



Summer 2024

Back before Covid, we had this thing called committee night. The first Wednesday of every month, we would gather to eat supper and then break off into respective committees. The advantage of that is that we were all here, physically here, at the same time. If one committee had a question for another one, they could just go down the hall and ask. The primary advantage, though, was seeing the church functioning and making decisions. It's always good to see the church full of people doing the Lord's work. I love coming here on Sunday mornings and hearing the musicians warm up. I love sitting at my desk and watching people come down that sidewalk, in between those worn-out cherry trees, into the Lord's house.

The good thing about the summer is that we take a needed break. Bible studies, music groups, Wednesday night activities, and – yes – even committees all meet less frequently. We go on vacation, we spend more nights with family, we hang out at the pool, we sleep in. Summertime is like a sabbath of sorts. I welcome its arrival.

One conversation that will NOT slow down, however, is the one we are having on the chapel building. Over the last month, the session has presented two different options regarding that building: either demolish the fellowship hall and renovate the chapel, or demolish the entire structure (or as one elder put it, renovate the front lawn). Both options will require a capital campaign. Renovating the chapel will obviously require more funding. As such, we are currently interviewing architects to render drawings of what a renovated chapel would entail and to estimate how much it would cost. Additionally, we will be conducting a feasibility study in the coming months to determine how much funding a capital campaign could raise and whether that funding could match estimated costs.

I wish that I could say that the path to this decision is a clear one, but it is not. Exactly how we conduct a feasibility study, for example, or which architect that we use and, more importantly, how we determine the use for a renovated chapel building... none of that is clearly spelled out anywhere. Like all important decisions, the path to discernment is not self-evident. However, we are on that path. We are meeting, we are talking to the experts, we are talking to you... and we are praying.

Finally, to that end, we are conducting a prayer service of discernment on the chapel building on Wednesday evening, June 26th at 6:30 pm. I hope to see you all there. I also hope that you get some badly needed rest and relaxation this summer. I need that in a bad way myself. This is going to be a great summer. Mission trips, vacation Bible schools, weekly worship, rest and relaxation all abound... And so do decisions, good ones. We will know more at summer's end than we know now. That's a good thing and I look forward to discerning with you what that is.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "AB" or similar initials.

Digging Deeper

by Rev. Luke Maybry

On Saturday morning, October 7, the Palestinian group that governs the Gaza Strip, Hamas, broke its borders and viciously attacked Israel, killing over 1200 Jews, thus marking the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust. The victims were almost all non-combatants and included numerous children. Since that attack, the state of Israel has conducted a bombing operation on the Gaza Strip that has resulted the deaths of around 35,000 Palestinian civilians, most of whom were also non-combatants that include numerous children.

Even a cursory reading of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, suggests that Jews have a special relationship with Christians. That same cursory reading, however, suggests that Christians are also called to love everyone, including Palestinians, many of whom, after all, are themselves Christian.

Exactly what the Gaza Strip is, however, and how it relates to the West Bank, and exactly how Palestinians got cordoned off to both and also ended up as voting citizens of Israel, and exactly how the current state of Israel was established and how the United States has aided that state... those are issues that many Christians know little about but want and need desperately to learn.

Speaking on such issues is fraught with danger. That history is complicated and that conflict is so old and deep that no class, or series of classes, can possibly cover it all. In addition, each section of each chapter consists of two very legitimate perspectives and speaking on any perspective risks being unfair to the other. Objective truth in this conflict is very, very difficult to determine.

However, American Christians have played a unique role in that conflict and therefore have a significant stake in it. While speaking about it is inherently risky, not speaking about it is irresponsible. To that end, in addition to other conversations that this church is having this summer, we will have this one, as well.

The pastor is hosting four meetings on this topic on the following dates: June 19, July 10, August 14, and September 11, all of which are Wednesdays and start at 6:30 PM. Each conversation will also be covered via live-stream. The first conversation will cover a brief history of the conflict, the second will try to present the conflict from a Jewish perspective, the third from a Palestinian perspective, and the fourth from a Christian perspective. We will be anything but experts on Israel/Palestine after this is over, but we can and will know more, with the hope that we can be part of a peaceful solution to this land that God and God's people have so loved.

Spotlight on Children & Youth

The Christian Education and Spiritual Growth Committee will meet for a Retreat on Saturday, June 8th from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Room 206 to center and plan our Children's and Youth's ministry for the year. A light breakfast and lunch will be served.

CHILDREN

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)

- **GLOWING WITH GOD** is our VBS theme this year!
- Monday, July 15th through Friday, July 19th from 9 a.m. - noon.
- Children ages 3 years (must be potty trained) to rising 6th grade are welcome.
- Registration is ongoing. Forms are on Table in Friendship Court.
- BRING YOUR GIFTS TO HELP MAKE THIS A GREAT WEEK!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0C4CABAD2CABF58-48216397-vbsvolunteer#/>

- Decoration and Set-up Team is needed!
 - Takedown and Clean-Up Team is needed!
 - Emergency Floater is needed!
 - Games leader is needed!
- Stay tuned for Monthly Summer Gathering Information!

NOAH'S CHAPEL

- *YOUNG CHILDREN UP TO 2ND GRADE:* Gather with 2 leaders immediately following the Children's message in Worship for a Bible Story, fun crafts and free-play time.
 - *Sundays during Worship (10:30 a.m.) following the children's message.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL

- Suspended for June and July. We will resume in late August.

YOUTH

- **VBS - YOUTH HELPERS WANTED!**
 - VBS will be held at Matthews Presbyterian Church from July 15-19th, 2024 from 9 am - noon.
 - Service Hours will be given!
 - If you want to volunteer to serve VBS in any capacity, sign up here!!
 - [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0C4CABAD2CABF58-48216397-vbsvolunteer#/?](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0C4CABAD2CABF58-48216397-vbsvolunteer#/)
- **Stay tuned for Monthly Summer Gathering Information!**
- Mission Trip to Gary, West Virginia (Intergenerational/All Church) will be held August 1-4, 2024. Sign up here to indicate your interest in attending:
[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0C4CABAD2CABF58-49469272-mission#/?](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0C4CABAD2CABF58-49469272-mission#/)

2024 Financial Summary

As of April 30, 2024

Below is the financial summary as of April 30, 2024, provided by the Finance Committee. Revenues and expenses are not uniform over the course of the year. The relatively low expenses in the first four months led to an actual cash flow surplus for the period.

	2024 Budget	4/30 Projected	4/30 Actual	% Actual to Budget
Revenue	556,303	185,434	173,882	94%
Expenses	610,452	203,484	169,050	83%
Net (Deficit) Surplus	(54,149)	(18,050)	4,823	

Upcoming Worship Services and Events

June 3rd – 6th: CDC Camp Session 1

June 8th: Christian Education Planning Retreat; 8:30 am – 1:00 pm; Room 206

June 15th – 22: Adult Worship & Music Conference in Montreat

June 16th: Father's Day; Gary, WV Mission Trip Info Session; 11:30 am; MPC Sanctuary

June 19th: Israel-Palestine Conflict Conversation (1st of 4 conversations); 6:30 pm; MPC Sanctuary and live-streamed. The other dates are July 10, August 14, and September 11.

The first conversation will cover a brief history of the conflict, the second will try to present the conflict from a Jewish perspective, the third from a Palestinian perspective, and the fourth from a Christian perspective.

June 20th: First Day of Summer

June 23rd: Stated Session Meeting; 11:45 am; Room 206

June 26th: Prayer Service of Discernment about the Chapel Building; 6:30 pm; MPC Sanctuary

July 4th: Independence Day; MPC Office Closed

July 10th: Israel-Palestine Conflict Conversation (2nd of 4 conversations); 6:30 pm; MPC Sanctuary and live-streamed.

July 15th – 19th: VBS; 9 am – noon; MPC Campus

July 22nd – 25th: CDC Camp Session 2

August 1st – 4th: Gary, WV Mission Trip

August 12th – 15th: CDC Camp Session 3

August 14th: Israel-Palestine Conflict Conversation (3rd of 4 conversations); 6:30 pm; MPC Sanctuary and live-streamed.

August 17th: Presbytery of Charlotte Meeting; 9:30 am; First Presbyterian Church, Concord

August 30th – September 2nd: Matthews Alive Festival

September 2nd: Labor Day; MPC Office Closed

September 11th: Israel-Palestine Conflict Conversation (4th of 4 conversations); 6:30 pm; MPC Sanctuary and live-streamed.