



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Jefferson City, Tennessee
Organized in 1867 as The Presbyterian Church at Mossy Creek

September 2026 Newsletter

Blessing of the Hands

Several years ago, while completing my Clinical Pastoral Education requirement at the University of Tennessee Medical Center, our team offered a “Blessing of the Hands” in the hospital chapel. It was a simple, quiet offering: a candle burning, soft music playing, and a few of us available throughout the day to pray with physicians, nurses, and other hospital staff.

I was moved by the people who stopped in. Some came in hurriedly between patients or responsibilities. Others lingered for a while. They came to have their hands blessed for the work they did each day. As I watched, I was reminded that our hands carry so much of who we are into the world. They heal, teach, comfort, create, serve, build, nurture, write, hold, and reach out to others in love. Not long afterward, I was talking with one of the hospital supervisors, who mentioned that she had once offered a Blessing of the Hands in her church on Labor Day weekend. I loved the idea, and it eventually found its way into our life together here at First Presbyterian.

I will never forget the first time I led a Blessing of the Hands service. Early that morning, a woman approached me with a big smile on her face. She said, “Usually we go out of town, but we stayed here so we could come for the service. I even washed my hands carefully so they would be extra clean!” She had no idea how much her words blessed me. There was something wonderfully joyful in her anticipation of the service—and something beautiful in the way she understood that the ordinary work of her hands was worthy of blessing.

Since then, I have led many Blessing of the Hands services, and each one has been meaningful in its own way. Perhaps that is because this simple ritual reminds us of something we so easily forget: all of our work can be holy work.

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians, “There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord.” We do not all have the same gifts, the same occupations, or the same responsibilities. Some are students; some teach or care for others; some work in offices, businesses, schools, hospitals, or shops. Some are retired. Some spend much of their time caring for children, grandchildren, a spouse, a neighbor, or a friend. Some are looking for work. Some are discovering new ways to offer their gifts in this season of life. Whatever our circumstances, the work of our hands matters to God.

So, on Sunday, September 6, we will once again have a Blessing of the Hands during worship. Anyone who wishes to participate—of any age—is invited to come forward. Using oil, I will make the sign of the cross on the back of your hand and say, “May the work of your hands be a blessing to others.” The anointing is a tangible reminder that whatever work lies before us, God’s grace accompanies us. My hope and prayer is that this blessing will help us see our everyday work in a new light—as one of the ways we participate in God’s work in the world, offering our hands in service, compassion, and love.

Your Sister in Christ,
Dr. Glenda Hollingshead

HOLY CONVERSATIONS

Our next book is *Holy Rover*, by Lori Erickson. Join us on Zoom September 2 at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the book. All are welcome!



Blessing of the Hands

Sunday, September 6

10:45 a.m.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Tuesday, September 8th
at 9:00 a.m.

Perkins in Dandridge



CHURCH STREET CAFE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
721 CHURCH STREET
JEFFERSON CITY, TN

September 8th 4:00-5:30 p.m.



@fpcjeffcity.org

Adulting Together Ministry You're Invited!

For adults in their 20s, 30s, and 40s

Our next Adulting Together Ministry event is on Sunday, September 6th after worship. Parents are invited to leave their children at church, where they will be fed and entertained, while the adults enjoy a child free afternoon. Whether you're single, married, with kids, or without - come connect, relax, and grow in community.



Saturday, September 12 at
1:00 p.m. at 1907 Brewing
Company. Let's gather
around the tables to share
different brews and views.

First Presbyterian Church Threads of Friendship Women's Group

A warm, welcoming space for all women of the church—where every thread, whether yarn or conversation, weaves us closer together. Whether you knit, crochet, craft, or simply want to connect, you're invited to be part of the gathering. Can't make it in person? Connect with us via Zoom. Come, share a laugh or two, and be part of something meaningful.

Thursday, September 17th at 2:00 p.m.
Church Parlor

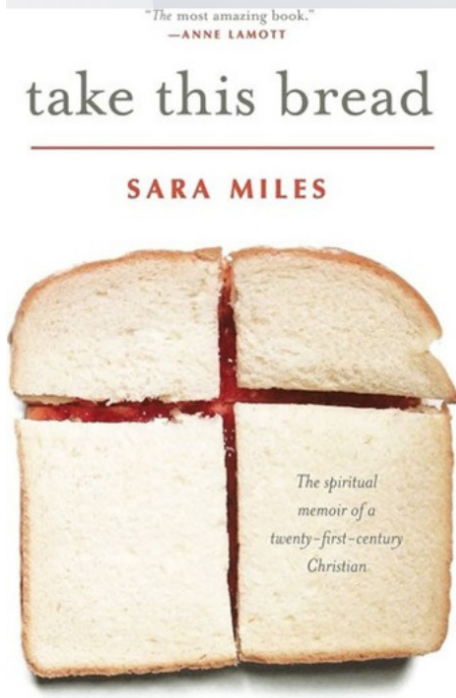
(Be sure to bring your own beverage.)

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS



On good days and bad days, our pets bring us joy, laughter, comfort, and friendship. So, on September 27th at 5:30 p.m. in the Prayer Garden beneath the shade of the trees, we will have a service to bless these animals that are a gift from God. If you have a pet that you are unable to bring, for whatever reason, simply bring a photograph of your pet to be blessed. Because this is a wonderful opportunity for outreach, tell your animal loving friends and neighbors about the service, and be sure to "share" our social media posts with your friends.

Remaining Books for Holy Conversations in 2026



In *Take This Bread: A Radical Conversion*, Sara Miles tells the story of her unexpected journey from atheism to Christian faith after wandering into a church and receiving Holy Communion for the first time. The experience transforms her life and leads her to start a food pantry that feeds hundreds of people each week. Through vivid storytelling, Miles connects the sacrament of bread and wine with the real hunger of the world, showing how faith can take shape through acts of radical hospitality. The result is a moving memoir about conversion, community, and the power of sharing bread with strangers. Mark your calendar for Monday, December 7 at 5:30 p.m. when we will meet on Zoom to discuss this book. If you would like Heather to order this book for you, please let her know by September 30th.

NEW DIRECTORY COMING SOON

A NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY WILL BE COMING SOON. IF YOU HAVE ANY ADDRESS, PHONE OR EMAIL CHANGES, PLEASE LET HEATHER KNOW.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

AUGUST 23, 2026

Corn & Bacon Festival: Planning continues for FPC's participation in the October 3 festival, with more than 50 vendors registered. FPC will offer tours of the church.

Communion Servers: As we transition to a six-person Session, additional Communion servers are needed. Session will invite Ruling Elders who are not currently serving on Session to join the Communion Server rotation.

Elder Nominating Committee: Session began forming the committee. Esther O'Hare and Samuel Hollingshead will serve as co-chairs. Three members-at-large will be selected before a Congregational Meeting is scheduled.

Worship, Media & the Arts: The committee shared dates for several upcoming worship opportunities, including the Kirkin' of the Tartans, when members will be invited to bring family heirlooms or other items for display.

Generations of Faith: Education & Fellowship shared an update on the new multi-generational Sunday School class beginning September 6. New technology, including a Meeting Owl, will enhance participation both in person and via Zoom.

Church Street Café: Mission & Creation Care reported that CSC has distributed 500 bags of food so far this year. We continue to receive generous donations from God's Warehouse and Renovatus.

Church Office: The Finance Committee reported that office furniture will be updated over the next few weeks to make the space more functional.

Healing & Renewal: Dr. Glenda Hollingshead led a discussion about the effects of stress and trauma on individuals and our wider society. Session agreed to explore practices that can help us "catch our breath, rest, and heal." To get us started a day retreat is being planned to introduce sound baths and art therapy.

Love This Place *Enough to Share It* ♥

A 3-WEEK STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

"Day by day... they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts... and the Lord added to their number."

Acts 2:46-47

Pull Up a Chair.



CAMPAIGN BEGINS **SEPTEMBER 13**



WEEK 1

Love Remembers

Remembering the table that welcomed us.



WEEK 2

Love Makes Room

Inviting others and setting another place.



WEEK 3

Love Looks to the Future

Our gifts today shape the table for tomorrow.

Love This Place Enough to Share It

This year's Stewardship Campaign invites us to consider what it means to love First Presbyterian Church enough to share it. We are blessed with a congregation that has a long history of serving our community, supporting our neighbors, and creating meaningful opportunities for worship, learning, and fellowship. But if we want this ministry to thrive for generations to come, we must not only cherish what happens here—we must invite others to be part of it. Starting September 13th, we will spend three weeks reflecting on what we have received, how we can make room for others, and how our generosity can help carry this beloved community into the future. There is room at the table. Pull up a chair.

Missions

Thanks to everyone who has brought animal care products for the two county animal shelters during August. They will be dedicated soon and then delivered to the shelters. And thanks to everyone who continues to bring personal care products for the Necessities Pantry, to help fulfill that ongoing need. The bin is in the back hallway.

The Mission focus for September is the PCUSA World Communion Offering, which will be collected throughout September and dedicated on World Communion Sunday, October 4. It cultivates reconciliation by supporting racial and gender justice, peacemaking efforts, global witness, and nurturing ecumenical and interfaith relations. This new special offering replaces the Peace & Global Witness offering that we collected in the past. Please look for - and read! - the bulletin inserts about aspects of this offering in the next few weeks.

Prayers for our Mission partners: We always ask, as part of the Mission grant process, how we may pray for them. Here is the request from The Gathering: Respite Care ministry at First United Methodist Church across the street: 'We welcome prayers for continued wisdom, strength, and guidance as we grow The Gathering in a way that faithfully serves both our friends and their caregivers. We are especially grateful for the many blessings already experienced - meaningful connections, dedicated volunteers, the visible joy and peace brought to families through this program. We ask for prayers for sustained provision - both financial and material - so that we may continue to expand access to those in need, as well as for the emotional and physical well-being of the caregivers we serve. Above all, we pray that The Gathering remains a place where every individual is met with dignity, love, and a deep sense of belonging.'

Please contact chair Carol Antoniewicz or any other member of the committee (Del Deaton, Linda Noonkesser, and Linda Raines) with any ideas or comments you have on Mission or Creation Care.



FPC IN MOTION

Moving Together in Faith & Fellowship



Make plans to join the fun!
Hiking at Panther Creek after
Worship, October 4th.

JUDY SITES SCHOLARSHIP 2026



ROBBIE GOWAN

Robbie Gowan is our 2026 Judy Sites Scholarship recipient. Robbie is a junior at The University of Alabama Huntsville majoring in Mechanical Engineering.

A “Save the Planet” Moment brought to you by Creation Care



“Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.” —Romans 13:10

Out of sight, out of mind. It can be so easy to trash something or pour something down the drain that will hurt someone or something else “downstream” because we forget that everyone downstream is a neighbor too. What items do you use or improperly dispose of that cause harm after they’ve left your sight? This month, look up your local hazardous waste organization to determine how to safely dispose of paint, batteries, e-waste, motor oil, medicines, etc. © *The Pastoral Center / PastoralCenter.com. All rights reserved.*

To that end, please be collecting your household hazardous waste, and plan to take it to the Jefferson County Landfill, 650 Grove Road, Dandridge, on Saturday, October 17, 8am – noon.

Accepted Materials

- Cleaning fluids and household chemicals
- Pesticides, fertilizers, and lawn-care products
- Paint thinners and adhesives
- Aerosol cans
- Fluorescent lamps and bulbs
- Lithium, button, and rechargeable batteries (no standard alkaline batteries)
- Mercury thermometers and thermostats
- Brake fluid and automotive/marine fluids
- Prescription medications
- Sharps (must be in a puncture-proof container labeled "SHARPS-DO NOT RECYCLE")

Items Not Accepted

- Standard alkaline batteries
- Paint (latex/oil paint in liquid form—check local rules or let dry before disposal)
- Electronics and computers
- Ammunition, explosives, or radioactive materials
- Medical waste (other than properly stored sharps)

And please continue to collect your clean glass bottles and jars, no lids, and let Carol know when you bring some to church for her to collect to take to the Blount County recycling center. Thanks!

And you can continue to bring in your old newspapers for the CARE animal shelter, and put them in the back hallway next to the bin for the Neighborhood Center



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Lyle Juroff	2 Holy Conversations 5:30 p.m.	3	4 Susan Clouser Steve & Janice Wintermute	5
6 Communion Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:45 a.m. Adulting Together 12:00 p.m.	7	8 Men's Breakfast 8:00 a.m. Church Street Café 4:00 p.m.	9	10	11	12 Pub Theology 1:00 p.m.
13 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:45 a.m.	14 Claud Gowan	15	16	17 Threads of Friendship 2:00 p.m.	18	19
20 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:45 a.m. Committee Meetings 12:00 p.m.	21	22	23 Newsletter Deadline	24	25	26
27 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:45 a.m. Stewardship Sunday Blessing of the Animals 5:30 p.m.	28	29	30			

Prayer Concerns

SPECIAL CONCERNS:

Arlene Peck

Bill Vest

Doug Moses

Jama Seahorn

The health and wellbeing of our country and those who live within its borders

Members of the military & their families

Peace in Ukraine, The Holy Land, Iran, and other war-torn nations

ILL AND RECOVERING:

Kent Clouser, who is having serious health issues

Connie Harlan, who broke her wrist

Wayne Hershberger, Jessica Evans' uncle, who has aggressive lung cancer

Terri, Ted Folsom's cousin, who is undergoing chemotherapy

Mike Frost, Janice Wintermute's nephew, who is recovering from surgery

Wayne King, who is having health issues

Angelia Ramsey, wife of Jim Deaton's friend, James, who has cancer

Kris Ridyard, who is undergoing immunotherapy

Paul Sorey, Linda Noonkesser's brother

Jane Sorey, Linda Noonkesser's sister-in-law

*The mission of First Presbyterian Church is to form disciples
who are invested in reflecting the love of Christ Jesus to the world.*

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*To access Online Giving or for more information about First
Presbyterian Church you may visit our website at www.fpcjeffcity.org
or scan this QR code with your smartphone.*

