

The Cumberland

Knoxville First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Inc.

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Church Staff: Mike Wilkinson, Pastor; Kayla Jeffery, Children's Ministry Director; Sam & Karen Ware, Music Directors; Rebecca Prenshaw, Accompanist; and Miranda Scott, Office Manager

Weekly Newsletter

"Loving God, Loving People"

July 19, 2022



As Joanna and I were running errands over the weekend, she saw a billboard advertising the lottery. The Mega Millions jackpot was something like \$450 million; today, it is \$530 million. When Joanna saw that astronomical number, she said, "I need to win the lottery." My immediate response was, "You need to buy a ticket first." We do not typically buy lottery tickets and I am not encouraging anyone else to do so, but our conversation caused me to think about prayer. **James 4:2** says, ". . . You do not have because you do not ask God." [NIV] We are probably more familiar with this verse from the *King James Version*, ". . . ye have not, because ye ask not." In context, this verse is not talking about material things such as Joanna winning the lottery or me finally purchasing the Jeep I have wanted since I was eighteen-years-old. Nor is this verse speaking of overcoming disease or some other calamity. Instead, the context of this often quoted verse is telling believers to quit competing with and even fighting others for the things of this world. If we have a real material need, then ask God to supply that need. God is always faithful to His children and has committed Himself to meet our physical needs. Notice that I said needs and not wants and desires. As much as I might still want one, I do not really need a Jeep; I have all the transportation resources I need. The desire for a Jeep is just a lingering teenage want. Have I ever asked God for a Jeep? Yes, fervently, but it has been years since I have done so. Why did God not give me a Jeep? First of all, because it was not a real need. When I asked my father to help me buy (co-sign for) the Jeep I had picked out, he said, "No." He then offered to help me buy my first new pickup truck, which he thought was much safer than a Jeep. Decades later, looking back at my teenage self, I would have put a lifter kit under the Jeep and big tires on it and probably turned it over in some mud pit; in other words, my dad was right. The second reason God did not give me a Jeep is because my motive was simply self-serving; in other words, I had no reason to buy a Jeep other than I just wanted it so I would be the coolest teenager I knew. **James 4:3** says, "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures." [NIV] My life experience has taught me that God will assuredly take care of all my financial/material needs, but the Book of **James** teaches that if I pray seeking God's direction and peace, He will grant me those things in abundance. In a sense, prayer is the ticket that opens up God's lottery of spiritual blessings. I suggest that we all get a pocketful of tickets; they are free.

Learning the unforced rhythms of grace,
Pastor Mike

Session Meeting

Our **Session** will meet this coming Sunday, July 24th, in the Keene Room, immediately following our Worship Service.

Vacation Bible School

The tentative dates for this year's **Vacation Bible School** are Wednesday, August 3rd, through Saturday, August 6th, in the evenings. This will be a "family style" VBS instead of the traditional graded classes. More details coming next week.

Collection of School Supplies

We will be collecting **school supplies** again for the children in Appalachia through the month of August. There will be a box in the Narthex for these supplies. The supplies will be distributed through the **Coalition of Appalachian Ministry** (CAM). Thank you for assisting in this ministry.

Choir Notes

There will be no **Choir Practice** on Wednesday nights from now until after Labor Day. All choir members please note that this makes our Sunday morning **Choir Rehearsal**, at 10:30 a.m., all the more important. In addition, at a date yet to be determined, there will be a **Choir Minicamp** where several anthems will be rehearsed.

Small Group Bible Study and Fellowship

The next meeting of our **Small Group Bible Study and Fellowship** will be coming Sunday, July 24th, at 5:00 p.m., at the home of Doug and Mary Wegman, 9016 Candlewood Drive. Dinner and childcare will be provided. RSVP to Mary at 865-363-6815.

Church Website

Our church website (www.first-cumberland.org) includes a secure "Donate" tab. Donations can now be designated to one of four options: 1) Contribution (general church expenses); 2) Music; 3) Youth; or 4) Memorial. There is a small transaction fee (2.9% plus \$0.30) for all online donations; the giver has the option of covering that fee when making a gift to the church.

*For the glory of God, Knoxville First Cumberland
Church exists to **worship** Christ, **evangelize** the lost, **love** one
another and our neighbor, and **learn** more about our God.*

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