

Happy Summer First Pres Children's Ministry Families!

It has been a crazy year, but thankfully we are headed into a summer that looks to be healthier, safer, and hopefully one that will be filled with lots of fun and big smiles. Before you head off on your many summer adventures, I want to take a moment to wonder with you about this past year. It has been a tough year, but I wonder if your family has had everything you NEEDED to help get you through the year? Did you have enough food? Did you have enough clothes and shoes? Did you have shelter, a place to call home? Did you have enough school supplies? We truly have everything that we need, but as we finish this school year and summertime begins there are still children and families in our community who continue to struggle to have all that they need.

We are reminded in the Parable of the Good Shepherd that Jesus is our Good Shepherd and as his sheep he takes care of us. However, we are not just the sheep. God calls each of us to be good shepherds to one another. Our church has answered God's call to be a good shepherd and neighbor in the community and around the world for many years. And most likely by now you have learned about a new way that God is calling First Pres. We are now a Matthew 25 Church! Please take some time this summer and visit the Matthew 25 PCUSA webpage. Read about what it means to be a Matthew 25 Church and the initiative's three areas of focus: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty. Also, be sure to read Matthew 25:31-46 in your Bible. This scripture calls us to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive, and we wake up to new possibilities. And what better time to "wake up" to new possibilities as we begin the next 200 years in the life of this wonderful church!

As we come back together to church and begin a new school year, we will continue to learn more about this new way God is calling our church to be a good shepherd. However, NEED does not wait until the summer is over. We have neighbors in need right here in our community and there are many ways we can be good shepherds and neighbors and offer help right now. So I WONDER... Would you like to be a good neighbor this summer? Would you like to share God's light and love right here at home in the Athens community? If your answer is YES, then I would like to invite you to join our **First Presbyterian Children's Ministry Good Shepherd Summer Club!**

Be on the lookout for your family's **Summer of Wonder Packet**. They will be mailed to you in the next few weeks. Inside this packet you will find all that you and your family will need to be a part of our Good Shepherd Summer Club - The Good Shepherd Summer Club Guide, The Good Shepherd Summer Club Neighborhood Map, Godly Play Story *Parable of the Good Shepherd* and story materials, and *When God Made Light* by Matthew Paul Turner. I will also email additional Good Shepherd Summer Club virtual resources to you throughout the summer. Be sure to read through the Good Shepherd Summer Club Guide next to learn more about how our Children's Ministry Family can join together as Good Neighbors and share God's light and love around Athens this summer! Please let me know if you have any questions.

Happy Summer everyone! And as always, sending you peace, lots of love and BIG HUGS!

Mrs. Natalie 