First Things First

NEWS FOR THE CHURCH FAMILY AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STERLING, COLORADO

AUGUST 2025

Anyway

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered; Forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; Be kind anyway. If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies; Succeed anyway. If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; Be honest and frank anyway. What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight; Build anyway. If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; Be happy anyway. The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway. Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough; Give the world the best you've got anyway. You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and your God; It was never between you and them anyway.

> by Kent M. Keith inscribed on the wall of Mother Teresa's children's home in Calcutta

A Message from Michelle. . .



This summer we've been turning to the letter to the Galatians, reflecting on the **fruit of the Spirit**. So far (on Sundays), we've dug into gentleness, faithfulness, goodness, and we'll look at kindness on July 27. You can see the fruit that remains on the schedule on the following page.

On Mondays, we've been following a different schedule, taking the fruit in the order they are listed in Galatians. It's been interesting to note, as we work our way through the list, how "hard" they all seem. You might think things like *love* and *joy* would be pretty easy. *Patience* and *self-control* we expect to be challenging, but *love* and *joy...* I think we expected those to be a little easier. The book we've been using as our guide, though, has really challenged us to reflect deeply on the ways we encourage or resist the growth of the fruit of the Spirit in us. It is a testimony to spiritual growth when we are challenged in this way. Anyway, I am grateful for the fellowship and community that we've enjoyed as we've taken this journey of spiritual growth together.

May we keep Growing in the Spirit together in the coming month...

Rev. Michelle

Growing in the Spirit

Sundays ~ 10:30

Sunday, August 3 Self-Control guest preacher: Jeff Underhill

Sunday, August 10 *Patience* guest preacher: Brandon Eaton

> Sunday, August 17 Peace

Sunday, August 24 Joy

Sunday, August 31 Love Mondays ~ 10:00

Monday, August 4 no gathering

Monday, August 11 Faithfulness & Gentleness

> Monday, August 18 (final gathering) Self-Control

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. ~Galatians 5:22-23

Jeff Underhill is a creative and counselor by heart. He enjoys his days living internationally.

Most recently, Jeff has served seven years in India as school counselor for children ages 3-12. He has lived in seven countries and taught in 13 schools, and is planning a (re)transition to the Middle East to teach fifth graders at American School of Kuwait in September. A Sterling native, Jeff grew up at First Presbyterian, attending Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Highlands Camp, and mission trips. Some of his fondest memories include attending church with his grandparents Ruth and Hollis Jackson, with his grandmother Lee Chapman in the choir. Presently, Jeff is making efforts to grow his online socialemotional coaching consultancy HelpKidsWin.com, as well as developing his volunteerism through online classes for ashram children in India. With a servant mindset, Jeff strives to be grateful in all circumstances.



Stewardship Update



Second quarter giving Statements were recently *emailed*... Please contact bookkeeper Karlee Manuello if you did not receive a giving statement by email or to let her know if you'd prefer to receive your giving statement in the mail.

	Profit & Loss Summary	January-June 2025
	Total Income	144,847.04
Your generosity makes	Total Expense	169,737.48
mission & ministry possible	Net Ordinary Income (Loss)	(24,890.44)
Thank you!	Budgeted Transfers	3,868.90
	Other Transfers	0.00
	Net Ordinary Income (Loss) with Transfers	(21,021.54)

MISSION & GIVING...

Per Capita Giving

The official definition: "Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian church through the governing bodies [mid councils] to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission; and of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed Church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians" (GA Minutes, Part I, 1995).

In essence: Per capita is a set amount of money (apportionment) per member that congregations pay to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Said another way, it is a covenant commitment — part of the glue that holds Presbyterians together. Because every Presbyterian shares in the benefit of the PC(USA)'s system of government, the expenses associated with coordinating and performing the functions of that system should be shared by everyone as well.

The 2025 per capita is \$56.00 per active member.

Local & International Mission

In addition to per capita giving, First Presbyterian Church supports various local, national, and international mission organizations. Some examples of the local organizations we support include: <u>HOPE House</u>, Help for Abused Partners, Family Resource Center, and <u>Sterling Advocates for Recovery</u>... One of the international organizations we support is <u>Wings of Hope for Trauma</u>.



Wings of Hope for Trauma opened the Trauma Healing Center in Bethlehem in 2011, offering a range of trauma therapeutic and psychosocial support options. Within this framework, Wings of Hope for trauma trains mental health practitioners and social professionals in psychotraumatology This enables them to help people suffering from the consequences of violence. Trauma work is an active contribution against violence in Palestine and thus active peace work.

Click on the links above to read more about these organizations.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can designate a gift to the church. Write "per capita" or "mission" or "music" on the memo line of your check to designate a gift to a particular area of ministry. **Thank you!**

THANK YOU...

Dear Pastor Witherspoon,

I hope you will convey to those gathered on Sunday the deep gratitude Kathy and I feel for the love and care we've received since her surgery. While Kathy's recovery actually has gone very well, even under the best of circumstances these things are quite painful and debilitating.

We want to offer a special thanks to Rose and Jim Neblett (we've even frozen half of the pork roast for a future meal) Jomari Lechtman for the pasta dinner (it was superb!) and Bev Cumming for the scrumptious chicken-apple salad. The meals were hearty, delicious and very much enjoyed.

Beyond that was something even more important. It was knowing that people with busy lives were thinking of us and valued us enough to make the effort to feed us. It was a truly Christian gift, straight from the teaching of our Lord and Savior. It reminded us that we are included among some of the finest people in our community, and that is a powerful and nourishing knowledge.

I am reminded of one of my mother's favorite Episcopal hymns: "They will know we are Christians by our love, by our love, they will know we are Christians by our love."

We return the love a hundredfold to you all and look forward when we can again be among you all in person.

Your servant in Christ,

Jeff Rice

Can you help...?



Lend a hand, fill a heart

When someone in our church family is hurting, we share our love and support, often bringing meals to ease pain and lighten the load. The Deacons coordinate this caring outreach. If you would like to volunteer to provide a meal on occasion, your assistance would be welcome. Let us know if you'd like to be on the list of contacts the Deacons use to coordinate meals. There is a sign-up sheet on the table outside the church office.

OR... If you'd like to contribute financially to support this ministry, please write "Deacons" on the memo of your check.
When we are short-handed or stretched thin, the deacons may pick up prepared meals from restaurants like J&L to deliver to church families in times of illness, recovery, or grief.

Thank You!

UPCOMING EVENTS...





Thrive in 2025!

"Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul." 3 John 1:2

Good health is the harmony of a healthy mind, healthy body, healthy spirit and healthy relationships. To help you travel the path to good health, the First Presbyterian Church is hosting free seminars presented by professionals to help pave the way.

Session 2: Self-Care and Well Being Presented by Jackie Barton

Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Self-Care plays a key role in your overall health and well being by applying the Golden Rule to yourself. It is to treat yourself in a way that you treat others. It is to respect, love, protect, and care for yourself each and every day, physically, socially, mentally, spiritually and emotionally. Good self-care involves sleeping, laughing, music, art, hobbies, reading, meditating: It means taking the time to do what we enjoy. Self-care is not a luxury but a priority. For more information, or to reserve a seat contact First Presbyterian Church at 970-522-2708.



These **FREE** Educational Sessions Include Refreshments, Presentations, Discussions, Questions And Networking On The Fourth Monday Each Month from 5:15 p.m.-6:15 p.m. In The Fellowship Hall

*Aug. 25 *Sept. 29 *Oct. 27

LOOKING AHEAD...



BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 10:30 A.M.

Save the Date ... Sunday, September 7

Blessing of the Backpacks

Start off the school year (and fall season) with a blessing. We'll have encouraging backpack tags (or luggage tags) for everyone!

Chancel Choir returns!

We appreciate the solos and special music in the summer, but there's nothing like having the choir lead us in worship!

New series begins: **Don't Give Up!** Check out next month's newsletter for more details.

It's going to be a great kickoff Sunday!

Highlights from the May 27, 2025 session meeting:

Dennis Kaan was approved to take minutes for this meeting.	"Thrive in 2025" sessions will offer sessions on the topic of Emotional Wellness in August, September and October on the fourth Monday of
The April 1, 2025 minutes were approved.	the month at 5:15 pm.
Rev. Michelle officiated at Joyce Lyberger's funeral on April 11.	Approved an honorarium for Darla for organizing and directing the Palm Sunday children's choir.
Approved time away (vacation) for Rev. Michelle (July 10-16 and August 1-4).	The annual insurance premium for 2025-26 will be \$37,709 (up from \$34,185 for the previous year).
Approved <u>Tending the Wild Garden: Growing in</u> <u>the Fruit of the Spirit</u> for a study/prayer group led by Rev. Michelle.	Approved. a request for use of Milligan Hall on May 29th, 12-3:30pm.
Affirmed e-votes for the FPC Scholarships to: Mason Boeff, Carlee Hicks Lovenburg, Audrey Reeves, Ava Reeves, Grace Reeves	Approved a request for use of Milligan Hall on May 31st, 1-5:00 pm.
and Addison Steele.	Approved the following:
And the Melvin Scholarship to: Reagan Fehringer, Karsyn Huss, Ana Lockard, Lilly Monat and Chance Segelke.	June 15: HS Senior/Youth Sunday July 6: Picnic Potluck/Worship July 13: Hymn Sing Sunday August 3: Jeff Underhill guest preacher
Approved February, March and April Transaction Detail Reports.	No August communion August 10: Brandon Eaton guest preacher
Approved additional expenses up to \$1,500 for VBS (in addition to \$1000 already budgeted).	Approved the local portion of the Pentecost offering to go to LifeSource Project along with a \$500 donation from Session Other Mission.
Approved receiving donations for Deacons/Heart- strings to cover the cost of meals when caring for members.	Approved \$2,500 donation to Hope House from the DD&E fund.
Date for the Pride Picnic was set for June 21.	

Highlights from the June 2025 session meetings:

June 17, 2025

Rev. Michelle officiated at the funeral of Mary Smith.

Approved time away for Rev. Michelle to officiate at a wedding in Mexico for a church member January 22-25, 2026.

Two people were removed from the Active Member Roll.

The presbytery voted to advance Brandon Eaton to the status of candidate .

Approved the wedding and reception of Brandon Eaton and Deborah Wilson, on August 16, 2025, in the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, officiated by Rev. Michelle D. Witherspoon.

Property committee reports it is getting quotes for a door security system. Lightning and weather has damaged fire monitoring panels which have been repaired.

32 children attended Vacation Bible School.

Approved donation from Other Session Mission of: \$500 to Bob's Walkers for the Alzheimer's Association; and \$100 to Sterling Advocates for Recovery for their 2025 Rally.

June 22, 2025, called meeting

Approved Dennis Kaan to take minutes.

Approved the baptism of Andi Christine Guitierrez-Dutton, daughter of Daniel Guitierrez-Dutton and Chad Dutton, on July 20, 2025 during the worship service.



Food Pantry You may bring your donations to the church and put them under the table outside the church office, or in the box in the elevator vestibule. Cooperating Ministry: August Sloppy Joe Sauce, SPAM,

Cornbread Mix

NJC Food Pantry: Nutritious Non-Perishable Prepared Foods

THANK YOU!





- 1 Jomari Lechtman Ryker Jackson
- 2 Marryn Sheldon Jana Lock
- 3 Dennis Kaan
- 5 Connie Brown
- 9 Mike Tyson
- 10 Chris Jutz
- Jenilee Spicer
- 12 Logan Guenzi
- 14 David Ruygrok
- 15 Cody Weingardt
- 16 Chad Borner
- 19 Emi Reeves Kim Jackson Danny Duodu
- 26 Dan Torres
- 27 Alex Hicks
- 30 Pat Borner Jacob Paiz Tammie Malone
- 31 Kay Rich Beverly Fritzler

Happy Birthday... May your day be blessed!

PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Military Personnel

Luke Brigham (Randy & Terry's son) | Thomas Gage Snyder (Kim Schlup's son) Cameron Venn (Doris Ramsel's grandson)

For those with special needs or concerns....

Florence Annan Grace Ann (Connie Clark's relative) David Balabanis Family Joe Baran (in-law of Ted & Penny Propst) Jackie Barton & Family Sharon Bennett (Neblett's son-in-law's mother) Tye Bennett (Neblett's grandson) Clark Bernhardt Norm Blackburn Brenda Boeff **Randy Brigham** Leah Burt (friend of Judy Roumph) **CEDEPCA** (Protestant Ministry in Guatemala) **Cooperating Ministry** Sally Craig (friend of Jackie Reynolds) Jeanne Crouch & Family Deb Daughtery (sister of Ken McDowell) Cierra Davis (friend of Becky Cranwell) Dave and Marsha Davis Sarah Davis Andrew DeSouza (Michelle Hawkins' son) Gary Espinosa (Arden Fennell's family) Family Resource Center Carolee Goldsmith (mother of Brandon Eaton) Meredith Goodwin (friend of Propsts) Mike Hawkins (Michelle Hawkins' brother) Abby Henry & family (friend of Jackie Barton) **Highlands** Camp Sonja Holden (friend of Arden Fennell) Chris Jutz

Congratulations to the family of Logan & Mikayla Guenzi, whose daughter, Emma June, was born on June 9.

Josh Jutz & Kaylee Robert Koehler (friend of Laura Guenzi) Debby Korrey (Delinda's & Darla's sister) Ann Leh and Family Delinda Korrey McDowell Susan Kozik (former sister in-law of Mike Tyson) Aline Marquez (friend of Becky Cranwell) Rose Neblett Dirk Nye and Regine Bendelow (Jackie Barton's step-father & mother) Mari Paradise (Jim Neblett's sister) Jeni Porter (In-law of Blackburns) Emma Rich (Granddaughter of Gary & Kay Rich) Sergio Rosado (family friend of Jackie Reynolds) Regina Riggle (Jackie Reynolds' niece) Cadie, Hailey and Austen Rose (Jason Rose family) Agnes Rundus Betty Scharf Linda Schoyer (Sister of Connie Sue Clark) John Seffens (friend of Mike Tyson) Steven Shinn (friend of Jim Leh) Darrell Smith and family Montelle Smith Becky Stieb, Justin & Torin (friends of Michelle Hawkins) Charlie & Roseanne Thompson (friends of Nebletts) Sharon Treacy (mother of Laura Guenzi) Mike Tyson Amy & Byron Uhrich (Jill Vollmer's parents) Under the Umbrella Robert Vance (Michelle White's dad) Don and Virginia Werner (Parents of Mike Werner) Jeff Weskamp Jean Williamson and family

Do you have an update on anyone listed on our church prayer list? We'd love to hear the good news of recovery, healing and answered prayer.

If you have a joy to report, let us know!

HIGHLIGHTS: June 2025













































HIGHLIGHTS: June 2025

Pride Picnic



Birthday Sunday





HIGHLIGHTS: July







Serving in Church — August

<u>Ushers</u>

- August 3 Laura Guenzi, Jill Vollmer
- August 10 Liz Chaney, Jackie Barton
- August 17Delinda Korrey McDowell, Ken McDowell
- August 24 Sue Weingardt, Jackie Barton
- August 31 Kim Weingardt, Gary Slimmer

FIRST RESPONSE/BULLETIN DELIVERY

August Jacob Paiz

Fellowship Coffee

- August 3Women's Bible Study
- August 10 Membership/Stewardship Committee
- August 17 Fellowship Committee
- August 24 Bell Choir
- August 31 Property Committee

COUNT OFFERING

August 3	Bob Smith
August 10	Connie Ham
August 17	Bev Cumming
August 24	Linda Meisner
August 31	Bob Smith

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

August 10 Pam Werner

ACOLYTES/BIBLE BEARER

- August 3Ted & Penny Propst
- August 10 Guenzi Kids
- August 17 Cooper & Callie Jackson Family
- August 24Max & Lindsey Jackson Family
- August 31 Jim & Rose Neblett



LITURGISTS

August 3	Pat Borner
August 10	Jomari Lechtman
August 17	Dennis Kaan
August 24	Darla Korrey Gertner
August 31	Rose Neblett

AV TECHS

August 3	Justin Cranwell (sound)
	Jacob Paiz (slides)
August 10	Dean Boeff (sound)
	Callie Jackson (slides)
August 17	Jeff Christenson (sound)
	Jacob Paiz (slides)
August 24	Rex Witherspoon (sound)
	Pam Trimble (slides)
August 31	Justin Cranwell (sound)
	Callie Jackson (slides)

Remember to let the church office know if you trade serving dates with someone (522-2708).

Serving schedules subject to change. Check the website for most up-to-date schedules. www.firstpressterling.org/servingschedules

August 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10:30 Worship 11:30 Fellowship Coffee	5:15 Fellowship	5:00 Zumba	10:00 Worship & Sacraments	4:30 Zumba		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
10:30 Worship 11:30 Fellowship with Birthday Celebration	10:00 Growing in the Spirit	12:00 Membership/ Stewardship 5:00 Zumba		4:30 Zumba	Newsletter Deadline	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
10:30 Worship 11:30 Fellowship Lunch	9:00 Finance Committee 10:00 Growing in the Spirit	5:00 Zumba 6:00 Session		5:30 Choir & Friends Potluck		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
10:30 Worship 11:30 Fellowship Coffee	5:15 Thrive in '25 Self-Care	5:00 Zumba		4:30 Zumba 5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir		
31						
10:30 Worship 11:30 Fellowship Coffee						

The hope of the church is more than what lies ahead some day when Jesus returns. It is our experience of God's kingdom breaking into our everyday journey of faith as we do justice, extend mercy, express love, offer compassion, and celebrate beauty . . . All in the name of Jesus.

N. T. Wright,

Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

130 S. 4TH STREET ~ STERLING, CO 80751

Worship

Sunday, 10:30 a.m. onsite ~ online ~ radio www.facebook.com/fpc.sterling

Radio Ministry

Sunday, 10:30 a.m. On KSTC (AM 1230)

CHURCH PHONE	970.522.2708
Fax	970.522.1365
WEBSITE	www.firstpressterling.org
Office Hours:	M/W/F: 9-noon T/Th: 1-4
	(or by appointment)

Staff:

PASTOR	MICHELLE WITHERSPOON
E-mail pastor@fpcsterling.org	
OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	RASHELL FRITZLER
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BOOKKEEPER	KARLEE MANUELLO
E-mail finance@fpcsterling.org	
MUSIC COORDINATOR/ORGANI	ST ELSIE FETZER
CHOIR DIRECTOR	DARLA KORREY GERTNER
BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR	LINDSEY JACKSON
PROPERTY MANAGER	JANET KLOBERDANZ
NEWSLETTER TEAM	BEV CUMMING
	TAMMIE MALONE
	JACKIE REYNOLDS