

# ***THE WINDOW***

***First Presbyterian Church***

***Hendersonville, TN***

***August 2024***



Dear Friends,

My sabbatical has been a wonderful, life-changing adventure. I am looking forward to being back in the office, pulpit, and your lives. Several months before the sabbatical, I read a very simple verse from the letter of Peter (2 Peter 3:18). “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.” This verse has become my guiding light through this sabbatical.

My readings, Bible study, reflection, and travels have deepened my faith and calling as your pastor. I have grown in the grace and knowledge of Christ. As we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, we glorify Him in our lives. I look forward to sharing with you the ways I have grown in grace and knowledge.

It seems each week added to the adventure. The Abbey of Gethsemani started me off well with quiet reflection. The silent retreat created space for me to listen. This experience helped slow me down to be reflective and open to what God wanted to say to me during these three months. My Florida trip with Gracie was the most challenging. Gracie and I had a wonderful time traveling to Miami and Sebring to visit my brother and his wife, and my parents. My parents had a difficult week with mice and the A/C going out. A giant moth kept Gracie from sleeping, causing her to wake me up three times to go on a midnight moth hunt. We finally eliminated the pest. Unfortunately, Dad fell twice, once in the middle of the night. They need a lot more assistance these difficult days. Scotland was our highlight. What an amazing trip to see long history, beautiful landscapes, and the birthplace of Presbyterianism.

Pam and I had a wonderful beach trip. We loved watching the waves, trying to count the stars, filling our stomachs with seafood (gained several pounds), and spending time together. The kids joined us for a second week which was filled with noise, energy, creating memories, and building relationships. One highlight of the trip was Harper, our grandchild, calling me Poppy for the first time. After she got home, she was asking, “Where’d you go, Poppy.” I also got to spend the weekend with Doug, my colleague from seminary. We have not seen each other in years but talk monthly. It was good to be with him and his family, talk about old times, and hear him preach.

I read eight books covering topics on leadership, the church, and the importance of the Bible; portions of three books on Scotland and Presbyterian history, and several journals. I interviewed five retired pastors to discuss ways to become a stronger, more effective pastor. I attended photography classes online with The Great Courses and talked with a hospice chaplain to learn more about hospice.

I have several favorites from this sabbatical time. I will leave you with my favorite quote by Thomas Keating, “The start, middle and end of the spiritual journey is the conviction that God is always present.” I want to live my life, build my relationships, and lead the church with this conviction, God is always present.

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Thank you again for this chance to rest, reflect, and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. I look forward to being back in the office on Thursday, August 1.

Love and Prayers, *Michael*

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## ADULT FELLOWSHIP GATHERING SATURDAY, AUGUST 3RD!



All adult members and friends of FPC, please mark your calendar for **SATURDAY, August 3rd** for our summer adult fellowship gathering. Kathy and Sprigg Ebbert have graciously agreed to host this event at their home located at **106 Windward Point, Hendersonville**. We will gather at **6:30PM** and look forward to an evening of good food and meaningful fellowship. Kathy and Sprigg will fire up their grill to provide a main meat dish, and attendees are asked to bring a side dish, salad, or dessert to share with the group. Adult fellowship gatherings are held quarterly at the homes of our members, and we encourage all FPC members and friends to join us. It is a wonderful opportunity to nurture our connection as a church family in a relaxed, casual and fun atmosphere! In order to assist with planning, we ask members to please RSVP to either Kathy Ebbert or Marikay Burke (724-301-7484 or [marikay091759@comcast.net](mailto:marikay091759@comcast.net)).

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The **NaCoMe Church-Wide Retreat** will be September 13-15, 2024! We plan to arrive on Friday night and stay through Sunday mid-morning. Participants have the option to stay Friday night, Saturday night, both nights or come only for the day on Saturday.



We are planning to have some fun at the upper lake with canoes and kayaks, plenty of creek walking time, a boat parade for kids (and adults) and much more! We need to have a firm count of those attending by September 1. Costs to attend are below:

Save the Date – NaCoMe Retreat  
September 13-15, 2024

Cabin costs: \$50 per night per family  
Meal costs: \$12/meal for adults, \$9/meal for K-5<sup>th</sup>, free for PreK and under. We are planning for the following meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday.



There will be a sign-up table on Sundays starting August 11 or you can email/call Eva Dye ([evadye@yahoo.com](mailto:evadye@yahoo.com) or 615-559-3860) to register or if you have questions.

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First Wednesday Coffee Talk will meet on August 7 at 10 a.m. in the Historical Room (across from the church office). You are invited to come join the fun, meet new friends, and celebrate everyone. Our circle is welcoming and full of good cheer. It's Coffee O'clock and You are Brew-tiful,...we have tea and cookies, too. You are invited to kick start the month of August with us.



# Daily Bible Reading—2024

In 2024, the daily Bible reading plan is reading the New Testament. Using the Navigators tool, take 5 minutes to read the scriptures assigned for the day and read 5 days a week. You can underline or highlight key words or phrases; write what you read in your own words; ask questions to deepen your understanding, like who, what, why, where, or how; or think about how the passage applies to your life.

August 1	1 Corinthians 3
August 2	1 Corinthians 4
August 3	Reflection
August 4	Reflection
August 5	1 Corinthians 5
August 6	1 Corinthians 6
August 7	1 Corinthians 7
August 8	1 Corinthians 8
August 9	1 Corinthians 9
August 10	Reflection
August 11	Reflection
August 12	1 Corinthians 10
August 13	1 Corinthians 11
August 14	1 Corinthians 12
August 15	1 Corinthians 13
August 16	1 Corinthians 14
August 17	Reflection
August 18	Reflection
August 19	1 Corinthians 15
August 20	1 Corinthians 16
August 21	2 Corinthians 1
August 22	2 Corinthians 2
August 23	2 Corinthians 3
August 24	Reflection
August 25	Reflection
August 26	2 Corinthians 4
August 27	2 Corinthians 5
August 28	2 Corinthians 6
August 29	2 Corinthians 7
August 30	2 Corinthians 8
August 31	Reflection

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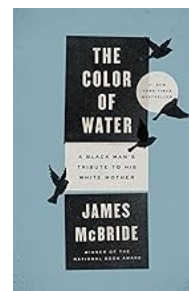
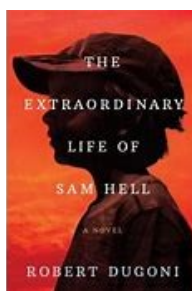


The First Presbyterian Church Evening Book Club has been reading and discussing a book monthly for more than 15 years. Since Covid, we have been meeting monthly by Zoom.

We are currently reading *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni. Born with ocular albinism, Sam sees the world through different eyes and was an immediate “misfit;” his mother called it “God’s will.” Follow Sam’s journey from “misfit” to small-town eye doctor until he can finally see what truly matters.

We will discuss *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* on **Monday, August 12, at 6:30 pm.** We invite you to join us from the convenience of your own home. All we need is your email address so our “Zoom Master” Charles Lott can send you a link. For any further questions, contact Jackie Decker ([thepauldeckers@comcast.net](mailto:thepauldeckers@comcast.net)) or Charles Lott ([clott@bellsouth.net](mailto:clott@bellsouth.net))

**Looking ahead:** Our September book is *The Color of Water* by James McBride; our discussion date is September 9 at 6:30 pm.



# FAITH AND GRACE: SPIRITUAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES COMING THIS FALL

Exciting things are happening at our church during the Sunday 9 A.M. hour. After an insightful and applicable examination of the fruit of the Spirit during the summer, we're moving into fall with two new offerings. If you've never checked out any of our Sunday morning classes, we hope you'll join us this fall and see what's going on.

No classes will be held August 4 because we hope everyone will stay after church to join the celebration luncheon for Pastor Michael, but we will resume Sunday school for all ages beginning August 11. Two new and exciting adult series are on the horizon.

On **August 11 and 18** we'll be discussing *Faith at Home*, a reminder that our devotion to God is not just for Sundays. Elements of our faith are reflected in our homes and routines. This study will challenge us to incorporate spiritual rituals and rhythms into our daily and weekly schedules. It will be relevant to parents and grandparents who want to ensure that young family members see active faith regularly modeled and expressed in their homes. It will also be relevant to anyone who wants to explore how to express their faith on a deeper, more consistent level. All ages are welcome. This was a popular class at Montreat this summer, and Tonya Elkins has brought it back for our benefit. Don't miss this opportunity to strengthen *your* faith at home.

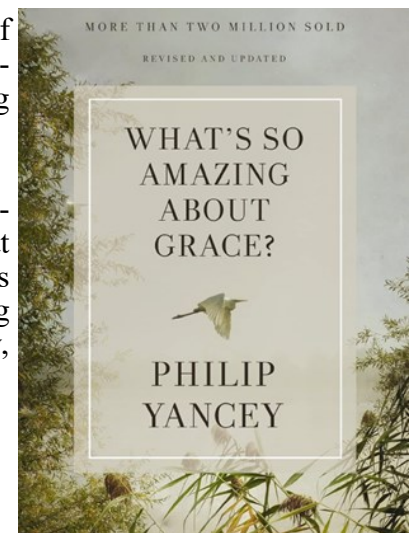
Then, on **August 25**, we'll begin a 12-week study of Philip Yancey's powerful book, *What's So Amazing about Grace?*

"In one of his last acts before his death, Jesus forgave a thief dangling on a cross, knowing full well the thief had converted out of plain fear. That thief would never study the Bible, never attend synagogue or church, and never make amends to all those he had wronged. He simply said, 'Jesus, remember me,' and Jesus promised, 'today you will be with me in paradise.' It was another shocking reminder that grace does not depend on what we have done for God but rather what God has done for us." (From *What's So Amazing about Grace?* chapter 4)

Have you ever felt unworthy to stand before God, undeserving of His love? If so, you're right. None of us deserves the love that God so freely bestows, which is why *grace* is so essential to our salvation and ongoing relationship with Him. Grace, by definition, is undeserved favor. It can't be earned, yet it must be humbly acknowledged and accepted if we're to have a growing relationship with Christ.

*What's So Amazing about Grace?* will investigate the wonder and power of God's grace using short video segments, group Bible study/discussions, and personal study options for those who wish to go a little deeper. It is a fascinating and potentially life-changing series.

We hope you'll join the enthusiasm and fellowship of our Sunday morning classes this fall, beginning August 11. Meetings are upstairs in the Session Room at 9:00. Please schedule these on your calendar and come whenever you can. As we individually strengthen our faith at home and develop a better understanding of God's grace, we can then increase our witness as a church to friends, family, and community . . . and see amazing results.





Reflections...when people look in our church window, what do they see? They would see people singing and resighting liturgy. They may see music rehearsals, Bible studies, and discussion groups. They would certainly see eating. They would see laughing, talking, and praying. Our first priority as a church is reflecting the love and care of Jesus Christ. When people look in a window, may they see a reflection of Jesus.



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Coming in the September Newsletter: All the amazing details and photos from their trip!

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**Participants included: Carrie Batey, Luke Batey, Luke Batey, Robert Wells, Kathy Ebbert, Mark Lloyd, Parker Lloyd, Griffin Lloyd, Drew Hall, Harrison Parks, Toby Parrotta, Jaden Wells and Carter Wells.**



**Tonya & Ariana hiking and enjoying the views**



**Getting ready to perform**



**Art Display in Anderson Auditorium**



**Beautiful Scenery at Montreat**



**Brian Seemann, from the blog Two Tacos High**



**David M. Harris, director of the Raleigh Ringers**

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Brian and David are both about as famous as you can get in the handbell world, so it was pretty amazing to get to work with them—Laurie Dishman.

## Worship & Music Week at Montreat, June 23-29, 2024 – “Lead Us Homeward”

Well, our group attending the Worship & Music Week at Montreat in June wasn't exactly the people we expected. We missed Jean and Andrew Getter but know they were with us in spirit as Andrew was recovering from his surgery back at home. Jean had planned the whole trip for us! Another difference this year was where we stayed. The Reynolds Lodge was a wonderful place to stay and get to know some amazing new friends, and it was only a short walk to Anderson Auditorium, where all the worship services and concerts were held as well as some classes.

As Linda Ballenger said of her first time at the conference this year, “The best part of Montreat is the people” and “the camaraderie at the cabin with the folks from Lexington, KY, who were so gracious to let us share their cabin.” Linda’s favorite class was the one led by a Catholic priest from Atlanta, GA, who started a homeless choir at his church, which became a ministry all over the country. She would love to start one here. Any volunteers to help organize it? Tonya Elkins and Ariana Brew got to do some shopping and to go hiking a bit where they spent some great time together in God’s creation. Tonya played in a handbell choir and took some other classes, including a drumming class. Laurie Dishman enjoyed playing in three different handbell choirs, including the auditioned bell choir. The handbell clinicians were David M. Harris, director of the famous *Raleigh Ringers* handbells ([www.rr.org](http://www.rr.org)), and Brian Seemann, from the handbell podcast *Two Tacos High* ([www.twotacoshigh.com](http://www.twotacoshigh.com)) – two pretty famous people in handbell circles (pun intended)!

As always, the worship services and concerts were amazing. Through this year’s theme, “Lead Us Homeward,” we were challenged to find our home in Christ, no matter our circumstances or background, through thought-provoking liturgy and sermons. The worship music took us around the world with styles from many different countries represented, and an impressive art display evolved on the main stage with additions to it every day reflecting more of the homeward theme. Each evening, there were concerts presenting some of the best music you will find anywhere – a fun organ concert, a talent show led by the youth, Beer and Hymns down in the town of Black Mountain, the chamber choir concert (auditioned groups: handbells, high school choir, and adult choir), and the final concert on Friday evening. How can you not be in awe of our creator’s handiwork with all this set in the grand backdrop of the majestic Blue Ridge Mountains!? If you’ve never been before or even if you have, I agree with Linda: “Y’all should go!”

Next year’s theme is “Clothed in Love” and promises to be just as wonderful. There are two weeks to choose from (June 15-20 or June 22-27). We would love to take a larger group in 2025, so be praying and planning now for this opportunity!

**Our group—**  
**Linda Ballenger**  
**Ariana Brew**  
**TonyaElkins**  
**Laurie Dishman**



**CHURCH STAFF**

**Michael Davis, *Pastor***

michael@hendersonvillefpc.org

**Linda Agee, *Church Administrator***

linda@hendersonvillefpc.org

**Carolyn McCoy, *P.D.S. Director***

PDSDirector123@gmail.com

**First Presbyterian Church**

**172 W. Main St. | Hendersonville, TN**

**(615) 824-8604 ; Fax (615) 824-3631**

**Website: [www.hendersonvillefpc.org](http://www.hendersonvillefpc.org)**

**Email: [linda@hendersonvillefpc.org](mailto:linda@hendersonvillefpc.org)**

**Sunday School—9:00 a.m.**

**Worship Service—10:00 a.m.**



**Y.T.D. thru June 2024**  
**Revenue \$ 148,264.91**  
**Expenses \$ 174,123.72**  
**Shortfall \$ - 25,858.81**

**August**



- 2 - Eva Dye  
Missie Colson
- 4 - Brenda Hubbell
- 5- Jimmy Tarbutton
- 6 - Nancy Hunt
- 12 - Drew Watson
- 14 - Mitzi Head  
Sheppard Watson
- 15 - Linda Ballenger
- 20 - Kaylie Parrotta
- 25 - Tony Williams
- 28 - Ariana Brew
- 29 - Sarah Ice