

First Presbyterian Church - Biweekly Newsletter -

July 14, 2026



Cash Bail and the Judicial System in NC

Presented in partnership with *NC Interfaith Cash Bail Reform* and *St. Stephen's Episcopal Church*.

There is a dividing line in America that less than 40% of the population see. It oppresses those of low wealth and it is hiding in plain sight. Join us for a session to learn about the injustices that the for-profit Cash Bail system in NC perpetuates for poor people.

July 27, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm • St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 82 Kimberly Drive, Durham

Featured speaker: Peter van Dorsten, NC Interfaith Cash Bail Reform Coalition

To learn more: email communications@firstpres-durham.org or call **919-682-5511**.

July Birthdays

July 1: Caroline Gabriel, Joseph K. Mbogo, Carter McLane Momsen-Hudson, Julia Diane Wigger

July 2: Kathy Colville, Eke Lekwuwa

July 3: Barbara Ann Stowe Boggs

July 4: Scott H. Randell

July 5: Jane Wettach

July 6: George Enrique Bruns, David Tendler

July 7: Alex Buck, Jackson Buck, Amy Mapel, Carolyn Merritt

July 9: Ariel Tylia Mbah, Patrick Dillon

July 10: Vera Mary Cecelski, Seth Charles Cowden, Margaret E. Derry, Maria Fish Smith

July 12: Kit Law

July 14: Tom Bacon, Joey Page, Kathy Parkins, Lisa Rist

July 15: Debbie Mathews

July 16: Simon Carsey, Ann McKown

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July 17: Karen Crumbliss

July 18: Peter Compton, Mary Ann Ruegg, Alejandro (Alex) Hamilton Sanchez

July 20: Linda W. Dobson, LaKisha Graham, Sarah J. Robinson-Rogers

July 21: Sibyl B. King, Harriett Mitchell

July 22: Daniel Conner, Emily Schmitt Dennis, George Grill, Julie Maxwell, Carolyn McAllaster, Phyllis Verhey

July 25: Nora Tubbs Tisdale, Jane Williams

July 26: Emily Barre, Minna Jane Fullenkamp, James Jones, Larry Peaden Jones

July 27: Ricky Bennett, Caroline Means

July 28: Andrew Kim

July 29: Marki Watson

July 30: Natalie Ann Hansel

July 31: Harrison Gilbert, Dub Gulley, Wib Gulley

The Next Two Weeks

Books with Dads



This summer, our own faith formation teacher Bob Pleasants and his friend Montez Thomas will again be reading & leading Books with Dads. This year, they're working through Jason Reynolds' "Track" series. The gatherings are hybrid, so kids can join however works best for their family. This is particularly good for middle schoolers, but other youth are welcome. Youth don't have to do all of them to do one - each is a stand-alone event.

Remaining Schedule: July 16 - Patina | July 30 - Sunny | August 10 - Lu

Questions? Email Bob Pleasants at bob.pleasants@gmail.com or call the church at **919-682-5511**.

First Friends July Event

July 18, 6:00 p.m.

Hosted by: Franzi Rokoske and Catherine Dumas. At the home of Franzi Rokoske.

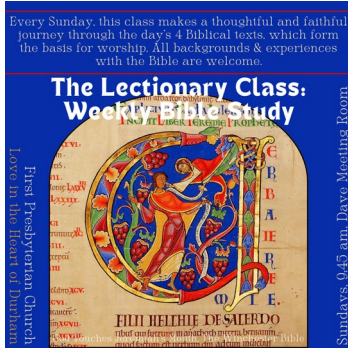
NeoMonde Mediterranean Deli's falafel and chicken kabobs, non-alcoholic drinks provided. Please bring sides, salads, desserts, or wine or beer to share. Park on the street; driveway reserved for accessible parking (enter in the back). RSVPs appreciated!

We can't wait to see you — see you July 18th!



To RSVP: email communications@firstpres-durham.org or call **919-682-5511**.

Lectionary — Robert Day Meeting Room

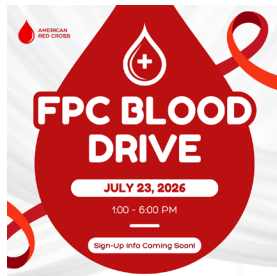


Join us each Sunday at 9:45 in the Robert Day Meeting Room for discussion of the lectionary readings.

July 19: When Jacob woke from his dream, he realized that God was in the very place he chose to sleep. Is God in the place where you are? Are you aware of God's presence?

July 26: A mustard seed? Yeast? A fishing net? How can the kingdom of heaven be like these ordinary, small things? Why won't Jesus just explain it clearly, instead of talking in riddles?

FPC Blood Drive



Save the date and give the gift of life! FPC Durham is hosting a blood drive Thursday, July 23 from 1:00–6:00 PM and we'd love your help. More info on how to sign up is coming soon. For now, mark your calendars and stay hydrated!

To sign up: email communications@firstpres-durham.org or call 919-682-5511.

Health Awareness & Health Equity Event in Honor of Denisha Williams



Covenant Presbyterian Church will host a Health Awareness and Health Equity Event on Thursday, July 23, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., held in honor of Denisha Williams, daughter of our own Sybil King. The evening will focus on recognizing warning signs that should not be ignored and understanding when and how to follow up with a doctor. The event will be held at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2620 Weaver Street, Durham, NC 27707.

For questions, contact **Reginald Williams** at 240-603-6454 or bookreggie@reginaldwilliams.org.

Ladies Tea

Calling all ladies of FPC: please join the Fellowship Committee Saturday, July 25 at 1pm for a time of well-brewed teas and delightful tea-time treats! If you would like to bring your favorite treat (savory or sweet!) please sign up below.



To sign up: email communications@firstpres-durham.org or call 919-682-5511.

Join Us for Worship



July 19

Mindy Douglas, preaching

July 26

Esther Hethcox, preaching

Children's Ministries

Children's Faith Formation

Summer Children's Faith Formation is in full swing, and we're looking for volunteers to help lead throughout the rest of the summer. Whether you can commit to one Sunday or several, your time makes a real difference for our kids.

If you'd like more information, please email **Lenore Champion**:
l.champion@firstpres-durham.org



To sign up to help: email communications@firstpres-durham.org or call **919-682-5511**.

Youth Ministry

Updated Youth Calendar!



Our youth are on the go this summer! From mission trips to Asheville and Appalachia, to conferences at Massanetta and Montreat, to hangouts at the Milkshake Factory and Fantasy Lake, there's something happening almost every week through August. Youth and families can find the full calendar of dates, times, and locations below.

If you have questions about any event or want to get your student plugged in, please email **John Weicher** at j.weicher@firstpres-durham.org.

Fellowship Opportunities

Daytimers' Luncheon

Join the Daytimers on Tuesday, July 28 at 11:30 a.m. at Pomodoro's Italian kitchen, 1811 Hillandale Road (NW corner of I-85 and Hillandale). All are welcome!

Make your reservation: contact **Mickey Velkey** by phone, text, or email.

First Friends Beach Trip 2026

Calling all Beachcombers! The annual First Friends Beach Trip is set for September 11 through 13, and the search for this year's location is underway. If you would like to join the fun, now is the time to let the group know.

Housing costs are expected to run between \$350 and \$400 per bedroom for the full weekend. To hold your spot, please Venmo \$100 to @Kathy-Conner-11 by July 15. This deposit is non-refundable, though if your plans change, you are welcome to find someone to take your place.

First-timers are always welcome and always delighted in. For more information, contact **Kathy Conner** at kwc.enoriver@yahoo.com or **Deborah Momsen-Hudson** at 919-417-8664 or dmomsenhudson@gmail.com.

First Acts – FPC's Play Reading Group

We're so excited to announce our next set of readings as First Acts (FPC's Play Reading Group) acts again! All three of these events will be held in the Robert Daye Hall on a Saturday from 9 am - 12 noon.



Oct. 3 – *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller

Nov. 7 – *The Desk Set* by William Marchant (the theatrical version that was the basis for the hit Tracy/Hepburn comedy)

Feb. 6 – TBD, but intending to highlight the importance and impact of Black Theatre in honor of Black History Month

We'll have copies available, but you're welcome to purchase your own copy as well. Similar to how we organized the Our Town reading, we will publicize the sign-up sheet closer to the date. Please feel free to forward this to like-minded thespians who might be interested in joining us.

For copies or questions: email communications@firstpres-durham.org or call 919-682-5511.

Get Involved

25th Anniversary of Fill That Bus! Campaign



It's that time of the year! FPC has been part of a long-standing tradition of showing up for public schools and making a tangible impact across public school classrooms in Durham. Last year, you donated a mountain of goods valuing \$1250+. Join us again in ensuring 2,400+ DPS educators and staff at 100% of DPS schools have access to free classroom supplies through the Teacher Store so they can focus on teaching, not out-of-pocket spending.

To donate or request the supply list: email communications@firstpres-durham.org or call 919-682-5511.

Volunteer in the Office

Share your time to support the daily work of the church.

To volunteer: email communications@firstpres-durham.org or call 919-682-5511.

Sanctuary Flowers

There are open dates for worship flower donors in September. This ministry offers a meaningful way to donate flowers for the sanctuary in memory or in honor of a loved one, or in celebration of a special occasion. The flower arrangements bring the colors and beauty of nature to our worship service each Sunday.



To sign up or learn more: email communications@firstpres-durham.org or call 919-682-5511.

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Community Events

Ends of the Earth



Ends of the Earth

A Contemplative Retreat to Experience the Wisdom, Food, and Musical Traditions of Celtic Christianity

September 18–20

Avila Center for Community Leadership

Ends of the Earth will offer participants an opportunity to slow their pace, gather for thoughtful listening to each other and the natural world, enjoy nutritious communal meals, and restore energy for engagement in the world. The retreat will include teachings, practices, food, and music grounded in the Celtic Christian traditions, which took shape at the westernmost ends of Europe on the coasts of Scotland and Ireland beginning in the 5th century.

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Yoga Offerings



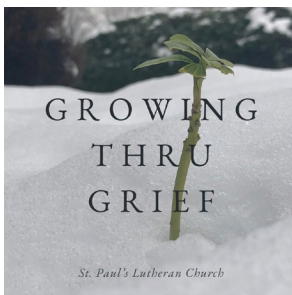
Monday at 4:30pm | Watts-Hill Hall

Friday at 10:30am | Room 201

For more information email **Jane Wettach**.

**FPC yoga will not be offered from June 29 through July 10. It will resume the week of July 13.*

Growing Thru Grief



July 21 | Cora Harrison, Growing thru Grief Facilitator — *Grief and Joy Don't Take Turns*

July 28 | Holly Lux-Sullivan, Heartwood Death Doula — *The Literal Feelings of Grief*

Growing thru Grief meets every Tuesday at 4:00, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 1200 W. Cornwallis. Our short presentation is followed by a small group discussion. There is no cost to participate, and no preregistration is necessary. We are open to all who grieve.

Celebrations & Concerns of the Congregation

Covering the week of July 12

We Remember in Prayer

Christy Gudaitis, as she recovers from surgery.

Janet and James Ouzts, sister and brother-in-law of Celia Dickerson.

Jim Rogers, as he recovers from surgery.

Vivian Turner, Donald Turner's mother, as she recovers from surgery.

Ongoing Prayers for Members of the Congregation

Tony Brown • Paul Cornsweet • Sam Crabtree • Susan Cyr • Sue Fricks • Elizabeth High • Kerry Holbrook • Lee House • Ann Huff • Elizabeth Manceras • Harriett Mitchell • Fred Moore • Franzi Rokoske

Care Communities

Croasdaile Pavilion: Dub Gulley, Alfred Tisdale

Durham Ridge: Phillip Herndon

Hillcrest Convalescent: Carol Wills

Pruitt Health – Durham: Fred Callaway

Brookdale Senior Living: Debbie Mathews

Southpoint Atria: Madge McKeithen

Chatham Ridge Assisted Living: John Fricks

Family and Friends of the Congregation

Ashley Alvord, colleague of Sharon Hirsch

Kim Cummings, father of Drew Cummings

Minnie Sue Douglas, mother of Mindy Douglas

Linda Foster-Momsen, mother of Deborah Momsen-Hudson

Jennifer Hervey, daughter-in-law of Jeanne Hervey

Katie Jackson, wife of Matthew Hirsch

Edward & Meryl Keenan, brother and sister-in-law of Mary-Jo Keenan

Sandra Mikush, mother of Katie Fogleman

Patrick O'Neill, father of Brianna Bennett

Bill Prochaska, friend of Al and Judy Arrowood

Joe Quirk, stepfather of Tim O'Brien

Newton Wong, nephew of Paul Lee

Francisca Cristobal, relative of Al and Judy Arrowood

Sara Degand, cousin of Deborah Momsen-Hudson

Rosalynn Farrell, mother of Rachel Bethune

Cheryl Fowler, friend of Cheri Reece

Donna Holladay, friend of Jane & Robert Brawley

Donna Johnson, mother of Ann Huff

Anthony Ketcham, brother-in-law of Wil James

Ana Sofia Ochoa, family member of Becky Martin

Rebecca Todd ("Toddie") Peters, mother of Sophie Peters

Annie Reaves, great-niece of Floalice and Robert Reaves

Jim Vacca, father of Jamie Chambliss