

FIRST LIGHT NEWSLETTER

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

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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 ~~

We Are Starting Strong With The Gospel of Mark!

Walk With Jesus

A Journey through Mark's Gospel

Jan 11 - The Beginning of Good News - Mark 1

Jan 18 - Which is Easier to Say? - Mark 2&3

Jan 25 - The Kingdom of God - Mark 4&5

Feb 1 - Clean and Unclean - Mark 6&7

Feb 8 - Who Do You Say I Am? - Mark 8

Feb 15 - Who Is The Greatest? - Mark 9

Feb 22 - Camels and Needles - Mark 10

Mar 1 - Hosanna to the King! - Mark 11

Mar 8 - Abraham, Isaac & Jacob - Mark 12

Mar 15 - The Day and The Hour - Mark 13

Mar 22 - The Body and Blood - Mark 14

Mar 29 - A Crown for a King - Mark 15

Apr 5 - He Is Not Here! - Mark 16

New Year's Resolutions can be a mixed bag. You can aim high and maybe bite off more than you can chew, get discouraged, and fall off the train entirely. That's usually my experience, anyway. Most of my best new habits did not start in January, but I couldn't tell you why!

I absolutely admire good habits and disciplines, and I applaud those who use the start of a new calendar to pursue and (hopefully!) adopt new habits and disciplines. Kudos and congrats to all of you New Year's Resolvers!

In 2026, I am asking you, church family, to take on a simple challenge with me. We are going to walk through the entire Gospel of Mark together, and we're going to do it in the first third of the year! Never mind that the entire gospel is only a few dozen pages and listening to the gospel read aloud should take less than three hours! We are going to do it, and we're going to explore Jesus Christ and His Gospel message and Kingdom Way together for all of the Sundays from January 11th through Easter Sunday. It's a simple challenge, but this season will be absolutely brimming with opportunities for the Word of God to speak to us and the Holy Spirit to stir up in us passion for following Jesus and proclaiming His Gospel to the world around us!

If you're already fairly advanced in your Bible Study skills and disciplines, this may seem like an easy lift. I would encourage you to consider reading a commentary on the Gospel of Mark as an additional Christian practice for this season!

If you're itching to jump ahead or wondering how to share this gospel-hearing practice with family and friends, we have an awesome and free resource! My old Theology professor, Dr/Pastor Phil Ruge-Jones learned the entire Gospel of Mark by heart and shared the gospel in this ancient, storyteller method and it was filmed professionally and uploaded to YouTube. You can view and share it with this link [\[https://tinyurl.com/5n8cvp7m\]](https://tinyurl.com/5n8cvp7m) or with the QR Code next to this article!



This Sunday focus will enrich our faith and bring us closer to The Lord and His heart for First Pres. I look forward to walking through the Gospel of Mark with you in early 2026!

~~Pastor David



CHILDREN'S ministry

MY FAVORITE KIND OF SHOW

If you didn't know, I love a good show, and one of my favorites is the Muppet show. Although the characters are just pieces of fabric and funny voices, when they come together and sing about peace and joy--the ache in my heart is real.

When we put on our annual Christmas pageant, I feel a little like Kermit the Frog: gathering up all the varied gifts and distinctions of the kids and adults and looking for a transcendent moment. We are not professional singers, and some of us have not combed our hair in a while, and one of us gave ourselves a Sharpie beard at the last minute. The Roman helmets broke this year--and Baby Jesus got lost under the hay and there was a mad dash to find another doll before the curtain opened. There were many little disasters. It wasn't as exciting as the year everyone got the flu, but it had some flavor.

Every year, I have a plan, just like Kermit, to put on a great show, but once we've begun, anything can happen. Hopefully, God reaches down and adds some more miracle to His miraculous story. Hopefully, the kids feel it, and the volunteers feel it and we grow a little wiser and a little kinder and a little more like Jesus. This year, Sonny played his trombone beautifully, and the middle schoolers spoke scripture like they meant it, and the little angels signed and the bigger angels sang in Spanish--and there was a joyous all-out run from a certain shooting star.

Thank you parents and kids and our wonderful audience. I pray God's love and mercy were evident for you in this, my favorite kind of show: where silliness meets the sublime. I hope it made your heart ache a little.

✝️ *Quinn*

Covenant

Notes from Nicole

First Pres Families,

2026 is staring right at us and it looks like it's going to be a solid year. If you're new to First Pres - welcome. There is a rich and full year planned for you, not just in Next Gen but for the entire body of the church. Whether you're a parent of NextGen, a Career member of NextGen, or a Student in NextGen there is a place for you at First Pres.

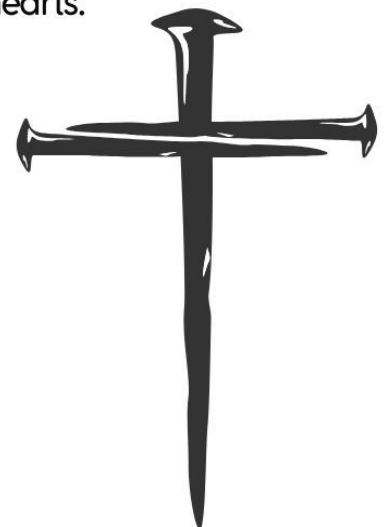
NextGen has a new opportunity to serve in First Pres by working with Dan and Amber on Sunday morning. We have a unique opportunity to provide faith support as we hold space as a warming shelter and the only place serving coffee and breakfast on Sunday morning. Sunday mornings any student, college, or career member of NextGen who would like to serve as a prayer partner is invited to do so. Any time you arrive before 10:00 a.m. worship you are invited to pray and refill coffee for those who need it most.

Parents - if you have a student who has struggled connecting to NextGen either before I arrived or during my time here at FPC please call me. I'd like to hear what would make it better or easier for your student to enjoy fellowship with our regularly attending students.

January in NextGen is like a garden: it will be quiet this month with our service project taking place during the 4:00 p.m. time and taking the month off leading worship. In January let's continue building the rhythm of High School meeting at 4:00 p.m. and College and Career meeting at 6:00. During our time we'll study the gospels.

2026 - can't wait to see how you shape our character and hearts.

For the Good and God,
-Nicole



January 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 and Career - every Sunday @ 6:00 p.m.**

Birthdays

- 2 Sarah Curtis*
- 5 Denise Wartes*
- 6 Beth Drummond*
- 7 Benjamin Hull*
- 10 Michael Repasky*
- 12 Joan Riggs*
- 14 Sara Cogley*
- 16 Geoff Beyersdorff*
- 16 Jack Schnurr*
- 25 Shelia Williams*
- 26 Kari Nore*
- 29 Samuel Boylan*
- 31 Karina Huffaker*

January

What follows is a short summary of the discussions and actions of the Session, at the December 16, 2025 Stated Session Meeting, which began at 6:11 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.
- A financial summary was received from Church Treasurer Mikki Holt and Ruling Elder (RE) Paul Reichardt, chair of the Stewardship and Finance Team.
- The vital statistics from November 19th to December 16th and the minutes of the October 21st Stated Session Meeting were reviewed and approved.
- Church membership remains at 151 as of December 16, 2025, with no gains or loses. The average weekly church attendance increased over the last month to 175 per service. Average weekly attendance for 2025 Year-to-date is 152 per service.
- It was moved, seconded and passed to ratify an email vote that was taken from December 1st to 4th which passed a motion to contract with “Push Pay” a church records system which will replace several current systems into one program and ends up saving service fees. Information on the new systems, which includes a new online giving program, will be presented soon.
- Correspondence was received from our Presbytery with information about the upcoming Presbytery Meeting.
- RE Emma Snell and Brian Sunderland volunteered to assist with communion on January 4, 2026.
- It was passed to move the remaining funds received from the recent Silver Tea into the Restricted Fund that has been set aside for that purpose.
- The upcoming Winter Presbytery Meeting was discussed. Ruling Elder Emma Snell and Clerk

of Session David Dreydoppel were elected as Commissioners. The meeting will be held January 30th in Gig Harbor Washington, at Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church.

- Pastor David presented an update on the Narthex Ministry Plan Committee, which recently met. The meeting resulted in positive planning steps, action items, and long range goals.
- A motion from the Security Sub-Committee, which has been tabled for several month was brought back up. It was passed that “The number of people utilizing the Narthex [for warming] on Sunday morning should be limited to 5 per volunteer monitoring the area”.
- It was passed to approve a new logo for FPC publications and to use the new logo on a new order of stationery for use by the church office.
- It was determined that a working group, made up of Pastor David, Emma Snell and Sarah Albert, work toward implementing a plan to set up Prayer Partners among the those in the congregation, with a goal of spiritual and relational growth.
- It was passed to approve vacation leave for Pastor David on December 30th, January 5th, 9th, 12th, 16th, and 23rd.
- Discussions on the 2026 Budget continued. A significant portion of the meetings focused on the church's financial status and planning for the 2026 budget. At this point, the number of pledges is down from last year, resulting in projected income which will be less than what was expected. Further discussion focused on ways to promote increased giving, and lower expected expenses.
- With the rising cost of health care, Pastor David and the Personnel Committee will be investigating alternate sources of medical insurance for staff members.
- It was passed, per denomination guidelines, to formally set the Pastor’s salary.
- Written reports were received from Ministry Teams.
- The meeting was adjourned by the Moderator and RE Sarah Albert led the closing prayer.
- The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on January 20, 2026 at 6:00 pm, in the Church Conference Room.

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



January 2026				Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Healing Prayers for Pat Fink Joy-el Culligan Sarah Curtis George Shoogukuwrk Joan Riggs Joyce Tapper Deanna Morris Mike Bartels									2 Tyler, Rachel, Liam & Soren Johnson	3 Anne Jones
4 Sunday Schools	5 Dave & Elizabeth Jones	6 Ray & Pat Karns	7 Robert Kent	8 Norm & Scottie Klann	9 Joanne Klaver	10 Adam, Emily, Norah, Holden & Dawson Kohl				
11 Children & Youth Ministries	12 Joe & Theresa LaMagna	13 Ethan, Nicole, Oakley & Wyatt Laughner	14 Mark Lawson, Jr, Heather Gaona & Dulce	15 Mark T. Lawson	16 Kathleen Libbey	17 Darlene Lundberg				
18 Music Ministry	19 Walter Lord	20 Isaac, Leah, Aaro, Adalie & Ezra Mackey	21 Karla MacKinney	22 Jeanne Maddux	23 Patsy Marenko	24 Lonny & Michele Marney				
25 Our Pastor	26 Scott, Rackell & Caxton Marney	27 Rick, Heidi, Twila, Kiana & Avery May	28 David & Brenna McConnell- Booher	29 Leslie & Debra McFarlane	30 Heather, Jason & Coby McFarland	31 Sandy & William McKee				