



# First Light

Volume 28, Issue 16

July 2019



**July 13-21  
Golden Days**



## FPC Summer at the Parks

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| July 4  | No Playgroup   |
| July 11 | Tanana Lakes ( Growden if too cold), end of Cushman. This is a Beach wear swimsuits, bring, life jackets and beach toys. |
| July 18 | Ester Park (off Parks Highway on Old Nenana behind the fire station).  |
| July 25 | Growden Park (on Wilbur, next to Goldpanner Station).  |

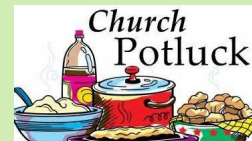
**Sunday Worship**

**July 14, 2019**

**COMBINED CHURCH SERVICE**

**Church Potluck Lunch**

**July 14, 2019**



**Following the combined service. Bring your favorite dish and spend some time getting to know others while enjoying some good food!**



**Monday**

**July 15, 6-8pm**

**Outside Games—Parents vs Kids Night**

**\*\*\*\*\* OFFICE CLOSURES \*\*\*\*\***

**Thursday, July 4 and Monday, July 8, 2019**

## The Midnight Sun at 1<sup>st</sup> Pres!

The caption for this 113-year old photo reads: "Taken at Fairbanks, Alaska, June 21, 1906. Midnight. By Robertson." The picture was taken from Cushman Street looking east at the front of our church on summer solstice, 1906, with everyone in their Sunday best!

I came across this photo while conducting dissertation research at the State Library and Archives in Juneau last month. If you're in Juneau, it's worth a stop to look through Rev. Samuel Hall Young's Collection of Papers & Photographs, containing six boxes of manuscripts and one box of photographs from 1881-1927.

Reverend Young considered Alaska a mission field. He organized the first Protestant church in Alaska in 1879. That same year, he met John Muir and together they explored Glacier Bay and the surrounding area (both published books recounting their adventure: "Travels in Alaska" by Muir and "Alaska Days with John Muir" by Young). A prominent figure in Alaska's history, Rev. Young was considered by President McKinley for appointment as governor of Alaska in 1897. However, with the Klondike gold rush beckoning, Young instead climbed the Chilkoot Pass along with thousands of stampeders and established the first Presbyterian Church of Dawson on Easter Sunday, 1898. Young continued to establish numerous missions and churches throughout Alaska and was a

appointed superintendent of all Alaska Presbyterian missions. He traveled extensively throughout the state and recounted his experiences in an autobiography titled, "Hall Young of Alaska: the Mushing Parson." His account of founding our church in 1904 is contained in chapter 38, "The Fairbanks Stampede."

In Young's autobiography, he writes that after arriving in Fairbanks in the summer of 1904, he lost no time in securing a site for church and manse. He then departed for the Seward Peninsula in spring 1906, leaving 1st Presbyterian church "in the charge of Mr. Howard Frank, whose church at [the town site of] Chena had declined with that town, and who agreed to care for the Fairbanks church until a pastor could be secured." (Rev.

Howard Frank is standing in the upper right hand corner of the group.) Reverend Young returned to Fairbanks in the spring of 1907 and oversaw the building of a commodious manse in Fairbanks to prepare for the "promised missionary," Rev. James H. Condit, and his family. Reverend Condit had previously ministered at the Presbyterian church located in Juneau and pastored Fairbanks 1st Presbyterian Church from 1908-1913.

This photo is similar to the one we have hanging in the foyer of our church, directly across from Marta's counter window. Fairbanks was only a few years old in 1906, yet still managed to be electrified as early as 1905 (electric wires are seen coming into the church from the left side). Note also the majority of women (only two men and a boy with dog are pictured), and their elaborate period hats, with one woman wearing a cowboy hat! Young writes, "There were in proportion more women in Fairbanks than at either of the other stampedes, and many of these women were Christians and used to church work . . . when my building was up, I organized a church of some thirty members representing seven or eight different denominations."

The picture shows members who agreed to don their Sunday best at midnight for a novel solstice photograph under the midnight sun. One hundred and thirteen years later, having church and taking a picture at solstice may no longer be a novelty to write home about, but Christ's work through the church in Alaska continues to be an exciting adventure and something to celebrate!



# Eight Essential Action Steps

On October 21, 2018, three months before I arrived in Fairbanks, the Session of the First Presbyterian Church committed itself to 8 “Action Steps” that they then sent to you, the congregation, and encouraged you to “Adopt these Same Action Steps.” These Action Steps were drawn to my attention two weeks ago. Action Steps are often helpful in focusing attention to particular issues and orchestrating a collective response, but Action Steps are only useful if they result in action or, at least, are reviewed on a regular basis. Much has happened since October 21, 2018, but I thought it would be helpful here to review, with you, what these “Action Steps” were and what has been done with them.

## 1. **Pray - Move towards unity by praying together. Hold a monthly concert of prayer.**

Prayer has certainly been a theme of Session and congregational meetings and gatherings over this year. For three months, the Session held an Elder’s Corner where everyone was encouraged to join with them in prayer after worship. Shortly, the Elder’s Corner will be replaced with a Prayer Corner. Watch for it and, if so moved, participate in it.

## 2. **Begin reading the following books, in this order:**

- **Making Peace by Jim Van Yperen**
- **Emotionally Healthy Spirituality by Pete Scazzero**
- **The Prodigal God by Tim Keller**

I must admit that I have not read all these books, but have read some of them and would commend them to you. I have talked with some who have read all three books and they seem to feel encouraged by them.

## 3. **Continue to serve the poor and do it without the attitude of blame**

One of the things that have particularly impressed me with First Presbyterian Church of Fairbanks has been its aggressive service to the poor and the marginalized. With your programs throughout the week and, particularly, on Wednesdays, few could find fault with your commitment on this matter.

## Message from the Pastor

## 4. **Take the AA challenge and do it without the attitude of blame**

AA offers this pledge, “God grant me the serenity to accept things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference.” Certainly this prayer, first written by Reinhold Niebuhr, the great Reformed theologian, in 1937, is well worth our repeated reflection.

## 5. **Build a culture of honor in the church. Bless others. No gossip or complaining.**

This has been the subject of numerous conversations both in Session meetings and elsewhere. To my observation, gossip or complaining, have been at a minimum. There seems to be an eagerness at First Pres to move on into the future and be advocates rather than critics for the Ministry of Jesus Christ here.

## 6. **Go to another worship service, meet 3 new people**

Most of the elders have and are doing this. I am not certain that many in the congregation are. I attend both worship services and meet all those I can after worship and commend this practice to you. It is really refreshing.

## 7. **Choose to accept the recommendations of the Vital Church Ministries report**

The Vital Church Ministries report can be found in the church office, available to all for the asking. Some of the VCM recommendations have been accepted, others are being evaluated, while others have been set aside as no longer relevant. The Session is presently assessing this report once again.



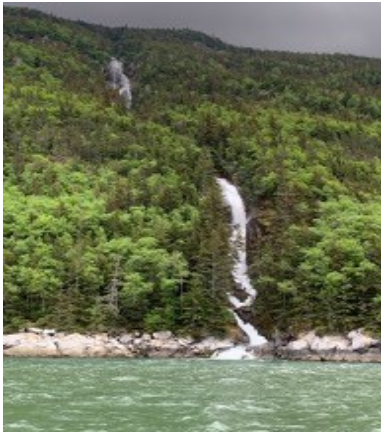
8. **Staff an intentional interim pastor who will help FPC navigate the VCM report findings**

It has been my privilege to have been called to be your “intentional interim pastor.” I suppose you, the members of the congregation, are in the best place to assess the success of this commitment, but I personally feel that we are making serious progress. With the election of the Pastor Search Committee, new elders and deacons and new members joining the church, there is good reason to feel that exciting days are on the horizon.

These Action Steps are helpful for each of us. I’d encourage us, each one, to ask God to strengthen our

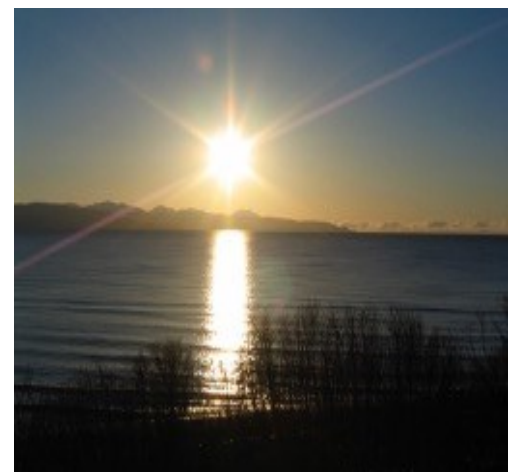
resolve, inspire our participation and produce His Peace through these action steps and all the other tools He has given us to be the Church He has created us to be. As we are reminded at the conclusion of the “Action Steps” I would repeat these words of Jesus, ***“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My Voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.”*** [Rev. 3:20]

**God Bless,  
Dr. Donald Baird**



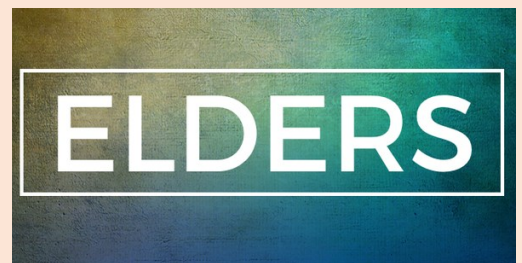
The beauty of summer in Alaska! Celebrate God’s great out of doors and spend time reflecting on how you can make a difference. Whether you are in Southeast Alaska, Denali National Park, Homer, Alaska, visiting the “Lower 48,” or simply in your own backyard with the squirrels and fragrant flowers and the buzzing mosquitoes, do not forget to thank Him for all the great things He hath provided! The Deacons of First Presbyterian Church are happy to welcome our new members: Rosario Sheets and Lillian Fortune, and we are thankful for Sarah Curtis and Kathy Rahmandar-Halfhill for continuing to serve as deacons for another term. We try to uplift the members of our congregation and we just celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of dear Marcel Colp! JOY! JOY! JOY! Have a blessed summer and stay safe in His care.

**In His service,  
Barbara Nore, Moderator of the First Presbyterian Church Deacons**



**What follows is a short summary of the decisions and actions of the Session, at the June 18, 2019 Session Meeting. The minutes of the meeting will contain a more complete record.**

- The meeting was opened by Pastor Don, who presented a "Pastor's Study" on an overview of the EPC Book of Order, the Westminster Confessions, and the EPC Leadership Training Guide.
- With regret, the Session received a written letter of resignation from Ruling Elder Jake Sirevaag. The Session voted to receive his resignation and to direct the Nominating Committee to begin work filling his position, along with any other positions that are vacant.
- In October of 2018, the Session shared with the congregation 8 Action Steps suggested by Vital Church Ministries as a result of our assessment last fall. These action steps will be reviewed by each Ministry Team to consider where progress is being made and where progress is lacking. Each team will report back to Session in July.
- Consent Calendar items on the agenda were passed without objection. These items included:
  - Review and approve the minutes of the Deacons' April 23, 2019 meeting.
  - Update the list of check signers on the church accounts to include Barb
- Page, Dave Dreydoppel, Jim Aldrich, June Champlin, Mike Repasky and Jerry Cleworth.
- Approve Michelle Harpole as a financial counter.
- Approve the request of members Jay and Lorian Quakenbush to be moved to the inactive roll.
- Approve the Baptism of Henry Wayne Hull, son of Ben and Lynn Hull, at the first service on June 23, 2019.
- Session received a financial report from Treasurer Dave Stephenson.
- Pastor Don and David McConnell-Booher will be announcing the availability of Prayer Minister in the sanctuary after services.
- The Personnel Ministry Team brought an updated list of core responsibilities for their committee and asked Session to approve. Session voted to approve.
- RE Terry Reichardt moved to have all ministry teams update their core responsibilities annually and have them available for review and approval in September of each year.
- RE Terry Reichardt, on behalf of the Personnel Ministry Team, moved to give a bonus of \$1000.00 to Youth Director David McConnell-Booher, in recognition of his exceptional efforts.



- Ministry Team Chairpersons updated the list of team members on each team. The list will be circulated to all members of Session.

**The next Session Meeting will be held on July 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm in the Church Conference Room.**

**Dave Dreydoppel, Clerk of Session**

**MISSION**

Our mission 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.

**VISION**

Our vision is to be a beacon for Jesus Christ. With His love and joy, we will draw people into a safe harbor where they are welcomed, healed, restored, and nurtured, becoming radiant witnesses.



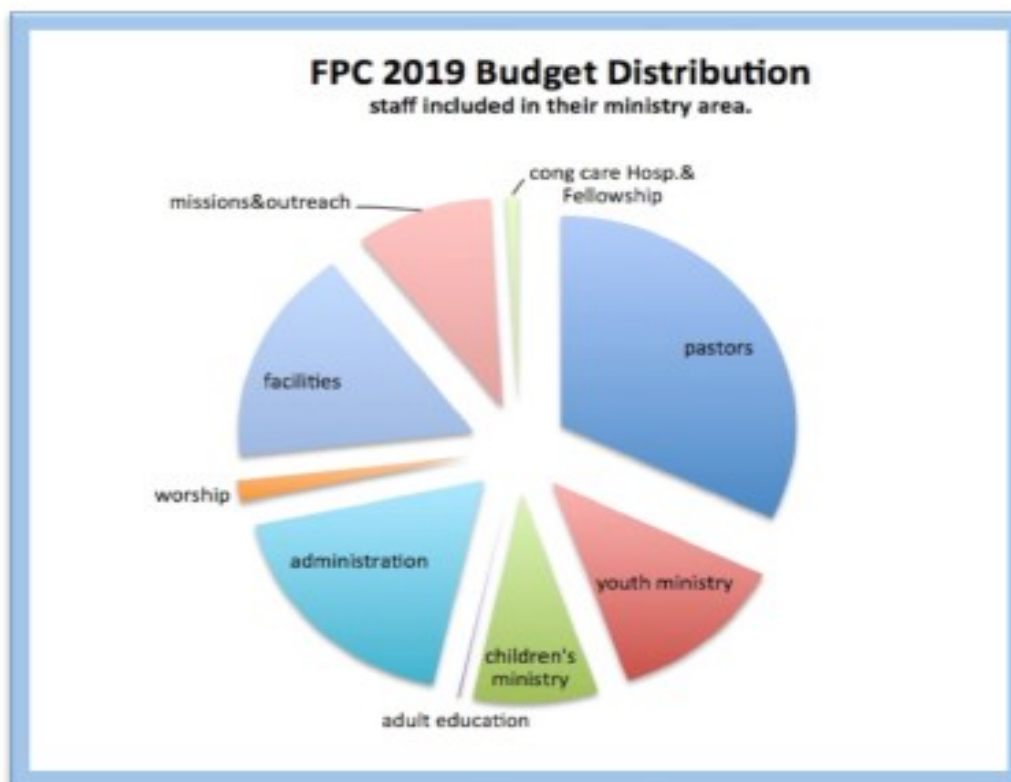


# STEWARDSHIP

*Managing God's Gifts To Us*

First Presbyterian Church of Fairbanks depends on the voluntary offerings of the congregation to maintain the facilities, pay the staff and carry out the programs of the church. Your contribution, large or small, helps keep us going.

The pie chart below shows how the \$593,420 budgeted for 2019 are distributed.



Staff members are included within their ministry area. For example, the youth ministry slice of the pie, includes the Youth Ministry Director's compensation along with the funds budgeted for the program.

The worship slice includes the sound projection tech's compensation.

The detailed budget is included in the annual report booklet that was distributed in January prior to the winter congregational meeting.

**Elder Barbara Page**

THROUGH MAY 2019	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	233,746
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>246,053</u>
NET	<u>(12,307)</u>

## FINANCE

**Submitted respectfully by  
Dave Stephenson**



2	Billy Brewer	17	Barbara Moody
4	Rebekah VanderLugt	17	Jill Gates
6	Janette Hanneman	18	Kathy Rahmandar-Halfhill
7	Judy McNinch	18	Jerod Dunlap
9	Diane Miller	19	Bob VanHatten
10	Scott Gilbert	19	Ian VanHarper
11	Margaret Vander Lugt	20	Heidi VanHarper
13	Sarah Albert	23	Michele Marney
14	Cindy Aldrich	23	Amy Logan
14	Roxie Fink	23	Elsa Beene
15	Aidan Moody	26	Walter Lord Jr.
16	Oliver Brewer	31	Allyson Benson

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**



at the  
North Haven Center  
Fort Wainwright

**Sunday July 14, 1-7pm**

Lunch, movies, video games, outdoor games, etc.!  
The youth will meet at the church at 12:45pm and  
drive over to the center.