



First Presbyterian Church South Charleston, West Virginia

March 2021

"Everyday...is the day the Lord has made— Rejoice! and be glad in it!"

Moving forward with Rock Lake

We are excited to announce that both Rock Lake session and our session officially committed to move forward with sharing Pastor Sharon as the pastor of both churches. 3 representatives were selected from each church to meet with a Presbytery representative to work out specific details. (i.e. how many hours she will work for each church, how the salary and benefits will divided.) Our representatives are Bob Lilly, Tom Titus, and Cheryl Eary. The committee of representatives expect to have their first meeting this month! Officially, Pastor Sharon will be in a part-time covenant relationship with Rock Lake. Pastor Sharon's terms of call will be reduced to part time for us. At this time there is no conversation about uniting any ministries. Watch for further news.

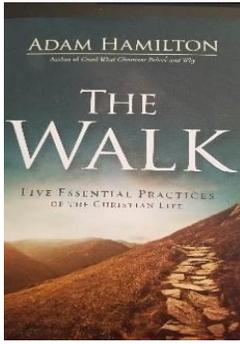
Hang in there!

"Turn, O Lord! How long? Have compassion on your servants! Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our day. Make us glad as many days as you have afflicted us, and as many years as we have seen evil." (Ps 90:13-15)

When you get this, it will be a year since we had in-person worship. It will be a year since we started wearing masks and being more confined to home. It seems like forever since we were able to live our "normal" lives! Now it is March and the weather has been gray and depressing. We hear some people have had their vaccines, but some of us will wait months before we can all get them. Be patient my friends. Warmer and sunnier weather is on its way. Vaccines are on their way. It is probably emotionally hardest for us when we see hints of life improving, yet we haven't reached that point. Rest in God for a little while longer. Know that God is with you. God suffers with you in your pain. *"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me." (Ps 23:4)*

If you are suffering from depression and/or anxiety right now, please know that many of us are struggling. You are not alone in your pain. It has been a tremendously difficult year. Many people also struggle with the pain of this pandemic year. Please reach out to me or to someone who will remind you of how much you are loved. Pray, talk, listen, read scripture, and take care of yourself. Do something that will lift your spirits, even if it is something small, like eating a candy bar. A therapist friend of mine told me, "Ask yourself, 'What can I do to improve this moment?'" Keep asking yourself that question, "What can I do to improve this moment?" Then do it. You probably can't fix the big problems of the world, but you can improve this moment.

(continued, next page)



The Walk....

Join our walk with God this Lent. Each Sunday we will introduce one of 5 Essential Practices of the Christian Life, and each week we will commit to practicing these spiritual disciplines in our daily lives. Let's grow in our faith this Lent. You can purchase the book online and study it more in depth. I highly recommend that.

Great News!

We have grant money for upgraded video and audio equipment! We have received the check and equipment will be ordered shortly. Thank you for being patient with our livestreaming. The equipment we have now worked for the short term, but the new equipment will give us clearer picture quality. It will enable us to splice videos and captions directly into the livestream. It will also have audio which is fed through our sound system, greatly improving sound quality. We are most eager to have these improvements to improve your worship experience.

May God give you peace, strength and joy to see you through.

Pastor Sharon



SPECIAL OFFERINGS
ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Contributions Support Disaster Relief, Self-development of People, and Hunger
(Offerings received throughout Lent, dedicated on Easter Sunday, April 4)

In a world of disaster, hunger, and oppression, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) – Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People – all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Three Ways to Contribute to OGHS:

1. Mail a check to the church, indicating "OGHS" on the memo line
2. Use our online giving portal on fpcscwv.org to make a payment by credit card or direct withdrawal from your bank account
3. Drop off a cash contribution in the mail slot at the church in an envelope clearly marked with your name and "OGHS 2021"

Laud & Honor on Palm Sunday



The Palm Sunday anthem “All Glory Laud and Honor” is one of Christendom’s oldest hymns. St. Theodulf of Orleans, who helped reform the church under Charlemagne, wrote the lyrics in the year 820 while imprisoned in France.

The lyrics recount Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, an event the medieval church reenacted every Palm Sunday. Clergy and townspeople processed from fields through the city gates, behind a Jesus figure riding a donkey. At the gates, children began singing the hymn in Latin — *Gloria, laus et honor* — and onlookers soon chimed in.

City gates may be a thing of the past, as the website Hymnary.org notes, yet we still praise our blessed Redeemer “because we know just what kind of King he was and is — an everlasting King who reigns not just in Jerusalem but over the entire earth. What more could we do but praise him with glory, laud and honor.”

All glory, laud and honor to you, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.
You are the King of Israel and David's royal Son,
now in the Lord's name coming, the King and Blessed One.

Feline-Informed Faith

I am the epitome of a “cat lady”: Each of my five felines has taught me a bit about faith. As I settle into bed, Piccolo presses his body tightly against mine. As I type, Tina sits on my lap, often reaching to rest a paw on my hand (the one on the mouse, of course!). Pumpkin cries persistently, even raising his front legs like toddler arms when he wants to be picked up. Yet, as any cat lover knows, these animals can be stubbornly aloof — at least until mealtime.

My cats’ actions make me think about how intentional daily Bible reading is like pressing myself against God. When I see God’s presence in nature or someone’s kindness, pausing to give thanks is like reaching out to touch God’s hand. When I feel needy, I can stretch my spirit toward God’s embrace with an honest prayer. And when I make myself aloof — as, alas, I sometimes do — I can rejoice that God’s love always calls me back, to nourish me again. —Heidi Mann



Creative Tech and Communication Team Tidbits



March is certainly blowing in some exciting news for our church and for the **Creative Tech Team and Communications Committee**. Our committee applied for an Innovative Grant through the WV Presbytery for 10,000 dollars.

We were approved and will be moving forward with updating our audio and technical equipment. We are so excited to be able to use updated technology to expand our ministry in an ever-changing world of social media and to provide quality output to our viewing audience and in our sanctuary for services and events.

If you have any feedback or how we as a committee can improve our communication please reach out by emailing Cheryl Eary at cseary@gmail.com

Paying it Back — and Forward



During the pandemic, acts of kindness seemed especially meaningful. Last spring, as Covid-19 hit Native American communities particularly hard, an interesting transatlantic outreach occurred. Donations from Ireland began appearing in a relief fund for Navajo and Hopi families, leading administrators to suspect the account had been hacked. Then they realized a cross-generational payback was underway.

In 1847, Choctaw Tribe members sent \$170 overseas to Ireland to help with Potato Famine relief. That generosity was never forgotten, and by May 2020, people in Ireland had contributed more than \$4 million toward pandemic assistance for relatives of people who'd helped their ancestors. Many donors included an Irish proverb meaning "In each other's shadows the people live."

The concept of paying it forward dates back to a 1784 letter by Benjamin Franklin. It also echoes Jesus' Golden Rule: "Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Luke 6:31). How might you live out this practice today?



March 4	Leslie Long
	Marsha McIlwain
March 11	Barbara Snyder
March 12	Mark Nelson
March 17	Dave Smith
March 20	Rick Hayes
	Mickey Rector
March 25	Quinn Luzier
March 26	Martha Racer

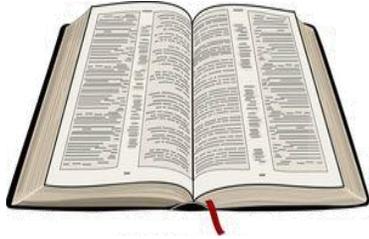
you're invited to take part in a

**100TH BIRTHDAY
CELEBRATION BY MAIL**
for

Mickey Rector

Help us wish MICKEY a Happy Birthday!
by showering her with cards to celebrate
this very momentous occasion.
Your thoughtfulness will make her day special!

Mailing address:
Garden House / #101
201 Edgebrook Drive
Anderson, SC 29621



Sunday School Conference Call LESSONS

“The Ministry of the Old Testament Prophets”

Come, join us in a conference call every Sunday morning from 9:30 - 10:30 am to read and discuss the scripture. All are invited. The more voices and perspectives, the more enlightened we all are. We always conclude our sessions in time for participants to join our on-line church services.

Here's how to join:

1. Call phone number (toll free) **1-978-990-5380**
2. You will be asked to enter an access code which is **3977015**
3. This will put you on the conference call and you will be able to hear from and talk to the others on the call.

The Spring quarter, beginning in March, will introduce the ministry of Old Testament prophets. As representatives and spokespersons for God, their messages were meant to effect social change that conforms to God's desired standards as prescribed by God's law.

Participants usually are sent participant books to help them with discussions. If you wish to join us, contact Becky Smith or Pastor Sharon who will assist you in receiving a participant book.



Ellen Bush moved to Florida on February 26.

Her new address and phone number are:

4367 Pilgrim Way
Jacksonville, FL 32257
304-590-1255

*Please keep Ellen in your thoughts and prayers
as she settles in to her new home and community!*



Now You Can Tithe or Donate Online, Safe & Secure!

We're thrilled to announce that we've made it easier to support the life and work of our church through online giving. You may also support our many (more than 20!) community programs, regardless of where you are in the world. From near or far, you can make sure your precious financial resources are supporting people you know and trust doing important work in our local, regional, national and global communities.

From feeding the hungry on our doorstep to clothing children and families in need to delivering medicine, supplies and educational materials to our friends in Fort Liberté, Haiti, your financial support allows us to continue being just where God wants and needs us to be.

To make an online contribution, simply go to our website: fpcscwv.org

Click on the "give" button on the menu bar.

Scroll down the bottom of the page to the blue bar.

CLICK HERE to tithe or donate using your credit card
and follow the instructions.

*"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness
and the world's deep hunger meet."*

--Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC*



Summer Camp 2021!

We have some exciting news!!
There WILL be summer camp this year.

Registration opens: March 1, 2021

Camp will look a little different this year, so check out our brochure on the following page to learn more.

We hope to see you all this summer!



2021 Dates

Week 1: June 15-20

Week 2: June 22-27

Week 3: June 29-July 4

Week 4: July 6-11

Register at bluestonecamp.org We accept all major credit cards and electronic checks online.

Venture Camp

Also known as "The Hogan Experience." This camp is rustic living in a remote setting away from our main campus. A Bluestone Hogan is an open-air structure with canvas tarps covering all windows and doors.

Venture Camp is for high schoolers, rising 9th grade to 12th grade.

Campers will learn and put into practice a variety of outdoor living skills including cooking with Dutch Ovens! At least one meal will be planned, prepared, and cooked over an open fire each day, and vespers by campfire light will complete each evening. Camper groups will also have the option to participate in extended wilderness hikes and/or paddle seven miles of the Bluestone Reservoir in canoes from Indian Creek to Bertha. In addition, they will experience a meditative "Quest Walk".

Be advised that there is limited capacity for these sessions due to the pandemic.

Venture Camp Pricing

Tier 1 - \$250, Tier 2 - \$310, Tier - \$370

There are hyperlinks all throughout this brochure. Click on any picture to Register Online! Click on any header to be redirected to that section of the Bluestone Webpage!



2021 Bluestone Summer Camp

"This is Our Prayer"

Bluestone will look a little different this year as we are committed to following the most up-to-date CDC Guidelines, including, when applicable, social distancing, mask wearing indoors, keeping *non-bubble* groups separate, etc.

For this reason, we are offering just two types of camping experiences.

Family Camp

Family Camp is cabin based camping, and "family" is not restricted to nuclear family, but anyone in your bubble. This can be a couple, cousins, a youth leader and youth group, or a group of friends. Activities will be similar to traditional camp, but will be done in your group.

Family groups are limited to 6 people per cabin.



Family Camp Pricing

Tier 1 prices are the required minimum fees.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 prices are voluntary and include donation amounts to further support Bluestone's Camp & Retreat ministry.

Tier 1 - \$250, Tier 2 - \$310, Tier - \$370

Campers between 3-8 are half price. 2 and younger are free.

These are the 5-Day prices for a full week of family camp. There are also 2-Day and 3-Day stay options priced at \$60 per day.

Visit our website for a detailed rate and date schedule.

Questions?

Call Sarah 304-397-5050 or email sarah@bluestonecamp.org



"Bluestone Camp and Retreat is an accredited member of the American Camping Association"



Presbytery of West Virginia's

Festival of Faith

REDISCOVERING JESUS

Saturday, March 20, 2021
on ZOOM

Keynote: *"Telling Stories of Jesus"* DIANA BUTLER BASS



Christians often struggle to talk about Jesus, especially as our culture grows more diverse and people increasingly question the need for faith. Yet, at the center of every Christian's story is the story of Jesus - who we have experienced him to be and how we have lived our lives in relation to his. The keynote will focus on Diana Butler Bass' upcoming book *Freeing Jesus* and the power of telling the story of Jesus in authentic, personal ways.

Some of the Festival of Faith Workshops:

- ❖ Deeper Diver with Diana Butler Bass
- ❖ Financial Report
- ❖ Intergenerational Ministry
- ❖ Keep that Sense of Humor
- ❖ Playing with Your Congregation
- ❖ Fibers of Faith
- ❖ Financial Reporting and Church Treasurers
- ❖ Beyond the Business: The Spiritual Life of Ruling Elders
- ❖ "... the Women in Matthew's Genealogy – PW 2021-2022 Bible Study
- ❖ Clerk of Session in the Small Church
- ❖ AND MORE...

Complete workshop and registration information can be found at www.wvpresbytery.org.

Why We Lament



In 2020, the coronavirus pandemic struck America during the middle of Lent, a season associated with deprivation. Some people made light of the shutdowns, joking, "I didn't mean to give up *this* much for Lent!" Others asked why the suffering was occurring in the first place.

Professor N.T. Wright, in an essay for *Time*, explains that asking "why?" but receiving no answer is key to biblical lamenting. Adding to the mystery, he says, is that God also laments — grieving at the wickedness of humans, despairing over Israel's unfaithfulness. Jesus cries at a friend's tomb; the Holy Spirit groans in anguish.

"Part of the Christian vocation," Wright concludes, is not being able to explain why but lamenting instead. "As the Spirit laments within us," he says, "so we become, even in our self-isolation, small shrines where the presence and healing love of God can dwell. And out of that there can emerge new possibilities ... new hope."

Come Walk with Us!

Over the past year, it has become very apparent that COVID-19 has disrupted (and will continue to disrupt) the routines and rhythms of our lives. We all miss our life at the church and getting together with each other on a regular basis!

To reconnect with each other, we'd like to invite folk to come walk at Joplin Park each weekday at 4:00 pm. You don't have to come everyday and you can walk as briefly or for as long as you like.

So, lace up your sneakers and head to Joplin Park! For more information, please call Tom Titus at 304-206-5930, or just meet us at the park.

That's the Point!

If prayer stands as the place where God and human beings meet, then I must learn about prayer. Most of my struggles in the Christian life circle around the same two themes: why God doesn't act the way we want God to, and why I don't act the way God wants me to. Prayer is the precise point where those themes converge.

--Philip Yancey

"Always show kindness and love to others.
Your words might be filling the empty places in someone's heart"

--Mandy Hale 

Elected Officers

- On Jan 10, we held a congregational meeting to elect officers. We greatly appreciate those who have chosen to serve.
- **Rick Smith** was elected to serve on the Session. Rick is already an elder with the PC (USA).
- **Chris Luzier** has agreed to serve another term as a Trustee.
- The following people were elected to serve on the nominating committee:
Ron Bryant, Dave Long, Nancy Bennet, Mary Sue Smalley.

New Session Structure

Due to the lack of people willing to serve on the session this year, we have restructured:

Admin/Personnel/Stewardship – Tom Titus

Mission/Fellowship – Rick Smith

Technology/Communication – Cheryl

Property – Bob Kent

Education – Caron Bryan

Worship – Dave Long

Clerk/Nominating – Joe Fuller

Congregational Care – will remain a non-session committee

Trustees:

The following people are remaining on our Board of Trustees:

Hersha Brown
John Melton
Chris Luzier

First Presbyterian Church

508 Second Avenue
South Charleston, WV 25303
PHONE: 744-2333
FAX: 746-9948

Ministers:

EVERY MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION

Sharon Gearing, *Pastor*
Mark Hornbaker, *Master of Music*
Becky Smith, *Office Manager*
Beverly Hughes, *Custodian*

Office Hours:

7:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Monday through Thursday
(Closed Friday)

E-Mail Addresses:

Sharon.gearing22@gmail.com
becky@fpcscwv.org

Web Address:

fpcscwv.org

WIFI Network:

1stPresby SC – Guest

WIFI Password:

PresbyGuest

Elders on Session:

Carol Bryan	Dave Long
Cheryl Eary	Rick Smith
Joe Fuller	Tom Titus
Bob Kent	

Trustees:

Hersha Brown (2021)
John Melton (2022)
Chris Luzier (2023)

March

April 2021

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	1	2	3	4	5 <i>World Day of Prayer</i>	6
7 9:30 Sunday School Conference Call 11:00 Online Worship 7:00 AI-Anon	8	9	10	11	12	13 <i>Daylight Saving Time Set your clocks back 1 hour before you go to bed tonight!</i>
14 9:30 Sunday School Conference Call 11:00 Online Worship 7:00 AI-Anon	15	16 6:00 Session Meeting	17	18	19	20
21 9:30 Sunday School Conference Call 11:00 Online Worship 7:00 AI-Anon	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 <i>Palm Sunday</i> 9:30 Sunday School Conference Call 11:00 Online Worship	29	30	31	1 <i>Maundy Thursday</i>	2 <i>Good Friday</i>	3