



## FAIRBANKS FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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.

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*Happy Thanksgiving  
To You and Your Loved Ones*

# Hope for the Word

I continue to think about the J.R.R. Tolkien quote from Lord of the Rings that David used in his sermon several weeks ago. Frodo, a character in the story says: *"I wish none of this had ever happened"*. I (Jim) think that many of us are saying that today. Anxiety over COVID, wearing masks, not wearing masks, isolation, loss of employment, social justice, and the national election is all around us. Frodo's mentor, Gandalf, replies: *"So do all that live to see such times; but that is not for them to decide. All we have to do is decide what to do with the time that is given to us."* Then there is a long pause and Gandalf says, *"There are other forces at work in this world besides evil"*. Tolkien was a Christian, and the statement and response are worth considering and possibly meditating on today.

Christ did not want His followers to fear, but to have hope. Paul in his letter to the Philippians (4:6) says: *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."* The Apostle Peter writes in 1 Peter 1:7, *"Cast all your anxiety on Him [Jesus] because He cares for you."* And Jesus, as recorded in Matthew 28:20 says: *"And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age"*.

I hope these are comforting words to you. Our world is filled with hurting people, with lives that are spinning out of control, with pain that they did not ask for or could ever imagine. But know that you are fearfully and wonderfully made. You were personally formed by the God who created the universe and everything in it, by mankind's savior. He knows every single thing about you. And He has made you a promise – that for those who trust in Him, He will literally hold them in His hand and carry them all the days of their life. So no matter how difficult the road or how dark the night, He will hold you, and carry you.

Isaiah (Chapter 40) describes a time when Israel had lost all hope. Isaiah says this:

*Why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel, 'My way is hidden from the Lord; my cause is disregarded by my God? Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God,*

*the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord (another translation says, those who wait upon the Lord) will renew their strength. They will soar like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

The Hebrew word translated as "hope" or "wait" in the verse above means: those who stand right in the midst of the craziness, the pain, the chaos, the valley of the shadow of death, and they do not gloss over it. They are dealing with the hardest stuff of their life. Standing in the middle of it all, they say: 'I don't see what God is doing. I don't understand what the plan is. But I am going to stand right here in the middle of this moment, and I am going to trust that God is sitting on a throne, that he has a purpose and plan for my life. And I believe that I am going to see the goodness of God in the land of the living, and I am not going to stop believing in that no matter what.' That's what the word means "to wait" and "to hope" on the Lord<sup>1</sup>.

Note that God does not promise that he will take us out of the storm. Make no mistake, He can do that and He does do that. But the promise is greater than that. He said: those who wait upon the Lord, I will renew your strength. So when you think you cannot take one more step, our Lord, the creator of the universe, the star breather, the heart former, will renew your strength. In other words, our Lord says: you keep hoping and I will keep renewing your strength. You hope, I'll renew. You hope, I'll renew. Even when you let go of me, I will not let go of you<sup>1</sup>.

What a promise!!! So keep hoping and He will keep renewing. Thanksgiving is coming this month and Christmas next month. Let us give thanks and show our faith in Jesus the Christ to the world.

This paragraph is taken largely from the DVD "How Great is Our God" by Louie Giglio. If you have not seen this, get it and watch it, you will not regret it. If you have not watched it recently, it's the perfect time to watch it again.

Elder James Aldrich



# DEEP ROOTS, LIVING WATER, GOOD FRUITS

Deep roots, living water, and good fruits are the requirements for a plant to truly grow and thrive. Throughout scripture, God reminds us to root ourselves firmly in His instruction, to draw nourishment from healthy sources, and to carry good works to the world that waits just beyond our branches. This sermon series guides us through an exploration of how we can be a church with Deep Roots in our Father's promises, drawing from the nourishment of the living Water of Christ, and sharing the Good Fruit of the Gospel in action by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

## NOVEMBER

1

Let Justice Roll Down  
Like Waters  
Amos: 5:18-24

8

Streams in the Desert  
Exodus 17:1-7  
Psalm 42:1

15

The Best Kind of Fruit  
is.....  
Galatians 5:13-26

22

Why Bear Fruit?  
Colossians 1:9-29

## Thanksgiving Holiday Office Closure Dates

Thursday, November 26, 2020  
Friday, November 27, 2020



# Stewardship Sunday is November 22nd



**ON STEWARDSHIP** *A quote from Dave Ramsey, Financial advisor*

"Stewardship is our **ultimate calling as Christ followers**.

It's the first assignment God gave the human race in Genesis 1:28. That's when God told Adam and Eve to "have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (NKJV).

**Stewardship is managing God's blessings God's ways for God's glory.**

See, the Bible tells us in Psalm 24:1 that He owns it all: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (KJV). And if He's the owner, that means we're not. Instead, we're His stewards—His managers. God commands us to be stewards over everything He blesses us with. **Everything. That means our time, talents, treasure, relationships, jobs and, yes, stuff.** It's all God's, and He trusts us with it."

## Pray and See

It must seem like we are always waiting these days: waiting to see what kind of winter we will have, waiting to see how the election plays out, waiting to see who our next Pastor will be, waiting for a COVID vaccine, waiting for things to be back to normal, whatever normal may be.

The old joke goes something along the lines of "Never ask God for patience, because your prayer will be answered, and then you'll have plenty of opportunities to use all that new patience." Even in Fairbanks, where it's rare to have to wait through a traffic light twice, we seem to be getting a little better at patiently waiting.

Waiting is no fun. Our brains are

wired for instant gratification and we have a hard time denying ourselves instant pleasure for a delayed reward, even if it's bigger and better than the instant pleasure. And yet, waiting is so often exactly what God calls us to do. Abraham and Sarah waited for decades before receiving the fullness of God's promises, Moses spent years in exile before encountering the Holy Spirit and going back to face Pharaoh, God's people waited in exile for over seventy years to return to their homeland, and we Christians have been waiting nearly two thousand years for the return of Christ and the fulfillment of his redeeming and resurrecting work.

But perhaps waiting isn't the right word. God certainly calls us to be patient, yes. But God also equips us with Holy Spirit presence, passions,

and gifts for loving our neighbors and working to bring the Kingdom of God into the corners of the world around us. God calls us to invest in ministries that bring positive change, God calls us to plant seeds of the Gospel and trust that they will grow and bring fruit, God calls us to venture out into the wilderness even though it isn't as comfortable or safe as our familiar home.

So, even when you feel impatient, or hopeless, anxious, worried, or just sick and tired of waiting, take a deep breath and remember that God is still at work and that we are invited to Pray and See.

**Spicy Mustard Youth Group**



# SESSION SUMMARY

What follows is a short summary of the decisions and actions of the Session, at the October 20, 2020 Session Meeting. The minutes of the meeting will contain a more complete record.

The Session of First Presbyterian Church met, virtually via Zoom at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, October 20th.

The meeting was opened by Ruling Elder Maggie Demers in prayer and a devotion.

It was moved, seconded and passed to approve the agenda as presented.

Vital Statistics from September 16, 2020 to October 20, 2020, as well as Minutes from the September 16, 2020 Stated Meeting, Called Session Meetings on September, 22<sup>nd</sup>, September 29<sup>th</sup>, October 13<sup>th</sup>, and October 15<sup>th</sup>, were received and approved.

Consent Calendar items were passed as presented. The Consent Calendar items included: Approval of the minutes of Deacons Meeting: August 25, 2020 and a motion from the Mission, Outreach & Evangelism Team to proceed with Thanksgiving Food Box ministry on Wednesday November 25<sup>th</sup>, pending an approved COVID mitigation plan, approved by both the COVID Mitigation Team Elders and the Facilities Elder.

The first reading and discussion of the 2021 Budget was held.

It was **moved, seconded, and passed** to form a Transitional Pastor Search sub-committee, composed of Ruling Elders Keith Nore, Jim Williams, Mike Repasky, and Mark Lawson.

Ruling Elders Jenna Dreydoppel and Terry Reichardt volunteer to be appointed to the Pastor Search Committee and to meet with the current committee to determine which committee members which to stay and which would like to resign from the committee.

It was **moved, seconded, and passed** to form a search committee to find a new Director of Children and Youth Ministries

Ruling Elder Stephanie Rozell presented a verbal report on the recent General Assembly Meeting, which was held via ZOOM.

Ruling Elder Barb Page presented a written report on the recent Presbytery Meeting, which was held via ZOOM.

The following items will be **added to the November Session Meeting Agenda**:

Committee Budget Request have been submitted to the Finance Team

Reports from the Transitional Pastor Search Team, Pastor Search Committee, and Children and Youth Ministry Director Search Team.

Reports from the Ministry Teams were received.

It was **moved, seconded, and passed** to move Communion from the Second to the First Sunday of each month.

Ruling Elder Mikki Holt will be taking a three month leave of absence. Ruling Elder Stephanie Rozell will be overseeing any tasks / decisions needed for the Children and Families Ministry Team. Devotions for the November Session Meeting will be provided by Ruling Elder Stephanie Rozell. Elders spent time in prayer. After making prayer requests known, elders prayed for one another and for First Presbyterian.

The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on November 17, 2020 at 6:00 pm via Video Conference.



## *Seeking God In the Midst of COVID and a Pandemic*



Greetings from Alabama! We are happy, healthy and have learned to be thankful EVERY day! Seeing God in the Midst of COVID has been a daily experience for us as we moved during this pandemic!

COVID-19 proved to be a challenge with all of the travel restrictions yet it was an extraordinary adventure. We saw the beauty of our country, fall colors, and fair weather followed us. After driving with kids and cats in our packed car, we arrived in Alabama straight in the path of the rainy remnants of a hurricane. Alabama welcomed us with a double rainbow! (God is Awesome!)

When we arrived near Ft. Rucker, we had to quarantine several days in a hotel, then finished our quarantine time in our new home on the military base as there is no other housing available. The day we were to move in, we were told the housing assignment was changed. We were given a different house. Turns out, it was an upgrade from the house we were assigned. (Thanks God!) We moved in with the possessions we had in our car and bought air beds and groceries. All of our household goods were still being transported from Alaska. We finished our quarantine, in our new home, without things. The experience was revealing.

Living this way for a couple weeks revealed how God always provides our needs. Oftentimes, we get our wants and our needs mixed up when it comes to our possessions. Yes, it would have been nice to have a microwave, T.V. washer and dryer, table, chairs and bed. But we made due with what we had. As things we ordered online began to arrive. The boxes became our dinner table, a computer desk, a game board, a laundry hamper, and fun for the kids.

We quarantined together. We attended a church that was recommended to us by one of Ian's former co-workers in Washington who is now the pastor here in Alabama. The sermon was an expository teaching series on James. How perfect! Now here's a book in the Bible that knows about trials in life!

It's moments like these that make us take a deeper look at ourselves while also finding beauty in the lessons learned. There is a purpose in all our experiences, no matter whether they are, good or bad. When it comes to our lives and possessions, people search the world for joy, fulfillment, meaning, purpose, and beauty. God has blessed us with creativity and the ability to see beauty in our struggles. In Him can we find real contentment!

Ian, Heidi, William and Savannah VanHarper



God is here. Moments, normally filled with running here and there, are now opportunities for me to be quiet with Him, to renew and strengthen my relationship with Him, develop deeper spiritual roots. What better time For me to learn how God could use me more...how to show His love by reaching out to others who could really use His touch right now?

Cindy Aldrich



My faith in God and mankind has increased drastically since the COVID pandemic has come upon us. Life can change in the blink of an eye. With that said, Sunday's have become my best day of the week. I look forward to hearing the Word, praying in the Word and singing the Word. I love seeing my brothers and sisters in Christ even if it requires masks and social distancing. It gets me through my week and I can't wait to do it all again the next Sunday.

With Love, Lonny Marney



You are my hiding place and my shield, I hope in Your Word.

Anonymous

# **\*\*THANKSGIVING TURKEY DISTRIBUTION DAY\*\***

FPC will continue its 30+ years of partnering service with the Food Bank as the main distribution point for Thanksgiving Food boxes.

**DATE:** November 25

**TIME:** 9am

**VOLUNTEERS:** 4-6 volunteers are needed between 4-6pm on **Tuesday, November 24** to load trucks, position food boxes, secure the parking lot, and any last minute tasks prior to next day

## **AND**

A steady stream of volunteers are needed between 6am-4pm on **Wednesday, November 25** to unload food boxes, assist visitors with carrying boxes to cars, also needed is a panel truck driver.

Volunteers will be screened for COVID as well as receiving a short COVID Orientation Training prior to working. If you would like to serve, please call or text Jim Williams at 907-978-3320 or by email at jimw.101591@gmail.com.

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## **Operation Christmas Child**



The Samaritan Purse Project Operation Christmas Child collects shoebox gifts and deliver them to children in need. This year, FPC will again assist with this project. Shoeboxes are available on the kiosk or from Marta (front desk), M-F. Collection Week is November 16-23. All boxes must be returned to the front office by 11am on Monday, November 23. Boxes can be built online, google Build a Shoebox.

Happy November First Presbyterian Church!  
Blessings to all of you from your faithful  
“Sneakin’ Deacons!”

## WHAT IS THE ANGEL TREE?

It is time to think about our First Presbyterian Church Angel Tree. What is the Angel Tree? Who decides who will receive blessings from our congregation in the form of angel gifts? What type of gifts are requested or needed from our church family?

The Angel Tree is a way that our church family members give back and “pay it forward” to those that are struggling in different ways. Your deacons are the ones who organize this project, identify possible recipients each year, and plan to make deliveries to the recipients on or around the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> of December.

Many families and individuals struggle with paying their electric bill, fuel bill, medical bills, food bill, and providing the basic needs for their families. Our church family tries to assist those in need by making a monetary donation or product donation to contribute to those angel recipients. This year we have a great need for cash donations to support these difficult bills.

We need your help in identifying members of our congregation that may be in need this year. Your suggestion of families or individuals can be made anonymously to the church office by phone call to Marti; by placing the request in the offering plate at first or second service; by contacting one of the deacons, elders, or staff members in person, or by phone or email. We would like to have this list of recipients created by the second week of November so we can better prepare our “Angels.”

The Angel Trees will be erected in the Narthex on November 30<sup>th</sup>, just outside of the sanctuary, and filled with tiny paper angels that have specific requests of needs printed on them. As congregation members feel moved, they will select “paper angel requests” and then donate the requested needs on each paper angel and bring it to church not later than December 13<sup>th</sup>. Donations may be dropped off at the church office or given to any deacon, elder, or pastor during service.

Angel gifts need to be at First Presbyterian Church no later than December 13<sup>th</sup> so the deacons can prepare each delivery.

Thank you to all congregation members and our church family for continuing to support this important outreach mission of First Presbyterian Church.

Kathy Stephens, Moderator  
First Presbyterian Church Deacons

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*He is before all things,  
and in Him all things  
hold together.*

*Colossians 1:17*

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1	Sophie Strong
3	William Mullen
5	Brian Albert
	Jack Morris
	Sue Ault
7	Dave Dreydoppel
	Barbara Schneider
9	Joanna Jagow
13	Jason Huffaker
	Johanna Coester
15	Ridge Demers
16	Jeanette Wrede
20	Katrina Nore
21	Deanna Morris
	Pam Hennessey
22	Vincent Eldridge
	Dawn Curtis
23	Bonnie Johnson
	Don Marsh
24	Owen Bunch
	Daniel Griggs
	Henry Repasky
28	Kathi Stevens