



A Personal Perspective from Beth Williams (Member since Birth):

(Shared Sunday, November 8) One of the scriptures read to us this morning was from Psalm 78. The psalmist reminds us that God will always work in and through His people.

We are His people, First Presbyterian Church, Lynchburg. Listen again to what the psalmist is calling us to remember and do: “Listen carefully to my commandments. Teach them to your children so that we will not become a disobedient people. Always know that your Hope is in God.” As Christians, we know that God has fulfilled all of His promises through the work of His son, Jesus Christ. We are His followers.

As I read through the statements that are compiled in our readiness assessment for this campaign, several of you said... *The tangible physical needs for the upkeep of our building and for our ministry outreach are equally important. *We want to ensure the mission and outreach of this church for future generations. *We have to do that by being responsible for the upkeep of our facility, while being open to the leading of the Holy Spirit for the calling to our work out in the world.

One of the scriptures shared across our campaign comes from Paul’s writings to Timothy. In 2 Timothy 1:13-14, Paul says “Hold on to the pattern of sound teaching you have heard from me, with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard the treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.” That treasure is God’s word in our hearts, reminding us of our calling.

Most of you know that I have been a member of this church since I was born. Sixty-three years ago, I was baptized in this sanctuary and claimed through this sacrament as a Child of God. This church has always been my church home. Like so many of you, I have been blessed with family who put worship experiences, and service to others, as very important in life.

Along with my family, many of the members of this congregation stand as my models for Christian living. These members have been my Weekday School Teachers, My Sunday School Teachers, the Youth Group leaders and the teachers of the Young Couples

Sunday School class that we attended soon after Gary and I were married. My Christian role models today are our Pastors and Elders who now are encouraging us to pray for this Campaign to know where God is leading us all to give. *We are blessed with superior teaching and preaching in our church, as well as strong leadership for community and world outreach through the many missions that we support.*

As followers of Christ, we are called to take care of others, as we take care of ourselves. Gary and I believe that we should be funding our outreach ministries that are serving others in our community and across our world, with the same commitment that we are placing in funding towards the upkeep of our facilities. Our church has taken a great stand to decrease hunger in our community. The current pandemic situation makes this need even greater today than when we started. We also believe that we must fix our steeple. The structural concerns below it make it a priority for our work in our church building to continue. Several of the comments from our meetings spoke to the focal point that our steeple provides in our community. When I look at our steeple, it reminds me that we Lift high the cross of our Lord Jesus, till all the world proclaims his sacred name.

We know that the work that goes on in our Weekday School is an amazing outreach to young families in our community. It provides us with a way to grow our church through the encouragement of these children's loving learning here. The additional support earmarked in our campaign will go towards enhancing the school's operations, bringing about more connections to young families with children.

We are a church with a rich history of worship through our music program. Our pipe organ needs a major overhaul to continue breathing wind into the beautiful music that it is capable of producing. Many of you have spoken to the essential role that it plays not only in our weekly worship services, but also in celebrating our sacraments, our community concerts, and all special holiday and Holy Week events.

There is a lot to prayerfully consider as you decide how you will give to this campaign. For over 205 years, First Presbyterian Church Lynchburg has been giving our ears to God's teachings, sharing his scriptures and parables, and raising our children to know of His mighty works among us. Our mission statement today reminds us of our calling... As we celebrate God's grace to us and inspire our next generation for Christ.

Please join me in one of the closing prayers written for our campaign.

Loving God,

You are so generous to us every day, and all that we have is a gift from you. Help us in the coming days to discern how we can use all that you have given us-our time, our talents, and our treasure- to participate and invest in your mission among us. Guide us with your Holy Spirit as we walk in Faith every day. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, let all God's people say....Amen!