

## First Presbyterian Church, Spring City experiences renewal



You hear them before you see them. The First Presbyterian Cheer Squad, all over the age of 60, is on the sidelines at AYSO soccer games singing their special cheers and blowing vuvuzelas in support of the children of Spring City, Tennessee.

It began with an effort to strengthen the relationship with the Girl Scout troop that meets at the church. In 2013, a Girl Scout earning her Silver Award organized an AYSO soccer league. The church encouraged her efforts by hosting community meetings, soccer sign ups, and board meetings. When the season started in the fall of 2013, the FPC Cheer Squad was on the sidelines at every game where they met lots of families and shared in the fun of supporting their children.

The relationship grew into a partnership when four Girl Scouts brought to the Session their plan for a community food pantry at the church. Seeing firsthand the devastating effects of unemployment and food insecurity for a family within their own troop, these Scouts wanted to find a way to help other families in the community. Several girls earning their Bronze Award also planned a summer garden to provide fresh vegetables for the pantry. After six months of planning, the Helping Hands Community Food Pantry opened its doors, serving 19 families on that first afternoon.

When First Presbyterian Church divided in controversy in November of 2013, they were left with seven members. The bond already formed between the remaining members and families involved in Girl Scouts and AYSO soccer has transformed the church. Families started coming to worship and participating in the life of church. And on Easter Sunday, 2014, they all experienced the hope of John 3:16 as they gathered around the baptismal font...baptizing 2 children and receiving 5 new members. Praise be to God for the new life we have in Jesus Christ!