



# First Presbyterian News

Aiken, SC  
PC(USA)

May 2025

*Alleluia! He is Risen*



Adding New Chapters to an Old Story...



# Contents

- 3 Vacation Bible School
- 4 Program Opportunities
- 5 Info to know
- 6 Women of the church
- 7 Ministers' Thoughts
- 8 May Calendar

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor/Head of Staff  
Parish Associate  
Director of Operations and Media  
Director of Christian Education  
Director of Music  
Director of Finance  
Preschool Director  
Office Manager  
Organist/Accompanist  
Finance

Rev. Dr. Christopher Erde  
Rev. Dr. Beth Yarborough  
Joanna Hamilton  
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If you are not receiving the Weekly Connections on  
Friday, please contact the church office.

### Publications:

The deadline for the Summer 2025 newsletter is 12:00 PM on Wednesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>.  
We would love to hear your story! Please send your information via email to

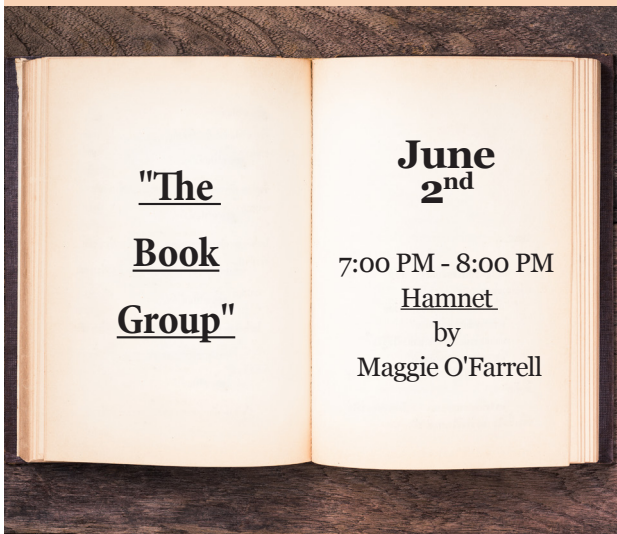
Joanna Hamilton at [joannah@aikenpresbyterian.org](mailto:joannah@aikenpresbyterian.org)

Watch for Weekly Updates in your email!

Please follow the church:

Facebook - [facebook.com/aikenpres](https://facebook.com/aikenpres)

Instagram - @aikenpres



Dates for the sacrament of holy communion during the morning worship services will be printed in the bulletin, newsletter and in Weekly Connections. If you are a home viewer for worship, you may participate at home with your own bread or cracker and juice. If you are unable to attend the worship service due to illness, recovery or mobility issues, the pastoral staff will bring communion to you.

Please call the church office and let Debby Dugan know if you would like to have extended communion brought to you.  
Next Date: May 11<sup>th</sup>



### Stewardship thoughts by

William Avery, (Augusta native, NBA former player)

*The question is not, how much of what is mine do I give to others?*

*The question is, how much of what is God's do I reserve for myself?*

*The answer we give is a faith issue, a stewardship issue.*

*Stewardship is a mindset, so set your mind to Stewardship.*

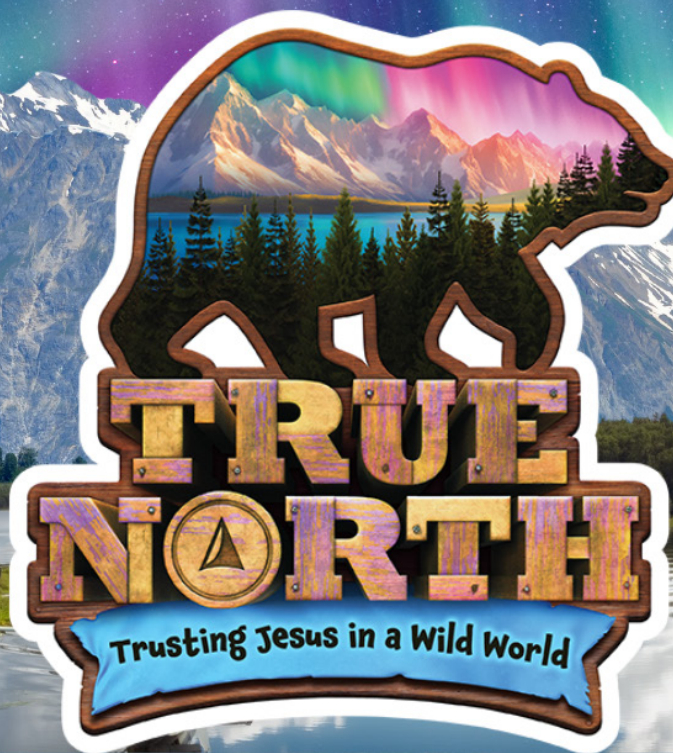
*Freely you  
have received  
freely give.  
Matthew 10:8*



**Stewardship 2025**

# COMING IN JUNE 2025

June  
2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>  
8:45-Noon



Register your children NOW (before May 12th) and get a free T-shirt! Registration forms are in the narthex and on the church website.

We are still looking for volunteers to join in the fun during the week of VBS – speak to Tamra Erde or Mary Fran Crook.

For those who want to support VBS but can't physically be here, consider sending baked goods, fruit, dips, or any snacks for our volunteer break room. Let Tamra know if you are interested.

We will collect donations for Thornwell Home for Children throughout the week. If you so choose, please bring in new items as follows:

- Individually wrapped snacks
  - Craft supplies
  - Linens
  - Outdoor toys
  - Sports equipment
  - Pool toys
  - Books age appropriate for children and youth
  - Hygiene products: body wash, shampoo, deodorant, feminine products, lotion
- (Monetary donations can be made as well, cash or checks checks made out to FPCA with Thornwell in memo)



Have a fun Summer



## Youth May 18<sup>th</sup>

High School Baccalaureate Service during the 10:30AM service. Be sure to leave our seniors, Connor Patterson and Lauren Luther, a message in the blessing jars located in the narthex.

End of the year Youth Party time and location to be announced.

## Adults May 25<sup>th</sup>

**Thank You!** We will celebrate the end of a wonderful school year by honoring our teachers and volunteers during the worship service.

## CHILDREN MAY 25<sup>th</sup>

**JAM!** will gather after the children's message during the worship service. We will celebrate being Easter people and the end of another great school year!



## Love to sing?

Want to be in the choir but don't want to commit to the schedule? Then the summer choir is the perfect opportunity for you!

We will meet on the **first and third Sundays** of each month during

## June, July, and August

to learn an easy anthem to sing during the worship service. Will begin at **9:30 AM** on rehearsal days. We hope to see you there! Email Daniel for more information.



## STEPHEN MINISTRY Care Receivers Share How Their Stephen Ministers Made a Difference

Although my needs changed as I went from wife to caregiver to widow, my Stephen Minister's love and support remained a constant. She was there at every stage of my journey, helping me through some of the most difficult moments of my life so I could begin to heal.

Susan ●

When things seemed like too much to handle, my Stephen Minister brought normalcy and calm. With him by my side, I knew I could make it from one week to the next. I could feel God's presence when my Stephen Minister was there.

James ●

My Stephen Minister was a consistent presence walking with me throughout my divorce. He would always show up, and most importantly, he refused to give up on me. I'll forever be grateful for the way he changed my life.

Ralph ●

When I was with my Stephen Minister, I felt Jesus was with me. I saw the love of God in her eyes while we talked and prayed, and it would fill me with such comfort and peace. It helped me know that I could make it through.

Ashley ●

After the death of my mom, I needed someone who would listen even to the same stories over and over and who wouldn't be afraid to say her name or bring up her memory. That's who my Stephen Minister was, and I don't know how I would have gotten through it without her. Molly ●

My Stephen Minister listens really listens. He doesn't judge me or tell me what to do but walks side by side with me. I never realized how helpful and healing that can be. With his care and support, I'm making it through.

Brian ●

When someone you love is terminally ill, people often pull back because they're scared and don't know what to say. But my Stephen Minister stood with me through it all listening, talking, and helping me on the journey. It was so reassuring to know he was by my side.

Andrew ●

My Stephen Minister loves me, listens to me, cares for me, prays for me, supports me, and gives me a safe, confidential relationship where I can totally share my heart. No matter how much I have to unload on her, she listens to whatever is going on.

Celeste ●

I'm blessed with an amazing Stephen Minister. She's been genuinely attentive and caring ever since she came alongside me. She's kind of fearless in that way she'll just be there without trying to fix me or talk me out of my feelings as I struggle with what's happening.

Nancy ●

I needed to know that there was one person in the world who knew the good, the bad, and the ugly about me and still cared for me. Experiencing that through my Stephen Minister was a tangible expression of God's love. It changed my life.

Julia ●

My Stephen Minister's weekly visits became an anchor in my life something I could rely on when everything else was so uncertain. She was a steady reminder of God's

presence, helping me know I was never alone.

Heather ●

Stephen Ministry showed me the face of Christ. God brought me exactly what I needed through the care of my Stephen Minister, and that demonstrated to me how God cares for each and every one of us.

Frank ●

*Stephen Ministry is a lay caring ministry being used by more than 13,000 congregations worldwide to increase care and outreach to hurting people.*







The Presbyterian Women's morning gathering will conclude its yearly Bible study and fellowship on May 14<sup>th</sup> with Paul Ebel as our leader. Following the Bible study, we will enjoy a salad lunch together. At the meeting, we will be placing orders for our Bible study books for next year. The price is \$15 and members can reserve a copy. Bet Girardeau is our Study Book leader and will have a list for sign ups.

The study for next year is Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ. Here's an excerpt from the introduction by the author, Rev. Dr. Rhashell D. Hunter: "In this Bible study, we will follow Mary Magdalene, Mary of a certain village," the woman who was poor, the prodigal

child, the woman who was bent over, the travelers on the road to Emmaus, as well as Jesus. These biblical characters and writers model for us resilience, joy, and finding our identity in Christ. My hope is that their witness will call you to greater devotion and faithfulness. This is an invitation and an opportunity for you to become grounded again, renew your faith, and reconnect to Christ."

Ladies, Presbyterian Women need you. Please plan to join the morning gathering or the evening gathering. We meet monthly for Bible study and fellowship and support missions locally, nationally, and internationally.

Thank you for supporting our missions with your purchases of the Mother's Day cards, created by Nancy Corbett and Dee Verley-Matthews.

### *Prayer Shawl Ministry:*

Prayer shawls will be dedicated during worship on Mother's Day, May 11th. Please plan to turn in any completed prayer shawls by Wednesday, May 7th, so they can be included. Please join us for one hour on the third Tuesday of each month. We will be meeting from 10:00 to 11:00 AM in the PW Productions Room (#27) May 20<sup>th</sup>. We can get you started on making a prayer shawl while we share ideas, tips, fellowship, and prayer! You can also be a part of this ministry through your handwork at home. Please call for details.

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry started in the fall of 2007, and so far we have made over 916 prayer shawls, and over 879 have been given away. We continue to pray for all those who have received a prayer shawl. Prayer shawls are available to give to anyone -- church members and those who are not members of our church. Please let us know of someone who might enjoy receiving this special gift from our church.

Please contact Robbie Knox to ask about getting a prayer shawl or to see how you can help!

### *Welcome Newborn Babies!*

Be sure to let us know if you are expecting a new baby, grandbaby, or great-grandbaby in your family! Some of our Presbyterian Women have made beautiful knit baby items which we'd like to share with you for your new family member! Let us know before the arrival time, so you'll have the gift ready to deliver at your convenience! Please contact Robbie Knox to ask about getting baby items or with your questions and suggestions.



# Children & Youth Art Work



*Art  
Wall*

# Starting May 25th

Over 30 of our FPCA children and youth will display their art beginning May 25th in the Parlor on the Art Wall. Over the last several months, the kids have been talking about all the places we see and feel God. The result is a collection of inspiring pieces from artists aged two to 18 years. Come and visit this heartfelt art display starting May 25.

If your child has not yet done their drawing/painting and they would like to participate, please contact Tamra at the church office or email at [christianeducator@aikenpresbyterian.org](mailto:christianeducator@aikenpresbyterian.org).

## Church Picnic Sunday, May 25, 2025



## Wednesday Dinner

### May 7<sup>th</sup>

in the Fellowship Hall  
at **5:45-7:00 PM.**

Join us for a festive meal of fiesta tacos, chips and salsa, black beans, and dessert. Donations for the meal will be taken at the door. Children will head out after dinner for games.



**Meet on the West Lawn after the  
10:30 AM worship service.**

**Please bring a side dish to share.**

**Burgers, hot dogs, meatless varieties,  
potato chips, drinks, and  
ice cream will be provided.**

**The Fellowship Hall will have tables and  
chairs for those who prefer to eat indoors.**

**Join us for these popular times,  
of food and Fellowship!**



According to the calendar, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter have come and gone; and I suppose, in a sense, that is true. However, for Christians Easter never really ends, does it? Maybe the good news of the day itself, fades; perhaps the joyous cries of "He Is Risen! - He Is Risen Indeed!" are gone from our ears, but Easter never ends, because it is what defines us. Easter is the reason we are together, the reason we have each other as a family of faith.

The past several weeks of preparing, celebrating, mourning, and celebrating again are why we are an Easter People, a people of hope. We hope for kindness and goodness to be more plentiful than hate, indifference, and evil. We hope that from what we have learned about Jesus and his life and his ministry, that we might be more like him when we think of and act towards our neighbors, strangers, the lonely, those hurting, our friends, family, those with whom we disagree, and yes, even those who might wish us ill.

## Ministers' Thoughts



Easter is more than a season, it is a guide for life, it is proof that Good wins over evil, that reconciliation is possible, that peace is worth pursuing, that loving all is more than a suggestion, it is our foundation, and it is what our Lord requires of us.

As we move on through the calendar and as we watch as God's creation Spring(s) back to life, let us never forget that our lives are born of, and sustained by, the Easter blessing that never fades, and never dies.

Peace, Chris

From the time I read Richard Rohr's book, Falling Upward (2014) I have been a fan of his writing. I just ordered his newest book, The Tears of Things to add to my summer reading list. Along with the book there is an on-line course available that looks like a good candidate for continuing education. If you feel so inclined, grab a copy of The

Tears of Things and join me in this summer reading. I would enjoy an occasional conversation about the book! Hopefully, now that we are moving into ordinary time in the church year, things will be a little slower paced providing the perfect opportunity for a little contemplative reading. Let me know if you add The Tears of Things to your summer reading list.

Blessings, Beth

## Thank you Notes

Dear Church Family,  
Thank you to everyone who sent sympathy cards and expressed sympathy to me for the passing of my beloved mother. You were so thoughtful. Thanks!  
Dee Verley-Matthews

Dear FPCA,  
Thank you so much for your help during recent health issues which includes but not limit to lending me the rollator, all the cards, phone calls, assistance from Stephen Ministers, and prayers from the congregation members.  
Thank you, Kathy Sweeny

Nancy Corbett and Dee Verley-Matthews,  
Thank you both for supporting our missions by creating Mother's Day cards.  
Blessings, PW Women

From the bottom of our heart, we wanted to thank you for all the love and support you've shown our family during this time. Your kindness, encouragement, and prayers mean the world to us. We feel so grateful to have such amazing friends and family who give us the strength and hope to overcome this. We can't thank you enough for everything you've done for us.  
Lots of Love, The O'Connor Family

**Flower Information:**  
**Open flower dates are**  
**May 4, 11, & 18**





# May 2025

## Thursday, May 1, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
3:30 PM - 6:30 PM Family Promise  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:00 PM - 8:30 PM Stephen Minister  
6:45 PM - 8:00 PM Aiken Athletic  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM South Boundary  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM BSA GA-CA

## Friday, May 2, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM Aiken Council/  
Garden Club

## Sunday, May 4, 2025

9:15 AM - 9:30 AM Coffee  
9:15 AM - 11:30 AM Nursery  
9:30 AM - 10:15 AM Sunday School  
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Worship  
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM New Member  
Luncheon  
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Indoor Soccer  
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Youth Group  
7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Men's Basketball

## Monday, May 5, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
5:00 PM - 7:30 PM Palmetto Sertoma  
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Friends Group  
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Stephen Leader  
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Christian  
Education  
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Aiken Athletic

## Tuesday, May 6, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
9:00 AM - 9:15 AM Preschool Chapel  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Aiken Model A's  
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM Stephen Ministry  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Boy Scouts Troop  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM BSA Girls Troop

## Wednesday, May 7, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
8:45 AM - 9:15 AM Morning Prayer  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Staff Meeting  
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM Handbells  
5:45 PM - 7:00 PM Wednesday  
Dinner  
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Aiken Athletic  
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Choir

## Thursday, May 8, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:00 PM - 8:30 PM Stephen Minister  
6:45 PM - 8:00 PM Aiken Athletic  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Preschool Board  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM South Boundary

## Friday, May 9, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM Girl Scout Troop

## Sunday, May 11, 2025

9:15 AM - 9:30 AM Coffee  
9:15 AM - 11:45 AM Nursery  
9:30 AM - 10:15 AM Sunday School  
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Worship  
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Indoor Soccer  
7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Men's Basketball

## Monday, May 12, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM Endowment  
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM Finance  
Committee  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Aiken Athletic

## Tuesday, May 13, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
9:00 AM - 9:15 AM Preschool Chapel  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM BSA Pack 110  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Boy Scouts Troop  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM BSA Girls Troop

## Wednesday, May 14, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
8:45 AM - 9:15 AM Morning Prayer  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM PW Bible Study  
& Lunch  
11:00 AM - 6:00 PM Sheppard Blood  
Drive  
Handbells  
Mission  
Committee  
Aiken Athletic  
Choir

## Thursday, May 15, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
3:00 PM - 5:00 PM Aiken Sherriff's  
Pipes  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:00 PM - 8:30 PM Stephen Minister  
6:45 PM - 8:00 PM Aiken Athletic  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM South Boundary

## Friday, May 16, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
11:00 AM - 5:00 PM BSA Pack 110

## Saturday, May 17, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
11:00 AM - 5:00 PM BSA Pack 110  
Sunday, May 18, 2025  
9:15 AM - 9:30 AM Coffee  
9:15 AM - 11:30 AM Nursery  
9:30 AM - 10:15 AM Sunday School  
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Worship  
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Diaconate  
Meeting  
TBA  
Youth end of Year  
Party  
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Indoor Soccer  
7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Men's Basketball

## Monday, May 19, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Stephen Leader  
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Aiken Athletic

## Tuesday, May 20, 2025

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Prayer Shawl  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM Stephen Ministry  
6:45 PM - 9:00 PM Summer Futsal  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Boy Scouts Troop  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM BSA Girls Troop

## Wednesday, May 21, 2025

7:30 AM - 12:00 PM Preschool  
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Preschool Spring  
Program  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Staff Meeting  
10:15 AM - 11:15 AM PS 5K Graduation  
Brunch  
12:15 PM - 1:15 PM PS Teacher Lunch  
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM Handbells  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Session  
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Aiken Athletic  
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Choir

## Thursday, May 22, 2025

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:00 PM - 8:30 PM Stephen Minister  
6:45 PM - 8:00 PM Aiken Athletic  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM South Boundary

## Friday, May 23, 2025

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Summer Futsal

## Sunday, May 25, 2025

9:30 AM - 10:15 AM No Youth or  
Children  
10:15 AM - 11:45 AM Sunday School  
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Nursery  
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM Worship  
Art Wall  
Reception  
11:30 AM - 2:00 PM Memorial Day  
Picnic  
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Indoor Soccer  
7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Men's Basketball

## Monday, May 26, 2025

09:00 AM - 3:00 PM Office closed  
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Aiken Athletic

## Tuesday, May 27, 2025

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:45 PM - 9:00 PM Summer Futsal  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Boy Scouts Troop  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM BSA Girls Troop

## Wednesday, May 28, 2025

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi  
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM Handbells  
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM PW Celestial  
Circle  
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Aiken Athletic  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Honduras Agape  
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Choir

## Thursday, May 29, 2025

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball  
6:00 PM - 8:30 PM Stephen Minister  
6:45 PM - 8:00 PM Aiken Athletic  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM South Boundary

## Friday, May 30, 2025

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM Tai-Chi