

# First Presbyterian Church of Nitro

Summer  
2022  
Newsletter

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## From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Church Family and Friends,

As I write this there are 2 months left until my retirement. This event will bring changes for both you and me. The most obvious change for you is I will no longer be your pastor as of August 1. That means I will no longer be a member of your church family. I will not be available to provide pastoral care – to visit in the hospital, to do funerals. In fact, I will not be available to provide you leadership in any other way.

I realize this can cause some concern about who will be available for those things. Presbytery's Committee on Ministry is working with session to make sure that pastoral care can be provided in some fashion when it is needed. While specifics of how that will happen are not available at this time, session will share with you how to obtain pastoral care as those details are worked out.

As you move into this time of transition, I encourage you to pray for and support the session. They will have a lot of responsibilities – making sure there are people filling the pulpit and providing for communion, considering what the needs of the congregation and our finances say about future pastoral leadership, engaging you in conversations about what your future pastoral leadership might look like, and generally making sure that things continue to operate. The session has discussed with Presbytery the possibility of obtaining an interim to help provide continuity, but realistically there may not be anyone available.



Pray for God's guidance for the session as they seek to navigate all these issues – and more.

I also encourage you to continue to support one another by maintaining your commitment to be at worship and other church events, as well as by your continued financial support. Continue your habits of prayer for your congregation and for one another.

In addition, I invite you – both members of the congregation and leaders – to dream dreams. While there is a need to be honest about your needs and your finances, don't be afraid to imagine who you might become. Ask God to give you a vision of the ministry and mission you can do – you are called to do – at this point in time. Remember, changing circumstances in our community call for changing understandings and vision for ministry and mission. God is able to lead you into a future that in all truth may be significantly different from your past, just as the community around us today is significantly different from the past.

Finally, as I said, as of August 1, I will no longer be your pastor; however I expect to still be in the area for at least a little while. I have no doubts that at least some of us will see one another around town, and we might even want to grab a quick lunch together at some point. Please understand, when we are together, that I no longer am involved in your church and will not discuss what is happening there. I will, however, be continuing to hold you in prayer as you navigate this transitional time.

Pastor Agnes



# SUNDAY SCHOOL

## Christian Education Committee Update

June 5, 2022

The Adult Sunday School Class recently completed the DVD-based study titled *If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat* by John Ortberg. We just started our newest study today (June 5th), which is based on the book by J. Warner Wallace entitled *Person of Interest, Why Jesus Still Matters in a World That Rejects the Bible*. Wallace, a former homicide police detective, is a popular speaker and best-selling author. In this study, he employs a unique investigative strategy to confirm the historicity and deity of Jesus, showing why Jesus is unlike any other person who has ever lived – a real person of interest. And Wallace demonstrates how the truth about Jesus can still be known, even without relying on the New Testament manuscripts. We just started this ten-session study, so please join us in person on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30am. We always have very enlightening discussions on our studies and the related scripture, and welcome new folks to join us. The class is tentatively scheduled to take the month of July off for a summer break and resume again in August. Lynne Kibler has continued teaching the Children's Sunday School Class.

We welcome all kids, grandkids, neighborhood kids, etc., who may attend the class; and for you adults bringing the children, please come join our Adult class on Sundays!

We would still like to divide the older and younger kids for Sunday School and are in need of an additional teacher. You can have your choice of which group of kids you would like to teach, as Lynne is flexible on this. If you are interested and feel called to assume this role, please contact me.

That concludes this update on Christian Education, and I again ask you to please become more involved with our activities. We would love to have you become a part of our educational efforts and learn with us!

Kevin Whipkey  
Chairman



**On June 5<sup>th</sup>, the Confirmation Class  
joined the church  
(Lytton Pitzer, Lucy Smith, Nolan Criner)**





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# **QUILT EXHIBITION AND SALE**

## **Saturday, July 16**

**Nitro First Presbyterian  
Church**

**9:00 am –2:00 pm**

**Lunch & Desserts Available**

**Pastor Agnes will  
retire on August 1<sup>st</sup>,  
2022.**



**We will have a potluck  
dinner in her honor at the  
church, after church, on  
July 24<sup>th</sup>.**



When I was in college, my campus chaplain was someone who was influential beyond words in my spiritual direction. She was the type of mentor and leader who could ask challenging questions, call me on my bluffs or denials, encourage me when I was struggling, help guide me to resources when I had questions beyond her skill set and the one person I was always able to call and celebrate the joys of life with.

My relationship with her helped shape me and mold me on my journey into ministry. She was one of the first people I talked about my desire to go to ministry, to change the career path I was working on in college and to change course in graduate school. The day I told her she just smiled, and then a chuckle came with as she said, “I’m so glad you’ve found what others and I have known for a while.”

When I attended seminary and was working toward ordination, she was the one I would call to discern with, laugh with and cry with as I encountered all the challenges and joys that come with the ordination process. It was little surprise to her when I entered college chaplaincy — when I took on a role that had shaped my faith and my being profoundly.

Now I am blessed to have a call that allows me to give back and work with young people, much like my mentor. And for me, the most rewarding part of college chaplaincy is walking alongside young people as they grow into their call in this life.

Watching them ask the hard and difficult questions, laughing alongside them at the humorous parts of life, being their support when tears flow in sadness or frustration and everything in between.

When a young adult first comes to college, they tend to hold the values of their family base. They think and believe like their parents because that is what they believe they are to do and that is what most of them have ever known.

And then they come to college and are challenged by different views, different belief systems and different ideas they never heard of or thought about before — and it can shake them, challenge them, liberate them.

And that is where I get to enter in and walk alongside them in this journey of self-discovery and growth. They might hold on to the systems they entered college with, they might go running in the opposite direction, they might wind up in the middle somewhere — but growth happens, and that is a beautiful thing to witness.

I will never forget the day that I was teaching about the attributes of God. The students and I got into a discussion then about whether God is really male or not. Some students were convinced that God was male because that was the way Scripture read; it used “he” to talk about God, so therefore God must be male. Another student mentioned that she viewed God as female, mainly because of her strained relationship with her father.

It wasn't until a transgender student spoke up to ask why we must label and put God into a category or box of gender that we turned to the passages students were using in their defense of gender identity of God. We took to the texts, we studied the various words, looked at the imagery used to describe God and we dissected the various forms we found that God takes in Scripture.

As we were reading the passage that describes God like the hen who collects her chicks, the transgender student exclaimed: “Wait! So, God is like a giant chicken!?!”

The discussion that followed was one of hilarity, truth, honesty and a deep examination about just why we desire to box God into our standards and labels.

This interaction in a class setting also sparked an unlikely relationship outside of class. A football player and a transgender student — an unexpected friendship — spent countless moments together asking deep theological questions and learned from each other's experience in life and in religious communities. I got to witness this friendship develop, watch as questions were raised, walk alongside them as they relived childhood religious experiences and as they developed new religious experiences through this relationship.

The key, I think, in the journey of faith is to find those who could not be more opposite than you in life, who you do not interact with on a regular basis, who think differently than you. Because when you do find them and build a relationship with them, you are able to learn more about yourself, your faith and God in the process.

You might still think of God in male terms, but now are open to the fact that your friend views God as a giant chicken.

You may not want to label God or box God into society's labels but understand that for some it makes it easier for them to relate to God. May we all look to build relationships like these two students — to learn, discern and grow with one another in faith, in life and in our relationship with God. And along the way, may we all find the person that changes how we view God and ourselves.

Maybe it won't be as exciting as the exclamation of "Wait! So, God is like a giant chicken!?" that was the day this friendship formed, but I hope you do find that person you can help flip your view around from time to time in order that you may grow and gain a better understanding of just how incredible God truly is.



## **MAGGIE ALSUP**

Maggie Alsup lives on iced coffee, believes that Disney movies are for all ages, is obsessed with hippos and loves living in the foothills of the Ozarks.

She currently serves as the chaplain at Lyon College, in Batesville, Arkansas, where she helps empower and equip students for the life and ministry of the church universal.

## BIRTHDAYS FOR JUNE

June 1 Isaac Helmick  
8 Frances Arthur  
11 Sally Atkins  
13 Ashlee Martin  
15 Sarah Helmick  
21 Sally Kinder

## BIRTHDAYS FOR JULY

July 4 Summer Harris  
10 Randy Humphreys  
13 Jack Van Dyke  
15 Kristin Humphreys/Putnam  
21 Gray Cochran  
24 Cliff Sutherland  
27 Jill Hindle  
28 Vikki Hamilton

## BIRTHDAYS FOR AUGUST

Aug.1 Judy Whipkey  
4 Sabrina Snead  
**Terri Helmick**  
6 Sharon Snead  
11 Chuck Martin  
12 Larry Harris  
15 **Ashley Westlund**  
17 Roger Hardway  
21 Katie Roberts  
22 **Margie Harris**  
24 Rylee Nicole Stoler



**JUNE**

**14 James & Megan Ankers - 2008**

**JULY**

**17 Larry and Margie Harris**

**AUGUST**

**2 Gray & Karen Cochran - 2007**

**23 Chuck & Ashlee Martin - 2008**



**A Very Special  
Happy Anniversary  
on August 12<sup>th</sup> to  
Randy & Suzie Humphreys  
for their**





# FUN and GAMES

Dixie Drive R-Powell



one Man's Heaven...



"He's just not himself, doctor."



"Wireless communication is nothing new. I've been praying for 75 years!"

## Bible Word Puzzle Who Was Jesus?



Jesus was known by many different names. We've hidden 40 of them in this puzzle. Names may appear horizontally, vertically or diagonally, both backward and forward. Our word list appears on the next page.

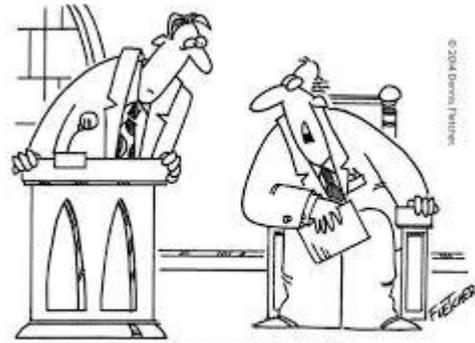
Q	B	C	B	L	V	A	D	O	G	F	O	B	M	A	L	D	O	M	K
S	G	N	I	K	F	O	G	N	I	K	Y	D	R	T	J	R	Z	R	Y
T	Y	H	A	R	W	I	S	E	L	D	R	R	R	O	R	O	O	P	T
H	A	R	C	X	O	A	X	E	M	E	N	R	E	E	C	L	Q	H	H
E	W	E	C	N	V	O	U	A	R	O	N	A	M	T	E	K	G	H	A
D	V	C	N	I	A	N	D	E	E	O	D	E	M	S	S	I	Z	H	D
R	S	E	O	E	A	R	V	M	I	T	E	N	N	F	L	A	I	P	U
E	B	R	R	M	R	I	B	T	E	D	A	U	A	P	O	G	M	R	J
H	D	E	M	L	L	A	C	C	E	D	O	C	R	A	H	N	E	K	F
P	A	E	L	E	A	E	Z	R	O	C	I	I	O	P	H	T	O	M	O
E	E	M	D	O	R	S	C	A	W	R	N	A	R	V	N	P	O	S	N
H	R	C	E	R	V	S	T	O	N	C	N	I	T	E	D	R	L	S	O
S	B	R	U	S	N	E	R	I	E	F	E	E	P	O	N	A	O	A	I
M	P	S	P	S	S	D	D	O	N	S	N	R	R	I	R	N	A	C	L
Z	E	D	Z	E	Q	I	F	S	T	G	A	E	N	S	O	L	H	R	E
R	R	Y	I	R	G	P	A	I	O	C	W	G	S	F	T	R	G	V	Y
X	M	L	U	V	E	R	B	H	K	N	S	I	G	O	I	O	I	B	Y
N	O	I	T	A	D	N	U	O	F	T	P	O	Z	S	H	N	N	P	E
V	K	F	C	N	Z	X	L	D	A	O	D	Z	T	I	E	C	F	E	C
R	K	E	Q	T	E	H	P	R	X	Y	T	H	G	I	M	L	A	E	O



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ADVOCATE  
ALMIGHTY  
ALPHA AND OMEGA  
BELOVED SON  
BRANCH  
BREAD  
CARPENTER  
CHOSEN  
CHRIST  
CORNERSTONE  
COUNSELOR  
DELIVERER  
DOOR  
EMMANUEL  
EVERLASTING  
FOUNDATION  
HIGH PRIEST  
KING OF KINGS  
LAMB OF GOD  
LIFE

LIGHT  
LION OF JUDAH  
LORD  
MASTER  
MEDIATOR  
MESSIAH  
MORNING STAR  
NAZARENE  
PRINCE OF PEACE  
REDEEMER  
RESURRECTION  
ROCK  
SAVIOR  
SERVANT  
SHEPHERD  
SON OF GOD  
SON OF MAN  
VINE  
WAY  
WORD



"We need to reach a younger demographic ... use an illustration about that Lady Goo Goo person."

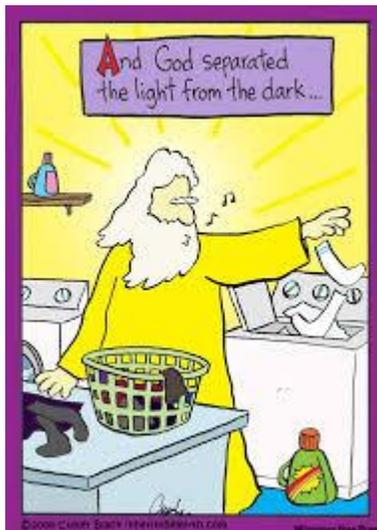


12-8

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JEFF  
and  
THE  
KEANE

"Hear that? People in heaven have ever-laughing life."



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5-15

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JEFF  
and  
THE  
KEANE

"This leaf was in the Bible. Maybe it's the one Adam wore!"

### Free Printable Bible Word Search Game

#### Books of the New Testament

Here's a great puzzle for anyone who's trying to learn the books of the New Testament. Find the capitalized words from the word list in the Bible word search grid. Words may appear in any direction. Here's a twist: Can you also find the name of the man who wrote much of the New Testament?

Q	S	P	R	B	H	S	U	G	P	U	E	Z	N
T	C	N	L	E	U	K	A	S	T	C	A	N	H
D	H	U	A	T	V	L	R	E	T	E	P	O	O
P	A	E	I	I	A	E	S	A	D	C	S	M	J
P	H	T	S	T	S	N	L	U	M	N	O	E	F
Y	M	I	I	S	A	S	J	A	A	R	P	L	O
K	M	A	L	M	A	T	O	I	T	H	R	I	R
L	N	A	O	I	I	L	H	L	E	I	H	H	E
S	S	R	T	M	P	T	O	S	O	E	O	P	T
U	G	E	O	T	N	P	I	N	B	C	L	N	T
Q	N	T	M	I	H	A	I	R	I	U	S	G	E
Q	H	R	A	N	E	E	A	K	A	V	T	L	
Y	J	O	O	S	J	W	W	E	N	E	N	C	F
H	C	F	C	J	S	W	H	J	W	S	Q	S	K

MATTHEW  
MARK  
LUKE  
JOHN  
ACTS  
ROMANS  
(I and II) CORINTHIANS

GALATIANS  
EPHESIANS  
PHILIPPIANS  
COLOSSIANS  
(I and II) THESSALONIANS  
(I and II) TIMOTHY  
TITUS

PHILEMON  
HEBREWS  
JAMES  
(I AND II) PETER  
(I, II AND III) LETTER OF JOHN  
JUDE  
REVELATION



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