

# The First Edition

## First Presbyterian Church, Ellerbe, NC

September 2024

www.pcanet.org  
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### From the Pastor:

#### “Learning, Knowing and Passing on the Faith”

So, the story goes, an officer in the United States army was in a great western city at a time of intense excitement and violent rioting. The streets were overrun daily by a dangerous crowd. One day this officer observed a man approaching him with a great calm and firmness about him. His very demeanor inspired confidence. This officer was so impressed with this man’s bearing amid the surrounding uproar that once he had passed him, he turned back only to find the stranger staring back at him. The officer then came back toward the stranger and giving him a chest bump asked him flatly, “What is the chief end of man?” Then, upon hearing the man respond, “Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever” (WSC #1), the officer rejoined – “Ah, I knew you were a Shorter Catechism boy by your looks!” To which the stranger quickly responded, “Why, that was just what I was thinking of you” (*The Christian Life* by Sinclair he Ferguson, 8-9).

For more than a hundred years, the famous *New England Primer*, the beginning textbook for America’s children, contained *The Shorter Catechism* (That is the Westminster Shorter Catechism). An 1843 printing of the primer states: “Our Puritan fathers brought the Shorter Catechism with them across the ocean and laid it on the same shelf with the family Bible. They taught it diligently to their children. ... If in this catechism the true and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel are expressed in fewer and better words and definitions than in any other summary, why ought we not now train up a child in the way he should go” (*The Confessions of Our Faith ... Fortress Edition*, xx).

There was a day when many, if not most, Presbyterians knew their Shorter Catechism. It was a rite of passage for youth, if not children. There was a day when pastoral visitation by church elders included making sure parents were catechizing their children. These questions and answers not only teach us the way of salvation and how to live before God, but they also teach us how to pray and how to teach. So, these questions are surely one of the best ways we can guard the good deposit (2 Tim. 1:14), train our children in the discipline (positive discipline) and instruction of the Lord (Eph. 6:4) and pass on the faith to other believers who will teach others also (2 Tim. 2:2).

That said, if we have never learned the Shorter Catechism, we should consider learning it. If we have learned it and forgotten it, we should relearn it. And once we learn it, we should assist others in learning it, especially our children and young adults. To that end, our session has decided to help you learn and teach the catechism. In our last session meeting we discussed an article by Dr. Barry York entitled, “Shepherding through Catechesis.” The elders shared their memories of learning the catechism, how they have used it, and how we could encourage our members to learn it.

This is still a work in process, but here is what we have thus far. Each Lord’s Day, starting Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, successive questions and answers to the catechism will be run in the weekly worship bulletin. That afternoon, ruling elder Ricky DeWitt will put out a call on OneCallNow in which, among other things, he will read the catechism question and answer for that week. We encourage you to set a goal of learning (or relearning) that one question each week. If we keep up that pace, our whole church will learn the Shorter Catechism in just over two years. We also intend to purchase some copies of the catechism and make them available to you in the vestibule. Later we may develop some type of recognition program for people (or at least youth) who have memorized the catechism. That’s it for now. And happy catechesis to you.

Grace & Peace,  
Pastor Stan

## From the Session

We are very happy to have Mr. Layton return from his leave. Mr. Layton called the stated meeting to order on August 21, 2024. A quorum was declared present. The reading of the Scripture came from Acts 20:18B-21. The usual perfunctory session business was held and then proceeded to our ongoing and new business.

Items approved as follows:

- Mr. Layton will be on vacation the first week of September to attend his mother's 90th birthday.
- Mr. John Kinyon will be our minister for our Homecoming service on September 8th.
- Prayer Meeting will restart Wednesday, September 11th at 6:00 pm.

Nominations for church officers will be open October 6—27. Church officer training will begin November 7 and examination will be December 12.

The next stated meeting is September 11, 2024. Please continue to be in prayer for Mr. Layton and our church family.

Respectfully, Jimmy Wagers, *Clerk of Session*.

### Circle News

Circle ladies met on Tuesday night, August 27th, at 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall. President Sandra Futrell welcomed everyone and Jan Stivers opened with prayer to bless our meal. We had 11 ladies in attendance and we enjoyed a delicious fish fry provided by the Stivers with the assistance of Mark Tyson. It was delicious food and we would like to thank Kevin and Mark for helping Jan! Ladies enjoyed a season of prayer to start our meeting and then Jan presented a great study of *Controlling our Tongue* from our new study of the Fruit of the Spirit – Self Control, based on James 3:1-12. "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be" (v. 9-10). Even though our tongue is just a small part of our bodies, it can cause much damage and we should be careful of the words we speak to others as well as how we speak to others. May we pray that the Holy Spirit will help guard our tongues.

Even though Circle ladies enjoyed their break for the Summer, it was busy. We would like to thank all who attended our Movie Night along with the Ice Cream Social sponsored by the WIC. It was a great time at both events and the movie was wonderful as well. We look forward to the next one!

We enjoyed meeting together and catching up and are ready to start getting back in the swing of meeting monthly. This is such a precious time where Christian women can come together and support each other and pray for what is on our hearts. We continue to remember our shut-ins, college students and missionaries with our card ministry ongoing and handled by Jackie Wright – thank you Jackie!

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 24th at 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall with Natasha Grotenhuis hosting assisted by Crystal Weatherly. Please mark your calendar to join us. We do send out reminders of our meetings, both Circle and WIC, via text and if any lady in our church wishes to be added to this group for texts, please contact Patricia McCormick at (910) 995-3490 – we will be happy to get you added so you may stay up-to-date with all the happenings in our church.

Patricia McCormick, *Secretary*



### WIC Update

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the WIC project of donating to the Senegal Girl's Home in Africa. A total of \$865 has been donated and will be sent to this Missions to the World project.

Homecoming is just around the corner on September 8 and a covered dish meal will be held at 12:00 pm following the worship service. The ladies Circle is hosting the lunch and we hope that everyone can attend and bring friends and family for this good time of Christian fellowship.

Beth Meacham, *WIC President*



**PRAYER LIST:**

President and other national leaders, the Persecuted Church and Christians worldwide, the upcoming elections, Samuel Austin, Beverly Sears Barber, Christian Barrett, Jason Bennett, Daniel Brown, Austin Bryant, Neal Cadieu, Billy Carter, Mary Ellen Carter, Ted Carter, Vera Carter, Vergie Clark, Kevin Conner, Ronald Lee Cook, Kim Covington, Kevin Craven, Tony Craven, Alli Cundy, Cindy Daniels, Sharon DeWitt, Susan DeWitt, Scott Dunn family, Ruby Dunn, Ellerbe First Responders, Fred Fletcher, Mark Futrell, Becky Henderson, Pete Herron, Ken Hill, Melanie Johnson, Donna McCormick, Bill McFayden, Patsy Dunn McIntyre, Julia McIntosh, Lee McKenzie, Shannon McNeil, Diane Meacham, Peyton Monroe, Trevor Moss, Morgan North, Leo Poole, Sophia Potterfield, Doris Sears, Tina Sellers, Betty Smith, Jane Smith, Neil Smith, Richard Smith, Tim Stewart, Tony Ward, Mica Way, Amanda Watson, Mary Nell Watson, Chrystal Weatherly, Hayley White, Jo Wilson, Curtis Wright, unspoken Requests



Happy Birthday  
September

- 1 Ted Carter
- 6 Evan Dazey
- 6 Madison Lodin
- 9 Mary Ellen Carter
- 9 Victoria Bolger
- 10 Jane Smith
- 12 Becky Henderson
- 16 Kin Yates
- 20 Alex Wagers
- 21 Rickie DeWitt
- 23 Ben Monroe
- 25 Patrick Bryant
- 26 Kellie Craven
- 29 Alex Clark
- 30 Savannah DeWitt

**Sunday School Assembly is in the s  
sanctuary at 10:00 am, classes are at 10:15. Worship service  
is at 11:00 am Sunday mornings in the sanctuary.**

**September  
Anniversaries**



- 24M/M Rickie DeWitt
- 24M/M Tommy White

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 <b>September 2024</b>	2	3	4 7:00 pm Deacon's Meeting	5	6	7
8 <b>Homecoming 12:00 Covered dish lunch</b>	9	10	11 6:00 pm Prayer Meeting 7:00 pm Session Meeting	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 6:00 pm Prayer Meeting	19	20	21
22	23	24 6:30 pm Circle meeting	25 6:00 pm Prayer Meeting	26	27	28
29	30					

## Announcements

**INQUIRERS CLASS:** On Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Stan will be starting a new church membership class which will be open to all interested persons (members and visitors). Going through the class does not oblige one to join the church; nor is taking the class an absolute requirement for joining. Nevertheless, taking the class is an effective way to learn more about what it means to be a communing member of a presbyterian church and of First Presbyterian Church in particular. Please let Pastors Stan know if you are interested.

**BIBLES FOR FIRST GRADERS:** So that the church may present Bibles to first graders, please let the Session know of any First Presbyterian children who are entering the first grade this year.

**PCA CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINESHIP CONFERENCE:** The PCA Christian Discipleship Ministries (CDM) MADE FOR MORE conference for women is at Christ covenant in Charlotte on Friday, January 31 and February 1, 2025. The Session will pay for the cost of girls and ladies to attend this conference. If you would to attend, please contact WIC Secretary Jan Stivers by October 1 and she will register you. Her contact information is [kevinandjan90@gmail.com](mailto:kevinandjan90@gmail.com) or 910-995-3975. For complete information about the conference, visit <https://women.pcacdm.org/made-for-more/>.

**OFFICER NOMINATIONS:** The On Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, the Session will begin receiving nominations for the offices of Ruling Elder and Deacon. Communing members may submit the name(s) of any male communing member(s) who meets the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 (elder and deacon) and Titus 1:5-9 (elder). Nomination forms will be available in the vestibule on or before October 6<sup>th</sup> and nominations will be received through noon on Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. In addition to adding additional Deacons, the Session would like to add up to two men to the Session. In preparation for the nomination process, Pastor Layton will be preaching a brief series of sermons on church leadership. We encourage everyone to begin praying now for officer nomination, training and election. n

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### Church Officers:

#### Ruling Elders

- Austin Bryant
- Bill Carter, Elder Emeritus
- Tim Clark
- Rickie DeWitt
- Richard Smith
- Jimmy Wagers
- Tony Yates

#### Deacons:

- Patrick Bryant
- Tim Grotenhuis
- Chris Meacham
- Jesse McQueen
- Buck Smith
- Kevin Stivers
- Tommy White

#### WIC Officers

- Beth Meacham, President
- Ginny Layton, Vice-President
- Jan Stivers, Secretary
- Jane Carriker, Treasurer
- Barbara Wagers, Historian
- Chrystal Weatherly, Mission to the World Chair
- Lori Clark, Mission to North America Chair
- Sadra Futrell, Christian Growth Chair