

# MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- |                    |                        |                  |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1 Kim Jaynes       | 13 Elliott Blanchette  | 19 Ian Bone      |
| 1 Madeline Griffin | 14 Mike Massengill     | 19 John Stuart   |
| 9 Mary Franz       | 14 Kenleigh Pennington | 25 Cynthia House |
| 10 Randy Sarles    | 16 Maggie Gunter       | 26 Happy Hilty   |
| 11 Ripley Linkous  | 16 Mollie Gunter       |                  |

Happy March Birthday!

Visit us at: [www.erinpres.org](http://www.erinpres.org) to catch up on news,  
make an offering, and read John's devotions!

TO:

Erin Presbyterian Church  
200 Lockett Rd. Knoxville, TN 37919  
865.588.5350 [www.erinpres.org](http://www.erinpres.org)

*"We all need one another like never before, so let's make that our goal - to gather together in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, trusting in His Name, and relying on His promises."*

*Isaiah 50:10 Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the word of his servant? Let the one who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the Lord and rely on their God. (NIV)*

Dear Friends,

Two years ago, the darkness of Covid overshadowed the whole world with uncertainty, anxiety, and disunity. It was the first time in generations that we had to face a terrifying pandemic which created problems for our whole society. Even church was greatly affected, causing many congregations like ours to close their doors and worship online. It was a difficult decision to make and not everyone was in agreement. It was hard to endure, and we had to invent new ways of being a connected congregation. Before Covid, worship and fellowship kept us together and supportive of one another; after Covid, those connections began to loosen - and sadly, some individuals found other ways of experiencing faith in God.

We're still in uncharted waters and the uncertainty of war has added to our angst. We hoped that we would be beyond this whole crisis and get to carry on with our lives. Most of us have been exhausted by the whole process and even church people feel their spirits are empty. What we thought was a light at the end of the tunnel turned out to be a mere spark of hope. We are still walking in the dark and wandering about; we are still waiting for the all clear to be given and our lives to be back on the right course. Our patience has worn thin and our faith is stretched to its limits. It's so frustrating to be waiting for the right conditions to get back to where we want to be, whether in our community or congregation.

When I read the words of Isaiah, I'm reminded that they were written for a remnant of his Jewish brothers and sisters who were still in exile and isolated from where they once lived. They found it hard to endure and often wondered if things were ever going to be the same. They were so unhappy that they could not even bring themselves to sing the Lord's songs in a strange land. However, Isaiah's prophetic words told them that these things would one day end because the Lord cared about them deeply and wanted to restore His people. The only reason why we still have those words from Isaiah in our Bible is because those prophecies were fulfilled. The people were both redeemed and restored by the love of God which had never been severed from them.

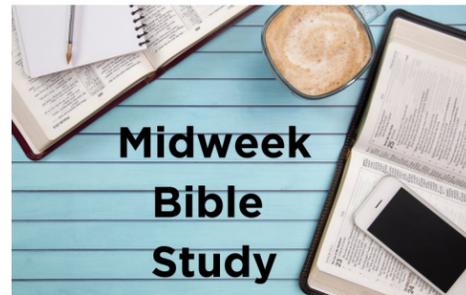
My friends, there will come a time when we will be thankful to the Lord again for bringing us through this pandemic. We will gather in each other's company for worship and fellowship once more. This pandemic may have split us politically and socially, but it need not divide us spiritually - we all need one another like never before, so let's make that our goal - to gather together in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, trusting in His Name, and relying on His promises.

May God bless you and all your loved ones.  
Pastor John

# CONNECTIONS



social distancing still practiced. We are no longer taping off the pews, so folks can sit where they usually do. Thanks for your patience and support. May God bless your faithfulness and love for one another.



## BIBLE STUDY

Each Wednesday, Pastor Stuart emails and posts a short Bible study with questions concerning the passage that he suggests for that week. At the moment, the studies are focusing on the Gospel of Mark.

The studies can easily be done individually or with family & friends. The purpose is to make us all think critically about what Christ has done for others in the past, so that we can try to follow His lead and be effective Christians within our congregation and in our community.

If you would like to receive the study passage and questions by email, just contact April and she will add you to the Events email group which the pastor uses to send out each Midweek study.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS

We have begun a new round of Confirmation Classes with our church youth. We hope to have between 6-8 students join the pastor each week for their teaching. On Sunday April 10<sup>th</sup> (Palm Sunday), the Confirmands will lead the worship service and be presented to the congregation for full membership in our church.

Details of who they are will be included in our April Newsletter. 😊

## CONNECTIONS CLASS

Pastor Stuart continues to teach a weekly Bible Class every Sunday. Since the beginning of the year, the class has been studying the Book of Judges. Since the beginning of the year, Pastor Stuart has been teaching a Bible study class on Sundays which is focusing on the Book of Judges. It's one of the most brutal books in the Bible which constantly reminds us that when God's people fall away from Him and do what is right in their eyes, all sorts of atrocities can occur. The class participants fully discuss each chapter and find relevant issues in both our history and current events. Pastor Stuart emails the study text and questions for class members on Fridays, in order to prepare them for the deep discussions which take place during each lesson. The classes take place in-person in our heritage Room. If you would like to participate or even receive the lessons, contact April our administrator ([admin@erinpresbyterian.org](mailto:admin@erinpresbyterian.org)) and she will add you to the Connections Class email group. For the month of March, the class will study the following chapters:

Sun 6<sup>th</sup> March Judges 9 – An Uncivil War  
 Sun 13<sup>th</sup> March No Class – Pastor in NYC  
 Sun 20<sup>th</sup> March Judges 10 – Same Old Story  
 Sun 27<sup>th</sup> March Judges 11 – Jephthah's Vow  
 The classes start at 9:45AM on Sundays and conclude around 10:30AM. Everyone is welcome to attend.

## SUNDAY WORSHIP

Our Session has agreed to continue worshipping in-person and online each Sunday. Certain precautions are still necessary to keep all of our folks safe in the sanctuary, so masks will be requested and

# MARCH VOLUNTEERS

## SUNDAY MORNING VOLUNTEERS

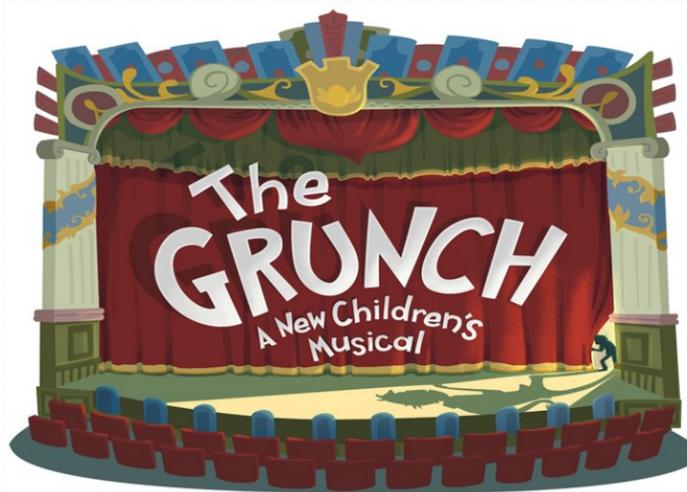
MARCH 6	MARCH 13	MARCH 20	MARCH 27
<b>GREETER</b>	<b>GREETER</b>	<b>GREETER</b>	<b>GREETER</b>
Jim Montgomery	Dave Leckie	Nehemiah Freter	Kelli Denny
<b>GUIDE</b>	<b>GUIDE</b>	<b>GUIDE</b>	<b>GUIDE</b>
Joe Jaynes	Kim Jaynes	Yvette Freter	Kellan Sarles
<b>READER</b>	<b>READER</b>	<b>READER</b>	<b>READER</b>
Joy Bornhoeft	Rickey McCallum	Elaina Wood	Erin McCallum
<b>USHERS</b>	<b>USHERS</b>	<b>USHERS</b>	<b>USHERS</b>
Linda Quinley Christa Mueller	Randy and Kellan Sarles	Joanne Clelland Jim Montgomery	Kim and Dusty Pennington
<b>COUNTERS</b>	<b>COUNTERS</b>	<b>COUNTERS</b>	<b>COUNTERS</b>
Neill Murphy David Eggers	Craig Strand Joe Jaynes	John House Ian Bone	Rickey McCallum David Eggers
<b>NURSERY</b>	<b>NURSERY</b>	<b>NURSERY</b>	<b>NURSERY</b>
Kenleigh Pennington	Lahla Deakins	Lizzy Freter	Elaina Wood

## ONLINE SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

	MARCH 6TH	MARCH 13TH	MARCH 20TH	MARCH 27TH
<b>GUIDE</b>	Stacie Armsworth and family	Don and Linda Quinley	Dave and Sara Leckie	Rob and Kelcey Levering
<b>READER</b>	Andy and Kelsey Sarles	Randy and Kellan Sarles	Cathy Van Ostrand Kelly Boyd	Yvette Freter and Family

# SONSHINE & CALENDAR

## SONSHINE COMPANY PRESENTS



### WINNER! 2012 Children's Musical Theatre Festival, NYC

Inspired by "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas", *The Grunch* tells the story of Rudy Grunch (played by our own Aiden Strand!), a grumpy 6th grader who always feels like an outsider. When the entire school gets excited about the annual school musical, he comes up with a perfect plan to ruin it for everyone; he'll steal the sets, costumes and lights the night before it opens. But will the spirit of theatre prevail?

*The Grunch* is a love letter to musical theatre with songs you will be singing as you leave!

Don't miss Sonshine's return to the stage and the opportunity to support 12 great kids!!

**Friday & Saturday, April 8 & 9 at 7:30**

**Sunday, April 10 at 2:30**

## MARCH ERIN CHURCH CALENDAR

### SUNDAYS

9:30am Sunday School Classes  
11am Worship Service  
12:30pm Youth Groups  
12:30pm Confirmation Class

### MONDAYS

7pm BridgeBuilders

### WEDNESDAYS

6:20pm Sonshine  
6:30pm Handbells  
6:30pm Journey 7  
7:30pm Choir

### INDIVIDUAL EVENTS/MEETINGS

1st 10:30am Donut Coffee Club  
7pm Discipleship Team

6th BridgeBuilders Congregation Mtg.

10th 7pm Worship Team

11th 12pm Staff Meeting

13th 12pm Outreach & Stewardship

14th 6pm Property Team

17th 7pm Session Meeting

20th 12pm Visitor Follow-Up

26th 9am Sonshine Rehearsal

27th Sonshine Set Load-In

# FAMILY MINISTRIES



**Pioneers and their Valentine Gnomes!**



**Pop-Up Pioneer Club**  
**Wed. March 9th**  
**6:15 - 7:15 pm**  
**Family Life Center**



The season of Lent begins on March 2, Ash Wednesday. Join us for in-person Children's Sunday School throughout this holy season. But please note, there will be NO Children's Sunday School on March 13<sup>th</sup> due to Knox Co. Schools Spring Break. SS will resume on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

## PW - Presbyterian Women's Lenten Bible Study

This study takes an in-depth look at the text of several familiar and beloved Lenten hymns. Each session will challenge us to work through the meaning of the text, learn more about the hymn writers, and discover how these texts speak to us today.

Contact Joy [cec@erinpresbyterian.org](mailto:cec@erinpresbyterian.org), to sign up today!

**WILL YOU COME AND FOLLOW ME?**  
An Adult Lenten Study on Hymns

Mel Bringle and Beverly Howard

### LESSONS:

- 1 - Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days
- 2 - Will You Come and Follow Me (The Summons)
- 3 - I Danced in the Morning (Lord of the Dance)
- 4 - To God Be the Glory
- 5 - When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

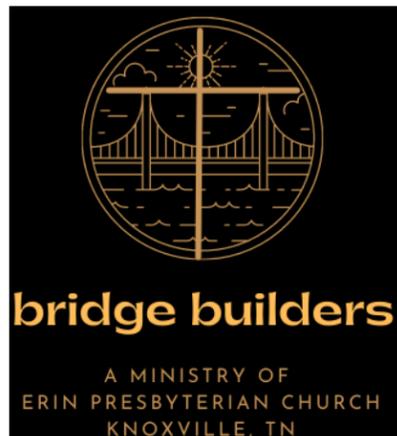
# YOUTH & BRIDGEBUILDERS



Justice Knox committees: Education, Transportation, and Gun Violence. Then, looking ahead to the May Nehemiah Action Assembly, we will discuss best practices for inviting our neighbors, friends, and fellow worshippers to attend.

Why is it important that everyone attend the Nehemiah Action Assembly? The answer is that a large group of like-minded people give credence to issues and wield tremendous influence. And the work of real change, whether it is improving education and transportation or reducing gun violence and homicide, cannot be accomplished by a lone advocate. Making the world a place where all can thrive requires all of us. Above all else, Christians are called to the work of loving and serving others.

**Please attend the Congregational Meeting on March 6th at 7:00.** And, please feel free to call house leaders, Kellan & Randy Sarles or Brooks & David Eggers with any questions you may have. Here is the link: **Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85735160741?pwd=aFVadk9QU2M4TGldTdac2drWFJLUT09>**



## MONTREAT

The Middle School Montreat Interest Meeting is this Sunday, March 6th from 10:30-11:00am.

Thinking about attending Middle School Montreat this year? Curious and want to know more about what to expect?

We'll meet briefly on Sunday March 6th between Sunday School and Church service in the Noah's Ark room.

I'll go over a typical day at Montreat and take any questions you might have about the trip. The Middle School Montreat conference dates for this summer are July 20th - 24th, and it will be held at Maryville College. The trip is open to all middle schoolers.

## BRIDGEBUILDERS CONGREGATION MEETING

Erin will host its first Justice Knox Congregational Meeting on March 6th from 7:00 - 8:15 via Zoom. This gathering is for network members and non-members who would like to know more. Since it is the first meeting of Erin's delegation since October, we seek everyone's participation.

During our time together, our members will report on the progress of each of the current

# BRIDGEBUILDERS

## BridgeBuilders Q & A

**Q: I keep hearing about BridgeBuilders. What is it?**

A: Bridge-Builders is an on-line community of believers—most of them from Erin—who meet each Monday evening to learn more about current social issues. They believe being informed prepares them to be humble and compassionate citizens and Christians.

**Q: What kinds of topics are discussed?**

A. Since its inception in 2020, Bridgebuilders has looked at *How to Communicate with Compassion*, *Crossing the Racial Divide*, *Pilgrims Together –A Look at Protestant Churches in the US*; *The Poor Among Us*, and (currently) *Contemporary Issues: Anti-Semitism/Gender/and Environmental Crisis*.

**Q: Why these subjects? Doesn't too much talk make matters worse?**

A: The church of Jesus Christ has always existed in the midst of turmoil. The same is true today. For this reason, God appointed prophets and Jesus chose disciples to help people know God's leading in their time and place. If Christians put their heads in the sand, are they fulfilling God's intention to be the salt and the light of the world?

**Q: Why doesn't the church stick to preaching and teaching the bible?**

A: Erin has three excellent adult Sunday School classes and a mid-week bible study for those seeking traditional study. In BridgeBuilders, participants apply biblical knowledge and principles to discern how to love and act justly in the world. Knowledge of a topic does not imply approval or even acceptance; it simply allows for more informed thought and action.

**Q: Is BridgeBuilders part of a larger purpose at Erin?**

A: Yes! Remember, "Belong, Become, and Beyond?" BridgeBuilders helps us to *become* better followers of Christ so that we can go *beyond* the doors of our

church. Through involvement in Justice Knox, we join other congregations in going beyond.

**Q: Who publishes the curriculum?**

A: The curriculum is not packaged but developed by the facilitators to address each topic. Participants receive reading/viewing assignments (often from Christian periodicals and reputable news outlets) in advance of each meeting, and frequently hear from guest speakers—many of which are pastors and religious leaders.

**Q: Does BridgeBuilders lean toward liberal thinking?**

A: BridgeBuilders is intended to be a "safe space" for all, regardless of politics. To that end, partisan discussion is discouraged. Christians' first allegiance is always to God and His Kingdom.

**Q: Who are the facilitators?**

A: Kellan Sarles, working with Pastor John, has been the facilitator from the beginning. Kellan is a life-long Christian, former high school/college teacher, and authorized lay pastor. This session, Kellan and John happily share the helm with two other capable leaders, Dr. Yvette Freter, Anna McKay, and Suzanne Burnell.

**Q: Can I still join this session?**

A: Yes! February 28<sup>th</sup> was the first of three sessions on Gender and Sexuality. What does LGBTQ+ mean? What is gender fluidity? Is this something new? How should Christians respond to lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender people? Previous weeks' recordings are available for those who miss a session.

**Q: How do I register?**

A: Simply e-mail Kellan to be added to the roster (sarleskellan@gmail.com). You will be warmly welcomed! Non-Erin folks may also join.