

First Presbyterian Church

www.fpcjacksontn.org

GROWING IN GRACE. SERVING IN LOVE.

AUGUST 2020



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CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

FPC lost two members in the month of July. We offer Christian sympathy to the following families:

Mike and Lark Taylor and family upon the passing of Lark's mother, **Martha Stockard**, on July 23.

The family of **Eloise Phillips**, who passed away on July 27.

Please continue to pray for comfort for these families in the days ahead.

.....

from the associate pastor

WILDERNESS TIME.

Scripture is full of stories and scenes set in “wilderness time” – moments in the vast and barren Judean wilderness, moments of confusion and disorientation, in which Israelites and disciples feel abandoned, fearful, and lost. Jesus is tempted in the wilderness, the Israelites wonder for 40 years in the desert, and Ezekiel is shown a desolate and dry valley representing the ruin of his people.

As believers, we too, experience wilderness moments, those times of uncertainty and loneliness. In fact, we may all be experiencing one right now in this pandemic – feeling anxious, unsettled, and isolated. We’ve experienced the loss of our routines and milestones. We’re separated and disconnected. We face an unknown future. Moreover, we’ve already witnessed the great toll of this virus in terms of economic stability, disruption, and of course, human life. It’s

probably fair to say the entire world may be in a wilderness moment right now.

Nevertheless, remember that in all those scriptural wilderness stories and scenes, God always shows up. No one is ever left alone in the wilderness. God always appears and always joins the sojourn.

In one such story, Hagar, the servant of Sarai (Abram’s wife before they are renamed Sarah and Abraham), runs away into the wilderness after being mistreated by the jealous Sarai. An angel of the Lord “found her by a spring of water in the wilderness” (Genesis 16:7). Hagar doesn’t find God; God finds her. Then, God convinces her to return home and promises to bless her in much the same way God will bless Abraham, with uncountable descendants. Hagar responds by naming God “El-roi” – “the God who sees.” In this wilderness time, God



sees Hagar. And, God not only sees her, but also helps and blesses her as well.

During our current wilderness journey, we may feel alone. We may feel uncertain. We may feel afraid. However, our God is the God who sees. Our God is the God who finds. Our God is the God who never abandons, but instead goes with us. God sees and finds each of us in our

SEE PAGE 2

SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH:

It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.

Deuteronomy 31:8



**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN**
1573 N. Highland Ave.
Jackson, TN 38301-3454
Phone: (731) 422-1591
Fax: (731) 427-2321

STAFF

John H. White, Pastor
fpcjohn@eplus.net

Courtney Bowen, Associate Pastor for Youth
fpccourtney@eplus.net

Helen Redding, Director of Music
fpchelen@eplus.net

Dr. Terry McRoberts, Organist
tmcrober@uu.edu

Libby Smith, Dir. of Children's Ministries
fpcclibby@eplus.net

Lindsey Patterson, Dir. of Children's Choir (K-5th)
lindseypatterson@eplus.net

Ellen McClune, Dir. of Children's Choir (3yrs-PreK)
emmccclune@gmail.com

Laura Byrd, Dir. of BLAST Learning
fpcclaura@eplus.net

Ceil Cowles, Dir. of Congregational Life
fpcceil@eplus.net

Molly Richardson, Interim Youth Director
fpcmolly@eplus.net

Machelle Daniel-Hall, Finance | Edu. Secretary
fpcmachelle@eplus.net

Emily Morrow, Admin. Assistant to the Pastor
fpcemily@eplus.net

Ernie Wilson, Facility Maintenance
ewilson1@eplus.net

Tamara Haynes, Housekeeper

Jennifer Geraghty, Playschool Director
fpplayschool@yahoo.com

SESSION

Class of 2020

Benita Brown
David Greene
Russell Jones
Stacey McAdams
Kevin Pauley
Stephannie Williams

Class of 2021

Greg Abbott
Barry Broughton
Russell Cook
Debbie Hurt
Mary Jane McWherter
Patty Smith

Class of 2022

Chris Alexander
Mark Harris
Judy Herron
Shirley Nelson
Jamie Richardson
Robbie Rodgers

OUR VISION

We are called to be a faithful and inclusive congregation which enthusiastically glorifies God in our worship, education, nurture and service through the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

fpcjacksontn.org

from the associate pastor



FROM PAGE 1

times of trouble and in our times of peace. And God sees and finds us right now, even now, in this wilderness time. And we can be sure that God does something else for us – something God promises to the Israelites as their wilderness

wanderings end in the promised land: “It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed” (Deuteronomy 31:8).

Thanks be to God. Amen.

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR AUGUST 2020

August 2 Genesis 32: 22-31; Psalm 17: 1-7; Romans 9: 1-5; Matthew 14: 13-21

August 9 Genesis 37: 1-4, 12-28; Psalm 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b; Romans 10: 5-15; Matthew 14: 22-33

August 16 Genesis 45: 1-15; Psalm 133; Romans 11: 1-2a, 29-32; Matthew 15: (10-20) 21-28

August 23 Exodus 1: 8-2:10; Psalm 124; Romans 12: 1-8; Matthew 16: 13-20

August 30 Exodus 3: 1-15; Psalm 105: 1-6, 23-26, 45c; Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16: 21-28

announcements

WELCOME TO THE WORLD!

Ella Ann Fry arrived on August 9th at 10:56 pm. She was 19 inches long and weighed 8 lbs, 4.9 oz. Ella's parents are Carly and Jake Fry and her grandmother is Lesa Barton. Her proud aunt is Abby McNeal. Ella is named for her great, great grandmother, "Ma" Barton, who was a lifelong member of First Presbyterian and nursery keeper. **CONGRATS!**



Dear FPC family and friends,

What a birthday! I think I will have a 90th birthday every year. It was a different kind of birthday. My children had planned a big celebration with all of my nieces and nephews present. It was a stay at home birthday. Ginny and Topie were here. Scott and his family came by. Susan was home caring for her husband. Sid was in rehab. I was totally overwhelmed by the kind messages that I received from you, my church family. Some of the remarks made me laugh. Some made me cry. Thank you for caring and being a part of my day. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the drive-by crew --Machelle, Courtney, Emily, Nora, and Ceil. You were the highlight!

Sincerely,
Virginia Conger

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES FOR AUGUST

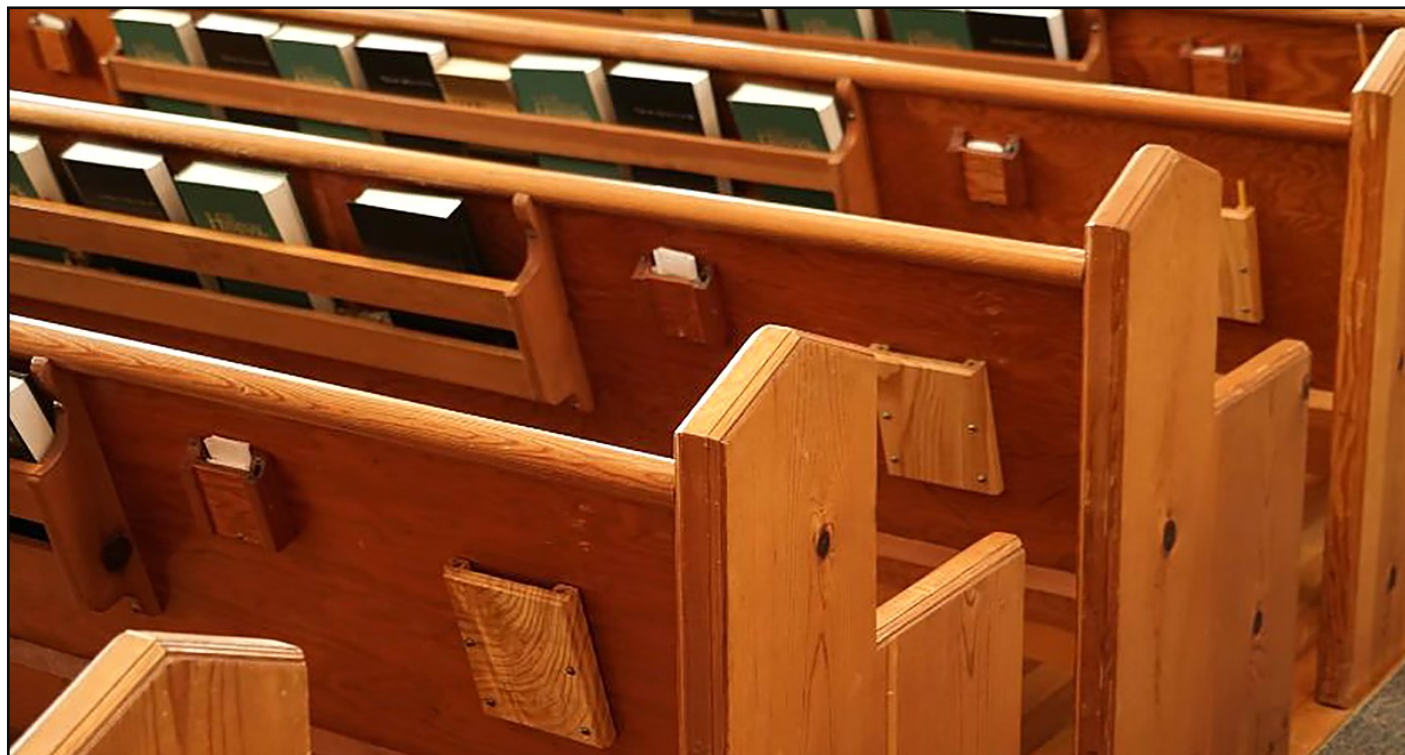
HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the members who celebrate their special day this month!

AUGUST 1: Henry Cook, Lori Howell; **AUGUST 2:** Andrew Donnell, Stan Harris, John Ross; **AUGUST 4:** Ford Richardson; **AUGUST 5:** Allison Climer, Henry Morrow, Sam Thompson; **AUGUST 7:** Dot Holt; **AUGUST 8:** Carol Carnell, Carly Thomas; **AUGUST 9:** Charles Blankenship, Mary Bess McWherter, Jo'Hannah Ross; **AUGUST 12:** Camille Cox; **AUGUST 13:** Tanner Ivey, Elin Johnson, Rev. John White; **AUGUST 16:** Vickie Richardson; **AUGUST 18:** Patrick Campbell, Sharon Keen; **AUGUST 19:** Susan Blackmon, Emily Taylor; **AUGUST 20:** Steve Lawson; **AUGUST 21:** Anna-Katherine Smith; **AUGUST 23:** Margaret Hewitt, Amelia Spurlin, Betty Stewart; **AUGUST 24:** Alison Ivey, Molly Richardson; **AUGUST 25:** Barry Broughton; **AUGUST 26:** Dorothy Alexander, Elizabeth Alexander, Mary Harbert Alexander, Sidney Richardson, Susannah White; **AUGUST 28:** John David Jones; **AUGUST 29:** Stella Crenshaw; **AUGUST 30:** Tausha Alexander, Laura Crossett, Brad Isaacs, Jan Jones, Turner Spurlin; **AUGUST 31:** Connor Donnell, Brantley Gobbell, Judy Herron

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

AUGUST 3: David & Catherine Greene; **AUGUST 5:** Blake & Tammy Anderson; **AUGUST 7:** Brian & Stephannie Williams; **AUGUST 12:** Richard and Elizabeth Swaim; **AUGUST 14:** John & Susan Anderson, Jeb & Caroline Campbell; **AUGUST 15:** Tom & Nancy Strawn; **AUGUST 17:** Ken & Marge Stumpenhorst; **AUGUST 31:** Bill & Julia Kipp

CHURCHGOERS AREN'T ABLE TO LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING - HERE'S WHY THAT MATTERS



This article is featured in the Sustaining Worship issue of Ministry During The Pandemic
WEBSITE: ministrymatters.com

By **Donna M. Cox**

Because of COVID-19, churches no longer reverberate with song; hymnals are neatly stacked and projection screens blank. Even as church leaders plan for reopening, scientists warn that it might be too early to resume singing in groups.

Though such restrictions are understandable, they rob congregations of an important aspect of their Christian faith. As the Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 5, believers should be “filled with the spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

As a choral conductor, scholar in African American sacred music and teacher of sacred music and worship, I have studied the relationship between singing and worship for over three decades. Singing is critical to identity

and faith. In some traditions, it is as important as the sermon. In African American churches, for instance, there is an equal emphasis on preaching, praying and singing.

First, verse

The importance of song in Christian worship can be traced to its Judaic beginnings. Throughout the biblical canon, the Apocrypha, the collection of books omitted from the Protestant Bible and noncanonical biblical texts, there are hundreds of references to

Christians singing.

In the Old Testament, singing was used to praise God, provide lessons for the community, confess sins, provide solace in times of lamentation and joy in times of celebration. For instance, Moses and sister Miriam memorialized the miraculous exodus from Egypt through the Red Sea in song.

Early Christians even sang their prayers. The Book of Psalms – a collection of 150 songs and proclamations – served as the songbook of the early church.

The New Testament is similarly filled with song. In the Book of James, the Apostle Paul and his companion, Silas, sang their way to freedom in a jail. After the Last Supper, Jesus led the disciples in song.

Main chorus

Singing has tremendous power, both spiritually and physically.

When people sing, sound runs through the body, giving rise to emotion and facilitating transformation. It acts as a natural antidepressant by releasing endorphins, the feel-good chemical. Studies have also linked singing with improved mental alertness, memory and concentration through increased oxygenated blood to the brain. Neuroscientist Andrew Newberg found that changes in the brain during worship make people “nicer, more forgiving, and trustful.”

Choral singing creates the kind of community togetherness that is necessary in churches. It brings disparate parts into a cohesive oneness, just as corporate worship – the gathering of the faithful to worship together – brings individuals into oneness in Christ.

Bringing people together for song has proven to be dangerous in the coronavirus pandemic. On March 10, a group of 61 singers met at the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church in Washington state for rehearsal. One of the members unknowingly infected 52 people with COVID-19; two people died.

Stay-at-home orders designed to stem the spread of diseases hit church music programs hard – some more than others.

Conversations I have had with church music directors around the country reveal the creativity employed to keep the music going: utilizing solo performers, prerecorded music, reducing the amount of music to the essential in liturgical services and creating virtual choirs.

Those with praise teams and bands that lead the congregation in song found it easier to provide music in online services – with fewer people, social distancing was easier to maintain. As a result, they continued to rehearse and perform in livestreamed or prerecorded services.

For churches that rely on choirs to carry the music, things have been tougher.

National guidelines limiting gatherings to 10 or fewer people meant no in-person choir rehearsals. Virtual choir rehearsals and performances are very problematic. Differences in bandwidth create lags that challenge the essence of choral singing: cohesion and community. Virtual performances demand technological expertise most choral directors are not trained to execute.

The resulting experience often falls short of a true choral experience. My own gospel choir, the Ebony Heritage

Singers, recorded a song for the University of Dayton’s virtual commencement using this technique. The result was pleasing, but it lacked the true feel of a gospel music performance.

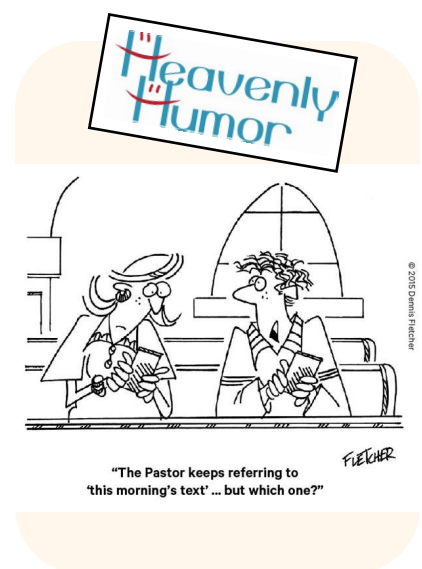
In my experience, virtual choral experiences are pale imitations of the real thing. Being connected in a physical way, feeling each others’ inhalations, coordinating exhalations and blending voices gives life to singers and to congregations.

A codetta?

Although research on the spread of COVID-19 is rapidly changing, singing in groups might be deemed too risky to enable churches to return to anything approaching “normal” for a long time.

So, until further notice, congregations are being advised to consider alternatives to singing. Worship may still be joyful, but it will likely be more quiet.

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reopening update

TENTATIVE DATE SET BY SESSION TO RESUME IN-PERSON WORSHIP

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

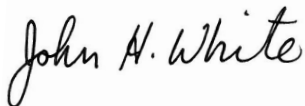
On July 26 our Session voted to work toward Sunday, September 13 as our tentative date to resume in-person worship. While we look forward to this day with joyful anticipation, we also recognize that we are in a fluid situation with this Covid-19 pandemic, in which our local case numbers may change, especially as our schools reopen.

Therefore, Session will meet two weeks prior to September 13 to make a final and more fully informed decision at that time. That decision will be communicated via letter, email, social media, etc. as quickly as possible.

As we resume in-person worship, we also hope to host a **FAMILY FUN NIGHT** on September 12 and resume our **WEDNESDAY NIGHT** and **SUNDAY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES** on September 16 and September 27 respectively. **YOUTH CONNECTION** will restart on September 20. We will share more details in the coming weeks.

We are living in an uncertain time, in uncharted territory. Yet, we know that God goes with us through this time and every time. God has carried us through difficult times before and we trust God will do so again now. We affirm these words from *A Brief Statement of Faith*:

*In everlasting love,
The God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people
To bless all families of the earth.
Hearing their cry,
God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage.
Loving us still,
God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.
Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,
Like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home,
God is faithful still.
Amen.*



Pastor John White



Associate Pastor Courtney Bowen



PLAYSCHOOL PLANS TO RETURN ON SEPTEMBER 8TH



JENNIFER GERAGHTY,
PLAYSCHOOL DIRECTOR
fpplayschool@yahoo.com

IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG since we last shared with you what has been happening at Playschool. Like all things this year Playschool has been a very different experience because of Coronavirus. Our last day in the classroom was March 13th. It's as if time just stopped in each classroom. We did try to continue sending things home and meeting virtually, but that is a pale substitution for having children in our classrooms.

Currently we are making plans to return to our classrooms on September 8th. It has been a months long challenge to formulate a plan guided by public health and medical experts. At this moment we are moving ahead with all our plans, all the while knowing circumstances beyond our control could bring everything to a halt.

Our goal in reopening is to continue to be partners to our families; provide our faith-

filled, warm, loving and educational Playschool environment our students deserve; and to do it as safely as we can for students, teachers and their families. Working to meet this goal has been no small task. We are limiting access to the Playschool building, mandating all adults wear masks, and the thing we are most excited about is creating an outdoor classroom space. We are most certainly trying to make lemonade out of the lemons this pandemic has given us.

the children's corner

THANK YOU FOR CARING!



Ms. Laura , Ms. Ellen, Ms. Libby, Ms. Lindsey

RIFA ASKED AND YOU DELIVERED!

Our Caring Kids Collecting for RIFA campaign was a big success! The FPC kids crew showed up and showed out. We are thrilled to report we collected and delivered **486 pounds** of food to RIFA on Tuesday, August 11!

It was such a treat to see our FPC kids and their families in the drive-through line. We have missed you so much! Thanks, also, to all volunteers who helped make this possible!



VOLUNTEERS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

Molly Richardson, Laura
Byrd, Libby Smith, Ceil
Cowles, Lindsey Patterson,
Ellen McClune and
Lisa Spurlin



BACCALAUREATE SUNDAY

REV, COURTNEY BOWEN,
ASSOCIATE PASTOR
FOR YOUTH
fpccourtney@eplus.net

MOLLY RICHARDSON,
YOUTH DIRECTOR
fpcmolly@eplus.net

This month we got to celebrate our high school graduates, Mari Morgan and John Junn.

Our Baccalaureate Service was held August 2 and featured Mari's senior sermon and a letter to the congregation from John (who was flying back to the States at the same time as the service). Both graduates received copies of "Oh, the Places You'll Go" by Dr. Seuss. A drive through reception for Mari followed. Thanks to everyone who helped put together the Baccalaureate Service and the reception!!

Blessings to Mari and John as they both set out for college. You each have so many gifts to share with God's world. We look forward to seeing all God has in store for you. Remember you always have a loving congregation and church family here at FPC.

"May the Lord bless you and keep you;

the Lord be kind and gracious to you;

the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26.).





On August 2nd, we honored Mari Morgan with a graduation reception under the portico after worship. Thanks to all those who stopped by and wished Mari well before she heads to the University of Memphis this fall.



A NOTE FROM SHARON JUNN:

Thank you for including John in the FPC Baccalaureate recognition service. For those who would like to send him a card, his mailing address is: Baylor University, 1 Bear Place, Waco, TX, 76798-2953

FINANCIAL UPDATE – JUNE 2020

	<u>Actual Year-to-date</u>	<u>Budget Year-to-date</u>	<u>Actual Last Yr to date</u>
2020 Pledges	\$ 409,332	\$ 330,875	\$ 349,043
Total Contributions	\$ 442,337	\$ 379,875	\$ 377,214
Total Income	\$ 474,450	\$ 468,906	\$ 412,321
Total Expenses	\$ 462,264	\$ 468,906	\$ 402,618
Net Income	\$ 12,186	\$ 0	\$ 9,703

Pledges can now be paid using ACH bank drafts on a weekly or monthly basis. If you are interested, please contact Machele Daniel-Hall at 422-1591.

For questions or more details on the financial report, contact Russell Cook (Treasurer) at 694-1991 or Machele Daniel-Hall (Financial Secretary) at 422-1591.

WHEN MAKING PURCHASES FOR THE CHURCH

Since FPC has a tax-exempt status, and we have a sales tax exemption number, all persons making purchases for the church should use the tax form and number when making purchases.

As part of our latest audit report, we are not to reimburse anyone for sales tax as part of a receipt/request for payment. You may get a Tax Exempt form upon request from Machele to use when buying items for the church, which should be provided to the retailer at point of sale.

The church will no longer reimburse for sales tax paid.

session highlight

The Session of First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, TN, did not meet in July, so we are resharing the highlights from the June 14, 2020 meeting. The Session met remotely at 5:00 PM and conducted its normal business.

The Session voted to:

- Approve a motion to not hold Family Camp in 2020
- Approve the minutes of the Stated Session meeting of May 17, 2020
- Approve the Auditor's Report
- Elect Judy Herron and Benita Brown as commissioners for the August 13, 2020, Presbytery meeting
- Approve a Bears Cheer camp usage of gym on August 3-4, 2020, from 9:00-noon
- Approve cancellation of a Stated Session meeting in July

On June 5, 2020, the Session voted by electronic means to approve the following motion:

Motion: That we adopt a reopening date of July 12, limited to 75 persons (excluding worship leadership), utilizing the regulations listed as follows:

1. Wearing of a facemask while in the sanctuary is required.
2. Please use hand sanitizer as you enter.
3. Do not enter if you have had a fever in the past week.
4. An usher will direct you to your seat. Please remain where the usher seats you.
5. Restroom is available only for emergency.
6. At the end of the service you will be dismissed according to pew.

All members of the Session encourage questions or comments at any time.

NEXT CALLED SESSION MEETING | August 30 @ 5 PM
NEXT REGULAR SESSION MEETING | September 13 @ 5 PM

prayer concerns

PRAYER PROGRAM:

Each week we randomly select individuals or families for whom we encourage everyone to pray. During the coming weeks, please pray for:

AUGUST 2: Tom & Susan Blackmon; Tom, Ginny, Charlie & Stella Brimm; Jimmy & Lauren Henson

AUGUST 9: Will, Elizabeth & Elin Johnson; Bill & Patty Lawrence; Wayne Monks

AUGUST 16: Jim & Evelyn Petterson; Nick, Libby, Jaxon, Maggie & Ila Beth Reynolds; John, Jezel, Je'Delle & Jo'Hannah Ross



AUGUST 23: Vance, Julie & Finis Shoaf; Libby Smith; Betty Stewart

AUGUST 30: Mike, Lark & Ana Taylor; Matt & Christie Thomson; Brian, Stephannie & Rayanna Williams

ASSISTED LIVING AND EXTENDED CARE:

Jackson Meadows
Bill Dellastatious, #234

Brookdale Jackson Oaks
Helen Johnson, #D65
Betty Stewart, #M8
Dolly Mathis, #M32
Martha Hanserd, #E85

Elmcroft
Bob Elam, #215
Judi Wilson

Northbrooke
Rosemary Kipp Monegue, #204

Morningside of Jackson
Dorothy Prince
(Carol Whitnall's mother)

PRAYER CONCERNS:

Ken and Sandra Brasfield
Susan Anderson
Charles Wayne Monks (heart issues)
Jerry Thomas (COVID) and wife, Patti
Judi Wilson (recovery from surgery)
Brenda Depriest (recovery from surgery)
Bill Meiers (fall, surgery, rehab)
Evelyn Taylor's cousin
Florence Bridges (COVID)
Barbara, Brian and Barry Fowler (COVID)
The family of Eloise Phillips
The family of Lark Taylor and
Martha Stockard
The family of Machele Daniel-Hall
The family of David Carp
Lyn Parliment
Ray Tanner
Julia Austin
Bert Bankston
Norma Smith's grandson-in-law
Debbie Lee
Lori Howell's sister-in-law | cancer
James Hargrove
Lori Howell's uncle
Diane Greer
friend of Benita Brown | cancer
Rebecca Priddy Muncie
Jim Cahill
Eleanor Cahill's brother
Ken Taylor
Evelyn Taylor's brother-in-law
Nancy Trent
Libby Smith's cousin

Kyle Young
Kim Dunnivant's nephew
Tyler Stevenson
(Sherry Taylor's son) and all law
enforcement across the nation
Blake Stevenson
Sherry Taylor's grandson
(ongoing recovery)
Byron Wilson, Sr.
Stephannie Williams' Dad
(broken back)
Pastor Leopoldo Aguilar Quispe
Pastor Jesusa Chavez Lima
Dot Holt,
Gwen Golden (cancer)
Healthcare and service providers
The health of our nation and world
Georgina Harlan
Ashley Lovell and family
Tisha Blankenship
Mike, Christie, and Jared Martin
Rick McCune
Phillip Pickens
Jody's brother (cancer)
Anne Garrard
Marilynn Ames
Judi Wilson
John and Susan Anderson
Disaster victims-all areas involved
Cancer patients on our hearts
Mission Partners in Asia
Mission Partners in Peru
Unspoken prayer concerns



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF JACKSON, TN**

1573 N. Highland Ave.
Jackson, TN 38301-3454

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

731.422.1591
www.fpcjacksontn.org

OUR MISSION:

First Presbyterian Church seeks to provide opportunities for people to encounter the life-changing presence of Christ through: preaching, the study of scripture, engagement in worship, faithful stewardship and service to others in the church and community.

*If you have an article for the newsletter, please send it to Emily Morrow, Church Secretary at: fpcemily@eplus.net. Articles will be used as space permits and may be edited for length. **Deadline for submissions are the 18th of each month.***

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PIZZA WITH THE PASTOR

ALL 4TH & 5TH GRADERS

AUGUST 23RD

MEET IN FRONT
OF MEMORIAL HALL

11 - 12:30

