



The Spire

April 2024

First Presbyterian
Church of Garner

Letter From The Pastor

Dear Church,

As you read this I am or will soon be in the midst of the second part of my sabbatical. While I will miss you greatly over the next two months, I relish the opportunity to continue "connecting" with family, friends, self, and God in new, deeper ways. I also am eager to be refueled and renewed as your pastor, so we can continue to live and share the good news of Christ together.

I also am envious to miss out on the preaching and worship leadership Lori Pistor and David Huffman will provide in April and May, respectively. These are two seasoned, superb pastors, with various gifts who I think will connect well with you, as did Lynn Stall in January. In fact, one of the best things that could happen when I return in June would be to hear you liked some element (a hymn, a prayer, a particular way of leading) of what Lynn, Lori, and/or David did so much, that you would like to see us incorporate it more regularly going forward.

When I return, I am mindful that we will not just be going back to "the way things were." While we will all enjoy the return of the familiar--like a nice pair of comfy shoes!--we will also discover how we've grown and will need to decide how to use this newness for God's glory and the benefit of our church and community.

One way of doing that will be by responding to a new vision statement that has been in the works for the last 9 months. Most recently our elders and deacons listened and responded to a draft statement offered by our Vision Team. This conversation resulted in a second draft that now reads:

Responding to Christ's call, FPCoG will be a church where all of God's people are welcomed, cared for, and encouraged to make a positive difference in the world.

The next steps with this statement will be to repeat a listening and responding process with the whole congregation! Plans will be developed in June for that purpose so that we can be ready for ways familiar and new that God is calling us to live and serve.

That is still to come through. For now, let us remember that neither time nor distance nor anything else in all creation can separate us from the love of Christ. Even while we are away from each other, we yet remain deeply connected in heart, spirit, and mind.

The Lord Bless and Keep You!

Rev. Ben



Worship News

April Worship Preview

During April, Rev Lori Pistor will serve as our Sabbatical Supply Pastor. Her leadership during worship each Sunday in April will focus on the continuing Easter Season, with a special celebration on April 21 of Earth Care Sunday! You'll find worship to be thoughtful, creative, and featuring a new voice—and a new hymn or two!

Lori has been ordained for 30+ years and has served in interim positions throughout New Hope Presbytery and, recently as a Parish Associate at West Raleigh Presbyterian. She also was the presiding pastor at the wedding of Stephanie Taylor-Morgan! Lori Lives in Durham with her spouse Terry.

While Rev. Pistor will not have regular office hours, she will be reachable by phone and email. There is also a guide available in the narthex and church office that lets you know “who to call” while Rev. Acton is away. For worship needs, contact elders Mike Koenig and Komivi Ekoule; for pastoral care needs, contact Rev. Pistor or Stephanie Taylor-Morgan. Read below for a preview of texts and hymns for April!



April 7, Second Sunday of Easter, Holy Communion

Psalm 150, John 20:19-31

Hymns: That Easter Day, I've Got Peace Like a River

Join us for Lemonade on the Lawn after worship!

April 14, Third Sunday of Easter

Psalm 40:1-8 John 21:1-17

Hymns: Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore, Jesus Calls Us

April 21, Fourth Sunday of Easter, Earth Care Sunday

Psalm 104

Hymns: Morning Has Broken; Praise the Lord, God's Glories Show; God of Great and God of Small, For the Fruit of All Creation

April 28, Fifth Sunday of Easter

Exodus 19:1-6, I John 4:7-21

Hymns: Open Now the Gates of Beauty; Where Charity and Love Prevail; Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

With Covid-19, flu, and other respiratory illnesses and health concerns, masks are optional but welcome at any gathering.
You can also attend online via Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurchofgarner>

April Flowers

7TH: FLOWERS GIVEN BY WILDA PRINCE IN LOVING MEMORY OF FRANK PRINCE

14TH: FLOWERS GIVEN BY THE GOULD FAMILY IN LOVING MEMORY OF MICHAEL GOULD

21ST: FLOWERS GIVEN BY THE CORNER FAMILY IN LOVING MEMORY OF RICHARD CONNER

28TH: FLOWERS GIVEN BY MARY SHULBY

Faith Formation

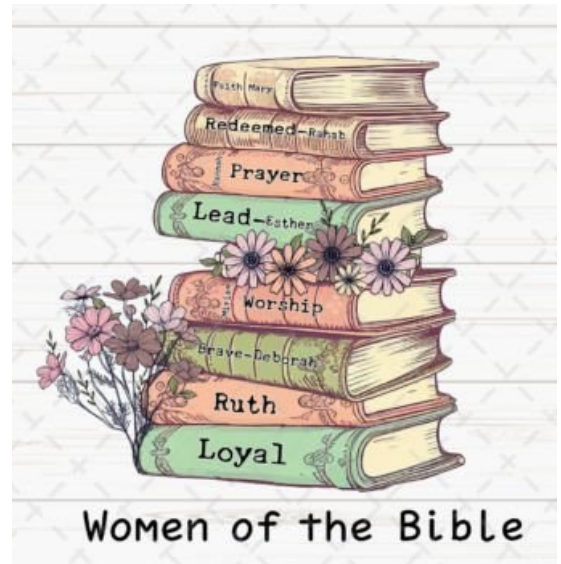
Sunday School

The Adult Sunday School class will begin the spring study of The Present Word Curriculum from PCUSA. In the Spring quarter, we explore the fullness of faith as a response to God's desire to be in relationship with us - Unit I - "Faith-FULL Versus Faith-LESS", Unit II - "The Measure of Faith", Unit III - "Standing in the Faith". Plan to join us each Sunday morning at 9:45am in the Ogburn Classroom for thoughtful discussion and fellowship. For more information, please contact Karen Lovering or Mike Koenig. Hope to see you there!



Ida Joy Bible Study

In April we will be studying Deborah and her impact on Christianity and especially to women even today. Please join us as we continue this wonderful, insightful journey of the women of the Bible and how we are still influenced by their story today! (all ages are welcome) The women truly have a beautiful tapestry to share and it is exciting to see how we can apply this to our everyday walk with God. We meet the second Tuesday of the month at ten in the Ogburn classroom. It's a wonderful time spent together as Christian women as we discover these women and ourselves! All you have to do is sit back and listen as Regina Alexander or Cheryle Prater led you in this very special study!



Wednesday Night Bible Study

The Wednesday Night Bible Study group meets each Wednesday night at 7:30pm... via Zoom! We continue our Lenten study of Pause: Spending Lent with the Psalms by Elizabeth F. Caldwell. The book invites us to take up the spiritual practice of encountering, sinking into, and deeply engaging with one psalm each week during Lent and Holy Week. The season of Lent encourages Christians to consider a different pace—one of slowing down, noticing, pausing—than what our dominant culture values. Join us each Wednesday for a mid-week boost that includes lively discussion and much-needed fellowship. For more information, please contact Karen Lovering or Mike Koenig.

Thursday Morning Bible Study

As of Press time, the Thursday Morning Study was reviewing options for April and May, including the length of a needed "Spring Break!" Check the bulletin during April and the May newsletter for the latest on this study.

Earth Care

Arbor Day: April 26

From backyards to tropical rain forests, trees around the world are hard at work. Trees clean our air and water, provide habitat for wildlife, connect communities and support our health and well-being. Climate change is the biggest challenge facing us. By working together, we can make a difference. Trees are the proven, affordable, natural way that can be implemented quickly to pull carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. Every tree planted is a step in the right direction.



Earth Day Origins

The following article is from <https://www.earthday.org/history/>

“Every year on April 22, Earth Day marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970. Let’s take a look at the last half-century of mobilization for action:

In the decades leading up to the first, Americans were consuming vast amounts of leaded gas through massive and inefficient automobiles. Industry belched out smoke and sludge with little fear of the consequences from either the law or bad press. Air pollution was commonly accepted as the smell of prosperity. Until this point, mainstream America remained largely oblivious to environmental concerns and how a polluted environment threatens human health.

However, the stage was set for change with the publication of Rachel Carson’s New York Times bestseller *Silent Spring* in 1962. The book represented a watershed moment, selling more than 500,000 copies in 24 countries as it raised public awareness and concern for living organisms, the environment and the inextricable links between pollution and public health.

THE IDEA FOR THE FIRST EARTH DAY

Senator Gaylord Nelson, the junior senator from Wisconsin, had long been concerned about the deteriorating environment in the United States. Then in January 1969, he and many others witnessed the ravages of a massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California. Inspired by the student anti-war movement, Senator Nelson wanted to infuse the energy of student anti-war protests with an emerging public consciousness about air and water pollution. Senator Nelson announced the idea for a teach-in on college campuses to the national media, and persuaded Pete McCloskey, a conservation-minded Republican Congressman, to serve as his co-chair.

Senator Gaylord Nelson recruited Denis Hayes, a young activist, to organize the campus teach-ins and to scale the idea to a broader public, and they choose April 22, a weekday falling between Spring Break and Final Exams, to maximize the greatest student participation.

Recognizing its potential to inspire all Americans, Hayes built a national staff of 85 to promote events across the land and the effort soon broadened to include a wide range of organizations, faith groups, and others. They changed the name to Earth Day, which immediately sparked national media attention, and caught on across the country. Earth Day inspired 20 million Americans — at the time, 10% of the total population of the United States — to take to the streets, parks and auditoriums to demonstrate against the impacts of 150 years of industrial development which had left a growing legacy of serious human health impacts.

Groups that had been fighting individually against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness and the extinction of wildlife united on Earth Day around these shared common values. Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, urban dwellers and farmers, business and labor leaders.

By the end of 1970, the first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of other first-of-their-kind environmental laws, including the National Environmental Education Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and the Clean Air Act. Two years later congress passed the Clean Water Act.”



Announcements

Going Up! - Liftavator Update

The Building & Grounds Team is pleased to announce that the exterior vertical lift has been installed near the church office and choir room. Over the next few weeks, the electrical and phone line will be installed, as well as new iron railing in the area. Once this work is complete, the lift will be inspected by the NCDOL to ensure proper installation and operation. Installation of this "Liftavator" allows for greater access to our building for those with mobility issues. We are thankful for all the support received from the congregation and will be happy to see the church building be more accessible for everyone!



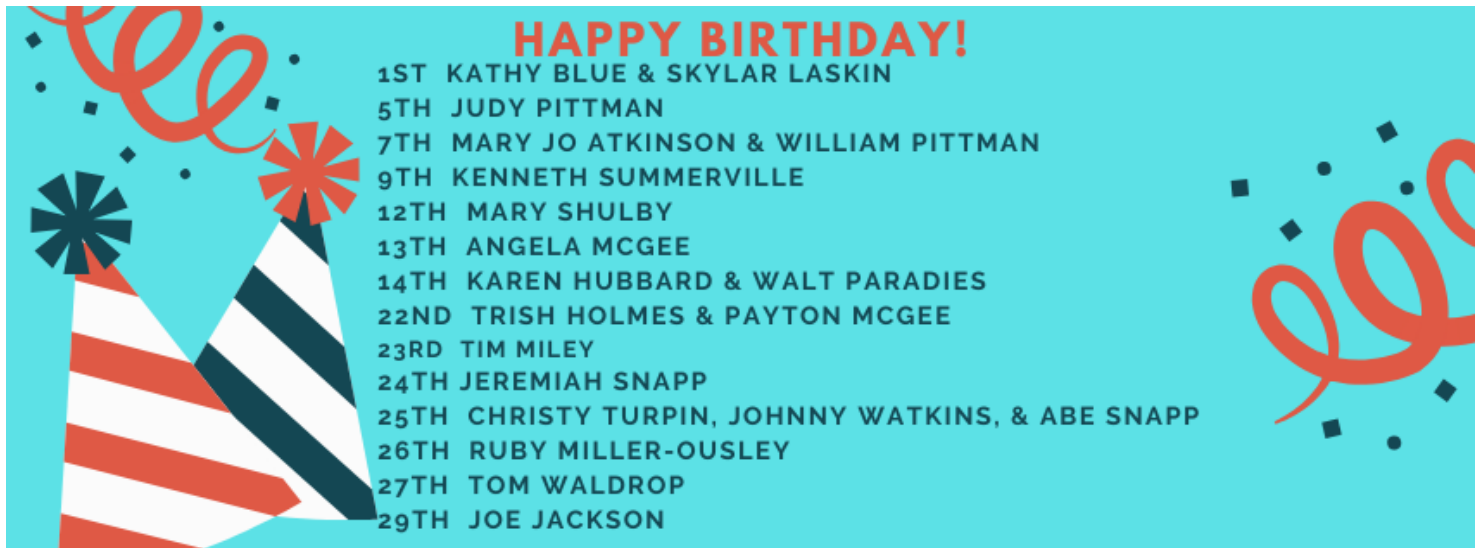
Kitchen Storage



For groups who use the pantry or storage areas in the fellowship hall, this is a reminder that **ALL FOOD should be stored in PLASTIC BAGS or SEALABLE CONTAINERS**. This will ensure that we do not have any unwanted "guests" nibbling in the kitchen. Let us work to care for and treat our church "home" like we treat our own home!

Earth Day is April 22. We will celebrate Earth Sunday during the morning worship on April 21. Don't miss it!

Congregational Care



Thanks Be To God!

Each month, we share thanks for the ways God is working in, through, and among us. This month we offer gratitude for:

- 🌸 **Our 3/16 workday volunteers: Ben and Nate Acton, Mike Koenig, Martha Long, Karen and Gary Lovering, Melissa Miley, David Pease, Sibyl and Paul Pedziwiatr, Joe Prater, Ken Summerville, and Henry Woodcock.** Thanks also to **Sandra Hodge** for cake and cleaning up the kitchen!
- 🌸 **Rick Beech** (Habitat for Humanity), **Ed Johnson** (New Hope Presbytery), **Jeff Babijtas** (Family Promise), **Rev. Ashley- Anne Masters** (Presbyterian Campus Ministry Raleigh) sharing updates in our mission partners during Lent. Thanks as well to Rev. Masters for preaching on Palm Sunday!
- 🌸 **Presbyterian Women** for organizing and providing food for our Lenten Bible Study and for ordering and organizing flowers for Easter Sunday
- 🌸 **Rich Whipple** for building a new “Flowered Cross.”
- 🌸 **Donors** for our special offering for One Great Hour of Sharing
- 🌸 **Liftavator**—the company who installed the lift; **Buildings and Grounds** for their continued work coordinating this project, and **all the generous donors** who made this financially feasible!
- 🌸 **ALL who** donated money, Easter Basket items, and other contributions to **Family Promise**—our week of delivering food is April 7-13
- 🌸 **ALL Worship volunteers** (liturgists, the leaders of our “Young At Heart” messages, our music leaders, and AV operators), Bible Study Leaders, fellowship coordinators, and the many anonymous servants who show and share God’s blessings to us.
- 🌸 **ALL who serve in humble, unseen, ongoing ways.** Your contributions mean so much to so many!

Prayer: God of new, risen life, may this Easter season fill us with gratitude for the many ways you continue to make all things new. Thank you for the servants who make your love and grace so visible. In Christ we pray, Amen.

Have someone you think needs a specific thank you?
 Please call or email Rev Acton at pastor@firstpresbyterianchurchgarner.com to share!

Prayer List

Members

Georgia Morrison, Edith Conyers, John Watkins, Anne Hopkins, Rose Gurkin, Carl Miller, Wanda vanDoornewaard, Rosemary Carmichael, JB Slaughter (in basic training), Jean Smith, Allen Hodge, Ruby Miller-Ousley, Barbara Turpin, Jerry Monroe, Walt Paradies, Connie and Tonya Boykin, Andy Cook, Bruce and Gloria Oelke, Marsha Whittington, Trish and Dave Holmes, Ann Bagwell, Abe Snapp, Lynne Jackson, Sandy Lee, Audrey Denton, Judy Hudson, Charlie Porter, Manny Losada, Peggy Wilkins

Members' Families

Michael Register (Losada's grandson), Jim Cole (Trish Holmes), Aleena Conner (Jeanne Conner), Ellyn Losada (Losada's daughter-in-law), Wes Smith (Sandy Lee's Brother-in-law), Phyllis Prorise (Allen Hodge's sister), Charlie Merritt (Emily Lee's cousin), Candice Davis (Cheryle Prater), Martha Morgan (Emily Lee's sister), Linda Register (Cheryle Prater), Pat Cook (Andy Cook), Pat Ballew (Reggie Foster), Vio Tapu (Regina Alexander), Charlye Harrington (Marsha Whittington's Mom), Sandra Wilkins Luther (Peggy Wilkins' sister-in-law), Todd Lee (Sandy Lee), Cheryl Weber (Jeanne Conner's sister), Jonah Ekoule (Komivi Ekoule's father), Rebekah Brewer (Trish and David Holmes' daughter), Shirley Klein (Wanda vanDoornewaard), Chris Chao (Jeanne Conner), Bob Dickerson (Amy Conner's father), the family of Tyler Gilbert (grand nephew of Lorrie Icenhour), Tommy Davis (Sandra Hodge's brother), Betty Mitchell (Harold Bagwell's sister), Lynn Hobby (Ann Bagwell's sister-in-law), Donna Smith (Sandy Lee), Jameson Hovis (Jean Thornton), Albert (Duke) Bickmore (Lucy Paradies), Eric Lee (David Pease's son-in-law), John Corbett (Kathy Blue's uncle)

Members' Friends

Jeanne Schmitz (Sandy Lee), Taylor Harris (Anne Hopkins), Tim Lee (David Pease), Reagan Martin (Kian Miley), Bruce and Myra McNellie (Jeanne Conner), Ann Fowler (Sandra Hodge), Terry Goodmundson (Sandy Lee), Ryan and Caitlyn and Banks Barry (Bill and Emily Lee), Ann Myhre (Peggy Wilkins), David Myhre, Jerry Godwin (Connie Boykin), Gene McLamb (Reggie Foster), Sylvia Lanspery (Rachel Acton), Betty Peterson (Deb Wallace), Julie Prevoznik (Reggie & Dee Foster), Isaac Wollersheim (Susie Knabe), Kenneth Ennis (Donna Gould), Pete and Pam Harris (Emily Lee), Ruth Stutts (Linda Monroe), Joyce Blackwood, P.A. Kirk (Dee Foster), Carrie Mullins (Linda Monroe), Pamela Harrop (Wanda vanDoornewaard), Robert and Elizabeth Hamilton (Sandy Lee), Vera Wright (Peggy Wilkins), John Ryan & family (The Lee's), Michael DiGeronimo (Sandy Lee), Nancy Whalen (Kathy Blue), Jan Wasserman (The Losada's), Whitney Wolfgang (The Oriel family), Kathy Schumacher (Nancy Waldrop)

PC USA Mission Co-workers

Jeff and Christi Boyd (in the Democratic Republic of Congo)

For the World

War and loss of innocent life in Israel and Gaza; Victims of gun violence across our nation; War in Ukraine; refugees; Those affected by natural disasters: wildfires, floods, earthquakes, and storms; the food-insecure and economically vulnerable; the mentally, physically, and spiritually overwhelmed; renewal for creation, the ill, dying, and grieving, those who continue to struggle with the effects of COVID-19



Presbyterian Women

Prayer Shawls

Prayer Shawl Ministry gave its first shawl in December 2007. Since then, many hands have come together to knit and crochet shawls. Heart-felt thanks are expressed to those who make the shawls and help send warm wishes and prayers to those who receive them. In February, a prayer cross was given to Sandy Lee, as she fell and injured her leg and shoulder. A prayer cross was also given to Lynne Jackson, as she continues to have health concerns. On Sunday, March 17, prayer crosses were given to Ann Bagwell, for the loss of her husband, Harold; Peggy Wilkins for the loss of her cousin, Steve Creech; and Arthur Bickmore, brother of Lucy Paradies, as his cancer has worsened. If you have questions regarding this ministry or wish to participate and make shawls, please contact Martha Long at 919-744-0751 or by email at seventy7tiger@nc.rr.com.



Lillie Circle

Lillie Circle meets on the second Monday of the month. The next meeting will be April 8th at 7pm.

Friendship Circle

The Friendship Circle's next meeting will be a ZOOM Meeting on Thursday April 4th at 6:30 pm. The Lesson Leader is Cheryle Prater. The circle will be providing the meals for Family Promise on Thursday April 11th. Some members will also be attending the 2024 Presbyterian Women of New Hope Presbytery Spring Gathering on Saturday April 20th at West Haven Presbyterian in Rocky Mount. Keynote Speaker is Brenda Brown who is Cheryle Prater's sister. Brenda's topic is "When Life Gives You Lemons". If you would like more information about our activities or joining us, please contact Jane Knabe (919-389-0462).

Men of the Church



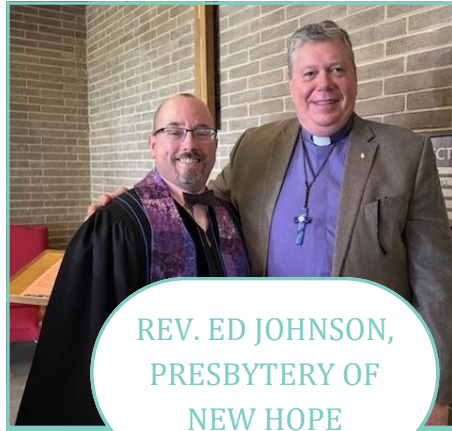
The Men of the Church will meet on the first Sunday of the month, April 7th, for breakfast. All men are welcome to join us in the Fellowship Hall at 8:45 am for coffee, juice, biscuits, donuts, and fellowship.

Mission Partners

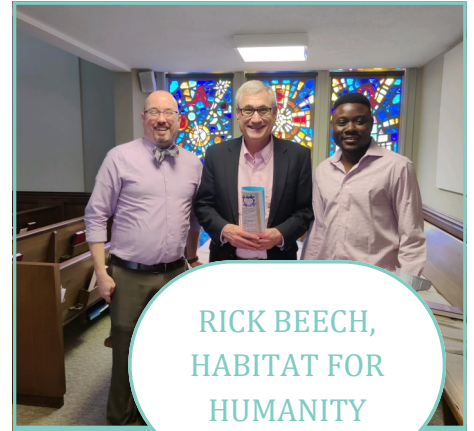
How fortunate we have been during this Lenten Season to have our mission partners join us in service of worship bringing the Good News of their organizations with updates and words of thanks and petition for needs in our community and world. Each of these organizations answers Jesus' call to serve others and offers us the opportunity to stand beside them. We thank them for their work in our world.



CARLTON MCDANIEL,
ABLE TO SERVE



REV. ED JOHNSON,
PRESBYTERY OF
NEW HOPE



RICK BEECH,
HABITAT FOR
HUMANITY



JULIE TEDDER, H.O.P.E.



KATHY BLUE, GARNER
AREA MINISTRIES



JEFF BABAJTIS,
FAMILY PROMISE



REV. ASHLEY-ANNE
MASTERS, CAMPUS
MINISTRIES

"Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' Matthew 25

Mission Ministries

2 Cents a Meal



Collected on the last Sunday in each month, the Two Cents-a-Meal offering invites the congregation to prayerfully contribute a few cents at each meal to help alleviate hunger and poverty. Participation in Two Cents-a-Meal is a commitment to share with others in response to Jesus' command, "You give them something to eat." The contribution of two cents (or more) per person at each meal, reminds us of the needs of others and our call to respond as Christians to their hunger. The money collected is dedicated during the morning worship service, and then distributed by the Ida Joy Bible Study Group to hunger initiatives including Garner Area Ministries and the World Hunger Fund.

Garner Area Ministries Food Pantry Requests

The GAM food pantry is in need of: Cereal, Peanut Butter, Grape or Strawberry Jam, Boxed Pasta, Tomato Sauce, Canned Pasta (ie Ravioli), Boxed Macaroni and Cheese, Diced Tomatoes, Canned Corn/Peas/Green beans, Tomato Soup/Chicken Noodle Soup, Saltines, Pork and Beans, Canned Beans, Instant Mashed Potatoes, Rice/Rice Mixes, Canned Meat (chicken, beef stew, corned beef), Hamburger Helper, Canned Fruit, Bottled Water, and Toilet Paper.

"Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you?"

Able to Serve

OPPORTUNITY



How can I support Able to Serve? I'm not able to work as a volunteer on site but I want to help.

Here's a way you can help: Sign up for Angie's fundraiser luncheon to benefit Able to Serve.

Catered by Angie's Restaurant, & delivered buffet-style to enjoy

HERE IN FELLOWSHIP HALL ON SUNDAY APRIL 28th after church.

The menu offers a 1/4 chicken (white or dark meat choice), green beans, potatoes, roll & dessert.

The cost is \$12 per person pre-paid either by cash or check payable to Able to Serve.

Able to Serve and Angie's Restaurant are pairing together and reaching out to other area churches as well for that day delivering to their other church partners. All orders will be collected and turned into Able to Serve by Monday April 15th.

FPCoG will have tickets available and can be purchased from Melissa Miley or Lucy Paradies.

Y'ALL COME AND WE'LL HAVE A GOOD TIME FEASTING TOGETHER AND SUPPORTING ABLE TO SERVE'S MISSION.



Mission Ministries Continued

Family Promise

Many thanks to everyone in the church who have so generously contributed to the many meals and groceries we have provided to Family Promise of the Triangle. Our week to provide meals for Family Promise is April 7-13, 2024 and several of our church groups each took a day to provide the meal.

Monday: The Men of the Church

Tuesday: Lillie Circle


Wednesday: Wednesday Night Bible Study

Thursday: Friendship Circle

Friday: Youth

Volunteer Signup

M Men of the Church	TU Lillie Circle	W Wednesday Night Bible Study	TH Friendship Circle	F Youth
Main Entree BBQ CHICKEN	Main Entree HOT DOGS	Main Entree CHICKEN STRIPS	Main Entree PIZZA	Main Entree SPAGHETTI + MEATBALLS
Side #1 VEGGIE 1	Side #1 BAKED BEANS	Side #1 GREEN BEANS	Side #1 SALAD	Side #1 SALAD
Side #2 VEGGIE 2	Side #2 CHIPS	Side #2 MAC + CHEESE	Side #2	Side #2 BREAD
Delivery Driver MIKE KOENIG	Delivery Driver KAREN LOVERING	Delivery Driver	Delivery Driver JANE KNABE	Delivery Driver CHRISTY TURPIN



Family Promise ^{30 years}
of the Triangle



**First Presbyterian
Church of Garner**

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Admin Assistant:

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Director of Music Ministries:

music@firstpresbyterianchurchgarner.com

Return Service Requested

We're on the Web!

Come walk with us!
FPCoG Walking Group

Enjoy fellowship and discover how our physical, mental, emotional,
and spiritual well-being are all connected!

Meet in person each Tuesday at 6:00 pm at Cadence Senior Center
(200 Minglewood Drive, Garner, NC, 27529) to walk around the "Village"
neighborhood

If you cannot join us in person but would like to walk "with a group"
contact pastor@firstpresbyterianchurchgarner.com to learn how to
participate virtually and add your walking steps to the group's weekly
mileage total.

