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Commencing a Lifetime of Learning

What would you tell a young man or woman about to graduate? One of the most common messages commencement speakers share is that graduates are indeed commencing. They are only just beginning to learn.

While they may rightly feel proud of finishing school, a few months in the working world often reveal how much they still do not know.

Christians who love God with their minds understand that truth frees us from ignorance and superstition. They also know that the joy of learning brings deep satisfaction and, in time, wisdom. That wisdom helps us evaluate what we have learned and use it well, so that knowledge becomes a tool for growth and faithful living.

First Presbyterian Church, Batesville AR

May 2026
Volume 40, Issue 5

Good News

Dear Friends,

I was approached recently by a member of the church wondering if it would be possible to include some questions in the newsletter each month testing the congregation's Bible knowledge. It sounded like fun to me and I'm led to believe this is something that has been done here in the past. Also, I think we all need to continue to challenge ourselves on Biblical knowledge. So I'll make sure we have some questions to work on in the coming months.

It isn't just a matter of trivia, of course. The more familiar we are with scripture, the more useful it can be to us as we navigate our lives and seek to serve God more adequately. When I became a student at Union Seminary in Virginia in 1986, I had participated in years of Sunday school, VBS, youth group and choir, and a number of camps, conferences, and retreats. Still, I felt it necessary to take an introductory class in the Bible before I became too deeply involved in other studies. Plus the PC(USA) requires all candidates for the ministry to pass a Bible Content Exam before they can be ordained to the ministry and I was very confident of my ability to pass that exam.

So I took what we might call a remedial Bible class to get my knowledge level up. When I was finished I felt much better about my grasp of the Bible and I passed the Content Exam without much trouble. My role as a minster has kept me flipping pages in scripture throughout the years as well which has helped me stay familiar and even expand my knowledge.

But there is no reason at all that I as a minister should be the only one in the congregation with an adequate understanding of God's word. We all need it, and no matter where we are in life we always have more to learn about God. So here is my challenge to you, members and friends of First Presbyterian Church, Batesville. Find ways remain conversant with God's word. Read the daily lectionary. Ask me for resources that might be helpful to you. And just for fun, check your knowledge against the questions we'll be adding to the newsletter in the coming months. Each question will have a scripture citation so that you can look it up and get the greater context and maybe learn a little more.

The Bible should be a crucial part of who we are, but it doesn't have to be drudgery. So here are our first two questions. Good luck.

Easier question: Where was the apostle Paul headed when he was met by Christ on the road? Acts 9:1-22 and Galatians 1:13-17.

Tougher question: Why did Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, go to Israel? 2 Kings 5:1-5

See you Sunday,
Jim Freeman,
Pastor

MAY
BIRTHDAYS

5/1 Will Grace
5/1 Margaret Miller
5/2 Murray Bell
5/4 Wesley Beal
5/7 Blake Ogilvie
5/8 Andrea Kikkert
5/8 Isabelle Geary
5/10 Bruce Johnston
5/10 Sophia Geary
5/10 Win Coleman
5/11 Wanette Baker
5/11 Terrell Case
5/12 Jennifer Coleman
5/16 Greg Manry
5/20 Ned Mobley
5/22 Ellie Smith
5/24 Elizabeth Walton
5/26 Dr. Fonzie Geary
5/27 Lucy Rayford
5/27 Mettler Bell

Winner, winner, catfish dinner!
Join us for our family picnic on Wednesday, May 27, beginning at 5:30pm on our beautiful church grounds. Fred's Fish House will be catering our meal so you know it's going to be good! There will be bouncy houses for the kids and games for all ages. Our neighbors are invited to join us on this fun evening!

CLASS OF 2026

Graduation marks both an ending and a beginning. As we celebrate students stepping into new seasons, we give thanks for the growth, perseverance and calling God has placed in their lives. May we surround our graduates with prayer, reminding them that God goes before them and walks with them wherever the journey leads.

Kate Lanier will attend Arkansas State University

Victoria Nelms will attend Highpoint University in North Carolina

Jill Qualls just graduated from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville with a BA in English. Congratulations!

Sam Smith will attend Ozarka's Aviation Program

Would you like to help Slam or FPI Youth? The youth would welcome any donations in the form of dinner, snacks, supplies and money. Please check with Ms. Lorrie if you would like to donate. mcclure2825@yahoo.com or 870-613-6961.

CURRENT ELDERS:

Class of 2026
Wanette Baker
Lenora Baldwin
Deborah Stroud
Janet Thomas

Class of 2027
Steve Lange
Jeffrey Freiert
Clint Thomas
Kathy Altom

Class of 2028
Andrea Weaver
Celeste Whipple
Barry Gehm
Mary Lee Thessen
Gerri Coleman, Clerk

CURRENT DEACONS
Class 0f 2026
Clint Howard
Larry Whipple
Rachel Baker
Payne Moser

Class of 2027
Laura Geary
Mayfan Thomas
Miriam Moore
Sandy James

Class of 2028
Clark Baker
Preston Nelms
Sarah Jones
Melissa Qualls

Donations this Month are for Arkansas Sheriffs' Youth Ranches

Please bring socks for ages 5-18 years, or shampoo, conditioner, and body wash for boys and girls

Drink from a can? Pull the tab and bring it to church! Drop your can tabs in the jar in the Narthex to help the local V.F.W. support the Ronald McDonald House! **Tabs can also be dropped off in the office.**

Bible Quiz Answers:

Easier question: Damascus

Tougher question: To be cured of his leprosy.

NEW MEETING TIME

Dementia Caregiver Support Groups will meet on Tuesday, May 12 at 2:00pm and Thursday, May 14 at a new time: 5:30pm. Both groups meet in the parlor. For more information, contact Paulette Freeman at 318-617-6282.

Presbyterian Day School

When school is closed for the summer, the PDS Library For Littles will still be open! You are invited to stop by with your kiddo or grandkiddo after church or anytime you're in the neighborhood and have them pick out books to take home and read. If they find a book they love, they are welcome to keep it!

If you know anyone looking for a special place to begin their child's educational journey, PDS is enrolling for the '26-'27 school year! Applications and informational brochures are available in the church office. Applications are also available online at http://www.fpcbatesville.org/presbyterian-day-school.html. And thank you so much for your support of PDS this year in all ways big and small, from donations of snacks to sponsorship of Breakfast With Santa. The PDS littles are fortunate to be embraced by such a wonderful community!

Would you like to help PDS? The day school would welcome any donations in the form of snacks, health supplies or **scholarship** contributions. Please check with Ms. Alyson or Ms. Laura if you would like to donate snacks or supplies. Any scholarship funds may be brought to the church office.

Worship Schedule

May 3rd
Liturgist– Andrea Weaver
Acolyte-Isabelle Geary
May 10th
Liturgist-Andrea Weaver
Acolyte-Isabelle Geary
May 17th
Liturgist-Andrea Weaver
Acolyte-Avery/Ryan Moore
May 24th-
Liturgist-Steve Lange
Acolyte-Arch Baker
May 31st-
Liturgist-Steve Lange
Acolyte-Arch Baker

Special Dates for May 2026

- National Day of Prayer, *May 7, 2026*
- Mother's Day, *May 10, 2026*
- Ascension of the Lord, *May 14, 2026*
- Armed Forces Day, *May 16, 2026*
- Victoria Day [Canada], *May 18, 2026*
- Day of Pentecost, *May 24, 2026*
- Memorial Day, *May 25, 2026*
- Trinity Sunday, *May 31, 2026*

Grateful for Those Who Gave All

We remember, O Lord, the men and women who have made the supreme sacrifice for our country. Help us never to breathe the air of freedom, claim the right to justice or enjoy the privilege of worship without deep gratitude for those who gave "the last full measure of devotion" for our sake.

May they now know the peace of eternity and the joy of your presence. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pastoral Care

PLEASE REMEMBER these members and friends of First Presbyterian Church in your prayers.

MEMBERS: Shelly Moser, Amy Howard, Bob and Sandy Qualls; Kathy Whittenton; Trish Boylan.
FAMILY AND FRIENDS: The Smith Family: Andrew, Ellie, Nate & Ollie (*daughter and family of Bruce & Sue Johnston*); Louise Simmons, (*sister of Paulette Freeman);* Paula Pollock, (*friend of Janet Thomas*); Gretchen LeMieux (*sister of Jo Gehm);* Tanya Anselm (*cousin of Jo Gehm);* Rose Scales (*friend of Mayfan & Clint Thomas);* Hattie Parker, unborn daughter of Anna Parks Arnold (*friend of Kathy Lanier*); Dana Mathis, (*friend of Sarah Jones);* Amber Lacewell (*friend of LeAnn & Price Homes*); Fin Anderson (*granddaughter of James and Camille*); Kathy Magness, (*friend of Amy & Clint Howard*); Andrew Langenbach (nephew of John Ried); Sam Crawford *(friend of the congregation)*; Bill Olson *(friend Amy Crouch Howard)*; Dwight Barnett & family *(brother of Carlene Lewis)*; Kelli Sarrett *(niece of Celeste Whipple)*; Dr. Mark Williams *(friend of Carlene Lewis)*; Daniel Neal *(friend of Zack Mobley);* Susan (Critz) Guthrie *(friend of the congregation)*; Marjorie Seasholtz *(friend of Kathy Whittenton)*; Don Weatherman *(friend of the congregation)*; Todd Phillips *(nephew of Camille Anderson)*; Eloise Kikkert *(granddaughter of Don & Lynn Weatherman);* Betty Howard *(friend of Kathy Whittenton);* Susan Anselm *(sister of Jo Gehm).*

May 3	Presbyterian Village	Vaughn, Bentonville
May 10	First, Hot Springs	Ministries to Hispanic Persons in Arkansas
May 17	Westover Hills, Little Rock	Allison Memorial, Little Rock
May 24	Holly Grove Church, Holly Grove	First, Alma
May 31	Mission Trip Participants	First, Fort Smith

Please remember to pray for these ministries in the Presbytery.

Thank you to the Fellowship Committee for a wonderful "Graduation Sunday." The reception was perfect in every way! We love our church family. Thanks so much!

Kate, Victoria & Sam

Dear 1st Pres ladies,

Thank you for hosting such a beautiful baby shower celebrating our daughter, Elsinore. Derek and I are so blessed to have a supportive church family to raise our family in. Looking forward to bugging you all.

Love, Derek, Carolyn & Elsie Reed