First Presbyterian Church

Focus on First

November 2026

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
6:00 pm Evening Worship

Monday
2:00 pm Women's Study of Pilgrim's Progress

Tuesday
9:30 am Women's Bible Study Colossians

Thursday
9:00 am Men's Bible Study
6:00 pm Women's Bible Study Colossians at Marion's

Upcoming Events

11-08 Fellowship Meal

YAH Group – see Pat Duck
80+ Women, 1st Thursday
ON Group – see Bob Duck
80+ Men's Group

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

Preparing a People and Place for Praising God

by Pastor Andy

First Presbyterian Church exists to glorify God by being a biblical expression of Christ's church here on earth. This is why we rehearse our identity and mission statement most every Sunday.

We belong to the family of the Redeemed.
Transformed by the grace of Jesus' life, 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.

We live this identity and mission so that in everything Christ might be preeminent (Colossians 1:18).

Our aim is for this core theology to shape all that we do as a church. Fueled by the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) and the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40), we are a people that seek to Worship God, to train one another and care for one another, and share the gospel with our community and world. Since these values are framing every aspect of work at First Presbyterian Church, even our buildings should reflect the Gospel Welcome of a worshiping, teaching, and gospel proclaiming congregation.

This past Sunday we approved a plan for much needed maintenance and expansion of our main building. As we commit to this important work of caring for and improving our facilities for carrying out our mission, I wanted to take this moment to encourage you again about why we are doing this. For without clarity about our purpose, we may experience a detrimental mission drift. We are committing to this renovation and expansion in order to express a Gospel welcome to all those God is redeeming!

not to make us more comfortable,
not to make a name for ourselves,
but to welcome, for the glory of Christ, those coming and those seeking.

Our vision is to be a healthy, Gospel-centered, Christ-exalting church who –

Glorifies Jesus,
Edifies his people, and
Testifies to the world this Gospel grace.

Join me in praying for the success of all that God has put in our hands.

Pastor Andy

November 8th Fellowship Meal

Our final **Fellowship Meal of 2026** will take place on **Sunday, November 8th**, to celebrate God's provisions and enjoy one another's company.

Please make sure your dish can **serve 8 to 10 people**.

A Gentle Logistical Reminder: To allow our volunteers to prepare the room, please keep the **hallway between the Sanctuary and the Fellowship Hall clear** while setup is underway. Waiting in the Sanctuary allows the Hospitality Committee to finish setting up the banquet tables. Your cooperation and patience are greatly appreciated!

It has been our joy to serve the Lord this past year by serving you, His church.

Thank you for your continued support.

In Christ,
The Hospitality Committee

Little Strummers: Learning the Ukulele

Dates: Weekly from January 6 – April 28, 2027 (16 weeks)
Time: 3:00 to 3:30 or 3:30 to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesdays
Ages: 6 to 8 year olds (Great for beginners!)
Registration Deadline: December 1, 2026
Cost: One-time payment $160 or 2 payments of $85.00
Instruments: Ukuleles are provided. No need to purchase.

About the Class: Lay a good foundation for your child's musical journey! This 16-week semester class (part 1 of 2) is specifically designed to introduce **6- to 8-year-olds** to the joy of the ukulele. **We provide the ukulele for each student for the duration of the class.** *(continued p. 3)*

Pursuing One's Passion and God's Purpose: Dr. Bea Durham



Dr. Beatrice Durham (Dr. Bea to those who know her) was born in Charleston, South Carolina, on January 14, 1942. Before World War II, Dr. Bea's father served in the U.S. Navy, but by 1940 he had left the service and settled in Nashville, Tennessee. As war clouds drew closer for America's entry into the conflict, he returned to the Navy and was assigned to the naval base at Charleston, building ships. Bea was too young to remember Charleston, but when she was 3 years old her family moved back to the Nashville area. She had an older sister (deceased) and has two younger sisters, Jerry (born in 1951) and Bonnie (born in 1954). Later, her family moved to Gallatin, Tennessee, where she finished high school in 1960. During those years, she began considering seriously how she might become a physician someday: *"Commit your works to the LORD, And your plans will be established"* (Proverbs 16:3), is one verse that she identified with in connection with her goal. But her family could not provide the financial help needed for medical school, and, in any case, female physicians were a rarity in Tennessee.

After high school she followed the path of other young women from her area, moving to Nashville for administrative or clerical work. Dr. Bea reflected that by 1960, good-paying jobs were readily available for young men because the Interstate Highway System was being built. But girls didn't do those jobs, she noted. During her six years in Nashville—while saving what money she could—Dr. Bea learned she could train to become a nurse in a 3-year on-the-job program available at particular city hospitals. That was one step toward medical school. By 1966, she decided to move to Knoxville and began the nurses' training program at the Fort Sanders Hospital. Three years later, by then a nurse, she began undergraduate studies at the University of Tennessee (UT) main campus, Knoxville. Her passion for medical school remaining as strong as ever, she chose an academic major that related to medicine: zoology. Dr. Bea completed her degree at UT-Knoxville in 1973. From there she was accepted at the UT School of Medicine, Memphis. For the next three years she continued the demanding course of study required of a physician, working extra hard to prove that a woman could make it in medical school. In her entering class of 120 there were only 12 women (there was no quota).

After graduation and a year as an intern—having lived in Nashville, Knoxville, and Memphis—Dr. Bea moved to her fourth fairly large city in Tennessee—Chattanooga—where she completed her one-year residency. She gained valuable experience by pulling weekend duty at the emergency room of several area hospitals, including at Cleveland (Bradley County), Dunlap (Sequatchie Co.), Pikeville (Bledose Co.), and Crossville. One night on duty at Cleveland, a patient was brought in suffering from severe allergic anaphylactic shock. Although his symptoms were by far the worst Dr. Bea had ever encountered—his labored breathing could be heard "a mile away" (a slight exaggeration!)—the Lord blessed her treatment. Her patient recovered.

Finishing her residency, Dr. Bea had been working and studying in relentless pursuit of a singular goal since no later than 1960—nearly two decades. After 3 years of training as a nurse, 4-year undergraduate and 3-year medical school programs, and 2 years of intern-residency requirements, she was finally ready to establish her own practice. Dr. Bea also was ready for a change of pace and looked for a suitable small town.

(continued on p.3)

Dr. Bea Durham

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Already familiar with Cumberland Medical Center (CMC), Dr. Bea did not take long to decide on Crossville. Unlike other hospitals she had experienced, Crossville's was not under the management of local government. Instead, local businessmen ran CMC as a non-profit, and they implemented measures unknown in those days at most other smaller hospitals in Tennessee—such as having an ICU (intensive care unit). Dr. Bea recalled that Crossville's forward-thinking mindset was the work of Dr. May Wharton, the first female physician in the area (also a great friend of Eleanor Roosevelt). Dr. Wharton paved the way and was largely responsible for starting CMC in Crossville. Her own medical practice had been situated at Pleasant Hill. (Dr. Wharton's excellent facility continues today as Uplands Village, which celebrated its centennial in 2025.) When Dr. Bea began her practice here in July 1979, she became only the second female physician to practice in Crossville/Cumberland County.

For the next two-plus decades, Dr. Bea practiced internal medicine while residing off Lantana Road, which was conveniently close to CMC. She was known to check out her patients quite thoroughly. On at least one occasion a patient came into the office for an unidentified issue. But she neglected to inform Dr. Bea of all the relevant symptoms. On the patient's way out the door, she made a passing reference to a detail that had gone unmentioned. Immediately, Dr. Bea told her, "Get back in here!" and proceeded to do some more tests, which identified the problem. Other patients appreciated the same degree of thoroughness. In her first year, Dr. Bea discovered 11 cases of cancer among her new patients who had been going elsewhere for their medical care.

In 2020 Dr. Bea moved to the Good Samaritan Society (known today as The Preserve) in Fairfield Glade. As her church family, we'd like to offer a collective, **"Thank You, Dr. Bea!"** for your many years of dedicated, excellent, and compassionate medical care in our community. You have modeled the psalmist's words: *"Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart"* (Psalm 37:4). Even years after your retirement, Crossville is a healthier city because of you.

A future article will relate Dr. Bea's role in the genesis and early years of First Presbyterian, Crossville.

– Forrest Marion & Audrey Ennis (Sept. 2026)

Session Notes

The session held its regular monthly meeting on Friday morning, Sept. 18, at the church.
Pastor Andy led a devotional from 2 Corinthians 4:16, following which he opened the session meeting in prayer.

The following agenda items may be of interest:

1. There is now a second **Men's Discipleship Group** meeting on Wednesday mornings at 6 a.m. lead by Pastor Peter Dietsch. The group is studying Larry Crabb's *Men of Courage*.
2. Our **Sunday Evening Services** are under way at 6 p.m.
3. We praise God for forward movement on our **Building Program**. Please pick up a Building Campaign Brochure for more information on phase II.
4. Your Session and Diaconate are hard at work developing the **Budget for 2027**.
5. The final **presbytery meeting** for 2026 was October 27 at Christ Covenant in Knoxville. The new Smoky Mountain Presbytery will officially launch in January of 2027.

Session spent time praying for the Shepherding and other needs of the congregation. Pastor Andy closed the meeting in prayer at about 10am.

Next Stated Session Meeting: Friday, November 20, 2026, 8 a.m.

Warmly in Christ,
Forrest

(continued from p. 2)
Each week, your child will experience, explore, and enjoy music basics in a fun, age-appropriate environment. Through hands-on instrument exploration, group playing, and engaging games, they will master basic chords and early rhythm concepts, build a strong musical foundation, and spark a lifelong love for melody. By the end of the semester, these budding musicians will have developed the essential listening skills, coordination, and focus needed to transition smoothly into private instruction.

To Register for either class: Call us at **931-337-6662** or email us at **fineartsschoolofmusic@firstprescrossville.org**

Mini Music Makers: Introduction to Music

Dates: Weekly from January 6 – April 28, 2027 (**16 weeks**)
Time: 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. on Wednesdays
Ages: 4 & 5 years old (Perfect for little ones preparing for future music lessons!)
Registration Deadline: December 1, 2026
Cost: One-time payment $150 or 2 payments of $80.00

About the Class: Lay the perfect foundation for your child's musical journey! This 16-week semester class (part 1 of 2) is specifically designed to prepare 4 and 5-year-olds for beginning music.

Each week, your little one will experience, explore, and enjoy music in a fun, age-appropriate environment. Through hands-on instrument exploration, rhythmic games, singing, and creative activities, we will build a strong musical foundation and spark a lifelong love for sound and melody. By the end of the semester, these little musicians will have begun to develop listening skills, coordination, and focus that is needed for private instruction.

First Presbyterian Church

Session:
Andy Aikens, Senior Pastor
Peter Dietsch, Associate 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.
Koos & Bhless Hagg, MTW,
Southeast Asia.
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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Missions Update

Myers Park Initiative — Greg Salazar



We started public worship six months ago, and God has continued to bless Christ Our King Church with numerical and spiritual growth. Here are a few highlights:

- We are continuing to grow and connect people to the life and vision of our church. We had 40 visitors in August and September and have added 25 people to our core (regular attenders and community group members).
- Since our community groups have grown substantially, we are raising up two additional community groups and have identified and are raising up the new leaders to facilitate them.
- We are beginning to make plans as we outgrow our current Sunday worship facility and have a facilities planning team in place.
- We saw someone come to Christ in August, and there is a couple who are not believers who are attending and in a community group, in whose lives God is really at work right now.
- I had the privilege of officiating a wedding of a couple in our church, and three families are pregnant.
- We are on track with our internal giving goals for this year.

Here are our prayer requests:

- For Tyler, who recently prayed with me to receive Christ.
- For unbelievers in our community groups.
- For our internal leadership team, which has begun meeting regularly.

On Friday, October 23, FPC held a pilot **basket making outreach** to our community. With Patti Lee as our teacher, we invited friends and neighbors to build relationships and introduce FPC's worship schedule and ministries. Each left with her own handmade Thanksgiving basket.

Because of the success of this pilot, further classes will be announced. Stay tuned!





