

FIRST LIGHT NEWSLETTER

A Monthly Newsletter Published by the Fairbanks First Presbyterian Church, March 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 ~~

What a Friend We Have In Jesus

There is a perceived danger in turning Authority Figures into friends. Historically, in the military and other strictly hierarchical organizations, officers were discouraged from "fraternizing" with the lower ranks and princes and rulers were told never to be caught in public with the commoners.

What does it mean, then, to call Jesus our Messiah, our Teacher, our Lord and God, but also our brother and our friend?

As we have traveled with Jesus through the Gospel of Mark this season, we have seen how, in almost every chapter, Jesus defies our expectations. He humbles Himself and is baptized by John. He loves strangers, lifts up people that have been cast aside and labeled sinners by the



authorities, not only healing them but also honoring them and praising their faith. Over and over again, Jesus doesn't just proclaim His Gospel message or fix someone's problem, He steps into their lives, sees them, knows them, loves them, and saves them.

Jesus is not just an authority figure. He is THE authority figure. He is God and Lord of us and all creation. But this authority is not a cold and distant executive order nor an iron-fisted threat of force. It is the authority of the One who made us, who loves us, and who wants us to have the best possible life in His Kingdom, here and now, and for all eternity.

His authority is unquestionable, and because He trusted in The Father who sent Him, who loves Him, and who continually (at Jesus' Baptism, Transfiguration, etc) encourages us to listen to Him. The Father trusts in Jesus and Jesus trusts in the Father. Jesus is secure in His authority. Without the insecurity that plagues so many of our earthly rulers, Jesus has no problem trusting and obeying the will of The Father. He happily declares that "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve." He sits down with us sinners and laughs, sings, and dances with us. He listens, weeps, and mourns with us.

Our Lord does not use his "Lordship" to lord over us, as the Gentiles do. When we trust in Jesus and receive Him in faith as both friend and Lord, we begin to see the flimsy walls of sinful ways collapse around us.

How will you receive Jesus this Lenten season? As brother? As Lord? As both?

How does the model of Jesus' authority change the way you see your responsibilities and authority over others?

~~Pastor David

FREE OF
CHARGE

ALL KIDS SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED
BY AN ADULT

EGG-STRAVAGANZA

EASTER FUN FOR ELEMENTARY KIDS!

CRAFTS

SNACKS

GAMES

SATURDAY, MARCH 28 10-12

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 7TH & CUSHMAN

Covenant



Notes from Nicole

First Pres Families,

We've wrapped Mardi Gras and we're in Lent! What a glorious time to return our focus back to the cross: Jesus, our obsession.

"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

The prayer for NextGen as we continue in fellowship is for students to have a desire to actively engage their faith and be inspired to pursue a closer relationship with Jesus. That prayer is applied to all three divisions of NextGen: High School, College, Career.

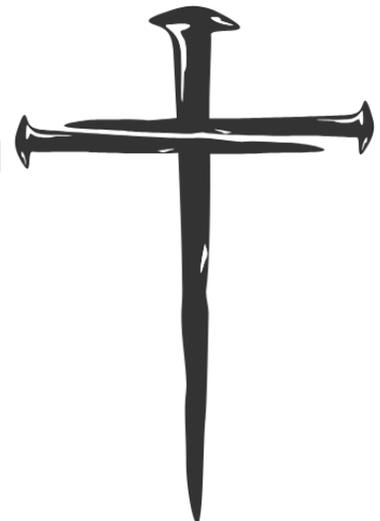
Career shout-out to Jenna Dreydoppel! Jenna just completed another full musical 'Les Miserable' where she accomplished the ever challenging feat of getting 20+ high school boys to sing together, on pitch, in one place. Bravo Jenna! What a fantastic show. You are demonstrating the light of Christ to your students and it SHOWS.

Spring Break is in the next few days and we'll uphold the tradition of leaving the Studio open for any students who want to come to the Studio to use it as a hang-out. Snacks, jack box, board games, and the like will be available. Text me or call me to let me know when you need in the Studio. (205) 914 - 6281

As always - it is a privilege and honor to serve you. See you in big church on Sunday!
For the Good and God,
-Nicole

March 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**
- **SPRING BREAK - Studio open daily for Students**



Birthdays

- 1 Derald Johnson**
- 1 Jeanne Maddux**
- 3 Debby Foster**
- 6 Jonas Huffaker**
- 7 Holden Jones**
- 8 Gwendolyn Bunch**
- 9 Sig Ericklook**
- 10 Sandy McKee**
- 13 Robert Kent**
- 14 Evelyn Sites**
- 16 Bill McKee**
- 17 Jaden Colasacco**
- 17 Collin Cogley**
- 20 Terry Reichardt**
- 21 Barbara Page**
- 25 Ted Riggs, Sr.**
- 28 Debra Brady**
- 28 Ainsley Benson**
- 29 Adalie Mackey**
- 31 Seth Wietgreffe**

March

Happy Anniversary!

Ted & Joan Riggs

3/3/1970

What follows is a short summary of the discussions and actions of the Session, at the February 17, 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 January 21 st to February 17 th and the minutes of the January 20 th Stated Session Meeting; February 15 th Called Session Meeting, and February 15 th Congregational and Corporate Semi-Annual Meeting were reviewed and approved.
- Correspondence was received from Mission & Outreach Chair Maggie Demers about a review of the committee goals. Also, a letter of resignation was received from Ruling Elder Sarah Albert.
- A financial summary was received from Church Treasurer Mikki Holt, who was in attendance to answer any questions, and Ruling Elder (RE) Paul Reichardt, chair of the Stewardship and Finance Team. It was requested that committee chairs be sure to review their monthly reports prior to the meeting. Session began a discussion on the possibility of RE Brian Sunderland taking on the role of Treasurer in addition to Session duties. Current Treasurer Mikki Holt will remain in the position until June 2026.
- Church membership decreased by one to 152 as of February 17, 2026. The average weekly church attendance increased by one over the last month to 131 per service. Average weekly attendance for 2026 year-to-date is 122.
- Feedback on the 2026 Budget received during the recent Congregational Meeting was discussed by Session:
 - Session members were asked to prayerfully consider increasing personal giving, as best as able, to provide an example, and call other church leaders and the congregation to follow suit.
 - Session will commit to provide Quarterly Financial Updates to the congregation.
 - Session is committed to provide increased and thorough communications.
- A motion from the Finance & Stewardship Committee was brought to Session, and was passed:

Motion: Paul Reichardt is authorized to contract for 1 st Pres with Giraffe Financial for preparation of an application for a federal rebate on the cost of the recent solar installation. The cost of the contract will not exceed \$7,500, payable only upon the receipt of rebate funds.
- Session approved the plan that, “On the condition that he is removed as a signer on church checks and accounts, and have no control of church funds or securities”. Session feels that as long as those conditions are observed, there is no conflict for a Ruling Elder to also hold the office of Treasurer.
- Ruling Elders Keith Nore and Clerk Dave Dreydoppel volunteered to assist with Communion service on March 1, 2026.

- Pastor David and Dave Dreydoppel presented a report on actions and decisions made at the recent Presbytery Meeting in Gig Harbor, WA at Chapel Hill EPC .
- The Finance & Stewardship Committee provided a form to be used when initiating a new Designated Fund which outlines the committee and committee chair responsible for oversight.
- Written and verbal reports were received from Ministry Teams.
- The meeting was adjourned by the Moderator and he led the closing prayer.
- The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on March 17, 2026 at 6:00 pm, in the Church Conference Room.

WAYS TO GIVE
At First Pres

GIVE ONLINE
<https://pushpay.com/g/fairbanksfirstpres>

GIVE ON YOUR PHONE
Text GIVE to 833-245-4294 or scan the QR code:

GIVE IN PERSON
Place your envelope in the offering plate as it passes by.

First Pres is in the process of consolidating!

Currently we use several different computer programs and services to process donations and offerings, keep track of addresses and phone numbers, produce mass emails, and so on. We are moving many of these functions, and a few others besides, into PushPay.

Over the next few weeks we are going to be migrating data and getting everything merged and working together.

One of the first steps is moving reoccurring donations away from VANCO and into PushPay. If you have set up a reoccurring donation, it will need to be cancelled out in VANCO and set up in PushPay. The QR code above and/or the link on the church website will take you to PushPay. Below is the old QR code linking to VANCO. If you need or want help making this transition, please feel free to contact the church office and talk to Noreen.

PushPay is up and running, so you can set up your online donation account at any time. We will be closing down VANCO in a few weeks, so please consider making the move soon!

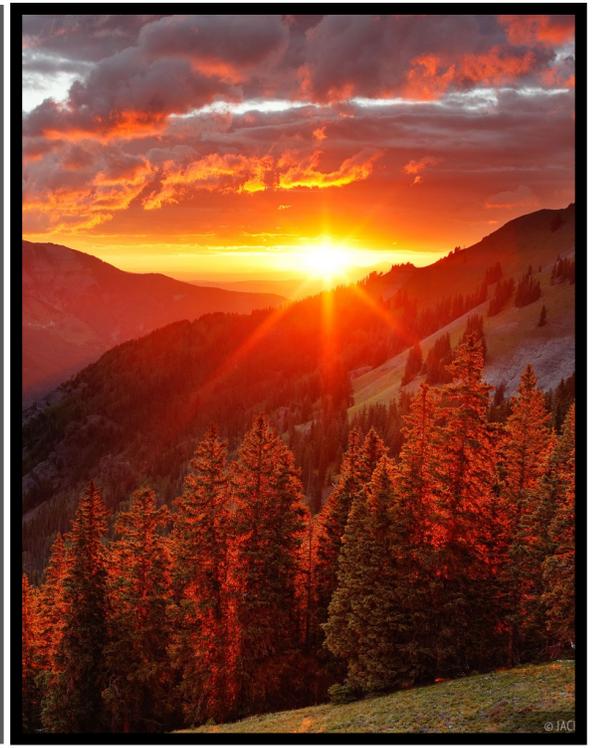
Thank You!





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!



Alleluia, Christ is Risen!



Come Celebrate Easter with Us!

Sunday, April 5th

Easter Brunch at 9am

Worship Service at 10am

First Presbyterian Church, 547 7th Ave

1st Pres Staff

David McConnell-Booher
 Nicole Matthews
 Carina Menaker
 Noreen Harwood
 Peggy Nicholas
 Paul Bonnell

Deacons

Marita 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

MARCH 2026

Sun

Mon

Tues

Wed

Thurs

Fri

Sat

1	Our Pastor	2	The family of Andrea (Nicholas) Clemens	3	The family of Don Marsh	4	Deanna Morris	5	Ted, Jr., Shannon, & Harrison, & Karson Riggs	6	Dennis & Fara Roe	7	Jonathan, Jessica, Adlai, Grace & Anna Romaneski
8	Deacons	9	Brian, Stephanie, Jacob, Toby, Micah & Sarah Rozell	10	Ben, Katie, Anna & Noah Sanders	11	Bill & Brenda Satterberg	12	August, Savanna & Alaska Schaefer	13	Jack Schmurr	14	George Shoogukwrk
15	Elders	16	Evelyn Sites	17	Travis, Megan, Holly & Allison Smith	18	Emma Snell	19	Dave & Linda Stephenson	20	Kathi Stevens	21	Rick & Peggy Stovarsky
22	Women's Ministry	23	Brian, Amber, Kyle, Caleb, Lily & Luke Sunderland	24	Sarah Susook	25	Joyce Tapper	26	Richard, Andree, Toby & Sean Thies	27	Kevin & Cindy Turnbough	28	Jacob, Christina, Sawyer & Juniper Turman
29	Men's Ministry	30	Russ, Rebekah, Ben, Autumn, Nathan & Margaret Vanderlugt	31	Ian, Heidi, Savannah & William VanHarper	<p style="text-align: center;">Healing Prayers for Pat Fink Joy-el Culligan Sarah Curtis George Shoogukwrk Joan Riggs Kianna May Joyce Tapper Deanna Morris Mike Bartels</p>							