

**First Baptist Church of Pendleton**

351 South Broad Street  
PO Box 187  
Pendleton, SC 29670

www.fbcpendleton.org  
(864) 646-3913



Newsletter Volume 46 Number 5

March 17, 2020

## CHURCH ADJUSTS SCHEDULES DUE TO COVID-19

All in-person church services and activities will be canceled through at least March 27.

**This decision** was made in consultation with the deacons, staff, and church council, due to concerns regarding the pandemic coronavirus, COVID-19. This means we will NOT have Wednesday night supper, Bible Study, or children/youth activities on March 18 or 25. We will NOT meet at church for Sunday School and worship on Sunday, March 22. We will have some form of **online worship** available for Sunday, as well as some kind of **virtual Bible study** material for Wednesday nights. (Information will be sent by email. If you do not receive the regular Thursday email but would like to receive information about virtual worship and Bible study materials during this time, please email [office@fbcpendleton.org](mailto:office@fbcpendleton.org) to let us know.) Deacons and staff will be checking in with flock members. While the decision to cancel services is difficult, it is made with the intention of protecting our church family and those with whom we may come into contact. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. The more contact we have with other people, the greater our likelihood of contracting (and then spreading) the virus. There are now 2 confirmed cases in Anderson County. Other countries have been dealing with this for weeks and even months. Some of the outbreaks have been connected to churches. We have a number of people in our church family who fall into the "higher risk category (older adults and/or those with underlying medical conditions). Physically distancing ourselves from one another seems to be one of the most significant ways we can slow the spread of this virus.

**Church Office:** At this time, our plan is for the church office to continue to be open as staff health and availability permits. Staff members with children will likely need to work from home due to school closures. The church voicemail will be checked regularly, so if you cannot reach the church, please leave a message, or contact Pastor Jennifer Rygg at 864-760-7135.

**Generosity:** Even though operations of the church will be limited, your financial support is important. We will likely have increased needs in the community, as will our mission partners. Even in the absence of an offering plate being passed down a pew, please support our church at this crucial time.

**Secure Online Giving** is available at [fbcpendleton.org](https://www.fbcpendleton.org). Click on the **Give Now** button.

Contributions may be **mailed** to: FBCP · PO Box 187 · Pendleton, SC 29670

### Other Cancellations of Church-Related Events Include

- Lenten Luncheons scheduled for March 18 and April 1 have been cancelled.
- Senior Fellowship will not meet on March 19 or 26.
- Children's Council canceled the Easter Egg Hunt scheduled for April 1.
- The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of South Carolina has canceled the General Assembly scheduled to be at FBCP on April 24.



COVID-19 Coronavirus Information: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

### DEACONS

At FBCP, the deacons are spiritual leaders. They are concerned with the spiritual welfare of the Church and serve with the Pastor as co-laborers. Deacons "shepherd" their flock by praying for, communicating with, and offering encouragement to members of their flock. If you have a prayer request, spiritual need, or concern, please contact your Deacon.

Flock 01 · A-BI	Glenn Andrews	(704) 523-1414
Flock 02 · Bo-CI	Peggy Carter	(864) 356-4390
Flock 03 · Co-E	Bruce Blackmon	(864) 653-0228
Flock 04 · F-Go	Deacon Nomination Open	(864) 646-3913
Flock 05 · Gu-Hen	Jan McCracken	(864) 934-4574
Flock 06 · Her-K	Rick Massey	(864) 940-3515
Flock 07 · L-Moo	Deacon Nomination Open	(864) 646-3913
Flock 08 · Mor-P	Cheryl Patterson	(864) 710-8238
Flock 09 · Q-Stri	Skip Still	(864) 903-1576
Flock 10 · Stro-V	Warren Willoughby	(864) 940-5471
Flock 11a · We-Wol	Kim Burgess	(864) 940-6902
Flock 11b · Woo-Y	Deacon Nomination Open	(864) 646-3913
Deacons and Spouses	Kim Burgess	(864) 940-6902

**Pendleton Community Counseling Center**  
1-888-293-7585 or 864-442-7585

**PASTORAL EMERGENCY**  
**Pastor Jennifer Rygg**  
mobile (864) 760-7135

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### CHURCH STAFF

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Please check the monthly calendar for events:  
[www.fbcpendleton.org](https://www.fbcpendleton.org)

### Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 8:30 - 6:00  
Closed from 12 - 1 for Lunch  
Friday 8:30 - Noon

## Adjusting our Focus, Keeping Our Joy



Writing a newsletter article in the midst of a global pandemic is, I admit, not something I ever expected to do. In these strange and unsettling circumstances, there is a great deal of uncertainty about what will happen next, what we should do, and how we should live in the meantime. So much about our daily lives and routines has changed, and we are still figuring out what all of this will mean for the next few weeks and beyond. Many events are being canceled, including in-person worship services (we will still worship; it will just be at home and/or online instead of together in the sanctuary!) We had eagerly anticipated hosting the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of South Carolina's General Assembly at the end of April, but that event has been canceled as well. With all of these changes and cancellations, our church will need to shift our focus quite a bit.

As many of you know, we recently began an important conversation as a church family, discussing the issue of same-sex orientation and same-sex relationships. This is a difficult topic, and many people in our church have strongly-held opinions and feelings on this issue. These opinions and feelings vary from one another, and it is a challenge to discern how we might be the body of Christ together, even with our differences. Last Wednesday night (March 11) we spent most of our Bible study hour listing and discussing questions and concerns regarding this topic, both in general, and as it affects our church. I was impressed by the thoughtfulness and variety of the questions, and I was making plans to address the various topics in the coming weeks. I have also had several individual conversations regarding this topic.

When we met for Bible study last Wednesday, many of us did not yet know that earlier that day, the World Health Organization had declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a pandemic. Two days later, both the US President and the SC Governor declared states of emergency. Churches began announcing plans to adjust their schedules and routines, and some canceled services entirely. Two days after that, all schools in the state were ordered to close until the end of the month. Our deacons, staff, and church council decided to cancel our services and programs at least through March 27th. The situation is changing quickly and drastically.

We had barely begun the important conversation about Christian responses to same-sex orientation and same-sex relationships when global events required us to shift our focus. I want to assure you that we do plan to return to this conversation. It is an important one. It is too important to try to have in the midst of a global crisis, with limited contact, relying on email, phone calls, and videos. Some conversations need face-to-face connection, and this is one of those. So please be assured that we do intend to return to this conversation. The conversation is not canceled, but delayed. Right now, we need to set this important conversation aside, and simply take care of one another in the midst of this crisis.

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The next meeting of the book study group based on **Growing Young** will be Tuesday, Mar 31 via **Google Meet** video conference. For more info, contact **Rev. Cara Morgan** ([cara@fbcpendleton.org](mailto:cara@fbcpendleton.org), 803-348-7482).

## Adjusting our Focus, Keeping Our Joy ...continued from page 2

One of the glimpses of hope in this stressful time has been the many offers of help I have seen — restaurants offering free meals for children who are out of school, people offering to pick up supplies for neighbors and even strangers, neighbors in Italy leaning out of their windows to sing together. Sometimes, the worst of times brings out the best in us. I hope that the church will lead the way in this. I have been in touch with Clemson Community Care, the MAGI program, and United Way to let them know FBC Pendleton is ready to love our neighbors by offering practical help as needed. I know that the school district has several plans in place to help ensure children have access to food and resources while schools are closed. If you know of ways our church can help, or if you or someone you know needs help — groceries or medicine delivered, a listening ear, or something else, please contact me, another staff member, or a deacon.

Even as we are unable to be together, let us continue to pray for one another. For some, these days will be lonely and long. For others, the days will be more chaotic, as children are out of school and schedules are drastically altered. For some, the fear of illness will feel overwhelming. For others, the anxiety and uncertainty will be a constant presence. May we pray for one another, realizing that even as this situation affects us differently, we are one body in Christ, and we are called to love and to encourage one another. Even in these challenging times, may we find joy and peace in Christ.

**Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

Philippians 4:4-7

Rev. Jennifer M. Rygg  
Pastor  
March 17, 2020

## Ladies Night Out

Some talented women created some beautiful artwork at Ladies Paint Night at Uptown Art in Clemson on March 5, 2020.

