


Christmas at First Presbyterian

Meet our New Youth and Young Adult Minister

An oval-shaped photograph showing a woman, Nicole, and two young children standing on the steps of a red train car. Nicole is holding a yellow suitcase, and the children are waving. The train is moving through a snowy landscape.

First Presbyterian Fairbanks, I'm Nicole - your new Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry. I'm an Alabama-born mom of two, who spent eight years in South Carolina. It is the privilege of my

life to move from Alabama to Alaska to serve alongside you. When I was 14 years old, I asked God to bring me to Alaska - here we are, 20 years later, just a few days away from a 4,000 mile move!

My family's life verse is 1 Samuel 2:35 "And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do what is on my heart and mind. And I will build him a sure house and he will go in and out before my

anointed forever."

I am so in awe of the health of FPC. It is evident from the way you work together, communicate, and minister that you truly love each other, God, and your community. It is an absolute pleasure to start the next season of our lives alongside you. My vision for the students and Young Adults in this ministry is to: know who they are, know who God is, and effectively minister to those in their circle of influence.

My kids and I can't wait to sink our teeth into the wonder of Alaska. They've told me they're most looking forward to snowshoeing and attending hockey games. I am most looking forward to listening to worship music while watching the Aurora. We get to behold the God of heaven in one of the most beautiful places on earth.





Christmas Eve

Regular Morning Worship at 10am

Candlelight Service at 7pm

O Come, Let Us Adore Him!



First Presbyterian Church, 547 Seventh Ave, 907-452-2406

A Word From the Pastor

Advent arrived awkwardly this year. Typically, we begin Advent the Sunday after Thanksgiving and have almost four complete weeks before the Christmas holy day. This year, the calendar got a little wonky and we are simultaneously only a few days into Advent but also almost a third of the way through it. All that is to say that I hope we can take this as a prompt to slow our busy lives down. May you hear Christ's invitation to calm your mind, slow your heart, and listen for His still, small voice that speaks beneath all of the frantic noise of the world that permeates our lives this time of year.



One way that Christ has been speaking to me in this Advent season is through His word in scripture, specifically through our recent focus on Matthew 5:2-12. As we studied and interpreted these nine Beatitudes, I reflected on how these 9 proclamations of blessings guide and shape us. After nine sermons on this text, if I had to narrow down what Christ is saying to us, a small part of His Church today, it is this: The world will know we are followers of

Jesus by how well we love and bless the poor in spirit, the people in mourning, the meek, the people who hunger and thirst for justice and righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted, and the reviled. At some points in our lives, we will find ourselves in some combination of those states. We will need to be loved, we will need to be blessed, we will need to know that God is for us and that God has sent agents of His Kingdom to make that love real for us in the midst of our struggling and suffering. But at all the other points in our lives, we will have opportunities to see Jesus in the people around us who are struggling and suffering. Each of those moments will be choices for us to see and love that person just as we see and love Jesus. Each of those moments will be opportunities for the world to see us and, if we are following Jesus deep into His heart for people on the margins of society, they will see a Light so bright that it will reveal the mystery and wonder of Heaven to them in a life changing way.

It is Advent. It is December. It is dark. It is cold. May the Light of Christ shine so brightly in your heart that it drives out all shadows and shivers. May the Light of Christ shine so brightly in how you love neighbors, strangers, and enemies that the whole world cannot help but stare and wonder.

Pastor David McConnell-Booher






Thank You

Thank you very much for the birthday cards, for your love and thoughtfulness.

Deanna Morris



Closure

The front office will be closed Monday, December 25 and Tuesday, December 26, 2023



Silver Tea

Saturday, December 30, 1-4pm

For additional information, please contact Lynn Hull



Happy Birthday

1	Donna Brewer	17	Christopher Cogley
1	Laura Strong	17	River Gates
1	Gretchen Wietgreffe	18	John Fink
1	Holden Kohl	19	Thelma Pierce
2	Loriann Quakenbush	20	Lindsey Dreydoppel
4	Bennett Gilbert	20	Cade Albert
5	Keith Nore	21	Joanne Klaver
5	Becky Fuller	22	John Anderson
9	Devin Perkins	23	Teddy Jerald Riggs Jr.
10	Linda Mullen	24	JoAnn Mills
11	Brian Sunderland	24	Chris Kilgore
11	Brooks Gilbert	25	Joyce Tapper
12	Michelle VanHatten	27	Gayle Meurs
12	Trevor Bunch	29	Shirley Albert
12	David Denton	30	Brenna McConnell-Booher
12	Elizabeth Jones	31	Daniel Armstrong
13	Bobby Perkins	31	Kristina Anderson
14	Brian Rozell		
15	Janie Feist		
17	Caleb Sunderland		



Fairbanks First Presbyterian Church

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.





CHILDREN'S ministry



Dear First Pres Folks,
This month, 15 Families were equipped to begin a candle lighting tradition at home through our pre-advent event. We continued our Sunday school teaching on the fruits of the spirit, using the lives of Bible characters to illustrate these virtues. We prepared for our Christmas program and in Roots Club, we concluded our study of the Ark of the Covenant, God's box of reminders for His people. 

Quinn



IMPORTANT DATES

CLIMB CLUB 6-8TH GRADERS

DEC.13-- CLIMB CHRISTMAS PARTY
DEC 20--MEET TO PAINT CLIMB ROOM
DEC. 27--NO MEETING

ROOTS CLUB 3RD-5TH GRADERS

DEC.10-- ROOTS CHRISTMAS PARTY
DEC 17--MEET TO MAKE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS
DEC. 24--NO MEETING

SUNDAY SCHOOL K-8TH GRADERS

DEC. 9-(9am-noon) Dress Rehearsal, Christmas program
DEC. 10- 9AM PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
10 AM CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

DEC. 17-- 9am Sunday school
DEC. 24-- TBD



Angels on this page were created by our Sunday School students.

Climb Club continued growing in service this month. We made centerpieces for The Well, our weekly meal with our hungry downtown neighbors.





GREETERS/USHERS NEEDED!



Greeters: 2 Greeters are needed every Sunday. Greeters arrive at church 15 minutes prior to the start. Greeters hand out the Sunday Bulletin and also stay at the sanctuary doors a few minute after church starts to help late arrivals find a place to sit. Greeters also help collect the offering.

Ushers: 2 Ushers are needed every Sunday to help the Greeters with offering. Ushers carry the offering plates during the church service. They do not need to be at the service early.

Sign up at this link or use the QR code: <https://signup.com/go/Pydpgos>

Sign up for just 1 Sunday, a certain Sunday each month, or for a full month or two at a time! We are excited to have you!

If you can't/don't want to sign up online please contact Sarah Albert @ bsalbert@hotmail.com with the dates you'd like to serve.



**WHAT ARE ANGEL GIFTS?
WHAT IS THE BLESSING TREE?**

**Blessings to all of you from your faithful "Sneakin' Deacons!"
We bless people with ANGEL Gifts ALL YEAR LONG.**

It is time to think about our First Presbyterian Church Blessing Tree. What is the Blessing Tree? What are Angel Gifts? Who decides who will receive blessings from our congregation in the form of angel gifts? What type of gifts are requested or needed from our church family?



During the season of Advent, the Blessing Tree is a way that our church family members give back and "pay it forward" to those who are struggling in different ways. Your deacons are the ones who organize this project, identify possible recipients each year, and the deacons will make the deliveries to the recipients on or around the 18th of December.

Many families and individuals struggle with paying their electric bill, fuel bill, medical bills, food bill, and providing the basic needs for their families. Our church family tries to assist those in need by making a monetary donation or product donation to contribute to those angel recipients. Each year we have a need for cash donations to support these difficult bills. We also request home baked goods to share with our families and individuals.

We need your help in identifying members of our congregation that may be in need this year. Your suggestion of families or individuals can be made anonymously to the church office by phone call to Marta; by placing the request in the offering plate at the Sunday service; and by contacting one of the deacons, elders, or staff members in person or by phone or email. We would like to have this list of recipients created by the second week of November so we can better prepare our paper "Angels" that will go on the Blessing Trees.

The Blessing Trees will be erected in the Narthex, hopefully the week of November 19th, just outside of the sanctuary, and filled with tiny paper angels that have specific requests of needs printed on them. As congregation members feel moved, they will select "paper angel requests" and then donate the requested needs on each paper angel and bring it to church not later than December 17th. Donations may be dropped off at the church office or given to any deacon, elder, or pastor during the Sunday service.

Angel gifts need to be at First Presbyterian Church not later than December 17th or 18th so that the deacons can prepare each delivery. Thank you to all congregation members and our church family for continuing to support this important outreach mission of First Presbyterian Church.

Melissa Prince, Moderator
First Presbyterian Church Deacons



Staff Appreciation Christmas Gift

Christmas provides a perfect opportunity for us to express our love & appreciation to our wonderful FPC staff, who faithfully serve us all year long. The personnel team invites you to contribute toward a Christmas monetary gift for all five of our awesome staff members. (Pastor: David McConnel-Booher, Children's Ministry Director: Carina Menaker, Office Manager: Marta Conner, Sound Projection Technician: Paul Bonnell and Nursery Coordinator: Peggy Nicholas).

If you plan to support the Staff Christmas Gift, please place your contribution in the church offering plate one of these Sundays:

November 26
December 3
December 10
December 17

Or you can mail it or drop it off at the church office before Friday, Dec. 15th. Be sure to mark your checks or envelopes (containing cash) with "FPC Staff Christmas Gift". We hope to present the gifts to the staff the week prior to Christmas. Of course, cards, notes or other gifts are welcome, too.

Thank you for your loving support of our awesome staff! How blessed we are to have them!

FPC Personnel Team
Brian Rozell
Bill Satterberg
Terry Reichardt
Donna Brewer

What follows is a short summary of the decisions and actions of the Session, at the November 21, 2023 Stated Session Meeting, which began at 6:00 pm in the Church Conference Room. The minutes of the meeting will contain a more complete record.

- Moderator McConnell-Booher opened the meeting with prayer and then presented a devotion based on Matthew 5:13.
- A written financial report was received from the church treasurer, Mikki Holt, who was in attendance to answer questions.
- Those in attendance recited the Vision and Mission Statements.
- The agenda was approved as amended, to add approval of a First Friday Event on February 2, 2024 to the Consent Calendar.
- Elders spent time in prayer. After making prayer requests known, Elders prayed for those needs.
- Minutes from the last Stated Session meeting and vital statistics from the last month were reviewed and approved as presented.
- It was moved, seconded and passed to approve Consent Calendar item, which included approval of the minutes of the Deacon's September 26, 2023 meeting, approval of a First Friday Event on February 2, 2024, and approval of leave for Pastor David on December 13, 14, 20, and 27, 2023.
- Session continued working on the 2024 Budget.
- The date and location for the upcoming Presbytery Meeting was shared with Session. The meeting will be February 2-3, 2024 at Woodlands Presbyterian Church in Woodlands, WA.
- It was moved, seconded and passed to extend the meeting until 9:30.
- It was decided to put matters related to distribution of the Church Directory on the agenda for the Winter Congregational / Corporation Meeting.
- It was moved, seconded and passed to set the date of the Semi-Annual Congregational and Annual Corporation Meeting for February 11, 2024.
- Ruling Elders Brian Sunderland and Ted Riggs volunteered to assist with serving communion on December 3, 2023.
- The meeting was adjourned with prayer, by the Moderator at 9:37 pm.

The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on December 19, 2023 at 6:00 pm, in the Church Conference Room.

