

# Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church of Newberry

1701 Main Street, Newberry, SC 29108

June 2022

## Shut-In of the Month

Vernetha Renwick

Newberry, SC 29108

## Update from the Session

Below is a summary of the actions taken by the Session in May:

1. The April Financial Report and the May Diaconate minutes were received as information. The April Session minutes were approved.
2. The shepherding concerns of the congregation were shared, discussed, and prayed for.
3. A final letter to inactive members will be delivered.
4. A list of teachers for the children's SS class will be confirmed.
5. Robin Bedford was received as a communicant member via profession of faith. He will be baptized during a service.
6. Elena Eising was received as a communicant member via profession of faith.
7. The June stated Session meeting is scheduled for the 21st.

If you have any questions, please speak with an elder.



## **PRAYER CHAIN**

If you have a prayer request, please email, text, or call **Marc Faulkenberry** or **Pastor Seth**, and it will be distributed via email.

prayers4newberry@gmail.com

██████████ (cell)

sethyi1969@gmail.com

██████████ (cell)

## **JOINT SUNDAY SCHOOL**

For the summer quarter (June - Aug.), the Friendship and Berean SS classes will meet together in the Fellowship Hall. *The Quarterly (Lamentations, Song of Solomon & Ecclesiastes)* will be used for each lesson. Please take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen your faith and relationship with the other members.

## Prayer List

Mark McGuffee, James Hill, Vernetha Renwick, Richard Lominick, Dottie Price, Lillian Price, Jean Williamson, Lizzy McCoy

## **Ministry Schedule**

### Sunday

9:45 am

Sunday School

10:25 am

Cong. Assembly

(2nd & 4th Sundays)

10:55 am

Worship

### Wednesday

5:30 pm

Handbell Practice

6:10 pm

Family Feast



## **FINANCIAL DATA as of May 29, 2022**

Budget Receipts \$ 84,162.14

Budget Needs \$ 72,253.84

## **NEW MEMBERS**

We give thanks to the Lord for adding Robin Bedford and Elena Eising, both via profession of faith, to our congregation.

### *Witnessing in the Power of the Spirit*

Unfortunately, even as a pastor, one of the most challenging as well as the least practiced expression of my faith is evangelism. That being said, I think it is safe to say that this reality is true for most of us. Despite knowing that we are called to be Christ's witnesses, that we have been given the Holy Spirit to empower us, and that we genuinely care about the eternal destiny of our friends, family, and neighbors, we are often hesitant to share the gospel. So often when the opportunity arises for us to declare the truth about the person and work of Christ, we find ourselves tongues-tied, overcome by the fear of what people may say or think of us (narrow-minded, intolerant, ignorant, or unkind), or uncertain about what to say. We have all been in these situations! It is not so much that we want to be disobedient, but that we are not confident or proactive when those opportunities arise.

As we have been studying the opening chapters of Acts on Sunday mornings, the promise of Christ to empower His disciples to be His witnesses through the Holy Spirit (*Acts 1:8*) has been on full display. In particular, Luke has noted the dramatic turnaround of the apostle Peter. The same Peter who boasted of laying down his life for Jesus (*John 13:37*) but then publicly denied the Lord three times has become a new person! Not only was he forgiven and restored to the apostolic office by Jesus (*John 21:15-19*), but he was filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. As a result, he took the initiative of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ with all boldness, sincerity, and truthfulness. What he failed to accomplish in his own strength, the Holy Spirit graced him to fulfill.

Does the Holy Spirit still work in our day to make us effective witnesses for Christ? Is that same power available to us as it was for Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ? What role do signs and wonders have in our empowerment as Christ's witnesses today? The answers to these questions are not only central to the identity of the church but applicable to our daily lives. We must submit to God's Word and by faith seek to be obedient to it.

Christ's promise in *Acts 1:8* gives us the answer to the first question regarding the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in empowering Christians to be the Lord's witnesses. At the end of verse eight, Jesus says "to the end of the earth." If we take seriously and cogently these words (and how the apostles understood this promise), it is reasonable to conclude that Jesus' purpose was that all men everywhere (*Acts 17:30*; cf. *Rom. 10:14-18*) hear and respond to the gospel. Furthermore, when we combine this promise and the command in *Matt. 28:19* "to make disciples of all nations" (*ethnos*), we know that what Jesus had in mind was for all the socio-ethnic, linguistic, people groups of the world to be reached with the gospel. All the divisions (linguistically and culturally) that were created at the tower of Babel (*Gen. 11:8-9*) will be united through the gospel and the oneness that is shared in the bond of the Spirit. Indeed, until the Great Commission is fulfilled, we can be confident that the promise of Christ to empower His disciples to be His witnesses throughout the whole world stands. We can by faith rely upon the Holy Spirit to enable us according to His sovereign grace to draw men to Christ. The Holy Spirit is and must be at work continuously in giving eternal life to the elect through the faithful witness of the church, of you and me, and all who follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will not rest in His redeeming work until all the elect are gathered from the end of the earth, and He will continue to add to the church souls who are being saved through the witness of Spirit-filled believers. You and I have the same Holy Spirit and the same grace available to us to proclaim the saving power of Jesus' name.

More specifically then, how is the Holy Spirit's power manifested in our witness? Will we all display the same degree of supernatural authority and effectiveness as Peter? In other words, is the conversion of nearly 3,000 souls (*Acts 2:41*) a common occurrence, something we should expect on a regular basis when the gospel is proclaimed? Here is one of many instances in *Acts* when we must distinguish between the *prescriptive* and the *descriptive*. This is an important distinction to recognize when we seek to apply certain passages. Descriptive passages, as the root indicates, describe what happened in the narrative of Scripture. The author is not endorsing or criticizing the event. It is simply a description of an account. For example in *Acts 2* when the disciples all speak in various foreign languages after they are filled with the Holy Spirit is a statement of fact. Luke is not implying that this phenomenon is *normative* for all believers who are filled with the Holy Spirit. We should not expect this miracle to hap-

pen to all converts. Prescriptive passages mandate a command or a principle that is to be obeyed by and applied to the church in all places and at all times. The Great Commission (*Matt. 28:19-20*) applies to and requires the obedience of all believers until Christ returns.

The events that took place on Pentecost are clearly descriptive. Therefore, we should not expect this same type of phenomenon to occur whenever the gospel is proclaimed and believed. What happened in *Acts 2* marked a unique stage in redemptive history. The Kingdom of God was being manifested with the formation of the new Israel. The Holy Spirit was setting apart the 12 apostles as the foundation of the church (*Eph. 2:20*) so that through their ministry and teaching all believers might be equipped to witness for Christ and His gospel. So even though we are not apostles, the same sovereign Spirit is available to us as we feed on His Word, mature in our faith, and witness in His name. The Holy Spirit is just as effective through our witness to save sinners as He did through Peter. The question is not about the number of souls saved but that they are continuing to be saved.

Lastly, the working of supernatural wonders and signs (*Acts 2:42*; healing of the lame beggar *3:1-10*) is also unique to the office of the apostles. As the prophetic successors of Jesus Christ who performed mighty works and taught with divine authority, the apostles continued the ministry of Christ by the power of the Spirit. Their mighty deeds authenticated their message and confirmed their identity as Christ's commissioned messengers in the early church. Their unique miracles established them as authoritative spokesmen of the gospel. Consequently, not all first-century believers were gifted with the same powers. Therefore, as the church grew in number and locale and the apostles' teaching became the established doctrine of the church ("the tradition" *2 Thes. 2:15*; *1 Cor. 15: 3-4*), via letters (*2 Pet. 3:15-16*) and oral instruction (*2 Tim. 2:2*), the Holy Spirit manifested His saving power in converting sinners and transforming them into the likeness of Christ. Moreover, as Christian congregations developed throughout the Roman Empire, the fellowship and love of Jewish and Gentile believers as the household of faith testified mightily of the Spirit's grace. As the gospel took root in the hearts of believers, the dividing wall of hostility between Jew and Gentile was broken down (*Eph. 2:14*). A new "race" of humanity in Christ was created by the power of the Spirit. This powerful and supernatural display of the Holy Spirit is just as active today. The ability to change a sinner's heart is a miracle that only the Holy Spirit can accomplish.

No doubt, there are some noticeable differences between how the Holy Spirit manifested His power in the early church in comparison to how He did afterward; nevertheless, the ongoing ministry of the Holy Spirit in the church is undeniable. Christ is continuing His redeeming work through the church by the Holy Spirit. This means the "promise-command" of *Acts 1:8* is still efficacious today and will be until Christ's return. Therefore, as Christ's witnesses, we have all the necessary resources we need to witness effectively for Him. Even if we are fearful at times or not quite sure what exactly to say, we can rely upon the Holy Spirit to empower us. Faith in the Lord's promises is not just about memorizing Scripture but acting upon them with the conviction and assurance (not necessarily a "feeling") that the Holy Spirit will supply the grace we need to will and to work for His good pleasure (*Phil. 2:13*). When we trust and obey the promise-command of Christ, we can witness boldly and faithfully leaving the results to the Holy Spirit. God is pleased to use our faithful witness in word and in deed to glorify Himself in saving sinners. What a mighty God we serve!

Pastor Seth

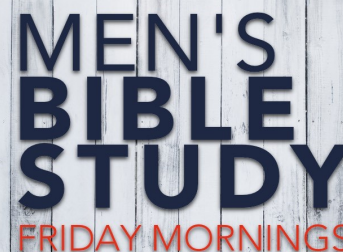


## GENERAL SYNOD 2022

June 7-9 - Bonclarken, Flat Rock, NC

Please pray for all the discussion and decisions that will be made at this year's meeting. In addition to the regular committee and board reports, there are several special committee and commission reports: Net Assets Reallocation, Presbytery Composition, Restructuring, Retirement Fund Crisis Study, Statistical Report Revision (Commission), Women Deacons Study, Judicial Review. Please pray for Pastor Seth who is schedule to preach on Thursday, 1:30 PM, if Synod has not adjourned.

On Friday mornings, 6:45 AM, several men gather at Doug Wicker's home for a time of food, fellowship, Bible Study, and prayer. Pastor Seth leads an interactive study (currently *Jeremiah*). Email Doug to be added to the weekly reminder.



MEN'S  
BIBLE  
STUDY  
FRIDAY MORNINGS



*All singles and widows are invited to share in this monthly fellowship following the worship service at the Pastor's home. We will meet on June 12th.*

## SUNDAY MORNING CONGREGATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Everyone is invited to gather in the Fellowship Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> **Sundays** of the month from **10:25 AM** to **10:50 AM** to nurture *koinonia* with one another. Drinks and refreshments are provided.

## Wednesday Night Family Feast

**Sharing a meal, nurturing intergenerational relationships, praising the Lord in song, studying the Larger Catechisms, and seeking the Lord in prayer. These are some of the blessings we enjoy on Wednesday nights (6:10 PM). Join your church family and grow in faith and love for one another!**

**On June 1, Rev. Lee Shellnut, World Witness candidate, will share about his call with the Barnabas Ministry.**

**On June 29, after the meal, groups will deliver dinner and visit with local shut-ins.**

## Women's Ministry

Our theme Scripture for 2022: "And Elijah came near to all the people and said, how long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." I Kings 18:21a (ESV)

*ARP Women's Ministries is an organization which encourages, equips, and connects the community of ARP women to minister together for God's glory and purpose.*

*Our desire is that all women in the ARP Church will: Know Jesus Intimately, Love Jesus Faithfully, and Serve Jesus Fruitfully.*

*The Morning Circle will meet on **Tuesday, June 7** at 10 AM in the Fellowship Hall for Bible study, prayer, and fellowship. We will begin our study of Elijah and Elisha with I Kings 17:1-24, "The Lord, Our Provider".*

*Are you free on the first Tuesday of the month? If so, we would love to have you come and visit our Circle, we are always open for new members or visitors. Contact Julia Rikard for more information.*



**NURSERY  
VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED**

There is a **ministry** in our church that can easily be overlooked but is **critical** to our church's vitality. As the Lord graciously grows our church, the need for **nursery volunteers** increases. Currently, we have only **seven** workers who serve during the worship on a rotational schedule. Would you please **prayerfully consider** volunteering, if not on the regular rotation, possibly some other schedule? Anyway you can serve will lesson the load on the regular volunteers. Many hands make light work! Please communicate with **Katie Eising**, if you are willing to **serve in any capacity!**

## Mark & Natalie Witte - Spain



Mark & Natalie joined the World Witness team in 2010 as missionaries in Toledo, Spain, where they have planted a growing church. Mark earned a M.A.T.S. and a Th.M. in Historical Theology from Erskine Theological Seminary. Mark was ordained to Gospel ministry by Catawba Presbytery in 2013. Natalie earned a B.A. in Linguistics at the Ukrainian National Linguistic University. The Wittes have three children.



### Refugee Families Arrive (Recent Update)

"Mom, is that a missile?" said the 4-year-old girl. "No hun, it's a plane. They don't shoot missiles in Spain." I (Mark) picked up a pregnant mother and her 4 daughters. This was their conversation in the car.

They came from a city in Ukraine that was hit very hard by Russia and only recently evacuated to Krakow, Poland. While staying in the refugee center, supported by MTW and Ukrainian Presbyterian Church, they were encouraged to head farther west to Toledo and join our diaspora community here. But late that very day, we heard Toledo was about to receive 30 refugees from Barcelona; and thus, Toledo was "closed" to new refugees.

This family was offered a village 60 minutes from us, but without any reformed churches. I was, however, able to find them housing in Ciudad Real – 90 minutes from us and 7 minutes from a very good, reformed Baptist church. Once we arrived in Ciudad Real, social workers from a NGO received the family. Then Pilar, wife of the church pastor, came and met the family. Pilar and the church have taken this family under their wing and will help them in the weeks and months to come. It is amazing to see God's Church be the Church!

Pray for Elena and her daughters. She is not a believer but has been helped by many churches and has friends who are believers. Pray also for the other families arriving at the same refugee center. They just opened and more are coming. Pray that Pilar and the church would love them and reach them with the Gospel.



# ARP Church of Newberry

1701 Main Street  
Newberry, SC 29108

We're on the web  
[NewberryARP.org](http://NewberryARP.org)

## Flowers for June

5 - Kathy Wicker

12 - Merri Avery

19 - TBA

26 - Shirley Mohler

## Nursery for June

5 - Merri Avery (Elizabeth Yi)

12 - Janet Porth (Tracie McCoy)

19 - Allison Yi (Abigail Yi)

26- Katie Eising (Merri Avery )

## Ushers for June

5 - Aaron Eising & Marc Faulkenberry

12 - Cecil McRacken & Andre Jennings

19 - Chip Porth & Michael Jennings

26 - Adam Petty & Caleb Jennings