

Beyond the Columns

First Presbyterian Church of Danville
193 Years of “Knowing Christ and Making Him Known”

October 2020



Our theme for October is “Drawn Together to Embody God’s Grace”. This is the second leg of the three-part rhythm of grace in our Christian lives.

There are many ways that a congregation embodies God’s grace, but the central vision of our life together can be found in the baptismal font and the communion table. Both of these central features in our sanctuary signify how the grace of God is at work in our midst. As believers we are drawn together by our baptism and when we eat at the table. These two activities are visible and tangible evidence of God’s hospitality – the welcome that each of us receive as God’s children.

The PCUSA believes in what is called ‘open communion’, or the ‘open table’, which means that we do not require someone to be a member of our church, or of any church, or even to be baptized in order to fellowship with us at the table. The only requirement is that you are open to receiving whatever Jesus has to share with you. You don’t have to have it all figured out or recite a creed. It isn’t a matter of intellectual assent. We welcome all kinds of folk when we serve communion.

The ‘open table’, or ‘open communion’ is not just a ritualistic practice. It is a way of being the Church. Just as Jesus sat at the table and ate with sinners and tax collectors, we invite those who are ignored, misunderstood, and rejected by society. In a world that scrutinizes you based on your outward appearance, the message of Holy Communion in our church is one of total acceptance in Christ. If nowhere else, Church is the one place where you can feel the unconditional acceptance of Jesus.

At the opening of Holy Communion, I typically use some form of the liturgy that says, “Christ our Lord invites to his table, all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin, and seek to live in peace with one another. Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.” If you are open and willing, you are invited.

Let me share three reasons why we practice the “Open Table” unlike many other churches.

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Jesus Modeled the Open Table for Us – If we want to do a study on the entire meal ministry of Jesus, we find all people invited to feast with him. When Jesus fed the 5,000 or the 4,000, he fed them all. He didn't ask if they were Presbyterians or Baptists or Catholics. When he ate at the house of the tax collectors, or when he traveled to Samaria, or when he broke the bread with two strangers on the way to Emmaus, Jesus never asked, "Are you a member?" He also didn't ask if you believe every part of our creed or dogma.

We Don't Control God's Grace – We cannot reify God's grace! Reification is when one gives substance to something that has no substance. Reification of grace is when the church, preacher, or anyone says God's grace is not available to you. I hold the grace, and we will dole it out to those who agree with us. As the Soup Nazi would say on *Seinfeld* if you didn't order the soup in just the right way, "No Grace For You!", many churches treat grace in the same way. We see this happen in many churches and denominations – you are divorced? You need to attend another church. You made some bad decisions in life? You might need to go somewhere else. God's grace cannot be given out by us.

The Table is Open...But the Grace Is Not Cheap – In our understanding of the Open Table, Presbyterians may continue to invite all persons to the Lord's table, as long as they understand that non-baptized seekers should be urged to enter the baptismal covenant and be taught the full truth about its costly dynamics. God's grace is free and offered to all that is true. *But it is not Cheap and Meaningless*. If we are going to receive the Grace of God in our lives, we must be willing to be transformed by it. That means we must be willing to abide by the costs of discipleship and submit ourselves to it.

The table of Christ is always open, but once we receive His body and blood, we should never again be the same.

Pastor Beth

On Sunday, Oct. 4 we will celebrate my official installation as the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church – Danville. During that celebration, it is customary to honor the pastor with a gift of welcome and hospitality. At the beginning of our relationship, session has also graciously approved a gift from your Pastor to the congregation. The gift of communion and baptismal ware made from pottery is symbolic of the transformative power of God's grace.

Scripture reminds us that we are the clay, and God is the pottery.

*Yet you, LORD, are our Father. We are the clay. You are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.
Isaiah 64:8*

While we are made from clay, God has the power to transform our lives into something beautiful if we permit ourselves to remain malleable. My hope is that we will be able to sing these words together in our hearts and minds as we grow into the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Change my heart oh God
Make it ever true
Change my heart oh God
May I be like You

You are the potter
I am the clay
Mold me and make me
This is what I pray

Change my heart oh God
Make it ever true
Change my heart oh God
May I be like You

Lord, You are the Potter and I am the clay.
Mold me and make me, have Thine own way

Lord, I need Your Spirit, Lord, I need Your grace;
Help me to run this Christian race.

You are the Potter, I am the clay.
Mold me and make me, have Thine own way.

Lord, I give my life, I give my all to You,
To be a willing vessel, to use me through and through.

<https://zionlyrics.com/vineyard-you-are-the-potter-i-am-the-clay-master-let-your-will-be-done-lyrics>

Prayer and Praise

PASTORAL CONCERNS—
Chuck Bolt, Lisa Bolt, Amy
Bracey, Bill Copeland
(Linda Copeland's father)
Judy Cox (Kristen Cox's

sister-in-law), Kathy Cropp, Lib Cuttle, Matthew
Dolianitis, Bill & Betty Fitzgerald, Fred Gunn (W.
Gunn's brother), Lois Hayes, Ina Ingram, Peggy
Lackey, Bob Lowther, Larry Mann, Ruth Meadors,
Tony Parker (W. Barrow's father), Mary Lou Snead,
Debra Bolt Thompson, Easton Zunker (K. Meadows)

ON THE MEND--(Praise & Gratitude for improved
condition) Mrs. Helen Harris

OUR VIPs—Chuck Bolt, Alice Bradshaw, Lib Cuttle,
Bill & Betty Fitzgerald, Lois Hayes, Charlotte Lowther,
Grace Litzenberg, Fae Smith, Jean White

CAREGIVERS

THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY

THE PEOPLE OF TOGO

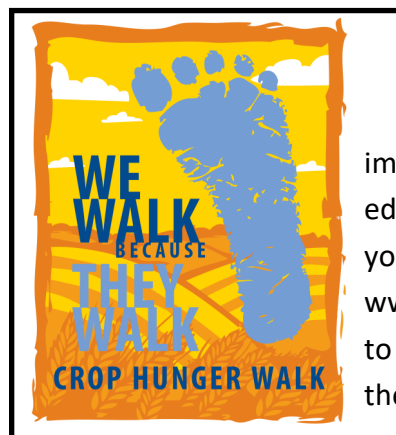
Our condolences to Walter Gunn in the loss of Gail.

Our condolences to the friends and family of Zane
Evans in the loss of their father.

SATURDAY LUNCH MINISTRY

WHAT: Serving a hot
lunch to the community.

WHEN: Every Saturday;
volunteers work from
10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Lunch is served at 11:00
a.m. During the summer.
Since our regular
volunteer churches have
taken a break from
assisting, we need
volunteers—call the office
if you can help on
Saturdays.



This year's Crop Walk will be different!
We will have a virtual walk October 4th
immediately following worship. If you are interest-
ed contact Barbara Wilkins or Jackie Rochford. If
you want to make a donation visit
www.danvillecropwalk.org or make checks payable
to First Presbyterian Church with "Crop Walk" in
the memo line.



Sunday Flowers on the Reredos

October 10- Today, the flowers are given in celebration of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Christopher T. Moore. The beautiful brass urns are given to the glory of God, to the First Presbyterian Church, by Rebecca and Chris.

October 25th- Date Saved for Meadema family

The Day Circle will be in charge for the month of October.

If you would like to place flowers in the sanctuary, please contact Rebecca Atkinson at 434.203.1666 or rebeccaatkinson@comcast.net, for more information. After the service, flowers are distributed to those persons on our prayer list or as directed by the sponsor.



VIP OF THE WEEK

Please remember our VIPs in prayer each week and drop them a card or note to let them know how much they are loved.

October 11 — Lois Hayes Room 45
Roman Eagle Nursing Home
2526 N. Main Street
Danville, VA 24540

October 18 — Grace Litzenburg
954 Main Street
Danville, VA 24541

October 25— Alice Bradshaw
Colonial Suite
1111 Main Street
Danville, VA 24541

If you feel visiting the elderly is your gift, please consider joining our VIP Committee. Talk to one of the following members: Pat Argyrakis, Joan Reynolds, Bernadine Hayes, Nancy Wilson, Susie Crews, or Kent Shelton.

Property Committee

Bob's To-Do List

Computer, streaming
TV & sound system
hardware & repair
Sutherlin Speakers

Investigate the aging
alarm system, Carbon
Monoxide & Fire
Alarm

Investigate Amp
replacement

Routine maintenance
items around the
church building
ongoing.

Front porch needs
bird
protection

Investigate replacing
electrical panel in
basement with
modern equipment

Women's bathroom
to be refreshed

Completed Items

Painted front door

Stewardship in Action

This year the Stewardship theme for First Presbyterian Church is **“We are the Church – We serve with energy, imagination, intelligence and love.”** Our church is so fortunate to have a congregation who serves with such love. This month we highlight one of our long time members- Ina Ingram. Ina has been a faithful member of First Presbyterian Church and The Outlook Sunday School class. She has served as one of the teachers for that class. Ina has very willingly served on the Diaconate, Session, and countless committees. She has always been ready to help with Wednesday Night Dinners and the Saturday Lunch Ministry. Over the years, I am sure this only scratches the surface of the ways that Ina has given her energy, imagination, intelligence and love. Please take time to thank Ina for her dedication to the Lord’s work here at First Presbyterian Church and our community.



Contact Jackson for details: Jackson@fpcdanville.com or 434.792.7822 ext. 3



DRAWN IN TO EXPERIENCE GOD’S GRACE

DRAWN TOGETHER TO EMBODY GOD’S GRACE

DRAWN FORTH TO EXTEND GOD’S GRACE



4 Bob Lowther

5 Jean White

Wilson Walden

7 Bob Newnam

8 Collier Wiseman

9 David Clark

Michael Jones

11 Brenna Takata

14 Bill Fitzgerald

15 Frank Van Valkenburg, IV

Fae Smith

Nicholas Argyrakis

17 Betty Fitzgerald

Maria Abreu

22 Denise Van Valkenburg

23 Iya Kassa

26 Carolyn Baker

Nick Argyrakis

28 Fred Baker

If we’ve missed your special day
let us know !!

We have purchased the Hygenica Electro Hygiene System which will disinfect and sanitize our church. We are using this through out the building. The chemicals used in the “fogger” will “remove 99.9% of viruses, pathogens, and bacteria, including most coronaviruses, including but not limited to COVID –19, influenza A, rhinovirus, and norovirus.”* At times a slight residue is left behind that can feel “sticky.”

There is a sign up sheet at the Main Street entrance next to the Admin. Office. If you are a committee chair, please fill out this sheet when you meet at the church so the room can be disinfected.

If you have any questions about the system or products being used to disinfect please contact the church office.

*Operator’s Manual

DAY SCHOOL NEWS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Founded in 1826, we were the first organized congregation in Danville. Our sanctuary and offices are located at 937 Main St, next door to the Sutherlin Mansion and Museum and a few blocks west of downtown. You can reach us at (434) 792-7822 or vickie@fpcdanville.com

We've had one month of Day School and we're doing GREAT! Happy to be back in the classrooms and watching these children THRIVE! They've been desperate for routine and learning, we're all very happy to be back! Our year is looking trimmer than normal so if you're able and are interested I have an Amazon wish list. Please see me (Erin Parris) for this list. I appreciate all the prayers for our beginning of the year as well as the children in Covid Care. We've been able to provide a great service to a lot of families during this time. Please see the comments made by two families who've been VERY thankful for what we've been able to offer. My prayer is that you'd continue to pray for our health and wellness and for increased numbers as the year progresses. Thank you all and HAPPY FALL!!

Here are what a few of our parents are saying: *"When I say I can't thank you enough, I truly mean it! The kid just loves to learn and loves school now, and you are able to provide that for him!"*

"Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I didn't know how I would be able to work and handle school for my child. "

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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24541-1809

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vickie@fpcdanville.com

