

FIRST THINGS FIRST

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

NOVEMBER 2023



Don't forget to turn in your 2024 Estimate of Giving by November 13 for
Thanksgiving/Dedication Sunday ~ November 19

A MESSAGE FROM MICHELLE. . .



We've been participating in a Lilly Endowment funded project called, *Relevance to Resonance*. The project is run out of Luther Seminary, directed by author Dr. Andrew Root and pastor Rev. David Wood. Because of the grant, some of our church officers were able to go on a meaningful retreat earlier this year, facilitated by Dr. Andrew Root and Rev. Kara Root. On this retreat, we explored what it means to live in the "secular age" (a culture in which people seek the good without God).

The *Relevance to Resonance* project is designed to help people recognize experiences of **transcendence** in their daily lives by cultivating resonance. What is resonance? In this project, resonance is what happens when we experience interconnection between oneself and the world, or through encounters with something beyond oneself. The project explores ways that church leaders can reshape and deepen congregational life.

The project includes a site visit from one of the project directors. Rev. David Wood will be with us for our site visit this month. You will have a chance to hear him preach and meet him on **Sunday, November 19**. The Fellowship Committee is serving chili and cinnamon rolls at the Fellowship Lunch, so we'll get to share a regional favorite with our guest preacher.

I'm very excited for you to meet Rev. Wood and learn more about this project. May it be a day of meaning, connection, and... resonance!

Rev. Michelle

A MOMENT FOR MISSION...AND SO MUCH MORE!

As a part of our church's mission, the Session voted recently to support Bob's Walkers team for the Alzheimer's Walk. Every year teams participate in the Memory Walk to End Alzheimer's here in Sterling and Bob's Walkers is the star team.

Our very own Connie Clark is the star of the Bob's Walkers team, the fundraising team that has raised over \$400,000 to support Alzheimer's research. There is quite a back story to this amazing ongoing fundraising campaign.

Connie Walker Clark was born and raised in Sterling—and in our beautiful church. She remembers as a child that her family always sat in the “Walker Pew” on Sunday mornings. Once she asked her grandmother why she always sat in that particular pew—third pew from the back in the middle—and she told her that she sat there so she could gaze at the sunlit dome without straining herself.

Connie is a lifelong member of the church and was baptized, confirmed, and married here, as were her parents, sister, and children. “It’s my home. My family,” she said. She taught Sunday School for over 35 years and is known in the church as the Godmother of Confirmation as she has been so dedicated to the confirmation process for so many young people in our church over the years. She has also served as a Deacon and twice as an Elder.

Connie's mother and father, Bob and Helen Walker both passed away in 2001. Her father began to show symptoms of developing Alzheimer's in his late sixties. She stated that there were many symptoms over the years but the family didn't realize what was going on until things were really bad, a sentiment families often feel when they have loved ones being affected by this terrible disease.

Shortly after the death of her parents, several people approached Connie to help organize an Alzheimer's walk in Sterling. She told them that she would be glad to help but couldn't come to meetings because she was working. Still, the idea was often on her mind. She decided to organize a team and contacted friends and family for support. One of her friends suggested the obvious name for the team to be called “Bob's Walkers,” and so it has been since 2002.



Bob and Helen Walker

She organizes Bob's Walkers team for the Alzheimer's walk every year “exactly” the same way she did that first year. She cleans off her kitchen table, compiles a list of previous and potential participants on

a legal-sized blue pad, types her yearly letter asking for support, hand addresses envelopes, and sends a packet to those on her list. Her kids admonish her, telling her that she should use her computer skills to make this job easier, but she believes in the tried and true system. In addition, she writes a personal note on every single letter she sends. This year she sent over 350 letters.

Bob's Walkers

Walking to End Alzheimer's

The first year, Bob's Walkers raised \$6,110. This year, twenty-two years later, this walking team raised \$20,185. The best year was 2019—\$27,807! The grand total for 22 years of Walking for Alzheimer's, Bob's Walkers team has raised a total of \$431,636 which is all donated for Alzheimer's research. She knows that sometimes over the years, children have donated a dollar during the walk. "The joy of going to the mailbox during the walking season is unbelievable!"

The Sterling Walk to End Alzheimer's, as it is now known, takes place each year on the fourth Saturday in August at the Logan County Courthouse.

Connie feels that raising money for the Sterling Walk to End Alzheimer's is a calling. She knows that her parents are guiding her. Connie smiles and then says softly, "And this church is a part of me forever."

Thank you, Connie!



Note: Connie started her career at the pharmacy as a child as she would always ride along with her father to the pharmacy when he was called out after hours when his clients needed him. After 40 years, Connie is retiring and a retirement party is planned for November 8th, 10am -12 pm at Walker Pharmacy.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW CHURCH MEMBERS...



Bob Hessler moved back to Sterling a few weeks ago and we welcome him back into our church family. He and his wife Debbie moved from Sterling to Greeley in the late 1990's to further his career. His wife Debbie passed away in 2019. He says that it has been a significant change at his age to move to a new home and he is still adjusting. He also says that one of his goals is to "stay retired." Bob's daughter and 2 grandchildren live here in Sterling and he has a son and 2 grandkids who live in Houston.



Carlee Hicks-Lovenburg is a senior at Sterling High School. She has been an honor students all during her high school career and will graduate early. She also works at McDonalds and has been a top employee there. Her first love is music and we are so blessed to have her as part of our church choir. She plans a career in cosmetology. We are so glad you are such a vital part of our church family, Carlee.



Callie Jackson grew up in Atwood, and she's been involved at FPC Sterling for years. Callie works at Sterling Regional Medical Center in the lab. Callie and her husband Cooper have three beautiful and charming daughters: Ellis, Emery, and Wren. Callie is part of our AV team, and we happy to welcome her as an official member of the church.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW CHURCH MEMBERS...

Alex Norell was born and raised in Merino. He graduated from Sterling High School and has earned an Associates of Music degree from NJC. He is currently an Americorps member, a federal agency for national service and volunteerism. He works across the country when needed for disaster response and in rural and urban development. He has worked in several southern states and in Puerto Rico. He states that he loves his job. When he is available he sings in our church choir and shares his talents on the mandolin and guitar.

Welcome, Alex.



Jacob Paiz grew up in Julesburg. He works at Sunshine Childcare Center in Sterling, and he's enrolled in the online Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education program at Western Governor's University. Jacob is part of our AV team at FPC, running slides and helping with the livestream.

Jacob and his husband David Chrisp were married at FPC last year, and we are delighted to have them both in our church family.



PASTOR APPRECIATION...

Rev Michelle,

Our God has sent you to this place
To lead us in the way
That He would have us work and think
And live from day to day.

We're grateful that you're here with us
To teach us from His word,
And we will try to do our best
In service of our Lord.

No matter the hour; whatever the need,
You go the extra mile—
Always ready and willing to share
A comforting thought and a smile.

We thank you for your ministry,
Your guidance and your care,
His greatest blessing for your life
Is our most humble prayer.



A note of Thanks from Rev Michelle: *Thank you so much for the very generous pastor appreciation gift! I am humbled and grateful. It is truly my honor to serve as your pastor. Thank you! ~Rev. Michelle*

MISSION... GUATEMALA

Last month Rev. Michelle visited the PCUSA Mission Co-Workers we support in Guatemala, Rev. Betsey and Eric Moe, who work with CEDEPCA (a Spanish acronym for the Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America). Below are some photo highlights from the trip.



meeting the team at CEDEPCA



visiting the local market



tour of historic churches/Antigua



cooking class



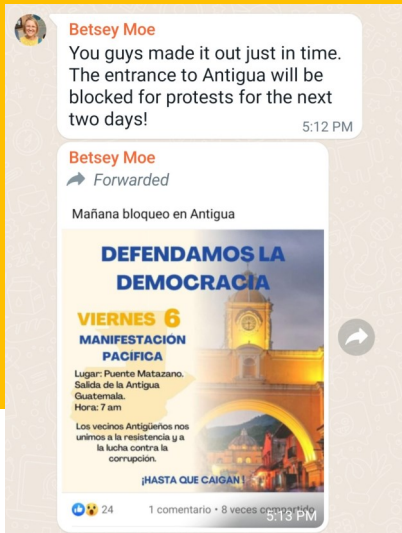
ancient public laundry basins...still used today



MISSION... GUATEMALA



It was an interesting time to be in Guatemala



Rev. Michelle shared some reflections on her visit to Guatemala during the sermon in the 10/29/23 service:
<https://fb.watch/n-NsYUm0I-/>

For recent news and more information:
<https://tinyurl.com/MissionGuat>

FPC RUMMAGE SALE



November 6-10

Sunday,
November 19th

Fellowship Lunch!



Check out the new prayer station in the sanctuary:

Let Love Rise... in prayer

LEAVE A PRAYER/TAKE A PRAYER

Leave a prayer request:

Write your prayer request on the paper and place it in the basket.

Take a prayer request:

Take a prayer request from the basket home with you and pray for the person/prayer request throughout the week.

You may... TAKE A PRAYER, LEAVE A PRAYER, OR BOTH.

In Person & on Facebook

First Friday @ First Presbyterian

Leslee Wisdom Siirila with Vic Wisdom



***“Virtues, Villains & Victor-y”
A Disney Collection***

November 3, 2023

12:05 to 12:35

South 4th and Ash, Sterling

Free & Open to the Public

facebook.com/fpc.sterling



Honor & Remember Loved Ones with Poinsettias

\$25 each

—
Poinsettias will be in the
sanctuary Dec 10-24,
and available to pick up
following Christmas Eve.

Poinsettia Donation Form

Completed Forms Must Be Received by Tuesday, December 4th

Donor's Name: _____

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

☐ My poinsettia(s) will be delivered to the church.

☐ I'd like to order poinsettias through the church:

of poinsettias (\$25/each): _____

Total: \$ _____

(Please make checks out to First Presbyterian Church with a memo specifying
"poinsettia" Or, select "poinsettia" if donating online)

Save the Date: We are planning one service on Christmas Eve at 4:30pm

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: November

Canned vegetables

****Goal: 250 cans**

for Cooperating Ministry Christmas Baskets

NJC Food Pantry:

Nuts, Dried Fruit, Trail Mix; Jerky;
Tuna or Salmon (cans/packets);
Protein Bars; Peanut Butter; Nut Butter;
Crackers; Granola; Fruit/Nut Bars;
Instant Oatmeal; Popcorn; Microwavable meals.

THANK YOU!

November BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Mikki Jackson
- 2 Bryce White
- 3 Tanna Prince
- 6 Carrie Lovenburg
- 7 Jill Vollmer
- 10 Nancy Hall
- 10 Tammy Sanders
- 11 Jim Neblett
- 11 Kale Christenson
- 14 Doug Fritzler
- 15 Wren Jackson
- 15 Larry Fetzner
- 16 Michelle Witherspoon
- 16 Rick Weingardt
- 17 Bev Cumming
- 18 Mary Smith
- 18 Trae Miller
- 19 Rick Jackson
- 20 Nancy Mann
- 21 Linda Meisner
- 25 Kay Dana
- 27 Harry Peterson

Happy Birthday...

May your day be blessed!

To help us
imagine the
communion of
saints, please
bring framed
photos of loved
ones you'll be
remembering this
All Saints' Sunday,

November 5.

All Saints Sunday



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....

Carl Anderson
Florence Annan
Grace Ann (Connie Clark's relative)
David Balabanis Family
Tye Bennett (Neblett's grandson)
Brenda Boeff
Gabe Chapin
Cooperating Ministry
Jeanne Crouch & Family
Cierra Davis (friend of Becky Cranwell)
Andrew DeSouza (Michelle Hawkins' son)
Gary Espinosa (Arden Fennell's family)
Edith Evans
Family Resource Center
Norman Foos
Koehn Gertner (Mike's grandson)
Meredith Goodwin (friend of Propsts)
David Hashman, SCF Inmate
Highlands Camp
Sonja Holden (friend of Arden Fennell)
Hollis Jackson
Chris Jutz
Josh Jutz & Kaylee
Dennis Kaan
Janae (Klindt) Kerr
Kiel/Alva Family (friends of Weingardts)
Robert Koehler (friend of Laura Guenzi)
Debby Korrey (Delinda's & Darla's sister)
Ann Leh and Family
Jimmie McCaffree
Delinda Korrey McDowell
Ken McDowell and Hannah

Aline Marquez (friend of Becky Cranwell)
Rev. Betsey & Eric Moe, & the people of Guatemala
Rose Neblett
Jeni Porter (In-law of Blackburns)
Frances Rhodes (Dave's mother)
Jerry Rich (Gary's brother)
Agnes Rundus
Betty Scharf
John Seffens (friend of Mike Tyson)
Steven Shinn (friend of Jim Leh)
Dennis Sloan (Rev. Michelle's uncle)
Darrell Smith
AJ, Sara, & Baby Leo Sonnenberg (friends of Weingardts)
Becky Stieb, Justin & Torin (friends of Michelle Hawkins)
Charlie & Roseanne Thompson (friends of Nebletts)
Mike Tyson
Amy & Byron Uhrich (Jill Vollmer's parents)
Under the Umbrella
Robert Vance (Michelle White's dad)
Norma Wagner (Jana Lock's mom)
Declan Nash Warner (Jason Rose's grandson)
Derek Weingardt (nephew of Rhodes and Weingardts)
Violet Weingardt (Rick and Kim Weingardt's mom)
Masi Wells (friend of Taylor Cranwell)
Jeff Weskamp
Jim & Jean Williamson

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!

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS...

The Session of First Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Sterling, Colorado, held a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 19, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in the conference room.

PASTOR'S REPORT:

IT WAS VOTED to host Wilian and Erly Cen, of the Yucatan Peninsula Mission (YPM), October 21-22; to approve Wilian and Erly to give the sermon on October 22; and to approve a donation of \$500 from the Session Mission line of the budget to YPM.

Funerals:

- Charles L. "Chuck" Cumming entered life triumphant on August 4, 2023. A memorial service was held at First Presbyterian Church on August 18, 2023, with Rev. Michelle D. Witherspoon officiating.
- Carol Wolvington Arnold entered life triumphant on August 28, 2023. A memorial service was held at First Presbyterian Church on September 5, 2023, with Rev. Michelle D. Witherspoon officiating.
- Eula Mae Green entered life triumphant on August 29, 2023. A memorial service was held at Chaney Reager Funeral Home on September 8, 2023, with Rev. Michelle Witherspoon officiating.

CLERK'S REPORT:

Correspondence:

- Thank you for our donation to the LifeSource Project.
- Thank you from Emi Reeves for the college scholarship.
- Thank you from the Zion Church "Soup Kitchen" for our donation to the Free Sunday Lunch Program.

The following e-votes were affirmed:

- To transfer \$10,000 from the Sauter fund for operating expenses.
- To transfer \$10,000 from the Mineral/Thornton fund for operating expenses.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

MEMBERSHIP/STEWARDSHIP:

\$2,847.00 was raised at the Tasty Favorites Auction on September 10.

PERSONNEL:

- Performance reviews were conducted with all staff members.
- **IT WAS VOTED** to increase the annual salary of the Office Administrator to \$12,480/year, beginning October 2023.

- **IT WAS VOTED** to approve the revised Job Description for the Chancel Choir Director.

PROPERTY:

IT WAS VOTED to approve the Building Use Request from Sarah Davis on behalf of the Ivan E. Rundus Foundation and the Logan County Arts League (LOCAL): Spooky Organ Concert; 10/07/23; 5pm-7pm; sanctuary.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

- **IT WAS VOTED** to recommend to the congregation a change in the by-laws to reduce the size of the session from 12 members to 9 members (3 classes of 3), beginning in 2025.
- **IT WAS VOTED** to call a congregational meeting for the purpose of revising the by-laws to reduce the size of the session and to elect officers on October 29, 2023 following the worship service.

MISSION CONTACT:

- **IT WAS VOTED** to invite Baby Bear Hugs to use two rooms on the 3rd floor of the church building for their office space and conference room, for \$200/month.
- **IT WAS VOTED** that our portion of the Peace and Global Witness Offering be designated for Under the Umbrella.

NEXT MEETINGS/IMPORTANT DATES:

- Session/Finance Budget meeting: October 17, 2023 at 5:30pm
- Called Congregational Meeting: Sunday, October 29, 2023, following worship
- Resonance Project Site Visit: November 18-19, 2023

There being no further business, Rev. Michelle Witherspoon closed the meeting with prayer.

	Jan-Aug 2023
Total Income	\$169,792.98
Total Expense	\$218,688.82
Net Ordinary Income (Loss)	(\$48,895.84)
Budgeted Transfers	\$24,719.78
Other Transfers	\$0.00
Net Ordinary Income (Loss) with Transfers	(\$24,176.06)

SERVING IN CHURCH — NOVEMBER

USHERS

November 5 Traci Reeves, Audrey Reeves
November 12 Dean Boeff, Tammie Malone
November 19 Justin Cranwell, Kim Weingardt
November 26 Ken McDowell, Delinda Korrey
McDowell

FIRST RESPONSE/BULLETIN DELIVERY

November Audrey Reeves

FELLOWSHIP COFFEE

November 5 Nominating
November 12 Personnel
November 19 Fellowship
November 26 Property

COUNT OFFERING

November 5 Connie Ham
November 12 Linda Meisner
November 19 Bev Cumming
November 26 Bob Smith

LITURGISTS

November 5 Rose Neblett
November 12 Penny Propst
November 19 Connie Sue Clark
November 26 Pam Werner

AV TECHS

November 5 Justin Cranwell (sound)
Callie Jackson (slides)
November 12 Dean Boeff (sound)
Myra Westfall (slides)
November 19 Tanna Prince & Rex
Witherspoon (sound)
Callie Jackson (slides)
November 26 Jeff Christenson (sound)
Pam Trimble (slides)

COMMUNION: NOVEMBER 5, 2023

PREPARING/SERVING COMMUNION

Preparing

Mike Tyson, Nancy Mann, Jomari Lechtman

Serving

Tara Guenzi, Ava Reeves, Linda Meisner



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

November 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
			10:30 Worship & Sacraments	5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir	12:05pm First Friday Concert	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
All Saints Sunday 10:30 Worship/ Communion 11:30 Fellowship Coffee <i>Daylight Savings</i>	Rummage Sale	Rummage Sale	Rummage Sale 5:15 Finance	Rummage Sale 5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir	Rummage Sale Office Closed (Veterans Day)	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
10:30 Worship 11:30 Fellowship Coffee			Newsletter Deadline	1:30 Women's Bible Study 5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir		Resonance Project Site Visit
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10:30 Worship <i>with Resonance Project guest preacher</i> 11:30 Fellowship Lunch				Thanksgiving Office Closed	Office Closed	
26	27	28	29	30		
10:30 Worship 11:30 Fellowship Coffee				5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir		



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:

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MICHELLE WITHERSPOON

E-mail michelle@firstpressterling.org

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

RASHELL FRITZLER

E-mail office@firstpressterling.org

BOOKKEEPER

KARLEE MANUELLO

E-mail karlee@firstpressterling.org

MUSIC COORDINATOR/ORGANIST

ELSIE FETZER

CHOIR DIRECTOR

DARLA KORREY GERTNER

BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR

LINDSEY JACKSON

PROPERTY MANAGER

JANET KLOBERDANZ

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

TAMMIE MALONE
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