



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

Monday

2:00 pm Systematic Theology

Tuesday

9:30 pm Women's Bible Study

Thursday

9:00 am Men's Bible Study

7:00 pm Women's study -

Essential Truths of the Christian Faith

Upcoming Events

YAH Group – see Pat Duck

80+ Women's 1st Thursday

3/6 Noon, Casa Grande FFG

Robyn Mayhugh Baby Shower

3/7 10:00 am in CEC

TVP Women's Conference

4/25 9 am-3 pm Chattanooga

ON Group – see Bob Duck

(Monthly Men's Octogenarian /
Nonagenarian)

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

First Presbyterian Fine Arts School of Music Pastor Andy

The launching of the School of Music this past September has been a tremendous blessing to our church and community. We have partnered with other churches in identifying quality teachers, and we have put to great use the gifts of some of our musically talented members. April and Lizzie Stewart, Diane Remillard, and Annalise Aikens all have students in the program. Teachers from other local churches are Barry Bouchillion and Ellen Tuuk. We are thankful for these servants of the gospel. Please remember to pray for each of them as they minister the love of Christ through music to their students.

To get a flavor of this ministry, here is a paragraph from the School of Music website:

First Presbyterian Church is committed to providing a Christ-centered learning environment with the hope that all who come in contact with the Fine Arts School of Music will know their great need of a Savior and find that need met in Jesus, becoming a worshipper of the true and living God. Under the Lordship of Christ, the session of elders and Christian teachers hope this ministry will help children and adults grow in their love for music and connect that love to the worship of God and eventual service in visible churches.

As you can hopefully see, this ministry is about much more than music. With 24 students enrolled in 27 time slots, every week our staff is engaging in gospel centered relationship. Often, a student will share a personal or family struggle, and this becomes an opportunity for the teacher or director to pray with the student. Families new to our community have been invited to our church. Sister churches in our community have had their music ministries strengthened by our work. We are so grateful to God for how he has used our team to further the gospel in Crossville.

In addition, our team will be doing an outreach concert at the Art Circle Library on Wednesday, March 25 from noon to 1 pm. They will be performing songs from our Appalachian and Spiritual heritage. It's going to be a fun time. I hope you will make it a priority to come and support the School of Music as we share our vision and passion for God's good gift of music. Who knows, there may be families who come to the concert that will also come to First Presbyterian because they see the love of Christ displayed in our serving.

Please join me in praying for this outreach opportunity. As we step into the community and serve, God is faithful to reach those in need of His grace. Our prayers are a part of how God does that wonderful work of drawing the nations to Himself.



Remember to move your clocks **forward** one hour on Sunday **3/8 2 AM**

Women's Service Opportunities

Women—younger and older—there is a place for you to serve the body of Christ. Two new ministry teams have been formed along with the prior ministry teams.

Check out the information in the hallway or the website. Contact the team leader if you have questions.

Consider how God has been shaping your desires and make a commitment to work with other women to show love to others this year!

Save the Date

Please plan on attending the **Plateau Pregnancy Services** annual banquet to be held on Thursday, **March 19th** at Redemption Church. More details to follow.

Missions' Update

Hope International Church of Brussels, Belgium is an FPC-supported overseas church plant initiated in 2023, led by Pastor Julian Bacon and his family. Many of you were able to meet Julian, Rachel and two of their children back in 2024 (they have since added a third child).

<https://www.hopebrussels.com/>

Blessed by God with steady growth during their first three years, Hope International started with a congregation of 30 and has grown to over 100 members, with attendance averaging 120-140 in 2025. Membership includes individuals from every continent.

The past year was filled with “firsts” for Hope International:

- Their first ruling elder was ordained, with two more candidates under training.
- A Discipleship hour (Sunday School) was added before Sunday worship services. This time is filled with two children-age Bible classes and an adult/teenager Bible Study.
- Hope International held their first Vacation Bible School with 25 attendees between the ages of 3-12.
- Pastor Julian has taken on his first pastoral intern, a local college student.

In addition to weekly worship services, Hope International continues to hold six weekly Bible Studies throughout the school year, most of them hosted at the Bacon residence. In 2025 the groups studied the book of 1st John.

Julian & Rachel Bacon



Prayer requests:

- To accommodate their growing congregation, church leadership has decided to pursue the purchase of a larger worship facility. Rental options for churches within the city are virtually non-existent. Leadership's prayer request is for God's wisdom and guidance as they begin the process for purchasing this facility.
- Prayer for identifying candidate(s) for deacon positions, along with development of a Biblically-based deacon training program.
- As the church continues dealing with all facets of a growing church, leadership asks especially for maintaining an “eyes on Christ” focus in all their efforts, defending against non-spiritual distractions.

A five-minute end-of-year video on Hope International is provided [here](https://youtu.be/hyBPxXLAeq0).
<https://youtu.be/hyBPxXLAeq0>



There is a sign-up sheet in the hallway for this event.

Session Notes

The session held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday evening, January 20, at the church.

Pastor Andy led a devotional from James 1:5-8 and then opened the session meeting in prayer.

The following agenda items may be of interest:

1. **New Elder:** The session welcomed Ruling Elder Eric Larson who was ordained and installed during the worship service on Jan. 11, 2026.
2. **FPC Memorial Garden:** the session appreciates the Memorial Garden Committee's attention to revising the FPC Memorial Garden Guidelines (effective 1/1/26) and approved the revision.
3. **Family Ministry Director:** the session discussed the financial ramifications of the potential hire of a Family Ministry Director and discussed the job description and a candidate recommendation.
4. **Potential New Members:** elders discussed several new families who have begun worshipping with us, and Pastor Andy is planning a New Members' Class in the near future. Church officers are invited to attend.

5. **Officer Candidates:** session discussed several potential candidates for Deacon.
6. **Tennessee Valley Presbytery (TVP) Overture:** the session approved an overture to TVP to multiply the presbytery, which now has about three dozen churches and covers a broad geographical area. This overture will be on the agenda for an upcoming presbytery meeting.
7. **Church Pavilion:** the elders support the Diaconate's plan for the church pavilion.
8. **Church Financials:** session decided to provide church financial information (including Deacon's Fund) in the weekly worship guide "once-a-month against the annual budget."

Order of the Day: Session spent time in prayer for the Shepherding and other needs of the congregation. TE Aikens closed the meeting in prayer at 8:30pm.

Next Stated Session Meeting: Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 6pm.

Warmly in Christ,
Forrest

Fine Arts School of Music presents

CONCERT

A Collection of Sacred, Folk, and Bluegrass

Art Circle Public Library

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

12-1 p.m.

For inquiries: 931-337-6662

Young at Heart

YAH Group – “Young at Heart” is a new ministry for our women in their 80s and above. They will meet the first Thursday of each month at local restaurants for fellowship, encouragement and to ponder a spiritual truth together. The first meeting will be at 12:00 noon Thursday, March 5 at *Casa Grande* in Fairfield Glade. If you have any questions or would like to sign up, contact Pat Duck.

Esther Bible Study

The women's Tuesday morning Bible study of *Esther: The Hidden Hand of God* by Lydia Brownback is March 17-June 2, 9:30 – 11 am, in the Fellowship Hall. A sign-up sheet and books are in the hallway. The cost is \$10.

New Member Orientation

A New Member Orientation will be held on Sunday, March 8-29 at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. There is a sign-up sheet in the hallway as well as a copy of *Living Stones: Why Membership Matters* for you to take.

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

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Focus on Fellowship

One of our favorite gatherings here at FPC is dining together... and our first meal this year is on **March 22nd!** As we prepare for our next fellowship dinner, here are some ways that you can help the Hospitality Committee (and one another) to have a successful time.

Abundance for All The focus of our dinners is the fellowship, but the food brings it together. We want to make sure there's enough food for everyone. Please bring dishes that feed 8-10 people.

Ready to Enjoy We're here to serve the congregation but we don't have much time for food prep. Please bring your dish ready-to-serve. You're welcome to put dressing on a salad, just be mindful that there's limited space in the kitchen.

Love Thy Neighbor Take moderate portions in line. We want everyone to

have enough to eat so please be mindful of how many are behind you. After everyone has been served, you're welcome to return for seconds.

Lending the Small a Hand Please assist your young children with their plates. This helps them find what they'll truly enjoy and minimizes food waste.

Make New Friends Sit by people who are new to you. Our church is growing and we want everyone to be welcomed and included. Let's take advantage of these opportunities to really get to know each other.

Thank you for your help in observing these new guidelines! **We can't wait to see you there!**

In the Lord's service,
The Hospitality Committee

The FPC Pavillion

In our January 15th diaconate meeting, we discussed the pavilion with the conclusion that it should be demolished. We made this recommendation to our Session and they have agreed. The reasons for this are:

- 1) It is a security problem
- 2) It is structurally in bad condition
- 3) It is too small to host church events for our growing congregation
- 4) It gets very little use

Over the last several years we've had people frequently the pavilion who "live" in abandoned houses south of us on Rock Quarry Road. We've even had people "living" under or in the pavilion at times. We've called the sheriff's office several times but there is apparently little they can do but tell them to move on, but they just return. Very recently, a man came from the pavilion and approached April Stewart's car as she was leaving the church, and this scared her badly. John Reed reviewed the security recording and indicated it was a scary incident for a woman to encounter.

Structurally the columns have experienced damage due to water, termites, etc. Shoring has been used in places to support these deteriorated columns, but columns are now out of plumb causing the roof trusses to sag along with the roof.

For the last church event held in the pavilion, which I believe was in 2024, we had to set up 2 or 3 canopies and bring out tables & chairs from the church to host the number of people and now our congregation is even larger. It's a big effort to move all that is needed from the church to the pavilion and those that are normally involved with this aren't getting any younger. The way the picnic tables are built, it is difficult for people to get in & out to sit. There have been small groups that use it, but there are other pavilion options available at Cumberland Mountain State Park & in Fairfield.

We hope that this demolition will take place in May.