



Focus on First

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

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 9/16

Upcoming Events

Men's Breakfast & Study

Saturday, 9/6 & 20 7:30 am

Deacons' Meeting

Thursday, 9/18 10:30 am

Session Meeting

Tuesday, 9/16 8:00 am

ON Group

(Monthly Octogenarian /
Nonagenarian-see Bobby Duck)

Newsletter Purpose

to communicate:

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

The Apostle's Creed in Worship

Pastor Andy

Over the next several weeks we will be using the Apostle's Creed as our profession of faith in worship. This goes back a long way in the history of the churches of the West and in particular, Reformed and Presbyterian churches. Indeed, when I became the pastor of FPC in 2016 it was our practice to rehearse the Creed weekly. I have given leadership over the years to using the Westminster Confession and Catechisms because we needed a greater familiarity with our own confessional documents. The Lord has blessed these efforts.

However, in the upcoming season, our children's classes on Sunday mornings will be studying the Apostle's creed. Therefore, it is a good time to return our attention to this important creed of the church.

The Apostle's creed was originally a baptismal confession for new converts. It was a bit shorter in those days and would be memorized as a part of the preparation for the sacrament of baptism. By the early 5th century it was in its present form and remained important for the churches in the West. This is why the Apostle's creed is so important to the Reformation. It forms the basis for Luther's catechisms, Calvin's *Institutes*, and the Heidelberg Catechism, just to name a few.

Ironically, the Apostle's creed was not written by the Apostles. Rather, it contains the doctrines taught by the Apostles. Additionally, the Creed has never been approved by any ecumenical council. For this reason, the Nicene Creed (Constantinople 381 AD) is preferred by many, especially the churches in the East. Both documents find their roots in the early baptismal confessions of new converts.

Two lines of the Apostle's Creed seem to always be in need of explanation. The first is the line "He descended into Hell." The Westminster Larger Catechism Q. 50 teaches that this refers to the time Christ spent in the grave under the power of death. The Heidelberg Catechism Q. 44 teaches that this line is to be understood as the sufferings of Christ in his life and on the Cross. Calvin has a similar explanation in the *Institutes*. When we confess this line, we are confessing our belief as expressed by Westminster and how that is also informed by Heidelberg.

The second phrase needing explanation is the confession of belief "in one holy catholic church." The word catholic means universal. We do not think of this as a reference to the Roman Catholic Church. Rather, this line instructs us that we are not the only true church. God has a people in all places and at all times. We are a part of this great family of the redeemed.

As you prepare for worship, take time to reflect on this explanation and appreciate the importance of the Creed to our history and our doctrine. We are confessing by it our belief and trust in the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is one God, and we have gathered to worship him in expressions of adoration because of who he is and all that he has done. Amen.

Volunteers Needed

Please help us make our Memorial Garden beautiful again! It needs a lot of TLC.

We need the following done:

- Weed, prune, trim bushes & trees
- Haul yard waste to composite site
- Locate and uncover the plot markers so we can add identification tags
- Repair the vinyl fence & bench
- Power wash the fence, walkways, stone monument
- Spread mulch

Do as little or as much as you are able, whenever you are able.

If you can help, please contact Darlene Gendjar
darlene.gendjar@gmail.com
931-484-1221

Thank you for honoring the memory of those interred there and their families.

GIVE

Online: [Patrick and Regina](#)

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Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. We hope this finds you well. We are blessed to be part of the family of God and to be participants in the Great Commission in Native America.

In this newsletter, we want to provide you with a quick review of the year so far, where we are this summer both in planning and support-raising, and also to take a moment to remember someone we were blessed to know.

If you have been tracking with us, you will have noticed it has been a heavy year of travel so far. Each month since February through June, we have been on the road for a week or more each time, we have one more trip in August, and the final one in October for the Native Pastors Gathering, Lord willing.

This past June we attended our denomination's General Assembly. As is our custom, we had a booth displaying Occom Ministries. We made some good connections and had some great conversations. We pray the Lord will bless our efforts. On the drive to General Assembly, we stopped over with some friends in Georgia. Patrick was asked to participate in a podcast called [On the Lane](#) with Craig Jeffery. Just click the hyperlink to listen.

Now we are planning a support-raising trip to Virginia. On that trip, we will also be relocating one of our pastor's libraries to a supporting church for storage until we can move it to our future study center, Occom Discovery Center. Please pray for our vans, either the minivan or the RV Dodge 3500. Both have been giving us concern.

The road throws us off kilter as we have so much administrative stuff to do in the office back home. Currently we are support raising for Regina, the Native Pastors Gathering, and Occom Ministries in general. The Native Pastors Gathering has a lot of behind-the-scenes logistics that

Missions' Update

Occom Ministries

Patrick & Regina Lennox

need to be taken care of, as well as finding attendees from around the country.

Here are some pics of a day in the life at the Occom headquarters. Regina is currently finding the proper addresses for churches in Virginia. The 230 red envelopes on the table behind her are being sent out in daily installments, followed up with phone calls and emails. Crunching the numbers, this mailing costs \$2:58 per unit. To view a digital copy of our flyer, click here, [native-pastors-gathering-2025-and-odc-four-pager.pdf](#)

Please pray the Lord grants us wisdom on where to send them, and that we would be able to have success in raising the necessary support to keep moving forward.

Although we have funds to raise for Occom's projects, we are asking here that you consider partnering with us, Patrick and, especially Regina. We receive no personal support from Occom. In order for us to continue the work the Lord has given us, we need to get our support account up to a healthy level. Currently, we are in need of an additional \$4,000 per month to be able to maintain monthly needs and build up to our minimum account balance.

If you are already giving, thank you again. If you been tracking with us through the years and thought about partnering with us, please consider that today. Most of the 680+ recipients of this newsletter do not support us at any level. Just imagine if everybody gave something on a regular, dependable basis. Please consider joining our team. Thank you for journeying with us. Thank you for giving and beseeching the Lord on our behalf.

All for the Kingdom!

Life Together

In the last several years our church has grown much. For this we praise God. We have celebrated new families and new Christians. God is doing a great work at First Presbyterian Church.

In 2016 when Pastor Andy arrived as our pastor, we were a much smaller congregation. We have doubled in size in the last few years. This creates greater demands on our pastor, but thankfully, we have been addressing those through training men and women to serve the body, particularly in men's ministry and women's ministry. This is as it should be. Ephesians 4:11 and 12 tells us that God "gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." Every member of the church is a part of a great team that ministers to one another.

As we enter this new season of ministry, Pastor Andy continues to regain his health, but it remains a biblical priority that we learn to minister to one another as a body. A pastor cannot meet all the spiritual needs of the church. For this reason, we are actively searching for a second pastor to help with ministry to children, youth, and families. We are also actively training men and women to minister to one another. If you would like to know more about how to be involved, please contact Holly in the church office.

God has been very kind to our church. As Elders of this congregation, we are very thankful for all of you, the precious saints of God. May the Lord bless you.

Building Program Phase II

Having completed the remodel to our Christian Education Center (Phase I), please pray for the Session and Diaconate as we turn our attention to Phase II, a remodel of our main building.

There will be three emphases in this project. We hope to expand the sanctuary, the fellowship hall, and add adequate restrooms. The Session will be appointing a building committee to help shepherd the initial stage of planning. This committee will be charged with taking the sketches we have produced thus far and ensuring that our plan is adequate for the ministry needs we currently have and those we envision.

We will give a little more information at our Fellowship Dinner on Sunday September 14 following the morning service. This project will take time. Please pray that every step will be God honoring. We are receiving donations for the building fund. Checks should be designated in the memo line for the Building Fund.

Thank you for being faithful to pray and faithful to give. You are loved. On behalf of the Session, Pastor Andy.

Fellowship Lunch - 9/14

Mark your calendars for our next Fellowship Lunch on September 14. This will be "Italian Style." Sign up to bring your favorite pasta dish, salad, or dessert on the sheets in the hallway. If you have any questions, please contact Beth McCrabb.



Music Ministry

We are expanding our music ministry to include a Fine Arts School of Music. Our website is now updated, and you can see many of the details at

<https://firstprescrossville.org/fine-arts-school-of-music/>

We are in the process of hiring teachers and enrolling students so lessons can begin on September 9. Please be in prayer for this new ministry as there will be many people coming to participate in some way, and we want God to be honored through its mission and vision.

Library News

If you have not yet picked up your library card, you will find it in your mailbox in the main building.

I'm excited to announce that there are some new materials in the library. Do you struggle with feelings of anxiety, anger, grief or impatience? Are you suffering from chronic illness or dealing with addictive habits? Do you fully trust in the Lord to keep His promises? We now have a collection of 31-day devotional type booklets that address these problems and more. Come by the library and take a look, if not for yourself, then maybe for someone you know who is struggling with issues.

Kathy Pipkin

First Presbyterian Church

Session:

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

Deacons:

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

Staff:

Music/Sound Director: Matt Bundy
Finance / Admin: Holly Kisly

Ministry Support:

Treasurer: Bill Allbright
Newsletter: Darlene Gendjar
Library: Kathy Pipkin

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, John Blevins
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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New Member Spotlight

Judy Hawes

I was born and raised on the eastern side of the Cumberland Plateau. I currently live on family land that was settled by my ancestors six generations ago. I guess you can say, my roots run deep here on the plateau.

I grew up attending a community First Presbyterian Church. My biggest pleasure as a kid was riding my pony, with my dogs by my side through the trails, woods, and creeks around me.

As a young child and the daughter of an alcoholic father, my life was very unpredictable and tumultuous. I learned at a young age that my strength, protection, comfort and refuge came from my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I felt His presence in my life even before I could understand it.

At the age of 11 my parents divorced, and I professed my faith publicly by being baptized in the Tennessee River while attending a summer Bible camp. At this point, my love and desire to know my Lord became the defining purpose of my life.

At the age of 19, I married and was blessed with the birth of my son and daughter. At the age of 27 I was divorced and became a single parent of my 4-year-old son and 2-year-old daughter (note: I never remarried). When my kids were 6 and 4 years old, we joined Westel Baptist Church. For the next 20 years my life was consumed with serving my Lord, raising my kids, working and going to school. My life was full of challenges and stress. My Lord was always with me, even when my focus was not on Him the way it should have been.

When my kids were grown and became independent adults (well, almost independent adults), I left Westel Baptist Church and began my search for a new church home.



During my almost 7-year search for a new church home, I retired as a technical editor after working over 35 years in Oak Ridge Tennessee. I spent the next 2 years helping my sister care for our mother who was in the end stages of Alzheimer's disease (which was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do). My mother passed in 2024.

I visited First Presbyterian Church here in Crossville in the fall of 2023. The Lord answered my prayer in finding a new church home and I became a member of the church in the fall of 2024.

Like everyone else, I have had struggles in my life, and my Lord has been with me through it all. He is still refining me and my desire to know Him more grows stronger each day.

I have 5 grandchildren. My son and daughter live within 20 miles of me.

Whew, writing this was harder than I thought it would be!



**We rejoice in the baptism of
Joseph Stewart!**