

first EDITION

Published monthly for members and friends of First Presbyterian Church, Nashville



Stuart Gordon
Executive Pastor &
Interim Head of Staff

Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new. (Acts 17:21)

In case you're wondering, Luke didn't mean that as a compliment! Like anyone in the ancient world, Luke believed that "old" meant "good." Christianity faced skepticism in its early days because people considered it a new religion, which they considered untrustworthy. That's one of the reasons that its apostles stressed its roots in Israel's story: it wasn't a new religion, but the climax of God's activity in a very old religion. People in the ancient world valued everything that had stood the test of time.

Now, I'll confess that I'm one of those people who are called "late adopters," especially when it comes to new technologies. My phone is a 2013-vintage Blackberry, which I love because of the mechanical keyboard. I'm not fascinated by the latest new thing, and I never have been. I'll admit that it's not a virtue, it's just my personality. I do believe, though, that there is a place of wisdom somewhere between being a grumpy old man and being the person who waits in line for days in order to buy the newest iPhone when it is released.

In matters of faith, that place, I believe, is where we witness what God does in our lives—the things that change who we are as people. A new car is a wonderful toy, but its luster fades with the first scratch. A new phone doesn't stay new very long; the company itself quickly begins upgrading the phone so that you'll buy a new one before the old one is paid for.

When the scriptures speak of God doing a new thing, they mean that the God who created everything has the power and the will to heal old hurts, reconcile relationships, forgive sin, and cleanse the past from memory. Instead of making "all new things," God makes "all things new."

In worship in August, I'll preach about "a new song," "a new you," and "a new world." And we'll continue to pray, as a congregation, toward the new chapter in our congregation's life as our Pastor Nominating Committee seeks our new Senior Pastor. By the grace of God, that new chapter will be more than a new toy; it will be a fresh beginning.

Grace and peace, *Stuart A. Gordon*

SUNDAY | AUGUST 4
8th Sunday after Pentecost
8:30 & 11 A.M.

A New Song

Isaiah 43:16–21
Psalm 40:1–10

Stuart Gordon

The Table

A "Something Else" Kind of Faith
Matthew 15

Josh Rodriguez

SUNDAY | AUGUST 11
9th Sunday after Pentecost
8:30 & 11 A.M.

A New Attitude

1 Samuel 25:1–4, 18–20
Ephesians 4:14–24

Sarah Bird

The Table

Jesus Was Matter-of-Fact
Matthew 21

Josh Rodriguez

SUNDAY | AUGUST 18
10th Sunday after Pentecost
8:30 & 11 A.M.

A New You

2 Kings 5:1–14
2 Corinthians 5:16–21

Stuart Gordon

The Table

Let Them Be
Luke 22

Josh Rodriguez

SUNDAY | AUGUST 25
11th Sunday after Pentecost
8:30 & 11 A.M.

A New World

Matthew 9:14–17
Revelation 21:1–5

Stuart Gordon

The Table

Raised Up
Luke 24

Angelina DeVincenzo

AUGUST *Events*

AUG1 Youth Trip to
Holiday World

AUG3-4 NaCoMe
Family Camp

AUG18 Children's Choir
Resumes

AUG24 Rooted in Christ
Family Conference

AUG25 Youth Fall Kickoff

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COMMUNICATIONS SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Did you know that you can keep up to date with all the activities and ministries of First Presbyterian Church by filling out our online Communications Subscription Form? You can use the form to subscribe to our weekly *Parish News*, monthly *First Edition*, and periodic funeral notifications, as well as the newsletters of individual church ministries.

Access the form at fpcnashville.org/about-us/communications/

SYMPATHY

The First Presbyterian Church family extends prayers and sympathy to the following people and to other members of their families during their time of loss:

Leslie & Doug Sellers on the death of Doug's mother, **Sara Cousins Sellers**, who died on June 21. Sympathy also to Douglas Sellers Jr. and William Sellers.

Argie Oman on the death of her husband, **Jack Allen Oman**, who died on July 8. Sympathy also to Martha & John Oman Jr., Catherine Oman Hendrick, and Elizabeth Oman Jasarevski.

Phyllis Cargile on the death of her daughter, **Patricia Justine Settle**, who died on July 17. Sympathy also to Betsy Brittain, Parkes Brittain, Liz (Warren) Beck, Justine Brittain, and Jack Brittain.

BAPTISMS

In the presence of family, the congregation of First Presbyterian Church, and God, the following persons claimed God's covenant promise through the Sacrament of Baptism:



Bridget & Bryce Keener presented their son, **Kieran Michael Keener**, for baptism on June 30. Assisting Elder was Deb O'Brien.

Melissa & James Sidney presented their daughter, **Claire Alexandra Sidney**, for baptism on June 30. Assisting Elder was Carl Flinn.



Daniel & Darla Akpan presented their son, **Spencer Francis Bassey Akpan**, for baptism on July 7. Assisting Elder was Joel Locke.

Stephen Ministers: The After People

People often ask, “What exactly is a Stephen Minister?” One way to put it is that Stephen Ministers are the *After People*.

Stephen Ministers are there:

- ... *after* the phone call you hoped you'd never get.
- ... *after* the funeral, when everyone has left and the emotions you've held at bay come crashing in on you.
- ... *after* the relationship falls apart and the bottom falls out of your life.
- ... *after* the doctor says, “I'm sorry, but there's nothing more we can do.”
- ... *after* the nursing home director shakes your hand and says, “Welcome to your new home.”
- ... *after* the last child honks the horn, waves, and drives away—and the house suddenly seems empty.
- ... *after* the gavel comes down, the handcuffs go on, and your loved one is led away.
- ... *after* the baby arrives, demanding more of you than you ever dreamed possible.
- ... *after* you find a pink slip with your final paycheck.
- ... *after* your family and friends have heard your story one too many times, but you still need to talk it out.

Stephen Ministers are the After People. They are ready to come alongside you—or your friends, neighbors, coworkers, or relatives—and provide comfort and support for as long *after* as needed.

www.stephenministries.org

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EDUCATION & SMALL GROUPS



BETHEL SERIES COMING!

Did you know it's been 18 years since Bethel was taught in First Presbyterian Sunday School classes? Elders and trained Bethel teachers Phil Martin and Mary Louise Flautt kept the Bethel ship sailing, until their last class concluded in 2002. This year, 18 new teachers (pictured) man the oars and catch the wind, ready to teach and sail with *you*!

- Want to finally learn of the journey from Genesis to Revelation, of God's plan for His people?
- Yearn to see how *each of us* fits into that blessed plan, through fresh, new lenses?
- Is this *your* time to commit to a great overview study of the Bible—Old Testament in year 1, New Testament in year 2?

BETHEL SERIES INFO MEETING
9:45 A.M.
SUNDAY, AUGUST 11
JONES SESSION ROOM
ALL ARE INVITED!

The Bethel Series may be just the class for you. There is no memorization or written homework. Read and watch the thread unfold from Genesis to Revelation.

Sign up now and enroll. Enrollment cards are available at the FPC Hospitality Center, in the narthex, and at the Welcome Center in Courtenay Hall. Online, please go to adults.fpcnashville.org/the-bethel-series/.

BETHEL HAS PROVEN TO BE EFFECTIVE FOR THOUSANDS AROUND THE WORLD FOR OVER SIX DECADES. SEE WHAT NEWLY TRAINED FPC BETHEL TEACHERS HAVE TO SAY:

The most important thing that Bethel has taught me is the continuity of the great story of the Bible from beginning to end, creation through resurrection. There is a wonderful plan, and we are part of it.

—Alice Van Lingen

Studying the Bible through Bethel has defined the meaning and importance of my life more clearly. Bethel's theme, "Blest to be a Blessing" (Genesis 12:1–3), has stuck with me. The words call my attention to my own blessing of friends, family, and fortunate opportunities. At the same time, they divert attention away from myself to what others are experiencing and how God is calling me to be an instrument in their lives.

—Hal Sauer

When it comes to the contributions of the Bethel Series, learning the Old Testament has given me the greatest insight. Bethel has helped me put everything in order, making Bible studies much easier to understand. I was surprised to find myself learning as much as I have.

—Bob Marraccini

Bethel has meant the world to me! It has been a time of unparalleled insight, growth, and maturation as a believer. What a blessing it has been to be in class with a group of incredible people.

—Mary Marraccini

Bethel has been such a gift in opening my eyes and heart to the story that starts in Genesis and weaves all the way through the New Testament. All the specific Bible stories I learned over the past 35 years mean so much more now, knowing the history behind them.

One of the best gifts for me has been in understanding our Sunday-morning sermons in a whole new light. Becoming friends with multigenerational classmates has meant so much to me, as a mom to young children. Come see what it means to be Blest to be a Blessing!

—Lauren Hancock

2019 FALL
INQUIRERS' CLASS



Would you like to know more about the Presbyterian faith & First Presbyterian Church, Nashville?

Are you considering church membership or wanting to be more involved in the life of First Presbyterian Church, Nashville?

An Inquirers' Class will be held on September 8, 15, 22, 29, and October 6, during the Sunday School hour (9:45–10:45 A.M.) in the Edgar Room (MW-227, located on the second floor, down the hall from the Sanctuary). If you are interested in uniting with First Presbyterian Church as members or just wish to learn more about the history and mission of First Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church (USA), you are invited to attend. Registration is not necessary. For more information, please call the church office at 615-383-1815 or Rev. Sarah Bird at 615-298-9518.



What keeps us from being present to where we are, who we are with, and the God we serve? In *Godspeed*, authors Julie & Matt Canlis write:

The Oxford Dictionary has recently added two words that give us some cultural clues: FOMO (fear of missing out, 2015) and YOLO (you only live once, 2016). Both of these reflect the urgency of modern life – the insecure drive to take advantage of every opportunity, wherever it takes us. But what if it takes us away from where we are suppose to be? Is there a word for that? Are FOMO and YOLO dictating our lives more than an attentiveness to the place God has us and the people around us?

Join us this fall as we explore these questions and more with our new Communities of Belonging program, and mark your calendars for our October 2nd kickoff event!

MISSIONS

The Missions department warmly welcomes home the Kenya and Taizé, France, mission teams. Look here next month for more information about their journeys.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL SUMMER 2019

On June 24, 185 children and 132 youth and adult volunteers met together for Bible study, music, science fun, art response, and mission learning. We call it Vacation Bible School.

Fifty-three children from the community joined FPC children to learn about God's power within us to do great things.

GREAT THINGS DID HAPPEN:

- The children raised \$1,071 for the KORE Foundation, our mission project, and an anonymous donor was so excited by the children's enthusiasm and the work of the KORE Foundation that they matched the children's mission offering.
- New volunteers met and connected with people of similar interests and passions.
- Children got up in the morning telling parents they would rather go to VBS than to their swim meet.
- First-time VBS children went home excited to share with their family what they learned and did.
- New friendships were formed.

It was a wonderful week! We are grateful to the VBS leadership team: Ceesun Andrews, Melissa Burton, Lindsay Callison, Amy Crosby, Meredith Stewart, Andrea Swafford, and Sarah Ward. VBS couldn't happen without the dedicated volunteers who give of their time and talent to lead children in a time of learning and serving.

MUSIC

CHILDREN'S CHOIRS RESUME

Children's choirs will begin rehearsals on Sunday, August 18. Please join us for this next season of singing and praising God with our voices. The choir ministry serves children ages 4-12, and the choirs rehearse weekly on Sunday afternoons from 4:00 to 5:00 P.M. Highlights of the upcoming choir season are singing monthly in our worship services, singing in worship at a local nursing home, and leading the 5:00 family service on Christmas Eve. To learn more about children's choirs and to register your child, visit <http://music.fpcnashville.org/children/childrens-music/>.



Parents are invited to bring their infants and toddlers for music classes on either Mondays or Wednesdays at First Presbyterian Church. In these 30-minute classes, you will learn to play musically with your infant or toddler through bouncing and rocking songs, wiggle and peekaboo games, and other fun activities. You'll sing, chant, move, dance, listen, and play simple instruments. In addition to providing an opportunity for parent-child bonding, the classes are a wonderful time for parents to meet one another.

The registration fee is \$50 per child. To register for classes, contact Susan Kirby at 615-298-9540 or visit music.fpcnashville.org/children/musikgarten/.

SPECIAL EVENTS



NaCoMe FAMILY CAMP

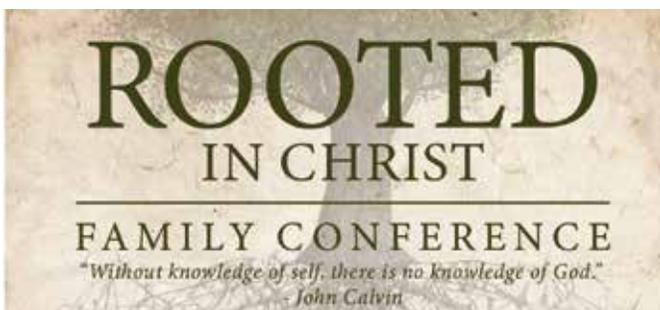
Registration is still open for NaCoMe family camp, but closes July 30. Camp is scheduled for August 3–4. Register at fpcnashville.org under Events.



YOUTH FALL KICKOFF

The Youth Fall Kickoff will take place on Sunday, August 25, in the Enrichment Center. Youth and their parents are invited to attend, and refreshments will be served. This is a great opportunity for youth to meet their Sunday School teachers and small group leaders, as well as the youth staff.

Those who attend will also receive the Youth Handbook, complete with dates and info for the 2019–20 school year.



ROOTED IN CHRIST FAMILY CONFERENCE

The Rooted in Christ Family Conference will take place Saturday, August 24, from 9:00 A.M. to 12:15 P.M. Speakers will include Mark and Susan DeVries, Jeremy Shapiro, Betty Ann Santi, David Thomas, and Sissy Goff.

Register at www.fpcnashville.org under Events.



TUES | SEPT 10

9:30 A.M. | BOOK SIGNING & SALES | COURTENAY HALL

10 A.M. | RECEPTION | COURTENAY HALL

11 A.M. | MAIN EVENT | FPC SANCTUARY





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