

## Looking Forward to Welcoming Rev. Elizabeth B. Johnson Our New Associate Pastor for Congregational Evangelism and Engagement



On Sunday, August 20, the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee presented its report on a call for our Associate Pastor for Congregational Evangelism and Engagement. At the Congregational meeting, Rev. Elizabeth B. Johnson was unanimously elected by the congregation.

Elizabeth is a native of Greensboro, NC. She is married to David, a minister in the United Church of Christ. They are parents to McClaren, a therapist in Cary, NC, and Stafford, a sound engineer for a Chicago law office. Ready to experience with them the joys of life in South Carolina are their rescue pup, Loiza, and two feline friends, Buster and Mr. Squeakers.

Elizabeth was ordained in the PC(USA) in 2019 and was loaned to the Vero Beach church, a United Church of

Christ church, serving as Minister for Family and Community Life. There she served the church and community in various facets. She worked with families to deepen their faith, develop spiritual practices at home, and discover inter-generational fellowship opportunities within the congregation. She coordinated events and activities with the Sunday School Director and led a chapel for the Community Preschool children. Elizabeth taught a weekly Women's Bible Study and shared in the worship life of the church, as well as congregational care, including overseeing the Prayer Ministry, Caring and Sharing Group, and Healing After Loss Group. She organized Women's Retreats and Family Retreats, officiated funeral and memorial services, and weddings. Elizabeth also served on the Treasure Coast Interfaith Council and the Vero Beach Be Kind Board, working in her community to build connections and relationships with those seeking to make the world a better place for all of God's children.

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## It's the beginning of a new church year!

Each fall, we celebrate reuniting after a summer that for some is comprised of travel, visiting with family and friends, or maybe enjoying some "down time," doing some of your favorite things. At First Presbyterian Church we are excited that adult Sunday School classes have begun; there is a new worship-sermon series based on the Book of Luke; the Sanctuary Choir has returned to Thursday night rehearsals and AiM Youth Choir is rehearsing on Thursdays; the Youth Group has kicked off; FPC Kids on Wednesdays has started; adult classes and small groups are meeting again throughout the week, and much, much more!

Here are several highlights—of an upcoming fellowship event and two adult classes.

- **Daufuskie Tastes and Tales:** On Wednesday, September 20, Breaking Bread of Congregational Life Ministry will host a Gullah-inspired dinner followed by speaker Jim Alberto, author of *Daufuskie Daze, Living & Teaching on a South Carolina Sea Island*.
- **Luke & Acts Bible Study:** This class, which begins on September 25, will be taught by member Jim Wagner. "Decades after Jesus' death, it seems that 'most excellent Theophilus' wants some answers. Is Jesus truly the Messiah? If so, why did he suffer and die?" The class will explore the largest contribution to the New Testament written by a single author. Learn more about the class by visiting the website.
- **Pastor Study with Rev. Will Robinson:** Beginning on October 12, the four-week study will explore a "Letter from Birmingham Jail," a work by Dr. Martin Luther King. Learn more about the class by visiting the website.

## “Caring Connections”

*Those who welcomed the message about Jesus were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common. — Acts 2:41-44*



Like our other four Values of Ministry—see the back cover of this issue—“Caring Connections” is based on the Scripture above, particularly “fellowship.” In a congregation of our size (1,250+) that is “purple” (i.e., a mix of “red state” and “blue state” folks and those more

theologically progressive and more theologically conservative), fostering caring connections can sometimes be difficult. Indeed, these words in our worship bulletins say it well: “God knows we don’t think alike” here!

We’re united, though, by our faith in the Lord and our commitment to live that faith, including our Values. A crucial aspect of “Caring Connections” is a willingness to “accept one another” (in the lyrics of a hymn), especially given our differences, and to welcome and love one another as our Lord commands. We should do that in worship too. That’s why we’re using “Your/s” in the Lord’s Prayer. Like the use of “sins,” “Your/s” is contemporary language that’s more welcoming and accessible to worshipers (in person and online) who aren’t familiar with this prayer. Of course, you may still use “Thy/Thine.”

The use of screens in 10:30 AM worship is another

example. We began using them instead of the hymnals during the pandemic (because there was a time when it was thought that doing so would help prevent the spread of COVID-19). In the process, we learned that some worshipers—such as those with Parkinsonism and macular degeneration—appreciate the screens. At the same time, we limit their use at 10:30 AM (only for what the congregation says or sings and less than at our 9:00 AM CrossRoads contemporary service).

We also live our Value of “Caring Connections” by accepting how others express joy and gratitude in worship. Some do that with just a smile and sigh (or the like). It’s expressed more internally. Others do that by applauding. They’re not applauding a performance; they’re expressing their joy and gratitude to God for what they’ve experienced. Again, particularly in a congregation of our size and composition, may we recognize and accept these varying expressions of joy and gratitude in worship.

I hope this issue of *First Press* opens the door to other possibilities of how we might cultivate “Caring Connections” here. As it does, I pray we will become that much more connected to the Lord and to one another.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Will".

Pastor Will

## News from the Visual Arts Ministry



In January, the Visual Arts Ministry will install a new exhibit from the Bowden collection, *Fill the Earth With Music*. “This installation includes 25 pieces from six centuries and many countries,” says ministry chair Nancy Millette. “The hope is that the observer will appreciate how artists find inspiration in music, and each viewer will be further inspired to celebrate and Fill the Earth With Music.”

Singing and musical instruments have been vital components in the life of the believing community as far back in the Bible (Genesis 4:21) as Jubal who played the *kinnor* or harp. King David wrote many psalms, one of which is Psalm 150, and it charges us to praise the Lord with the trumpet, cymbals, stringed instruments, and organs. An engraving in this show has drawings of many biblical instruments.

The ministry shares that next spring they will sponsor an FPC member show entitled *STUDIO 540—Lifting Our Spirits With Our Gifts*. “We are fortunate to have many talented artists among our congregation,” says Millette. “It’s going to be exciting to see the variety of artistic contributions.” More information to be announced in the next few months.

*To live in (Christian) community with others is a part of God's plan and intention for us. A congregation is a school for love; the place where God's spirit forms us and the place where we learn how to give love to, and receive love from, friends, neighbors and strangers.*  
— Robert Schnase, "Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations"

As we lift up caring connections in this issue of our newsletter, I'm grateful to see firsthand the work of our deacons and all the many ministries they oversee: lay visitation, our health ministry, our prayer chain and prayer project (which concluded at the end of the August); our knitters; the folks who make meals for Family Promise, our memorial receptions teams which share delicious food and compassion during times of grief, and many others. These ministries, and each of you who participate in them, share the love of Christ with those who are hurting, alone, on the margins. I also hear from many of you that by your participation, you "receive more than you give" as love and grace are returned to you by those with whom you connect.

As a society we are conditioned to "go it alone," to not ask for help, to keep things "private" lest we



**Knitting Ministry—Just one of many caring connections at FPC.**

appear weak or needy. That's such a shame because that isn't what Jesus taught. In scripture we find people boldly asking for help and healing, seeking restoration into

community, reaching out to clutch the hem of Christ's cloak in their desire to find wholeness and inclusion. And in return, Jesus commends them for their faith and persistence, and asked his disciples to "feed my sheep" after he left this earth. Caring connections, one of our values here at FPC, reminds us that we are called to be counter-culture because "community is part of God's plan and intention for us."



I'm excited by two new initiatives on the horizon. First, our Stephen Ministry, which launches in September with nine newly trained Stephen Ministers and four Stephen Leaders who will be commissioned in worship on October 8. Second, our Neighborhood Care Groups, which require no special training, just a willingness to step beyond our own front doors to "love our neighbors" who are FPC members while also making space for neighbors without a church home to be welcomed in. Watch for more details on both these ministries coming soon.

Thankful to be part of such a caring congregation,  
Pastor Diane

## **More about Rev. Elizabeth B. Johnson** *(Continued from page 1)*

Elizabeth is excited to return to her Presbyterian roots. She believes God is calling her to serve others who love God and love their neighbors as they love themselves. She is excited to join a congregation that is open to creativity in worship, courageous in their love of others, and seeks to build the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. The APNC worked diligently to represent the faith and energy of the congregation and believe that she has found all of these things in First Presbyterian Church Hilton Head. She is very much looking forward to working with Will, Diane, our church staff and our members to create disciples of Christ together.

Elizabeth and David are eager to discover all that Hilton Head and the area have to offer and to develop new relationships with the folks of FPC. In her spare time, Elizabeth enjoys keeping up with Stafford and McClaren, cooking, gardening, and sailing with David.

**We look forward to welcoming Elizabeth at a Reception hosted by the APNC Sunday, October 1 in the Gathering Space following both worship services**



# Upcoming Programs Hosted by FPC Ministries

## Coffee and Conversation

Hosted by the Social Witness Ministry

Thursday, September 28

Gathering Space

9:30 AM—*Coffee by Hebrews Ministry*

10 AM—*Shari Manning, PhD, Speaker*

**What is Trauma and How Do You Help People**

**After Traumatic Events?**

Discussion to include:

- A definition of trauma
- Effects of trauma on people's emotions, behaviors and relationships
- Pointers on helping others deal with trauma



## The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up Your Archives

Health Ministry Partners with the Hilton Head Library

Thursday, October 5

10 AM

at the Hilton Head Library

In celebration of National Ask an Archivist Day, Certified Archivist and Reference Librarian Warren Cobb will guide you through what to do with your old documents, including paper, analog and digital media, and books – what to keep, what not to keep, and what to give away. He will also discuss what to do with your art and antiques. Registration is required so there is space for all. Please call the Hilton Head Branch reference desk, 843.255.6525 for more information or to reserve your spot.

## Faith Formation Introduces New Adult Sunday School Class

Begins Sunday, October 1

10:22 AM, following CrossRoads Worship Service

Each class is a standalone, meaning members and visitors can attend knowing each class is a new start.





## FPC Kids Summer Camp Was a Huge Success!



*"Our camp curriculum focused on how God's Word fits into children's everyday lives.*

*They learned to move forward in their own journey of faith."*

—FPC Camp Director Jodi Krivda



The second week of July, 65 children participated in FPC's summer camp for kiddos ages 3 through 5th grade. "We had an incredible time and I can't say enough about how much I appreciate the help of FPC Youth Group members and adult church volunteers," said Jodi Krivda, Assistant Director of Faith Formation who runs the camp.

Each morning the day started with group activities in Fellowship Hall. Throughout the day there were rotations for small group activities, crafts, Bible study, Music with Ms. Beth (FPC Children's Music Director), outside water sports, special snacks and more!





# FPC's Youth Ministry



## Youth Group Returns to Meeting on Sunday nights

As the new program year begins FPC youth gathered on Sunday, September 10.

There was a parent meeting at 4 PM followed by dinner, games and small groups.

### The schedule this year

4-5 PM Middle Years  
(Grades 5-7)

5-6 PM Dinner & Games

6-7 PM Senior Youth  
(Grades 8-12)

To learn more about the youth program, contact Jackie Wilhelm, Director of Faith Formation.

## Did you know there is a Kazoo Museum in Beaufort?

On Friday, August 18, youth group members — along with Ms Jackie and Ms Jodi — visited the Kazoo Museum in Beaufort.

Their trip included a guided tour of the factory where they saw how kazoos are made from start to finish. They also had the opportunity to make their own kazoos. At the museum you learn about how kazoos and other funky instruments have been created to make sounds effects and music.



**YOU'RE INVITED!**  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH HHI  
HOSTS...



**LOW COUNTRY BOIL 5:30PM**  
**GAME NIGHT 6:30PM**  
**WEDNESDAY, OCT 4**

RSVP BY OCT 1, CALL THE CHURCH  
843-681-3696 OR INFO@FPCHHI.ORG

\*SUGGESTED DONATION OF \$15 PER ADULT\*  
ALL PROCEEDS WILL BENEFIT THE FPC YOUTH PROGRAM

**Low Country Boil** & **GAME Night**

chicken strips and mac & cheese  
for our land lovers!

## FPC Youth Fundraiser Low Country Boil October 4, 5:30 PM

You'll want to reserve your spot now for a fabulous evening of fellowship and delicious food!

We're excited to share that chefs Otto Ferrene and Keith Jude will be cooking and shrimp is being donated by Andrew Carmines, owner of Hudson's Seafood.

## Member Giving



As disciples of Jesus Christ, it starts with us, and our collective acts of generosity and kindness can make a big impact. Together, we can *truly* change the world and your support of the 2023 Operating Budget allows FPC to do just that!

Below is member giving through August. If you have slipped behind, we appreciate you catching up. Thank you for your generosity and kindness!

AUGUST MEMBER GIVING			
	ACTUAL	BUDGETED	VARIANCE
AUGUST	\$84,707	\$144,853	(\$60,146)
YEAR-TO-DATE	\$1,240,255	\$1,292,611	(\$52,356)

### Ways to Give

- GIVE button at [fpchhi.org](http://fpchhi.org); a one-time or recurring gift
- Text "FPCHHI" to 77977
- Check: mail a check to 540 William Hilton Parkway, HHI, SC 29928; please indicate on the memo line how the gift is to be used, (i.e., pledge, etc.)
- Securities Transfer – Gifts of securities are welcome and we suggest you consult your financial advisor or tax advisor for details. The process is simple. Please contact Susan Brannon at [sbrannon@fpchhi.org](mailto:sbrannon@fpchhi.org) for the information required for this transaction, and be sure to let her know of your donation.

## Adventures in Music (AiM) Youth Choir Celebrates Five Years

"September 9 marked the 5th anniversary of AiM's 'birth' and it's hard to believe five years have already flown by," said Laura Floyd, the director of Adventures in Music, FPC's youth choir.

"Thinking of this milestone, I started looking back, pondering the impact AiM has had, and the blessings we've experienced during the past five years. The Lord has been so faithful," she added.

According to Floyd, 32 families' lives have been touched by AiM, because of their children's participation in the group. And the counting doesn't stop there! "We would be hard pressed to number all the lives the Lord has touched through AiM's musical appearances within our community. We've performed in churches, in medical and retirement centers, in concerts, and at the Shelter Cove Mall."

AiM celebrated this special occasion on Thursday, September 14, at 4:00 PM during rehearsal and will continue to praise God for His gifts of music and of making music together.

The following are dates for upcoming performances planned for the rest of the year.

- October 19 — 4 PM at the Fraser Health Center
- November 5 — 10:30 AM during worship
- November 19 — 10:30 AM during worship with the Sanctuary Choir
- December 2 — 12:30 PM at Palmetto Hall Women's Club
- December 6 — 4:15 PM at The Cypress
- December 6 — 5:00 PM at the Preston Healthcare Center
- December 17 — 10:30 AM during Worship
- December 17 — 1:00 PM outside Kilwin's at Shelter Cove Center





September ~ October



## Every Member in Ministry ~ Caring Connections

The Vision of First Presbyterian Church is *Every Member in Ministry*. Whatever your personal gifts, talents or interests, there is something for you to volunteer for and become involved with at FPC.

Each Sunday in September and October, we are focusing at the Volunteer Center on Caring Connections, ways to get involved to help others. Each Sunday there will be people at the Volunteer Center in the Gathering Space to talk with you about the possibilities.

The following are just some of the *many* volunteer options available.

- Knitting Ministry—make prayer shawls, baby items and more
- Write welcome notes to new members
- The Prayer Chain—join the group which prays year-round for others
- Sewing Ministry—use your sewing skills to make prayer squares
- Help with Memorial Receptions
- Lay Visitation—visit homebound members and those in the hospital
- Help within your Neighborhood Care Group
- The Geek Team which provides computer assistance to church members
- Serve as an usher on Sundays—at the service of your choice, 9 AM or 10:30 AM



If you would like to learn more about any of these opportunities, or have questions about participating, schedule a meeting with Andrea Siebold, the Volunteer Director of Volunteer Ministry, [asiebold@fpchhi.org](mailto:asiebold@fpchhi.org), or call the church office, 843.681.3696.

In this and upcoming issues of *First Press*, we will focus on each  
of our five values—also recognized as areas of service at FPC.

*Joyful Worship, Gracious Invitation, Prayerful Study, Sacrificial Service & Caring Connections*