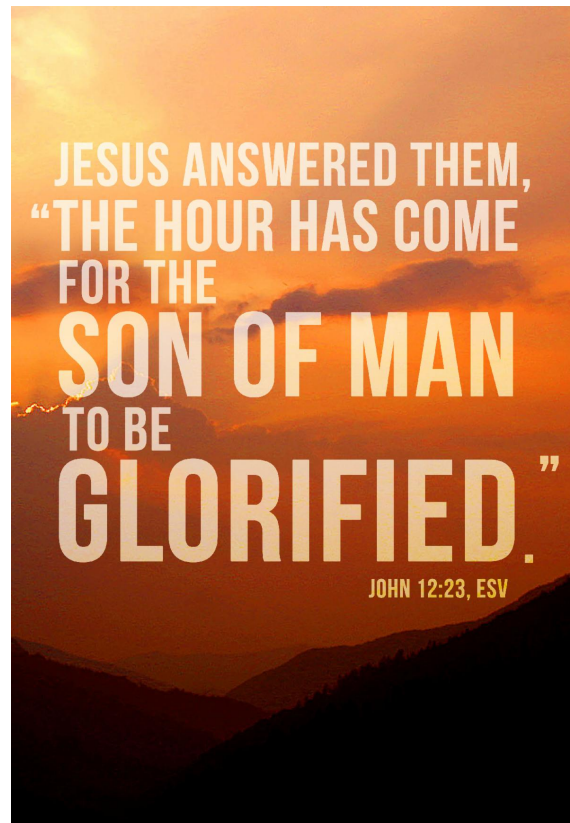




# THE WEEKLY FIRST



As Jesus made His journey toward the Cross at the climax of human history, Jerusalem and surrounding areas were filled with a palpable spirit of anticipation and anger. John 12, the chapter on which our teaching is based for Sunday, captures a glimpse of this spirit. Jesus had just raised Lazarus from the dead. In the ancient day of misinformation, Lazarus' death and aliveness were indisputable. Four days he was dead.

As John 12 opens, Lazarus is having dinner with Jesus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, in his hometown of Bethany. At this dinner in Jesus' honor, Mary anoints Jesus pouring a pint of expensive perfume on Him which dripped from His head to His feet. It was a beautiful display of extravagant devotion in response to Jesus' radical love. Of course, beauty is in the eye of the beholder so not everyone thought Mary's display was an act of devotion. Judas thought it a waste of money that could have been invested in ministering to the poor. He would have had a point except Judas was no wise steward but a thief.

As Jesus blesses Mary's devotion, His journey moves from messianic anticipation to religious anger. Anger is not only mounting against Jesus, but plans are being made to murder Lazarus. Lazarus was a living illustration of Jesus' claims and power. Jews "were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in Him" (John 12:10). The next day as crowds arrived for the Passover feast, Jesus publicly and confrontationally entered Jerusalem declaring Himself the Messiah King and the crowds erupted, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel!" (John 12:13)

The "die was cast". It was Sunday but Friday was coming! Jerusalem, already a powder keg, filled with Jewish pilgrims to celebrate Passover and Jewish hatred and zealotry against Roman occupation, became more volatile with religious rage against Jesus and messianic expectations for Jesus.

Ironically, as Jewish leaders conspired to eliminate Lazarus and Jesus, Gentile God-seekers came to Jesus' disciples. "We want to see Jesus". (John 12:21 "Jesus replied, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." (John 12:23) "Hour", this is a reference to the Father's Mission and the Son's manifest destiny.

Gentile God-fearers want to see Jesus. Jesus' response, "it's time for me to die". Jesus said, "Amen" or "Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds." (John 12:24)

This is one of Jesus' Amen truths. Often when Jesus spoke a solemn word, He affirmed the veracity and gravity of His statement preceding it with "Amen". Indirectly, Jesus is claiming He speaks for God as God in the flesh. Practically, the "Amen" truths are like Jesus grabbing us by the lapels and saying, "listen up". This Sunday we will look at this Amen truth and the larger passage which reveals it.

**Click the link below for the most recent Session Minutes.**

[Session Minutes March 2025](#)

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## [Sunday Bulletin is Online!](#)



*Welcome*

Our mission is to know Christ, serve Him,  
and make Him known.

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**UPDATE: Work on the sanctuary restroom will begin next week (week of March 17).** The restroom will be painted and will get new floor covering, fixtures, and mirrors. The room may be unavailable on Sunday March 24, but should be available shortly after that.

The session has approved purchasing new equipment for the playground to add to what we already have. A climber and two bouncers will be purchased.

Both the restroom work and new playground equipment will be funded by designated contributions that have already been received – not from the general budget.

The team is studying other potential improvements (both indoors and outdoors) and will communicate as more is known.

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## Moscow Evangelical Christian Seminary



### Your Mission Team News

Our mission: "To be Christ's witnesses in Kannapolis, Rowan; Cabarrus counties, and even to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Russia, with its 11 time zones, seems like the "ends of the earth" and maybe an unlikely place for our mission support, but there is exciting work (God's work) happening in Moscow, Russia and the former Soviet Union countries, such as Ukraine, Moldova, and Armenia. We support one student a year at the Moscow Evangelical Christian Seminary (est. 1993) through the One Mission Society. Sasha, their director, has spoken to us in previous years about the challenges and triumphs of RE-growing the Christian church in Russia after decades of persecution.

Currently there are 700 students enrolled. Tuition costs \$1,200/year/student (a 3-yr program) for training full-time pastors, bi-vocational pastors and missionaries.



### Please check your information in the Instant Church Directory.

If any corrections are needed, please call the church office 704-938-4623 or email them to [firstpresb@firstpresb.org](mailto:firstpresb@firstpresb.org) so updates can be made. Thank you.



The Navigators Sunday School Class, along with any Middle/Senior High Schoolers, are invited to a Downtown Picture Scavenger Hunt! Adam and Tracy Caskey will meet you at the church on Friday, March 21st at 6:00pm. After the scavenger hunt, you'll enjoy ice cream downtown. Pick up will be back at the church at 8:00pm. Friends are welcome – let Tracy know if you can come!



### Wednesdays in the Word will soon embark on a 4-week Lenten study.

Join us each Wednesday, March 19 - April 9, as we contemplate Christ's Journey to the cross and the events of Holy Week. Adults will meet in the Fellowship Hall with Pastor Eddie. Children and Youth will meet on the third floor.

**The schedule is as follows:**

5:30pm - Dinner for Youth

6:00pm - PraiseMakers Rehearsal

6:30pm - Adult and Youth Classes

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FEEDING  
KANNAPOLIS  
HUNGER

**Health Market - Produce Market & Linda's Closet**

**First Presbyterian and Feeding Kannapolis Hunger will host a Health Market THIS Saturday, March 22 at 9:30am.** We will feature information and samples on healthy eating, along with a produce giveaway.

Linda's closet will also be open for the community. Set up will be Friday, March 21 at 5:30pm (pizza provided), and volunteers are needed by 9am on Saturday, March 22.

Please sign up in the Narthex if you can help on either or both occasions!

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**The JOY Group will be meeting for lunch at noon on Friday, March 28 at the China Grove Family Restaurant.**

Please sign up in the Narthex.

If you need a ride, contact Dave or

Jane Argabrite or reach Dave by phone/text 304-588-0156.

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**Middle and Senior High Youth are invited to the premiere of The Chosen, Season 5, at Southeast Cinemas – Carolina Mall!** The new Season of The Chosen begins with the events of Palm Sunday, and we will use these viewings as the basis for our Wednesday night discussions during Lent. Below is our schedule for viewing. Please sign up in the Narthex for each date you plan to attend! See Michelle if you need more information.

**Friday, March 28 – 6:45pm** (Part 1); Meet at Chili's for dinner at 5:15pm

**Friday, April 4 – 5:30pm** (Part 2); Go to dinner after the movie

**Saturday, April 12 – 1:00 pm** (Part 3); Meet for lunch before the movie

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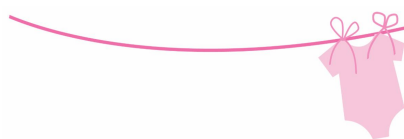
*Women Without Reservations*

**Women Without Reservations will meet for dinner on Sunday, March 30 at 6:00pm.**

Join us at the Cheesecake Factory in Birkdale Village.

**We will also be “showering” Lauren Goodnight with diapers, pure wipes, and gift cards for her baby girl due May 17!**

All women of the church are invited. Please let Michelle Walker know if you plan to attend so we can secure enough space at the restaurant.



**This year, there will be multiple opportunities to pause during Holy Week** and contemplate more deeply Jesus' journey to the cross, His sacrificial death, and His triumphant resurrection. Please invite others to these special services and events:

**Palm Sunday, April 13**

11am – Worship Service in Sanctuary

7:30pm – The Last Supper presentation (Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting “comes to life” as the disciples contemplate Jesus' declaration that one of them will betray Him.)

**Maundy Thursday, April 17**

6:30pm – Worship Service in Sanctuary

**Good Friday, April 18**

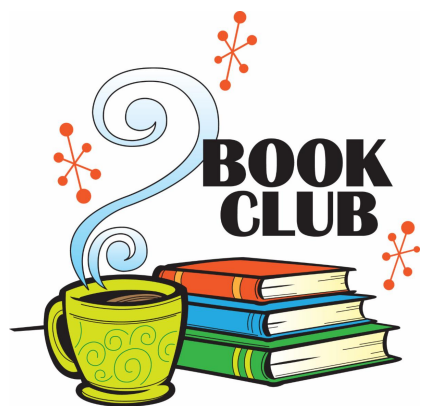
6:30pm – Worship Service with area churches in Sanctuary

**Saturday, April 19**

10am – 12pm – Children and Youth Easter Celebration (Join us for games, crafts, a cookout, and special treats as we contemplate Jesus' love for us.)

**Easter Sunday, April 20**

11am – Resurrection Worship Service with Special Music and Flowering of the Cross



**A BOOK CLUB will meet Monday, March 31 from 10:00-11:30am in the parlor.** Our first book is *At Home in Mitford* by Jan Karon. The book club is open to men and women. See Trish Nixon if you would like more information.



**Thank you to all who have donated to the First Pres Blessing Fence!**

So many items have been gifted to our community through this ministry.

**Current needs:**

- Feminine Products
- New or gently used bath towels

**Please see Sam or Kay McAllister if you can help!**

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**Linda's Closet has new hours:  
Tuesdays, 11:00am - 1:00pm.**

Volunteers are needed weekly and also during the Health Market on Saturday, March 22.

Please see Trish Nixon for information and to volunteer.

Thank you for your support of this ministry!

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**Prayer Concerns**

**Help us keep Prayer Concerns current with weekly updates. Email the church or note on a prayer card & place in the offering plate.**

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**CHURCH FAMILY**

- Peggy Gibson - recovery from arm and hip surgery
- John Hammond - heart surgery March 24th

**FAMILY & FRIENDS OF CHURCH FAMILY**

- Catherine Cox (Alice Jeanes' sister) - recovery from surgery
- Richard Smith (Becky Seaford's brother) - pain and ongoing tests
- Scott Maiocchi and family (Sue's son) - loss of mother-in-law
- Richard Hough (Eddie's friend) - recovery from brain surgery
- Amy Morgan (Sharon Stricker's son's mother-in-law) - recovery from surgery for cancer that went well
- Kim Stipe (Kay McAllister's daughter) - chemo treatments
- Zelda West (Trish Nixon's granddaughter) - Spina Bifida - recovery from two surgeries
- Justin Wallace (Melba's grandson) - recovery from heart & kidney transplants and amputated foot
- Darrell Blalack (Linda Hathaway family) - diagnosed with Hodgkins
- Barbara Coffey (friend of Judy Hunter) - cancer
- Thomas Dishman (friend of Judy Hunter) - on dialysis and waiting for a kidney
- Buddy Troutman (friend of Hammonds) - under hospice care
- Timmy Troutman (Buddy Troutman's son) - recovery from heart surgery

**HOMEBOUND**

- Linda Bost - Best of Care
  - Barbara Hancock - Home
  - Loretta Young - Five Oaks
- 

**This Week@FIRST PRESB**

**Sunday, March 16**

9:30am - Morning Coffee  
 - Gracefull Movements  
 Rehearsal  
 10:00am - Sunday School  
 11:00am - Worship Service  
 4:00pm - Last Supper Rehearsal

**Tuesday, March 18**

11am - 1pm - Linda's Closet  
 12:00pm - NA  
 3-6:30pm - Peek NexGen

**Wednesday, March 19**

3-6:30pm - Peek NexGen  
 5:30pm - Youth Families' Dinner  
 6:00pm - PraiseMakers Rehearsal  
 6:30pm - Wednesdays in the Word

**Thursday, March 20**

10:30am - Ladies' Bible Study  
 12:00pm - NA  
 3-6:30pm - Peek NexGen

**Friday, March 21**

5:30pm - Health Market Set Up  
 6:00pm - MH/SH Downtown Picture  
 Scavenger Hunt

**Saturday, March 22**

9:00am - Set up for Health Market  
 9:30am to 1pm - Feeding Kannapolis  
 Health Market/Linda's Closet

**Next Sunday, March 23****10 Cents A Meal**

9:30am - Morning Coffee  
 - GraceFull Movements  
 Rehearsal  
 10:00am - Sunday School  
 11:00am - Worship Service  
 3:00pm - Build Altar Extension for *The  
 Last Supper* (Bring drills!)  
 4:00pm - The Last Supper Rehearsal

**SERVANTS**

**Elder Lock-Up:** Ken Sparks

**Children's Message this week:** Roxanne Spencer

**Children's Message next week:** Michelle Walker

**Children's Church:** Lynn Efirid

**Children's Church next week:** Sharon Cranford

**Acolytes:** Evie Sechler & Ingrid Townsend

**Acolytes next week:** Michael Herbst & Caylin Lowder

**Nursery:** Amelia Caskey

**Nursery next week:** Jennie Sparks

**Ushers:** Jeff Barnhardt, Eric Cowan, Mark Goodnight, Tony Hunter

**Ushers next week:** Amy Hurst, Chris Lowder, Mike Lowder, Sam McAllister

**Greeters:** Phil McLain, Roxanne Spencer

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION - ACTIVE ELDERS**

Raegan Swaringen Dave Ellington Lynn Sechler  
 Cookie Hamilton Chris Lowder Ken Sparks  
 Sue Maiocchi Phil McLain

Pastor Eddie Spencer, Moderator



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