



# 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

### Thursday

9:00 am Men's Bible Study

7:00 pm Women's study -

"Essential Truths of the Christian Faith"

## Upcoming Events

### Deacons' Meeting

No mtgs in February & March

### Session Meeting

Tuesday, 2/17 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

## Looking Back in Order to Think Ahead

Pastor Andy

In the last ten years we have seen some remarkable changes at First Presbyterian Church. We are no longer the small congregation that called me as pastor in 2016. In this time period the church has basically doubled in size, growing from a church of about 80 to a current membership of 161.

With record attendance and membership also comes record giving. Our church's giving has almost doubled in that same time frame. More importantly, our ministries have expanded in the areas of shepherding, discipleship, music, gospel missions, women's ministry, men's ministry, as well as children and youth discipleship. We have plans for even more.

With greater resources and greater ministry commitments has also come greater responsibility in maintaining our facilities. As a tool for ministry, our buildings and properties serve us well, but they also have to be maintained. The CEC was remodeled and several aspects of upkeep have been done to the main sanctuary building. Our new playground has also been a blessing to our families and neighborhood.

We have also seen a healthy transition in leadership. Some of our past elders have graduated to heaven while others have retired from faithful service. By God's grace we have a few new elders and a few new deacons with prospects for more additions to these important roles. As your pastor, I praise God that He continues to give us godly men to serve in shepherding and serving the body.

Change has come gradually but steadily in the last ten years. It is good to look back on some of these growth points so that we can look forward to what is next.

In January, our Financial Advisory Committee met to tweak our financial strategies. The newly formed building committee met to begin evaluating the needs for the expansion of our main building. The Session met for the first time in the new year to launch oversight of all these prongs of ministry. The Deacons are also hard at work caring for the congregation. Our Women's Ministry team also met to launch a new year of work. God has been so good to us!

In the days ahead, please remember to pray for our School of Music. There will be an outreach concert at the Art Circle Library on March 25th from noon to 1. This will be an exciting opportunity for our church to impact the community with the gospel through the gift of music. I hope you will plan to attend and support those on this team.

Finally, as we work to shape leaders and teams to reach and disciple new families, please pray for me and my fellow elders. We long to be a people transformed by the gospel. As we experience this transformation, may God be glorified in all things, that we might trust Him for all things, proclaim Him as King over all things, remembering to Love God and others through all things. Amen.



Ryan and his wife, Charli, both attended TTU for their undergraduate studies. They have three daughters, Scarlett (6), Kinsley (4), and Lottie (2), and just welcomed their first son, Brooks. Ryan loves to spend time with his wife and kids, watching and playing sports, exercising, and fly-fishing. He and his family consider it a huge blessing and privilege to be able to share the love of Christ with college students.

## Missions' Update

First Presbyterian Church,

I am so grateful for your prayers and support! Your heart for—and investment in—the lives of students at Tennessee Tech is such an encouragement. I wanted to take a moment to share some of what God is doing on campus this year.

We've seen incredible growth in our ministry, with many new students getting involved. Even more exciting is how many non-Christian students are engaging seriously with the claims of the Gospel. These students aren't just coming to hang out—they are wrestling thoughtfully and honestly with what Scripture teaches.

One freshman, for example, came to TTU this Fall identifying as an atheist. Yet after meeting our staff and students, she decided to attend a RUF event. Since then, she has been involved in most of our gatherings. Just before Thanksgiving break, she shared with a few girls in the ministry that she had come to believe in and trust Jesus! This story is a powerful reminder of the life-changing power of the Gospel.

Would you join us—and the angels in heaven—in rejoicing over this student's salvation, and in praying for her as she continues to grow in faith? Would you also be praying that the Lord would continue to bring new people into his kingdom and

## RUF TN Tech – Ryan Angel

grow the hearts of those who are already his to love and know him more?

Thank you so much for your faithful support and for your heart to see the Gospel go forth on our college campus!

### Ryan Angel Campus Ministry Associate RUF-TN TECH

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Giving](#)

As a ministry of Jesus Christ, RUF exists to reach students for Christ and equip them to serve in God's Kingdom for the rest of their lives. We strive to embody the lived graciousness of the Gospel proclaimed by Jesus Christ and his disciples. At RUF, we believe that you are never so good that you are beyond the need of God's grace and you are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God's grace. Whoever you are and whatever your story, RUF is for you!

**These are some of the weekly RUF events Ryan and his staff plan, prepare and host typically each week...**



### Community Groups

Throughout the week, community groups meet at various times and places and are designed to help students develop deeper friendships and work the gospel deeper into their hearts.



### Lunch Discussions

Thursdays, 11am (During Dead Hour)  
Join us for a free lunch and discussion which will cover a variety of topics. New topics and locations will be posted throughout the semester!



### Sunday Night Fellowship

Sundays 7:30pm, Poet's on the Square  
One Sunday per month, we gather together at Poet's on the Square and have a time of fellowship, worship, and to hear how God is working in students' lives.



### Large Group

Wednesdays, 8pm, Bell Hall Auditorium  
Join us each week for a time of fellowship, worship, and hearing God's Word taught.

The 2025 Financial Summary has been removed from this online version of the newsletter.

If you would like a copy of this summary, please contact Dave Miser.

## Opportunity to Serve

With the new year, there are opportunities to serve the families with young children by cleaning toys and nursery spaces. The time commitment is usually once a month for an hour depending on how many folks are in the rotation.

If you are interested in serving in this manner, please contact Hope Aikens.

## Women's Brunch

Women of all ages are invited to a New Year brunch on **Saturday, February 7** at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Come and make new friends and learn how you may serve.

A sign-up sheet is in the hallway.

## Spring Women's Bible Study

The spring Women's Bible Study will begin in March. We will be studying the book of Esther.

Further details are coming soon!

## First Presbyterian Church

### Session:

Andy Aikens, Senior Pastor  
Robert Berman  
Eric Larson  
Forrest Marion, Clerk  
Richard Parks  
Jim Sparks

### Deacons:

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

### Staff:

Music/Sound Director: Matt Bundy  
Finance / Admin: Holly Kisly  
School of Music Dir.: April Stewart

### Ministry Support:

Treasurer: Bill Allbright  
Newsletter: Darlene Gendjar  
Library: Kathy Pipkin  
Children's Ministry: Hope Aikens

### Missions -- International

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

### Missions -- North America

Plateau Pregnancy Services  
Good Samaritans  
RUF Tennessee Tech, Ryan Angel  
Rural Church Dev., Corey Pelton  
Myers Park Initiative, Greg Salazar  
Mercy Presbyterian, Rob Herron  
Occom Ministries, Native American Initiative

## First Presbyterian Church

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# A Review of Andy's Latest/Newest Set of Reformed Expository Commentary Books

## Kathy Pipkin

Does a title containing the word "commentary" make you think of a scholarly tome that may be much too wordy and difficult for you to navigate? Maybe something that would put you to sleep after reading a few pages? I think you might be surprised to discover that Pastor Andy has made a newer, even more relevant series available for checkout in the library. Editors Philip Ryken and Richard Phillips state that the series is intended for both pastors and lay readers, aiming to instruct and inspire Christians in a "joyful, obedient discipleship to Jesus Christ."

Wanting to see for myself, I picked up the book on *Philippians* since we had studied that very title in the spring session of the Women's Bible Study group and perused a few pages. I found the wording to be interesting, accessible, and very relatable. These books are certainly applicable to modern times. For example, I was reading a few pages concerning Paul's description of behavior that conflicts with the cross. The author further expands on this theme

by warning about the dangers of an earthbound mindset in linking happiness to consumption and "grabbing what you can now." He explains that "citizens of Heaven walk a different path, following the footsteps of Paul and his companions, to a different destination." He advises that it's perfectly okay to enjoy God's good gifts in this life as long as we don't idolize them and are willing to freely forego them if He so directs us to do so.

For anyone looking to undergo an even deeper study of God's word and how it should apply to our lives today, I recommend exploring these volumes.

Warning: These volumes are located together on the very top of the shelf in the BS section. Unless you are tall, you cannot reach them without using a footstool. If you are unable to do this, please let someone in the office or me know, and I can get the book you want and reserve it under your name. I can place it next to the computer so it's within easy reach.

Tennessee Valley Presbytery

# Women's Conference

Sat, Apr 25 - 9 am-3 pm  
Covenant Presbyterian Church  
8451 E Brainerd Rd. Chattanooga, TN



Speaker: Paula Miles  
Topic: Body, Bride, & Building



**SAVE THE DATE!**