

FIRST LIGHT NEWSLETTER

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

"Everyone, then, who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock."

(Matthew 7:24)

I am still processing and reflecting back on my vacation to Greece and Turkey. One thing that keeps coming to mind, over and over again, is the rich stratification of history there. In so many places (churches, ruins, and even entire cities!), you can literally see the layers of history for yourself. You view the oldest relics of human history from the early bronze age, then a few artifacts from the Mycenaean era (which Homer wrote of, hundreds of years later), then the Classical Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and finally the modern era. Each period of history is stacked one atop the other!

As we walked among the ruins of St John's Basilica near Ephesus (pictured here), it struck me just how much we rely on God's providence, and not only the providence that God shows to us in our lifetime, but the myriad outpourings of grace, mercy, and goodness that God has bestowed upon every generation of His covenant people.



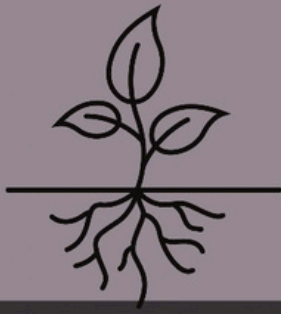
We do not walk the path of faith alone; we do it in deep communion with The Holy Spirit, with those whom Christ has also called around us, AND with the countless Christians who have gone before us. We are not only surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, we also stand on the shoulders of the faithful who planted seeds of faith in their community, lived as exiles in the Babylon of their era, served neighbors, loved enemies who didn't always love them back, and invited such enemies to repent, be reconciled to their Creator, and welcomed into the family of God (and thus added to the diverse beauty of the Kingdom of Heaven!).

When you encounter adversity and discouragement in the coming days, take heart! You do not walk alone. Come upstairs and take in the photos of FPC's history. Ask older generations how they learned the Good News of the Gospel and the Way of Jesus Christ. Consider how your story is one more beautiful component of the grand mosaic of faith that our Father continues to build upon the Cornerstone that is Jesus Christ, our Rock and our Foundation.

Go to God in prayer and consider how the Holy Spirit is calling upon you to bless and encourage the coming generations of faithful; that one day, they too, might see all that Jesus has done for His church and through His church, and find fresh hope upon which to stand!

"You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

(1 Peter 2:5)



CHILDREN'S ministry

Extended Growing Season

Although it's the end of summer gardens, It's a new year for Children's Ministry, and all our programs are starting to sprout! There are many new faces and some wonderful kids and families taking part. Last week, our Roots group for 3rd-5th graders had 11 kids, double last year's attendance! In Sunday school, we are focused on ways to pray and praise in response to who God is. In week one, we studied the Creation and practiced the Doxology in Sign Language as an expression of our thanks to God.

- In our second week of Sunday school, we focused on "Consider the Lilies" and spent time observing the generosity of God in creation--including Baby Puffins!
- Last Sunday, we reviewed Jesus' instructions on how to pray. For our youngest, it was time to learn about the Lord's prayer. Our older kids were invited to pray boldly, asking God with persistence, trusting that He wants to give us good things.

Every weeeek, we encourage, we teach, we water and grow the inner lives of our kids, hoping that they get so used to growing in faith, that they never stop.

Pizza & Pumpkins

Oct. 25th
4-6 p.m.

BRING YOUR KIDDO AND A PUMPKIN

YOU MAKE MEMORIES, WE MAKE DINNER!

Sunday School

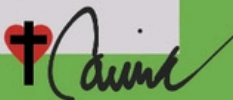
9-10 am every
Sunday

Climb

4-6 pm every
Sunday

Roots

4-5:30 Wednesdays



October

Birthdays

- 1 Adam Benson
- 1 Micah Rozell
- 2 Brenda Satterberg
- 2 Ray Karns
- 2 Felicity Jensen
- 3 Leah Mackey
- 3 Megan Smith
- 4 Lienna Jensen
- 5 Michelle Harpole
- 6 Kathey libbey
- 9 Carol Gray
- 9 Scott Adams
- 9 Viletta Knight
- 11 Adam Kohl
- 13 David Henry
- 15 Lynn Hull
- 17 Norah Kohl
- 21 Oki Albrecht
- 21 Jenna Dreydoppel
- 21 Linda Wells
- 21 Ashley Dykstra
- 24 Marcus Cogley
- 24 Luke Sunderland
- 26 Kallie Jensen
- 27 Bill Brewer
- 27 Travis Smith
- 28 Torin Jensen
- 29 Glenn Brummond
- 29 Emily Kohl
- 29 Avriel Nicolai (Hoak)
- 31 George Repasky
- 31 Ariena Jensen

What follows is a short summary of the discussions and actions of the Session, at the September 22, 2026 Stated Session Meeting, which began at 6:11 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 August 19th to September 22nd and the minutes of the August 18th Stated Session Meeting were reviewed and approved. It was moved, seconded and passed to ratify and email vote that was conducted, from September 1st to 4th, to approve two motions, 1) to approve RE Maggie Demers as a Commissioner for October Presbytery Meeting and 2) Approve a day off for Pastor David on November 8th.
- Church membership remains at 169 as of September 22nd. The average weekly church attendance over the last two months was 124 per service. Average weekly attendance for 2026 year-to-date is 134.
- Correspondence was received announcing actions to be taken at the October Presbytery Meeting and the recent actions taken at the General Assembly meeting in July, related to the ad-interim report on human sexuality.
- There were no Consent Calendar items.
- Financial information was received from the Church Treasurer and the Finance & Stewardship Committee. As of the end of August 2026, Year to Date receipts have been \$490,810 and Year to Date expenses paid are \$381,470, resulting in an approximately \$109,340 surplus.
- Session held second-round discussions on the 2027 Budget. It was determined that factors affecting the budgeting progress will include employee benefits, compensation and staffing.
- As part of the discussion on the 2027 Budget, it was **passed** to **direct the Personnel Team to develop a job description for a possible new half-time position titled “Director of Neighborhood Ministry”, funded at approximately \$30,000.** The initial job description is requested to be submitted to Session by October 15, 2026.
- It was **passed** to **lower the position of “Director of Next Gen Ministries” from Full-Time to Part-Time, funded at approximately \$30,000, as of October 15, 2026.**
- It was **passed** to **pay a 2% bonus for all staff members, no later than December 31, 2026.**

- It was decided to end the recent practice of chaining exterior doors on the south and west entrances to the church facility.

In response to recent questions about church security it was moved, seconded **to create a new session ministry team/committee:**

1. to provide for the overall safety of the staff, members, and visitors in the building and on our grounds
2. to be overseen by an elder currently serving on session
3. to develop and regularly review safety policies and written safety practices, including a written and annually updated safety plan
4. to publish this safety plan and make it available to the congregation
5. to make recommendations to staff, the session, and the congregation regarding any changes needed to the facility or its use to minimize safety risks
6. to provide safety training to staff and volunteers, including CPR, AED, bio-spill response, de-escalation, mandatory reporting, and active threat response training
7. to coordinate volunteers to serve on a safety committee and in other safety volunteer roles
8. to receive any questions, concerns, or complaints from staff or congregants regarding safety issues
9. and to update the FPC Session Ministry Teams (FPC Policy 02.03) accordingly.

- It was **passed** to extend the meeting to 9:30 pm.
- It was **passed** to table the motion to create a new session ministry team until the October 20th Session Meeting.
- Ruling Elders Maggie Demers and Steve Hurtle volunteered to assist with communion on Sunday October 4, 2026
- The Host Packet for the May 2027 Presbytery Meeting, to be held here, was discussed again. Several committees have begun planning.
- RE Noelle Lyle volunteered to provide snacks for the August Meeting.
- Written reports were received from the Ministry Teams.
- The meeting was adjourned by the Moderator at 9:12 pm and Pastor David led the closing prayer.
- The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on October 20, 2026 at 6:00 pm, in the Church Conference Room.

5 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

FOR

CARINA MENAKER

It was October of 2021 when Carina Menaker joined the FPC staff as our Children's Ministry Director. How blessed we have been to have her serving in this capacity for the past five years and what a perfect opportunity it is to celebrate! So, be sure to mark your calendars for Sunday, Oct. 25, 2026 when we will acknowledge Carina in our worship service and then after worship gather in the narthex for a reception.

We would like to bless Carina with a gift from the congregation. If you would like to donate, please place your contribution in the offering plate either on one of these Sundays: Oct. 4, Oct. 11 or Oct. 18 (Please mark it: Gift for Carina) or drop it by the church office and give it to Noreen by Mon. Oct 19 th ! Also, please bring cards or notes expressing your appreciation to Carina and place them in the basket that will be available at the celebration. (FYI: Carina's birthday is Oct. 28, so if you want to combine your thanks with a birthday greeting that would be special, too!)

FPC Administration and Personnel Team

OCTOBER IS PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

For over 30 years, the month of October has been recognized as *Pastor Appreciation Month* and the second Sunday of the month has been designated *Pastor Appreciation Sunday*, which this year is Oct. 11, 2026. That gives us a whole month to express our thanks and appreciation to our wonderful pastor, Rev. David McConnell-Booher. We want to encourage everyone in our FPC family to find ways this month to let *Pastor David* know how much we love and appreciate him!

Here are a just a few suggestions on ways to bless our pastor: pray for Pastor David, give him verbal affirmation or encouragement, write a personal note, select a card, give a gift or gift card, make a special treat, offer to take him out to lunch or coffee, or any other thoughtful way that God shows you!

FPC Administration and Personnel Team

1st Pres Staff

David
McConnell-Booher

Carina Menaker
Noreen Harwood

Peggy Nicholas
Paul Bonnell

Deacons

Aaron Evans
Bethany Evans
Debby Foster
Daniel Griggs
Rick Halfhill
Violetta Knight
Theresa LaMagna
Kathy Libby
Kiana May
Kathy Rahminder Halfhill

Shannon Riggs
Christy Repasky
Elders
Stephanie Rozell
Charles Weber
Beaudreault
Marta Beaudreault

Maggie Demers
David Dreydoppel
David Henry
Steve Hurtle
Noelle Lyle
Keith Nore

Paul Reichardt
Brian Rozell
Stephanie Rozell
Brian Sunderland



October 2026

Sun

Mon

Tues

Wed

Thurs

Fri

Sat

Healing Prayers for Pat Fink Joy-el Culligan Sarah Curtis George Shooogukuwrk Kiana May Joyce Tapper Deanna Morris Mike Bartels				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sunday Schools	Bob, Michelle, Brandon & Kyle VanHatten	Carol Vondra	Victor & Denise Wallace	Paula Ward	Denise Wartes	Ed Washburn
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Indonesia Mission	Joe, Joanna & Alice Weber	Dan & Linda Wells	James & Kil Whiteman	Liesl, Seth, Adelaide, Gretchen & Cora Wietgreffe	Jim, Shelia & Sean Williams	Jim & Jane Wisland
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Our Pastor	Stuart, Heather & Taylor Young	Sheng Zhao, Kay David & Sheng Wang & Kiwi	David & Holly Zumbro	Brian, Sarah, Chloe & Cade Albert	Mark & Shirley Albert	Oki Albrecht
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
FPC	James & Cindy Aldrich	Kristina Anderson	Charlie, Rachel, Eli, Miriam & Ansel Armstrong	Mike Bartels	Charles & Marta Adam, Julie, Beaudreault	Ainsley, & Allison Benson