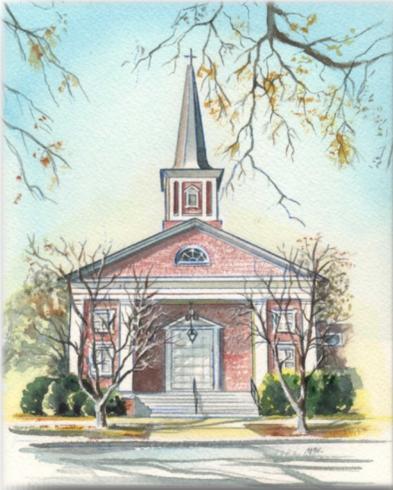


June/July 2021



# The First Press

## INSPIRATIONS - Pastor Brooks

### One Nation, Under God?

This July 4th, we celebrate our nation's 245th birthday with a Patriotic Hymn Sing at the 10:30 worship.

From humble beginnings, our country of immigrants forged a new homeland built on the premise that all are created equal and ***"are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."*** These words from the Declaration of Independence have been a shining light to peoples worldwide seeking freedom from tyranny and direction for self-determination. This declaration became a proclamation for all who struggle to establish governments that assist rather than resist the common good. (It is worth noting that in 1940 there were eight functioning democracies in the world. In 2010 there were over 100, nearly half the nations in the world). Thus, we celebrate!

As we celebrate our heritage, let us not be delusional about our success. Our greatness is not in the full realization of freedom but in the promise of liberty we continue to pursue. It is not to say that we have nothing to celebrate. It is to proclaim that our celebration is in the promises to which we strive more than the accomplishments that have fallen short.

Abraham Lincoln realized both the promise and the failures when he surveyed the bloody burial ground at Gettysburg and proclaimed the eternal hope of a nation ***"of the people, for the people, by the people"***. Let us, this July 4th, thank Almighty God for the blessings of freedom we enjoy and heed the challenge to continue to march toward freedom for all.

Join our church family on July 4th to sing Patriotic Hymns and to thank God for His blessings.



**"For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love."**

- Galatians 5:13

# UPDATES FROM OUR EXTENDED FPC FAMILY

Even though Amber Stewart is no longer working in the church office here at FPC in Decatur, she still holds a special place in our hearts and FPC holds a special place in hers. Please read her note from May 25, 2021:

To Rev. Brooks, Elders, and FPC Family:

When Rev. Brooks first approached me about coming to work as Administrative Assistant at First Presbyterian Church of Decatur, his vision and enthusiasm for the church's future made it impossible for me to say anything except, "Yes!" I am so glad that I did.

Thank you for letting me be part of this adventure for the past two years. Thank you for your welcoming spirit and unconditional support from the first day I arrived to the last day. In one way or another each one of you demonstrated what the Body of Christ should look like. You were truly His Hands and Feet through your kind words and generous deeds. It was a pleasure and an honor to get to know you and to serve you.

Going forward, my immediate future will be longer and more frequent trips to North Carolina to attend to the needs of my mother. At 87, her health is declining quicker, as expected. And again, I thank you all for the wise and encouraging words and willing spirits that allowed me the freedom to be able to take those trips over the past two years.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 says, "Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up." Thank you, FPC family, for being there for me, each other, and the community around you. No one will ever "fall" as long as you are around to lift them up!

With Love and Gratitude,  
Amber

Member, Tom Caddell reached out to Bill Frazier regarding the Carillon damage. Tom thought many members might be interested to hear from him and know where he is now. Below is his response:

Dear Tom:

Your letter of February 11, 2021, has just reached me at my home in Las Cruces, NM, where I moved from Montana several years ago. It was nice to hear from you, but I am sorry to hear of the damage to the carillon. I have retired from law practice and ranching, but as is the case with many retirees, I wish I now had more to do. While I have not been to Decatur in many years, I still think of First Presbyterian as my church, so to speak. My father died in 2007 at the age of 97, and my mother in 2013, at 94, and I know how much the church meant to both of them.

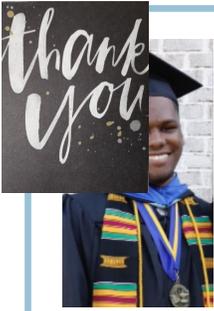
Although I am not now in a position to make a meaningful contribution, I will try to send something later in the summer.

Thank you for writing and I hope all is well with you and your family. Please extend my best wishes and fond memories to the other members. I wonder how many are still there that I knew back then. I moved to Montana in 1983.

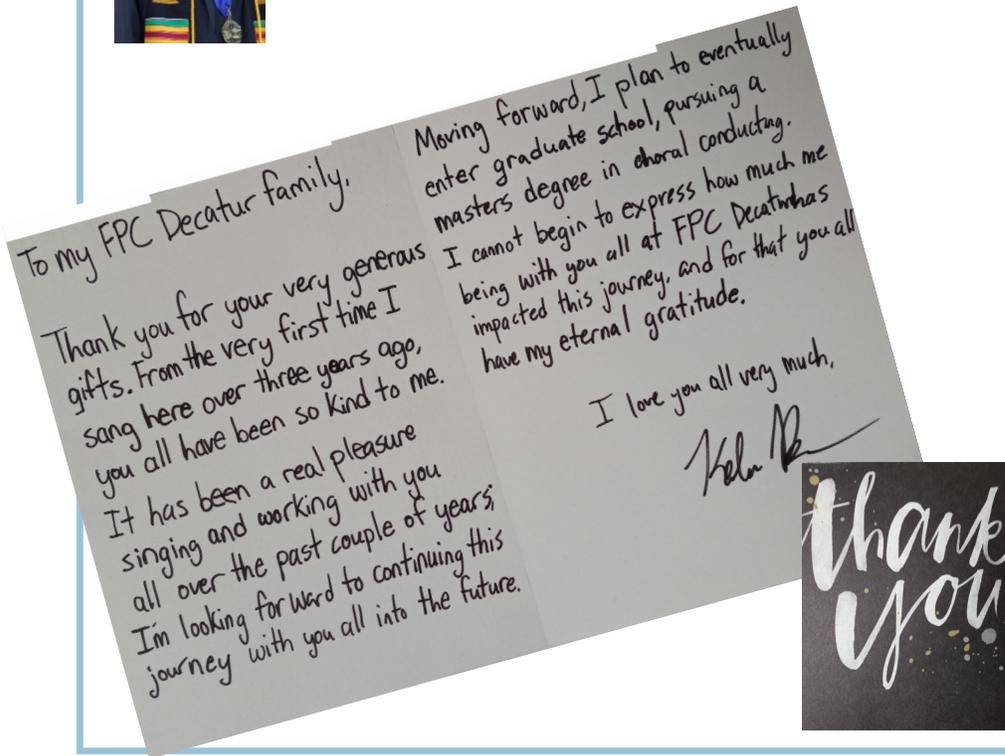
Best wishes,

Bill Frazier  
3812 Yellowstone Drive  
Las Cruces, NM 88011  
406-930-1050

# HONORING OUR GRADUATES



As you know, we honored our graduates in the May newsletter. The FPC Family collected funds to share as a gift to our Choir Director, Kobe Brown since we know he is saving up during the coming year to apply to graduate school. Kobe greatly appreciated the generosity and kindness of the FPC Family and expressed that in a card.



## Happy Birthday...

**June 12**  
Caroline Taylor

**June 16**  
Cerise Pearce

**June 30**  
Lee Anne Smith

**June 30**  
Carol Pearson

**July 15**  
John Edington

**July 19**  
Tom Caddell

**July 20**  
Petie Compton

**July 25**  
John Pearce

**July 31**  
Peggy Prewitt

## Our Homebound:

Juanita Dukes  
Lynn & Ann Fowler  
Charles Howard  
Barbara Martin  
Sue & Charles Murphree  
Liz Pilgrim  
Jane Rowe  
Caroline Taylor

## Our Family Members in Military Service:

**Peyton Davis**  
Army  
Fort Campbell, KY  
(nephew of Luke Pryor)

## JULY 4TH SERVICE

Our service on July 4th will take place at the usual time: 10:30 AM, but it will be a little different. In addition to worshipping and honoring God, we will also be honoring and celebrating our country's Independence Day through songs and hymns.

You are encouraged to bring a friend (or 12) and celebrate and worship with us on Sunday morning.



## Our Staff:

**Rev. Richard H. Brooks, Minister**  
richardhbrooks@gmail.com

**Kobe Brown**  
Music Coordinator

**Cheryl Wade**  
Organist

**Rob Corn**  
Social Media Outreach Coordinator

**Julie Loggins**  
Administrative Assistant

## Contact Us:

First Presbyterian Church  
701 Oak Street NE  
Decatur AL 35601  
256-353-0253  
FPCdecaturAL@gmail.com

## Stay connected with all the happenings at First Presbyterian Church of Decatur . . .

You can find us on the web at:



Fpcdecatural.org



FPCdecaturAlabama



FPCdecaturAL



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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Worship services** are being held in person every Sunday at 10:30 AM.
- **Silver Sneakers: ABS (Agility, Balance, and Strength)** classes are being held every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 10 AM and 11 AM.

First Presbyterian Church  
701 Oak Street, NE  
Decatur, AL 35601

