THE WINDOW

First Presbyterian Church

Hendersonville, TN

July 2026

Dear Friends,

We have been on a vision discussion since November 2, 2024. It all started with a Full Circle Assessment with the consultant, Cyclical (paid for by the Presbytery). The congregation participated in an online survey. The Session met with one of the consultants who reviewed the results of the survey. We scored very high, which didn't surprise me. Our highest scores were in worship and relationships.

The session voted on a Future Planning Team to work with a consultant from Cyclical who assisted and communicated with us through phone calls and emails. Casey Thompson, Elizabeth Ipox, Cari Lou Westendorf, and Paul Decker agreed to work together in this discerning process.

The first congregational gathering was on September 14, 2025, at Long Hollow Gardens. After worship, we met in small groups to discuss our past. We discussed Isaiah 43:15-19 and how the past can become an obstacle to future directions. However, the past teaches us about God's faithfulness in the past and future. There was noticeable energy around our worship and music, missions, and relationships.

The next congregational gathering was on November 16 in Martin Hall. After a shortened worship service, in small groups we discussed our future. Where will we be in five years? What would future headlines say about First Presbyterian? There were lively discussions with laughter and commonality. The highlights were: young families and youth, expanding our parking lot and facility for growth and accessibility, capitalizing on quality of music ministry, appreciation for close relationships, and commitment to mission.

The Future Planning Team met over the following months to discuss and discern a vision statement that articulates the top three priorities of our congregation. The consultant was very helpful through this process. At the session meeting on June 15, the Future Planning Team presented a vision statement for the next 3-5 years.

We are a family of all generations, joining our voices in worship and extending our tables in mission — growing together in the ever-expanding Kingdom of God, where every neighbor is welcomed and known by name.

Responding to God's love and grace, our mission is to serve Christ through our service to others.

On Sunday, August 16, we will have a Congregational Meeting to approve this vision and celebrate with a meal. We appreciate Casey Thompson, Elizabeth Ipox, Cari Lou Westendorf, and Paul Decker for working diligently and faithfully to help our congregation identify a vision for our future.

I am excited about the ministry and mission God will do through our lives.

Love and Prayers, Michael

Mattie S. Dunn Fund for Seminary Education: The Mattie S. Dunn Fund, established back in 1999 with a generous $10,000 bequest from a former member, was created to support individuals entering the ministry of the church. The interest income from this fund is to be used to provide monetary grants for the education of these future ministry leaders. If you know of a family member of our congregation who will be entering the ministry, and is interested in receiving financial support, please contact a member of the Missions committee or Pastor Michael.

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Ministry Around the Church

Every Sunday we end our worship service holding hands and singing *Blest Be the Tie That Binds*. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above." The tie that binds our hearts is the love of Jesus Christ. His love inspires and calls us to reach out to others.

There are two other stanzas to this song that describe our commitment to one another. "Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers; our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares. We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear, and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear."

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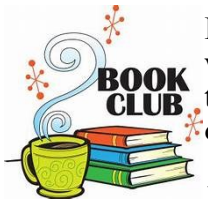

Evening Book Club: The FPC Evening Book Club is currently reading ***The Correspondent*** written by Virginia Evans. In this highly acclaimed novel, which is soon to be a motion picture, Evans teaches us the transformative power of the written word and the beauty of slowing down to reconnect with the people we love.

Join us for our discussion on **Monday evening, July 13,** at **6:30 p.m.**

Read along and meet with us for discussion from the comfort of your own home as we meet by Zoom. Just send an email to our "Zoom Master" Charles Lott so he can send you a link. (crlott@bellsouth.net) For any further questions, contact Jackie Decker (thepauldeckers@comcast.net).

Looking ahead: ***Once We Were Brothers***, by Ronald H. Balson

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Coffee Talk: Ladies, you are invited to First Wednesday Coffee Talk on July 1st at 10:00 a.m. "It's Summertime and the living is easy. The fish are jumping and the cotton is high", and we still like our coffee, and we still like our talk....and we still like to laugh. If you aren't on vacation, join us in the library....there will be cookies...always...and friendship to

Appalachia Service Project

On Sunday morning, June 7, 2026, at about 7:45 a.m., 12 young men and women aged 15 to 19 and 6 adults, left our church to drive 280 miles to a small town in Letcher County, Kentucky for our annual mission trip with the Appalachian Service Project, or more simply, ASP. Our church has supported this important mission for fifty years. 15 of us had served this mission previously, with each ranging from 2 - 19 prior volunteering experiences. Only three were volunteering for the first time.

There were several firsts for us this time—first time to go for the first week of the youth summer program; first time that our entire group worked together at the same site for the entire week; first time to stay at a church-based temporary center instead of an ASP center or one of its temporary summer centers at active or abandoned schools. In fact, we were very close to downtown Whitesburg, Kentucky—a former coal mining town founded in 1842 and located in eastern Kentucky, only 5 miles from the Virginia border, with a population of about 1,800 residents. Whitesburg is the county seat of Letcher County and however small, its residents are very proud of their town and have preserved it well, having obtained a historic overlay over its downtown on the National Register of Historic Places in 2006.

What wasn't new to us was the existence of poverty in the county in which we were assigned to work this year. The median income for a household in Letcher County is $41,793. 24.35% of the population lives below the poverty line, including 29.7% of children under the age of 18 and 14% of those aged 65 and over. 21.4% of the population struggles with food insecurity, which rises to 24% of children. Additionally, Whitesburg was completely flooded in the devasting floods of 2022. 25% of the county residents rely on SNAP benefits… which is significantly higher than the overall Kentucky average of 12%. Having enough extra income to pay for normal home repairs is simply not possible for many homeowners.

This is why ASP exists and serves Appalachian residents in 5 states. And this is why our church sends volunteers there at least once a year to devote a week of our time to make repairs that are essential to make those homes safer, warmer and drier for their residents. In past years, our church used to send three groups each year to different parts of Appalachia. The needs are great.

Our project was a home that Mrs. Christine and her husband had built by hand from salvaged materials more than 25 years ago, though some of the work was never fully finished. Widowed about six years ago, Mrs. Christine needed several repairs. Her heating and cooling bills were very high because the house was poorly insulated. Two windows had been broken by would-be thieves and boarded over with plywood. The largest portion of our job was to wrap the entire structure in Tyvek paper, cut and install J-channel to hold the insulation board and siding in place, cut and install foam insulation board over the entire home, tape the foam board, and then install white vinyl siding. The floor in one of her two bedrooms was rotten and uneven, making the room uninhabitable and our job was to install new flooring. All these repairs were included in the contract the homeowner had signed with ASP. Starting these repairs was our scope of work for the week.

However, when we removed the flooring in that one room on the first day, we discovered that the outside beam, all the floor joists, and the supporting posts had been badly damaged by rot and termites. There were no concrete footers; instead, the support posts for the house rested on limestone beneath the soil for support. The scope of our work had to be increased. We proposed a solution to our center director, who was required to call in a construction consultant the next day. Fortunately, the proposed solution was accepted and the increase in scope was approved. Also not within the original scope was her front door, which had been kicked in years ago, did not close properly, and had a substantial hole in it. She had proudly purchased a new door 10 years earlier, shortly before she and her husband were in a serious car accident that began his decline in health. They had no children and no one to help install it. Lastly, the house had no soffit covering the eaves around the roof or above the porches, and Mrs. Christine was plagued with wasps nesting in many of them. One of our college-age kids drew up a design and materials list and presented that to our center director. And largely due to the donations of this church that we delivered when we arrived on Sunday, that soffit was also added to the scope of work!

Appalachia Service Project (Continued) - There were 5 churches that were assigned to our center, and 84 total volunteers. ASP tightly organizes every day around a very busy schedule. Each center operates with only 4 staff members plus a part-time cook that prepares breakfast and dinner. So there is a daily "chore chart" for each work group to ensure meals are served, dishes washed, the kitchen and dining room are cleaned, bathrooms and showers are cleaned, trash is collected and taken to the dumpster, and the supply/tool room is kept tidy and organized.

Each day starts with a musical wake-up at 7:00 a.m. and devotional delivered by the volunteer groups at 7:15 a.m. Breakfast is served immediately thereafter and following breakfast, each work group is responsible for preparing their own sandwiches for lunch. Tools and materials needed for the work that day at each work site are ordered the night before and are ready for each work group to load them into their vehicles each morning. Our team met to discuss the work assignments and goals for the day, engage in some leadership training, and then we headed to the work site typically around 8:45 a.m.

We work at the site until 3:30 or 4:00 p.m. and return to the center, where there is a schedule so that 84 showers can be taken in the 3 men's and 3 women's showers. Our group leaders debrief with the center staff about the work completed that day and the needs for the following day, and some daily chores are completed before dinner, which occurs sharply at 6:00 p.m. There is additional time for chores after dinner, followed by the evening gatherings, which begin at 7:30 p.m. and typically finish by 8:00 p.m. Afterward, there is more time for chores and some leisure time for cards and board games or for some…a run to Wal-Mart to pick up lunch supplies for the next day. Lights are out at 10:30 p.m. and each day's schedule is the same.

We didn't—and weren't expected to—complete the entire scope of work. But our kids completed the repairs to the flooring infrastructure; installed new subflooring (leaving two boards not nailed down so an electrician can make some wiring repairs); removed the two broken windows, added studs, insulation and drywall; installed the front door; completely finished the foam board, siding and soffit on one end of the home, the foam board and siding on 1/2 two more sides; and the foam board on the remaining half of those two sides. We left the next team with an inventory of the materials remaining on site and a clear list of the work to be done. We were very pleased with the work we did, and the homeowner was beyond delighted.

ASP is not glamorous or leisurely. Our sleeping space is cramped. Five-minute showers are the rule. We have our own team chores to complete each day as well as the center chores. We work hard both on our work site and at the center. Our kids learn new skills. We make mistakes and solve problems together. There is little free time or any tolerance for sleeping in or missing any of the group activities. And yet, on the final night when we shared our experiences with the group, every single one of the kids said they had fun and also volunteered they will do it again next year! We hope to have even more new volunteers next year!

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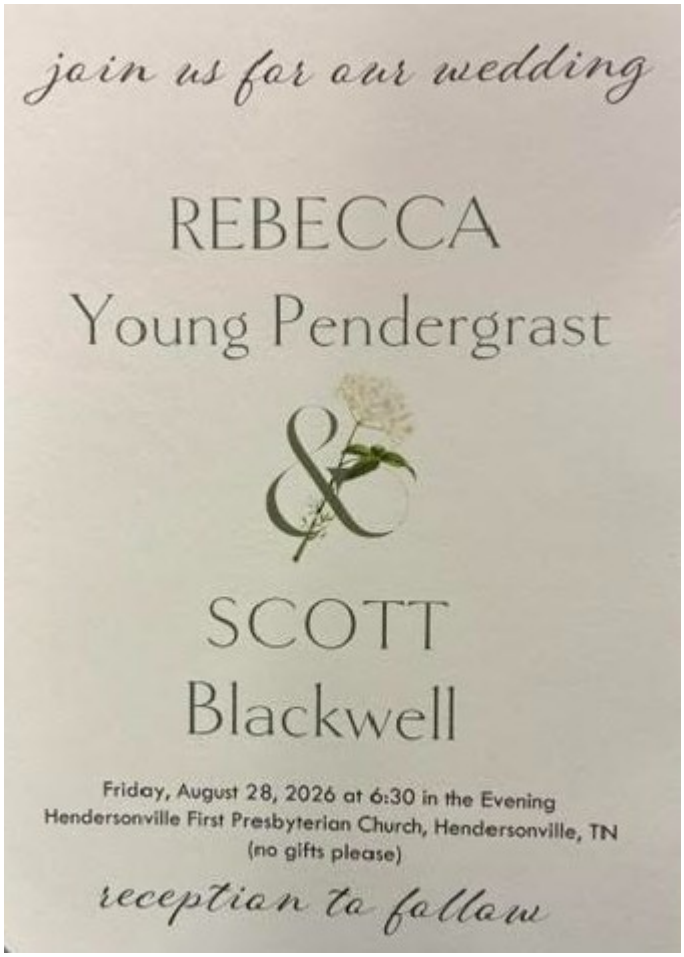
DAILY BIBLE READING

This year we will read through the New Testament. There will be one chapter for each weekday and no reading assignments on weekends. This time can be used to reflect on the weekly readings. Here are some reflective questions after you read the chapter through twice. Is there a word or phrase that gets my attention? How does this touch my life? Is there an invitation for me? How will this impact my life today?

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

Mark Your Calendar



The church office will be closed on Friday, July 3rd in observance of Independence Day!

SERMONS

July 5 – Michael on vacation – Guest Preacher—Perry Muse

July 12 – Michael on vacation – Guest Preacher—Tom Tyndall

July 19 – God always has a welcome sign, Romans 8:1-4, 12-17

July 26 – God's strong grip, Romans 8:31-39

SESSION ACTIONS

- Prayed for congregation
- Read the session statement of faith
- Approved minutes from May 18, 2026
- Discussed the book, *Proclaiming the Great Ends of the Church* – The Preservation of Truth
- Approved Ministry Unit reports
- Heard and approved verbal report from Discipleship and Education Committee
- Received pastor's report
- Discussed and approved the vision statement and discussed next steps
    - Called a Congregational Meeting for August 18, 2026 to approve the statement
- Approved a $250 gift for Cailyn Wolff to thank her for overseeing the sound and streaming on Sundays.

Church FINANCES

Thru May 2026

Revenue	**$ 123,672.90**
Expenses	**$ 173,081.41**
Shortfall	**$ - 49,408.51**

Rise Against Hunger August 22nd!

Congratulations to Lucas & Leah Niven on the birth of their daughter, Naomi, born on June 9th, weighing 6 lbs, 15 oz. The ladies of the church will be hosting a Sip & See on July 25th from 2:00—4:00 p.m. in Martin Hall to welcome Leah and baby Naomi! Hope you can join us!

"Yes, Mrs. Bobaloo, I'm sure Fifi is a fine soprano, but the choir is quite full at the moment."

CHURCH STAFF

Michael Davis, *Pastor*

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Linda Agee, *Church Administrator*

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Sheri Brazelton, *Music Director*

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Lee Druce, *Pianist*

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Tina Yar, *Nursery Attendant*

Tina.ostovar@gmail.com

Lauren Finn, *P.D.S. Director*

PDSDirector123@gmail.com

1	-	Lucas Bish
2	-	Janice Yearout
3	-	Margaret Ewald
		Ben McCrary
7	-	Becca Pendergrast
9	-	Gary Head
		Gayle Casey
11	-	Richard Roche
12	-	Ellen Getter
16	-	Luke Batey
17	-	Lesley Parrotta
18	-	Drew Getter
23	-	Carl Scott
		Amy Iceman
26	-	Stuart Ruffin
27	-	Ethan Iceman
31	-	John Allen

First Presbyterian Church

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Sunday School—9:00 a.m.

Worship Service—10:00 a.m.