



THE WEEKLY FIRST



Dear Church Family,

I hope and pray that all of us will enjoy a blessed new year. May you live in the confidence and joy of your identity in Christ empowered by God's Spirit. "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." (2 Cor. 9:8)

On the occasion of the New Year, I remind you of a few spiritual commitments. First, make worship a daily and weekly priority. The New Testament word for worship means "to recognize something or someone of ultimate worth." There is only One of ultimate worth and He delights in our worship. When we engage in genuine worship, we seek to give esteem and glory to Him to whom it is due. In worshipping Him, we declare that all things and all relationships are secondary, because He is the central reality (the core, the center) in whom we find our life, meaning, and worth. When our daily lives are centered on worshipping the Lord, our focus becomes Him, not the situations or things swirling around us. It is as the song writer says, "the things of this earth grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace."

Secondly, I challenge you to declare war on anything that keeps you from a daily devotional life. The glorious privilege of our salvation is the spiritual experience of intimacy with the Almighty. "God, who called you into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful." (1 Cor.1:9) Unlike all other religions or philosophies, followers of Jesus have an intimate relationship with the one true God. Not only do we have this relationship, but our God desires fellowship with Him so that we get to know Him more and more. He desires to spend time with us, with YOU. It is the great spiritual joy and privilege of our faith and yet, it requires discipline. "Train yourself to be godly." (1 Tim. 4:7) Daily time with the Lord through Bible-intake and prayer begins as a decision

and develops over time into a disciplined habit. It is sustained by commitment and in time becomes as natural to us as eating or breathing. As we regularly commit to spending time with God, we increasingly delight in Him.

Third, I challenge us to daily encourage others. “Do everything without complaining or arguing.” (Phil. 2:14) “Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.” (James 1:19) “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs that it may benefit those who listen.” (Eph. 4:29)

Can you imagine the impact on the lives of those around us if we practiced positive words? It is difficult. The tongue is a powerful thing (James 3). Yet, a positive tongue holds the key to effective communication, conflict resolution, and joy in relationships.

Equally, it unlocks the doors of great pain and division. Jesus noted the power of the tongue this way, “For by your words you will be acquitted and by your words you will be condemned.” (Mt. 12:37). Jesus is not teaching that we earn our salvation by our words and deeds. Rather, He is teaching that our words are such an accurate portrait of our hearts that they reflect the rightful ownership of our hearts, whether or not they are the property of the Lord.

Lastly, be spiritually present wherever you are. “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.” (Matt. 9:37) Our harvest field is wherever we are and wherever we go. Christ’s spiritual kingdom is within us and wherever and whenever we are faithful to Him, Christ’s eternal kingdom is present. A life of kingdom obedience is a life that is truly life. It produces spiritual satisfaction and it leaves a legacy that counts forever.

Great Peace in the Lord,

Eddie Spencer

“I resolve that all men would be obedient to Christ, but if no one else is, I resolve to be obedient.” - Jonathan Edwards

The Session has approved our church budget for 2026.

Please click the link below to see the 2026 Budget Report.

Printed copies are available for you to pick up in the Narthex.

2026 Budget Report



Thank you to all who contributed to the Building on the Cornerstone campaign! The fundraising campaign has been a success, and the team has engaged a landscaping and hardscaping company to make the improvements to our property. Plans are for the work to begin in the late winter and to be completed in the spring. More details will be shared about the work and schedule as the date draws nearer.

Sunday Bulletin is Online!



Welcome

Our mission is to know Christ, serve Him, and make Him known.



To our First Pres family...Thank you for your donations (130 items) for our Giving Tree this year. We were able to bless eight children and four homebound Senior Citizens because of your generosity.



There are three Bible Reading Plans available for you in 2026! The plans are designed to encourage daily Bible Reading and time meditating on God's Word.

- **The 2026 Bible Reading Plan focuses on the New Testament, with Old Testament readings from Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.**
- **The Bible in a Year – Mixed Readings takes you through the entire Bible in one year. Each week, you will read from an Epistle, Old Testament Law, Old Testament History, Psalms, Poetry, Prophecy, and a Gospel.**
- **The Bible in a Year – Chronological Plan takes you through the entire Bible in one year. It is arranged chronologically, so you read events, psalms, and letters in the order in which they occurred.**

Printed "bookmarks" with these plans may be found in the Narthex. You can also access them from our website.



Adult Sunday School

All Sunday School classes will resume this Sunday. Plan to join us each Sunday at 9:30 am for morning coffee and 10:00am for studying God's Word together.



Linda's Closet' will reopen Tuesday, January 6th from 11:00am - 1:00pm. Other Tuesdays will be work days.

See Sue Maiocchi if you can volunteer.

Current needs:

- Kids clothes especially Boys, sizes 2-16
- New underwear for all



Thank you for donating to the First Pres Blessing Fence! See Sam or Kay McAllister if you can help with current needs:
*small cosmetic bags
*feminine products
*new/gently-used towels

Prayer Concerns

Help us keep Prayer Concerns current with weekly updates.
Email the church or note on a prayer card & place in the offering plate.

Church Family

- Peggy Gibson and family - loss of Frank
- Vickie Morris - recovery from knee replacement
- Steve Goodnight - recovering at home
- Bonnie Goodnight - caring for her father, Lester Watts
- Debby Baker - recovery from pneumonia
- Tony Rary - multiple myeloma treatments
- Regina Starnes - health concerns
- Julie Doby - broken hip pocket and femur

Family & Friends of Church

- Diane Belotti's brother, Robert Hudak - recovery from spine surgery
- Thomas "Bran" James (friend of Pam Hooks) - 10-yr-old - stem cell treatment in January
- Rachel Duval (Sam McAllister's granddaughter) - cancer
- Kim Stipe (Kay McAllister's daughter) - cancer treatment in January

Homebound

- Barbara Hancock - Home
- Loretta Young - Five Oaks
- Linda Bost - Best of Care

This Week @ FIRST PRES

Sunday, January 4
Happy New Year!

9:30am - Morning Coffee
10:00am - Sunday School
11:00am - Worship Service with Holy Communion

Tuesday, January 6

11:00 - 1:00pm - Linda's Closet
12:00pm - NA

Wednesday, January 7

6:00pm - Chancel Choir Practice

Thursday, January 8

12:00pm - NA

Next Sunday, January 11

9:30am - Morning Coffee
10:00am - Sunday School
11:00am - Worship Service

Servants

Elder Lock-Up: Ken Sparks

NO Children's Message This Week

Children's Message Next Week: Alpha Barger

Children's Church This Week: Chariti Lowder

Children's Church next week: Roxanne Spencer

Acolytes This Week: Michael Herbst & Charlie March

Acolytes Next Week: Caylin Lowder & Scarlett Porter

Nursery: Chariti Lowder

Nursery Next Week: Roxanne Spencer

Ushers: Lynn Sechler, Phil Smith, Pam Hooks, Ryan Walker

Ushers Next Week: Jeff Barnhardt, Eric Cowan, Mark

Goodnight, John Hammond

Greeters: Sue Maiocchi, Donnie Swaringen

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION - ACTIVE ELDERS

Raegan Swaringen Sharon Cranford Tony Rary

Cookie Hamilton Chris Lowder Ken Sparks

Sue Maiocchi Phil McLain

Pastor Eddie Spencer, Moderator

Jeff Barnhardt, Session Clerk



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