

MAY 2025

GOOD NEWS BANNER

FARRAGUT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

TO PRAISE GOD, WELCOME ALL, SERVE OTHERS,
GROW IN FAITH, BE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST
AND SHARE THE GOOD NEWS

Reverend Matt Nieman

A message from our Pastor



Now's the Time

Ross Douthat, a writer for the New York Times, wrote a piece on April 19 that painted a bleak picture of our culture. Due to the rapid rise of advanced technology and despite its many benefits, many institutions we have valued for decades face extinction. Whether it's churches, colleges, service clubs, or even humans' ability to engage in relationships with each other, our way of life that has generated so much prosperity is threatened.

Douthat writes, "In this environment, survival will depend on intentionality and intensity. Any aspect of human culture that people assume gets transmitted automatically, without too much conscious deliberation, is not going to make it.

"Languages will disappear, churches will perish, political ideas will evanesce, art forms will vanish, the capacity to read and write and figure mathematically will wither, and the reproduction of the species will fail — except among people who are deliberate and self-conscious and a little bit fanatical about ensuring that the things they love are carried forward."

As I read Douthat's piece more than once, I couldn't help but think of the Church and its gradual decline in our culture due to populations choosing to forgo faith in community. And I also thought of Jesus, who deliberately and self-consciously, and a little fanatically, went to the disciples more than once after his resurrection and made sure they knew that he was alive.

He was relentless in his pursuit of them.

We are God's agents. The church is a community of believers charged with sharing good news that Christ is alive. And in today's world, it demands a rather relentless commitment to telling others about Jesus and who he is. Not arrogantly, not boastfully, not selfishly, and not outside of our talents and skills. But instead, with humility, kindness, welcome, and a deep sense of concern for our neighbors, Farragut Presbyterian Church can be relentless in being the church God created us to be 40 years ago, albeit in a much different landscape.

Join us for Worship

9:00 am

Casual Service

Parking Lot

Bring a chair

11:00 am

Traditional Service
Sanctuary

<https://tingurl.com/fpclivestream>

We are a diverse and welcoming community of believers, called by God to be disciples of Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to acknowledge God's gracious presence in the world. Our faithful response in praising God encompasses compassionate service to all, nurturing one another to grow in faith together and sending out disciples to share the Good News.



In March, our Session endorsed an initiative called Horizon 2035, a process by which we move closer to the calling that God has for us over the course of the next decade.

You might recall the conversations that the Session commissioned our own John Sharp to have with all of us over the winter months, conversations that yielded tremendous insight from all of you but also included data that John provided us about the state of the mainline church in the U.S., the PCUSA, and the demographics of our congregation.

John wrote a final report with a series of recommendations the Session will begin to implement. As part of his report, John wrote this: “While in many respects [FPC] expresses its mission as well as it ever has, both the culture and the congregation itself have arrived at inflection points that must be faced. The data bear this out. Given long and clear trends, in another decade FPC will likely not have the range of options, vigor, membership and physical resources with which to catalyze a vision. Simply put, FPC will never be in a stronger position to discern and act upon God’s preferred future for the congregation and its mission. Our time is now.”

Our time is now to keep being relentless in our calling. The culture will tell us we don’t matter anymore; that there’s no use for us, a Presbyterian Church USA congregation in the heart of Farragut.

We have the resources to defy what the culture is telling us. We can keep being intentional, in ways that bring out the best in us, in sharing resurrection hope within our community. But it’s going to take some changes. It’s going to require us changing course a bit to keep fulfilling the purpose God established for Farragut Presbyterian Church forty years ago.

In my eleven years here, I’ve never been more excited about the potential we have to live into our mission. That we can relentlessly be the church by what we have to offer to our community.

Now is the time to act.

At its meeting on April 28:

The Session took two initial and important steps toward enacting the Horizon 2035 initiative (see above) it endorsed in March.

First, it hired Reverend John Sharp, Ph.D, as director of spiritual formation. In his role, John will lead the Horizon 2035 initiative and direct adult programming at FPC. John is a seasoned and accomplished pastor, scholar, teacher, and leader. He and his wife, Whitney, joined our congregation last year and are tremendous blessings to our community. John begins his part-time role on May 1.

Second, the Session created a Horizon 2035 steering committee to assist John in implementing the initiative’s vision. The steering committee consists of Jeff Thode, Sharon Koch, Lynn Kszos, Tom Feldhausen, and Matt Nieman. The committee will champion the project and chart the steps taken to realize the vision of fulfilling God’s call to FPC for the next decade.

John’s comprehensive and detailed report that led to the Session endorsing this major new initiative, along with a one-page summary of the report, is available below.



<https://www.fpctn.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Horizon-2035-one-page-summary.pdf>

<https://www.fpctn.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Horizon-2035-Final-Report-B.pdf>

<https://www.fpctn.org/horizon-2035/>



Horizon 2035: A Readiness Plan for Farragut Presbyterian Church - Summary

The "Horizon 2035 Final Report" outlines a readiness plan for Farragut Presbyterian Church (FPC) to address current inflection points within the congregation and the broader culture, aiming for a thriving future by its 50th anniversary in 2035. The report is the result of a comprehensive inquiry into the church's identity, program, process, and context, utilizing data collection instruments, interviews, workshops, and reviews of church records and broader religious trends. The goal is not mere growth but discerning and moving towards God's calling for FPC.

The Present Moment and Key Findings: FPC was formed in 1985 through the unity of two churches, and its DNA is characterized by diversity, a robust love for God and neighbor, continuous learning, vibrant worship, genuine fellowship, and unconditional acceptance. Members describe FPC as feeling like family, with strong and encouraging leadership and an accepting environment. Notable strengths include a welcoming congregation, effective pastor, acceptance of diverse perspectives, strong mission involvement, quality music program, and a good balance in size. However, the church faces challenges, particularly the need for growth (especially among younger generations) and increased engagement across different groups. Key findings reveal that FPC's membership has a high median age of 70, and the average weekly worship attendance is around 150, placing it on the borderline between a pastoral-size and a program-size church. Importantly, FPC possesses an accepting identity that occupies a dynamic center, embracing diverse theological, political, and world views as a distinctive strength. Despite these internal strengths, cultural and denominational trends show a decline in religious participation and engagement, particularly among younger generations.

Conclusions: The report concludes that the current trends of aging and contraction are likely to continue without deliberate intervention. The church's functioning between pastoral and program sizes creates inefficiencies and missed opportunities. There is a lack of awareness regarding the current mission or vision statement. Addressing the need for growth, especially among younger demographics, requires a focus on robust adult programming that will gradually lead to healthier age representation. Intentional inviting by current members is identified as a crucial vehicle for potential numeric growth and congregational vitality. While learning is central to FPC's identity, Sunday School participation has declined, presenting an opportunity for revitalized spiritual formation offerings. Current campus utilization may be hindering the best expression of identity and programming.

Key Recommendations: To navigate these realities and move towards a preferred future, the report offers several key recommendations:

- Deliberately transition to and function as a program-size church. This involves shifting from a pastor-centered model to one where the pastor equips and inspires program leaders, distributing leadership and pastoral care more broadly.
- Evaluate and potentially adjust the Sunday Morning Schedule to allow more time for worship and Christian education.
- Establish The Mustard Seed Fund for bequests to support the church's mission in the future.
- Strategically allocate the budget, aiming for approximately 60% for personnel, 15% for facilities, 10% for missional endeavors, and 15% for programming.
- Actively reinforce FPC's identity around the tagline "Love & Learn" through a 4-6 week emphasis on its 40th anniversary, highlighting its core mission of expressing love to God, to one another, and to the world, and being a community of continuous learning.
- Execute a tiered, in-house capital campaign (Vision 2035) focused on enabling the vitality and mission of the church, utilizing reserve funds and congregational investment without incurring long-term debt.

- Increase the scope and visibility of church programs through “Quest” (spiritual formation) offering diverse learning opportunities, and “ReQuest” (ministry of invitation) encouraging members to invite others.
- Consider adding a global (international) mission component to the outreach efforts.
- Implement “Fresh Look II” facility upgrades, including audio and video capabilities in key spaces, improved gathering spaces in the Narthex, and screens in the Sanctuary for visual aids and enhanced worship.

The report concludes with a call to action, emphasizing the need to "Re-plant" the church for each generation while cherishing its essential traditions. FPC's balanced and diverse congregation is seen as a strategic asset in a polarized world, positioning it to be a beacon of hope through its unwavering commitment to Love & Learn.

Adult Education

PASTOR MATT'S CLASS

Library

Led by Larry Byars

Larry Byars will be leading Pastor Matt's class during the month of May. Join us for Bible study and discussion in the library.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Outdoors/Room D

Led by Elizabeth Wilson

This class will discuss the weekly Lectionary text. The Revised Common Lectionary is a three-year cycle of readings from the Scriptures, arranged and intended for proclamation during the worship of the people of God. This practice of assigning particular readings to each Sunday and festival has continued through the history of the Christian Church.

KIDS ZONE!

We invite any little adventurers aged 3-9 to come aboard for a Sunday morning full of fun at 9:00am in our Fellowship Hall!

Kids will dive into the magical world of God's love with Bible tales, catchy tunes, cool videos, and loads of giggles, while grown-up helpers guide them through arts, science, food and jam sessions.

Let's make Sundays a fun day!

YOUTH CLASS

CAFE/PARLOR

LED BY MASON WARREN

The Youth Sunday School Class meets to DIVE IN to the Old Testament! Each week throughout the school year, youth explore a specific book of the Old Testament utilizing videos and discussion. We will explore key themes like God's covenant with the Israelites, stories of pivotal figures like Abraham, Moses, David, and Daniel, learning about concepts of obedience, faith, justice, and redemption, while also examining how these stories and characters relate to their own lives and challenges today, especially through relatable experiences like dealing with difficult choices, facing adversity, and navigating relationships with others; all while understanding the historical context of the stories and how they foreshadow the coming of Jesus in the New Testament.

OUTREACH

BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH GIVING

Each month the Outreach Committee will highlight some of the many organizations supported by FPC. This month we focus on the Morgan Scott Project and Emerald Youth Foundation.



MORGAN SCOTT PROJECT \$2,000

The Morgan Scott Project is a non-profit, serving the needs of the elderly, disabled and unemployed in Scott and Morgan Counties of Tennessee. They provide a common, multi-denominational base for churches, agencies and individuals to identify problems of and provide solutions for people in peril in these two very poverty-stricken counties in Tennessee.



Emerald Youth \$1,500

Emerald Youth Foundation is committed to ministering with Knoxville's urban young people right where they live, attend school and play. Our

desire is that we would engage young people comprehensively in three key areas: faith, learning, and health. Just lead is their youth leadership program that is implemented through a network of urban neighborhood churches and faith-based organizations located throughout Knoxville. Just Lead's afterschool program for elementary and middle school students includes tutoring, homework help, health/fitness/nutrition instruction, field trips and service-learning opportunities. They also offer discipleship opportunities for all ages, including mid-week Bible study, small groups, corporate worship and inter-generational faith activities. Calling & Career Ministry provides support services to high school students as they transition to post-secondary experiences as well as to successful careers and into their Christ-centered calling.



As school ends soon, some children will lose school-provided breakfasts and lunches. The Shepherd of Hope Food Pantry will help make up for that loss by having a special food distribution to families in need as identified by school social workers. Through Sunday, May 11, we will collect food items kids can have on hand that require little preparation. Think breakfast bars, cereal, peanut butter, individual fruit cups, etc. You can place your donations in the red wagon in the narthex.

CAM craft supply drive



It's that time. If you have unused craft items, we will be making a trip to Townsend CAM cabin May 22. Items specifically requested include baby flannel, medium rick-rack, white batting, 7/8" white buttons, old license plates, TN, GA, AL. Fabric, yarn, thread are always needed. We meet at church at 10, have lunch at Elvira's. If you would like to go or have questions, contact Debbie Long or Mikie Lancaster.

Posies for the Pantry

Posies for the Pantry 2025 was a big success! We will be sending The Shepherd of Hope Food Pantry a check for approximately \$6,100. If you came out, purchased plants, or made a donation you have assisted the pantry in feeding our neighbors. Thank you so much! Posies for the Pantry would not take place without the many volunteers who gave of their time and in many cases their physical abilities. I am so grateful for each and every one of you!

Summer KidZone
starting June 1 Sundays at 9am



Get ready for an epic adventure through snowy trails, towering mountains, and wild forests as we discover God's amazing creation and His love for us. Each Sunday will be filled with fun games, cool crafts, songs around the "campfire," and thrilling Bible stories that will warm your heart—even in the frozen north!

So bundle up, bring a friend, and join us for a wild time in the great Alaskan outdoors!

FPC YOUTH SUMMER 2025

MAY 25 ----- NO YOUTH

JUNE 1 ----- SUMMER KICKOFF

JUNE 7-14 ----- MONTREAT YOUTH CONFERENCE

JUNE 15 ----- NO YOUTH

JUNE 17 ----- SMYG @ TOPGOLF

JUNE 22 ----- SOAKY MOUNTAIN

JUNE 29 ----- WHITE WATER RAFTING EXPEDITION

JULY 6 ----- NO YOUTH

JULY 13 ----- FPC NIGHT @ THE MOVIES: SUPERMAN

JULY 14 ----- SMYG @ RIVER RAT TUBING

JULY 15 ----- YOUTH SERVE @ VMC

JULY 28-31 ----- PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH TRIENNIUM

AUGUST 3 ----- BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

AUGUST 10 ----- NO YOUTH

ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

PLEASE CONTACT MASON WARREN, MASONWARREN@FPCTN.ORG,
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Ministries

Presbyterian Women

All circle meetings are held at the church

Circle #1

2nd Tuesday, 10 am
Leaders: Megan Figel
240-319-6768
Kathy Emmerson
312-286-1676

Circle #2

2nd Tuesday, 10 am
Leaders: Becky Thomason
865-607-0727
Linda Nunley

Circle #3

2nd Wednesday, 10 am
Leaders: Mikie Lancaster
865-675-0360
Jo McElhaney
865-705-6518

Presbyterian Women in the Congregation (PWC) groups build community, affirm women's calls to leadership and spiritual growth, raise concerns and channel information to and from Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. Presbyterian Women is a loving community that can challenge and nurture you, and be a vehicle for making the world a better place for all of God's children. Consider joining an FPC Circle.

Check us out on Facebook:
Presbyterian Women in the PC(USA) or
on Instagram: PWPCUSA, Inc.
www.presbyterianwomen.org

Men's Bible Study

May 8 and 22
8 a.m. / Narthex

The men of FPC gather twice a month for fellowship and a time of bible study. The group meets the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month in the narthex at 8am. If you would like to join us, please contact John Neighbors or the church office to get on the contact list. Breakfast, coffee, and great fellowship provided!

We had 47 women attend the Spring Birthday Luncheon on March 29. Shelley Binder presented her program with flute and slides concerning her great grandmother and great uncle who were survivors of the Titanic.

Many of our FPC women attended the PWPET gathering at Powell Presbyterian on April 26. Our former children's ministry leader, Katina Sharp, who is now the minister at Powell Presbyterian, was the worship leader.



Activities

Chair Yoga

MONDAY AND FRIDAY

10:00 - 10:30 AM

NARTHEX

Class designed for those with limited mobility or balance concerns.

TGIF Gentle Yoga

FRIDAY 7:00 - 8:00 PM

NARTHEX

Gentle, slow flow class. Bring a mat and comfortable clothing. For beginner and experienced yogis.

Contact Jenny Trussell at
CEDARSTUDIOS4@GMAIL.COM for additional information or a private introductory session!

Both Yoga classes are free and open to the public.

No childcare available

ATTENTION GOLFERS!

The 2025 FPC golf season will begin at Avalon Golf Course on April 2. Tee times will start at 4:30 p.m. each Wednesday throughout the year. The cost is \$40/person and includes 9-hole greens fee and cart. This enjoyable group gathers at the club grill afterwards for good food, fun and fellowship. If you are interested in playing, please contact Wayne Walls at 865-207-7114, for more information.



May Birthdays

5/01 Janet Tinder
5/01 Helen Nalley
5/01 Mike Houlihan
5/05 Bruce Wilson
5/05 Pat Dail
5/06 Holly Morrell
5/06 Beth Hallman
5/06 Brenda Selecman
5/08 Wayne Davis
5/09 David Long
5/10 Rachel Hopson
5/10 Carolyn Caldwell
5/11 Ann McAnally
5/17 Ginger Grunke
5/18 Jenny Trussell
5/19 Beth Ralph
5/20 Angie Batey
5/21 Dennis Starr
5/21 Bill Nelson
5/23 Liza Wright
5/24 Jeff Gary
5/25 Judith Bradbury
5/25 Matt Marcum
5/26 Tim Schult
5/27 Jaci Marks
5/29 Norma Foriska

May Anniversaries

5/04 Chuck and Karen Brown Gonzalez
5/18 Mitchell Adams and Laura McFee-Adams
5/10 Tom and Sharon Koch
5/11 Chuck and Mitzi Gentry
5/15 Jim and Jessy Rich
5/19 Fred and Jean Peretz
5/21 Christopher and Lori Patterson
5/25 John and Whitney Sharp
5/28 Alan and Melody White
5/31 Philip and Ruth Jacobs

**Remember in
your prayers...**



Prayer Shawl Ministry

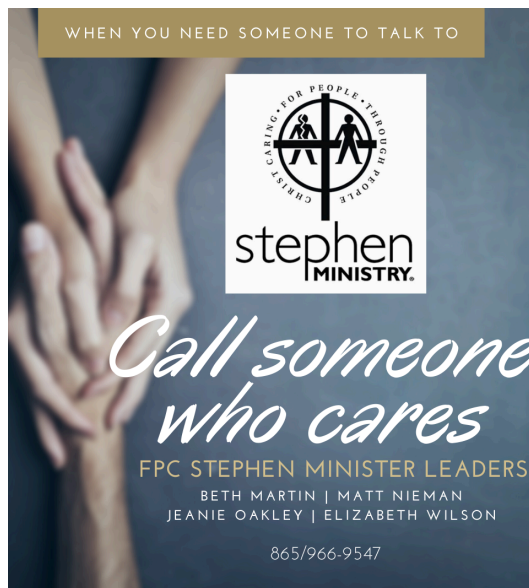


**Tuesday, May 27
11:00 am in Room D**

Can you touch a prayer? Can you pull it close and feel its comfort? You can if it comes in the form of a Prayer Shawl. Prayer Shawls are simple gifts of grace from God that are prayerfully and lovingly stitched by us as a reminder that God's promise is always with us.

Every day in our own individual lives, we encounter people for whom a special prayer would be of great comfort and support. This ministry would welcome your participation.

If you have ever knit or crocheted it will come back to you quickly. The patterns are simple repeats. Basic instructions and yarn are available.



**Our Stephen Ministry Leaders
can help:**

**Beth Martin
(865) 776-3132**

**Matt Nieman
(865) 966-9547**

**Jeanie Oakley
(256) 468-4501**

**Joanie Scheuer
(865) 705-1571**





STAFF

Pastor

Reverend Matt Nieman
matt@fpctn.org
402-660-2451 (call or text)

Reverend Dr. John Sharp
Director of Spiritual Formation

Sandra Porter Bohlken
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865-966-9547

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SESSION

Administration
Kathy Emmerson
Cheryl Cardwell

Christian Education
Beth Honey
Cheyanne Feldhausen

Church Life
Gayle Williams
Jeff Thode

Outreach
Scott McKinney
Jan Darnell

Property
Thom Haig
Rick Van Allen

Worship and Music
MaryAnne Walls
Eva Quinley Lynch

Clerk of Session
Lisa Gary

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www.fpctn.org

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 9-3
Friday 9-1

Get Social!

Farragut Presbyterian is live on Facebook, Instagram, and X.
Have something to post?
Send to our social media coordinator, Emily Sweetland,
at social@fpctn.org or text 865-567-7636



<https://www.instagram.com/farrgutpesbyterian>



<https://www.facebook.com/FPCKnox>



@FarrPres



Farragut Presbyterian Church



KARM STORES
The Thrift Store with a Mission

When donating used items to KARM tell
the employee the name of the church.
The church will receive gift cards to
KARM Stores that can be given to
someone in need.

Support FPC Christian Ed with Kroger
Community Rewards Program. Link your
Kroger reward card to FPC.
Sign up at: Visit
<https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow/>
Our organization number is YU915.

