

First Presbyterian News

1

Rev. John McCarthy - Pastor
Sherolyn Barnett, Office Manager
secretary@1stpres.cc
Sue Wilkins - Treasurer
Jim Luedtke - Choir Director

Face book:
www.facebook.com/firstpressobo
Website: 1stpres.cc

Office Hours
M-Th 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 pm
Closed on Friday
434-572-3581



Theology Matters... Especially in the Wilderness

Over the past couple months, I have been preaching through the Book of Romans for our Theology Matters series. The idea behind this was, what you think and believe about God (i.e. your theology) will determine your Christian walk and how you speak with people about God as you try to live out the Great Commission of making disciples of all nations. The questions we examined were: does your theology match what the Bible teaches, and how did specific theologies that the Apostle Paul wrote about help you make disciples. On Rally Day, Sep. 13th, we will shift gears to a new series called A Walk in the Wilderness.

In the light of the Gospel message we read in Romans, we are going to go back to Exodus and examine how God delivers and walks with His people. Our theology matters because it shapes how we live and walk. Romans gave us the Gospel foundation, the blood of Christ covers our sins and releases us from the bondage of sin, but salvation is just the beginning of our journey. Freedom is not the end of the story; it is the first step on the path the Lord has laid out for you. We can learn a lot from Israel's deliverance from Egypt and their walk through the wilderness as they had to learn how to fully rely on God for even the most basic needs, like bread and water.

One very interesting lesson is how even after Egypt was forced to release Israel, Pharaoh still didn't want to let them go. The mighty Egyptian army chased after God's people in order to bring them back to bondage. To put a modern take on it, when you are just a spectator of the Christian life you are of no concern to the devil. Once you become a disciple of Christ and start fulfilling God's mission, giving Jesus all the honor and glory, you become a target. The sins of your past come chasing after you like Pharaoh's army after Israel. Your past temptation, fear, guilt, and old patterns of living want you back. To use the football analogy from my 8/23 sermon, while riding the bench and just going to practice, you are inconsequential to the other team. When you get out on the field and try to run the ball, you are going to get hit. But just like Israel, you are delivered and given new life for a purpose.

God did not deliver Israel from Egypt simply so they could stand on the other side of the Red Sea. He delivered them so they could walk with Him and fulfill His holy mission of redemption and reconciliation. Likewise, Christ did not save us merely to escape judgment. He saved us to belong to Him, to follow Him, and to carry His Gospel into a world that desperately needs to hear it.

Join us as we make this important transition from learning about God, to learning how to faithfully walk with Him where we must *fully rely on God* (FROG)! To Egypt, frogs were a curse, but to disciples of Christ FROG is life everlasting.



In Christ,

Pastor John





September 6 – 15th Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Title: Love Fulfills the Law

Scriptures: Ezekiel 33:7-11; Romans 13:8-14

Sep 13 – 16th Sunday after Pentecost

NEW SERIES – Walk in the Wilderness

Sermon Title: God Delivers

Scriptures: Psalm 114; Exodus 14:19-31

Sep 20 – 17th Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Title: Mana from Heaven

Scriptures: Psalm 105:1-6; Exodus 16:2-15

Sep 27 – 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Title: Water from the Rock

Scriptures: Psalm 78:1-4; Exodus 17:1-7

Oct 4 – 19th Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Title: Ten Commandments

Scriptures: Ps. 19; Exodus 20:1-20

Card Ministry at Commonwealth - The next Card Ministry will be Tuesday, September 1st at 10:30 am.



THE TABLE study group - We are looking forward to a new opportunity to have women of our church family come together for lunch and faith discussion. This is a hope that all will get more acquainted with one another not just on a social level but a spiritual level. As we come together we can learn one from another and further grow our faith in Jesus Christ. More information will be forth coming after October 1.

For more information contact Carol Foster, Sallie Adams, or Frances Harrell.



Prayer Meeting – Each Tuesday beginning September 8th, 6:30 pm; Group will study “The Prayer Practice” on RightNow Media.



Operation Christmas Child - The big push and campaign to pack 3 boxes in November, will be here before we know it. To prepare there will be two (2) special opportunities to listen to a previous recipient and get perspective on how these boxes bless the lives of those receiving. One meeting will be held at a church (location TBD), the second will be at a school. The dates for these two events will be October 15 and 16, exact details TBD. Mark your calendars and watch for more information.

Other dates to keep in mind:

*September 19th - Project Leadership Workshop at Shady Grove Church in Virgilina.

*November 15th is expected to be "Packing Day".

*November 16-23 - Collection Week. We will need volunteers to help during Collection week to receive boxes from other churches and organizations.

Right Now Media— Have you had a chance to sign up for RightNow Media? The Tuesday Prayer meeting and Big Questions/Honest Conversations will use references from this site. Sign up at <https://app.rightnowmedia.org/join/fpcsb> or use QR code, or text FPCSB to 49775, and receive access to 25,000+ Bible study videos.



Rally Day – Sunday, September 13th. Start the day with breakfast here at First Pres at 9:45- provided by the Deacons. (No Sunday School). We will begin new Sunday School classes for both children and adults. Make this new year a year to commit to learning more of Christ and drawing closer to Him.

Women's Bible Study - September 9 at 10:30 we will begin our study of the book of Revelation. The entire bible is revelation, we will study the final chapter - The Final Revelation that God gives us. The book of Revelation isn't meant to inspire fear - it is meant to reveal Jesus and to strengthen the faith of His people.

Join us for a verse-by-verse Bible study as we explore: The meaning behind Revelation's symbols; God's promises to His people; God's ultimate victory; And Practical lessons for living faithfully today.



Come with your Bible, your questions, and an open heart.

There will be a study guide provided, please contact Wendy Daniel (434-579-2425), so she can ensure that there will be an adequate number of study guides prepares.

Everyone is Welcome!



Prayer List - Robin Hall fell early in August injuring her achilles tendon - having an MRI September 1. Danny Hazelwood - severe back and foot pain, Pastor John also having foot pain. Jennifer McCarthy - knee pain. Craig and Elaine Glenn's daughter, Melissa, in SC expecting 3rd grandchild in Dec/ Jan. Quinn, 2 yo daughter of friends of Abbey Bates - had heart surgery. Kit Hooper now in Commonwealth Asst. Living. Patricia Burton had a medical procedure. Laura Edwards' brother passed unexpectedly. Sandi Hughes' sister-in-law, Phyliss Powell, passed away. Sterling Byrd-Roberts' mother, Linda, was moved to assisted living in Florida. Mark Foster was cleared by Drs after being taken to Lynchburg hospital with chest pains.

Prayers Continue - Ted VanBenschoten and Pat Hay, Jean Long, Andy and Joann Newland,

Praise! - Joseph Roberts passed his Series 7 test allowing him to sell securities. Many heavenly blessing of healing ie: Robin Hall, Jim Debiec, and others.



Enduring Storms

4

Recently, I was listening to a speaker who was discussing a familiar story. I received a different impression and meaning with his telling.

He retold two stories of the apostles on stormy seas. In the first Christ is with them on the boat sleeping while the boat is rocking around. In Mark 4:38 we read, “*Master, carest thou not that we perish?*” Do we sometimes feel like the Lord isn’t noticing us or caring about our problems. I know I have felt this way in the past.

The second story is also in Mark 6:45-50 where Jesus sent them out on the boat and He stayed near the shore. “*The ship was in the midst of the sea, and [Jesus was] alone on the land.*” He saw the storm, He saw the apostles navigating the treacherous seas, but He didn’t immediately go to help. In fact, He waited until the fourth watch, which is between 3:00 – 6:00 am. Christ then came to them miraculously walking on the water. The apostles saw the image on the water and were frightened, but Christ said “*Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.*”

Then in Matthew 14:28-29 we learn that when Peter recognized Christ’s voice, he asked to come and draw closer to Him, and said “*Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.*”



Now Peter had been rowing frantically for hours with the other apostles. He surely knew the how dangerous the seas were, but his faith in Christ was greater, so he asked to join the Savior out in the seas.

These are great lessons to me. We all have storms in our lives. We, likely, have all felt a bit unseen or forgotten at times; but these stories show God’s love for us, and that He is there through our storms. He doesn’t always immediately calm the storm but will watch until we’ve struggled for a length of time, and then will come to our aid. Sometimes even then the storm may not be calmed, but He gives us the strength to endure the trials of life.

I pray we recognize Christ in all parts of our lives, not just when things are going well, but in the midst of the storms continue to have faith that He is there watching and will provide comfort in His time. May we have faith as Peter and step out into the storms of life and draw closer to Jesus. He is there to bring us up when we fall. He is there to calm the storms and give us the strength to endure them until the calm. ~ *Sherolyn*



Big Questions/Honest Conversations – Sunday Evening.

When: Beginning Sunday, September 13 at 6:30 pm.

What to expect: Worship, Study, and Conversations.

Where: Fellowship Hall

What part do I play? Invite a friend(s) to come who are seeking purpose and more information about God.

Study source: Quick Shots: Fast Answers to Hard Questions



SEPTMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 9:45 am - Sun Sch 10:30 am - Fellowship 11:00 am Worship	31	Sept 1	Sept 2 10:30 am—WBS 12:00 pm - AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	Sept 3 7:00 pm - Al-Anon	Sept 4 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	Sept 5 NA - Picnic Area 11 - 3pm
6 - Communion 9:45 am - Sun Sch 10:30 am - Fellowship 11:00 am -Worship	7 - Office Closed 	8	9 10:30 am—WBS 12:00 pm - AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	10 7:00 pm - Al-Anon	11 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	12
13 9:45 am - Sun School 10:30 am - Fellowship 11:00 am Worship 12:30 pm - Session	14	15	16 10:30 am—WBS 12:00 pm - AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	17 7:00 pm - Al-Anon	18 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	19
20- 5 Cents a Meal collection 9:45 am - Sun Sch 10:30 am - Fellowship 11:00 am -Worship	21	22	23 10:30 am—WBS 12:00 pm - AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	24 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 	25 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	26
27 9:45 am - Sun Sch 10:30 am - Fellowship 11:00 am Worship	28	29	30 10:30 am—WBS 12:00 pm - AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	October 1 7:00 pm - Al-Anon	October 2 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	October 3

- 1 Mike Koch
 4 Joshua Glenn
 6 Connie Marvin
 6 Salli Pool
 7 Connie Cox*
 8 Harman Saunders
 8 Michaela Freshour
 8 Doris Koch
 9 Joan Cranford
 10 Sam Lewis
 10 Julianna Berry
 10 Carole Woodward
 11 Tommy Wilkinson
 14 Matthew Lee
 16 Eric Roberts



- 17 George Burton
 17 Sallie Adams
 18 Dylan Berry
 18 Jeremy Luedtke
 21 Nan “Tee” Godbold*
 21 Courtland Thackston
 22 Mike Freshour
 24 Grace McAbee
 24 Parker Harrell
 25 Joe Ferguson*
 26 Fred Collins*
 28 Jennifer McCarthy
 28 Shirley Blackmon*
 28 Latané Saunders
 29 Susan Chandler

* In Memory



We want to recognize everyone. If we don’t have your birthday listed, please call the office and let us know.



Session Notes: Since our last Newsletter, our Session discussed:

The Session met on Sunday, August 16, 2026.

1. Rev. John McCarthy opened the meeting with prayer.
2. News of the congregation was shared by Pastor John.
3. The minutes of the June 14th Stated Session Meeting were approved.
4. Next Presbytery Meeting – October 22 (Thursday): In-person, Raleigh Court Presbyterian Church.
5. Membership Roll – No change, the roll currently stands at 99 members.
6. The congregation approved the sale of the parcel of land to Stanley Jeffress and Joel Cunningham.
7. Worship – Next Communion, Sunday, September 6, 2026.
8. Prayer Meeting – Each Tuesday beginning September 8th at 6:30 pm. In the Fellowship Hall.
9. Rally Day – Sunday, September 13th. Deacons will provide breakfast (no Sunday School).
10. Discovering Faith – Sunday Evening Service. Coming Sunday, September 13 at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall.
11. Budget & Finance – Financial reports for June/July 2026 were reviewed.
12. The Session approved the quote for Reave’s Lawn & Garden to prune and mulch the church property.
13. Local Missions – Operation Christmas Child 2026 – August collection: School supplies. Pastor John and Jennifer have attended training. There will be a meeting on September 26th for final planning.
14. Good Samaritan – August collection: canned fruit/vegetables.
15. Pastor John closed the meeting with prayer.
16. Next meeting will be on Sunday, September 20, 2026.



- **Choir** - Wednesday's at 6:00 pm
- **Card Ministry** - Tuesday, September 1 at 10:30 am
- **Communion** - Sunday, September 6
- **Rally Day** - Sunday, September 13 - with Breakfast
- **Diaconate** - September 20 at 9:00 am
- **Session** - Sunday, September 20 at 12:30 pm
- **5 Cents-a-meal** - Sunday, September 20

First Presbyterian Church
 800 North Main Street
 South Boston, VA 24592