

FIRST THINGS FIRST

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

SEPTEMBER 2023

Back-to-School Prayer

Join us on September 10 for a
Back-to-School blessing
for all those in school.

Lord, you delight in creating beauty, in calling forth new and good things, in forming unexpected relationships of love, in teaching us your will and your ways.

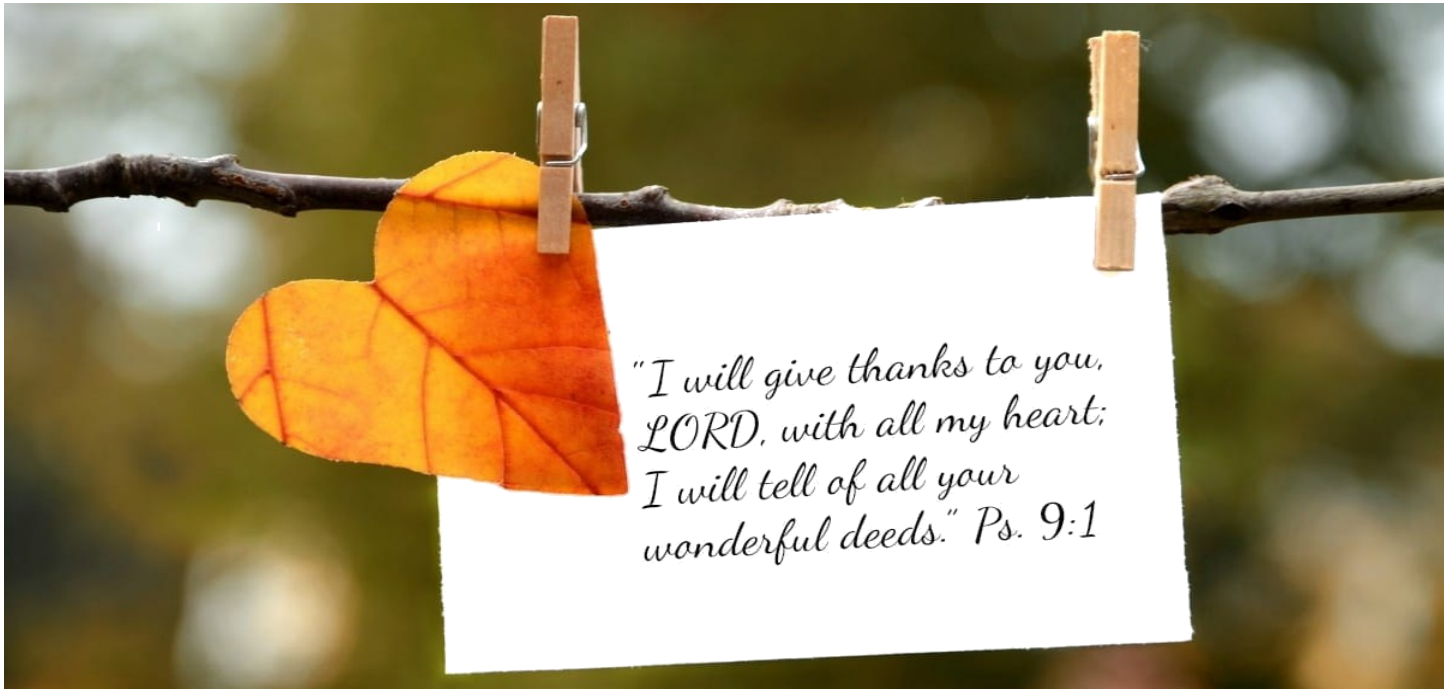
As we begin a new school year, we thank you for educators and administrators, bus drivers and cafeteria workers, custodians and coaches, counselors and school board members. We recognize that it takes a multitude of gifts, a myriad of resources and a whole lot of energy and compassion to teach our children well. We ask your blessing upon all of those called to these positions. Grant them stamina and imagination, joy and patience.

We remember, too, those families for whom school offers particular stresses and challenges — children who learn differently, those with needs that may be obvious or unseen, parents struggling to buy school supplies, students who come to class hungry or afraid. Show us how to best support all families. Give us eyes to see those hurting and the will to advocate on their behalf.

Remind us, Lord God, that we are one community of your beloved, responsible for one another, gifted with each other, all uplifted when everyone is tended and nurtured in your name. Amen.

Prayer by Jill Duffield, *The Presbyterian Outlook*

A MESSAGE FROM MICHELLE. . .



It's only September so it's too soon for the Thanksgiving newsletter article, and yet... this newsletter is full of thanks. Take a look and see all of the messages and notes of thanksgiving held in this month's newsletter.

We've been in the habit now for a couple of years of taking a "Moment for Grateful Reflection" during the worship service each Sunday. My youngest son helps with AV on Sundays, and he really enjoys getting the fully annotated bulletin that's prepared for the AV team. That bulletin contains the words that the liturgist says before the moment for grateful reflection: *"Today, I am thankful for _____."* And, it's just like that, with the blank for the liturgist to fill in to share something. Well, not too long ago my son told me that he likes to fill in the blank on his bulletin, actually writing something on the blank line for which he is thankful every Sunday. So, we started putting that line, *"Today, I'm thankful for _____"* in the bulletin and up on the slides, to encourage everyone to call to mind at least one thing for which you are grateful on any given Sunday.

I know it may seem a little corny or trite, but this gratitude practice really does make you more thankful. It's counterintuitive — we think we have to *feel* grateful in order to give thanks, but actually giving thanks increases our gratitude. That's why we call it a *practice*. We really can practice, and strengthen, our gratitude.

So, it's only September, but maybe we can start getting in shape (spiritually) for the Thanksgiving season by practicing gratitude even now.

Let us give thanks for the Lord is good... *Rev. Michelle*

MISSION...

We sent our portion of the Pentecost Offering to the LifeSource Project, a suicide prevention program that provides financial assistance to youth for counseling.



District Headquarters - 700 Columbine St., Sterling, CO 80751
(970) 522-3741 - 877-795-0646 - www.nchd.org

August 8, 2023

First Presbyterian Church
130 South 4th Street
Sterling, CO 80751

Dear First Presbyterian Church;

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generosity by providing \$606.00 for the LifeSource Project for youth in our region at the Northeast Colorado Health Department for 2023. It was appreciated and incredibly kind of you.

As per your request, we are using the donation to help youth in crisis in our region.

Thank you so much for considering the LifeSource Project from your special offering.

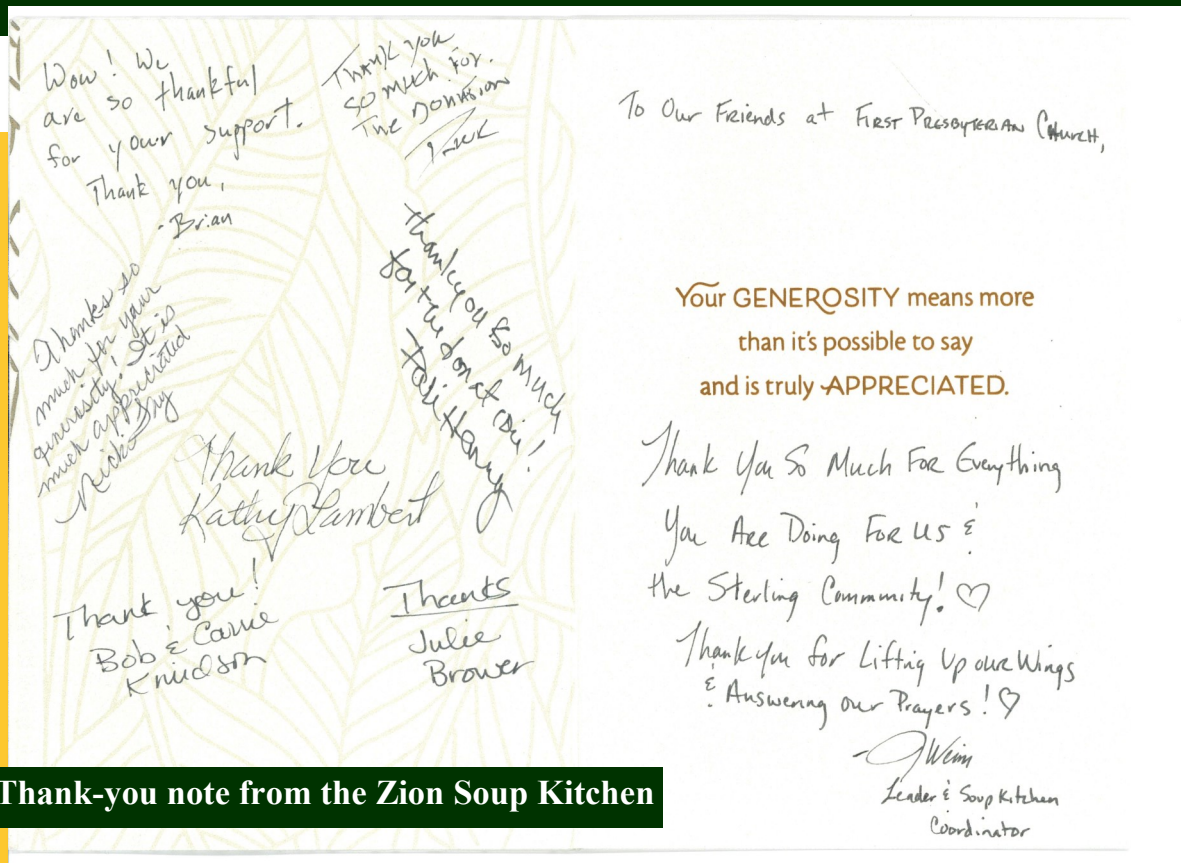
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mechelle Beck".

Mechelle Beck, Health Integration Manager

One of FPC's missions is the soup kitchen at Zion Congregational Church.
In 2022 1,898 free meals were served from the soup kitchen.

"...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me..."
~ Jesus (Matt. 25:35)



Thank-you note from the Zion Soup Kitchen

Thank-you note from Hope House

Rev. Witherspoon, Staff,
and Congregation:

Last week we were blessed by a donation from your church. There are not enough words to express our thanks.

Your donation will be used to purchase socks, undergarments, and new pillows for the guys.

We are always grateful to the ladies during the Church Rummage Sale that

open the doors to the guys to select items at no charge. They leave with grins on their faces at their new treasures.

Thank you for the gift of God's love to each of us.

Shawn
Thank you
Thank you Steve

Thank you
Vince

David Graker
Thank you! Nick Warner
Thank you
Seth W.

Thank you so much!
- All

Thank you for everything - Ann Cal



FPC hosted the
Presbytery of Plains
and Peaks for the
May presbytery
meeting.

The offering at that
meeting was designated
to support
Hope House.





BJ Eaton has begun his studies at Princeton Theological Seminary. Please continue to keep him in your prayers as he discerns a call to ministry.

Dear Session + Scholarship Committee,

Thank you so much for your blessing and gift of \$5000 to help support me as I head into seminary in June. I appreciate your generosity and also the encouragement, the healing, + the joy you've given me over the past year.

With love,

BJ

"You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity, will result in thanksgiving to God."

2 Corinthians 9:11

FPC scholarship thank-you notes

Dear First Presbyterian Church-

Thank you so much for all of the generosity and gifting me a scholarship to continue my education. I will be attending Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction this fall. I cannot tell you how grateful I am for all of the help the church has given me.

My Church family has played a big part in helping me find my faith, as well as growing into the person I am. I'm so excited for this new adventure. Thank you for everything you've given me to help me get this far!

Always,
Emmi Reeves



September 3-October 1 is designated as *A Season of Peace* in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Churches across the denomination collect a "Peace and Global Witness Offering," of which 50% stays in our local community, and 50% goes to support peacemaking efforts around our nation and across the globe. To donate to this special offering write "Peace" in the memo line of your check, or use a Peace & Global Witness Offering envelope from church.

UPCOMING EVENTS...

**First Friday
@ First Presbyterian**



*Marijean
Blankenbeckler*
Soprano

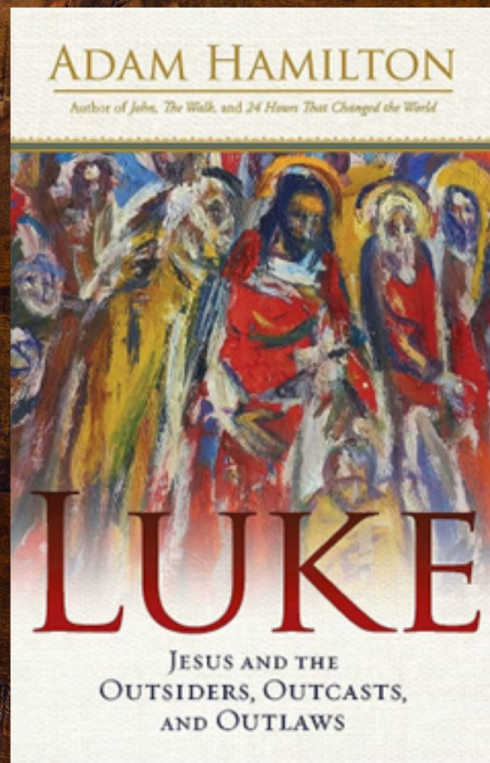
Broadway

September 1, 2023

12:05 to 12:35

In Person *or* on Facebook

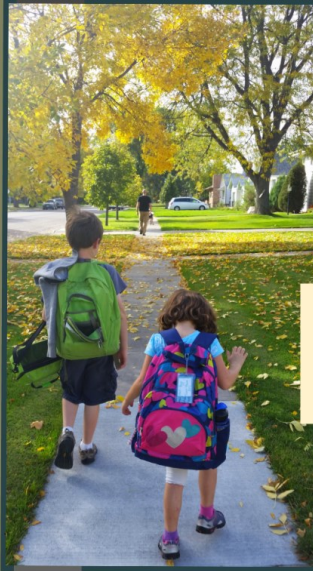
facebook.com/fpc.sterling



*Women's
Bible Study*

**Third Thursdays ~ 1:30pm
*begins Sept 21***

UPCOMING EVENTS...



BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Sunday, September 10

Tasty Favorites ~~Pie~~ AUCTION



On Sunday, September 10 we will say a special blessing during worship for all those who are in school — students, teachers, administrators, support staff, etc. Then, following the service, we will have a Tasty Favorites Auction... bid on your favorite pie, dessert, fresh bread, and more. This year we have a Fiesta Dinner made and hosted by Dan and Karen Torres, and a German dinner made and hosted by Linda Meisner and Sue Weingardt, on auction.

Proceeds of the auction benefit FPC's missions.



Potluck Worship

SUNDAY,
SEPTEMBER 17

5:00PM

Brats will be provided.
Sides/desserts welcome.

On Sunday, September 17 we'll meet at 5pm instead of 10:30 am for a potluck service. Our meal and service will be in the Fellowship Hall. The Fellowship Committee will provide brats, and the congregation is invited to bring a side or dessert to share.

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)
Norm Blackburn
Brenda Boeff
Paul Budin
Gabe Chapin
Confirmants & Mentors
Cooperating Ministry
Jeanne Crouch & Family
Cierra Davis (friend of Becky Cranwell)
Andrew DeSouza (Michelle Hawkins' son)
Gary Espinosa (Arden Fennell's family)
Family Resource Center
Rev. Greg Faulkner
Norman Foos
Koehn Gertner (Mike's grandson)
Meredith Goodwin (friend of Propsts)
Michelle Greenfield (friend of Mike Tyson)
David Hashman, SCF Inmate
Highlands Camp
Sonja Holden (friend of Arden Fennell)
Hollis Jackson
Chris Jutz
Josh Jutz & Kaylee
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
Emerson McClanahan (Ellen Bernhard's daughter)
Delinda Korrey McDowell
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)
Peggy Thompson (Carol Arnold's daughter)
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)
Masi Wells (friend of Taylor Cranwell)
Jeff Weskamp
Joan Whitney
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!

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

Instant Potatoes & Gravy Packets

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!

September **BIRTHDAYS**

- 1 Bruce Kelley
- 3 Florence O'Neal
- 10 Bailey Jackson
- 12 Naioma Benson
- 14 Jean Williamson
- 15 Kim Weingardt
- 16 Alie Sheldon
- 17 Jamie Spicer
- 20 Terri Rhodes
- 20 Grace Reeves
- 23 NaDean Meier
- 24 Curtis Clark
- 27 Ellis Jackson
- 28 Jace Rhodes
- 30 Connie Ham
- 30 Janet Forinash

Happy Birthday...

May your day be blessed!

*With
appreciation...*

Kay Rich has decided to step down from her role
as our Coordinator of Children, Youth, and Family
Ministries in order to give more focus
to her "day job" and her family.

We are grateful for her service to the church.

Thank you, Kay!



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Session of First Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Sterling, Colorado, held a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 16, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in the conference room.

IT WAS VOTED to elect Jackie Reynolds to take minutes of the meeting.

IT WAS VOTED to seat and give voice to deacon representative Delinda Korrey McDowell.

PASTOR'S REPORT

A written report was received.

Baptisms:

Austin Gage Rounph and Samuel Guy Rounph, were baptized on April 10, 2022, during worship by Rev. Michelle D. Witherspoon.

IT WAS VOTED to approve the following continuing education/spiritual development dates and plans (September 29-October 12):

Visit the mission co-workers we support in Guatemala (approximately Sept 29-Oct 2)
Clergy Retreat in Salida (approximately Oct 8-10) reading/studying/sermon planning at home on the remaining days.

CLERK'S REPORT:

IT WAS VOTED to receive Austin Rounph and Sam Rounph as active members upon their baptism and profession of faith (04/30/23).

IT WAS VOTED to designate the local portion (40%) of the Pentecost Offering for the Life Source program.

WORSHIP & SACRAMENTS:

IT WAS VOTED To approve holding a potluck fellowship worship service at 5pm on Sunday, July 2, instead of a service that morning. To approve moving July communion from July 2 to July 9. To hold a hymn sing service on Sunday, June 25.

IT WAS VOTED To approve the following guest preachers: BJ Eaton – June 11; Larry Fetzer – July 23; and Rev. Denise Pass – July 30; and to collect a special offering at the doors for the Gideons on July 23.

PROPERTY:

IT WAS VOTED To approve the following building use requests: May 21, 2023; Elsie Fetzer; piano/organ recital; sanctuary; 2pm-5pm; 20-25 people. September 9, 2023; Ann Blackburn; birthday party; kitchen and fellowship hall; 2pm-5pm; approximately 12 people.

FINANCE:

IT WAS VOTED to accept the 2022 compilation report from Johnson and Associates.

MEMBERSHIP/STEWARDSHIP:

The Tasty Favorites auction is planned for September 10, 2023 following church service to support the Missions of the church.

PERSONNEL:

IT WAS VOTED to approve the hiring of Rashell Fritzer as Office Administrator.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

Confirmation/Youth/Senior Sunday is planned for May 28.
VBS is planned for July 10-14.

MISSION CONTACT:

IT WAS VOTED to donate \$500 to the Alzheimer's Association through Bob's Walkers Team.

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

	Jan-July 2023
Total Income	\$126,522.03
Total Expense	\$169,808.08
Net Ordinary Income (Loss)	(\$35,889.04)
Budgeted Transfers	\$12,289.89
Other Transfers	0.00
Net Ordinary Income (Loss) with Transfers	(\$23,599.15)

September 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
					12:05pm First Friday Concert	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10:30 Worship/ Communion 11:30 Fellowship Coffee	Office Closed (Labor Day)	5:15 Fellowship	10:30 Worship & Sacraments	2:00 Membership/ Stewardship 5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
10:30 Worship 11:30 Fellowship Dinner/ Auction		5:15 Finance		5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir	Newsletter Deadline	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
5pm Potluck/ Worship		5:30pm Session		1:30 Women's Bible Study 5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
10:30 Worship 11:30 Fellowship Coffee				5:30 Bells 6:30 Choir		

SAVE THE DATE

Holy Land Presentation and Special Lunch following worship

Sunday, October 15

SERVING IN CHURCH — SEPTEMBER

USHERS

September 3 Mason Boeff, Dean Boeff
September 10 Audrey Reeves, Traci Reeves
September 17 Ken McDowell, Delinda Korrey
September 24 Tammie Malone, Justin Cranwell

FIRST RESPONSE/BULLETIN DELIVERY

September Tammie Malone

FELLOWSHIP COFFEE

September 3 Deacons
September 10 Fellowship
September 17 Potluck (5pm)
September 24 Finance

COUNT OFFERING

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

LITURGISTS

September 3 Becky Cranwell
September 10 Kim Jackson
September 17 Pam Trimble
September 24 Tara Guenzi

AV TECHS

September 3 Jeff Christenson (sound)
Jacob Paiz (slides)
September 10 Dean Boeff (sound)
Pam Trimble (slides)
September 17 Tanna Prince & Rex
Witherspoon (sound)
Jeff Christenson (slides)
September 24 Justin Cranwell (sound)
Callie Jackson (slides)

COMMUNION: SEPTEMBER 3, 2023

PREPARING/SERVING COMMUNION

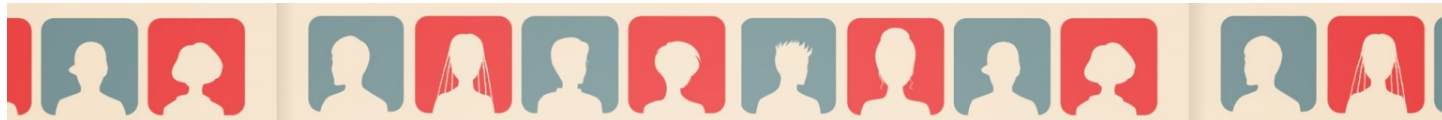
Preparing
Tanna Prince
Sue Weingardt

Serving
Jomari Lechtman
Tanna Prince
Bob Smith



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



CHURCH DIRECTORY

We're updating the church directory!

Let us know if you'd like to update
your photo or contact information.

Please submit by September 30.

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 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

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