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*“Serving God,  
Honoring Creation,  
Embracing Differences”*



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
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# THE PRESBYTERIAN PIPELINE

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Issue Five

“Beautiful Grace”

Stop and consider beauty. Not Miss America beauty, but awe-inspiring elegance-of-design beauty. Both require that we stop and take notice. The first one can be polished and teased and held together with hairspray, but the other seems to happen at the whim of our Maker.

God offers us beauty in abundance. There is beauty found in things like bird feathers, butterfly wings, wildflowers, and cultivated gardens. When we look through God’s eyes, we discover beauty everywhere. Not only the vivid colors of a sunset or the grandeur of a giant redwood but the legs of a spider or a dandelion seed afloat on the wind. Among all this beauty, we are reminded that every detail of ourselves is known to God. Every hair on our head is counted just as our Good Shepherd knows every sparrow and every lost sheep.

We long for beauty in the same way we long for God. There is a space inside us that yearns to be fed even before we know what we are missing! Being in the presence of beauty fills us with wonder, like an encounter with the Divine. Beauty and wholeness are part of who God is in the world.

In ancient Greece, the Golden Ratio was considered the mathematical equivalent of beauty. This geometric pattern can be found in architecture, pinecones, spiral seashells, and the face of sunflowers. As scientific discovery has grown, this same sequence is found on the microscopic and macroscopic levels. The Milky Way galaxy, our galactic address, is an expression of this meticulous artistry.

God is the creator of marvelous, wonderful, and beautiful masterpieces! Things we can experience with our senses but also feel with our emotions.

Why would God create so many varieties of roses if not for us to appreciate the diversity? Why would God adorn the night sky with so many stars if not for us to stare into? Or leaves on trees, or fish in the sea, or breeds of dog? All these creations that are similar but not the same reveal something marvelous about God: God plays! God makes all this beauty because God celebrates the wonder of creation itself.

Frederick Buechner says, “Beauty is to the spirit what food is to the flesh.” Beauty fills an empty space inside us, but unlike food, we always have room for more.

The tricky part about beauty is that we must look for it. We must notice it to experience it. Like our relationship with God, it takes time for us to feel it inside of us. Thank goodness God grants us grace that we may know what to look for!

*Rev Michele*



We are getting closer and closer to the unveiling of the parlor renovation. The work of the Team is coming to fruition – the room is painted and carpeted. The lightening has been updated, the windows have been cleaned and beautiful wooden blinds have been installed. There is a bright, warm feel to the room. And now, it is awaiting the return of furniture. We hope to unveil for the congregation a finished renovated parlor by mid-May. We do hope you'll think it has been worth your wait!

In addition to the inside beautification we're working on, we are also continuing our outside facelift. The weather (wet and cold) have been our obstacles to finishing the steps project but with luck (and some prayers thrown in please) the warmer dry weather coming will offer step completion weather. In addition, we are giving our beautiful (yet a little worn and torn) bell tower and the set of crosses on the west front side of the sanctuary some needed TLC. That work is expected to be completed by first week of May! The majority of the renovation and facelift projects are being done with funds donated to this specific project and not taken from the budget. We are thankful, grateful and appreciative of the generosity of this congregation and its members.

As with many businesses and homes in our area, our outside plants and bushes received some shock during the ice storms of January and February. Some of them are recovering better than others. After giving them a little time in recovery, we are going to have the bushes in the front of the church cut back to give the new growth hopefully some stimulus to leaf out. Fingers crossed and prayers said!

Our hands and our hearts working for you,

**Your Building & Grounds Team**

## From Lent until Easter





The Worship Committee wishes each of us a Happy May!

***“Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.”***

*Proverbs 31: 25-26*

This month is exciting because we have several celebrations and gatherings! We start the month off with joint, in-person Sunday School beginning on Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Fellowship Hall. On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Joshua will begin in-person, live Music In the Middle in our Fellowship Hall on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm. Open to all – Masks Required!

May 9<sup>th</sup> is Mother’s Day and we will recognize all the mothers of our congregation and afar. David Reeder will fill our pulpit on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

May 23 is Day of Pentecost

Acts 2:

***“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from the heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them”***

Peace be with you all,

**Worship Committee Team**



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### **Fellowship Committee:**

The Fellowship Committee would like to thank everyone who participated in our outdoor Easter Sunday taco breakfast. We so enjoyed the touch of normalcy compared to Easter 2020, and we hope you enjoyed it as well! We look forward to more outdoor socials in the future as we continue to do everything we can to keep our congregation safe AND connected.

### **Christian Education**

The library here at First Presbyterian Church is full of wonderful books to aid us all in our study of the Bible, with helpful commentaries to assist our understanding of scripture. Come by and see what is available. Our library is well arranged and comfortable. Our C.E. Team recently reviewed donated books and we have several give-away books to offer to our congregation or perhaps the community. These will be placed in a basket in the Narthex for a couple of weeks in the near future. We do keep a record of our books, so please self-check-out for the sake of our records.

Earth Day was celebrated with a small (socially-distanced and masked) group outside singing and praising the Lord for all the wonderful gifts of creation. We wore our new Earth Day T-shirts and enjoyed the beautiful day!

On Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, we encourage everyone to watch the PBS presentation of Extinction: The Facts. A few of us gathered to watch the documentary, Kiss the Ground. This wonderful film about steps to help save our planet is on Netflix and tells how taking care of our soil can help our planet.

Also on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, we will reinstate Sunday School, combining both the Andrews Class and the Seekers Class at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. We will still use Covid-19 protocol. Members may want to enter at the back door, parking in that adjacent space. Our study will be “Testimony, Vocabulary of Faith from Presbyterian Outlook.” It is a 6-week study, but each section stands on its own so you can plan to attend as many or as few as you’d like. All are welcome for one, two, or all sections of the study. We will use visual equipment for some portions. Your Bibles will be helpful, so bring them. Some may want to follow via Zoom.

If you have followed Theology on Tap, be reminded that it is again online on Tuesday evening via Oil Horse Brewing website, in Longview.

Please mark your calendar for National Gun Violence Prevention Day – Friday, June 4<sup>th</sup>. Wearing orange will show our support.

Delighted to welcome anyone who wishes to join the Christian Education Team. Presently, it consists of Jimmy C., Rev. Michele, Claudia, Kathy and Lynn-Chair.

The Outreach Team is never far from your reach – and you are never far from ours.

We **Adopted A Block** on April 19<sup>th</sup>. It was a great day in the neighborhood. It was a beautiful day and we had wonderful interaction with our neighbors.

We are in the second of our Special Offerings – Pentecost which will run through May 23<sup>rd</sup>. If you want to participate, please make your checks payable to FPC Henderson and in the memo line indicate Pentecost. Jimmy and Tom are the co-Champions for this offering.

We're asking everyone to joins us for our new initiative to **"Hustling Kindness" every Friday**. To participate, just commit to one random act of kindness.

With kindness in our grateful hearts and love and grace in our outstretched arms,

**Claudia, Tom, Kathy, Katie, Lynn, John, Jimmy, Elizabeth, Scott & Rev. Michele**



## Did You Know?

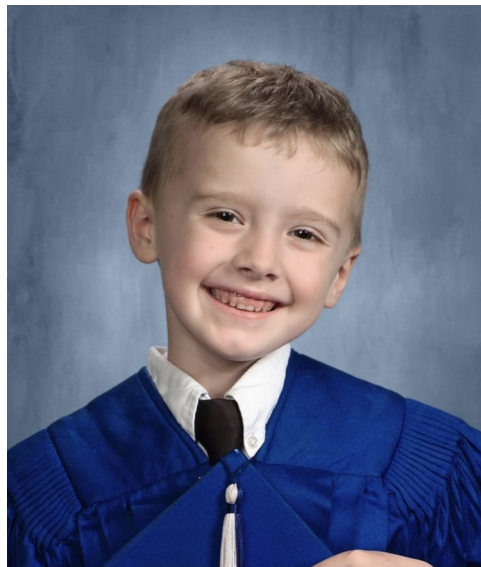
This is a lung.



This is a tree.



We breathe in what trees breathe out, and they breathe in what we breathe out. We are nature.



Our FPC Graduate:  
*Briar H.*

The Christian Education Green Team sponsored an Earth Day Service outdoors honoring all of God's creation.



**The CE Green Team**



### Member Care

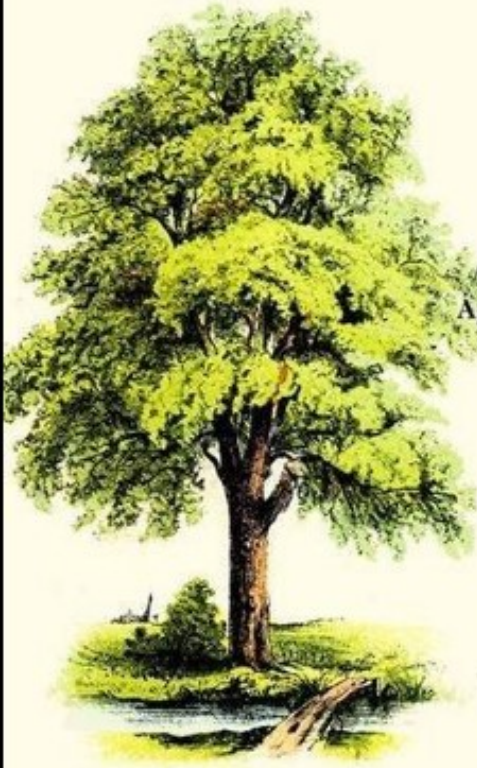
Member care wears many hats with our congregation. We are part of the group that is delivering our Communion elements to those unable to attend worship. We help provide food to members of the congregation and we assist taking members and friends to doctor appointments. If you would like to be a part of this ministry, please contact Rev. Michele or Lynn.

Another one of the means we stay connected, especially with those not able to attend church, is through the cards we sign and send. Thankfully, we are beginning this thoughtful tradition again. Remember to follow our Covid-19 protocols – sign with a clean pen and try to give each other room around the cards.

Prayer Companions are available, and these warriors communicate mostly by phone or text and sometimes by email. Confidentiality is observed according to the request presented. If you have special prayer requests, please call or text Kathy P or Lynn T, or Rev. Michele.

I want to take a minute to express my appreciation to you all, my church family, for your concerns, calls, cards, kind words of comfort, donations in Kenneth's name & other expressions of kindness & love at the loss of my brother Kenneth. Kenneth was a great husband, father, grandfather, brother, & friend to many. He loved spending time with family. He was 68 years old, far too young. Kenneth was a very integral part of the bar-be-que team at Lynn and mine's 50th wedding anniversary celebration. I ask that you continue to hold his wife Loy, son Kendall, daughter Ashley, along with several grandchildren in your thoughts & prayers. You, my church family, are a great comfort to me during this time of loss. I thank you all!

Peace  
John W. Tieken



**TREES**  
by Joyce Kilmer

I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest  
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,  
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear  
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;  
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree.

*Please keep these dear ones in your prayers:*

- For Patsy R, as her arm continues to heal.
- For Judy A, as she recovers from surgery.
- For Michael D, as he continues his journey.
- For those who have been affected by gun violence.
- For all the front line health care specialists who continue to put their lives at risk to help others during this pandemic.



# May 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sunday School will meet in person starting May 2, 2021 at 9:45 am in the Fellowship Hall.						1
2 Sanctuary Service & FB Virtual 11:00 am	3	4	5 CE Meeting 10:00 am Music in the Middle LIVE 7 pm Fellowship Hall	6	7 Meals on Wheels	8
9 Sanctuary Service & FB Virtual 11:00 am <i>Mother's Day</i>	10	11	12 Music in the Middle LIVE 7 pm Fellowship Hall	13	14 Meals on Wheels	15
16 Sanctuary Service & FB Virtual 11:00 am	17	18	19 Music in the Middle LIVE 7 pm Fellowship Hall	20 Session 6:00 pm	21 Meals on Wheels	22
23 Sanctuary Service & FB Virtual 11:00 am <i>Pentecost</i>	24 Pipeline Deadline	25	26 Music in the Middle LIVE 7 pm Fellowship Hall	27	28 Meals on Wheels	29
30 Sanctuary Service & FB Virtual 11:00 am	31 					

## Duty Elder for May

*Steve & Mary Lowe*



## Liturgists for May

5/02 - Claudia Morgan-Gray

5/09 - Jan Pennal

5/16 - John Tieken

5/23 - Carol Scoggins

5/30 - John Hillin



## *May*

*Liz Buckner, 7*

*Tolly Dill, 13*

*Pat Laney, 13*

*Patsy Reynolds, 13*

*Bert Lowe, 18*

*Mary Lowe, 18*

*Mike Dill, 21*

*Tela Snelgrove, 26*