



In This Issue:

Letter from our Pastor

Prayer Concerns

Ascension of the Lord
Avera Scholarship
Fellowship Meal
Handbell Concert
Highlights of the Session
Hunger Ministries
JOY Connection
Memorial Day
Memorials
Mission Outreach News
Mother's Day
Outstanding Older Adults
PW Birthday Brunch
Relay for Life
Spring at FPC
Stewardship Report
Vacation Bible School
Walking Ministry
Youth Year-in-Review

May Calendar

Lectionary
Fellowship Time
Worship Nursery
Flowers
Birthdays
Anniversaries
Ushers
Lay Readers
Acolytes
Trinity Ringers
Building Officers
Sunday Shepherds



A publication of
First Presbyterian Church
215 S. Third Street
PO Box 1159
Smithfield, NC 27577
919-934-0988
fpcsmithfield@nc.rr.com
www.fpcsmithfield.org

ICHTHUS

May 2016

The Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church, Smithfield, North Carolina

REFLECTIONS IN THE WATER: Great Is the Mystery of Faith

"Mystics are the ones who have actually gotten in touch with what is real. They have powers of receptivity and sympathy that are particularly acute. They are porous and have the ability to be so open as to stretch beyond the usual small and protective ego, and they are often unusually courageous. Out of that wide, and sometimes painful, stretching of an ego they find ethical opportunities special to them. Anyone can be an ordinary mystic."

—Thomas Moore, psychotherapist and former monastic.

"The Christian of the future will be a mystic or will not exist."

—Karl Rahner, Jesuit priest and theologian.

"Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed"

—I Corinthians 15:51

In 1937 the German Protestant pastor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, authored *The Cost of Discipleship*, an exposition on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount as a message of justice and liberation of the oppressed even as the National Socialists tightened their oppressive and unjust grip on every aspect of German life. He became an enemy of the state and would be martyred for his courage. He spoke to the Church of a costly discipleship in opposition to a practice of cheap grace:

... Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline. Communion without confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ. Costly grace confronts us as a gracious call to follow Jesus, it comes as a word of forgiveness to the broken spirit and the contrite heart. It is costly because it compels a man to submit to the yoke of Christ and follow him; it is grace because Jesus says: 'My yoke is easy and my burden is light.'

His exposition of faith has influenced subsequent generations of Christians far beyond the gallows on which he was hanged for his faith in 1945. His contemporary, German Catholic priest Karl Rahner, who survived the Nazi brutality of the Second World War, also saw his world of the institutional church crumbling before his very eyes. Rahner raised the question, What is the future of the Church? He perceived that it somehow lay with us individually in our own discipleship and as a mystical encounter with God. Rahner's 'future Church' has become our present. Today our congregation states as part of its mission that we are calling and creating and growing as disciples with each new day. How are the personal disciplines of our Christian discipleship and mysticism today giving rise to the new Christian disciple and the Church of tomorrow as suggested by Rahner?

Carl Colman, a writer of the Cistercian order offers these insights for the 21st Century disciple and modern mystic:

The mystics (*past saints and disciples*) call us to be still and know.

The mystics remind us that silence is praise.

The mystics know that the poor and the forgotten are the Body of Christ.

The mystics understand that humility (self-forgetfulness) and *kenosis* (emptying of self) are all about loving your enemy.

The mystics are comfortable with mystery, with unknowing, with not having all the answers.

The mystics remind us that a miracle can happen at any time.

The mystics understand that being faithful matters more than being successful.

I encourage you to reflect on these mystical aspects in your personal faith. Already we hear the following observation: to follow Jesus will look a lot different in the future than it did in the past. To be a disciple of Jesus Christ today is to live also as a present day mystic with a God who, in the words of the prophet, is "making all things new" for us. We present-day disciples and mystics are called to live in relationship with Jesus Christ who is the true light of a shadowy and chaotic world. As disciples and mystics we are called be present to one another in life-changing encounters of justice and salvation that endure and overflow the boundaries of this present world. This encounter with the Divine Mystery is the God who called Moses from the Burning Bush, the Jesus we encounter in the Easter Resurrection, and the Holy Spirit who came to disciples to form the nascent Church and bids us follow now.

Pastor Joe



Prayerful Support for
 Nor Bell at Barbour Court
 Jane Bolin at Meadowview
 Tom Barbour at Meadowview
 Bernice Johnson at Meadowview
 Alice Narron at Meadowview

Shirley Williams at Meadowview
 Myde Eason at Brookdale Smithfield
 Hazel Whitehurst at Johnston Health
 Timothy Allen who is at Duke
 Marie Atkins
 Tom Avera
 Jane Cunningham in Wilmington
 Ruth Daniel
 Ross Hailey
 Tom Johnson
 Bill Kimball
 Shannon Kimball
 Charles Lee at SECU Hospice House
 Bill Leist
 Marie Maddox
 Chap Ragland
 Peter Russell
 Linda Stephenson
 Nelson Vaughn
 Betty Welch
 Ted Wells
 William Wells
 Al Worsham
 Hilda Worsham
 Joy Worsham
 Rebecca Ziady
 Sharon Van Velzen, sister of Joyce Knoll

Congratulations to Steve Bryant and Rose Edwards who were married in our sanctuary on April 23, 2016.

Christian Sympathy to the family of **Eula Lee Brown**, who died Sunday, April 24, 2015.



Honorarium: Tom Avera
Memorials: Chad Jason Sanders, James E. Faulkner, James Walker, Martha Howerton, Clem and Mikki Sharek

Donors: Tommy and Camille Boone, Beth Daniel, Judy Daniels, John and Margaret Causey, John and Meg Scovil, Dot Ellmore, Tom and Sandra Johnson, Lisa and Frank Deans, Joyce and David Lee, Stan and Kelly Coats and family

Always with Us

Forty days after Easter we celebrate Jesus' ascension into heaven. This occurred ten days before Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus' followers as he had promised.

Jesus' ascension reminds Christians that although his body couldn't remain present everywhere, we can universally experience his spiritual presence. In fact, Jesus' final words to his disciples —and to us — contain this key promise: "And remember I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20 NRSV).

May 5, 2016



HIGHLIGHTS of April Session:

- Received new members Steve Bryant, Paul and Emilia Anaruma, Mary Margaret Coats, and Taylor Holzshu into membership.
- Approved a Hymn Festival to take place during worship on Sunday, April 17, 2016.
- Approved a request by the Presbyterian Women to place a basket in the fellowship hall to collect toiletries for the Interfaith Women's Prison Ministry as part of their Spring Gathering mission project.
- Approved receiving the gift of a wooden cross for the Great Hall given by the Presbyterian Women in memory of Helen Godwin.
- Received a report from Harold Allen on the March New Hope Presbytery meeting.
- Elected Jim Henderson to chair the 2016 Nominating Committee. Jimmy Hooks agreed to serve as the elder on that committee.
- Approved a Fellowship Meal on May 5, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. The covered dish dinner will host speaker Joe Roberson from Church World Services.
- Approved formation of a Walking Ministry and placed oversight for the ministry with the Spirituality Quadrant.
- Jimmy Hooks reported that Dwight Dockery has resigned effective July 31, 2016, to pursue a doctoral degree. The Personnel Team will begin working to find a replacement Director of Music.
- Communications and Technology reported that the Wi-Fi hot spot is installed and functioning so that all areas of the church have internet access.
- Communications and Technology reported that a laptop has been placed in the sound box in the Fellowship Hall for use with our ceiling data projector. Instructions for connecting and using the laptop are with it.
- Property reported three areas of concern: a leak in the bell tower roof area, repaving the parking lot, and air conditioning for the upstairs of the older building. Session approved the spending of up to \$15,000 to address these three areas in priority order with funds from the Property Reserve fund.

If you have items you wish to see brought before Session, please contact Debbie Jacobs, clerk.

—Debbie Jacobs

Spring at FPC



A Taste of God's Love

In *Lost in Wonder, Love, and Praise*, John Killinger describes a mother's love and how it offers a tiny foretaste of God's love:

"It is stronger than steel, softer than down, and more resilient than a green sapling on the hillside. It closes wounds, melts disappointments, and enables the weakest child to stand tall and straight in the fields of adversity. I believe that this love, even at its best, is only a shadow of the love of God, a dark reflection of all that we can expect of him, both in this life and the next."



May 8, 2016

Mission Outreach Fellowship Meal, May 5

The Mission Outreach Quadrant, is sponsoring another Family Fellowship Meal on Thursday, May 5. Our guest speaker will be the Rev. Joseph Roberson, Faith Outreach Liaison with Church World Services in Durham. The Rev. Roberson will speak about refugee needs in the world and possible opportunities for faith communities to help.

The meal will begin at 6:00 p.m., followed by the presentation at 6:30 p.m. A sign-up sheet to bring a side dish or dessert to share will be available in the vestibule. The meat and beverages will be provided.

We hope to see you there.

—Greg and Joyce Knoll



Last JOY Connection until Fall

We hope to see you at the May 5, 2016, JOY Connection. We will meet in the fellowship hall at noon and will enjoy a very delicious meal and an exciting program.

Camille Boone and Judy Daniels will be on "stage" with their selection of folk songs that will spark memories of days gone by. Be sure to call the church or sign yourself up on the reception desk clipboard to let us know that you are coming. And, of course, you are welcome to bring a dessert to share if you would like. This will be our last JOY gathering until September, so don't miss out on this special time together.

—Ann Ragland



Mission Outreach

JOY Connection, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Hospice Meals, SAM contributions, Pennies for Hunger, assistance for Smithfield Rescue Mission—First Presbyterian Church reaches out to our community in so many ways. We cook meals for those who have been hospitalized and for their families, we provide meals and services for the bereaved, and our deacons check on members often to make sure each of us feels the love of Christ through fellowship and caring.

Another way we can show the love of Christ is by visiting those in nursing homes, rest homes, and rehab centers. Imagine how we could lift the burden on the families of these beloved by a thirty minute visit just to chat. Imagine providing a bulletin from Sunday's service just to keep these friends in touch. Imagine picking up Hershey bars at CVS when you stop to get your next prescription and presenting them to Jane, Bernice, Alice, Tom, or Shirley the next time you drive by Meadowview.

The azaleas and spirea and blooming trees are so beautiful and uplifting, and we are blessed to see them on our daily travels. Grab a branch (with permission from the owner, of course) and take it with you to brighten Eula's or Nor's day. Thursday's newsletter and the ICHTHUS list all of our members who can't attend church with us on Sundays and the places where they live. A quick check with their families might give you an idea of a great time to visit and any dietary restrictions or limits. Or just pop in!

First Presbyterian Church is known for its warmth and friendliness. Take a moment to spread that warmth and share a smile with those who can't be with us regularly. It'll do your heart good!

—Sandy Perkinson



THE SILVER TSUNAMI: Many Are Drowning in Hunger

Hunger and food insecurity doesn't just affect children. "Headlines alert us to the impact of the aging of America. The "silver tsunami" or "age wave" is already here as over 10,000 Baby Boomers reach the age of 65 every single day. One quarter of today's 65-year-olds will live past the age of 90 and will experience many of their daily chores turning into insurmountable everyday challenges. These seniors already represent the fastest growing population segment in the United States" (http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/the_issue/problemandsolution?). I am so thankful that both of my parents, in their mid 80s, are in relatively good health. Mom has a painful back, but Dad still works 40 hours per week (although he says he is retiring for the third time this summer.)

I haven't worried about what my parents eat because both are avid gardeners who can and freeze foods throughout the summer that seem far more wholesome than the stuff I eat. I feel guilty when mom offers me a bag of her frozen baby lima beans which I know tastes as sweet as honey or her cut corn which melts in your mouth. Last year Mom didn't make pickles, and when she gave me one of her remaining jars over the winter I winced – but gratefully took it anyway because I know how good they taste in potato salad. My parents enjoy what the garden offers most of the year, even harvesting greens and other hardy during the winter, but certainly enjoying the fruits (and vegetables) of their labor from the freezer or the pantry then as well. But they threaten each year, usually in late summer when they've already spent too many hours harvesting and hoeing, to stop gardening. They say they can't tolerate the physical labor and temperatures involved as well and I know that is true. I dread the spring it happens and will then worry how well they will eat after that occurs.

This online article from Elon University's *Elon Law Now* by law professor Hannah Vaughan is poignant. "Research has shown that food insecure seniors are more likely to have lower nutrient intakes than older adults who are food secure and are at higher risk for severe health consequences than younger people who experience food insecurity." "The State of Senior Hunger in America 2013: An Annual Report" also released in April, **ranks North Carolina in the top 10 states for the number of seniors (60 and older) who are food insecure.** It estimates that in 2013 over 18 percent of seniors in North Carolina experienced the threat of hunger. Those at greatest risk for food insecurity among seniors are the poor and near-poor, people of color, the unemployed, the disabled, and those residing in the South or Southwest. Among age categories of seniors, the people at highest risk are the "youngest old" (defined as age 60-69) (http://www.elon.edu/e-net/Article/113369?s=/law/news/enet_navigation).

From the same article Professor Vaughan wrote "There are federal benefits available to alleviate hunger for those who qualify. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps, provides a limited benefit to low-income seniors. **However, only about 1/3 of seniors who are eligible for SNAP benefits actually receive them.**" (bold added)

Thank goodness Dad has already run the rows and planted the potatoes for Mom. It seems certain they will garden another summer, and if their health holds out, they'll enjoy fresh corn, beans, potatoes, greens, etc., etc., this coming year. Please support our hunger missions: Yes We Can, Smithfield Rescue Mission and Pennies For Hunger.

—Tom Barwick

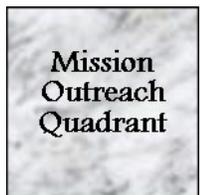


Give Give Give!

Give food, give money, give time! The food pantry lists the items they need most.

Peanut Butter
Chunky Soups
Canned Meats: Spam, Chicken, Tuna
Pop Top cans of Fruit and meat
Powdered Milk
Margarine
Beans: Pinto, Kidney, Black
Sweet Peas
Green Beans
Tomatoes
Pork and Beans
Corn
Juice
Cereal
Macaroni and Cheese
Rice
Pasta
Pasta Sauces

<https://smithfieldareaministries.wordpress.com>



Lace Up Your Sneakers, We're Walking!

If you expressed an interest in starting a walking ministry at FPC, you're in luck. The Session approved the program, and now I have to build some of the tools we'll need for success. To prepare you for success, I strongly recommend everyone letting your doctor(s) know that you intend to begin a walking regimen, especially if you have known or suspected issues or are an older athlete. She or he will let you know if you are healthy enough to participate. We will start with modest walking goals that early on will tell your body to start responding to the demands of exercise. If you are starting from scratch, consider walking in Smithfield's Medical Mall for two days a week. The climate control, wooden floors, and many eyes of fellow walkers make this location a very safe place to begin walking. Bringing a friend will also help if you have stability issues. Start slowly, accelerate to slowish, then finish slower. I don't want you to test your limits if you've been sedentary for too long. For experienced walkers, keep on truckin'. To prepare spiritually, pray about what you'd like to get out of this program and be ready to share your thoughts. In May, I'll schedule several orientation sessions to the program that we'll grow over time with your feedback. Then in June, we'll go out and enjoy God's creation at the human speed of walking. I look forward to exploring this new spiritual practice with you and seeing your health improve over time. If you need more advice on how to begin before June, send me an email or call.



—Wayne Dockery

Relay Team Preparing for the Main Event!

Your Relay for Life team is selling tickets for the quilt and afghan through the month of May and also at the Relay event on June 3. We will have tickets at the information desk.

All luminary orders must be turned in before May 23. There will be a Relay Team Meeting on May 19 at 7:00 p.m. to finalize plans for Relay for Life 2016.

—Martha Taylor



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

MAY 2016

Smithfield, NC 27577

PO Box 1159

First Presbyterian Church

NON-PROFIT STD MAIL
US POSTAGE
SMITHFIELD, NC 27577
PERMIT #93

FPC Names Two Outstanding Older Adults

Shirley Slaughter Booker joined First Presbyterian Church on May 12, 1968. She and her husband John reared their four children in the church. She has participated in most areas of church life over the years. When her children were young, Shirley served as a Sunday school teacher in grades four through six and frequently kept the nursery. She also began her very long tenure, which still continues, of preparing food for fellowship meals. She served on the Christian Education Committee for five years. Shirley has served both as Moderator and Co-Moderator of Presbyterian Women and has been the chair of her circle as well as the chair and co-chair of the Bereavement Committee. She has twice been elected deacon. And she has been a co-chair of the Special Meals Committee.



In 1996 the Presbyterian Women of First Presbyterian Church presented Shirley an Honorary Life Membership.

Besides being a first-class cook., Shirley is also a first-class gardener, and her floral arrangements have been the centerpieces of many events in the life of our church.

During our recent building campaign, Shirley served on the Transition Team Kitchen Furnishing Committee. She continues to keep an eye on the kitchen, and she volunteers several times a year to give it a thorough cleaning.

Shirley Booker is also active in the community. She is a member of the Smithfield Garden Club and, in conjunction with the Smithfield Appearance Commission, has planted many areas in the Town of Smithfield. She has also served as a member of the Town of Smithfield Preservation Committee and as a member of the Auditorium Board of Johnston Community College. Shirley is also a gifted artist. She works with the Frank Creech Gallery at JCC and has helped with many art shows there.

Joyce Faulkner Lee joined First Presbyterian Church, her husband David's life-long church, on May 19, 1981. Joyce was born and reared in Ormondville, NC, and was a member of Ormondville Free Will Baptist Church. She and David have one daughter, Kelly Lee Coats, a son-in-law, Stan Coats, and three granddaughters, Mary Margaret, Lauren, and Addison. They are all very active in this church.

Joyce has been an active member of the Presbyterian Women since she arrived, serving as circle chair, Bereavement Chair, and other various committees.

She has been involved in teaching Sunday school and VBS, and has completed the Disciples' Bible Study series along with several other Bible studies.

Joyce has also served as a deacon.

She was a member of our Building Committee for our new addition and renovations and is a member of the Design Team which chose furnishing for the new addition.

Joyce is also a great cook. She was a member of the Kitchen Committee for many years, and is an active member of JOY Connection, FPC's outreach to older adults in our church and community. She is currently co-chair of the Special Meals Committee. She was also a faithful member of Contact Teleministry, a crisis hotline.

Joyce is an avid supporter of Johnston Community College, served on the Board of Visitors at Peace College for six years, and was Chair of the March of Dimes in Randolph County.

Joyce's latest interest is in helping her daughter with her horse farm and in watching her granddaughters compete.

We are proud to nominate both Shirley and Joyce for recognition by New Hope Presbytery as 2016 Outstanding Older Adults.



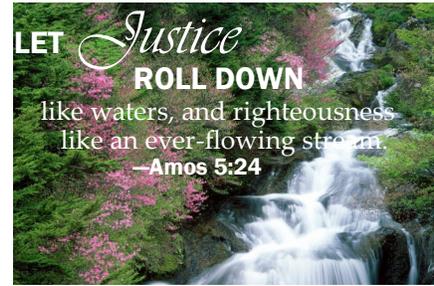
All Ladies!

Brunch in your honor!

Saturday, May 14, 10:00 a.m.

Reserve your place with the church office one week ahead!

Come for fellowship and friendship of the Presbyterian Women!



Remember your Presbyterian Women's Birthday Offering!

YOUTH Year-in-Review

Mission Projects:

FPC Youth started their year with a wonderful mission experience, the JoCo Mission Project, August 1-3, joining members of Mosaic Church and Wilson's Mills Christian Church in a Johnston County Mission Project. All three churches partnered to fill backpacks, as well as, other outside service projects.

Society of St. Andrew Annual YAM JAM Gleaning for sweet potatoes in October to feed the hungry.

Smithfield Area Ministries (SAM) Food Closet Food Drive. First Presbyterian Youth, in partnership with Carolina Premium Outlets merchants, collected food for two weeks in November to fill the SAM Food Closet for Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Souper Bowl of Caring Offering and Meal in February also benefited the SAM Food Closet

CROSS MISSION/Urban Plunge: Youth and leaders joined in partnership with Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte to work at the Moore Place Ministry Center which serves individuals with mental health or physical disabilities. We shared in bible study and social time with these folks then moved over to yard work at the homes of the elderly or disabled individuals. We were once again joined by Wilson's Mills Christian Church youth, and the feedback we received from Myers Park Presbyterian Church about FPC youth was simply inspiring.

Back Pack Buddies – May Youth Project to partner with West Smithfield Elementary to provide back packs of food for food insecure elementary school children for the weekend. The deadline for donations is May 29.

Fund-raising Projects:

Potato Bakes are a much-enjoyed traditional fund raising project following worship services. A potato bake was held in October and was very well attended.

Silent Auction is also an annual fund raising event. This year's was held a week before Thanksgiving, and we had a record number of silent donations.

Oyster Roast is another favorite annual fund raising/eating opportunity. Held this year in January, the weather did not cooperate, but it was still a record event.

Upcoming events include a Chicken Roast in August followed by a LIVE Auction in September 11.

FUN: Yes we had fun as well:

Ice Skating, Duke Youth Day and, this summer, MONTREAT!!!

At this point the youth would like to offer a heartfelt THANK YOU to the congregation for supporting them in their efforts in Mission and Outreach, fund raising opportunities, camps and just plain fun! Thank you for making us a priority in the life of First Presbyterian Church.

—Linda Crowder

**Spirituality
Quadrant**

Community Handbell Concert a Hit!

On Sunday evening, April 24, handbell choirs from First Presbyterian Church, First Baptist Church, and Wilson’s Mills Christian Church came together in our fellowship hall to present a program of handbell music, *Ringing with Friends*.

Every seat was filled for the program, and our handbell choir had to stay in the Great Hall while the other choirs performed.

Each church presented its own program. Vertie Perry of First Baptist Church, has been directing handbells there for almost 50 years. Two of their choirs played: The First Baptist Bells is a beginning choir under the direction of Kerrie Clayton. The Praise Ringers is a seasoned group which Mrs. Perry directs. Some of the members of that choir have been ringing for thirty or forty years!

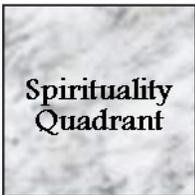
The Wilson’s Mills choir is directed by Janet Stephenson, who also rings in the choir. Therefore, no one stands before the group to lead. That did not pose a problem for this all-female group who say they are “lead by the Spirit.” They call handbell rehearsals their weekly therapy, and say, “What happens in handbells stays in handbells!”

FPC’s handbell choir was the last on the program. Kathy Rice expressed how much the handbell choir means to her and each of its members, and how they always leave rehearsals feeling better than when they came.

All three choirs performed beautifully.

Following the program, refreshments were served in the Great Hall.

We’re hoping this will become an annual event!



Remember that the Lord is great and awesome! – Nehemiah 4:14b



Snappy the Crab wants you to volunteer to teach, lead Crafts, play, lead music, prepare a meal, or just be an all-around helper!!

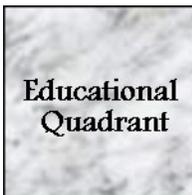
Things we need: Beach and surfer themed items to decorate such as shells, rafts, surf boards, etc. Please leave any items that need to be returned with your name marked clearly. Also needed are items for crafts such as shells, yarn, Popsicle sticks, wiggle eyes, red foam sheets elastic string, Mod Podge. We welcome all donations of items, gift cards or money to be used for VBS!



Vacation Bible School

June 20 - 24

5:30 - 8:00 p.m.



The Evelyn Southerland Avera Scholarship

It is time to apply for the Evelyn Southerland Avera Scholarship. The purpose of this scholarship is to honor the Avera children’s mother, her love of First Presbyterian Church, her spirit, and her strong belief in the value of education. This scholarship is designed for someone seeking a two- or four-year degree, has a financial need, has a connection to this church, and exhibits the characteristics of Evelyn Avera. It is open to any student who is currently enrolled in college. Download an application from our website and return it by June 15, 2016, to Debbie Jacobs.



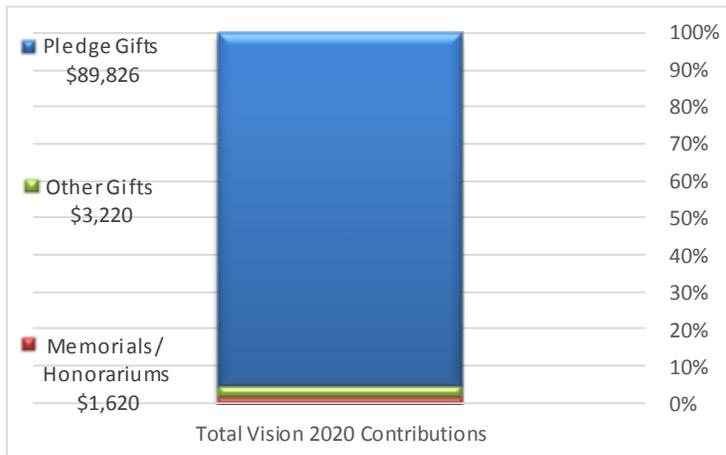
—Debbie Jacobs

First Presbyterian Church Operating Results — January – March 2016 Actual vs. Budgeted

	Jan - March 2016 Actual	Jan - March 2016 Budgeted
Revenue		
General Offering	65,637.88	72,500.01
Disbursements		
Education Q	(181.04)	1,012.47
Mission Outreach Q	3,463.78	4,687.50
Spirituality Q	34,713.03	44,608.26
Stewardship Q	25,174.64	27,708.54
Total Disbursements	63,170.41	78,016.77
Net Income/(Deficit)	2,467.47	(5,516.76)

VISION 2020 Capital Campaign as of May 31, 2016

\$ 89,826	Pledge Gifts
\$ 1,620	Memorials / Honorariums
\$ 3,220	Other Gifts
\$ 94,666	Total VISION 2020 Contributions



\$ 559,626 Total VISION 2020 Commitments
\$ 1,127,151 Mortgage Balance

