

First Presbyterian News

September 2025



Adding New Chapters to an Old Story...

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If you are not receiving the Weekly Connections on Friday, please contact the church office.



Publications:

The deadline for the October newsletter is 12:00 PM on Wednesday, September 17th
We would love to hear your story! Please send your information via email to
Joanna Hamilton at joannah@aikenpresbyterian.org Watch for Weekly Updates in your email!
Please follow the church: Facebook - facebook.com/aikenpres Instagram - @aikenpres



"The

September 22nd

Book

Group"

The Great Gatsby

by F. Scott Fitzgerald Men's Breakfast

Calling all FPCA Men:
Gentlemen, mark your calendars
and join the Men's Breakfast in
the Fellowship Hall for good
food and fellowship!
Sunday September 14th
at 8:20 AM.



This year's Stewardship Campaign will begin in October, please begin to prayerfully consider your support for our growing church in the coming year.

So take heart: when things around you are slow, quiet, and inefficient, perhaps the Spirit is very near.

- Rev. Emma Nickel

Stewardship 2026



Food, Fellowship, Learning, Fun

★ September 7, 2025 Open: 11:30 AM ★



Join us September 7th for our Fall Kick Off

We will gather in the Fellowship Hall and on the West Lawn after worship for a delicious cook-out. Hamburgers and hot dogs, dessert and drinks will be provided. Please bring a side dish to share. We will have games and fun activities for the whole family!

Let's Kick Off a new season of opportunities to learn, grow and serve at FPCA. Come and see the impactful ways to connect with one another and God this Fall at FPCA.









Sunday School

9:30am-10:15am

Adult Gatherings in the Adult Wing:

First Class Room 28

The First Class is currently studying ?????????? This group endeavors to conduct the class as a "small group", caring for each other in addition to studying together.

Law Class Room 26

The Law Class studies The Present Word, an in-depth Bible study for adults that dives deep into God's Word, studying the Bible over a six-year period and focusing on a specific theme each quarter. The class also makes contributions each week to support several missionaries and some local mission causes.

Focus Class Conference Room

This Fall the Focus Class will begin their study with the popular video series, "The Chosen", a historical drama based on the life of Jesus and those who knew him. Episodes will be viewed and discussed weekly. The Focus Class also supports a child through World Vision and donates to the Honduras Agape Foundation.

All Ages are Welcome!

Lectionary Class Room 32

The Lectionary Class follows the Revised Common Lectionary passages which will be used in the 10:30am worship service each week. The class helps deepen the worship experience, by peeling apart the layers and discovering history and context of the texts that will be sung, read and heard.

Children and Youth in Children's Wing 3k-5k Room 4 1st-5th Grade Room 3 Confirmation Room 1 9th-12th Grade Room 2

Nursery is available in Room 6 During Sunday School and Worship for Infant - Kindergarten



Working towards a nation in which every family has a home,

a livelihood, and the chance to build a better future

September 19th and 20th 8:00am-2:00pm

Preview Sale Sept 18th 6:00-8:00pm (entry fee \$10)

Donation items can be dropped off at FPCA in the partition wall, until the 16th Fellowship Hall at St. Paul Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall behind the

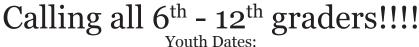


ENTRY IS FREE



September 24, 2025 We will be in the Fellowship Hall 5:45-7:00 PM This dinner will be catered,

with donations taken at the door.



September 7th

Beginning of year Cook Out. Bring your swimsuits for the water slide and bubbles.

September 14th

9:30-10:15am All Sunday School Classes Resume. 5:30-7pm Youth meeting in room 2 Pizza party.

September 21 st

Youth Pool Party & cookout at Crooks time: TBA September 28th - Ocotber 12th Fall Break



Art wall September 14th

The next artists to be featured on our Art Wall are Marti Healy and Mimi Inman. They will present a joint display that showcases Marti's book "Walking With Dogs" and the story boards / WALKING with DOGS illustrations Mimi created for this book.







<u>New Stephen Ministers</u>

Welcome to our newly commissioned Stephen Ministers Sharyn Greytak, Jo McMurtrie and Joe Tully! They join Mary Maddrey, Lucy Sutter, Rob Gray, Vic Sowers, Gayle Gordon, Julie Taylor and Karalee Kludzuweit.

Stephen Ministers provide one-to-one Christian care, in a confidential manner, to an assigned care receiver, who is experiencing life concerns, difficulties and/or losses.

Joe Tully, Stephen Minister

I am a relatively new member of First Presbyterian, having joined the church in 2023. I was raised in Queens, NY, and prior to moving to Aiken in 2021, was a longtime resident of Pennington, New Jersey. My wife of 37 years, Donna, and I are the proud parents of our daughter, Colleen, and son-in-law, Dan, who have gifted us with three beautiful granddaughters. Our family is rounded out with our adopted dog named Artie.

An employment career in institutional asset management has facilitated my participation in the Stewardship, Endowment and Finance Committees of our church. Post-retirement, I also served as an adjunct professor of finance at both Rutgers University and USC Aiken, and participate currently as a pro bono, external advisor for the UNICEF Financial Advisory Committee. My interests are running, golf, and completing the authorship of my draft novel within my lifetime.

I joined First Presbyterian Church of Aiken because it best encapsulated the spirit of my previous place of worship, the Pennington Presbyterian Church. There, my faith was lovingly nurtured, and grew from reluctant attendee to committee assignments, Eldership, and lastly, the chair of Deacons during COVID.

My decision to become a Stephen Minister was an impulsive one, which likely means that it was Spirit-driven. The training I received will reward me with opportunities to advance Jesus' healing ministry, and has provided a new set of tools to be a better husband, father, friend and Christian.

Sharyn Greytak, Stephen Minister

I moved to South Carolina from Ohio 15 years ago when my husband, Gil, accepted an accounting position in this area. We have two sons: Ryan, a psychiatrist practicing in California, and Scott, an attorney living and working in Washington, D.C. Before retiring, I spent many years working as a speech-language pathologist in the school system, a profession I found both challenging and rewarding. In retirement, I enjoy traveling, participating in book club, dinner clubs, gardening, attending a wide variety of cultural and community events here in Aiken, and spending time with friends.

I'm fortunate to be involved with several local

organizations. I assist adults in developing literacy skills, help with the annual Joye in Aiken arts event, and actively participate in P.E.O., a philanthropic educational organization dedicated to raising funds to support women's education.

Faith has always been an important part of my life. I have been a member of several Presbyterian congregations over the years and joined First Presbyterian Church almost two years ago. It has been a joy to be part of this community, teaching Sunday School, assisting with Vacation Bible School, and participating in other church ministries.

My interest in the Stephen Ministry program was sparked by my brother, a Stephen Minister and Leader in Hilton Head. Hearing him speak about the fulfillment he found in offering Christian care to those facing life's challenges and the valuable skills he gained through the

program resonated with me.

Since beginning my own Stephen Ministry training, I've been grateful for the opportunity to grow both personally and spiritually. The program has equipped me with practical, time-tested strategies for providing compassionate, Christ-centered care and support to individuals on a one-to-one basis, who are experiencing a variety of difficult issues in their lives. I've learned so much from our dedicated leaders and fellow trainees and deeply value the experiences I've had through this ministry. I look forward to continuing to serve and grow within both this congregation and the broader community.

Jo McMurtrie, Stephen Minister

I grew up in Iowa. I met and married Ted in Charleston. We have 3 grown children and 5 grandchildren. Our son is living with us. Our younger daughter is in Alabama with her husband and their 2 children. Our older daughter lives in Switzerland with her husband and their 3 children. I am a retired teacher with most of my years teaching kindergarten. I love children's books, traveling, sewing, quilting, camping, being outside and spending time with our children and grandchildren.

I grew up in the church. My parents were quite active in church, so I accompanied them to many activities. As an adult, I have worked on various mission projects in different churches as we have moved around with the Navy - building houses in Mexico, building relationships in Mexico and Haiti and participating in collecting supplies for schools in Haiti. When visiting First Presbyterian Aiken last December, we felt very much at home and decided to make it our church home.

I have always enjoyed listening to others and their stories. I also very much enjoy helping others; a trait I believe was modeled all my life by my parents. The Stephen Ministry Training has been a great time of learning and reflecting. I believe I will find being a Stephen Minister challenging but also very rewarding.









Morning Prayer

A 30 - minute service of scripture, prayer, and the Eucharist, from The Book of Common Worship - Daily Prayer. We meet every Wednesday morning 8:45-9:15 in the Sanctuary. Starting

September 3, 2025 Hope to see you there.

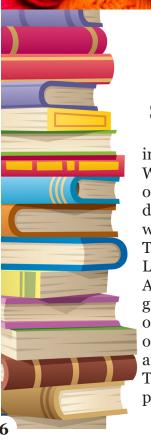
WELCOME NEWBORN BABIES!

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.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Please join us for one hour on the third Tuesday of each month. We will be meeting from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. in the PW Productions Room (#27) on September 16th. 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 Robbie Knox for details. Our Prayer Shawl Ministry started in the fall of 2007, and so far we have made over 950 prayer shawls, and over 918 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!



New Book Study

Thursday, September 25 at 10:00 AM in the fellowship hall. We will meet every other Thursday to discuss a book that we can read together. The first book is The Little Liar, by Mitch Albom. This is a great book with lots of emerging themes of truth, honesty, and relationships. The book can be purchased on-line or

at a local bookstore. Let the office know if you need us to order a copy for you. We'll include Advent and Lent studies in addition to other titles throughout the vear. Jan Eubank, Chris Erde, and Beth Yarborough will be leading this discussion. Be sure and get it on your calendar. For more information, call the church office or email Beth at bethy@ aikenpresbyterian.org

The Little Liar

Sept.25 Oct. 9

Oct. 23

Advent Nov. 6

Nov.20 Dec.4

Falling upward

Jan. 15, 2026

Jan. 29 Feb. 12

Lenten Study

Feb. 26

Mar. 5

Mar. 12

Mar. 19 Mar. 26

To Be Determined

Apr. 9 Apr. 23

May 7



Day of Service 2025 Saturday October 18th







Schedule:

8:00-8:45 Breakfast on the West Lawn 8:45 Blessing, group photo and dismissal 9:00-noon Work at the various sites Here is a list of the projects we will be working on. The actual project work will be determined as we get closer to the date:

ACTS Chair: Beth Beckham

Area Churches Together Serving is a local organization which provides services such as a food bank, financial support and transportation as well as a re-sale store.

Stand at the Crossroads Chair: Jean Schwalbert

A place for mothers and children to get back on their feet. The residents can stay for up to two years as well as get the help they need.

Children's Place Chair: John Elgin

A place for children who have experienced physical or emotional trauma to get help and healing.

Cumbee Center Chair: Dee Verley-Matthews Giving women in abusive relationships a safe place to go.

Project Vision Chair: Steve Jahn
Helping members of the community by supplying

help such as wheelchair ramps and home repairs. **Community Medical Clinic Chair: Tamra Erde**Providing medical services to people who need them.

Habitat ReStore Chair: Lucy Sutter

A store where gently used items are sold to help raise funds to build homes for people in the community.

Shepeard Bloodmobile Chair: Chuck Dynarski Collecting blood for the community.

Tri-Development Center Chair: Vic SowersGiving help and support to individuals with disabilities in Aiken County.

Soup Making Chair: Sandy EvansMaking and then delivering soup to our church members in need.



Please join with the women of our church as we begin the morning gathering and Bible study on Wednesday, September 10 @ 10 o'clock in the Fellowship Hall. The evening gathering is Thursday, September 18 @ 6:30 pm in the parlor. Beth Yarborough will lead our morning session, followed by a salad lunch. Please bring a salad to share.

On Friday, August 8, PW provided lunch for the Women's Build of Habitat for Humanity. Amy Gray coordinated, delivered, and set up the lunch items in a buffet style. About 15 workers helped themselves at the work site on Catawba Street.

Both the morning and evening gathering members provided food. A list of the items prepared/furnished follows:

24 chicken salad sandwiches, 18 ham and cheese or pimento cheese sandwiches 24 bags individual chips/pretzels 2 gallons iced tea, 2 gallons lemonade, water and ice 12 brownies, 12 cookies Grapes and watermelon slices A vegan salad Left overs were delivered to Nurture Home.

PW has participated in this event for over 10 years and welcomed the opportunity to assist once again. We look forward to continued years of service with the Women's Build program at Habitat for Humanity. This program allows women experience in the construction trade. Owners are required to contribute sweat equity time during the build, and Amy and her helpers met the owner and one of her children that day.



BEAUX
ARTS
CHAMBER
ENSEMBLE



Thursday, September 11, 2025 Noon in the Sanctuary

> 224 Barnwell Ave. NW 803-648-2662 aikenpresbyterian.org

Fall

Concert

is just around the corner! We welcome a very talented group of musicians. Join us on September 11th at Noon!

Juilliard trained violinist Erika Venable (associate concert master of Miami City Ballet Orchestra)

Professor of Palm Beach Atlantic University cellist Claudio Jaffe (principal cello of Palm Beach Symphony)

Steinway Artist Tao Lin (visiting professor of Shanghai Normal University and faculty at Bowdoin International Music Festival)

Program will include the famous Cafe Music by American composer Paul Schoenfield.

Cafe Music took root in the composer's experience in filling in for a friend as the pianist of a trio that played regularly in a restaurant in St. Paul. Primarily intended as live background music for diners, the trio performed pieces from early 20th-century America and late 19thcentury Vienna. The idea presented itself to use the thematic styles, harmonies, and typical gestures of this thricefamiliar music as the basis for an original work for the same ensemble -- violin, piano, and cello.



Calling All Singers and Ringers!

Do you love to make a joyful noise? Now is the perfect time to get involved in our church's music ministry! **Choir** Rehearsals begin Wednesday, September 3rd at 7:00 PM in the choir room. Whether you're a seasoned singer or just love to sing praises, we welcome all voices high and low!

Handbell Choir Rehearsals start Wednesday, September 24th at 5:30 PM. No experience necessary—just a willingness to learn and ring for the glory of God!

Come share your talents, grow in fellowship, and be a blessing through music.
All are welcome—bring a friend!



September 28
and
all of October
are available on the
flower calendar





Happy Fall Y'all! I know that "officially" it's not fall until September 22, however, school is back in session, college classes have started, the Cubs are locking down a playoff slot, and there's football on the tv, so...Happy Fall Y'all! I love this season of the year because I get to see people coming home to FPCA on Sunday mornings. The past few weeks the pews have been a little fuller, the smiles bigger, and the laughter louder, it's been great, it's been fun, so if you haven't made it back yet, come join in! Officially our FPCA Fall Kick-Off Cookout is Sunday September 7, right after worship on the west lawn and

in the Fellowship Hall. We'll enjoy fellowship, fun and games for the kids, plenty of good conversation, and I'm sure boatloads of smiles and laughter!

Hopefully everyone's had their opportunities to rest and recharge over the summer, now it's time to rally together for the ministries God has planned for our congregation. This is a wonderful time of year, filled with hope and excitement for our future because we know that God isn't anywhere near done with using us to share love and grace in Aiken and beyond. So, with the strength that is born of hope, let's use this year's Kick-Off Day as our re-set, our day to each re-claim our place at FPCA, and to recommit as active members in the congregation we all love! I'll see you soon! Chris



Dear First Pres. Family:

Over the years you have been so incredibly gracious, supportive, loving, and compassionate with me through a range of difficult times – from cancer to accidents to the loss of beloved animals. And you have celebrated all the good things with me with equal generosity! I hope you know how much it means to me to know you are always there. From your caring calls, cards, prayers, and prayer shawls, to the sharing of food and sanctuary flowers, you have lifted me up more than you can realize. I am deeply grateful for your continuing kindness.

Long overdue ... hugs all around, Marti Healv

Dear FPCA,

Many thanks for the prayers, food, and flowers sent for my pup, Oatee, and I as we each were recovering from accidents that involved stitches! But we're now both on the mend! Praises be! Thanks,
Dee

Dear First Pres,

I am grateful for my church family for all your get well wishes, birthday cards, lovely flowers, and prayers for the family.

Thank you all so much, Marjorie Milne



Navigating Griefland

8 week small-group event for anyone dealing with grief.

As grief can affect us for many reasons, whatever kind of loss you're dealing with, you're welcome to join us.

Peggy Haymes, the author of
Navigating Griefland is a colleague
whom I have known for several
years. Peggy has served as a
licensed therapist, church staff
member, interim pastor, devotional
magazine editor, hospital chaplain
and coach. More information
will be forth-coming and if you're
interested in finding out more
about Navigating Griefland, please
call the church office or email Beth
at bethy@aikenpresbyterian.org.



		<u>Septembe</u>	r <u>2025</u>	
Monday, September 1, 2 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Office Closed	Thursday, September 11 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Preschool Sanctuary	2:00 PM - 4:00 PM 7:15 PM - 9:00 PM
Tuesday, September 2, 2 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 9:00 AM - 9:15 AM	2025 Preschool Preschool Chapel	2:30 PM - 4:00 PM 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM	Concert Finance Committee Pickleball	Monday, September 22, 2 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM	Pickleball Stephen Ministry Meeting	Friday, September 12, 2 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM	025 Preschool	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Tuesday, September 23, 2
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM 7:00 PM - 8:45 PM	Boy Scout Scouts BSA	Sunday, September 14, 2 8:20 AM - 9:15 AM 9:15 AM - 9:30 AM	2025 Men's Breakfast Coffee	7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 9:00 AM - 9:15 AM 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM
Wednesday, September 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 8:45 AM - 9:15 AM	Preschool Morning Prayer	9:15 AM - 11:45 AM 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Nursery Sunday School Worship	5:30 PM - 7:00 PM 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM 7:00 PM - 8:45 PM
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM	Staff Meeting Choir Water to Wine Band	11:30 AM - 12:30 PM 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Art Wall Diaconate Meeting Indoor Soccer	Wednesday, September 2 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Thursday, September 4, 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM	, 2025 Preschool Pickleball	7:15 PM - 9:00 PM Monday, September 15,	Men's Basketball	8:45 AM - 9:15 AM 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM 5:45 PM - 7:00 PM
Friday, September 5, 20 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM		7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Preschool Pickleball Stephen Leader	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Saturday, September 6, 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM	2025 Water to Wine Band	Tuesday, September 16, 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM	Preschool	Thursday, September 25, 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Sunday, September 7, 2 9:15 AM - 9:30 AM 9:15 AM - 11:45 AM	025 Coffee Nursery	8:30 AM - 10:30 AM 9:00 AM - 9:15 AM 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	PS Fall Pictures Preschool Chapel Prayer Shawl	2:00 PM - 3:00 PM 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM	Sunday School Worship Fall Kick Off	5:00 PM - 6:30 PM 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM	Ministry Pickleball BSA Pack 110	Friday, September 26, 20, 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM 7:15 PM - 9:00 PM	Indoor Soccer Men's Basketball	6:30 PM - 8:30 PM	Stephen Ministry Meeting	Sunday, September 28, 2 9:15 AM - 9:30 AM
Monday, September 8, 2 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	2025 Preschool Endowment	7:00 PM - 8:30 PM 7:00 PM - 8:45 PM Wednesday, September	Boy Scout Scouts BSA	9:15 AM - 11:45 AM 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM	Committee Pickleball Friends Group	7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM 8:45 AM - 9:15 AM	Preschool PS Fall Pictures Morning Prayer	7:15 PM - 9:00 PM
Tuesday, September 9, 2 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 9:00 AM - 9:15 AM	2025 Preschool Preschool	10:00 AM - 11:00 AM 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Staff Meeting Session Choir	Monday, September 29, 2 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	Chapel Pickleball BSA Pack 110 Preschool	Thursday, September 18 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM	3, 2025 Preschool PS Fall Pictures Pickleball	Tuesday, September 30, 2 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM 7:00 PM - 8:45 PM	Board Meeting Boy Scouts Scouts BSA	5:00 PM - 6:30 PM 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM	Presbyterian Women	
Wednesday, September 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM	Preschool	Friday, September 19, 2 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM	Preschool	
8:45 AM - 9:15 AM 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Morning Prayer Presbyterian Women	Sunday, September 21, 2 9:15 AM - 9:30 AM 9:15 AM - 11:45 AM	Coffee Nursery	
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Mission Committee Choir	9:30 AM - 10:30 AM 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM	Sunday School Worship Youth Pool Party	

Party

Men's Basketball 2025 Preschool Pickleball Book Group 2025 Preschool Preschool Chapel Pickleball BSA Pack 110 **Boy Scout** Scouts BSA Preschool MSG work Session Morning Prayer Handbells Wednesday Dinner Choir 5, 2025 Preschool Thursday Morning Bk Study Nominating Committee Pickleball 025 Preschool 2025 Coffee Nursery Sunday School Worship Indoor Soccer Men's Basketball 2025 Pickleball Friends Group 2025 Pickleball **Boy Scout**

Indoor Soccer