

FIRST THINGS FIRST

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

OCTOBER 2025



**PURSUE
WHAT
MAKES
FOR
PEACE.**

ROMANS 14:19

A MESSAGE FROM MICHELLE. . .

DON'T GIVE UP



Held Together in Faith Since 1878

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Sterling, Colorado

In this season when we are thinking about what we can hold on to during hard times, I am particularly grateful for the community of faith — for *this* community of faith. There's something about the sanctuary that is sturdy and grounding, and at the same time warm and welcoming. That seems true of the physical space as well as the liturgy and theology of this church. Our worship services are a unique combination of traditional and progressive. I am grateful for who we are as a church, but I'm also grateful for our history. It is both humbling and encouraging to consider the heritage of this community of faith. For nearly 150 years, this congregation has been gathering, praying, singing, eating, and sharing life together. As I've been reflecting on the scriptures before us in this season, with repeated themes of perseverance and persistence and a don't-give-up vibe, and as I think about the things we can hold on to when things feel chaotic and frightening, I've been struck by the way that God holds us together, even when the world or our lives seem to be falling apart. Indeed, at First Presbyterian Church in Sterling, Colorado, we have been held together in faith since 1878. How blessed we are to be part of this legacy. May we cherish the gift of this community of faith, and may we nurture it for generations to come...

Rev. Michelle

THANKS. . .

To First Pres. Members and Rev. Michelle:

Thank you for all of your work and support during the past 57 years. Your kindness, thoughtfulness, and prayers have confirmed our faith and carried us through both good times and bad. The fellowship has also been very important and necessary. The church has definitely filled our parachute.

In faith and gratitude,
Barbara & Bart Thiele

Thank you for packing



Thank You To Those Who Pack Our Parachute

Charles Plumb, a US Naval Academy graduate, was a jet fighter pilot in Vietnam.

After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy hands. He was captured and spent 6 years in a communist Vietnamese prison.

He survived the ordeal and now lectures on lessons learned from that experience.

One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!"

"How in the world did you know that?" asked Plumb.

"I packed your parachute," the man replied.

Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. The man pumped his hand and said, "I guess it worked!"

Plumb assured him, "It sure did. If your chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today."

Plumb couldn't sleep that night, thinking about that man.

I wonder how many times I might have seen him and not even said, "Good morning, how are you?" or anything because, you see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor.

Everyone has someone who provides what he or she needs to make it through the day.

As you go through this week, this month, this year, recognize those people who pack your parachute.

THANKS. . .



Fellowship appreciation dinner and tour at the Sterling Fire Department... What fun!



Pam Trimble and Jackie Reynolds cleaned and organized the crafts closet. Please use supplies from the closet as needed. There is lots of good stuff. They said, "It was a good time!"

NEW MEMBERS...



Beth Frye

Beth Frye recently became a member of our church. Welcome, Beth, to our church family. She has lived in Sterling for a “long time” but grew up in several areas of the US. Her father was a government employee, so she and her family moved throughout the country. They lived in the Washington DC area for 11 years as well as in Iowa and South Dakota.

Beth graduated from the University of South Dakota where she played basketball for 4 years. Beth came to Sterling when she got a job as a health and physical education teacher in the Sterling school system and coached girls’ basketball teams. Before she retired, she served as the district’s athletic director for 13 years.

Beth’s first love is the outdoors, and she loves all activities that keep her outside and in the countryside. She loves yard work, her horses, mending fences and living in the country at her and Laurie’s home east of Sterling.

Beth has always been around horses, learning to ride when she was 3 years old on a small farm outside Washington DC. She rode performance horses and competed in horse shows when she lived in South Dakota. She even took her horse to college with her. In fact, she wants to be cremated with all her horse show ribbons because they were “such hard work to earn!”

Beth cares about people a great deal and wants to reach out to them. Her goal in life is to keep every person’s welfare in mind as she believes that each and every person has potential to grow and be happy.

Beth enjoys coming to our church and becoming a member. She loves Rev. Michelle’s messages and the music. She states that her favorite part of the service each Sunday is when Rev. Michelle encourages us to sit and take a deep breath and settle in. She says that simple exercise “resets” her for the week and allows her to let things go.

Welcome, Beth. We are blessed to have you as part of our church family.

NEW MEMBERS...



Laurie McKenzie

Welcome, Laurie McKenzie, to our church family as a new member. Laurie grew up in Sterling. She left when she was 18 to attend college and returned to the area in 2008 when she was fifty-something years old.

Laurie attended college in Gunnison and also lived in Boulder, Salt Lake City, and Oregon. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from the University of Oregon. When she married, she and her family moved back to Gunnison, started a business and raised her two daughters. She loved living in the mountains of the Gunnison area where she could mountain bike, hike, and kayak — all the while loving the outdoors.

After her daughters were grown, she moved back to the area to help with the family ranching business. She also worked at Sterling Regional Medical Hospital.

In 2011, she and Beth bought their home in the sandhills east of Sterling. Laurie said that for 8 years the two of them worked “with the sun,” working from sunup to sundown, creating the home they both envisioned. They built fences and corrals and planted over 150 trees and bushes. They now feel as if they have done most of the “heavy stuff” and just enjoy their home and mostly living outdoors. Laurie said they now have all winter to “think about spring projects!”

Laurie loves to travel and has traveled around the world alone. She said that she decided where she wanted to travel, bought plane tickets, and then traveled solo to Japan, China, Thailand, India, Kenya, Tanzania, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, England and home through Boston.

Laurie feels that our church is inclusive, kind, and nonjudgemental. She loves Rev. Michelle’s messages each week. Her favorite part of the service is when Rev. Michelle raises her arms wide and blesses her—and each of us.

We are blessed that you are a part of our church community, Laurie. Welcome.

UPCOMING EVENTS...

First Friday @ First Presbyterian

Jennifer Linn Leaf

& Good Friends



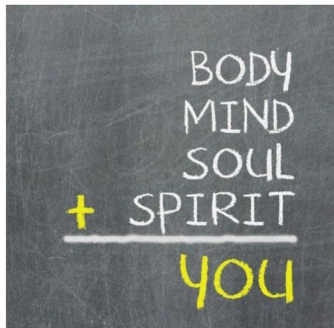
A Musical Journey

October 3, 2025

12:05 to 12:35

onsite, or online: www.youtube.com/@FPC.Sterling

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

Upcoming Sessions: Sept 29 | Oct 27

UPCOMING EVENTS. . .

WELCOME DINNER

Join us for dinner to connect with
elders and other new members.

Wednesday, October 15
5:30pm

Join the pastor and elders for dinner!

If you're new to the church, we'd love to welcome you.
Perhaps you're interested in becoming a member,
or just learning more about the church,
or getting to know the leaders ...

Join us for dinner!

RSVP by October 8.
Call the church office for more information.

MISSION...



25%

of this Offering goes to our mid-council to join with other congregations to support peacemaking work in our region.

25%

of this Offering stays with our congregation to support peacemaking and reconciliation in our own community.

50%

of this Offering supports the work being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

The local portion of this offering will be used to support the **Life Source** program. The Life Source program provides professional mental health therapy for youth at risk of suicide in the Counties of Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Yuma, Cheyenne, Kit Carson and Lincoln. The goal of this program is to decrease youth suicides by removing the financial and social barriers to treatment.

To contribute to the Peace & Global Witness special offering, put “Peace” on the memo of your check or use a Peace & Global Witness offering envelope.

We are the Peacemakers

Our gifts to the Peace & Global Witness Offering are helping our neighbors in need — those who live next door, down the street, and across the globe.

WHEN WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT.

SESSION. . .

Highlights of the August 19, 2025 Session Meeting

Andi Christine Gutierrez-Dutton, daughter of Daniel Gutierrez-Dutton and Chad Dutton, was baptized on July 20, 2025. The wedding ceremony and reception for Branden Eaton and Deborah Wilson has been postponed.

Thank you notes were received from One Great Hour of Sharing, Hope House, Life Source, and Bob's Walkers for Alzheimer's. Transaction detail reports for May and June were approved.

One member was removed from the rolls because of death; two members were removed from the rolls at their request. Laurie McKenzie and Beth Frye were received as new members. A Building Use request for the Fellowship Hall on August 18 for a funeral dinner was approved.

It was approved to give Brandon Eaton \$2,246 from the DD&E Fund to cover seminary housing costs. Property Committee is receiving bids to upgrade building security.

A grant of \$400 was approved from the ELMST Fund for a member. Staff performance reviews are scheduled for September.

Save the Date:

**There will be a Called Congregational Meeting to elect officers
on Sunday, October 19, following the worship service.**

Your generosity makes
mission & ministry possible...

Thank you!

Profit & Loss Summary	Jan.—Aug. 2025
Total Income	\$178,211.50
Total Expense	219,978.61
Net Ordinary Income (Loss)	(41,767.11)
Budgeted Transfers	7,727.84
Other Transfers	0.00
Net Ordinary Income (Loss) with Transfers	(34,039.27)



Held Together in Faith Since 1878

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sterling, Colorado

2026 Estimate of Giving

\$ _____

2026 Estimate of Giving cards are going out soon. What's an Estimate of Giving (EOG)? It's just a way of letting the church know how much you plan to give in the coming year. Sometimes people call this a "pledge" because it's also a spiritual practice, a commitment between you and God, to give in faith and gratitude for all God has given you.

Spiritually, taking the time to fill out an EOG card helps us grow in faith.

Practically, it helps us make financial plans for the coming year.

So let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good.

At the right time we will harvest a good crop
if we don't give up.

Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance,
let us work for the good of all and especially for those of the family of faith.

Galatians 6:9-10 (MSG/NRSVUE)

Your faithful and generous gifts make ministry possible.

Thank you for turning in your 2026 Estimate of Giving.

We will be dedicating the Estimates of Giving on Sunday, November 2.

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: October
Cake Mixes and Frosting

NJC Food Pantry:
Nutritious Non-Perishable
Prepared Foods

THANK YOU!

October **BIRTHDAYS**

- 1 Jackie Barton**
- 6 Marcia Panice**
- 6 David Rhodes**
- 8 Lindsey Jackson**
- 9 Sarah Davis**
- 10 Charles Reynolds**
- 10 Jane Robinson**
- 12 James Leh**
- 14 Jillian Mathews-Salazar**
- 17 Meghan Jackson**
- 17 Tom Westfall**
- 21 Haley Mead**
- 22 Jeff Weskamp**
- 24 Leila Warden**
- 25 Penny Propst**
- 25 Marc Reck**
- 27 Jennifer Reck**
- 28 Jan Mari**

Birthday Sunday:

October 12

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 Routh)
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 Propst)
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)

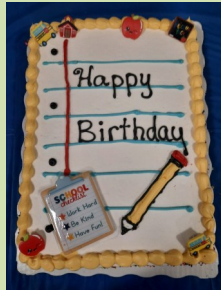
Rose Neblett
Dirk Nye and Regine Bendelow (Jackie Barton's step-father & mother)
Mari Paradise (Jim Neblett's sister)
Jeni Porter (In-law of Blackburns)
David Prince
Emma Rich (Granddaughter of Gary & Kay Rich)
Regina Riggle (Niece of Jackie Reynolds)
Cadie, Hailey and Austen Rose (Jason Rose family)
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)
Don and Virginia Werner (Parents of Mike Werner)
Laurie Weskamp Wagner (Jeff's sister)
Jeff Weskamp
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!

HIGHLIGHTS: *September*

Birthday Sunday



Farewell to Thieles

Blessing of the Backpacks Communion Moment for All God's Children



SERVING IN CHURCH — OCTOBER

USHERS

October 5	Carrie Lovenburg, Alex Hicks
October 12	Kim Weingardt, Michelle Hawkins
October 19	Jill Vollmer, Laura Guenzi
October 26	Delinda Korrey McDowell, Ken McDowell

FIRST RESPONSE/BULLETIN DELIVERY

October	Michelle Hawkins
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FELLOWSHIP COFFEE

October 5	Christian Education Committee
October 12	Membership/Stewardship
October 19	Fellowship Committee
October 26	Deacons

COUNT OFFERING

October 5	Connie Ham
October 12	Bev Cumming
October 19	Linda Meisner
October 26	Connie Ham

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

October 12	Carrie Lovenburg
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ACOLYTES/BIBLE BEARER

October 5	Kim Jackson, Linda Meisner
October 12	Ashlee Glaser, Cason Guenzi, Cohen Guenzi
October 19	Leroy Morrissey, Harry Peterson
October 26	Justin & Becky Cranwell

LITURGISTS

October 5	Tara Guenzi
October 12	Penny Propst
October 19	Pam Trimble
October 26	Bob Smith



AV TEAM

October 5	Jeff Christenson (sound) Pam Trimble (slides)
October 12	Justin Cranwell (sound) Myra Westfall (slides)
October 19	Dean Boeff (sound) Jeff Christenson (slides)
October 26	Jeff Christenson (sound) Callie Jackson (slides)

COMMUNION—OCTOBER 5, 2025

Prepare—Bev Cumming, Rose Neblett

Serve—Bob Smith, Linda Meisner, Becky 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.
www.firstpressterling.org/servingschedules

October 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
				4:30 Zumba 5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir	12:05 First Friday Concert	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10:30 Worship/ Communion 11:30 Fellowship Coffee	5:15 Fellowship	5:00 Zumba		4:30 Zumba 5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
10:30 Worship 11:30 Fellowship with Birthday Celebration	12:00 Finance	5:00 Zumba	Newsletter Deadline 5:30 Welcome Dinner	1:30 Women's Bible Study 4:30 Zumba 5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10:30 Worship/ Congregational Meeting 11:30 Fellowship Lunch		5:00 Zumba 6:00 Session		4:30 Zumba 5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir	RETREAT	RETREAT
26	27	28	29	30	31	
RETREAT 10:30 Worship and Fellowship Coffee	5:15 Thrive in '25 Self-Care	5:00 Zumba		4:30 Zumba 5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir		

SAVE THE DATE

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

All Saints' Sunday

November 2

All Saints Sunday



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

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RASHELL FRITZLER

BOOKKEEPER

E-mail 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