

FIRST LIGHT NEWSLETTER

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

In This Issue:

- 1. From the Pastor*
- 2. NextGen Ministry*
- 3. Children's Ministry*
- 4. August Birthdays & Anniversaries*
- 5. Prayer Calendar*

RIVERSIDE WORSHIP AND BAPTISMS

at Graehl Park

SUNDAY AUGUST 9TH

11:20 AM

**JOIN US FOR A NORMAL WORSHIP
SERVICE AT FIRST PRES CHURCH AT
10AM. FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY
HOLY BAPTISM AT GRAEHL PARK**

**IF YOU OR YOUR CHILD WANT TO BE BAPTIZED,
CONTACT PASTOR DAVID TODAY**

LAST 2 PARK DAYS OF THE SUMMER

Wednesday 8/5
11-1
@
Tanana Lakes
Kiwanis
Musical
Playground



Wednesday
8/12
11-1
@
Ester Park

COMING SOON!

**BLESSING
OF THE
BACKPACKS
AUGUST 16**



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The Hope That Is In You

Studying The Epistles of Peter

"The Word Is ____" [1 Peter 1] ~ July 5

"Mercy House" [1 Peter 2:1-10] ~ July 12

"A Free People" [1 Peter 2:11-25] ~ July 19

"How to Defeat Evil" [1 Peter 3:1-12] ~ July 26

"The Best Defense" [1 Peter 3:13-22] ~ August 2

"A Different Life" [1 Peter 4:1-11] ~ August 9

"Suffering & Hope" [1 Peter 4:12-19] ~ August 16

"Cast Your Burdens" [1 Peter 5] ~ August 23

"Blessed Assurance" [2 Peter 1] ~ August 30

"Bad to Worse" [2 Peter 2] ~ TBD

"The Patience of God" [2 Peter 3] ~ TBD

***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~~

Blessed and Broken



While reading through chapter 14 of The Gospel According to Matthew recently, I came upon a familiar phrase:

"and taking the five loaves and the two fish, [Jesus] looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds." [Matthew 14:18]

Of course this is familiar, I have read Matthew 14 many times, the feeding of the 5,000 (plus thousands more women and children) is the only miracle documented by all four of the Evangelists, and I have both heard and now spoken myself the Words of Institution before Holy Communion hundreds of times. At the Feeding of the 5,000, the Feeding of the 4,000, the Last Supper, and the dinner at Emmaus, Jesus says a blessing of thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father, breaks the bread, and gives it to others.

What stood out to me upon this most recent reading was not the familiarity of the phrase or the recurrence of these practices of Jesus before the meal is shared. It makes sense that Jesus would offer a prayer of thanks and blessing: that is a good way to remind everyone that our Creator loves and provides for us, and that gratitude and worship are the best posture to assume before enjoying a meal. It makes sense that Jesus would break the bread: biting into the outer crust of a homemade sourdough loaf would be an exercise in mandibular fortitude and might be awkward to try before passing the bread on to your neighbor.

It was something else that stood out to me: Jesus was blessed, broken, and given to us. In all of these stories, Jesus prepares us for the greatest gift of all: Himself. Jesus is blessed and holy, yet broken by sin and death on the cross for our sakes. Every time we come to the table of the Lord's Supper, and indeed, every time we invite Jesus into our hearts and minds, we receive Him as broken, yet restored. Ripped apart, yet made whole. He is both God's love and God Himself, yet he is also beaten and bruised, mocked and spat upon, tortured and killed. Jesus undergoes all of this for two great reasons: that we might receive Him, and that in receiving Him, we might commune with Him and become the Body of Christ.

Brothers and Sisters, if we are the Body of Christ, that means that we join Jesus in this fundamental act. We are blessed. We are broken. We are called by our Heavenly Father. We are blessed and made holy. Our sin is wiped away and we are forever redeemed to be God's. We are adored and wholly beloved of God. Yet we are also broken, and given to the world.

Freed from sin, we are also freed from the bindings and futile purposes of a sinful world. There are no expectations to meet. No keeping up with the Joneses over which to fret. We are free to know Christ and to love Christ. And to know Jesus Christ is to follow Him and become more and more like Him. To do this, we break our egos, we demolish our selfish pursuits, and we sever the ties that human culture would bind around us.

We serve a lost and starving world. We love neighbors and strangers and enemies when the powers of this world tell us to let them starve. We appear weak when the world tells us that we must be strong. We give what we have in this life because the life-to-come requires neither bank accounts nor mortgages. We invite people we do not know to taste and see that God is good. But in order to see Jesus, they must taste the bread of life. In order to taste this bread, they must have a chance to hold it. In order to hold it, we, the Body of Christ, must be blessed, broken, and given into their hand.

~ Pastor David

Covenant

Notes from Nicole

First Pres Families,

This is the farewell. Thank you for allowing us to serve you in the magnificent splendor of the state we love. To say my heart is rightfully distraught is an understatement. When we left Fairbanks I cried from my drive-way all the way to Delta.

Serving you for just two and a half years allowed us to build the most remarkable life of wonder, adventure, and awe. How we see and experience God will never be the same. I fear these mountains have broken us and we will always long to be in the shelter of these snow capped cliffs for the rest of our lives.

Thank you for such a generous and heartwarming send-off. I certainly did not deserve your generosity. It took three days for me to be able to read all of your cards and well wishes.

Creating a life of ministry, servitude, charity, and relieving the suffering of others with you will be stored in my heart forever. The relationships built will continue to have impact on this side of eternity.

Leaving First Pres is painful yet the return to South Carolina I ardently avoided has been met with great purpose. We arrived in South Carolina at 4:00 a.m. Tuesday morning just two and half hours before the kids got up for the first day of school and ended the day with a belated birthday celebration.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you. I miss you with every fiber of my being.

For the good and God,

-Nicole

Exodus 19:5



CHILDREN'S ministry

Dear First Pres Folks,
If you've been to church these last couple weeks, you've noticed: I'm so curious about bats! I encountered a bat colony in Houston, Texas and I was amazed at the wild and wonderful things God has created. They inspired two children's sermons and at least one large painting from me! I want to encourage you, as I encouraged the children, and as I remind myself lately:

Just like a bat, we need an accurate map of life to survive. Just like a bat who cries out to echolocate, we have to cry out to God, to see what is true, what is helpful, what will feed us.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart. and lean not on your own understanding: in all your ways submit to Him and He will make your paths straight."

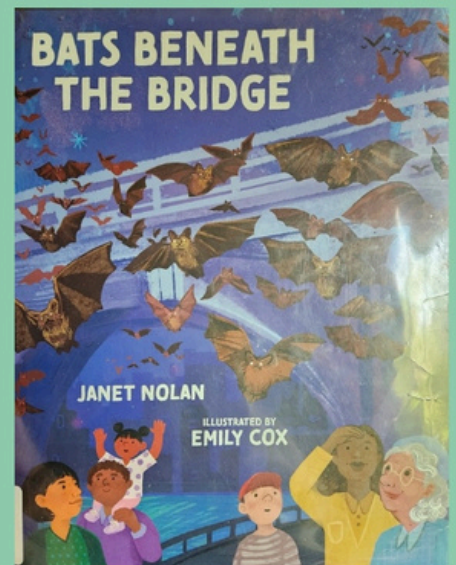
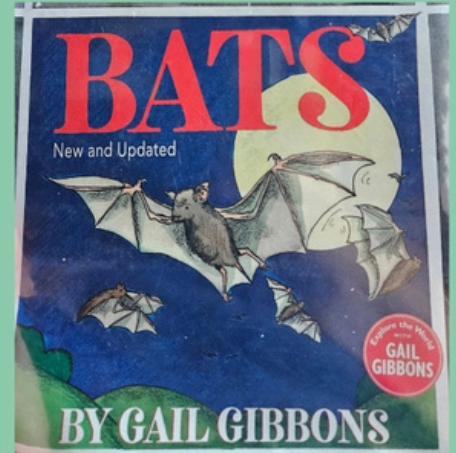
Proverbs 3:6



Carmel



To learn more about bats, check these out at our public library!



August

Birthdays

1 Jim Aldrich
1 Ava Denton
1 Andree' Thies
1 Chris Demers
3 Angela Adams
3 Nathan Vander Lugt
5 Blake Bunch
7 Greg Young
9 Kelsey Nore
9 Bryon Cogley
10 Linda Armstrong
13 Mark Albert
13 Sena Gilbert
13 Charles Beaudreault
15 Paul Reichardt
16 Maggie Hess
18 Peggy Nicholas
20 Savannah VanHarper
22 Jim Williams
23 Lauren Bouta
23 Eli Brovold
24 Amber Sunderland
25 Wendy Cogley
26 Dan Brady
26 Toby Rozell
27 Isaac Mackey
27 Janice Celworth
28 Savanna Schaefer
28 Karson Riggs
30 Marita Bunch
31 Barbara Nore
31 Liesl Wietgreffe

Anniversaries

1 Russ & Rebekah VanderLugt
5 Ian & Heidi VanHarper
11 Jerry & Janice Cleworth
12 Dave & Barbara Moody
16 Merle & Lillian Fortune
16 Lonny & Michele Marney
22 Mark & Shirley Albert

1st Pres Staff
David McConnell-Booher
Carina Menaker
Noreen Harwood
Peggy Nicholas
Paul Bonnell
Deacons
Aaron Evans
Bethany Evans
Debby Foster
Daniel Griggs
Rick Halfhill
Violetta Knight
Theresa LaMagna
Kathy Libby
Kiana May
Kathy Rahminder Halfhill
Shannon Riggs
Christy Repasky
Sarah Rozell
Joanna Weber
Elders
Charles Beaudreault
Marta Beaudreault
Maggie Demers
David Dreydoppel
David Henry
Steve Hurtle
Noelle Lyle
Keith Nore
Paul Reichardt
Brian Rozell
Stephanie Rozell
Brian Sunderland

August 2026

Sun

Mon

Tues

Wed

Thurs

Fri

Sat

							1 Rick, Heidi, Twila, Kiana & Avery May
2 Elders	3 David & Brenna McConnell- Booher	4 Leslie & Debra McFarlane	5 Jason, Heather & Coby McFarland	6 Sandy & Bill McKee	7 Judy McNinch	8 James, Carina, Diego, Essie & Lucy Menaker	
9 Deacons	10 Gayle Meurs	11 Diane Miller	12 Robin & Connie Miller	13 Ray & Trish Mikolajczyk	14 Rhonda Montgomery, Sailor, Sam, John, Rosie & Seidny Waddell	15 David & Barbara Moody	
16 Youth & Children's Ministry	17 Deanna Morris	18 Jack, Ashley, Henry & Sarah Morris	19 Fred, Maria, Cassie & Jacob Morrison	20 Linda Mullen	21 Meredith Nava	22 Peggy Nicholas	
23 Our Pastor	24 Keith. Barb, Kari & Kelsey Nore	25 Barb Page	26 Josephine Papp	27 Rachel, Bobby, Devin, Mya, Emily & Ethan Perkins	28 Thelma Pierce	29 Vickie Plowman	
30 FPC	31 Nicole, Theodore, & Constance Matthews						
				Healing Prayers for Pat Fink Joy-el Culligan Sarah Curtis George Shoogukwark Kianna May Joyce Tapper Deanna Morris Mike Bartels			

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