

# THE CHURCH FAMILY

*Presenting Everyone Complete in Christ*

## FROM YOUR PASTOR'S DESK

This year Easter happens to fall on April 1. Not only is that day my two year anniversary on staff at FPC, it is also April Fool's Day! Hopefully, there is no relationship between the two. However, there is a strong connection between the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead and the idea of April Fool's Day. Paul writes in I Corinthians 15:14-17 *"And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead...if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins."* In other words if Jesus is still dead in the grave, we are fools for believing in Him, forgiveness of our sins is a sham, and we become liars when we tell others that Jesus is alive. Easter is the day that delineates foolishness and faith.

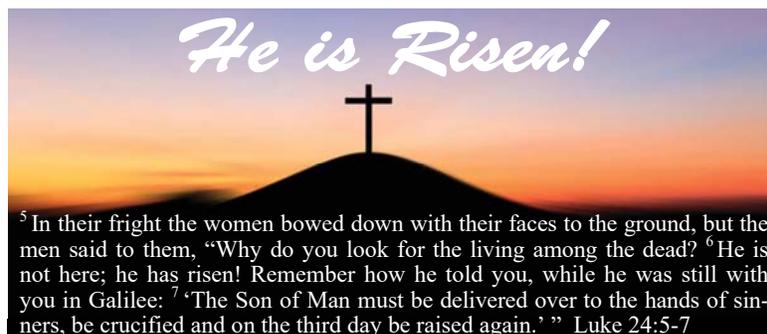
But Jesus has been raised from the dead! How do we know that? How can we be certain that we are not fools to believe this? The answer is changed lives. First of all, we witness the changed lives of the disciples. After the death of Jesus we find the disciples hiding behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. (John 20:19) Then just 50 short days later these same disciples are out on the streets boldly preaching. *"Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd..."*(Acts 2:14) What converted their fear into courage? It was seeing the risen Christ! This becomes the cornerstone of their faith and is the centerpiece of Peter's famous sermon on Pentecost *"God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact."* (Acts 2:32)

Not only were the disciples' lives changed, multitudes of lives down through history have been transformed by the resurrected Jesus. This bears witness to the fact that Jesus is alive and that all who believe that fact in their hearts will be saved. (Romans 10:9) Peter recognized the life changing power of the empty tomb when he writes: *"In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."*

Because Jesus is alive, we have a message that the world needs to hear. This Easter Sunday you have the opportunity to invite someone you know to come celebrate the greatest historical event of all time. We will have invitations available for you to pass along to the people that God puts on your heart. Our fellowship meet and greet time will begin at 9:45am, and the celebration of the Resurrection at 10:15am on April 1. Remember, you are not a fool to believe in the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead, in fact it is the foundational truth of our faith.

Not a fool,

*Steve*



The Session has called a  
**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**  
**for 11:15 AM, Sunday, March 25,**

to hear the report of the Pulpit Committee and  
vote on their recommendation to call  
Pastor Steve Jessen as Senior Pastor.

## **MINISTRY ROOTS RUN DEEP FOR SENIOR PASTOR NOMINEE**

**by Dan King**

When the FPC membership votes on the Pulpit Nominating Committee's recommendation of Pastor Steve Jessen as senior pastor Sunday, we will be considering a third-generation Presbyterian minister. Most of us are aware that Pastor Steve's father, Dr. Charles Jessen, is a retired Presbyterian minister. But fewer realize that his grandfather was a clergyman, too. Arriving in America as a Danish immigrant, his grandfather had to learn English before he could attend seminary, and afterward, spent his entire ministerial career serving a single church. The Rev. Christian Jessen pastored the Presbyterian Church of Circleville, N.Y., for 35 years.

The Rev. Steve Jessen, 50, a native of Phillipsburg, N.J., began his ministry as FPC Assistant Pastor April 1, 2016 and has served as Interim Senior Pastor for the past year. Steve launched out into vocational Christian ministry soon after graduating from Grove City College (Penn.) in 1990, serving for a year as a missionary in Mexico. He returned to the U.S. to marry his college sweetheart, Julie Davies, in 1991, and to take up the role of Youth Pastor at Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church near Pittsburgh. After four years there, during which time daughter Hannah was born, Steve realized it would be important to get more education in order to fulfill God's plans for his life.

The family of three moved to Charlotte, where Steve enrolled in Reformed Theological Seminary to pursue a Master of Divinity degree. From high school days, Steve had worked summers as a carpenter and home builder, and he used those skills to support his family, working full-time in construction while also attending seminary full-time. During those busy seminary years, daughter Miriam was born.

Receiving his degree in 1999, Steve was ordained a minister of the gospel in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) and joined a team of other tent-making pastors to develop a new congregation for the EPC in East Charlotte, Covenant Community Church, where he specialized in leading worship and youth ministry. In 2001, he answered the call of Myrtle Grove Presbyterian Church (EPC) in Wilmington, NC, serving there seven years as Youth Pastor.

In 2008, he took a break from the pastorate, retaining his ministerial credentials but returning to construction work, and moving his family to Charlotte three years later. The Steve Jessen family began attending FPC in 2012, joining his parents Charles and Alice Jessen, and younger brother Joel Jessen and family in our shared ministry here. Hannah has since married Pierce Conway, and they live in the Washington, D.C. area. Miriam is a junior at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia.

## SPRING CONFERENCE

**“Keeping Love Alive as Memories Fade”  
with Dr. Gary Chapman**

**Thursday, April 12 6:30 – 9:00 pm**

You may have a loved one suffering from dementia or you may know someone who is walking this difficult path. This seminar is for everyone. Don't miss this special opportunity to learn how to brave the road ahead. Invite someone to come with you.

**NOW** is the time to make your reservations to attend.

Call the church office or sign up on one of the forms available in the church hallway.



**YOU ARE INVITED TO A  
BABY SHOWER  
HONORING**

**ELIZABETH ABERNATHY**

**SUNDAY,  
APRIL 15, 2:00 - 3:30 PM  
IN FOUNDERS HALL**

Elizabeth is registered at: Babies R Us, BuyBuy Baby, and Amazon.  
The nursery colors are purple, gray and mint.

Hostesses are: Anne Abernathy, Deanna Beatty, Jonan Bynum, Debbie Harper, Natalie Helms, Kristen Henderson, Carol King and Heather Ormsby.

### REMINDER:



**Baby Shower  
honoring  
Sarah Robinson  
will be  
Sunday, March 25  
2:00 - 3:30 pm!**

### COLLEGE BOX DONATIONS

Thanks to those of you who have brought in items for our spring college boxes. These care packages will be sent to our students living away from home while attending college. The following are examples of items requested: snacks, candy, cookies, crackers, soups, popcorn, post it notes, etc.

We will continue to collect donations through Sunday, April 8.

## WIC NEWS

### APRIL CIRCLE MEETINGS:

#### Tuesday, April 3:

Denver Circle meets at the home of Elizabeth Abernathy.

#### Monday, April 9:

Elizabeth Circle meets in Founders Hall, Robin Mundy hosting.

Readers Circle meets at the home of Lennie Burrell.

Ruth Circle meets in the Church Parlor, Jonan Bynum hosting.

**Reminder:** The next scheduled WIC Council meeting is Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm.



If you're interested in playing in the Spring Church Co-ed Softball League at Poston Park on Monday nights starting April 9<sup>th</sup> please contact Mike Gamage at 704-689-1789.

## SOCCER CHAIRMAN NEEDED

Needed Immediately! A person (or couple) with a love for kids and spreading the gospel and able to lead and coordinate. The SOAR committee is in search of a Soccer Chairman (or chair-couple) to oversee and coordinate the fall soccer season. While knowledge of soccer is helpful it is not required. This chairperson will have a talented group of coaches and a soccer committee who are all well versed in the rules and how-to's of the sport. The chairperson is primarily the coordinator ensuring the coaches, players and their families are informed and supplied with information, supplies, equipment, etc. to make them successful. Think of it as the "coaches' coach" position. In addition to the coaching staff and soccer committee, the SOAR committee is available for assistance when needed as well. If your spiritual gifts are administration and evangelism or teaching and you can devote time over the next six months to spreading the gospel throughout our community, please talk to a SOAR committee person today. The SOAR committee is Lauren Henderson (chair), Luke Bynum, Mike Gamage, Rachel Gamage, Chris Graham, Sherry Teague and Phyllis Withers.



SAVE  
THE  
DATE



FPC Captain's Choice  
**Golf Tournament**  
**Saturday, September 8**

Mark your calendar and  
look for more details in the future!

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Heffner

along with

Michael Steven Kirksey  
Deanna Griffie

request the pleasure of your presence  
at the marriage of their children

*Sydney Cecile Heffner*

to

*Andrew Steven Kirksey*

March thirty-first, two thousand eighteen  
Half past five in the afternoon  
First Presbyterian Church  
512 Old Mt Holly Road  
Stanley, NC 28164

Nursery will be provided for children under 3.

*The son of*  
*Mr. Jimmy Abernathy*  
*and the children of*  
*Mrs. Carolyn Caldwell*  
*request the honor of your presence*  
*at a joint 85th Birthday Celebration*  
*April 14, 2018*  
*3:00 - 5:00 pm, Drop in*  
*Founders Hall*  
*First Presbyterian Church*  
*Stanley, NC*

# April 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1  <b>Easter Sunday</b></p> <p><i>No evening activities.</i></p>	<p>2 <b>Newsletter Deadline</b></p> <p style="border: 1px dashed orange; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Church Office and CDC closed</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 10:30 Wed. Morn Care Grp. Preschool and Afterschool CLOSED all week!!</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 2:00 Men's Open Basketball</p>
<p>← Palmer Home Mission Trip (Bus gone all week.) →</p>						
<p>8 6:00 Children's Ministry; Youth; Care Groups</p>	<p>9 6:30 Outreach Comm Mtg 7:00 Elizabeth, Readers &amp; Ruth Circle Meetings</p>	<p>10 6:30 Barton Care Group 7:00 Burrell Care Group</p>	<p>11 10:30 Wed. Morn Care Grp. 6:30 Abernathy Care Grp Tech Team Mtg.</p>	<p>12 6:30 MTW Committee Mtg. CE Committee Mtg. 7:00 Adult Rec. Volleyball</p> <p><b>6:30 Spring Conference with Dr. Gary Chapman</b></p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 2:00 Men's Open Basketball</p>
<p>15 2:00 Baby Shower for Elizabeth Abernathy 6:00 Children's Ministry; Youth; Care Groups</p>	<p>16 <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> 7:00 Facilities Comm Mtg</p>	<p>17 6:30 Barton Care Group 7:00 Burrell Care Group</p>	<p>18 10:30 Wed. Morn Care Grp.</p>	<p>19 12:00 Best Years Lunch 6:30 AHG Unit Meetings 6:45 Joint Officers' Mtg. 7:00 Adult Rec. Volleyball</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 9:00 Security Training 2:00 Men's Open Basketball</p>
<p>22 4:00 WIC Council Mtg. 6:00 Children's Ministry; Youth; Care Groups; Missions Update with the Hills</p>	<p>23 7:00 CDC Committee Mtg</p>	<p>24 6:30 Barton Care Group 7:00 Burrell Care Group</p>	<p>25 6:30 Abernathy Care Grp SOAR Committee Mtg</p>	<p>26 6:30 AHG Unit Meetings 7:00 Adult Rec. Volleyball</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 2:00 Men's Open Basketball</p>
<p>29 6:00 Children's Ministry; Youth; Care Groups</p>	<p>30 <b>Newsletter Deadline</b></p>					

## APRIL RESPONSIBILITIES



### NURSERY

**April 1:** 10:15 AM - Lauren Henderson, Olivia and Ashleigh Fox

**April 8:** 10:15 AM - David and Donna Hill

**April 15:** 10:15 AM - Craig and Susan Mesimer, Kaitlyn & Caroline

**April 22:** 10:15 AM - Josh and Stacey Hall, Samantha

**April 29:** 10:15 AM - Lisa and Allie Grice

*Train a child in the way he should go,  
and when he is old he will not turn  
from it. Proverbs 22:6*

### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

**April 1:** Easter

**April 8:** Robert Rhyne

**April 15:** Ryan Abernathy

**April 22:** Ron Smith

**April 29:** Chris Baker

***SPREADING GOD'S LOVE AT HOME, IN  
OTHER STATES, AND AROUND THE WORLD!***



## MISSIONS AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

We are sending a short-term team to minister at **Palmer Home for Children in Columbus, Mississippi on April 2 – 7**. Pray for team members: Zack Bedford, Rachel Bynum, Emma Deneen, Mason Hamrick, Joel Jessen (Team Leader), Abigail Jessen, Steve Jessen, Grace Kopka, Craig Mesimer, Kaitlyn Mesimer, Caroline Mesimer, Kaleigh Smith, Sherry Teague, Jake Teague, Tori Teague and Katie Weaver.

### **Happy Birthday to our missionaries celebrating birthdays in April!**

02 – Katy Janicek	14 – Bill Troutman
03 – Ana Santana	21 – Jane McLaughen
04 – Carrie Dirks	22 – Garry Chambers
Anna F. (2007)	24 – Robin White
Michaela Wadhams (2007)	26 – Suzanne S.
05 – Melissa Hunt	27 – Jonathan Jones (2013)
06 – Michael Cochran	29 – Foxx Cochran (2009)
09 – Karen Weaver	

## WITH LOVING THANKS

*Dear Church and Pastors,*

*We would like to express our thanks for your love and concern shown to our mom, Eloise Murphy, and our families. She loved the church and each one there. Thank you for each call, visit, card and all the many prayers. Thank you to each pastor and deacon that visited. She loved to have you sit with her and share. Thanks again for supporting us and holding all of us in prayer.*

*We love you all,  
Carolyn, the Murphy and Summey families*



*On behalf of United in Action of Stanley Churches, Inc. and its spirit-filled and devoted ecumenical alliance of pastors, ministers, laity and “prayer warriors,” we wish to thank Pastor Jessen and your most cordial and attentive assembly of Christian believers for the warm and gracious hospitality which was extended to each and everyone from the moment we exited our vehicles and throughout this scheduled UASC, Inc. 2018 Communitywide Noon Day Lenten Service on Wednesday afternoon, March 14, 2018 until the Benediction and our inevitable departure. A special “word of thanks” is also extended to your Hospitality/Kitchen Committee for their culinary expertise and endearing demeanor as we gathered together most jubilantly in fellowship and enjoyed a scrumptious repast following this communitywide ecumenical praise and worship service. Always be reminded that our prayers are with your church family without ceasing as you proceed and progress in earnest fashion in your service to Almighty God, Our Lord and Savior Jesus The Christ, to family, community and humanity.*

*Yours in Christian Service,  
Rev. Dr. Claude Williams  
President, UASC, Inc.*



*WOW! A BIG thanks goes out to the group of ladies that showed up for the Martha Mop-up Day last Saturday. There were 13 ladies that worked to clean areas of the church that needed extra attention. The Parlor, Sanctuary, bathrooms and adult Sunday School rooms were some of the areas they cleaned. We are especially grateful to all of you for taking time to come out on a Saturday and work so diligently! May you be blessed for your efforts.*

*Love,  
Your FPC Church Staff and Family*

***How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? 1 Thessalonians 3:9***

## WITH OUR CHURCH FAMILY

We are thankful for the good report that **Chuck Jessen** received last week. After one of our volleyball games, Pastor Chuck passed out as he stood up to leave. He was transported to the hospital and stayed overnight for observation and tests. After good results from the tests, the doctors determined the cause of his scare was trauma from a leg injury he sustained earlier that day.



### MEALS-ON-WHEELS NEEDS YOUR HELP!!!

The Adult Nutrition Program of Gaston County needs volunteers to deliver lunchtime home delivered meals in Stanley. Our volunteers make a wonderful difference in the lives of home-bound seniors by delivering nutritious meals and friendly smiles. Training is provided and you only need to deliver one hour a month to help with Meals-on-Wheels. Please call Phyllis at 704-862-7825 to join our team and experience this wonderful volunteer program.



## FEBRUARY FINANCIAL REPORT

Needed monthly for budget .....	65,149.24
Received in February for budget .....	53,847.67
Needed to date for budget.....	130,298.48
Received to date for budget .....	101,316.60
Needed monthly for Faith Promise.....	13,156.67
Received in February for Faith Promise .....	16,776.00
Needed to date for Faith Promise .....	26,313.34
Received to date for Faith Promise.....	28,187.00

# *Birthdays to Celebrate in April*

1 Keith Black  
April Marsh  
Holden Marsh

2 Terri Fowler

3 Sallie McAllister

4 Tony Beam  
Brad Heath  
Chris McAllister

5 Cathy Rhyne



8 Tommy Deese

10 Doug Lamb

11 Casey Ham

12 Rachel Baker  
Mary Rankin

15 Alyssa Lowery

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Assistant Pastor, Steve Jessen  
Worship 10:15 AM • Sunday School 9:00 AM



512 Old Mt. Holly Road  
Stanley, North Carolina 28164

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Stanley, NC 28164

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

# ARMORBEARER

Prayer Calendar – April 2018

First Presbyterian Church • Stanley, NC

Armorbearers were personal attendants of a warrior chieftain who accompanied him in dangerous missions; they held huge shields sometimes surrounding their leader to protect him. **Intercessory prayers** by church members' can **protect** their leaders from “the flaming arrows of the evil one” and uphold them “that words may be given to me [Paul] in opening my mouth boldly to **proclaim** the mystery of the gospel” (Eph 6:16, 19).

## Promptings from God’s Word for April: Christ, Risen at God’s Right Hand to Pray

*“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup> For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Col 3:1-3) “...He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he ever lives to make intercession for them.” (Heb. 7:25)*

## Prayer for Our Pastors

Pray daily as the Holy Spirit guides you in thinking about, and praying for our pastors. Some suggestions for prayer are included, but pray also as you are aware of other particular needs and concerns they may have.

**Monday:** To love God with all their heart, and to love others as themselves. (Matt. 27:37-39)

**Tuesday:** To trust the Lord completely for their wisdom, so that he will direct their daily path. (Prov. 3:5,6)

**Wednesday:** To pray always, putting on the armor of Lord to stand against the wiles of the Devil. (Eph. 6:11ff)

**Thursday:** To love their wives and manage their family in ways that honor Christ. (Eph. 5:25, I Tim. 3:4,5)

**Friday:** That God’s word will be their reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. (II Tim 3:16)

**Saturday:** To care faithfully for the flock and have compassion for lost sheep. (John 10:16, Lk. 15:4)

**Sunday:** To empower them to preach and teach the Gospel in the power of the Spirit. (Matt. 4:23, Rom. 10:15)

## Prayer for Our Ministry Leaders and Staff

Pray daily as the Holy Spirit guides you in thinking about, and praying for, our ministry leaders and staff:

**Monday:** Debbie Smith, Director, Child Development Center

**Tuesday:** Global Outreach, Adult Ed/Care Groups  
Jimmie & Martha Sue Mitchell

**Wednesday:** Lauren Henderson, Children’s Ministry

**Thursday:** Sandra Taylor, Administrative Assistant

**Friday:** Eric Beam, Music Director

**Saturday:** Pray that **all** who preach, teach and lead on the Lord’s Day at FPC will bring God’s word in the power of the Spirit to bless his people and glorify Jesus Christ.

## Prayer for Our Elders and Deacons

- 1 **Rick Herd:** Pray that I will be a good steward of time at work with so many demands and projects.
- 2 **Jimmie Mitchell:** Pray that I might always fear God and keep His commandments.
- 3 **Matt Ormsby:** Pray that our care group ministries will continue to grow.
- 4 **Jerry Ratchford:** That the Presbyterian Church in America and its churches remain steadfast, holding to Biblical truth and not falling prey to the pressures of the world as other churches have.
- 5 **Grady Rhyne:** Pray for strength to serve the Lord and be faithful at church and with my family.
- 6 **Kevin Rhyne:** That I become ever more focused on doing work that builds God's kingdom.
- 7 **Robert Rhyne:** Prayer for wisdom to recognize when God's grace is at work.
- 8 **Will Robinson:** Pray that I would be a good representative of the church and what it stands for.
- 9 **George Ross:** Pray for God to guide the Facilities Committee with our work to provide safety and security in our church.
- 10 **Ronnie Smith:** Pray that I would be more bold in sharing the gospel.
- 11 **Tracy Withers:** Pray that God will guide our Church leadership as we continue in this time of transition. There are many struggles and the evil one is right outside the door.
- 12 **Ryan Abernathy:** Pray that Elizabeth and I will have peace and patience as we prepare for our daughter to arrive.
- 13 **Chris Baker:** Pray that I always look for the Lord's guidance in all decisions and actions.
- 14 **Tommy Barton:** Pray that we will be good stewards of all God has entrusted to us.
- 15 **Mark Beatty:** Please continue to pray that my shoulder will heal. Things are moving much slower than anticipated due to the additional work required to re-attach my bicep.
- 16 **Lynn Burrell:** Praise that the front sanctuary wall project is FINALLY complete. It proved more time consuming than originally thought.
- 17 **Dean Chaney:** Pray for wisdom for our elders in decisions that we will be making in the days ahead to lead our church in God's way.
- 18 **Ken Dake:** Pray as I share the Word with the youth (Sunday School, Youth Grp) that the Gospel be communicated and that all involved (including me) will be enriched by those truths.
- 19 **Andrew Deese:** Pray for Hailey's cousin and family in the unexpected death of her husband.
- 20 **Ron Ensley:** Pray that I seek God's direction in all areas of my life.
- 21 **Ed Faggart:** Pray that I not focus so much on the small faults of others, but concern myself more with my own shortcomings and addressing them.
- 22 **Mason Friesenhahn:** Pray for me in my work as a deacon in the church, and my responsibilities at work and home.
- 23 **Mike Gamage:** Pray that God brings growth and renewal to our spiritual lives just as he shows us His power in the beauty of Spring.
- 24 **Chris Graham:** For our youth to be strong and courageous for the Lord in their schools and jobs.
- 25 **Mark Harper:** Please pray that I will always put my worries and stress in God's hands and not dwell on things out of my control.
- 26 **Rick Herd:** Pray that my schedule will work out to go on the Mexico mission trip in August.
- 27 **Jimmie Mitchell:** Help me to be humble as I deal with every situation that I face.
- 28 **Matt Ormsby:** Pray for wisdom for our session and search committees as they seek to fill staff needs of our church.
- 29 **Jerry Ratchford:** Pray that God's word will be our standard in all that we seek to do at FPC.
- 30 **Grady Rhyne:** Pray for strength to serve the Lord and be faithful at church and with my family.

## Praise and Thanksgivings

- Praise that the Stanley Total Living Center kitchen renovation project has been completed.  
Ron Ensley
- Praise for the people touched by God's Word during Youth Volleyball season. Prayers for the lifting up of a leader for Youth Soccer.  
Mike Gamage
- Thanks for the work of the Pulpit Committee and their recommendation to call Stephen Jessen.