



FIRST LIGHT NEWSLETTER

A Monthly Newsletter Published by the Fairbanks First Presbyterian Church, April 2026

In This Issue:

From the Pastor
Children's Ministry
NextGen Ministry
April Birthdays & Anniversaries
Session Report (March)
Announcements
Prayer Calendar

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Our *VISION* is to see the world transformed to love, worship and serve Christ.

We do this through our *MISSION*, which is to welcome all people, equip them for a deep and living faith in Jesus Christ, and send them into the world to share God's love.

~~ From the Pastor ~~

What Happens After Easter?

When the last egg has been hunted, the final slice of honey ham devoured, and the rest of the potato salad is encased in Tupperware in the fridge... what then? The journey we follow from the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday to this “high holy day” of Easter is over. The holiday is complete. Here at First Presbyterian Church, the Lenten journey this year has taken on added weight for at least two reasons: we dipped our toes into Lent early by reading our way through the entire Gospel of Mark, beginning a few weeks before Ash Wednesday, AND it has been an absolutely brutal winter. The National Weather Service of Fairbanks just announced that this past winter is officially the coldest on record, with an average temperature of -13F. The end of Lent, coming now, also feels like the end of a long, hard winter.



So, what **is** next? *The short answer is, of course, we don't know! We know that summer is coming, but we don't know what kind of summer we will get. Will it be one remembered for the heat? The smoke? The bugs? The rain? The weeks upon weeks of glorious sunlight and moments at the lake, at the park, and out in the wild places with friends and family?*

In the same way we cannot know for sure what kind of summer weather we will soon experience, neither can we predict what God will bring into our lives in the coming season. Despite the popularity of the adage “God never gives you anything you can't handle,” that phrase neither appears in the Bible nor rings fully true to me. For one thing, there are plenty of things we encounter, experience, or choose for ourselves that have nothing to do with the will of our Heavenly Father! Additionally, we will encounter overwhelming and indeed, impossible challenges, which God fully expects us to at the very least ask for help with, if not leave to one side until we have what we need to face such an obstacle.

No matter what lies ahead of us, we have promises from Christ Jesus that we can trust, whether the coming season brings great trials, wonderful blessings, or some mixture of both, sprinkled with mystery. The promises we have from Jesus are the same ones that Jesus spoke to his followers two thousand years ago.

Peace. Jesus repeatedly greeted his disciples with peace, especially after his resurrection. When they were afraid of the Romans and the Sanhedrin, and weren't sure how the Son of God would feel about them abandoning him, Jesus said “Peace” to them over and over again. Not peace as the world gives, which is fleeting and often fake, Jesus instead gives us lasting peace; peace that passes all understanding. The Peace of Jesus Christ brings rest, recuperation, and encouragement in times of turmoil.

Presence. At the end of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus promises to be with us "to the end of the age." The Greek word used here is αἰών, which would directly translate to "eon" in English. Jesus promised his followers that we will have his abiding presence in the midst of our gatherings and by our side as we work our way through this world not for a moment, a year, a lifetime, but for an eon. An eon is an astronomical amount of time. Jesus remains by our side through the Holy Spirit until we slip through death to greet Jesus bodily, or until Jesus steps back into history to wrap up the mortal era of Creation.

Purpose. Matthew ends his Gospel with the Great Commission. Jesus tells us to *go and make disciples of all nations.* Mark ends his Gospel with the Great Silence, telling us to *go and tell everyone that Jesus is Risen, just in case they haven't heard the Good News yet!* Luke ends his Gospel with... a sequel. But in that sequel, Jesus tells his disciples (and us too!) to *go and be witnesses who share all that they have seen and heard.* John ends his Gospel by encouraging his readers to be like Simon Peter: *to consider the love that The Lord has for us, piling up mercies upon mercies for us, to consider the love that we have for The Lord, and then to go and be a little shepherd, who follows The Good Shepherd, caring for all those around us, the way Jesus has already cared for us.*

Peace, Presence, Purpose. These are only a portion of the rich treasures of the Kingdom of God, for you, the People of God!

No matter what the next chapter of life in Alaska brings, trust in these promises, and in the one who speaks to us and guarantees these promises with his life, death, and resurrection!

~~Pastor David





CHILDREN'S ministry



Dear First Pres Folks,

I am so excited to introduce Gospel Lab! It's a special 2026 whole-church summer program, that will benefit our seniors, our singles, and families at every stage of life.

We are taking a year off from normal VBS programming to invite all of y'all to be refreshed with worship, teaching and fellowship.

The Gospel Lab invites every church member to spend 4 evenings (June 7-10) immersed in the Bible, together.

- Pastor David will share dramatic retellings of the early church and represent some of its characters to us.
- Members of our church and community will present learning stations that help us visualize those times with history, science and art.
- We will share meals and get to know each other more deeply.
- We will also spend time celebrating the Good News of the Gospel together in worship.

The subheading of our Gospel Lab is "Becoming God's Curious People". When we get curious about scripture, the world and each other, we hope that we are becoming more like the people God wants us to be: engaged with the world, passionately in love with Jesus.

I hope you'll join us.



GOSPEL LAB: *BECOMING GOD'S CURIOUS PEOPLE*

Sunday June 7-
Wednesday June 10
5-8 p.m

Includes dinner
Registration for First
Pres attendees and
friends opens soon!

CURIOUS:

adjective

cu·ri·ous 'kyŭr-ē-əs

1. Marked by desire to investigate and learn
2. Distinct, strange, different

Covenant

Notes from Nicole

First Pres Families,

NextGen is cool. I want to take a moment to thank Session for approving our budget this year. There is some deep and meaningful ministry taking place right now on Friday nights with our college and gap year students. The budgetary support for NextGen makes this ministry possible.

Parents and Guardians of High School Students: please review the link I sent you for our Summer mission trip. The deadline to sign-up is April 5th. This year we're digging our roots deep in Fairbanks with NextSteps Ministries. We'll spend a week off site staying at Lighthouse Church June 13th - 19th. We'll do a t-shirt fundraiser and possible rummage sale on church grounds to raise additional support for the trip.

Graduation Sunday is the FIRST SUNDAY in May. I'll send you an info request soon.

If you have any concerns or requests for your students please send me a text so we can schedule a time to talk. It's a good season of watching everyone grow closer together and to the Father.

See you in big church on Sunday!

For the Good and God,
-Nicole



April calendar

- **NextGen Worship: Sunday, April 12th**
- **High School - every Sunday @ 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.**
- **College - Dinner & Bible Study @ Nicole's every Friday @ 7:00**
- **Career - Easter day trip to Denali immediately following Sunday service**
- **Mission Trip Sign-Up deadline: April 5th**

Birthdays

- 1 Bill Satterberg**
- 5 Ivory Huffaker**
- 5 Melissa Logan Mitchell**
- 6 Paul Bonnell**
- 9 Isaiah Hull**
- 12 Anglea Thies**
- 12 Cora Wietgreffe**
- 13 Jerry Cleworth**
- 19 Marty Foster**
- 19 Sean Williams**
- 20 Robert Askelin**
- 23 Stephanie Rozell**
- 26 Patricia Fink**
- 29 Merle "Sunny" Fortune III**
- 30 Rosario Sheets**

April

Anniversaries

Charles & Marta Beaudreault

Stanley & Amy Logan

Paul & Terry Reichardt

Norman & Scotty Klann

Ben & Lynn Hull

What follows is a short summary of the discussions and actions of the Session, at the March 17, 2026 Stated Session Meeting, which began at 6:06 pm in the Church Conference Room. The minutes of the meeting will contain a more complete record.

- The Meeting was opened with a Devotion and Prayer.
- Elders spent time in prayer. After making prayer requests known, Elders prayed for those needs.
- Children’s Ministry Director Carina Menaker provided an update on plans for Gospel Lab, a family-focused ministry event which has been scheduled for this summer.
- The vital statistics from February 18th to March 17th and the minutes of the February 17th Stated Session Meeting were reviewed and approved.
- Church membership remained steady at 152 as of March 17, 2026. The average weekly church attendance increased over the last month to 142 per service. Average weekly attendance for 2026 year-to-date is 129.
- Correspondence was received from member Diane Henry. Diane writes a blog, and shared several of her posts with Session.
- A written financial summary was received from Church Treasurer Mikki Holt. Ruling Elder (RE) Paul Reichardt, chair of the Stewardship and Finance Team provided further information. Year to date receipts are \$93,011 and year to date expenses paid were \$97,106, resulting in an approximately -\$4,095 deficit.
- Two motions from the Finance & Stewardship Committee were brought to Session, and were passed:
 - **MOTION:** Based on previous Session action, the Stewardship and Finance Committee moves that Session amend the “2026 Budget Session Version” by incorporating the changes indicated on the *2026 Budget Session version Mar 13 Draft*.
 - **MOTION:** The Stewardship and Finance Committee moves that Session approve the opening of a Schlotfeldt Scholarship savings account at Mt McKinley Bank.
- A proposal by UAF Student and current Well volunteer Samuel Boling was discussed. The proposal is to provide Thursday evening Community Meals in the Fellowship Hall on March 26th and April 16th, using UAF Student Volunteers. The proposal was discussed and a motion to approve as presented was passed, on the provision that FPC associated volunteers be in attendance to assist.
- The Narthex Ministry & Security Plan is in the process of being finalized by Pastor David, and Ruling Elders Brian Rozell and Charles Beaudreault.
- The Moderator of Session, TE David McConnell-Booher called Session to a special meeting on Sunday, March 29, 2026 after service, for the purpose of examining prospective members.

- With the loss of two Ruling Elders, the oversight of the Worship and Christian Education ministry teams were discussed. Oversight of the Worship Team was assigned to RE Keith Nore and Session as a whole will maintain oversight of the Christian Education Team.
- EPC Teaching Elder Andrew Smith will be preaching on Sunday May 10, 2026, as Pastor David will be returning from Presbytery.
- Session was given information on the upcoming Presbytery Meeting, May 8th to 9th, at Sunset Presbyterian Church in Portland Oregon.
- Session was given information on the upcoming meeting of the General Assembly, June 15th to 18th, at Cherry Creek Presbyterian Church in Englewood Colorado.
- Ruling Elders Brian Rozell, Dave Henry and Emm Snell volunteered to assist with communion on Sunday April 5, 2026.
- Pastor David will be providing snacks for the April Session Meeting.
- Written and verbal reports were received from Ministry Teams.
- The Facilities Ministry Team reported that the solar panels are up and producing a portion of the electrical needs for the facility.
- The meeting was adjourned by the Moderator and he led the closing prayer.
- The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on April 21, 2026 at 6:00 pm, in the Church Conference Room.

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!



Come Celebrate Easter with Us!
 Sunday, April 5th
 Easter Brunch at 9am
 Worship Service at 10am
 First Presbyterian Church, 547 7th Ave

NO Sunday School on Easter!

Sunday, April 5th

There will be no Sunday School for children or adults on Easter Sunday. Instead, please join us for a special church family breakfast starting at 9 am.



NEXT GEN MINISTRY weekly update

High School and Rising Freshman
Summer Mission Trip

Fairbanks, AK

June 13th - 19th

Sign-up Deadline Extended April 5th



WAYS TO GIVE

At First Pres



GIVE ONLINE

<https://pushpay.com/g/fairbanksfirstpres>

GIVE ON YOUR PHONE

Text GIVE to 833-245-4294 or scan the QR code:



GIVE IN PERSON

Place your envelope in the offering plate as it passes by.

A big **Thank You** to everyone who has already switched their online giving into PushPay! We are getting close to finishing this process!

Don't Miss This



Showing at Regal Goldstream Theaters April 2 - 9

Go online to find the showing times for each day.

Go to [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), watch: A Great Awakening - Official Trailer, and A Great Awakening - Heart of the Story

In early April we will be sending out the 1st quarter giving statements. Because we are between systems, you will receive two statements with overlapping information. Most of the data for 2026 has already been migrated into PushPay, but for some people there are donations still in the process and we don't want to miss anything. By the time the 2nd quarter statements come out in July, the process will be complete and all 2026 data will be fully integrated.

There have been a few questions regarding giving by cash or check. If that is the way you are currently giving, you do NOT need to change anything! You can still create a PushPay login for the purpose of accessing your giving statements online, but it is NOT a requirement.

We will be discontinuing VANCO effective Monday, April 20th. At that time we will cancel/delete/discontinue ANY remaining reoccurring or scheduled donations and block the site from further activity. Use the QR code below to manage your VANCO account and the one at the top or the giving link on the church website to set up PushPay.

As always, if you have questions or would like help with VANCO or PushPay, please contact the office and speak with Noreen.

VANCO



Online Giving

1st Pres Staff

- David McConnell-Booher
- Nicole Matthews
- Carina Menaker
- Noreen Harwood
- Peggy Nicholas
- Paul Bonnell
- Deacons**
- Marta, Beaudreault
- Aaron Evans
- Bethany Evans
- Debby Foster
- Daniel Griggs
- Emily Kohl
- Kathy Libby
- Shannon Riggs
- Christy Repasky
- Sarah Rozell
- Joanna Weber
- Elders**
- Sarah Albert
- Charles Beaudreault
- David Dreydoppel
- David Henry
- David McConnell-Booher
- Keith Nore
- Paul Reichardt
- Brian Rozell
- Emma Snell
- Brian Sunderland



April 2026

Sun Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri Sat

<p>Healing Prayers for Pat Fink Joy-el Culligan Sarah Curtis George Shoogukurk Joan Riggs Kianna May Joyce Tapper Deanna Morris Mike Bartels</p>							
5		6	Victor & Denise Wallace	7	Paula Ward	8	Denise Wartes
12	Youth & Children's Ministry	13	James & Kil Whiteman	14	Seth, Liesl, Adelaide, Gretchen & Cora Wietgrefe	15	Richard, Linda, Josie & Lydia Wies
19	Music Ministry	20	Sheng Zhao, Kay Wang & Zhao	21	David & Holly Zumbro	22	Brian, Sarah, Chloe & Cade Albert
26	Ministry to the Street People	27	Kristina Anderson	28	Charlie, Rachel, Eli, Miriam & Ansel Armstrong	29	Charles & Marta Beaudreault
3		9	Ed Washburn	10	Joe, Joanna & Alice Weber	11	Dan & Linda Wells
4	Bob, Michelle, Brandon & Kyle VanHatten	16	Jim, Shelia & Sean Williams	17	Carol Vondra	18	Stuart, Heather & Taylor Young
2	As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.	23	Mark & Shirley Albert	24	Oki Albrecht	25	Jim & Cindy Aldrich
1	Our Pastor The Well (Every Wednesday)	8	Denise Wartes	15	Richard, Linda, Josie & Lydia Wies	22	Brian, Sarah, Chloe & Cade Albert