

# FIRST THINGS FIRST

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

DECEMBER 2025

## Christmas Eve

at First Presbyterian Church



*Join us for our traditional candlelight communion service:*

**4:30pm**

December 24

# A MESSAGE FROM MICHELLE. . .



## *Advent: History, Mystery & Majesty*

There's a tradition of speaking of Advent as the time when we recall how Jesus comes in history, mystery, and majesty. Jesus came in **history**, when he was **born** in the first century in Bethlehem. We remember and anticipate his birth in the Advent season. Jesus *still* comes to us in **mystery**, through the sacrament of communion, and whenever we gather together for **worship** ("Where two or three are gathered, I am in the midst of them," Jesus says). And so we sing, "Be born in us *today*." Finally, in the season of Advent, we don't only look back at history to the birth of Jesus in history, nor to the present and his ongoing presence with us in mystery, but we also anticipate the future and his coming again in glory, or... **majesty**.

Advent is always a special season at First Presbyterian Church... Join in the season as we give our attention and our hearts to Christ who comes in history, mystery, and majesty.

*Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.*

*Rev. Michelle*

## UPCOMING EVENTS...

# First Friday @ First Presbyterian Christmas Carol Singalong



**December 5, 2025**

**12:05 to 12:35**

onsite, or online: [www.youtube.com/@FPC.Sterling](https://www.youtube.com/@FPC.Sterling)

# Advent Gathering

with Rev. Michelle

MONDAYS – 10am | December 1, 8, 15, & 22

Join me for a weekly gathering for tea and cookies and conversation.

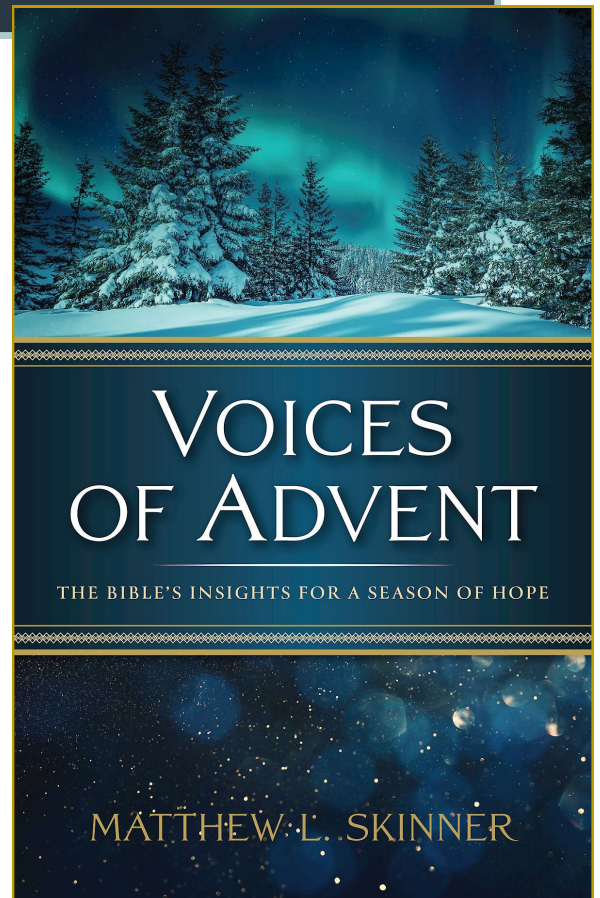
Reading the book is optional – all are welcome.

*Rev. Michelle*

“I need hope to survive, and Advent comes to me as a season designed to stir up hope. That’s because Advent keeps us focused on Jesus’ commitment to be with us, to arrive into our circumstances again and again.”

~ Matthew Skinner, author of *Voices of Advent*

*Voices of Advent* explores biblical texts to consider how they lead us to reflect on God, live our lives, express faith, set our priorities, and celebrate Christmas. If we **listen carefully** we’ll hear **hope** in the voices of angels and visionaries, faithful people like Mary, John the Baptist, and Jesus.



**Suggested Donation: \$16/book**



# ~ AN INVITATION ~

If you are seeking...

solace

fellowship

hope

peace

healing

respite

quiet

...

Join us for our annual Blue Christmas service:  
a time to remember loved ones no longer with us,  
and a time to take a break from the frenetic pace of life  
to be still and reconnect with the sacred.

## *Blue Christmas* *a service of Remembrance & Hope*



Wednesday, December 10 ~ 5:15 supper ~ 6:00 service

# thank you



Dear Church Family,

Thank you for the thoughtful and generous Pastor Appreciation gift. I will treasure the "Hold on to Hope" cross, and I will gratefully savor the special time with family.

It truly is my honor to serve as your pastor... Thank you!

*Rev. Michelle*

We have some TVs left over from the Rummage Sale.

Contact Pat Borner for more information.

## Radio

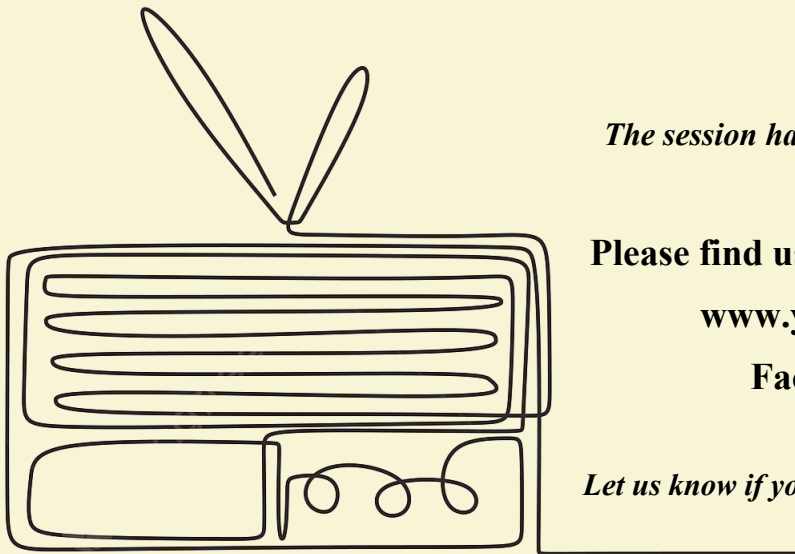
*The session has decided to discontinue the radio service.*

**Please find us on YouTube or Facebook instead:**

**[www.youtube.com/@FPC.Sterling](http://www.youtube.com/@FPC.Sterling)**

**[Facebook.com/FPC.Sterling](https://Facebook.com/FPC.Sterling)**

*Let us know if you need any help accessing the service online.*



# SESSION. . .

## Highlights of recent meetings.

### **Congregational Meeting October 19, 2025**

The following were elected as officers:

Elders, Class of 2028: Michelle Hawkins, Traci Reeves,  
Jerri Spear

Youth Elder, Class of 2026: Rex Witherspoon

Deacons, Class of 2028: Lora Boren, Brenda  
Christenson, Jane Robinson

Youth Deacon, Class of 2026: Leila Warden

2026 Nominating Committee Members at Large:  
Ann Blackburn, Connie Clark, Connie Ham

### **Session Meeting October 21, 2025**

Dennis Kaan was elected Acting Clerk while Jackie  
Reynolds is out of town.

There were two funerals.

Thank you notes were received from the following  
missions: Rev. Betsey Moe thanking the church for  
our support of the PCUSA mission coworker  
program and CEDEPCA (Protestant ministry in  
Guatemala); Office of Stewardship & Funds  
Development for our contribution to the Peace &  
Global Witness offering; the Alzheimer's  
Association; Sterling Advocates for Recovery; and  
Rod Schaefer for letting him use the church for his  
mother's funeral lunch.

It was noted that donations to the General Fund have  
been received in memory of Marilyn Ross in the  
amount of \$1,000 and from the Agnes Rundus estate  
in the amount of \$9,000.

Approved the September Transaction Detail report.

Approved the use of Walmart Pay in place of the  
discontinued Walmart Credit cards.

A draft budget was developed. No action was taken

It was voted to explore the creation of a music internship  
with young adults (typically NJC students).

Approved changes to the Chancel Choir Director job  
description and a 5% salary increase for the Chancel  
Choir Director effective immediately (October 2025)  
to compensate for additional responsibilities.

### **Called Session Meeting November 2, 2025**

Approved to increase the Endowment Fund Sauter  
Corpus spending distribution from 5% to 6%  
annually

Approved to increase the Mineral/Thornton Fund  
spending distribution from 4% to 6% annually

Approved reaching out to Jim Leh regarding possible  
changes to distribution of the ELMST Fund

Your generosity makes  
mission & ministry possible...

*Thank you!*

<b>Profit &amp; Loss Summary</b>	<b>Jan—Oct 2025</b>
Total Income	\$230,275.59
Total Expense	283,436.60
Net Ordinary Income (Loss)	(53,161.01)
Budgeted Transfers	21,611.14
Other Transfers	0.00
Net Ordinary Income (Loss) with Transfers	(31,549.87)

# FINANCE & CHURCH OFFICE . . .

## YEAR END PLANNING:

Year-end donations should be received by **Monday, 12/29** to be recorded in 2025 giving.

## GIVING STATEMENTS:

3rd Quarter Giving Statements were **emailed** in October. Year-end statements (hard copies) will be mailed in January. Please call the church office if you need to change your email or mailing address, and feel free to contact our Bookkeeper Karlee Manuello if you ever need an updated giving statement.

## HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS:

The church office will be closed: Wednesday-Friday, December 24-December 26,  
and Wednesday-Friday, December 31-January 2.



*Held Together in Faith Since 1878*

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Sterling, Colorado

2026 Estimate of Giving

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Don't forget...*

It's not too late  
to turn in your 2026  
Estimate of Giving.

**TITHES &  
OFFERINGS**

*Thank you...your support makes mission & ministry possible.*

give now:  
[tinyurl.com/FPCPayPal](https://tinyurl.com/FPCPayPal)



THANK YOU  
VERY MUCH





### **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: December**  
Chunky Soups with pop-top

**NJC Food Pantry:**  
Nutritious Non-Perishable  
Prepared Foods

**THANK YOU!**

## *December* **BIRTHDAYS**

- 1 Jaxon Guinn  
Andi Gutierrez-Dutton
- 2 Elsie Fetzer
- 3 Julia Mari
- 6 Debbie Harris
- 13 Robert Smith  
Clifford Benson
- 14 Joan Whitney  
Jeannie Park
- 15 Audrey Reeves  
Ava Reeves
- 17 Dean Boeff
- 18 Ashlee Glaser
- 18 Michelle White
- 18 David Chrisp
- 19 Danny DeSouza
- 21 Ana Nuila
- 22 Myra Westfall  
Ryder Kropp
- 26 Pam Werner
- 27 Kaiden Tanner Clary
- 30 Taylor Cranwell

***Birthday Sunday:***

***December 14***

*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....

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 Rounph)  
CEDEPCA (Protestant Ministry in Guatemala)  
Cooperating Ministry  
Sally Craig (friend of Jackie Reynolds)  
Jeanne Crouch & Family  
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  
Josh Jutz & Kaylee  
Robert Koehler (friend of Laura Guenzi)  
Debby Korrey (Delinda's & Darla's sister)  
Delinda Korrey McDowell

Susan Kozik (former sister in-law of Mike Tyson)  
Jomari Lechtman  
Ann Leh and Family  
Aline Marquez (friend of Becky Cranwell)  
Aubrey Moorehead (great niece of Tanna Prince)  
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)  
David Prince  
Emma Rich (Granddaughter of Gary & Kay Rich)  
Regina Riggle (Niece of Jackie Reynolds)  
Cadie, Hailey and Austen Rose (Jason Rose family)  
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)  
Laurie Weskamp Wagner (Jeff's sister)  
Jeff Weskamp  
Jean Williamson  
Michelle Wilson (friend of David Chrisp)

Condolences to Mike Werner and family for the loss  
of Mike's father, Don Werner.

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: November

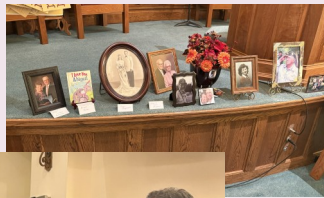
## Birthday Sunday





## HIGHLIGHTS: November

**All Saints Sunday  
Pastor Appreciation  
Worship**





# HIGHLIGHTS: *November*

## Student Bible Presentation Children's Moment



# SERVING IN CHURCH — DECEMBER

## USHERS

December 7	Carrie Lovenburg, Alex Hicks
December 14	Sue Weingardt, Alie Sheldon
December 21	Liz Chaney, Jacob Paiz
December 24	Laura Guenzi, Kim Weingardt, Jill Vollmer
December 28	Delinda Korrey McDowell, Ken McDowell



## FIRST RESPONSE/BULLETIN DELIVERY

December	Kim Weingardt
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## FELLOWSHIP COFFEE

December 7	Nominating Committee
December 14	Membership/Stewardship
December 21	Fellowship Committee
December 28	Board of Deacons

## COUNT OFFERING

December 7	Linda Meisner
December 14	Linda Meisner
December 21	Bob Smith
December 24	Connie Ham & Bev Cumming
December 28	Bev Cumming

## CHILDREN'S MOMENT

December 14	Karen Torres
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## ACOLYTES/BIBLE BEARER

December 7	Dennis & Cheryl Kaan
December 14	Ted & Jeannie Park
December 21	Beth Frye & Laurie McKenzie
December 28	Ashlee & Chuck Glaser

## LITURGISTS

December 7	Ann Blackburn
December 14	Myra Westfall
December 21	Jeff Rice
December 24	Dennis Kaan
December 28	Dean Boeff

## AV TEAM

December 7	Jeff Christenson (sound) Pam Trimble (slides)
December 14	Justin Cranwell (sound) Callie Jackson (slides)
December 21	Dean Boeff (sound) Myra Westfall (slides)
December 24	Jeff Christenson (sound) Jacob Paiz (slides)
December 28	Justin Cranwell (sound) Pam Trimble (slides)

## COMMUNION—DECEMBER 7, 2025

**Prepare**—Tanna Prince, Jomari Lechtman

**Serve**—Bob Smith, Linda Meisner, Becky Cranwell

## COMMUNION—DECEMBER 10, 2025

**Prepare**—Tanna Prince

**Serve**—Tanna Prince

## COMMUNION—DECEMBER 24, 2025

**Prepare**—Bev Cumming, Jomari Lechtman

**Serve**—Connie Ham, Dennis Kaan, Cheryl Kaan, Jim Neblett, Rick Weingardt, Sue Weingardt, Becky Cranwell, Taylor Cranwell

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.**

# December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	10:00 Advent Gathering with Rev. Michelle	5:00 Zumba	10:00 Worship & Sacraments  6:30 Choir	4:30 Zumba  5:30 Bells	12:05 First Friday Concert	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10:30 Worship/ Communion  11:30 Fellowship Coffee	10:00 Advent Gathering with Rev. Michelle  12:00 Finance Meeting	5:00 Zumba	5:15 Blue Christmas Dinner 6:00 Blue Christmas Service 7:15Choir	4:30 Zumba  5:30 Bells		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
10:30 Worship  11:30 Fellowship with Birthday Celebration	10:00 Advent Gathering with Rev. Michelle  Newsletter Deadline	5:00 Zumba  6:00 Session	6:30 Choir	1:30 Women's Bible Study  4:30 Zumba  5:30 Bells		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
10:30 Worship  11:30 Christmas Dinner	10:00 Advent Gathering with Rev. Michelle	5:00 Zumba	Church Office Closed  4:30 Christmas Eve Worship Service	Church Office Closed  Merry Christmas!	Church Office Closed	
28	29	30	31			
		5:00 Zumba	Church Office Closed			

# Christmas Dinner

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

The Fellowship Committee is hosting a traditional holiday meal following worship:  
ham, scalloped potatoes, rolls, green beans, and pie

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

130 S. 4TH STREET ~ STERLING, CO 80751

#### WORSHIP

Sunday, 10:30 a.m.

onsite ~ online

[www.facebook.com/fpc.sterling](http://www.facebook.com/fpc.sterling)

[www.youtube.com/@FPC.Sterling](http://www.youtube.com/@FPC.Sterling)

CHURCH PHONE 970.522.2708

Fax 970.522.1365

WEBSITE [www.firstpressterling.org](http://www.firstpressterling.org)

OFFICE HOURS: M/W/F: 9-noon T/Th: 1-4  
(or by appointment)

#### Staff:

PASTOR

E-mail [pastor@fpcsterling.org](mailto:pastor@fpcsterling.org)

MICHELLE WITHERSPOON

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

E-mail [office@fpcsterling.org](mailto:office@fpcsterling.org)

RASHELL FRITZLER

BOOKKEEPER

E-mail [finance@fpcsterling.org](mailto:finance@fpcsterling.org)

KARLEE MANUELLO

MUSIC COORDINATOR/ORGANIST

ELSIE FETZER

CHOIR DIRECTOR

DARLA KORREY GERTNER

BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR

LINDSEY JACKSON

PROPERTY MANAGER

JANET KLOBERDANZ

NEWSLETTER TEAM

BEV CUMMING  
TAMMIE MALONE  
JACKIE REYNOLDS