

# BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

**3 Agnes Kirby**      **17 Effie Fellers**  
**4 McKenzie Stump**   **21 Kellan Sarles**  
**6 Kevin Griffin**      **24 Lucy Cate**  
**9 Lauren Stuart**      **30 Lynn Sexton**  
**9 Marcia Mechlin**    **31 Lauren Gahan**  
**14 Mary Frierson**

## AUGUST EVENTS

**1st** Discipleship 7pm      **16th** Handbell Practice 6:30pm  
**8th** Property Team 7pm   **17th** Session Meeting 7pm  
**13th RALLY DAY**      **18th** Staff Meeting 12pm  
• **Breakfast 9:30am**  
• **Sunday School 10am**  
• **Return to 11am**  
• **Worship Service**  
• **12pm Outreach**  
**30th Begin Wednesday Events**  
• **Choir Begins**  
• **Journey 7 and Sonshine**  
• **Parent Meetings**

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**This is church.**

***Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses. (ESV)***

Dear Friends,

This time next year, we'll be fully into a new Presidential election and my biggest concern is that people, especially church people, will become uncivil again. I dislike partisan politics because it brings out the worst in all of us. Over the years, I have sadly seen church folks antagonize and infuriate each other in ways that would make Christ ashamed. It's very disappointing and is something that supporters on both sides of the political spectrum should really avoid. The temptation to score points or to show contempt to one another because of our political differences is not what I would call being a Christian. Jesus was forever telling us to love our enemies and turn the other cheek, not just spiritually, but emotionally, socially, and even politically.

Now that doesn't mean that the issues at stake are unimportant – the likes of health and wealth, poverty and powerlessness, crime and discrimination deserve our focus when choosing our local, state, and national leaders, but how we express our thoughts, opinions, and support of those officials should reflect more of Christ within us as we deal with folks outside us. We should also avoid spreading lies, name

calling, or insulting one another, as well as using snide comments or making strident accusations. We may think that we're honoring our parties, but in reality, we're dishonoring Christ. Or to put it another way, what good will it do to win political arguments, but lose our church family and friends in the process?

I hope and pray that the venom that was unleashed in the 2016 and 2020 elections won't manifest itself again in 2024. If it does, then our congregation, community, and country will be divided and diminished even further. We live in a wonderful country which isn't perfect and always needs to improve, just like we have a wonderful Savior Who knows we're not perfect, and yet He strives to make us improve by encouraging us to set aside hatred, so that His love in us, may cover all offenses. As Dr. King once wisely said: ***“Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”***

May God be with and bless you all.

***Pastor John***

# CONNECTIONS

## CONNECTIONS CLASS - Final Semester

This will be my final semester teaching a Sunday School class at Erin. I have been doing this on Sunday mornings for over twenty-five years. We have covered a lot of Bible books, characters, and themes, as well as church history, national leaders, and social issues. I have enjoyed presenting the classes, as well as sharing faith experiences with the many people who have attended them over the years.

This final semester has nineteen Sundays from Rally Day (August 13) through to December 17. I am going to teach the Gospel of Mark from beginning to end, tackling each chapter every week. I think after almost forty years of trying to preach the Gospel, I'd like to end by teaching my favorite Gospel.

The classes will take place in either the Heritage Room or the Noah's Ark Room at the church, depending on our class numbers. They will start around 9:30AM and conclude before 10:30AM. I'll provide the material with handouts on Sundays, as well as sending the text to be covered with questions on Friday mornings. Everyone is very welcome to attend.

Thanks for allowing me to teach on Sundays. It has been a wonderful part of the ministry we share at Erin. Here's a schedule of what will be covered during August and September:

13 August Rally Day	-	Introduction to Mark
20 August	-	Mark 1
27 August	-	Mark 2
03 September	-	Mark 3
10 September	-	Mark 4
17 September	-	Mark 5
24 September	-	Mark 6

## ONLINE BIBLE READINGS AND STUDIES

Pastor Stuart will continue to encourage the congregation and others to read the Bible daily and study it each week via his group emails. On Monday mornings, he sends out a clickable

list of the daily Bible readings which can be bookmarked, so that each day as you click the link, you will find the daily readings on your computer, tablets, and cellphones. It's a very simple way of reading Bible texts on a daily basis.

On Wednesday mornings, the pastor usually emails a short Bible study on a passage (currently from the Book of Psalms). The study can be easily downloaded and completed within 20 minutes. It can be done individually, with the family, or even with a small group over coffee.



For both of these opportunities, you only need to have your email address added to our "Events" group email. If you would like this, send an email to April our Admin at [admin@erinpresbyterian.org](mailto:admin@erinpresbyterian.org) and she'll add your email to the group list.

Finally, several times a month, the pastor writes a short devotion based on one of the daily Bible verses. It takes about five minutes to read and includes a short message, point to ponder, and a prayer. If you would like to receive these devotions, ask April to add your email to the "Devotions" list. John writes these devotions on a regular basis and has had many of them published for various church organizations throughout the world.

## JAYNES SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE

Joe and Kim Jaynes are taking the Fall off, and plan to return for the Spring 2024 semester.

## YOUTH EVENTS

Here are some important upcoming dates for our Youth and their parents:

- August 13 - Rally Day
- September 10 - Youth Group Resumes
- September 22-24 - Middle School Retreat at Camp John Knox
- February 16-18, 2024 - High School Youth Summit at Camp Holston

# AUGUST VOLUNTEERS

AUGUST 6TH				AUGUST 13TH				AUGUST 20TH				AUGUST 27TH			
<b>BELL RINGER</b>				<b>BELL RINGER</b>				<b>BELL RINGER</b>				<b>BELL RINGER</b>			
Will McCallum				Lucy Cate				Addison Strand				Ginger Thompson			
<b>GREETER</b>				<b>GREETER</b>				<b>GREETER</b>				<b>GREETER</b>			
Anna McKay				Tony and Kelli				Jim Montgomery				Sara Leckie			
Pat Wallin				Denny				Joanne Clelland				Mary Nelle Cate			
<b>GUIDE</b>				<b>GUIDE</b>				<b>GUIDE</b>				<b>GUIDE</b>			
Erin McCallum				Kim Jaynes				Elaina Wood				Anna McKay			
<b>READER</b>				<b>READER</b>				<b>READER</b>				<b>READER</b>			
Diana Brandon				Craig Strand				Betty Gibbs				Larry McKay			
<b>USHERS</b>				<b>USHERS</b>				<b>USHERS</b>				<b>USHERS</b>			
David Leckie				Brooks and David				Robbie Levering				Mike Cate			
Jim Thompson				Eggers				Kelcey Levering				Dusty Pennington			
Eliana Wood				Linda Quinley				Ella Levering				Susan Miller			
<b>COUNTERS</b>				<b>COUNTERS</b>				<b>COUNTERS</b>				<b>COUNTERS</b>			
Rickey McCallum				Neill Murphy				Craig Strand				John House			
Joe Jaynes				David Eggers				Rickey McCallum				Joe Jaynes			
<b>NURSERY</b>				<b>NURSERY</b>				<b>NURSERY</b>				<b>NURSERY</b>			
Ella Levering				Lindsey Barber				Elaina Wood				Brooks Eggers			
Farrah Linkous				Evelyn Stuart				Kay Pennington				Kelcey Levering			
<b>ONLINE SERVICE VOLUNTEERS</b>															
<b>JUNE 4TH</b>				<b>JUNE 11TH</b>				<b>AUGUST 20TH</b>				<b>JUNE 25TH</b>			
Cathy Van Ostrand Kelly Boyd				Robbie and Kelcey Levering				Andy and Kelsey Sarles				Randy and Kellan Sarles			

# BRIDGEBUILDERS & JUSTICE KNOX

readily accessed by internet. How should America best educate her multicultural and diverse family of children? How should we, as responsible citizens and followers of Christ, work to shore up what our founding fathers believed to be the most critical component of a free republic?

Beginning August 1<sup>st</sup>, you may enroll in this free nine-week Zoom course by visiting the BridgeBuilders page on Erin's website. The course is open to all who wish to engage in study, explore different perspectives, and exercise respectful dialogue. Educators and students are especially invited!

Will you broaden your Christian discipleship by becoming a BridgeBuilder? We hope so!

- Kellan Sarles and Brian Sohn, moderators

## JUSTICE KNOX MEMBER CHURCH - YEAR 3

When Erin affiliated with Justice Knox almost three years ago, we were new to the work of local justice ministry, and newcomers to the process that D.A.R.T. affiliates use to bring positive change in a community.



**Early on, some feared that Justice Knox would lead us into campaigns and methods of activism that would be controversial and/or uncomfortable.** Others may have envisioned **working long hours in shelters or soup kitchens.**

**Our fears were unfounded and our reluctance unjustified.** Justice Knox has proved to be a natural extension of Outreach at Erin, a model of how to respectfully approach our elected leaders, and a personally gratifying experience those involved.

Because of the work of Justice Knox, we have seen small and large victories in bringing more and better mental health care to Knoxville, building affordable housing through a well-designed trust fund, securing training and resources for law enforcement officers, expanding restorative justice practices as an alterna-

tive to disciplinary suspension in our public schools, bringing the nation's leading expert on gun violence to Knoxville to do a deep assessment of the problem here, and to work with law enforcement and local community groups to prevent/reduce it. This year, we will intensify our campaigns to improve public transportation and find appropriate housing for the homeless.

Your network members here at Erin have joined research teams, met with local officials, attended rallies, and financially supported Justice Knox. They have also had opportunities to work, pray, be encouraged by and celebrate with a larger community of believers. The foundation of Justice Knox is the biblical injunction to "Love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly." The power of Justice Knox is *people power*—turning out large numbers of committed citizens to stand up for what is just and merciful.

If the health and well-being of your city and county are important to you, I urge you to get involved! You will have at least two opportunities to be part of "house meeting" listening sessions in the next couple months. Come hear more and decide for yourself if Justice Knox is a good fit for you!

- Kellan Sarles

# FAMILY MINISTRY



*"Come. Follow me," Jesus said.  
"I will make you fishers of people."*

## Planet Worship returns August 27th

Planet Worship is our children's worship program for children 4 years old – 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Children attend regular worship with their families for the first half of the 11 am Service. After the Family Sermon, children leave the sanctuary and go to the Family Life Center for special age-appropriate lessons.

Planet Worship will meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays each month beginning August 27<sup>th</sup> (with the exception of holidays and school breaks).

This year, we begin a new study, **Disciples Then! Disciples Now!** Through this study, children will learn about the life and work of each of Jesus' twelve Disciples. As we study these faithful followers we will discuss how we too are called to be Disciples of Christ.



Our Summer 2023  
VBS took place  
July 10th-13th.

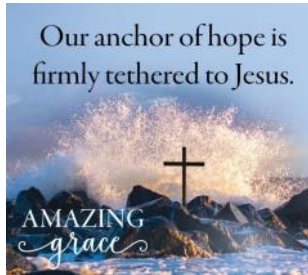


# RALLY DAY, CHOIR & OUTREACH

**RALLY DAY**  
**August 13th**  
**9:30-10:30am**  
**Fellowship Hall**

Join us as we kick off a new year of Sunday School classes. All ages will gather in the Fellowship Hall for coffee and breakfast treats and to hear about our various classes for children, youth, and adults. At 10am, adults stay, youth and children will move to their classrooms to meet their teachers.

This year's theme is **"Amazing Grace"** in celebration of 250 years of this beautiful hymn! "Amazing Grace," written by John Newton in 1773, has been translated into more than 50 languages and is one of the most recorded hymns of all time.



In 1999, Andrew Loveall went on a short-term mission trip that changed his life. Feeling a divine call on his life, he quit his job and moved his family to Guatemala, working with a clinic serving the desperately poor who scavenge at Guatemala City's massive municipal dump. There he began to encounter Guatemala's street children. Their needs overwhelmed him.

Thousands of kids live on the streets. Incredibly, they are not abandoned, but come from destitute families who send their youngsters – as young as five – to beg and make money in tourist towns such as Antigua. There they shine shoes, sell souvenirs and serve as tour guides. Many are victimized by those who take advantage of children. Few go to school. Often they are detested by local officials, particularly for coming from rural, indigenous Mayan tribes.

Over the next decade, Andrew developed a unique "business model" of working with local officials to establish schools, clinics and other infrastructure in partnership with generous friends from the United States. A mentoring program was also developed, with Andrew giving key youth leadership roles in local projects. He has now served this region for 25 years.

Erin Presbyterian has been a prayer and financial supporter of the work of New Hope for Guatemala for over 10 years. Then members, Don and Mary Alice Vowell, connected Erin to this great work as they had personal connections during the adoptions of their two sons from Guatemala. Erin sponsored a mission trip to Guatemala, and has made a great impact on the students' school building, and by providing VBS.

Please pray for Andrew Loveall and his team, and for the children they serve. You can find more info on this important ministry at: [newhopeforguatemala.com](http://newhopeforguatemala.com).

## **THE ERIN CHOIR NEEDS YOU!**

Summer vacation is coming to an end, and the choir will be back in action. Please join us! No formal vocal training is required... just a willingness to learn and an eagerness to lift your voice in praise. And we welcome all ages, from high school students to senior adults! We believe that God is worshipped in many ways. Consequently, the Choir performs a wide variety of music, from classical to contemporary. More importantly, we strive to have fun with the music and with each other. In addition to singing, we share joys and concerns and support one another with prayer and compassion each week. Sounds like fun, doesn't it? Come join us and experience it for yourself. We practice Wednesday nights from 7:30-8:30pm starting August 30th.



## **ERIN SUPPORTED MISSION - AUGUST**

**New Hope for Guatemala**  
**"We are helping indigenous  
kids find a way."**



# OUTREACH, BAKE SALE & MORE

## HELP FILL OUR BLESSING BOX

The blessing box outside our front doors was donated by Agnes Kirby's family. This is a wonderful chance to help our neighbors who don't always have enough to eat. People who use our blessing box may live in a house or apartment and just need a few items to stretch their grocery budget until the end of the month. Some are single, but many have children to feed. Some may not be able to find an affordable apartment and may live in a hotel for a while, or in their car. Some may be camping out.

Think about what you could prepare and eat in these living situations, and choose food items accordingly. If you leave your donations in the office we will restock the box to make sure we offer a variety of foods. Here are some ideas to consider:

1. Look for canned items with pop tops. We've provided a few can openers (and could use more), but items that don't require them are better for those who don't have kitchens. Microwavable plastic containers are even better.
2. Include protein. Cheese or peanut butter crackers, jars of peanut butter, packages of nuts, single serving and ready-to-eat entrees like ravioli or chili, protein bars, canned tuna and chicken, Vienna sausages, beef jerky, baked beans, soup, individual boxes of cereal, and shelf-stable milk are all good options.
3. Raisins and other dried fruits have much-needed iron and vitamins and are easy to carry. Individual cups of applesauce and fruit cups are great for kids.
4. For neighbors who can cook meals, items like boxed mac & cheese, pasta, and pancake mix (plus syrup) will help them feed their families.
5. Hydration is important, especially on hot days. Bottled water, juice boxes, Gatorade, and other beverages are crucial.
6. If you get extra wrapped plastic utensils when you order takeout meals, bring them in, too!

## BAKE SALE & SILENT AUCTION

Do you dream of deep-dish apple pie with cheddar crust and a scoop of vanilla ice cream? A sour cream pound cake like Grandma used to make? How about crisp almond biscotti begging to be dipped in coffee? If so, you're in luck!

On August 13th, "Rally Day", our Erin Justice Knox team will hold its 2nd Annual Silent Auction Bake Sale in the church narthex. As early as 9:20am you can begin silent bidding on cakes, pies, cookies, brownies, homemade bread, jam, relishes and other made-from-scratch confections. You may also purchase \$1 raffle tickets to win one of two large gourmet sampler baskets! After Sunday School but before our 11am. worship service, you can continue to make bids, increase your previous bids, and generally vie for the yummiest confections!

This is no time to count calories! All proceeds will go to advance the important work of Justice Knox. Join us on the 13th!



## BRIDGEBUILDERS

### **Public Education in the United States**

Beginning Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, our fall 2023 BridgeBuilders course, moderated by Kellan Sarles, Dr. Brian

Sohn, and guest experts, will engage in an extended dialogue about public education in the United States. Together, we will explore the deep and noble roots of public schools in America and why education was deemed essential for all. What is its purpose? How has it succeeded and where has it fallen short? Our discussion will lead us to pivotal Supreme Court rulings, federal legislation, segregation and desegregation, diversity and inclusion, charter schools and vouchers, and the recent conservative Christian challenge to public education. We will reflect on the impact of Covid and on the explosion of information/misinformation now