

The MacPherson Press

April 2024

*God calls MacPherson Presbyterian Church
to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ,
to make disciples, and to be His witness.*

YOUTH YARD



MacPherson Presbyterian Church

6 am - 12 pm

Saturday April 6, 2024

3525 Cliffdale Rd, Fayetteville NC 28303

Overcoming Enemies of Faith

PASTOR JIM

When I was in seminary, I took an elective course in developing genograms. A genogram is similar to a family tree except the genogram includes diseases, social habits, and a variety of other traits and issues that impact one's life. The benefit to knowing this type of information is that it can in part explain why you do the things you do. It may also help you to identify your weaknesses and strengths. This will in turn help you to grow and mature in your faith and practice as a Christian. One of the great challenges for Christians is to maintain their focus upon the things of God. Remember, Jesus challenges His disciples, you and me, "Seek first His [God's] kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things [you need] will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33).

I encourage you to develop a genogram-like chart for yourself. At this point, do not include family or relatives. Just make this chart (genogram) about you. So, stop what you are doing for a moment and reflect upon your practices and habits. Create a chart dividing your habits, practices, and attitudes into two categories. Make the first category "Destroying Faith." Now make the second category "Building Faith."

Your chart may look something like this:

<u>Destroying Faith</u>	<u>Building Faith</u>
Excessive busyness at church	Meaningful participation in church
Constant worry	Constant prayer
Focus on things of the world	Focus on things of God

This chart only contains six items; nonetheless, it serves as an example for you to develop your own chart.

Once you have your chart, examine the balance. How many of the entries onto your chart help to destroy or hinder your faith, and how many are building or encouraging your faith? This is valuable information that once analyzed can help you to put your life into balance so your faith will mature in a healthy way.

The purpose of this small exercise is to first show how our lives can get out of balance. Second, this chart reveals the healthy practices and attitudes which one can build upon to strengthen their faith.

Now make a second chart with three categories. Keep the first two categories the same. Make "Corrective Action" the third column heading. It should look something like this:

<u>Destroying Faith</u>	<u>Building Faith</u>	<u>Corrective Action</u>
Excessive busyness at church	Meaningful participation In church	Participate in worship
Constant worry	Constant prayer	Focused prayer
Focus on things of the world	Focus on things of God	Mission activity

The third category should help narrow what you are doing to be more targeted and specific. This will help to mature your faith. Give it a try. You may be surprised at what you discover about yourself.

Until the nets are full,
Pastor Jim

April Sermon Information

There are numerous habits and activities that Christians engage or participate in which have the potential to hinder or destroy the Christian's faith in Jesus. Some of these habits and activities are: excessive busyness, procrastination, worry, love of money, and laziness. During the month of April we will undertake an examination of Scripture specifically as it relates to some of these enemies of faith. We will also examine ways to overcome these enemies of faith so that a person's faith may mature.

April 7: Overcoming Toxic Relationships

Judges 16:16-27; James 4:1-10

April 14: Overcoming Love for Money

1 Timothy 6:1-16; Hebrews 13:1-14

April 21: Overcoming Cultural Attachments

2 Kings 17:6-23; Romans 12:1-2

April 28: Overcoming Procrastination

Genesis 19:15-22; Acts 24:24-27

Enjoy dining with others.....?

Enjoy dining with others? Enjoy lively conversation and good food? Dinners for Eight/Suppers for Six might be for you! Some groups eat out once a month. Some groups enjoy eating in each other's homes. Wherever the meal, the conversation and fellowship are sure to be enjoyable! Interested in more information? Sign-up on the Congregational Care bulletin board if you're interested, or see David Hesnard.



Supporting Gate Beautiful

How can MacPherson Church support the work of Gate Beautiful? This was the question to be answered on March 20 as Shelby Thompson, Operations Director, visited the Express Meal to describe the work of Gate Beautiful.



Gate Beautiful is the only organization in Cumberland County focused on those victimized by and associated with human trafficking. According to the Department of Homeland Security, “Human trafficking involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act.” Human trafficking is a significant issue in Fayetteville and Cumberland County.

Gate Beautiful provides victim advocates immediately after men and women are rescued from human trafficking. They provide immediate material resources to human trafficking victims (clothes, toiletries), and—most importantly—they spread awareness of human trafficking indicators to the general public. (You may see human trafficking but not know what you are seeing.) MacPherson could support this work in a variety of ways. Evangelism and Mission will be discussing these ideas to bring a recommendation to Session. Some of the suggestions include:

- Encourage people to become victim advocates.
- Arrange Prayer Caravans in areas especially vulnerable to human trafficking. (Prayer Caravans drive through neighborhoods and pray.)
- Pray for these vulnerable communities daily.
- Gather supplies to provide to rescued victims (toiletries, change of clothing, undergarments, phone chargers, and Bibles).
- Spread awareness by allowing Gate Beautiful to participate in community events at MacPherson Church (such as Community FallFest).

Won't you pray now for the work of Gate Beautiful and for the E & M Team as they consider a recommendation to the MacPherson Session? Contact Don Mollett or Megan Shoff if you have any questions about MacPherson and Gate Beautiful.

MacPherson Men Update

Thirteen MacPherson Men met in ongoing fellowship and service on Saturday, March 9 to enjoy a hearty breakfast and share a devotion. That devotion included historical and Biblical quotes of the call to be diligent Watchmen. We also discussed future activities, including support for the Resurrection Sunday Sunrise Service breakfast on March 31.



Plans are underway to serve 60+ following the Sunrise Service. A workday at the Manse was rescheduled to prepare it for rental in the April timeframe. The MacPherson Men meet on the second Saturday each month and welcome men of all ages to join in fellowship and service. The next meeting is on April 13 in the Fellowship Hall at 7:30 am. Plans are to support the Annual TLC Dinner scheduled for April 20. If you have questions or comments, contact David Hesnard or Steve Thrasher for details.

VBS—save THE DATE!

JULY 21-25





MacPherson celebrated Women's Sunday on March 17 with special participation by the women of the church, including the Korean Ladies Chorale. The service was also highlighted by presentation of the PW Lifetime Membership Award. Congratulations!



From APP

Bill Groening, Chair



The Manse renovations were completed on March 19. What is left is to finish the cleanup of the grounds. Most of the leaves have been raked into piles that need to be put into the dumpster. We will have a workday every Saturday beginning at 9 am until we have the grounds clean and are ready to put the Manse on the rental market. Emails will be sent out as a reminder and to let you know if we need to cancel due to inclement weather.

From Christian Education

Tanya Anderson, Chair

The theme of this week's article is: volunteers! Our volunteers are the lifeblood of activities at MacPherson Church, and Christian Education is in need of volunteers in the following areas:

- **Sunday School teachers** at ALL grade and age levels. The team seeks to nurture enough volunteers so workers can rotate. In addition, the team is evaluating some new curriculum resources to ensure all Sunday School teachers have the materials needed.
- **Breakfast support** for the Fellowship Breakfast each Sunday Morning between 8:45 worship and Sunday School. We particularly need help for the first Sunday of the even months (February, April, June, and so on), as well as folks willing to substitute when regulars need to be absent.

If you can help in either of these areas, please contact a member of the Christian Ed team!

Behind the Scenes at MacPherson: Faith Freezer Meals

Behind the Scenes articles are written to remind all of us the history and details of programs or activities at MacPherson. This month is no different, except after talking to the usual folks—no one can exactly remember how or when we began the Faith Freezer!

To the best of our collective recollections, it has been between 10-15 years that MacPherson has offered Faith Freezer Meals. The idea may have been introduced at a Presbytery meeting and then shared with the Congregational Care Team by someone from MacPherson who had attended that meeting.



The premise is simple: People need to eat. When MacPherson had a fellowship meal every Wednesday night, leftovers were frozen to be given to people in need. In time, the Faith Freezer also started accepting donations of leftovers from congregation members, especially after MacPherson went to one Wednesday night meal a month. As a rule, many of us prepare too much food for our own families to eat. One simple solution for leftovers is to share them with the Faith Freezer.

A special section of the freezer in the big kitchen is designated for these meals. There are labels to put on your freezer-safe container or you can use your own label, indicating the contents and date prepared. Single portions work well, but slightly bigger portions work for big appetites or two people. Remember, you do not have to make a lot of meals. One leftover portion at your house equates to one meal for someone else. Some of these meals go to our own church family; some are given to community members. Either way, meals are appreciated! Contact Liz or Rene with questions—and plan to contribute a Faith Freezer meal soon!

Worship and Music

Mary Groening, Chair

*All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.*



Cecil Frances Alexander wrote those words to teach children about the Apostles' Creed. The words of the familiar hymn, well loved by many of us, also became the title of a series of books focused on God's creatures by veterinarian James Herriot. The words beautifully and simply express our core belief in God the Father, Maker of Heaven and Earth.

In March, the month-long sermon series on the Apostles' creed provoked us to rethink those words that we have so often repeated mechanically, giving them little thought. We were reminded that those words, words which express the core beliefs of our faith, should never be taken lightly. Each sermon focused on those beliefs, beliefs regarding God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Church, the saints, forgiveness, and what happens to the faithful in eternity.

The timing of each topic couldn't have been better. We considered the virgin birth on the Sunday we celebrated the women of MacPherson. On Easter, Resurrection Sunday, we reaffirmed our belief in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ as well as His authority to judge those who reject Him. After this sermon series I am sure that none of us will repeat the Apostles' Creed mindlessly. We came away with a fuller knowledge of why each part is important, and the ability to share those reasons and those beliefs with others.

March also brought some beautiful music to the worship service. Music plays an important part in and adds much to

worship. We enjoyed the Korean Ladies Chorale on Women's Sunday and the Chancel Choir on Easter. A big thanks goes out to all who participated. As much as we enjoyed these offerings, we were disappointed that the Handbell Choir did not play on Palm Sunday as anticipated. The handbell ringers were also disappointed. We would like to see the Handbell Choir return to participate in worship, but we need your help in order to do so. Please consider joining the Handbell Choir. If you are interested, please, please let one of the ringers or members of the Worship and Music team know. In addition to the special music offerings, we want to thank the musicians who regularly provide worship music for our services.

March brought with it many special worship services: Girl Scout Sunday, Women's Sunday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Easter. March also ushered in spring and the renewal of the earth. We marvel at God's creation in

*Each little flow'r that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
Knowing full well that
He made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings.*



*He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty,
Who has made all things well.*

Let's resolve to make April a time of renewal, not only for the earth but for our faith. Let us live the words of the Apostles' creed and join with creation in proclaiming the majesty of our God.

A special thanks to Cecil Frances Alexander for writing the words to one of my favorite hymns, "All Things Bright and Beautiful"!

From Congregational Care

David Hesnard, Chair

April has arrived, Spring is officially here, we joyfully celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus our Savior, and as faithful believers we are assured of our eternal home with our Messiah and Redeemer in Heaven, as we pursue His will for our lives in service and devotion.



The Congregational Care Team (CCT) works to meet the spiritual, physical, emotional, and relational needs of our MacPherson Church family we are blessed to serve. If you see a need or feel led to participate in any of our ministry areas, please see myself or Tricia DeMann. Additional hands, thoughts, and ideas are appreciated and encouraged. We meet the first Thursday of every month, at 7:00 pm.

Planning is underway for the Tender Loving Care (TLC) dinner on Saturday, April 20. Invitations are out to our honorees, so please RSVP by April 8.

The Apostle Peter wrote in chapter 4 of his first epistle the following guidance: *“The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be self-controlled and sober-minded, for the sake of your prayers. Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: ...—in order that in everything, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”* As we respond to His call to service let us remember we have received gifts and talents the Lord expects us to use in service for kingdom outreach.

We have the opportunity each day to boldly seek and share God’s truth and our belief in Jesus with those around us in study, discussion, fellowship, and service with compassion, gentleness, and respect as we are able.

~ ~ In Prayer and Service, David



See paper copy for this content

On March 10, MacPherson was pleased to welcome representatives from one of its three troops—Troop 886—for Girl Scout Sunday.



We thank them for their support on this day of special recognition.



From Evangelism & Mission

Don Mollett, Chair

Returning to the Lords Mission

Proverbs 11:24-25 - One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.

I stated the following a year ago: “Starting in 2019 these last few years have taken a great toll on the nation’s Christian Mission work. MacPherson was no exception to these effects, and we cannot just blame the COVID-19 Pandemic. Many of the Evangelism & Mission activities were canceled or postponed due to restrictions and impacts on the foundation of these events as well as the people. It seems no matter where you look or read these days, we see a decline in attendance at churches with many closing around the country. I fear that without Christians giving of themselves to do the Lord’s work the Word of God does not reach those in need.”

In 2023 we returned to the Cabell-Lincoln Work Camp in West Virginia with several of the youth and adults. All in all, it was very successful, and everyone that attended enjoyed renewed fellowship with Christians from other locations and substantially added to the mission of helping others in need. In 2023, we also began prayerfully searching for a new local mission that MacPherson Church can support in our local community. The E&M Team, I believe, has found just the local mission we need. With God’s help and divine guidance we can and will make a big difference in our local community.

I also asked the question in 2023, “What motivates a Christian to volunteer?” I can say without hesitation it is faith. What gives some people the ability to love where others

fail? Faith. **Faith** is the decision to *love*, no matter the circumstances. And the more you choose love, the greater your faith will grow. It is with faith that we go out into the world to share freely the word and love of God.



On March 20, during the Wednesday night dinner, we heard from Shelby Thompson, Lived-Experience Expert working

with the Gate Beautiful Organization. See the article on page 5 for a summary of the information and suggestions she shared. Her lived experiences provide her with a deep insight that helps her to foster change and understanding. She believes in the power of faith, and I hope we at MacPherson Church can join her in her faith journey and bring God's love and helping hand to those in desperate need of it. Please take a moment to turn back to page 5 and read the summary of her presentation. And watch this space next month for more details.

Upcoming events for the month of April 2024:

Cabell-Lincoln Workcamp registration packets are due April 14. In addition, you are invited to join the Monday Morning Prayer meeting each Monday at 7:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. March has seen a great increase in prayer requests. If you are able to attend, bring a friend and join in for a brief time of devotion and dedicated prayer for the church and community.



As always, If you have ideas, concerns, or a passion for our outreach and mission efforts, please contact Don Mollert, Megan Shoff, Sharon Mazingo, Barney Treneman, and Bill Kern, or join us on Thursday, April 4 at 6:00 pm in Room 228 for fellowship and God's work with the E&M team.

MacPherson Presbyterian Church

April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Church Office Closed 7:30 am Monday Morning Prayer Meeting (FH) 6:00 pm GS Troop 821 (#228, #233A) 7:00 pm Troop Meeting (FH)	2 8:00 am—4:00 pm Classical Conversations Homeschoolers (Various Rooms—See Rene) <i>No meeting Troop 888</i> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts Troop 886 (FH/ K, Z33A, Z24) 6:30 pm Bible 101 (#215)	3 9 am ESL, Tutoring/Jackson (#233A) 4:30 pm McCrafters (FH) 5:00 pm Finance (FH) 5:30 pm Handbells (Choir Room) 6:00 pm BYOB Bible Study (FH/K) 6:30 pm Praise Band Practice (S) 7:00 pm Freedom to Grow (#215)	4 Session Team Meetings See Below 9:00—3:00 pm CHA Staff (#233A) 6:00 pm Fireside Chat with David & Pastor Jim (You Tube) 6:30 pm Praise Band Practice (S) 7:00 pm Pastor's Book Study (#215/Zoom)	5 10:00-3:00 Services for the Blind Daily Living Skills Training (FH/K) 6:00 pm Pastor Reserved Pastor 7:00 pm SOS: Seekers of Sobriety (#215)	6 Youth Yard Sale 8 am-1 pm 6:00 am- Noon Happy Feet Soccer (Soccer Field)
7 Communion	8 7:30 am Monday Morning Prayer Meeting (FH) 6:00 pm GS Troop 821 (#228, #233A) 7:00 pm Troop Meeting (FH)	9 8:00 am—4:00 pm Classical Conversations Homeschoolers (Various Rooms—See Rene) 5:30 pm GS Troop 888 (#12, #24) 5:30 pm Girl Scouts Troop 886 (FH/ K, Z33A, Z24) 6:30 pm Bible 101 (#215)	10 9 am ESL, Tutoring/Jackson (#233A) 4:30 pm McCrafters (FH) 5:30 pm Handbells (Choir Room) 6:00 pm BYOB Bible Study (FH/K) 6:30 pm Praise Band Practice (S) 7:00 pm Freedom to Grow (#215)	11 9:00—3:00 pm Children's Hope Alliance Staff (#233A) 10:00 am Circle 5 (FH) 6:00 pm Fireside Chat with David & Pastor Jim (You Tube) 6:30 pm Praise Band Practice (S) 7:00 pm Pastor's Book Study (#215/Zoom) 7:00 pm Eagle Board of Review	12 10:00-3:00 Services for the Blind Daily Living Skills Training (FH/K) 7:00 pm SOS: Seekers of Sobriety (#215)	13 7:30 am MacPherson Men (FH/K) 8:00 am- Noon Happy Feet Soccer (Soccer Field)

<p>14</p> <p>Centsability Offering 12:45 pm Youth Fellowship (FH, K) 12:45 pm Session (#2105)</p> <p>Applications & Money Due for Cabel-Lincoln Workcamp</p>	<p>15</p> <p>7:30 am Monday Morning Prayer-Meeting (H) 6:00 pm GS Troop B21 (#228, #233A) 7:00 pm Troop Meeting (FH)</p>	<p>16</p> <p>5:30 pm GS Troop 886 (#172, #174) 5:30 pm Girl Scouts Troop 886 (FH, K, 233A, 274) 6:30 pm Bible 101 (#2105)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 9 am ESL Tutoring/Jackson (#233A) 4:30 pm McCreathers (FH) 5:30 pm Handbells (Chair Room) 6:00 pm Express Meal & Prayer Meeting (FH, K) 6:00 pm BYOB & Bible Study (FH, K) 6:30 pm Praise Band Practice (S) 7:00 pm Freedom to Brew (#2105)</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9:00-3:00 pm Children's Hope Alliance Staff (#233A) 9:00 Noon Classical Conversations Memory Masters (IBD) 6:00 pm Fireside Chat with David & Pastor Jim (YouTube) 6:30 pm Praise Band Practice (S) 7:00 pm Pastor's Book Study (#2105/Zoom)</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:00 Noon Classical Conversations Memory Masters (IBD) 10:00-3:00 Services for the Blind Daily Living Skills Training (FH, K) 6:00 pm Parlor Reserved Pastor for TLC Dinner 7:00 pm SDS: Seekers of Sobriety (#2105)</p>	<p>20</p> <p>8:00 am Noon Happy Feet Soccer (Soccer Field) 9:00 am-7:00 pm FH, K Reserved for TLC Dinner 5:00 pm TLC Dinner (FH, K)</p>
<p>21</p> <p>Bus Reserved Youth 12:45 pm Youth Fellowship-Bowling @ B & B Lanes 3:00 pm Plano Teachers' Associa- tion Picnic (S)</p>	<p>22</p> <p>7:30 am Monday Morning Prayer-Meeting (H) 6:00 pm GS Troop B21 (#228, #233A) 7:00 pm Troop Meeting (FH)</p>	<p>23</p> <p>5:30 pm GS Troop 886 (#172, #174) 5:30 pm Girl Scouts Troop 886 (FH, K, 233A, 274) 6:30 pm Bible 101 (#2105)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9 am ESL Tutoring/Jackson (#233A) 4:30 pm McCreathers (FH) 5:30 pm Handbells (Chair Room) 6:00 pm BYOB & Bible Study (FH, K) 6:30 pm Praise Band Practice (S) 7:00 pm Freedom to Brew (#2105)</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9:00-3:00 pm Children's Hope Alliance Staff (#233A) 6:00 pm Fireside Chat with David & Pastor Jim (YouTube) 6:30 pm Praise Band Practice (S) 7:00 pm Pastor's Book Study (#2105/Zoom)</p>	<p>26</p> <p>7:00 pm SDS: Seekers of Sobriety (#2105)</p>	<p>27</p> <p>8:00 am Noon Happy Feet Soccer (Soccer Field) 10 am-8:45 pm Classical Conversations End-of-Year Celebration (FH, K)</p>
<p>28</p> <p>Food Drive 12:45 pm Youth Fellowship (FH, K)</p>	<p>29</p> <p>7:30 am Monday Morning Prayer-Meeting (H) 6:00 pm GS Troop B21 (#228, #233A) 7:00 pm Troop Meeting (FH)</p>	<p>30</p> <p><i>No meeting Troop 886</i> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts Troop 886 (FH, K, 233A, 274) 6:30 pm Bible 101 (#2105)</p>				<p>Session Team Meetings April 4 6:00 pm APP (FH) 6:00 pm E & M (#228) 6:30 pm W & N (#274) 7:00 pm Christian Ed (P) 7:00 pm LRP (#233A) 7:00 pm Congregational Care (FH)</p>

April 2024 – Jesus Our Redeemer

Verse 1 – Jesus Is the Redeemer in Job

Job 19:25

For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth.

Verse 2 – Jesus Is the Redeemer in Isaiah

Isaiah 44:6

Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and His Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last; besides Me there is no God.

Verse 3 – Jesus Is Jeremiah’s Redeemer

Jeremiah 50:34

Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is His name. He will surely plead their cause, that He may give rest to the earth, but unrest to the inhabitants of Babylon.

Verse 4 – Jesus Redeems the Faithful

Isaiah 49:7

Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and His Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers: “Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves; because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”

Verse 5 – Pray for the Leaders of Habitat for Humanity, Operation Inasmuch & Our City

Psalms 127:1

“Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.”

April Birthdays

See paper copy for this content



Some of the happy, helpful faces who worked MacPherson's first concession outreach with Happy Feet soccer! Watch your bulletin and email for information on how YOU too can volunteer!



MacPherson Presbyterian Church

3525 Cliffdale Road, Fayetteville NC 28303
(910) 867-2113

church@macphersonchurch.com
www.macphersonchurch.com

Pastor

The Rev. Dr. James W. Randall, Jr.

Church Secretary

René Bahrenfuss