

# First Light

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## Looking Ahead to the

### Annual Congregation Meeting

As you know, our Annual Meeting was delayed from May to June, and we are still planning on having that meeting this month. As Session considers and implements safety protocols for in-person gatherings at FPC over the next two weeks, prepare to hear about the Annual Meeting being called before the end of June. Please continue to pray with us as we do the work of Christ's church together!

David McConnell-Booher

## A Word on Reopening

As you know, Governor Dunleavy has implemented Phases 3 and 4 of the Reopen Alaska Responsibly Plan. This means that churches can now begin to reopen. At last month's Session meeting, a committee was formed to look into what we will need to do to open the church. Things like extra sanitation, access to the building, and a large number of factors are being considered. Guidance provided by the State of Alaska and the Fairbanks North Star Borough is also being considered.

This week (the week of May 31<sup>st</sup>), we anticipate that the committee will finalize their three separate recommendations. The first will address the measures needed to reopen the church for a single service on Sunday. The second will address the measures needed to hold a congregational meeting at the church, and the third will address the measures needed for limited church sponsored youth activities. We also anticipate that these recommendations will be passed along to Session during the week of May 31<sup>st</sup>.

As I mentioned last week, we want to reopen the church as quickly as we can, but we also want to be careful to do so responsibly. That means different things to different people, and so we are trying to balance the different interests and concerns as best we can. In any event, we will continue the online Sunday services as we begin to reopen the church so that anyone who feels they should not return just yet will have the opportunity to continue to worship with us online.

Please continue to pray for our team and for our church. Our prayers are the most important part of this effort.

Respectfully,  
Jim Aldrich  
Session Moderator

**HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!!**  
**June 21st**

## Proper Goodbyes

FPC Family, because of the pandemic, we were unable to give proper goodbyes to Dave Stephenson, our church treasurer and accountant for over 40 years and our interim pastor, Dr. Donald Baird. We would like to encourage you to write a card of thanks and blessings to both of these faithful servants.

In addition, a gift was purchased for Dave Stephenson and a gift will be purchased for Pastor Don to be presented when he comes back to pick up his belongings. If you are able to contribute to these gifts, please note specifically who/what it is for when you mail or drop your donation off at the church.

**David and Linda Stephenson**  
**6147 W. Drummond Drive**  
**Meridian, ID 83646**

**Dr. Donald Baird**  
**561 Pico Way**  
**Sacramento, CA 95819**

For additional information, please contact Stephanie Rozell at 907-687-3730.



## HAPPY BIRTHDAYS!!!

1	Kyle Vanhatten	27	George Bowder
	Mya Perkins	28	Sara Williams
	Richard Halfhill		James Fuller
2	Roberta Scott	29	Jacob Rozell
	David McConnell-Booher	30	Taylor Young
	Amy Richards		Kyle Lundberg
3	Aaro Mackey		
	Henry Morris		
4	Ellie Hull		
7	Roland Tapper		
8	Steve Beene		
9	Kathleen Fagre		
	Jerry Freel		
	Benaiah Vanderlugt		
10	Carla Lundberg		
13	Chelsea Miller		
14	John Waddell		
16	Lillian Ahsoak Fortune		
	Kyle Sunderland		
24	Sarah Rozell		

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARIES!!!

1	Jay & Loriann Quakenbush
5	David & Brenna McConnell-Booher
6	Barb & Perry Schneider
7	Dave & Linda Stephenson
12	Don & Michelle Harpole
13	George & Wanda Bowder
14	Bob & Michelle Vanhatten
18	Dwight & Deanna Morris
29	Rob & Ellucia Boswell
30	Victor & Denise Wallace

## Transitions and Seasons

I remember when I was a kid, our church would always joke about “Being In Transition.” Whether we were changing to a new hymnal, hiring a new Youth Minister, or undergoing a construction or building renovation, it always felt like we were never quite settled as a church.

I am certain that many of us here at First Pres feel the same way today. In the last decade, we have said goodbye to a Senior Pastor of over twenty years, an Associate Pastor of nine years, two Directors of Children’s Ministry, and three Office Administrators. We have also said goodbye to dozens of members who have moved away or passed through death to eternal life with The Lord. Of course we have also welcomed dozens of new members who were born and baptized here in our community, many more were confirmed through the Youth Ministry, and still more chose First Pres because you invited them to come and see what Christ is up to around here! We have left one denominational organization and joined another. We have finished our basement and upgraded many of the facilities that allow our church building to be a place where the Gospel is proclaimed, the hungry are fed, the hopeless are given a promise of salvation in Christ, and all are welcomed.

Certainly, we are all familiar with what “Being in Transition” feels like. It can be exhausting at times as we seek a more comfortable space. We would rather be settled and established than in some perpetual flux, right? The idea of finally being out of transition does sound nice. After all, we are looking forward to getting a new Senior Pastor, we are looking forward to gathering in the sanctuary of FPC for regular worship and fellowship once again, and we are looking forward to having a new Director of Children’s Ministry. All of these are worthy subjects of anticipation and hope. Our elders, staff, and volunteers are all diligently striving to see these hopes become reality.

But I’m not so sure we should be too quick to cast off our title as a “Church In Transition.” What was the Protestant Reformation if not the church recognizing deep flaws in its theology and practice and transitioning to better ways of being the church that were more thoughtful, prayerful, and scripturally-based? Have we not continued to be a “reforming church” or in other words, a “church in transition” since then?

As this newsletter goes out, we will be transitioning from May to June and on the church calendar we will be moving from the Easter season to the season of Pentecost. What a wonderful opportunity to mark this transition; to (as Stephanie said in last week’s sermon) plant an Ebenezer stone and remember all that God has done to bring us to this moment; to pray with eager anticipation and see how God will be bringing His Kingdom to Earth and how we might be obeying and serving God’s will as workers in that Kingdom in the coming season!

It is certainly good to take moments every day to settle, to be still and listen for God’s voice. But inevitably, we hear God’s voice calling us deeper into Love, deeper into Discipleship, and deeper into the work of Christ’s church. May we hear God’s call, and boldly step into a new season as First Presbyterian Church!

David McConnell-Booher  
Youth Pastor



**What follows is a short summary of the decisions and actions of the Session, at the May 19, 2020 Session Meeting. The minutes of the meeting will contain a more complete record.**

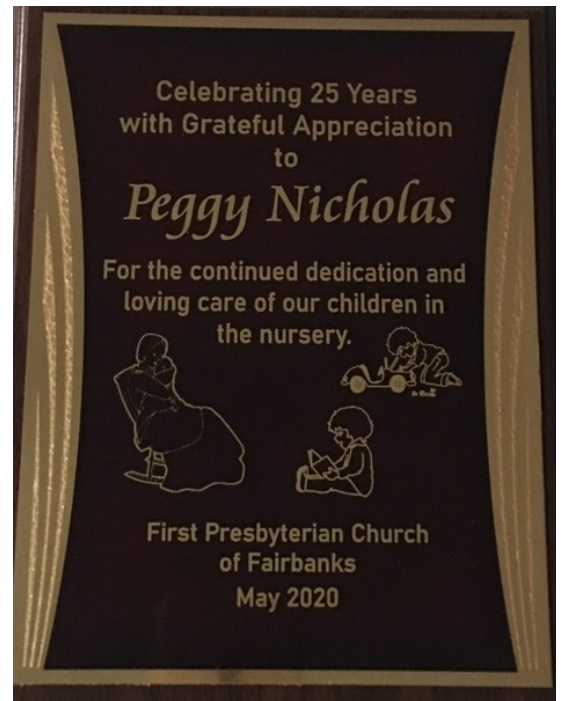
- Elders attended the meeting over video chat.
- The meeting was opened by Ruling Elder Barbara Page with a devotion based on Psalms.
- Minutes from the April 21, 2020 Stated Meeting, April 28, 2020 Special Session Meeting and vital statistics from April 22 to May 19, 2020 were received.
- A written Financial Report was provided to Session.
- Consent Calendar items were passed as presented. The Consent Calendar items included: Approval of the minutes of Deacons Meeting: March 24, 2020 and removal from the rolls of the church, at their own request, members Tonia and Travis Brown and Bill and Terry Beaudoin.
- It was **moved, seconded and passed** that a sub-committee be formed to research and make recommendations for re-opening the church for worship and to the public. The sub-committee to be composed of RE's Barb Page, Mikki Holt, Jim Aldrich, Stephanie Rozell, June Champlin, Youth Director David McConnell-Booher and member Tom Hoak.
- It was **moved, seconded and passed** that the Clerk of Session be directed to contact the Office of the Presbytery to 1) notify them of the election of RE Jim Aldrich as our moderator; 2) determine if he can moderate the Semi-Annual Meeting; and 3) determine the advisability of voting via mail or online for church officers.
- It was **moved, seconded and passed** to authorize the following ordained pastors to provide pulpit supply, via online methods, if needed: Rev. Jamie Richard, Rev. Wes Vander Lugt and Rev. Brice Booher.
- It was **moved, seconded and passed** to contract for the painting of the sanctuary and narthex in the next month.
- It was determined that current Ruling Elders will provide officer training to the new elders and deacons.
- It was **moved, seconded and passed** to table the approval of the Sexual Misconduct Policy until the July 2020 Meeting.
- Reports from the Ministry Teams were received.
- Elders spent time in prayer. After making prayer request known, elders prayed for one another and for First Presbyterian.

**The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on June 16, 2020 at 6:00 pm in the Church Conference Room or if needed via Video Conference.**



# *Thank You, Peggy!!!*

Thank you to all who have helped celebrate Peggy Nicholas' 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as FPC's Nursery Attendant. Since the church building is still closed, on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, about 40 church members participated in a surprise drive-by visit with Peggy, out in front of her house. In honor of her 25 years of service, the church gave her an anniversary plaque and a C. Alan Johnson figurine. Children's Ministry presented her with a flower basket and they are also having a special book made of numerous cards, letters, pictures, and photos that have been collected. Peggy also received two awesome banners, along with other cards and gifts from church members. We sure do love and appreciate Peggy!!





## How Do You Know When It Is Your Time to Serve?

How do you know when the time is right for you to serve others outside of your family? What gifts might you have to offer others? Have you ever wondered why no one has asked you to serve? I joined First Presbyterian Church in 1983, married in FPC in 1984, taught Sunday school to third graders and Nursery/Preschool children, volunteered at Vacation Bible School, stopped teaching Sunday school so that I could attend adult classes taught by Gene & Phyllis Bartels, directed a few Christmas musicals and a summer hand bell choir, we raised our three children through different pastoral leaders, and I always wondered why I was never asked to serve as a deacon. And then, the time was right, and God had a plan. God knew exactly when I was supposed to serve as a deacon.

God knows that we are like the sunflower. In the beginning, we are closed up tight, learning to take care of our family and navigate our own spiritual journey. As we begin to open up, life is messy with bees and spiders – like how to balance responsibilities and learn to share the gifts that we were given. Eventually, one gazes out over the others with curiosity and prepares to serve others. “God is the Light of the world.” John 8:12

Now, the time is right, and you begin to serve others reaching out like the petals of the sunflower. My service as a deacon began in 2014 alongside my husband, Keith, and an incredible class of current and new deacons who taught us and led us deeper into the ministry of serving the congregation of FPC.

We learned to turn to each another for guidance, strength, and energy. We shared many prayers and ways to serve all of you. Our lives are fuller now because of serving. Every visit, whether it is serving communion to shut-ins or visiting someone in the hospital or Pioneer Home, is uplifting and more spiritually gratifying than you can imagine.

With our eyes wide opened and our hearts full, it is time to spread new seeds and seek those that God has chosen to serve as deacons at First Presbyterian Church.

Serving as a deacon is a humbling and rewarding experience. Please consider if this is your time to serve.

“The Lord God is my strength and my salvation.”  
Isaiah 12:2

**Barbara Nore, Moderator of the FPC Deacons**

