

[www.richmondipc.com](http://www.richmondipc.com)

Curtis Christian  
 curtischristian@richmondipc.com

Joel Stanley  
 Joel.christopher.stanley@gmail.com

Dana Miller  
 danamiller@richmondipc.com

Joyce Wolf  
 jhwolfsong@gmail.com

Mark Johnson  
 markjohnson@richmondipc.com

ONLINE GIVING 3 easy ways!

\*Click the **GIVING** button on our church website  
 OR

\*Text **fpcgift** to **73256** OR  
 Download the **Abundant Giving** app on your  
 phone. Locate our church name and select.

**Follow all prompts to give online. Of course  
 you can always sign up to give through your  
 bank site or by mailing a check to:**

**First Presbyterian Church  
 P O BOX 165  
 Richmond, KY 40476-0165**



**MEDITATIONS ON THE APOSTLES' CREED  
 WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT**

“Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit”—a Latin relative clause “*qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto.*” This is the first of a chain of relative clauses in the Apostles’ Creed, all sharing the same relative pronoun “qui” (who); all sharing the same antecedent, Jesus Christ. In this clause is the first of two affirmations concerning the Holy Spirit. Although an explicit statement about belief in the Spirit is declared later in the creed, belief in the Spirit is already presumed in this clause—a clause which is primarily a statement about the conception of Jesus Christ.

Simply stated, the Apostles Creed acknowledges that Jesus was conceived. Now, apart from its biological allusions, conception refers to the forming of an embryo in the womb. Of course, it is hardly illuminating to affirm that Jesus was conceived; we can say this about any human being. But what makes Christ’s conception unique among all others is that his did not involve human insemination. There was implicitly no biological father who caused this conception. Instead, Christ’s conception was the result of God’s intervention; that is, the Holy Spirit.

But what does it mean to say that God’s Messiah was conceived by the Holy Spirit? Is the creed saying that the Holy Spirit had sexual relations with the mother of Jesus in order to effect his conception? If so, does this mean that the Holy Spirit, and not God the Father, is actually the divine parent to Christ the Son?

To be clear, when the creed affirms Christ’s conception by the Holy Spirit, it is not implying that God the Father is being supplanted by God the Spirit. God’s role as Father is not defined in terms of a sexual union and the subsequent conception resulting from such union. Rather, God’s fatherhood is defined in terms of an intimate relationship with Christ the Son—a parental relationship characterized by unconditional love and sacrificial compassion.

Note: both Matthew 1:18-20 and Luke 1:35 attest that Jesus’ conception was an act of God, and that that act was accomplished through the agency of the Holy Spirit. And note also what these two accounts do not say; neither reports that the conception occurred through sexual means.

So, what are we to say of this purported miracle? How does an incorporeal deity bring about the conception of a corporeal human being? The simple truth is that no explanation can be given. The accounts in scripture testify to the miraculous conception of Christ, but do not offer an explanation. Indeed, they cannot. Philosophers, scientists, and theologians throughout the centuries have offered their cogent rationalizations to account for such a mysterious conception. But any explanation of a miracle inevitably disavows the miracle. A miracle that can be explained and understood is not a miracle.

Perhaps we should allow the purported miracle to be simply that—a miracle. Any effort to explain the miracle of Christ’s conception misses the point. Indeed, the witness of Scripture and the affirmation of the creed are not actually focused on the miracle; rather, they focus on the ever-righteous and infinitely compassionate activity of God revealed in this miraculous account.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**ELDERS CLASS OF**

David Deaton	2024
James Exline	2024
Bonnie Gray	2024
Eric Everett	2025
Lucie Nelson	2025
Jennifer Wilke-Deaton	2025
Philip Gump	2026
Paul Hager	2026
Bill Mitchell	2025

**DEACONS CLASS OF**

Linda Adams	2024
Donna Cox	2024
Lynn Shearon	2024
Sue Reeves	2025
Julie Stanley	2025
Gene Wolf	2025
Jennifer Brubaker	2026
Kathy Shew	2026
Rhonda Orttenger	2026



*Holy  
 Communion*

**Sunday,  
 April 7**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Ostensibly, Matthew and Luke narrate this account of the Messiah’s conception as a proclamation of the miraculous way that the Creator himself becomes a part of his own creation. The gospel writers attest to the very moment in time when God intervenes into human history with his reconciling grace. They are witnessing to God’s full immersion into the human condition, from conception, through birth, growth, and maturity, and even to the point of passion and death.

Whereas the gospels of the New Testament include this account of Jesus’ miraculous conception as a witness to God’s intervention into salvation history, the Apostles’ Creed affirms this aspect of Christ’s life as a refutation of particular teachings from certain early Jewish Christian sects. In the early centuries of the common era, religious groups such as the Ebionites taught that Jesus of Nazareth was not begotten of God and was not divine, but that he was a righteous human being who became the son of God through adoption. The creed uses the witness of the gospels to denounce the doctrine of adoptionism and to affirm the incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

But what would be the problem in confessing, like the Ebionites, that Jesus was a mere human being just like the rest of us? Would there be some great crisis of faith if Jesus were simply adopted as God’s son? Why is it so important to believe that some divine agency makes Christ the Son of God?

While subsequent clauses in the Apostles’ Creed do acknowledge the humanity of the Messiah, it would not be accurate to say that the creed declares Christ as “merely” human. Indeed, the full witness of the creed is to the two distinguishable, yet inseparable natures—human and divine—that are simultaneously at work in the one person of Jesus Christ. So, without any intent to detract from Christ’s humanity, this relative clause about being conceived by the Holy Spirit is affirming that the presence of Christ is indeed the very presence of God. At conception, the Creator enters creation such that the mission and message of Jesus Christ is the mission and message of God in the world.

So, why is it essential to the Christian faith to acknowledge the divine presence in the Messiah? Why is it important to say that it is God who is at work in Christ, “reconciling the world to himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19)? As a result of a protracted history of human sinfulness, we are and have been estranged from one another and alienated from God. Our reconciliation becomes possible only through forgiveness of sins. Of course, a human being is quite capable of forgiving another’s specific sin, thus enabling reconciliation among particular individuals in concomitant circumstances. But because God alone is Lord of all creation, of all peoples, and of all generations; only God’s forgiveness can transcend all sins in every place and time and thus bring about the reconciliation of the entire world.

In the miraculous and inexplicable story of Jesus’ conception, the Apostles’ creed is bearing witness to a God who dons the fullness of mortal vesture from start to finish. It is bearing witness to God’s reconciling presence in a Messiah whose conception, birth, life, crucifixion, and death rectify humanity’s brokenness and save the world from the taint of sin. This is why the Apostles’ Creed affirms the holy and divine conception of Jesus the Christ, the Son of God.



## FEBRUARY LOVE FUND SUMMARY

Rent	11 families	\$1,850
Utilities	12 families	\$1,321.90
Hotel	2 Berea families	\$393.42
Save a lot food bill		<u>\$633.37</u>
*Total Spent -		<b>\$4,198.69</b>

Food vouchers distributed	17	
Gas vouchers distributed	8	
Cupboard assistance	7	
Total families	30	Includes 22 children)

Have a Blessed week!  
Mark Johnson



- 3 Austin Adkins
- 4 Matthew Guerra
- 7 Melody Mitchell
- 11 Phyllis Deaton  
Ralph Thompson
- 15 Betsy Ney Shackelford
- 19 Helen Martin
- 20 Chris Campbell
- 22 Elliot Orttenburger
- 24 Cindy Glass
- 26 Ainsley Waterbury  
Gannon Orttenburger
- 29 Serena Florell
- 30 Donna Cox



- 1 Piper Lawrenz
- 10 Alison Underwood
- 15 Wayne Bowlin
- 18 Joyce Wolf
- 22 Sandee Bonar
- 23 Olivia Florell
- 24 Thomas Crump
- 29 Jeanie Logue

**LAST CALL** for those interested in attending the **Presbyterian Women's Spring Gathering** on Saturday, April 13 from 10:00 till noon with lunch provided with your \$15 registration fee. Jim Embry will be speaking first about how "Mother Earth Provides Food Security". Please contact Becky Elam as registration is due Friday, April 5.



**April 6—Intergenerational Meditation Fellowship Hike:** to Gray's Arch (Red River Gorge): We will hike, read scripture, pray, and afterward eat at a local restaurant. All who wish to participate in the hike are to meet at the Church's back parking lot on Water Street and we will take the Church Bus to the Gray's Arch Parking Area. Hiking boots or sturdy shoes, and a bottle of water are recommended. ALL ARE WELCOME!!! Invite a Friend!!! (9:00 am, weather permitting).

**May 4—Intergenerational Meditation Fellowship Hike:** Cumberland Falls State Park (McCreary County)



The **Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary** is fast approaching on Saturday, April 20 at 2:00 pm in the Christian Life Center. The MCHS choir will be performing excerpts from "Cinderella" for your entertainment and there will be silent auction items, baskets and delicious food to enjoy. Contact Lynn Shearon for tickets (\$25).



**Evening Women's Circle**

**Tuesday, April 16th @ 6:30 pm in the Church Parlor**  
**Karen Losson will bring refreshments**

During the summer we will meet twice for a book club circle.

The books are:

***The Women*** by Kristen Hannah  
***Horse*** by Geraldine Brooks

**Rebecca Esther Circle**

April 16  
 10:30 am



*Once again I am ever so grateful to my church family for your support as I go through my chemo treatments. Your texts, phone calls, cards, and offers of help are so appreciated by me. HUGS! Church family.*

*Melody Mitchell*

Preschool pre-registration for the 2024-2025 school year is April 11th and 12th!

Monday, Wednesday, Friday class is \$180 per month

Tuesday/Thursday class is \$125 per month

Hours: 8:30-11:30

Ages 3-5

Registration is online on our website or come into school on the 11th or 12th to fill out an application.

\$50 registration fee

\$75 supply fee due on first day of school.

Check out our FB page – Presbyterian Preschool!



**Youth Sunday** is scheduled for **May 12th (Mother's Day)** and that date is quickly approaching. We will be dedicating some of our Sunday school time (9:45 on Sunday mornings in the youth room) and prayer breakfast time (6:45 at Purdys) towards planning this service. If you're a youth who would like to be involved in this process, we invite you to join us. There will be plenty of roles for everyone who wants to participate and the service is always a highlight of the youth calendar!



**Madison Missions Offering  
(God's Outreach, Ethan Health, and Love Fund)  
Sunday, April 21**



### **Burnamwood**

Registration is now open for our Presbytery's summer camps! Our own Joel Stanley is directing the camp lineup this year with Martin Carver from Hunter Presbyterian serving as the assistant director. Scholarships are available. Our church is committed to sending any youth who are interested in attending. The theme for this year's camps is "Rise Up" and we will be focusing on resurrection and new life with the curriculum. You can register online at the Burnamwood website ([burnamwood.net](http://burnamwood.net)) or through Joel in the church office.



### **Montreat!**

It's time to sign up for our annual summer youth trip to Montreat! This is always a great week with lots of fun, music, spiritual growth and fellowship. This trip is open to any of our Middle or High school youth interested in being on the work crew. We've got 4 youth signed up and ready to go so far, but the more the merrier! Scholarships are available for people interested in going. Contact Joel to sign up.



## *Easter Egg Hunt!*

Thanks to everyone who came out to participate in this year's Easter Egg Hunt! Special thanks to the youth for helping set everything up. We had a load of fun celebrating the season with face painting, basketball, coloring, bubbles and a bunch of other fun stuff with over 10 kids in attendance. Official pics of the event will be coming soon, keep an eye out for them on the Facebook page!



***PALM SUNDAY  
2024***

**Teaching With Soul  
By Joel**

In my own personal devotional life, I've been working my way through the Psalms and my psalm for today was Psalm 105. It's a psalm of remembrance and I believe it has an important message for us even today. The psalm recounts Israel's journey from the time of Abraham all the way through to the exodus. It's almost more of a history lesson than a psalm, calling out different important milestones in Israel's past. It touches on the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses and emphasizes the steadfast character of God and has strong themes of remembrance. Remembering God's faithfulness was important for Israel at the time because they were going through a bit of a rough patch.

Psalm 105 is likely an exilic Psalm. It was written at a time when Israel had been exiled to a foreign land and lost their God given inheritance of the land of Canaan. This is certainly a dark point in Israel's history. It is a time of doubt and uncertainty for the chosen people of God and it is a time when they have no choice but to turn to the memory of their shared heritage for hope and comfort. When God feels distant, remembering the times when God felt close can be a helpful exercise.

Psalm 105 acknowledges the truth that memories play an important role in the life of faith. The psalm calls Israel to "remember the wonders God has done" and to "remember God's covenants" and through those memories, memories which speak to God's steadfast and loving nature, Israel is reassured that their current sad state is not a permanent situation. God's love and commitment to Israel has been proven time and time again through the witness of the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses and those stories proclaim that even in the dark times of the exile Israel has not been abandoned.

So it is that Psalm 105 proclaims memory as an effective tool for faith and it is a tool that is just as relevant to the lives of believers today as it was in the time of ancient Israel. Every believer has times when they feel closer to God as well as times when God feels more distant. Making space to remember and celebrate the times in your life when God felt especially close is a good spiritual exercise. Memories of the close times can help carry us through the distant times and remind us that God shows up and will continue to do so.

So I wonder what stories you would include in your own personal Psalm 105? What times in your life has God proven to be especially loving or steadfast? When in your life has God felt especially close? Cherishing and celebrating these memories is a time tested and scriptural way to give your faith life a little extra hope if it's needed.

**MISSION.....a body of people sent**

**GREETINGS FROM THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE** Happy Spring to everyone!

The **One Great Hour of Sharing** special offering was collected on Palm Sunday. It is not too late to send a contribution to Dana as the money will be held a few days. All of the money we receive will be sent to Presbytery for the Presbyterian Hunger Relief and the Presbyterian Disaster Relief Programs. When we hear of the malnourished children and adults in many parts of the world, we often want to help but we do not know exactly how to do that quickly and easily. Contributing to the One Great Hour of Sharing is a way to do just that. Will we surpass the \$3000 we collected last year? We will let you know! The challenge from the Mission Committee is to reach a goal of \$3500 for this year. So, put your loose change and those paper bills in the banks or in the offering plate in a special envelope available in the pew racks. Or just write a check to First Presbyterian Church and note in the memo line that it is for this special offering. When we are counting the money, it is really exciting when we find paper money in certain high denominations!! We thank you very much for any contribution you were able to make and know that it will be a blessing to those in need of food or other necessities.

Our church has been sending Goodie Boxes to our college students and choral scholars for years. These Goodie Boxes let these young people know that we are thinking about them during the stressful time during their final exams and other projects, papers and performances. Most recently John and Marcia Florell have been overseeing these boxes, but the Florells are currently in Florida. Why they choose to leave us here in the colder climate we do not know. This year the Mission Committee will do this labor of love. As committees are sometimes prone to do, we decided to do things a little differently. Instead of sending out a big box of sugary and salty snacks, we decided to send less quantity and to upgrade the quality of the sugar and to eliminate the salt. Are you serious, you may be asking yourself? Yes we are as we have decided to send each student a dozen homemade cookies and a gift card or cards to Starbucks. Exactly how much the Starbucks cards will be worth depends on how many are donated for this project.

Here is how you can participate and we encourage you to do so as we are not very good cookie bakers!! Well some of us might be but it will be easier if you help us. We will be packing these boxes on April 15<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to donate a dozen homemade cookies please bring them to church on **April 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> by noon and place in the refrigerator next to the ice machine.** Gift cards for Starbucks may be sent or given to Dana any time **before April 15<sup>th</sup>.** We suggest \$10 cards. Please feel free to donate more than one card as each student will receive one ninth of the total of cards, as we have nine students on the list to receive a Goodie Box. If we receive \$90 worth of cards, each student will receive one \$10 card; \$180 worth of cards will double the value of the cards to \$20 for each student and so on. Since Starbucks has more items than just coffee, students could have a breakfast sandwich or a nice healthy smoothie. These cards will be a way of providing them with money for some food and a little break from the stress of the end of the semester. Checks made out to FPC are appreciated too, with Goodie Box written in the memo line.

We are hopeful that this way of doing the Goodie Boxes will be enjoyable for everyone involved—the students who receive them, the folks who bake the cookies and buy the Starbucks cards (or give money for them) and the committee members who assemble and distribute the boxes. Thank you in advance for your participation and we will report back on how the project went and especially the value of the Starbuck cards each student received. Blessings to you all as we prepare to celebrate our Risen Lord!

**BURNAMWOOD**

2024

# Summer Camps

## CAMP RISE UP



[www.burnamwood.net](http://www.burnamwood.net)

**COUNSELOR-IN-TRAINING**  
June 7 - 9, 2024  
Cost: \$250 / Early Bird: \$230  
(register by May 1)

**3RD - 5TH GRADE WEEK**  
June 10-12, 2024  
Cost: \$250 / Early Bird: \$230  
(register by May 1)

**MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMP**  
June 13-15, 2024  
Cost: \$250 / Early Bird: \$230  
(register by May 1)

**HIGH SCHOOL CAMP**  
June 17-22, 2024  
Cost: \$400 / Early Bird: \$380  
(register by May 1)

**WE NEED COUNSELORS!**  
Rising High School Seniors and Enrolled College Students are invited to apply to Camp Counselors for 3rd-5th Grade. Enrolled College Students are invited to apply to be Camp Counselors for Middle and High School Camp.

**APPLY TODAY** [joel.christopher.stanley@gmail.com](mailto:joel.christopher.stanley@gmail.com)



*Un-Chol and Hee Young Shin, our long time church members, are leaving Richmond in a few weeks to live near family in Philadelphia.*

*We enjoyed a reception to give them our good wishes. Thank you Un-Chol and Hee Young for sharing your many talents with your church family. We will miss you so much!*



**EASTER  
EGG  
HUNT  
2024!**





**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

P O BOX 165      Richmond, KY 40476-0165  
 859/623-5323      (fax) 859/623-5329  
 www.richmondfpc.com

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Bible Study 10:30 am	2 <b>Tuesday Crew 9-11</b> Mission mtg. 7:00	3 Bible Study 6:30 pm	4	5	6
		<b>DANA ON VACATION</b>		<b>JOEL ON VACATION</b>		
7  Communion	8 Bible Study cancelled	9 <b>Tuesday Crew 9-11</b>	10 Bible Study 6:30 pm	11 Needle Arts Fellowship 11:30	12	13 <i>Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering 10:00 am</i>
14 Deacon mtg. noon	15 Bible Study 10:30 am <b>College Boxes</b>	16 <b>Tuesday Crew 9-11</b> Pres. Women 10:30 am CE mtg. 4:30 Evening Circle 6:30 pm	17 Bible Study 6:30 pm	18	19	20 <i>Salvation Army Tea</i> (see Lynn Shearon to purchase tickets)
21 <i>Madison Mission Offering</i> (God's Outreach, Ethan Health, Love Fund)	22 Bible Study 10:30 am	23 <b>Tuesday Crew 9-11</b> <b>Session mtg. 7:00</b>  Newsletter deadline 9:00 am	24 Welcome Wednesday 6:00	25	26	27
28	29 Bible Study 10:30 am	30 <b>Tuesday Crew 9-11</b>				