



OWNING OUR PREJUDICE

We Christians, like the rest of humankind, are sinners. Throughout history, we too have contributed to the brokenness of the world by our own prejudices. Even the first disciples were marred by bigotry. This is evident in the way that Nathaniel stereotyped Jesus, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46b). He prejudged Jesus before he even met him based on his bias against Nazarenes.

Prejudice stems from the ugly self-deception that "We are better than you." But the truth is that God made us all equal, for God made us all from the dust of the cosmos (Genesis 2:7).

So, how do we Christians address our prejudices?

FIRST, we must own our prejudices. We must bring as much Christ-like compassion and emotional openness to those inherent biases that lurk within us.

SECOND, we must deliberately see ourselves in others, especially those whom we prejudice. We must try to feel what it's like to be subjected to stigma and bias. This is precisely what it means to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31).

THIRD, we must channel the discomfort of ownership and the pain of connection into a motivation to act. We must commit to concrete steps that reduce the effects of prejudice and stigma on others. This is precisely what it means to take up our cross (Luke 9:23).

Jesus Christ breaks down those barriers that our human prejudice props up. Jesus' relationship with persons who were ethnically, religiously, socially, and physically marginalized shocked the people of his day. His love for these people exposed inhumane laws, unjust social structures, and burdensome religious expectations. In the name of God's love, Jesus broke through barriers that used race, gender, religion, class, and orientation to separate and oppress people.

As Jesus' disciples, we strive for social justice, compassionate expectations, and inclusiveness. At First Presbyterian Church, our doors, our table, and our hearts are open to all persons as children of God.

www.richmondipc.com
Curtis Christian
curtischristian@richmondipc.com
Joel Stanley
Joel.christopher.stanley@gmail.com
Dana Miller
danamiller@richmondipc.com
Joyce Wolf
jhwolfson@gmail.com
Mark Johnson
markjohnson@richmondipc.com

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

Table with 2 columns: Name and Class Of. Rows include Elders (Eric Everett, Lucie Nelson, Jennifer Wilke-Deaton, Philip Gump, Paul Hager, Bill Mitchell, Caroline Crump, Jim Exline, LeAnn Jones) and Deacons (Sue Reeves, Julie Stanley, Gene Wolf, Jennifer Brubaker, Kathy Shew, Rhonda Orttenburger, Wayne Bowlin, Donna Cox, Denise Crump).

Service Project

Thanks to all our youth who came out for our President's day service project last month. We went to God's Outreach food pantry and helped portion out sweet potatoes, sort pallets of macaroni and cheese and share God's love with our community! A lot of good, important work was done.



Oh baby!

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A BABY SHOWER
HONORING
*Kassie and Kyle
Brubaker*

SATURDAY | MARCH 15TH | 1:00 PM

AT WHITE HALL
ELEMENTARY
CAFETERIA
2166 LEXINGTON
ROAD, RICHMOND,
KY 40475

REGISTERED ON
AMAZON.COM
-PLEASE SEE TEXT
BELOW

CLICK THE LINK BELOW FOR REGISTRY OR
LOOK UP KASSIE BRUBAKER ON AMAZON
BABY REGISTRY

Dear Church Family,

We are happy to announce and invite you to a Brubaker Baby Shower! Kyle and Kassie are expecting a little baby girl!

Everyone is welcomed to attend their shower on March 15 at 1:00. No rsvp needed, just show up and enjoy some cake and refreshments! Here is the invitation from Kyle and Kassie. Thank you!

News Brief from Session



- Lenten Lunches begin Tuesday, March 11. Come enjoy a light lunch and inspiration.
- Pray for Dori Hjalmarson who's missionary position in Honduras has been eliminated.
- Nominating Committee to meet in March.
- Presbyterian General Assembly has sent out guidance called Project 2025 on how churches can legally deal with the issues stemming from the governmental changes to USAID.
- Youth worked at God's Outreach helping with food distribution on February 17.
- Repairs to the balcony wall are complete. You can still smell the paint!
- Refunds have been received from making changes to our insurance policies. Yeah!
- Our church will host the Presbytery meeting on Tuesday, May 20 from 10-2. If you can help that day, contact an Elder or Curtis.
- Don't forget the church's 200th Anniversary Celebration in July 2027.

Clerk of Session
Melody Mitchell



Lenten Lunch

**Tuesdays
March 11—April 8
Noon**

*Please join us as we
enjoy soup, each other's company,
and a short reflection time.*

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RELIGIOUS BARRIERS

The grace and love that Christ would have us show others has nothing to do with their faith (or even their lack of faith). But it has everything to do with ours.

AGE BARRIERS

In the scriptures, age distinguishes people in a good way – elders are honored for their wisdom and experience – youths are cherished for their vision and innovation. "I will pour out my spirit on all flesh . . . your elders shall dream dreams, and your youths shall see visions (Joel 2:28).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BARRIERS

The first disciples whom Christ called to follow him were not the elite, the powerful, or the wealthy. He called fishers, tax collectors, and rebels. The invitation to the kingdom of God is for all persons, but especially for the poor, the broken, and the marginalized.

GENDER BARRIERS

In Christ, there is no male or female (Gal. 3:28). Just as men were leaders in the church, women also led the way. Women followed Jesus as disciples, and were the first to proclaim that he had been raised. Women served as evangelists, pastors, teachers, and prophets in the Bible. Women — men — non-binary — all are included, and anyone may lead.

RACIAL-ETHNIC BARRIERS

The Apostle Paul wrote, "we have this treasure in clay jars" (2 Cor. 4:6-7). We are the vessels in which God has placed his treasure of love and light. Christ does not care what the jars look like. He cares only for the love and light within.

ORIENTATION BARRIERS

We believe that God intends all Christian relationships to reflect Christ's self-giving love. Relationships that are based in God's love transcend gender; and they witness to Christ's empathy, compassion, sacrifice, and what it means to "love our neighbor as ourselves."

HEALTH DISABILITY BARRIERS

Through his ministry of healing, Christ breaks down all physical and mental barriers that would otherwise exclude us from full fellowship with others and with God. His healing ministry calls us to make the community of faith accessible to all.

SIN BARRIERS

Through his ministry of forgiveness, Christ pardons all transgressions and offenses that otherwise might exclude us from full fellowship with others and with God. Because he has forgiven us, we are called to forgive others (and ourselves) so that we might be reconciled to God and to each other.



Evening Women's Circle Tuesday March 11th at 6:30

Book Club in the Church Parlor
Cindy Harter will bring refreshments.
The book is *James* by Perceval Everett

Rebecca Esther Circle

Tuesday, March 18
10:30 a.m.
in the parlor

Welcome Wednesday
has changed! It is now
Sunday Supper!
Join this potluck fellowship
dinner on the last Sunday of
each month at 4:30 !

Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary Tea Horses and Hats, Springtime in the Bluegrass

The Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary will hold their 29th annual Spring Tea "Horses and Hats, Springtime in the Bluegrass" on Saturday, April 12, 2025 in the Christian Life Center. Tickets are \$25.00 and can be purchased from Lucy Nelson, Lynn Shearon or Melody Mitchell around mid February. All proceeds go to help families in the 9 counties we now serve with food, utilities, etc.



Wednesday
March 5
7:00 pm

*Paul and Linda Adams
would like to thank their
church family for the
prayers, support, kind
words, food and encour-
agement given to us during
Paul's treatment for lung
cancer. We are so blessed
to have our church family.*

Triennium

Our Presbytery is assembling a delegation to attend this year's Presbyterian Youth Triennium! This is an event where Presbyterian youth from across the world come together to worship, fellowship and study in creative and exciting ways. This event is open to any High School youth in the congregation (graduated 8th graders - graduated seniors) and only happens once every three years (so it's kind of a big deal). Joel is on the Presbytery planning team for this so if you have questions or would like to sign up, let him know!



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 High School youth and scholarships are available to any of our youth interested in attending. The conference is scheduled for **6/1-6/7** and is always a highlight of the summer for our High Schoolers. Contact Joel to sign up.



Teaching With Soul By Joel

We are now in the home stretch of an almost year long series of articles studying the 10 commandments. I hope that this endeavor has been able to shed a little light onto the true nature of the commandments as well as give some insights into what the different commandments require of us in our day to day lives. We've only three more commandments left to go and this month's commandment is the 8th, "thou shalt not steal". As has been our method for these articles, we will take a page from the Westminster Shorter Catechism and examine the eighth commandment from both a positive and negative perspective, asking both what the commandment prohibits as well as what it encourages in us.

The prohibitive aspect of this commandment is straightforward enough. The eighth commandment prohibits us from taking things that do not belong to us. This is likely something we've all been taught since we were children. I know it is something Julie and I review on an almost daily basis with our own children as we try to negotiate who gets to play with what toy at any specific moment. "If someone has something, it's not ok for you to just take it" seems to be something that is said quite a lot around our house. It's not a hard concept to understand, and I daresay it's not the hardest commandment to follow, if you're over five and your basic needs are being met. But that's just the thing, we live in a world where the sad fact is that not everyone's needs are being met.

The eighth commandment comes with a set of huge presuppositions. It is listed after commandments calling us to care for life in general and especially for the lives of those on the fringes of society (see my articles on the fifth and sixth commandments). It presupposes that people are earning a fair wage for a fair day's work (Deuteronomy 24:14-15). It presupposes a society that has eliminated theft driven by need and is only left with theft driven by greed. There should be a big distinction drawn between the two. If we are truly following all of the other commandments, this is the sort of idealized society with which we are left. There's no need for theft in a society like that.

So it is that the eighth commandment is not just an indictment of theft, but it is also a call to generosity. People cannot steal what is freely given away. People have no reason to steal if they have the things they truly need. This is what we should be working towards, as Christians and is the core of the eighth commandment.



26th Madison County Empty Bowls Project
Friday, March 28, 2025

First Baptist Church

425 Eastern By-Pass

11 a.m.-2 p.m.

(eat in or to go)

2-3 p.m.

(to go only)

Minimum Donation: \$20

Cash or Check (payable to "Empty Bowls")

Donation includes a handmade pottery bowl, vegetable soup, hoecake & drink

Also Available:

Quart container of Vegetable Soup to go – \$10

Help fight hunger in Madison County!

100% of proceeds go to:

God's Outreach Madison Co. Food Bank

New Liberty Family Shelter and Food Bank

Home Meals Delivery

Salvation Army of Madison County

To volunteer, make a donation, or to request more information, contact Lora Danley (859) 200-9361

Madison Missions Offering
will be received
March 9!

MISSION.....a body of people sent



Love Fund —January 2025

Assisted 77 unique families (includes 33 children)
 28 families assisted with rent - \$4,370
 24 families assisted with utilities- \$2,935.48
 14 families assisted with hotel -\$1,835

Save a lot bill (food vouchers) \$1,746.31 Distributed 55 food vouchers
 Gulf gas bill- \$675 Distributed 26 gas vouchers
 LF Pantry assisted 11 families

Grand Total - \$11,561.79

Numbers have definitely increased in December and January. The need has been tremendous. *Mark Johnson*



BLESSINGS
ON YOUR
BIRTHDAY



- 2 Paula Guerra
- 4 Steven Gump
- 7 Grace Stanley
- 13 Kathy Shew
- 19 Sophie Stanley
- Randy Shew
- 20 Stephen Guerra
- 23 Lucas Glass

- 3 Austin Adkins
- 4 Matthew Guerra
- 7 Melody Mitchell
- 11 Phyllis Deaton
- 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



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
2  Holy COMMUNION	3 Bible Study 10:30 am	4 Tuesday Crew 9-11 Mission mtg. 7:00	5 Ash Wednesday Service 7:00	6	7	8
9 Deacon mtg. noon Madison Missions Offering  SPRING AHEAD	10 Bible Study 10:30 am	11 Tuesday Crew 9-11 Evening Circle 6:30  Lenten Lunch noon	12 Bible Study 6:30 Choir practice 7:30	13 Needle Arts Fellowship 11:30	14	15
16	17 Bible Study 10:30 am  St. Patrick's Day	18 Tuesday Crew 9-11 Presbyterian Women 10:30 CE mtg. 4:30  Lenten Lunch noon	19 Bible Study 6:30 Choir practice 7:30	20 FPC is hosting the March Presbytery Mtg. 10:00-2:00	21	22
23	24 Bible Study 10:30 am	25 Tuesday Crew 9-11 Session mtg. 6:00  Lenten Lunch noon	26 Bible Study 6:30 Choir practice 7:30	27	28 Empty Bowls —see information on page 8	29
30 Sunday Supper 4:30	31 Bible Study 10:30 am					