

FIRST LIGHT NEWSLETTER

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

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Fairbanks First Presbyterian Church

547 7th Avenue

Fairbanks, AK 99701

Office: 907-452-2406

Fax: 907-452-7205

www.fairbanksfirstpres.com

[Facebook/fpcfairbanks](https://www.facebook.com/fpcfairbanks)

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* ~~

February brings many blessings: a massive increase in sunshine, (typically) warmer weather, and of course, Lent!

Lent sits in an awkward place for many of us. For those of us who didn't grow up with Lent as a tradition, we're still not sure exactly what it's all about. Others in our church family did grow up with it, but maybe only remember it being about fasting and frowning or solemn assemblies.

Put simply, Lent is the 40 days (not counting Sundays) before Easter. It is meant to be a time for Christians to reflect and prepare for the great celebration of Christ's resurrection from the dead at Easter and to grow deeper in our discipleship. Some Christians fast by giving up sweets or caffeine or alcohol. Some Christians take on a spiritual discipline like reading scripture, praying, writing letters to loved ones, or giving to charity. I encourage you to consider how God is calling you to practice Lent.

One way that God is calling FPC this Lenten season is deeper into evangelism: sharing the Good News of what Jesus has done and continues to do in the world and in our lives. One thing that I am asking every household at FPC to do, is to invite a neighbor/coworker/friend from outside the Church (the whole Church, not just FPC!) to join you in a simple act of hospitality and fellowship.

We are kicking off this Lenten Call for our church with a potluck on Sunday, February 22nd that will also feature some board games and an opportunity to learn those games!

If you're unsure about how to go about doing evangelism, try these easy steps:

- 1) Identify the person to whom you feel God is calling you to pray and share your faith.
- 2) Pray for that person every day. It can just be for a couple minutes once a day. Ask God to give you the right opportunity and the right words when the time comes.
- 3) Invite that person. This could be dinner at your house. Lunch at their favorite spot. Coffee or tea at a local cafe. See if there's a quick card game or board game they'd like to play together at this meeting.
- 4) Make it clear that you feel blessed by God to have them in your life. Express gratitude for what their presence in your life brings.
- 5) Ask if there's anything in their life that you can be praying for, or if they have any questions about Christianity, The Bible, or church.
- 6) Don't try to force them to come to church or accept Christ as Lord, simply let them know that you are grateful for their presence in your life and that you are hoping to discuss more than just the weather. If this is an opportunity to go deeper, the Holy Spirit will make it clear.
- 7) Afterward, continue to pray for this person. Patiently wait and see how God works in their life. Follow up with them a week or two later and see if they're interested in meeting again.

I guess what I'm saying is: "Preach the Gospel, Use Board Games if Necessary."

This Lent, God is calling us to know our neighbors, love our neighbors, and share the Gospel with our neighbors. This doesn't mean to hand them tracts, or shout until they repent, or force awkward conversations. It means to extend hospitality to them, to listen to their life, to notice where your life and their life intersect, and to share about how God is at work in both your life and their life. When we do this, God will honor our effort and many seeds of Christ's Gospel will be planted!



Sunday, February 22nd

After the Church Service

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&
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CHILDREN'S ministry



Dear First Pres Folks,

This week, I had the pleasure of chatting with a parent who is new to First Presbyterian. I found myself explaining why we create our curriculum as we go, rather than purchasing a perfectly normal curriculum from a reputable Christian publisher. The answer I gave her comes down to: we teach what these particular kids need, at this particular time.

This month, this season before Lent and after Christmas, I look around and the kids are tired. When kids are tired, it can make them jumpy and unfocused and a little frantic at times. To be fair, sometimes tiredness, of the body or mind or soul can do the same to adults. Maybe you've experienced this lately? Observing this, we chose to study the book of Jonah.

We observed that even prophets don't always want to do what God calls them to. We observed that when Jonah tried to run, the Hound of Heaven chased after him, and interrupted his disobedience, and saved his life. We observed that God put Jonah in a time out of sorts, until he could obey.

We spent some time this week practicing stillness with God, as if we were in the belly of a whale.



We practiced drawing close to Him when we don't feel like being kind or generous, or grateful. In this season, with these kids, I hope we are teaching that in difficult times, with all our big feelings, God is present, and He will speak. If we're willing to slow down and rest with Him, He will direct our feet, change the world, and He may even change us.



Roots Club (for Kids 3rd-5th) meets Wednesdays 4-6 and includes a snack.
Climb Club (for Kids 6th-8th) meets Sundays 4-6 and includes dinner

Covenant

Notes from Nicole

First Pres Families,

February is upon us and we can see the LIGHT! What a gift it has been to walk with you on Sunday mornings as Pastor David exegetes the gospel of Mark encouraging us to receive the light of Christ NOW as we become the Light.

Both High School and College are continuing to explore the gospel of John finding connections, differences to other gospels and the Old Testament. Thank you for allowing your students to participate. The game of the season is "find the baby" because Mardi Gras is my favorite season and king cake is superior. It's fun to bring southern tradition to some of our students.

February will be like January as we are not adding any additional new programming or special services. In February let's continue building the rhythm of High School meeting at 4:00 p.m. in the Studio and College at 7:00 on Friday nights for dinner and bible study at my house.

My prayer for NextGen as we continue in fellowship is for the vision of my heart to be made manifest: worship, healing, and salvation. For members of NextGen to know they are deeply loved and wanted by the God of heaven.

"Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine." Exodus 19:5

For the Good and God,
-Nicole

February Calendar

- **Sunday Service: Pray in the Narthex with Dan and Amber before worship on Sunday**
- **High School - every Sunday @ 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.**
- **College - Dinner & Bible Study @ Nicole's every Friday @ 7:00**
- **Career - Fellowship Dinner once a month**



Birthdays

- 1 **Sarah Morris**
- 2 **Danny Sheets**
- 4 **Chloe Albert**
- 7 **Russ Vander Lugt**
- 7 **Hayden Masterson**
- 7 **Esmeralda Sheets**
- 8 **Henry Hull**
- 8 **Diane Henry**
- 9 **Austin Foster**
- 12 **Samuel Craft**
- 13 **David Jones**
- 13 **Molly DeLeon**
- 15 **Autumn Vander Lugt**
- 15 **Lily Sunderland**
- 17 **Christina Repasky**
- 19 **Ellucia Boswell**
- 20 **Lonny Marney**
- 24 **Dale Feist**
- 26 **Merle Fortune II**

February

What follows is a short summary of the discussions and actions of the Session, at the January 28, 2026 Stated Session Meeting, which began at 6:05 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.
- The vital statistics from December 17th to January 20th and the minutes of the December 16th Stated Session Meeting were reviewed and approved.
- Correspondence was received from our Presbytery and a group of Teaching Elders from the Denomination, with information about an Ad Interim Committee which is at work and will provide its results at General Assembly this Summer.
- The Consent Calendar was presenting and approved; which included approval of membership transfer to FPC for Steve and Julie Hurtle and approval of vacation leave for Pastor David on February 6th and 8th.
- A financial summary was received from Church Treasurer Mikki Holt and Ruling Elder (RE) Paul Reichardt, chair of the Stewardship and Finance Team. For the 2025 Budget, the deficit has increased due to a short-fall in unrealized pledges. Spending for 2025 remained at expected levels.
- Church Treasurer Mikki Holt notified that she would be remaining in the position until August 2026 at the latest.
- Church membership increased by two to 153 as of January 20, 2026. The average weekly church attendance decreased over the last month to 130 per service. Average weekly attendance for 2025 Year-end was 151 per service.
- Director of Children's Ministry Carina Menaker provided possible plans for Vacation Bible School, scheduled for June 7-10, 2026.
- The date of the Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting and Annual Corporation Meeting was set for February 15, 2026, after morning worship. The proposed agenda for the meeting was reviewed and approved. The deadline for Annual Reports to be submitted by Session Chairpersons was set for February 3, 2026.
- The position of Clerk of Session is up for re-election in January of each year. It was moved, seconded and passed to re-elect David Dreydoppel as Clerk of Session for the remainder of 2026.
- RE's David Henry and Paul Reichardt volunteered to assist with communion on February 1, 2026.
- It was passed to approve serving Communion on each Sunday of the upcoming Lenten Season.
- Discussions on the 2026 Budget continued. At this point, the number of pledges remains down from last year, resulting in projected income which will be less than what was expected. Amounts in the budgetary restricted funds were realigned to better reflect the church's financial policy.

- The final version of the 2026 Budget was presented and approved, with an amendment to the overall deficit, lowering to \$-6,385 with the release of \$10,00 in the church plant restricted fund to the General Fund.
- Session determined that Quarterly Financial Reports will be provided to the congregation, in verbal and written formats directly to the congregation, in the bulletin and the newsletter.
- Session was urged to update and review written reports prior to each Session Meeting.
- Pastor David presented plans for a “Board Game Potluck” immediately after morning worship on February 22nd as a kickoff to the Lenten Season.
- Written reports were received from Ministry Teams.
- The meeting was adjourned by the Moderator and RE Brian Rozell led the closing prayer.
- The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on February 17, 2026 at 6:00 pm, in the Church Conference Room.

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, February 15th
After the Church Service



Please plan to stay by to hear reports and ask any questions you may have. Members of the congregation have voice and vote, but all are encouraged to attend.

Copies of the Annual Report will be available in the Narthex.



First Presbyterian Church
of Fairbanks

Annual Congregational Meeting
February 15, 2026

Elementary Children



Bring a sack lunch.

Adult supervision and a movie will be provided.



Ash Wednesday
Worship Service
February 18th
7pm



We would appreciate donations of easy to eat breakfast foods, like muffins or bread, to pass out to people in need during the Sunday morning church service. Food can be left in the fellowship hall/basement kitchen, labeled "Sunday Morning Warming Food".

The Well needs your old clothes! We're out of warm pants, preferably sweatpants and snow pants, and non-cotton winter socks. We can always use winter clothing donations like boots, jackets, hats, mittens/gloves, and gators. We've got plenty of shirts but warm layers like hoodies/sweatshirts are also really helpful. Thanks for your help keeping people warm at these cold temps!



**10 week
Class
begins
Feb. 22
4-6 in
place of
Climb
Club.**

Middle School Confirmation Classes

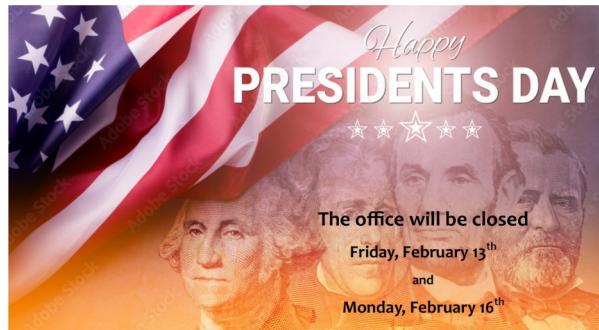
Confirmation classes will review the essentials of faith, especially as reflected in the Apostle's Creed.

Upon completion of the course, students may opt to be baptised for the first time or make a public reaffirmation of previous baptism. They are then eligible to be "Confirmed" as voting church members.

**To register your student,
please plan to attend**

**Sunday, February 15
4-6 p.m. @FPC**

*Information Session 4-5
Family Dinner 5-6*



.be well
Isaiah 3:10

Date: Saturday, February 7th, 2026

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Where: FPC Fairbanks

What to bring: yoga mat

What to wear: Athleisure

Cost: \$30.00



FYNDout

F R E E

FYNDout Free is Hiring
Nurses!



Paid
Positions

Volunteer
Positions

Contact us at 907-455-8255
for more information

**JOIN
OUR
TEAM**

February 2026

1st Pres Staff
 David McConnell
 -Booher
 Nicole Matthews
 Carina Menaker
 Noreen Harwood
 Peggy Nicholas
 Paul Bonnell
Deacons
 Maria 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

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1 <i>FPC</i>	2 <i>Judy McNinch</i>	3 <i>James, Carina, Diego, Essie & Lucy Menaker</i>	4 <i>Gayle Meurs</i>	5 <i>Diane Miller</i>	6 <i>Robin & Connie Miller</i>	7 <i>Ray & Trish Mikolajczyk</i>
8 <i>Our Pastor</i>	9 <i>Rhonda Montgomery, Sailor, Sam, John, Rosie & Seidny Waddell</i>	10 <i>Jack, Ashley, Henry & Sarah Morris</i>	11 <i>Fred, Maria, Cassie & Jacob Morrison</i>	12 <i>Linda Mullen</i>	13 <i>Meredith Nava</i>	14 <i>Korey, Beverly & Indigo Neuhs</i>
15 <i>Congregational Meeting</i>	16 <i>Peggy Nicholas</i>	17 <i>Keith, Barb, Kari & Kelsy Nore</i>	18 <i>Josephine Papp</i>	19 <i>Josephine Papp</i>	20 <i>Bobby, Rachel, Jerry, Devin, Mya, Emily & Ethan Perkins</i>	21 <i>Thelma Pierce</i>
22 <i>Middle School Confirmation Class</i>	23 <i>Autumn Prince</i>	24 <i>Melissa Prince</i>	25 <i>Kathy & Richard Rahmander-Halfhill</i>	26 <i>Paul & Terry Reichardt</i>	27 <i>Michael, Christina, Henry & George Repasky</i>	28 <i>Ted & Joan Riggs</i>

Healing Prayers for

Pat Fink Joy-el Culligan Sarah Curtis George Shoogukwuk Joan Riggs Joyce Tapper Deanna Morris Mike Bartels Brian Sunderland