

# FIRST LIGHT

Volume 28, Issue 23

February 2020

## Annual Congregational Meeting

An Annual Congregational Meeting will take place on Sunday, February 9, 2020 at 12:30pm. Copies of the Annual Report Booklets are available in the Narthex and front office.



First Light is a monthly newsletter publication. Please submit newsletter articles to the front office by the 20th of each month.

Please join us for  
**FPC Ladies Movie Night**  
Saturday, February 8 - 6:30 PM in the Fireside Room



Popcorn provided.  
Please bring a finger food to share.

About the movie:

Yesterday is a comedy with fantasy elements about a musician named Jack who, after an accident, wakes up to a world in which the Beatles never existed -- and all their hit songs can be his. But, does success bring happiness?

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's Desk

Fourteen months ago, I was called by the Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest and the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Fairbanks (you) to come to Fairbanks, Alaska, and be your interim pastor. After much prayer and the blessings of my family, I accepted what has turned out to be one of the most challenging and rewarding adventures of my 50+ years in ministry. I remember well stepping off the plane over a year ago to a blast of Fairbanks best winter and a warm greeting from Mark, Brenna and several of the elders. Since then, I have watched First Pres grow, struggle and experience the Grace of God in ministry together. While I've been here, you have begun the healing process (it is never finished), received new members, grown in worship attendance, increased your budget and added several new programs. You have a new and hardworking Pastor Search Committee, a well-organized Session and a talented staff. Last week I met with the Session and told them that, after a long and soul-searching struggle, I regrettably and reluctantly felt compelled to bring to an end my role as your interim pastor after this coming Easter. This will mark the 15<sup>th</sup> month I will have served with you and my family is calling for me to return to a ministry of being Papa with them.

To be perfectly honest, I make this decision with a heavy heart. I know that the work I came to do with you a year ago is not finished. I came to First Presbyterian Church to see you through to your next pastor, and I am not one prone to walk away from commitments. Yet, I leave confident that First Presbyterian Church is in such a better place than it was when I came, that I leave with no fear that you will not prosper in the years to come. I sincerely believe that you will be able to successfully see your way through to your next installed pastor without me. God has given you committed elders, a strong staff and a Presbytery which has your back. The Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest will be working with your Session over the next few months to help you find a new interim pastor or, God willing, you will have a new installed pastor by then. I know the Pastor Search Committee is hopeful that their work will be done by then, but if not, the necessary leadership will be provided.

In closing, let me say this is not a good time for good-byes or celebrations, at least not yet. There is still much work to be done and we have over 3 months in which to do it together. The Session is implementing a new long-range plan that will focus our ministry for years to come. We are still looking for a Children's Director and hope we will have one soon. There are plans to seriously increase our investment in our worship services and strengthen our small groups and add to their numbers. Adult Christian Education is just beginning some new ideas and hopes to build on them. This new year offers some exciting opportunities and we, more clearly now than for many years, are able to see what those opportunities are and how to realize them. I think you will agree with me that this is a good time to be a member of First Presbyterian Church and praise the Lord for the ministry and grace He gives to each of us.

God bless,  
Dr. Donald Baird



As we begin a new year, let's look ahead to special people or events in 2020 that you would like to have recognized at church. You can do this by dedicating flowers on the communion table to your cause. Now is the time to reserve significant dates by listing the information on the flower chart located on the bulletin board in the entry way. It can be for a birthday, anniversary, graduation or in memory of a friend or family member. We ask that you place a check for \$40 in the plate to cover the cost. Following the contemporary service, the deacons deliver the flowers to shut-ins or folks hospitalized or sick.

The Worship Committee wants to recognize the children and youth for the expanded part they have played around the church in the last year. It is a joy to watch as the kids step up to read at the beginning of worship service. Speaking in public is tough and these kids are doing such a great job. When it was time to decorate for the holiday season, these same kids were right there doing most of the heavy lifting and willingly following directions. A great big THANK YOU to them one and all.

Worship Committee





You may be wondering, "What is taking so long?" It is not unusual for a "call" to take 6 months to 2 years. We are presently at the 6 month timeline.

Finding God's choice for our new Lead Pastor has kept the Pastor Search Committee (PSC) not only on their knees, but also seeking many ways to advertise.

We have posted the position in about 50+ seminaries, emailed and phoned pastors in the EPC, posted on search engines, and followed any leads given. At times the results are encouraging, but as of the writing this report, we do not have a candidate.

**We have had over 30 responses to our advertising.**

- Of those, there were approximately 10 who had the qualifications to be ordained in our denomination (EPC).
- Many did not meet the qualification of having a Master of Divinity degree. Some disqualified themselves because they can't affirm the 7 Essentials of Faith for the EPC or do not agree with the Book of Order.
- A few accepted other calls
- Some did not follow through with submitting a required Personal Information Form.
- One candidate whose church we were planning to visit, asked to be removed from consideration.

We meet weekly and at special times for interviews and are grateful for the guidance and encouragement of the Presbytery Ministerial Committee and Pastor Don. If you know of a possible candidate, please let the PSC know. Continue to pray for the Pastor that God is calling to FPC. God's timing is perfect and He is faithful.

Pastoral Search Committee: Ted Riggs, Sr., Michelle VanHatten, Sheila Williams, Sarah Curtis, Sarah Albert Geoff Beyersdorf, Joanne Klaver.

**It's back!**  
**FPC Talent Show!**

**Take a leap and show off  
your talent  
(serious & vaudeville welcome)  
on Saturday, Feb. 29, 2020**

**Dinner served by the youth  
group at 6:00 PM**

**Talent show begins at 7:00 PM**

*Monetary donations will support the youth group mission  
trip to Portland in July.*  
*For more information: Stephanie Rozell 907-687-3730*  
*To sign up for an act: Jerry Cleworth 907-452-5551*



What follows is a short summary of the decisions and actions of the Session, at the January 21, 2020 Session Meeting. The minutes of the meeting will contain a more complete record.

The meeting was opened by Youth Director David McConnell-Booher, with prayer and a devotion based on 1 Samuel 3:1-11.

In place of a "Pastor's Study", Pastor Don facilitated while the elders practiced sharing their story of coming to faith, which leads to sharing the Good News of the Gospel.

Chair of the Pastor Search Committee presented a brief, verbal report on the search for the new Senior Pastor.

Session received a letter from Ruling Elder Scott Marney about his plans to resign from Session. Youth Director David McConnell-Booher will be meeting with RE Marney, prior to Session accepting his resignation.

Treasurer Dave Stephenson is currently out of town, however a written Financial Report was available to the Session.

Session prayed, in thanksgiving, for the positive news received about the financial health of the church.

Consent Calendar items were passed, after pulling one item. The Consent Calendar items included: Approval of Deacons Minutes for November 2019; Accepting the resignation of Dr. Donald Baird as Transitional Pastor, effective April 30, 2020 or whenever a new Senior Pastor is installed, whichever comes first. The item pulled from the Consent Calendar was a motion from the Personnel Committee that **the revised version of Personnel Policies submitted to Session be approved.**

After a review of the revised Personnel Policies, it was **moved, seconded and passed to Approve the Personnel Policies as revised.**

Reports from the Ministry Teams were received.

Youth Director David McConnell-Booher presented plans for a Confirmation Class, for the Youth, to be presented this spring. It was **moved, seconded and passed** to approve the syllabus for the Confirmation Class, to be updated as to dates and times.

The Children's Ministry Team has begun plans for a Vacation Bible School, this summer, in cooperation with Lighthouse Church, to be held at First Presbyterian. It was **moved, seconded and passed** to approve the plans to hold VBS.

It was **moved, seconded and passed** to hold a Church Talent Show on February 29, 2020 and allow the Youth to hold a dinner prior to the Talent Show as a fundraiser for the Youth Mission Trip.

Several motions were made, which revise the Budget as approved by Session at a Special Session Meeting on January 14, 2020. The motions were seconded and passed. The 2020 Budget, as amended, will be presented at the February 9, 2020 Congregational Meeting.

At the November 2019 Session Meeting, a motion was passed to create a reserve fund to receive donations to help David McConnell-Booher with the costs associated with studying for a Masters of Divinity degree at Fuller Theological Seminary. It was moved, seconded and passed to approve the Seminary Expense Reserve Fund to replace the fund established for David McConnell-Booher. This fund will be available to members of the church for seminary with approval from session to be used for tuition, books, travel, and other educational fees.

It was moved, seconded and passed to change the name of the Capital Improvements Reserve Fund to the Capital Facility Equipment Repair / Replacement Reserve Fund.



At the January 14, 2020 Called Session Meeting, it was passed to create a General Fund Reserve to hold three month of expenses. At this meeting it was moved, seconded and passed to move \$160,000 into this reserve fund, from the church's general fund.

It was moved, seconded and passed to add the General Reserve Fund to the list of Reserve Funds, at that it appear on the balance sheet in the Assets section of the monthly financial report.

Session reviewed the proposed Congregational By-Laws for a second time, making some revisions. It was moved, seconded and passed to refer further work on the By-Laws to a working committee, composed of Moderator Donald Baird, and Ruling Elders Jim Williams and Janice Cleworth.

One Elder per month will share their Testimony at the Stated Session Meeting. A list was circulated to schedule elders for each month.

Presenting Devotions at the February Stated Meeting is: RE Mike Repasky

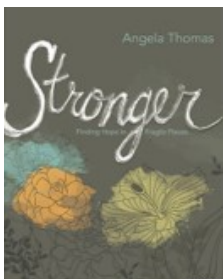
Presenting Dessert at the February Stated Meeting is: RE Terry Reichardt

Presenting a testimony at the February Stated Meeting is RE June Champlin

Elders spent time in prayer. After making prayer requests known, elders prayed for one another and for First Presbyterian.

The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on February 11, 2020 at 6:00 pm in the Church Conference Room.

## WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY



Would you like to break life-long patterns of defeat and despair and learn how to focus on the glorious hope promised to us in Christ? Do you desire to remove paralyzing inner anxiousness and truly live in the peace

that surpasses all understanding? Instead of being self-focused and distracted by striving, comparing and performing, would you prefer a life that accomplishes more for God's glory? If you are seeking answers to any of these questions, then plan to attend the Tuesday morning Women's Bible Study as we begin a new study by Angela Thomas-Pharr, called "Stronger." We will meet from 10-11:30am in the FPC Conference Room. Childcare is provided.

If you want to sign up or have questions, please contact Donna Brewer at [billanddonnabrewer@gmail.com](mailto:billanddonnabrewer@gmail.com) or at 907-378-3351.



## The Gospel According to Matthew.

Please join us every **Sunday at 10am** as we study the Gospel of Matthew. Classes are held in the Conference Room (upstairs) and led by Brian Rozell.

For more information, please call Brian at 907-687-9792.



## *The WELL*

**Each Wednesday, FPC opens its doors to reach out to its church family and the local community by serving hot dinners from 6-7pm.**



# HIGHLIGHTS

## Men's Lunch

Each Monday, the FPC men meet for lunch and fellowship at the Hometown Restaurant on South Cushman. In an effort to beat the crowd, the luncheon begins at 11:30am, and last approximately an hour. Come join us! Bring a friend! For additional information, please contact Jim Aldrich at (907) 479-2582.

## Couples Ministry Opportunity

Are you interested in helping to identify and/or organize Christian activities for couples? One activity of interest that has been discussed is a marriage seminar that would give us some tools to tune up our marriages. If we want such an opportunity this coming fall, and we want to possibly bring in an outside speaker to lead it, we will have to get started almost immediately.

For additional information, please contact Jim Aldrich at [jwaldrich@gmail.com](mailto:jwaldrich@gmail.com) or 907-378-2582.

## Women's Ministry

Are you interested in helping to identify and/or organize Christian activities for women? One activity that has been discussed is a women's bible study that could be held at a time when working woman could attend.

For additional information, please contact Jim Aldrich at [jwaldrich@gmail.com](mailto:jwaldrich@gmail.com) or 907-378-2582.



## Youth News


We are looking forward to seeing you all at one of FPC's favorite traditions: **The Talent Show!** Please join us at 6pm on February 29th for Dinner and A Show. This is a fundraiser for the youth mission trip to Portland, OR in July. Dust off your top hat and polish your dancing shoes - we want to see your talent shared with the church family!

Confirmation Class will begin this month! If you have a child who has not yet been baptized or is ready to make a public affirmation of their Baptism and Christian faith, please let me know as soon as possible! We will be instructing Confirmation students in the fundamentals of the Christian faith and the Presbyterian tradition. Students are required to attend every class and complete assignments before becoming full members of the church. This is an important milestone in the life of a young follower of Jesus and is definitely something to prepare for and celebrate! We look forward to a new generation of FPC stepping up for Christ and his Church.

David McConnell-Booher, Youth Director



# Happy Birthday



4 Chloe Albert  
6 June Champlin  
7 Russ VanderLugt  
7 Hayden Masterson  
8 Andy Ekblad  
9 Diane Henry  
9 Austin Foster  
12 Samuel Craft  
13 David Jones  
15 Autumn Vanderlugt  
15 Lily Sunderland  
17 Christina Repasky  
19 Ellucia Boswell  
20 Lonny Marney  
23 Lauren Scott  
23 Claude Klaver  
24 Dale Feist  
27 Leah Ekblad  
27 Brett Johnson