding and other needs of the congregation.

Next Stated Session Meeting:

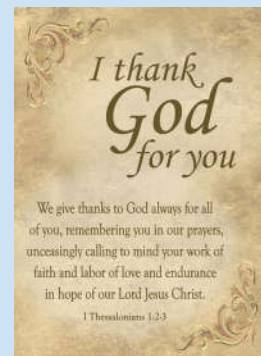
Tuesday, February 18, 2025, 8am.

Warmly in Christ,
Forrest Marion, clerk

PASTOR DICK GILLEN

Since 2005 Pastor Dick Gillen and his wife Tracey have exercised an important ministry at First Presbyterian Church. Pastor Gillen served as the interim pastor for a season when the church was between pastors. More recently, he has been the assistant pastor performing a ministry to the residents of Good Samaritan Society in Fairfield Glade. For the past 12 years Pastor Gillen has led the weekly chapel service at GSS while also serving as chaplain to the residents. In addition to these responsibilities, he has served on the board of GSS as well as serving as the president of the board for Plateau Pregnancy Services. This season of ministry has now come to a close. All this important work took place after being honorably retired from the PCA presbytery in South Florida. This is an encouraging example to us all of a God-honoring use of one's retirement.

Pastor Dick, thank you for your faithful service to Christ's church. You are a blessing to us all. As Pastor Gillen turns his attention to caring for Tracey, may we commit to faithfully pray for them both and support them in this new season of glorifying God through the assignment He has given to them.



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:

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 Goeglein,

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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MISSIONS UPDATE—

JULIAN AND RACHEL BACON

Hope International Church of Brussels <https://www.hopebrussels.com/>

For the Bacon Family, 2025 began with a wonderful blessing, the birth of their third child, Noah Olivier, on January 15. Check out the new family photograph (to the right)!

Under the International Presbyterian Church (IPC), Hope International conducted their first Sunday morning service in March 2023, and in June 2023 the IPC changed Hope International's status from church plant to mission church. As a mission church, Hope still receives oversight from the IPC but can receive members and administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The church now has 59 members, with 120 attendees on average at Sunday morning worship services. Sunday services have moved to a different location, but church leadership is still in search of a larger place of worship.

In addition to Sunday worship services, the church is continuing their five weekly Community Groups and the Greenhouse Youth Group for spiritual growth and fellowship. Julian has also started a ten-week class on the basics of Christian faith, while members are beginning to take on church function leadership roles (missions, hospitality, nursery and other committees), and initial steps have begun in preparation for training elder candidates.

The Bacons offer praise onto God for answered prayer in the healthy pregnancy and birth of Noah, and ask for continued prayer:

- For leadership wisdom as the church continues outreach efforts and ministers to members through Community Groups and the Greenhouse Youth Group
- For Hope International's continued search for a new (larger) space for worship



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**. A sign up sheet is in the hallway.