



NEWSLETTER

Arise, O God, and shine in all thy saving might, and prosper each design to spread thy glorious light; Let healing streams of mercy flow, that all the earth thy truth may know. William Hurn, 1813



FPC MISSIONS AND BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE

by Ruling Elder Keith Easterling

Your Missions Committee wants to take this opportunity to thank you, the church body, for supporting home and foreign missions for—literally—decades. The committee functions to communicate with those missionaries we support and to assess missionaries who come to us asking for our church’s support.

As committee chairman for 2024-2025, I thought it would be a good time to share more in-depth information with our congregation:

- Our church currently supports forty-eight missionaries, missions agencies, and educational institutions. Twenty-five of these are in the United States and twenty-three are outside of our borders.

Continue Reading

On Page 2.

INSIDE

FPC Missions and
Benevolence Committee
Pages 1-2

In the Courtroom with
God’s People
Page 3

Women’s Ministry Studies
Stewardship Update
Operation Christmas Child
Page 4

SUNDAYS

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship, 10:45 a.m.
Evening Worship, 6:00 p.m.

- “Home” missions causes are overseen through Mission to North America (MNA) and the remainder through Mission to the World (MTW), both of which are under the authority and guidance of our denomination, the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) .
- The Missions Committee works with a budget of over \$280,000, the largest item in the church’s budget other than staff expenses.
- Our committee reviews each of our missionaries and agencies on a regular basis. If their mission changes, they must reapply and be evaluated by the committee prior to support continuing.

There are several criteria for the type of missionary efforts that our church supports. One of most important of these is the mission’s plans to become self-supporting, continuing to thrive after the missionary leaves the field.

First Presbyterian Church has supported these faithful missionaries for many years:

Rick and Betty Aschmann (Ecuador) since the 1980’s

Donald and Claire-Lise Cobb (France) since 1997

David and Marcia Jones (England) since 1985

Tom and Catalina Nachtergaele (Belgium) since 1998

Stephen Rarig (Australasia) since 1990

Stephen and Marion Spencer (South Africa) since 1995

David and Jan Thomae (MTW) since 1989

Carolyn Thompson (LOGOI) since 1992

Missions Committee members are Amy Grenn, Trevor Grenn, Lance Mangum, Dennis McGaughran, Kathy McKellar, Robin Reeves, Eli Smith, Kim Smith, and Jamie Tice. The diaconate representative is Randy Martin and the session is represented by Bill Turpin, Randy Henderson, Wyche McMullan, and Keith Easterling. Knox Baird is our church’s Missions Pastor.

FALL EVENTS CALENDAR

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Sept. 15 | Fellowship Groups Meet
<i>No Evening Worship Service</i>
If you would like to learn more about these groups, please contact Julie Durfield. |
| Oct. 20 | Churchwide Fall Picnic |
| Nov. 8-10 | Student Ministry Retreat
Timber Creek Camp |

IN THE COURTROOM WITH GOD'S PEOPLE

by Darwin Jordan

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? 33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; 34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Romans 8:31-34

The Charges

This is a courtroom scene. There is a possibility that charges could be brought against us in God's "courtroom." And we know that charges could be brought: anger, hatred, jealousy, lust, covetousness, prayerlessness, selfishness, lack of passion for God's glory. Where would one start, or end for that matter?

An account of every sin of thought, word and deed, of things we did to people and things we should have done for people, would make a desperately long, sad and bad movie.

But for believers, there is no one even to *bring* a charge. "Who will bring a charge against God's elect?" (8.33). There is no prosecuting attorney even allowed in.

The Judge

Why? Because the Judge is the one who justifies. And the Judge is God. If the all-powerful God declares us finally and completely and permanently "not guilty" then that's that. No further discussion. No one even there: "who is the one who condemns?"

God's verdict shuts every mouth. On December 12, 2000, the Supreme Court rendered its decision that settled a recount dispute in Florida's presidential election that year. Whatever you think about the decision, or whether or not it should have come before them, their decision was the final word. So it is with God. Once He justifies, who condemns? *Who can bring a charge to the Judge who has already dropped the charges?*

The One Who Intercedes

And the charges are not just dropped. They are totally forgiven. In fact, the charges have already been brought against Another, Christ Jesus. All our guilt was transferred to Him; He suffered on our behalf. He was punished in our place and therefore, "He died."

The charges *have* to be dropped because Someone has already been indicted, convicted and executed. Every charge has been dealt with finally and completely. *For those who trust in Christ, these charges don't exist anymore*

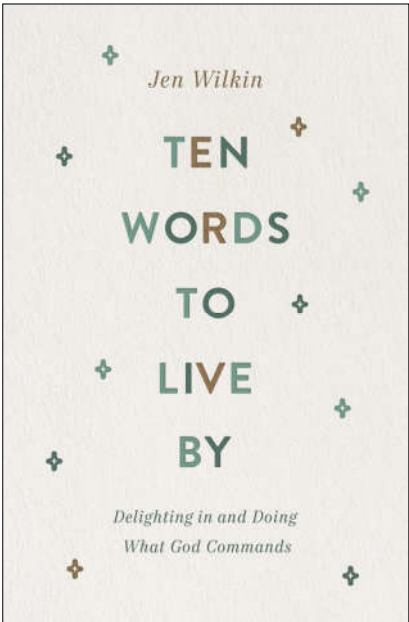
Not only did Christ die for us, he was raised from the dead to enter heaven and intercede for us. In the Old Testament on the Day of Atonement the priest sacrificed the lamb and brought its blood into the inner chamber of the Tabernacle called "The Holy of Holies."

This points to Christ, who offered up Himself as a sacrifice on the cross and then entered the real Holy of Holies in the very presence of God. His very presence intercedes for us. His wounds declare that He has died for His people. We are always accepted by the Father because Christ is always interceding for us.

The only attorney concerning God's people is Christ! The only voice is the precious work of Christ which wins the case hands down for our forgiveness. Charles Wesley wrote:

*Arise, my soul, arise, shake off your guilty fears
The bleeding Sacrifice in my behalf appears...
Five bleeding wounds he bears, received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers, they strongly plead for me.
"Forgive him, O forgive," they cry, "Nor let that
ransomed sinner die."*

Dear believer, your guilt is gone – all of it, for good and forever. Don't live in it. Don't live as though there is someone to condemn. There isn't. Don't you do it either! Rest in His minute by minute love. Be exhilarated in it! He never stops loving you. He never loves you less. As Paul says in verse 31, "If God is for us, who can be against us?"



WOMEN'S MINISTRY STUDIES



All women are invited to join one of the fall Bible studies using Jen Wilkin's TEN WORDS TO LIVE BY: Delighting in and Doing What God Commands.

There are studies beginning **Wednesday, September 18 at 6:30 p.m.** in the Parlor and **Thursday, September 19 at 9:15 a.m.** in Taylor Hall. Contact Bridgett Aehnlich for more details or register by scanning the QR code above.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Stewardship Update July 31, 2024

<i>General Fund income year-to-date</i>	\$878,709
<i>Expenses year-to-date</i>	<u>973,918</u>
<i>+/-</i>	<i>\$(95,209)</i>
Balance on mortgage line of credit	\$317,449

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX PACKING PARTIES November 8-10 in McIntosh Hall

FPC partners each year with *Samaritan's Purse* to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world.

For more information about Operation Christmas Child, contact Laretta Shurden or Debera Shaw.

