



# FIRST LIGHT NEWSLETTER

A Monthly Newsletter Published by the Fairbanks First  
Presbyterian Church, November 2024

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Fairbanks First Presbyterian  
Church

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Fairbanks, AK 99701

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## November Birthdays

*Wishing You a Very Happy Birthday!*

1	Sophie Strong
1	Caxton Marney
5	Marta DeLeon
5	Brian Albert
5	Jack Morris
5	Sue Ault
7	Dave Dreydoppel
9	Joanna Jagow
13	Jason Huffaker
13	Johanna Coester
15	Ridge Demers
20	Katrina Hummel
21	Deanna Morris
21	Pam Hennessey
22	Vincent Eldridge
22	Dawn Curtis
23	Bonnie Johnson
23	Don Marsh
24	Owen Bunch
24	Daniel Griggs
24	Henry Repasky
28	Kathi Stevens



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.

**Getting to Know You**—Part of the role of the Deacons is to help new members get connected, and to encourage all members to get to know each other better. In order to do that, your Deacons have decided to feature different households in our church family by sharing a little bit of information about them, so we can all learn a little more about each other. This month we are featuring The Dykstra family and Emma Snell. If you and your family are interested in being featured now, or on a particular month, please let one of our Deacons know. We are looking forward to getting to know you all a little bit better!

## Meet the Dykstra Family!

Meet Steve and Ashley Dykstra, and their kids Steven Oak (age 6) and Eve (age 4). They first came to Fairbanks in the summer of 2023 and are enjoying the opportunity to explore our wide-open spaces. Ashley works part-time for a missions organization called Horizons International supporting the emotional, spiritual and relational health of missionaries. Steve is a professor at UAF who studies oceanography and hydrology. His work is focused on coastal flooding and erosion. In their free time, they enjoy hiking camping, playing board games and more recently skiing. You may not know they lived on an island in the

Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Alabama for 6 years (Dauphin Island) while Steve did his doctorate studies. Both Steve and Ashley love learning about different cultures and have traveled to many different countries for fun and for ministry work. They have been members of First Pres for about a year. Ashley serves our FPC family as a worship leader, Steve makes coffee, and together they host a home Bible study group. One thing they really value about our FPC family is the diverse community of people coming from many different walks of life. Be sure to reach out and say hi when you see them!



## Meet Emma Snell!

She has been in Fairbanks since November 2022 and works as a field artillery officer in the US Army. Hometown? Emma is a self-described Army Brat and hasn't lived anywhere long. She loves Fairbanks for the new adventures it offers; hiking and reading are two favorite activities. Emma is a seasoned traveler: she's visited 38 states, 34 countries, and 5 continents!

Emma has been attending First Pres since she moved here, but became a member this summer when she volunteered to join Session. She serves with the Young Adult Ministry, as a Narthex

monitor, sometimes as an usher or greeter, and, most recently as the Elder of Christian Formation. She loves the way that the people of FPC give their long-term commitment and investment to this church. Reach out and say hello to Emma!



# ~~ From the Pastor ~~

Stewardship is a word that can be a bit fuzzy in our own personal dictionary today. For people who have spent a great deal of time in churches like First Pres, we know that it is often understood as shorthand for "church budget and giving money," though there is more to it than that. For folks outside our church tradition, stewardship is even fuzzier: maybe they think about Denethor from the Lord of the Rings: an old man who has inherited the responsibility of ruling an embattled kingdom but has never enjoyed any of the glory that comes with being true royalty; or maybe they think about stockbrokers who handle millions or billions of dollars in wealth that does not belong to them, but they are trusted with this wealth all the same.

All of these examples are fuzzy parts of the larger reality. The reality is that "The earth is The Lord's, and all that is in it." [Psalm 24:1]. There is no corner of the planets, stars and galaxies, no cell within our own bodies, no area of our life that does not have its origin in God.

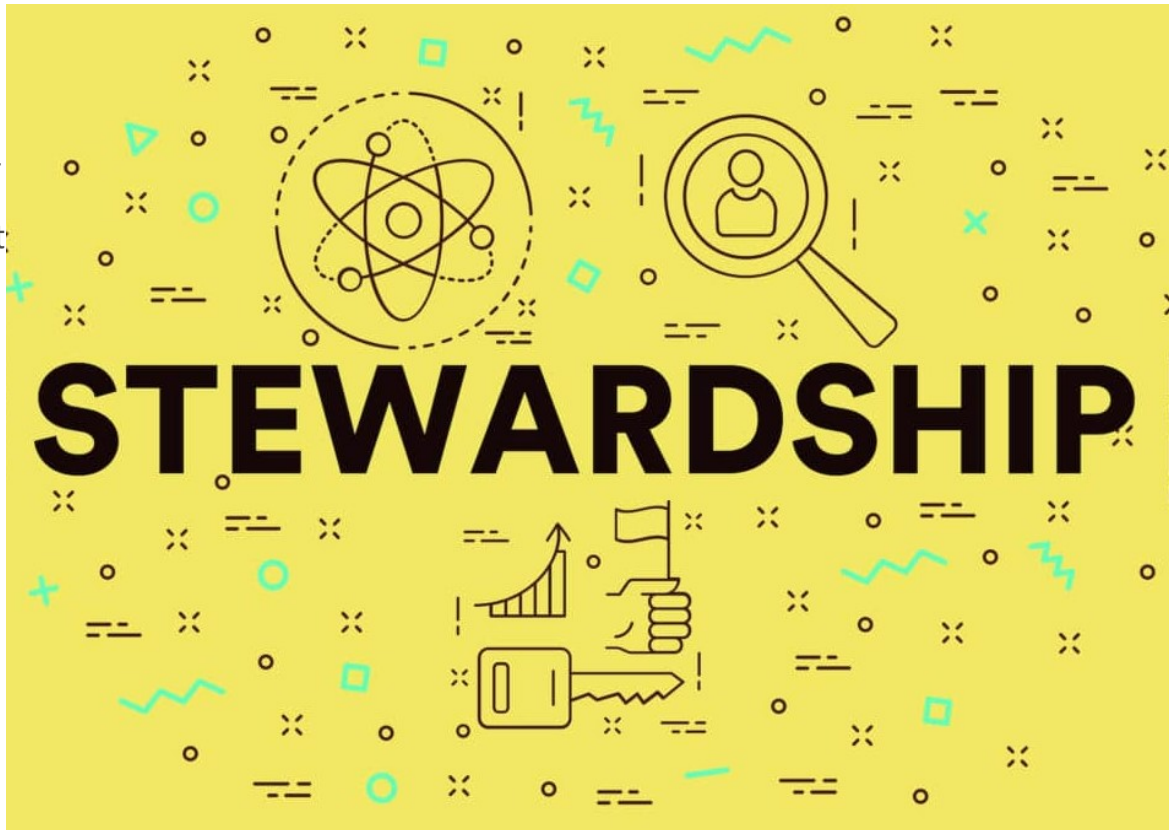
Stewardship means living under two fundamental truths:

- 1) God is the Source of and Sovereign over all of creation.
- 2) Because of Jesus Christ, we are stewards of this world.

We trust God, and God trusts us. We trust God to abide with us, encourage us, and continue to sanctify us by the Holy Spirit as we seek His will in our lives. God trusts us with His creation, His church, and His resources: the natural world around us, our families, our neighbors, our gifts and talents, even the money in our accounts are entrusted to us by God.

God loves us enough to trust us, and God trusts us to lovingly care for the people, creatures, and things in our lives.

So whether you are filling out your 2025 pledge card for First Presbyterian Church, feeding your pets tonight, or using your gifts to make something new: REJOICE! Rejoice that God loves you enough to trust you, and trusts with the greatest treasures we have in life. How will you cultivate and share such treasure?



~Pastor David



# CHILDREN'S ministry

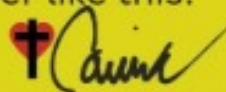


Dear First Pres Folks,  
What a joy to combine adult Sunday school and children's this month! We learned that in the kingdom of God small things (like yeast) become huge (like rising bread). Many pizza crusts were mixed and I enjoyed pictures from families who almost literally fed on the word of God that evening!



Smith family pizza!

Thanks to all who participated! Its a sign of a healthy Church to see generations working together like this!



## MIDDLE SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL AND DRAMA TEAM



Middle school students have a new Sunday morning option. Ms. Marta Beaudreaux leads 6th 7th and 8th graders to step into scripture through drama. This group meets as a part of our Sunday school ministry at 9 am in the Fireside room.

CHRISTMAS  
PAGEANT  
REHEARALS  
BEGIN  
NOVEMBER 1  
DURING THE  
SUNDAY  
WORSHIP  
SERVICE.

## WEEKLY

### ROOTS CLUB

GRADES 3-5

SUNDAYS 4-6

### CLIMB CLUB

MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

WEDNESDAYS 3-5

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

K-8TH

SUNDAYS 9AM



# O COME TO THE ALTAR

Genesis 35:3

FPC Young Adult Ministry

## NOTES FROM NICOLE

First Pres Families,

October was so fun and life giving – God is rad and the Bible is cool.

The Studio feels like an 'official' young adult space with the recently gifted drum kit from Elder Bill Satterburg. Worship nights are about to kick it up a notch (after the first of the year we'll get to incorporate those.

The event calendar for rest of the year is listed on the church Facebook page and coming soon I'll have the 2025 event calendar prepared for you. A few dates are tentative as they aren't listed yet with their parent organization but they are on the annual calendar for you to look forward to and share with your Young Adult.

As the year continues I'd ask you to be fervent in your prayer for Young Adult Ministry. For our members to remember regardless of where they are in life or their faith practice they can ALWAYS, "go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone."

The ministry schedule is listed below:

High School – Worship Nights 2x per month @ 6:00 p.m. in the Studio

College – Sunday afternoon 4:00 – 6:00 p.m in the Studio

Career – Every Thursday @ 7:00 p.m. @ my house + Sunday School @ 9:00 a.m. in the Studio

If you'd like to serve with our Young Adult program we'd love to have you! Give me a call or text (205) 914-6281, e-mail nicolefirstpresfbx@gmail.com

For the good and God,  
–Nicole



## NOVEMBER EVENTS

**Friendsgiving + Deck the Halls,** : Saturday November 23rd @5:00 p.m. Bring a Thanksgiving dish to share. We will decorate the Studio for Christmas and pull out big church Christmas decorations to prepare them for display.

## DECEMBER EVENTS

**Sunday Serve Day** – We need 4 Members to serve as Usher and Greeters

**Worship Nights:** December 1st & 15th @ 6:00 p.m.

**Dirty Santa/White Elephant Gift Exchange:** Saturday, December 21st @ 6:00 p.m. in the Studio. Bring a \$10 or less gift + your favorite Christmas Cookies and Dad Jokes.

**Worship on the Ice:** Saturday, December 28th m@ Polar Ice from 4:00 – 5:45 \$8.00 p/person. This is open to the entire church.



## WHAT ARE ANGEL GIFTS? WHAT IS THE BLESSING TREE?



### *Happy October First Presbyterian Church!*

Blessings to all of you from your faithful  
“Sneakin’ Deacons!” We bless people with  
ANGEL Gifts ALL YEAR LONG.

It is time to think about our First Presbyterian  
Church Blessing Tree. What is the Blessing  
Tree? What are Angel Gifts? 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?

During the season of Advent, the Blessing Tree  
is a way that our church family members give  
back and “pay it forward” to those who are  
struggling in different ways. Your deacons are  
the ones who organize this project, identify  
possible recipients each year, and the deacons  
will make the deliveries to the recipients on or  
around the 18th 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. Each year we have a need for cash  
donations to support these difficult bills. We  
also request home baked goods to share with  
our families and individuals.

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 Marta; by placing the request in the  
offering plate at the Sunday service; and 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 paper “Angels” that will go on  
the Blessing Trees.

The Blessing Trees will be erected in the  
Narthex, hopefully the week of November 19th,  
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 17th. Donations may be dropped off  
at the church office or given to any deacon,  
elder, or pastor during the Sunday service.

Angel gifts need to be at First Presbyterian  
Church not later than December 17th or 18th so  
that 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.

Melissa Prince, Moderator  
First Presbyterian Church Deacons



FPC Women's Ministry



INVITES YOU TO THE ANNUAL

*Silver Tea*  
and  
*Craft Bazaar*

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH

1:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

FPC FELLOWSHIP HALL