



First Presbyterian Church of Naples
*In the Heart of Naples with the Love of God:
we worship, we love, we grow, we serve*

Outreach July 2026



The National Memorial Day Choral Festival concert at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., including Dr. Brice Gerlach and members of both the Voices of Naples and the First Presbyterian Chancel Choir.

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FROM THE PULPIT

July 5

Rev. Dr. Scott Kenefake

July 12 - Holy Communion

Senior Pastor and Head of Staff
Candidate

July 19

Rev. Rex Childs

July 26

Rev. Dr. Scott Kenefake

Notice of Congregational Meeting

The Pastor Nominating Committee has completed its search. On **Sunday, July 12**, the candidate will preach at the 10:00 a.m. service. A Congregational Meeting will convene immediately following worship to hear from the PNC, introduce the candidate, and present them for approval by the congregation to be our next Senior Pastor and Head of Staff.

Please note that voting requires physical presence in the sanctuary; congregational meetings are not livestreamed. For those who are not able to attend the meeting, we will email results and information from the meeting as soon as possible.

Staff Listing

239.262.1311
Phone Extensions

Minister

Rev. Dr. Scott Kenefake, Interim Sr. Pastor
scottk@fpcnaples.org 2035

Rev. Rex Childs, Associate Pastor
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Dr. Brice Gerlach, Director of Music Ministries
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Taylor Irvan, Sound and Video Operator

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America at 250: A Time for Reflection

This week, Americans across the nation will gather to celebrate Independence Day. Families will travel. Flags will be displayed. Neighborhoods will host cookouts and parades. As darkness falls on July 4,

fireworks will light the sky from coast to coast.

This year's celebration carries special significance. It marks the beginning of our nation's 250th year—a milestone that invites not only celebration but reflection.

Anniversary dates have a way of focusing our attention. Whether commemorating a marriage, a church's founding, or a significant birthday, anniversaries encourage us to look back, take stock of the present, and think carefully about the future. They compel us to ask foundational questions: Who are we? Where are we going? And who are we meant to be?

Those questions are especially relevant as America approaches its 250th birthday.

Throughout our history, major anniversaries have prompted similar reflection. On July 4, 1826—the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence—both Thomas Jefferson and John Adams died within hours of one another, a remarkable coincidence that many interpreted as a providential sign. The Centennial celebration in 1876 showcased the nation's industrial achievements with a grand exposition in Philadelphia. The Sesquicentennial in 1926 featured speeches, pageants, and patriotic displays across the country. The Bicentennial of 1976 remains memorable for tall ships in New York Harbor, community celebrations, and even a red, white, and blue painted locomotive that crossed the nation. Americans have always marked these anniversaries with a mixture of gratitude, pride, humor, and self-examination.

In his recent book *The Greatest Sentence Ever Written*, Walter Isaacson reflects on the enduring power of the Declaration of Independence and its assertion that "all men are created equal." Isaacson argues that these words have inspired generation after generation to expand the promise of liberty and equality to people who were initially excluded from it. The Declaration's power lies not only in what America was in 1776, but in

the vision of what America could become.

Historian John Fea offers a helpful companion perspective in *Was America Founded as a Christian Nation?* Fea reminds us that the founders themselves held diverse religious convictions and often disagreed sharply about the role of faith in public life. America's story has never been one of complete religious uniformity. Rather, it has been an ongoing experiment in freedom of conscience, democratic self-government, and the challenging work of living together amid deep differences.

Other historians echo similar themes. Jon Meacham often describes American history as a continuing struggle between our highest ideals and our recurring failures. Jill Lepore reminds us that the nation's story is incomplete and contested, requiring each generation to decide what kind of country it wishes to become. Randall Balmer has highlighted how religious liberty flourishes best when faith and government remain distinct, allowing conscience to remain free.

Recent research suggests that Americans continue to wrestle with these questions. A major national survey released this month found widespread concern about the future of American democracy and growing anxiety about the nation's direction. Yet the same survey revealed something encouraging: large majorities of Americans continue to affirm a vision of the United States as a diverse nation made up of people from many backgrounds, faiths, and cultures. Most also expressed a desire for America to cooperate with other nations and serve as a responsible global neighbor. Even amid deep political divisions, many Americans still seem drawn toward what Abraham Lincoln called "the better angels of our nature."

As Christians, we approach these conversations with both gratitude and humility. We can celebrate the freedoms we enjoy while honestly acknowledging the ways our nation has fallen short of its own ideals. We can give thanks for the blessings of liberty while remembering that democracy requires participation, responsibility, and concern for the common good.

The coming year will bring many opportunities to commemorate America at 250. As we enjoy the fireworks, gather with family and friends, and remember the stories that shaped our nation, perhaps we might also make space for reflection. The most

4 Rev. Dr. Scott Kenefake, Interim Sr. Pastor

important question is not whether America has perfectly lived up to its founding ideals. Clearly, it has not. The more important question is whether we are still willing to pursue them.

Who are we? Where are we going? Who are we meant to be?

Anniversaries invite us to ask those questions. The 250th anniversary of American independence gives us an opportunity to answer them anew—with gratitude for the past, honesty about the present, and hope for the future.

Blessings,



Rev. Dr. Scott Kenefake
Interim Sr. Pastor

Holiday Office Closure • July 3

Please note that the church office will be closed on Friday, July 3, in celebration of Independence Day. Have a safe and blessed weekend!

Finance

Ned Camuti, Finance Committee Chair, nedcamuti@gmail.com
Joan Congine, Finance Administrator

Excitement is Building!

Thank you for your continued support of the First Presbyterian Church of Naples and our mission over the summer months!

In addition to our summer children's programs, building maintenance projects, and Missions activity, we have exciting news from our Pastor Nominating Committee! There is so much going on at First Presbyterian Church here in the heart of Naples!

We have a YTD profit of \$20.8k through the end of May. However, YTD Offerings are still unfavorable compared to the same time last year by \$14.4k. We are cautiously watching expenses, but we have deposits on three A/C units that require replacement, and we will have a final payment due for the security system upgrade in June. Work for Finance and Facilities is ongoing - we are sweating away here, literally!

Please continue to live-stream our services, leave comments, and stay in touch with us. We enjoy your comments and feedback.

As always, please reach out to Debbie Savage, Executive Director, or Joan Congine, Finance Administrator, if you have any questions.

Joan Congine

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF NAPLES
SUMMARY FINANCIAL
INFORMATION
May 31, 2026**

	B			A	
	YTD Actuals 2026	YTD Budget 2026	Annual Budget 2026	YTD Actuals 2025	B - A YTD Actuals 2026 vs. 2025
Income					
Offerings	868,463	958,333	2,300,000	882,836	(14,373)
Preschool	350,283	240,333	576,800	319,886	30,396
Other	28,376	16,658	39,980	17,166	11,210
Budgeted Endowment Transfers*	0	0	400,000	0	0
Total Income	1,247,122	1,215,325	3,316,780	1,219,888	27,234
Total Expenses	1,226,366	1,416,029	3,398,470	1,245,054	(18,687)
Net Operating Income (Shortfall)	20,756	(200,704)	(81,690)	(25,166)	45,921

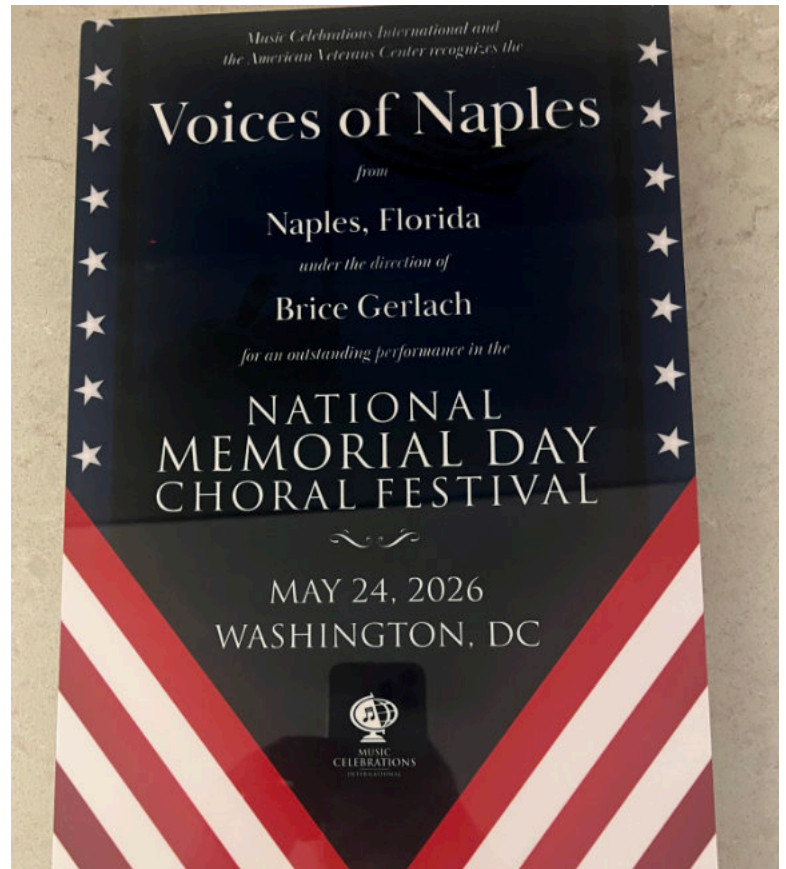
Voices of Naples Reaches the Kennedy Center

Over Memorial Day weekend, I participated in the National Memorial Day Choral Festival in Washington, D.C. Members of the community choir that I conduct, The Voices of Naples, joined several other choirs to form a nearly 300-voice chorus that performed a patriotic concert in the Kennedy Center. Several of our own First Presbyterian Chancel Choir members also sing in the Voices of Naples, which made the experience even better.

The concert was conducted by Dr. Craig Jessop, the former director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the Air Force Singing Sergeants. It was a privilege to work with him, especially since this was his fifteenth and final year conducting the Memorial Day Choral Festival.

We had two days of rehearsal with the full choir, followed by a morning rehearsal with the Capital Wind Symphony, which accompanied us. The concert was nearly sold out, and it was a fantastic experience. Between the rehearsal and the performance, we did get to tour Washington, seeing the Lincoln Memorial and the Vietnam, Korean, and World War II memorials. I even got a tour of the National Basilica by their organist, Ben LaPrarie, and got to play that great organ! I truly appreciated participating in this concert, and I am most grateful to Bob Henstein, who played the organ and directed the choir while I was away.

Dr. Brice Gerlach



Stephen Ministry



Summer is most often a time allowing for more impromptu and recreational activity. It could also be a time for thought and reflection. I ask that everyone think about considering a new role in the life of our church, come 2027. The Nominating Committee is currently making calls to solicit new Deacons and Elders, and Stephen Ministers are going to focus this summer on finding new Stephen Ministers to add to our ability to serve God and our members.

I have written many times about the functions of Stephen Ministers, but I will take a moment to give a very brief summary again. We do not serve any specific term length, and our commitments to serve may be for any amount of time. We meet once each month, the third Thursday of each month (excluding

July and August) at 1:30 p.m. in the Church Parlor. Our two principal functions are (i) to establish one-on-one Christian relationships with church members who are experiencing periods of unusual pain or other challenge caused by a medical condition, injury, divorce, depression, extreme loneliness and the like; and (ii) to do hospital visitations so that every church member we know to be hospitalized will receive one Stephen Minister brief visit each weekday to let people know they belong and are loved. Stephen Minister training takes place every two years, and the next training program (50 hours over three months) begins in early January 2027.

Please take a moment to read and ponder the following blog article describing some exercises one can do to help identify and develop one's sense of meaning and purpose. This is an exercise very worth doing from time to time, and it often leads to manifold benefits for oneself and for our community of Christians.

Highlighted Excerpts: 10 Ways to Find Purpose in Life

Adapted from Harvard Health Publishing (Mind & Mood)

By Heidi Godman, Managing Director | Originally published November 1, 2023

The full, unabridged article can be viewed at [Harvard Health Publishing](#).

Try these exercises to reflect on your experiences, abilities, and interests, and discover a new way to make life meaningful.

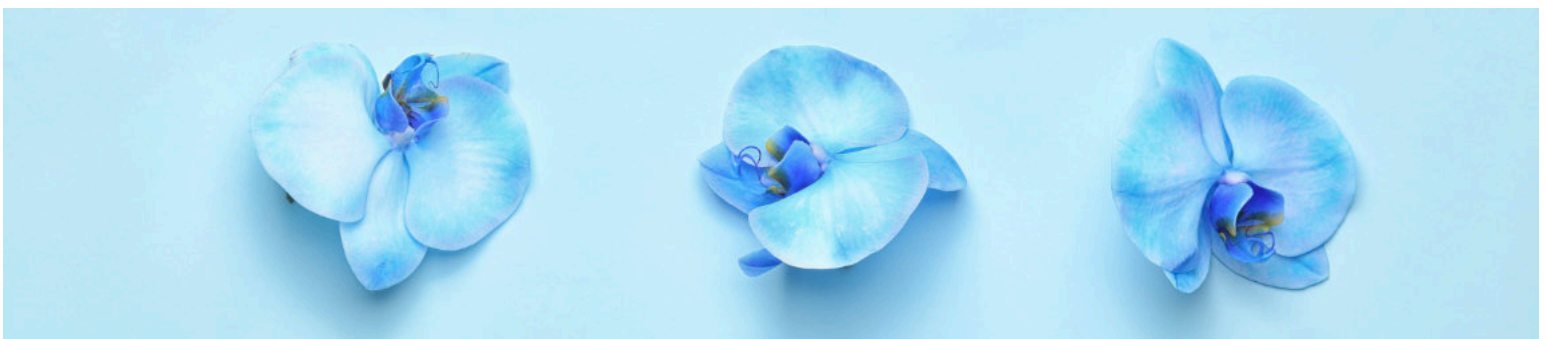
Having a sense of purpose is associated with many health benefits, such as sharp memory and thinking skills, mood control, reduced risks of chronic disease and disability, and longevity. Why is purpose so potent? "Several studies suggest that, compared with people who don't have a sense of purpose, those who do tend to perceive stressors as being less difficult and cope better with stress. That might help them avoid some of the physiological effects of chronic stress that contribute to heart attack, stroke, and early death," says Dr. Matthew Lee, a sociologist and research associate at Harvard University's Human Flourishing Program.

Purpose can spring from something simple, like a hobby, or more complex, such as contributing your service to your community in some way. While there's no one formula to find that inspiration, there are ways to cultivate it. Some suggestions to get you started:

- 1. Zero in on your strengths.** Ask friends, family, and your partner what comes to mind when they think of you. Do they find you entertaining, compassionate, or artistic? Use their feedback to think about how you can apply these attributes in a way that would give meaning to your life and the lives of others.
- 2. Think about the obstacles you have overcome in your life.** Can you find ways to help others who are going through the same thing? "This can be profound," Lee says. "Your life experience can help others, which is inherently purposeful."
- 3. Draw up a purpose timeline.** Your purpose changes as you age. Think about what it was at different points in your life, with particular focus on periods of evolution or transition. Did you learn any lessons that you can apply to your current situation?
- 4. Look for role models.** Are there people whose work you admire? Can you learn how to do something similar?
- 5. Become a mentor and share your knowledge and skills.** People often cite the encouragement and wisdom they've obtained from others who took the time to care about their careers. "A mentoring relationship is a caring one that enables us to give and receive love," Lee says. "Reciprocal, caring relationships are often what's missing as we get older."
- 6. Think about what the world needs.** There are a great many needs on this planet, and different people will prioritize different ones. Are you concerned about world hunger? Climate change? Injustice? Identify a cause that's meaningful to you, and think about how you could help. "There are probably a million needs in your community that aren't being met. Maybe some of those needs require your skill set," Lee says.
- 7. Write your own story.** Your own lived experience is also worthwhile. Recall the best stories from your childhood and write them down with all the detail you can think of. Include answers to important questions about yourself — the kind you wish you had asked your own parents and grandparents. Give the stories to your kids and grandkids.
- 8. Write your own obituary.** You can do this at any age, maybe not for publication — just for yourself or your family. What do you want to be remembered for? Can any of that inform your purpose now? If you haven't yet achieved something you're especially proud of, remember that it's not too late.
- 9. How to start.** Don't feel pressured. "Explore the possibilities," Lee says. "It gets you moving again, and momentum can take you further in ways that you may find rich, rewarding, and even surprising."

If this has piqued your interest in any way, please email me at dpwitman@hotmail.com. Have a great summer!

David Witman



You Can Make a Difference Through the Deacon's Benevolence Fund

At First Presbyterian Church of Naples, we are called to share Christ's love in tangible ways with those in need. One of the most impactful ways we do this is through the Deacon's Benevolence Fund, a ministry dedicated to providing hope, assistance, and encouragement throughout our community.

Unlike our regular church budget, the Deacon's Benevolence Fund is supported entirely through the generous gifts of our congregation. Every dollar given goes toward helping local organizations that provide food, temporary financial assistance, counseling, and other essential services to individuals and families facing difficult circumstances.

So far, this year, the Board of Deacons has awarded two grants. The first was a \$3,000 grant to Our Daily Bread Food Pantry, a volunteer-powered ministry that has grown from serving 320 families to reaching more than 900–1,200 households each week through its food pantry, mobile pantries, and school programs in Naples and Marco Island. The Deacon Benevolence Fund also provided \$3,000 to St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, helping further their mission of combating food insecurity and offering hope to our neighbors.

These gifts are made possible only through your generosity.

The pink envelopes located in our church pews provide a simple way to contribute to the Deacon's Benevolence Fund. Donations may also be made online at fpcnaples.org/give by selecting "Give Now" and then "Deacons Benevolence Fund."

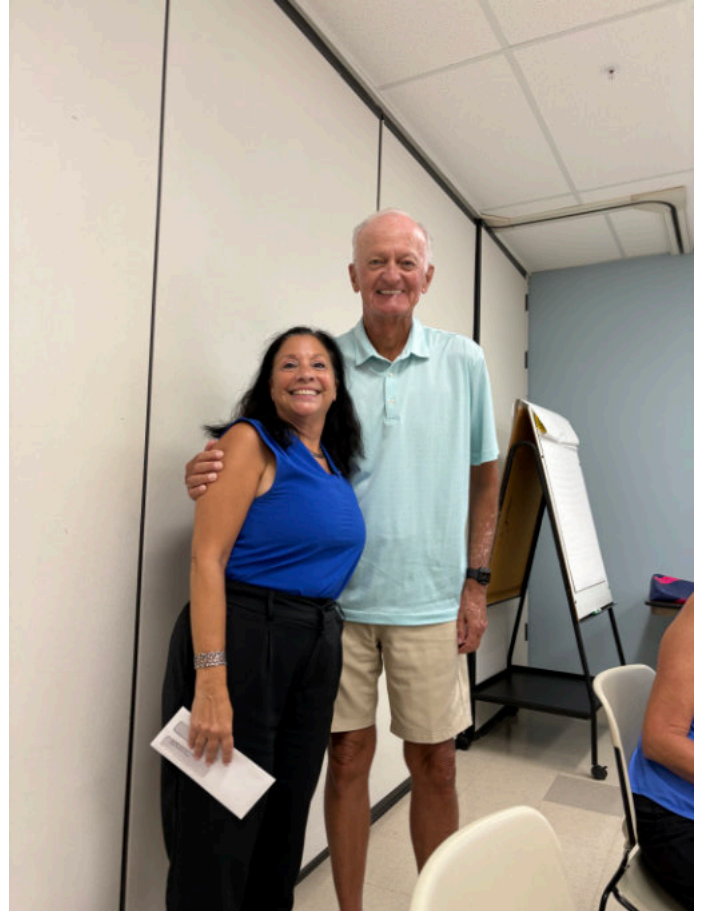
As needs in our community continue to grow, so does the opportunity for us to respond with compassion and generosity. Every gift—large or small—helps extend Christ's love beyond our church walls and into the lives of those who need it most.

Please prayerfully consider donating to the Deacon's Benevolence Fund today. Together, we can continue to provide food, encouragement, hope, and practical assistance to our neighbors in need. Thank you.

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." — Matthew 25:40

For more information about the Deacon's Benevolence Fund, please get in touch with [Gary Tincu](#).

Kathi Webber



Pictured: Gary Tincu, Board of Deacons Treasurer, presenting a grant check to Evelyn Rossetti-Ryan, EdD, Executive Director of Our Daily Bread Food Pantry.



FEED THE 5,000

This month, we are helping to restock the food pantry of **The Salvation Army**. Ushers will have a list available as you leave the sanctuary. Food donations will be collected at the 6th Street church entrance on the second Sunday of the month, **July 12**. If you prefer, monetary donations may be made online at fpcnaples.org/give by selecting "Give Now" and then "Feed 5000". Checks may be made payable to First Presbyterian Church with the memo marked "Feed the 5,000" and placed in the collection plate.



Suggested items include:

- Coffee & Sugar
- Dried Beans & Rice
- Chips & Crackers
- Pasta & Sauce
- Canned Tuna or Chicken
- Oatmeal & Cereal
- Peanut Butter & Jelly
- Condiments
- Macaroni & Cheese
- Instant Mashed Potatoes
- Canned Soup
- Canned Vegetables
- Canned Fruit

Linda Gadkowski, Palms Society Co-Chair, linda.gadkowski@gmail.com
Amy Manley, Palms Society Co-Chair, aa34@icloud.com

Palms Society

First Presbyterian Church Palms Society

The Palms Society is an honorary group of church members and friends who have chosen to leave a lasting legacy by making a financial gift to the Church, oftentimes upon their passing. Membership is open to anyone, and no minimum gift is required. All gift amounts are kept entirely confidential. Perhaps the easiest method of joining the Palms Society is by including the Church in your estate planning. In appreciation of a shared "Spirit of Giving," all members receive equal recognition, including acknowledgment on a society plaque and a small palm tree emblem on their name tags.

If you would like more information about the Palms Society or to become a member, please contact Amy Manley at 239.272.6821 or Linda Gadkowski at 508.292.5500.



Reflections from Montreat: Walking in Wonder

From June 5–13, our youth traveled to Montreat, North Carolina, for the Montreat Youth Conference. We had a little time to settle in before the conference officially began on Sunday, June 7.

To begin our week in a spirit of quiet reflection, we walked the labyrinth on Montreat's Prayer Path. In the cool mountain air, with the sound of water nearby and the crunch of gravel under our feet, we invited God to center our hearts and prepare us for the days ahead. That night, before everyone else arrived at the hotel, our group shared a special candlelighting ritual. Each person chose to light the candle of someone in our group whom they did not know very well. We lit those candles and quietly pledged to pray for that person throughout the week as we shared in a Liturgy For a Purposeful Beginning.

The following evening, Sunday, June 7, the conference began. The theme of this year's conference was "Wonder and Wander", an invitation to be fully present in each moment and to notice God's presence as we wander through life. Throughout the week, our youth were encouraged to bring their questions, their hopes, and even their doubts before God, trusting that God meets us not only in answers but also in the questions themselves.

As a group, we shared prayers at breakfast, lunch, and dinner, learning to speak honestly with God and with one another. We prayed for each other, our families back home, this congregation that supported us, for the concerns of our world, and for the ways we saw God at work during the conference. By the end of the week, our youth were writing their own prayers, which became part of a beautiful closing ritual for our group.

We had powerful moments outside the conference schedule, as we experienced God's creation and the gift of silence together. We took a waterfall tour in Pisgah National Forest, surrounded by rushing water,

moss-covered rocks, and towering trees, and we were invited into the wonder and beauty of God's world. The quiet moments - simply listening, breathing, noticing - became a kind of prayer.

On the last day of the trip, we walked another labyrinth, this time at the University of North Carolina. It served



Pictured left: Members of our Montreat group enjoy a moment of community on the scenic patio at the Assembly Inn.

as a bookend to our week, giving us one more chance to slow down, breathe, listen, and reflect on all we had experienced together at Montreat.

Each year, the Montreat Youth Conference lifts up a mission partner. This year's partner was Arms Around ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), an organization that walks alongside individuals and families affected by autism. This focus was especially meaningful for our group because one of our own youth is on the autism spectrum. On the Saturday following the conference, we were able to visit the Arms Around ASD resale shop in Asheville.

For the first time in my six years of traveling to Montreat, one of our own youth, Payton Gibbs, served as part of the Jeremiah Project. Payton was an active participant in the conference worship services, helping to lead the larger community in prayer and praise. It was a joy and a deep encouragement to see one of our youth in such a visible leadership role, offering her gifts to the wider church.

We are also deeply grateful for Kristen Gibbs, who joined us as a significant adult on the trip. Kristen offered steady care, presence, and support throughout the week—listening, encouraging, and helping to create a safe, loving space for our youth to grow in faith.

I have included a note from each of our youth, in their own words, sharing their gratitude for each and every one of you who supported this trip—financially and prayerfully—and made it possible. I am deeply grateful for you, the church family that surrounds our youth with love, encouragement, and prayer.

Please enjoy the pictures from our week at Montreat and the words of thanks from our youth. Your support helped create a space where our young people could wonder, wander, and discover God's presence in new and life-giving ways.

In great gratitude and love,

Marcy



Pictured (from top to bottom): Members of our Montreat group on the labyrinth walk; group members enjoying a healthy lunch at Green Sage.

12 Intergenerational CE

Words of Gratitude from Our Youth

- **Tommy Schulte, 8th Grade**

"Dear Congregation, my time at Montreat was spent to a purposeful use, as I made new friends and explored the beauty of the Appalachian Mountain landscape I woke up to every morning. I am grateful for the opportunity to fully understand the true faith of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. These Biblical studies make me realize that God put us on this Earth to wonder and wander about his creation. We are all children of God, and connected to be a part of this wonderful circle of life. Yet this trip has ended, I am to pursue my following of the Lord, and give gratitude to this wonderful church that paid for our trip. Nothing more than heartfelt love is to be expressed from me and my peers. Thank you for all you have done and the safety of those in the future. Amen."

- **Payton Gibbs, 9th Grade**

"Dear Congregation, I had a wonderful time at Montreat – I made new friends, and loved walking along God's path. Thank you so much for letting us go to Montreat and worship the Lord."

- **Alyssa Coppens, 10th Grade**

"Dear Congregation, I am truly grateful for all of your support. I am so thankful I got to make new friends. I just cannot say enough how grateful I am that I got to experience Montreat with this group. I will always hold this trip in my heart."

- **Ryan Sherry, 12th Grade**

"For the Congregation, spending time here in Montreat was wonderful, my time spent here was spent looking, taking in the beautiful mountain views, and observing the life here in North Carolina. I can't thank you enough who contributed to the funding of this trip! God bless and Amen."

- **Charleigh Shanks, Freshman in College**

"Thank you, congregation, for supporting us on this trip. This being the second time I've been on this trip, it has truly changed a part of me. I have made new memories, friends, and new perspectives on my faith. Going to Montreat wouldn't be possible without you all and I am forever thankful."

- **Christiana Liu, Freshman in College**

"Montreat has truly changed my life. As this was my 4th and final time going to Montreat, I can't express how grateful I am. From unforgettable memories, to learning more about myself and my faith, Montreat has become a special place for me. Thank you, congregation, for supporting our journeys and for giving us the opportunity to go."

- **Kristen Gibbs, Significant Adult Participant**

"I can't thank you all enough for this unforgettable experience. Between the mountain views, fresh air, and incredible kindness of the community, Montreat will always hold a special place in my heart. This journey has truly brought me closer to loving and trusting God."



Pictured above: Members of our Montreat group sharing a silent prayer walk in the woods.



Clockwise from top: Members of our Montreat group at Arms Around ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder); getting ready to paddleboat; glazing pottery.

14 Intergenerational CE



Clockwise from top: Members of our Montreat group with our keynote speaker, Rev. Seth Lovell; sharing our prayers for one another; closing candlelighting ritual.



FUNDAY Winter! SCHOOL

EXPERIENCE GOD'S LOVE THROUGH FRIENDSHIP AND FUN!



EVERY SUNDAY
JULY

- 5: Winter Warmth**
- 12: Winter Wonderland**
- 19: Snowflakes of Uniqueness**
- 26: Winter Olympics of Joy**

Drop off begins at 9:30 a.m. in the Youth Room for kindergarten to fifth grade. Pick up 11 a.m.

Nursery open for 18 months to VPK

Mark your calendars for the Back-to-School Blessing on August 9th!

16 Intergenerational CE

HUDDLE

A Men's Bible Discussion Group

All men are invited and encouraged to gather with us each Thursday at noon.

We are studying the **Gospel of John**. Bring a Bible and your lunch!

If unable to attend in person, please join the meeting via Zoom.

Please contact the church office for the Zoom link to the meeting.

Women's Ministry Bible Study



All women are invited to join us for a weekly Bible Study, held on Mondays at 1 p.m. in the Parlor.

We look to covenant with each other week by week as we delve into God's word. For more information email Janeen McClure, at jrmc@airmccclure.com.

Presbyterian Women

Linda Ferrario, PW Co-Moderator, lindaferrario44@gmail.com
Martha Waddell-Gill, PW Co-Moderator, mwadd001@gmail.com

Holy Hospitality

We continue enjoying our fellowship after worship in Spencer Hall this summer. Thank you for volunteering to help Presbyterian Women serve cookies and punch. Only 3 more opportunities to sign up—August 2, September 6, and September 20. If you are available and would be willing to help, please call Saralene Oldham at 239.564.1847 or Betty Mangos at 239.248.8800.

Presbyterian Women 2026-2027 Directory

The new directory is under development. We are gathering names and would like to include you, even if you do not or are unable to be in a Circle or regularly attend functions. Call Saralene or Betty.

Happy Birthday America • July 5

On July 5, Holy Hospitality joyfully recognizes our country's 250th birthday. Join us in this important recognition with special treats, decorations, and cake and ice cream.



Our Church Family Stories: The Stewart Family

Family faith formation is at the forefront of our Christian Education Curriculum, and the emphasis on the family being the primary faith formers brings our families and our church community together. We delight in the participation of our youth as ushers, prayer writers, choral singers, and cake servers, but getting to know their parents and siblings allows us all to go deeper in our community and intergenerational intentions.

This month, we are visiting the Stewart Family.

Nicholas and Kate, as we all know, are very visible each Sunday, not only in Children's Time but also in participating in the work that helps create our sacred space of worship. Their sincerity, reverence, and enthusiasm for involvement are easily recognized. But when we don't see them here, which is rather rare, they are committed to many activities outside of church and home. Nicholas is an avid golfer and loves basketball. He loves to help with gatherings—he is always the first to volunteer to create VBS menus, cook, and serve. Kate is very involved in soccer, softball, golf, and gymnastics, and she has a wonderful soloist voice. Her art has graced our Christmas bulletins for years. The foundation they experience at home, the loving guidance they receive from their parents, James and Ashli, truly are the backbone of their character and faith.

James Stewart was born in Ann Arbor, MI, in 1982. In his formative years, emphasis was always placed on academic and community involvement. His father, a doctor, held him and his younger sister to very high standards.

Ashli Gagliano was born in Naples in 1981, and she and her family were members of FPC Naples, attending regularly when she was a child. She was raised in a loving family that supported all of the many sports and extracurricular activities she and her siblings were involved in. Her father was an educator and coach who taught elementary through high school in the Collier County school system for many years.

On the completion of their higher education—James, at the University of Michigan and Law at Northeastern in Boston, and Ashli at Rollins College and the University of Florida Law School—they met in 2007 at the Florida State Attorney's Office, both recently hired as promising young prosecutors. Although they were embedded in their new positions, they fell in love and married in 2011. In 2013, Nick was born, followed by Kate in 2017.

Ashli remains with the State Attorney's Office, and her specialization is working with Mental Health Court and Veterans' Treatment Court. James, in his 18th year as a prosecuting attorney, was appointed to the Judiciary by Governor Ron DeSantis in 2025. Circuit Court Judges serve all the counties in their Judicial circuit, which, for James, are Collier, Lee, Glades,



18 Caring Ministries

Charlotte, and Hendry counties. His decision to take on this position was nurtured and supported by so many people, not only in the offices he works in but by the people themselves in these various counties. His record of fairness and adherence to the facts and the law speaks for itself.

Most people are really not aware of judges. We tend to take them for granted. But if we find ourselves in a situation where we are standing in front of one in court, that can change very quickly. We pray that the judge before us is a just, kind, and dedicated person who is there to do right by the law. Being informed about the person and the integrity behind the desk and in the robe is very important for a fair and just society.

When asked how James' profession as a judge reflects his core faith, he smiled and said,

"I believe judges are, in part, ministers of justice, and I believe that is consistent with our faith, which teaches that we should all do what is right and just."

"We are taught to give back to society in all we do. Both Ashli and I were taught that at a young age, and it is something we continually reflect on and teach to our children. To help others, to give to service, to search within for the truth, and to speak only truth: isn't that what Jesus is also about?"

Judgment from a judge isn't conjured up from a biased or favored position. Judgment handed down comes from the very laws themselves.

James is now in a non-partisan, everyone-can-vote race on the August 18 ballot. This will allow him a six-year term. He goes into it with a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to serve.

"As long as the people are willing to have me, I will help maintain their confidence as a dedicated judge in all of the communities I serve."

As an intergenerational community of faith, we are grateful for all parents and children in our church family. Our fellowship each Sunday, providing a space for us to share and learn from each other, is a gift and a joy. First Presbyterian Church of Naples is truly blessed!

Susan Pratt





July 1

Doc Neumann
Brian Boeve

July 2

Bob Padgett
Forest Edwards

July 3

Sharon Cumming

July 4

Shirley Bartholomew
Brittany Hance
Bruce Rogers
Estella Platte

July 5

Ann Herring
Bill Adkisson

July 6

Kevin Batcher

July 7

Jacque Coombs
Janet Magennis
Karen Newton

July 8

Morgan Forsythe
Holly Jensen

July 9

Connie Abston

July 10

Beverley Vining

July 11

Linda Rhodes

July 12

Beth Tomkow
Richie Eisenhower
Steve Yarbrough
Debbie Savage

July 13

Marjorie Cashion

July 14

Richard Trampe

July 15

Nancy Daniel

July 16

Andrew Haradean
David Jackson

July 17

Don Boyd
Isabelle Connell
Donna Estler

July 18

Matthew Fisher
Amy Frick

July 20

Jerry Nichols
Tom Clark
Nancy Smythe

July 21

Caroline Wulfert

July 22

Kathy Patton
Lois Tichenor
Susan Corryn

July 23

Sally Lutz
Steve Hendrick

July 24

Jo Debbink
Tom Brodmerkel

July 25

Janey Lahey

July 26

Joan Gust
Harriet Tobin
Cindy McCarthy

July 27

Forest Reeves

July 28

Mark Mollers

July 29

Ron Avola

July 30

Heather Townsend
Roxy Barry

July 31

KC Hornbach
David Mills
Lynn Thye

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow that reflects on the water. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

In Sympathy

Gerald "Jerry" Miller

June 4, 2026

Sue Dotson

June 19, 2026

First Presbyterian Church of Naples

250 Sixth Street South

Naples, FL 34102

fpcnaples.org

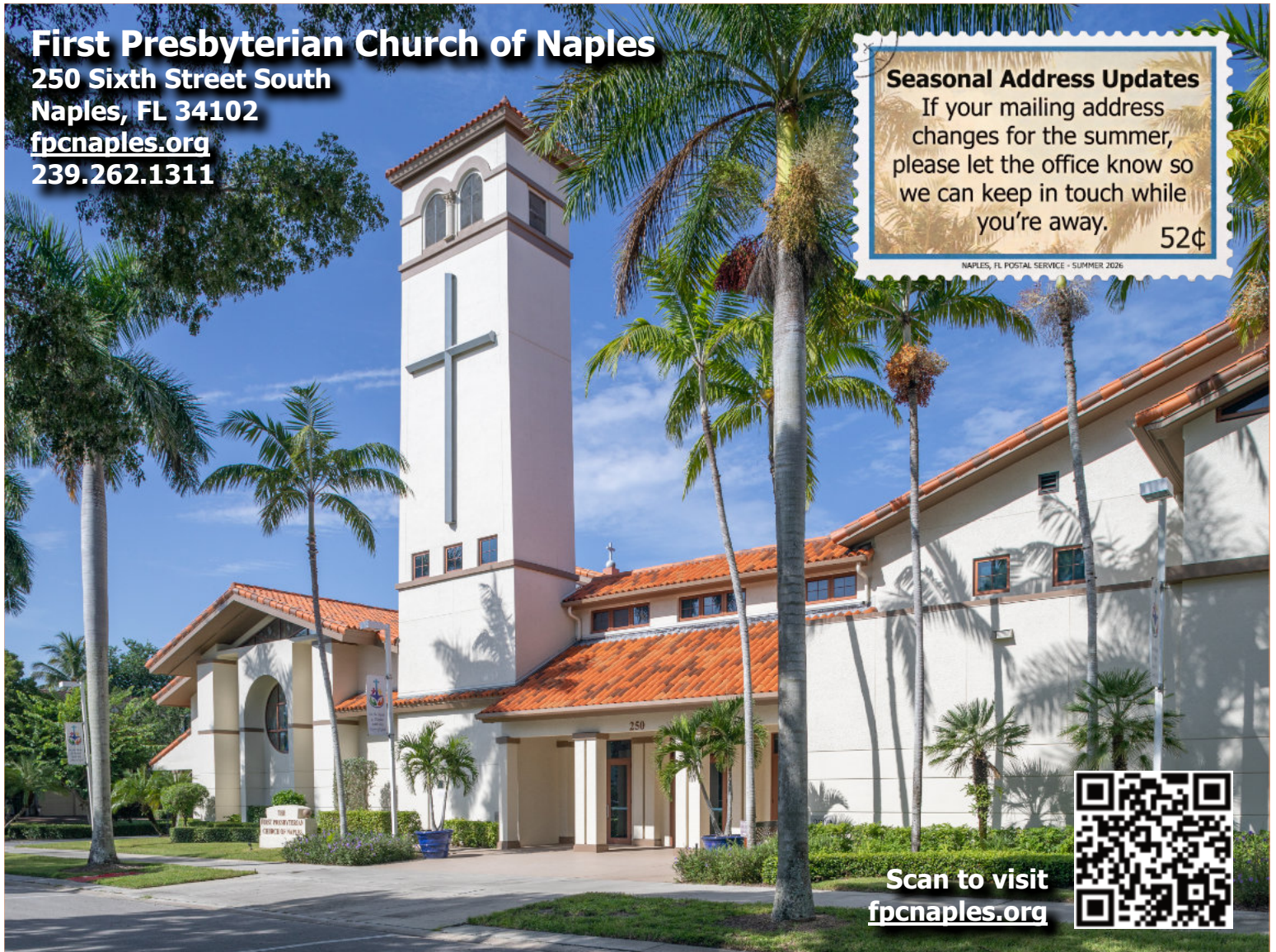
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Seasonal Address Updates

If your mailing address changes for the summer, please let the office know so we can keep in touch while you're away.

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Worship With Us From Anywhere!

Heading north? Stay connected to your FPC family all summer long! Join us virtually every Sunday at 10 a.m. for our live-streamed worship service at fpcnaples.org. When you join us, be sure to register your attendance via our online Friendship Pad.

Nominations for Church Elder and Deacon • Submit by July 12

The Nominating Committee seeks your help in identifying candidates to serve as Ruling Elders or Deacons. Please prayerfully consider who is being called to lead these important ministries.

Submit your nominations online at fpcnaples.org/resources. Paper forms are also available at the exit doors and the church office. Each form outlines the PC(USA) Book of Order requirements and responsibilities. If you are nominating someone else, you do not need their permission—simply submit their name and the committee will handle the rest.

Please submit all forms by Sunday, July 12. For questions, contact Linda Gadkowski, Committee Chair, at linda.gadkowski@gmail.com or 508.292.5500.