



## First Presbyterian Church of Littleton

1609 W. Littleton Blvd. Littleton, CO 80120

[www.littletonpresbyterian.org](http://www.littletonpresbyterian.org) ♦ [fpcl@fpcl.org](mailto:fpcl@fpcl.org) ♦ 303-798-1389

February 2024

Join us for  
Worship Every  
Sunday at 10am

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Happy Valentine's  
Day



*For God so loved the world,  
that He gave His only Son, so  
that everyone who believes in  
Him will not perish but have  
eternal life. John 3:16*

## A Message from Pastor Jonathan

Alle... Oops. Hold on...

As you are reading this article we are approaching the Season of Lent. During Lent we do not proclaim our 'Alleluias' or 'Hallelujahs'. Of course, that celebration is coming at Easter. This year Easter is almost as early as it can be. The earliest Easter can be is March 22. (*Western Christianity's date for Easter changes based on the Jewish Passover; to understand how Jews calculate the date for Passover search Google*).

In an odd combination of liturgical and social 'holy' days, Ash Wednesday falls on February 14 this year. Because of the odd combination of dates, we will host a drive-through Ashes-to-Go at noon in the parking lot (*enter from the northern drive and exit the southern drive*) and then a 6p.m. service in the sanctuary. If you are not available for the Ashes-to-Go drive through and wish to receive Ashes, please contact me directly.

The Season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, a 40-day season that ends on the vigil of Easter. Now if you look at the calendar and count the days, you will quickly discover there are not (only) 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Vigil – there are 46 days. This is the really lovely aspect of the theology of Lent (yes, I'm a nerd!) – we don't count the Sundays. You may notice (or have noticed) when we name the date during Lent, we identify it as *'the [x] Sunday in the Season of Lent'*. It is the *'in'* that indicates the time of the liturgical (church) year that we are within, but Sundays are not considered part of it (other times of the year we use 'of' to indicate Sundays are part of the season). Every Sunday – even during Lent – are celebrated as a mini-Easter... a celebration of God's amazing grace! (sing it with me!)

But, back to Ash Wednesday – this is a day when we stop to remember that we are mortal; we will die and, as our body decomposes, we turn to ash. This is also a day that we proclaim with hope that God has redeemed the world and we will live eternally with God, not because of what we have done, but because of what God has done and who God is. For me, Ash Wednesday is a good reminder to hear the wisdom:

Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart;  
don't try to figure out everything on your own.  
Listen for GOD's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go;  
God's the one who will keep you on track. (Prov. 3:5-6, *The Message*)

If we accept that we are mortal, if we will trust God in all we do, then God is the one who promises to 'keep [us] on track.'

God can and God will because God has already redeemed the world – past, present, and future. We do not see it all yet, because we are still in the midst of it. We are in that already but not yet: we already know that Jesus has risen from the dead (and we will celebrate this at Easter) however, we do not see the full redemption, yet.

But before the Season of Easter is the Season of Lent... it is a season of waiting... nearing the cross of Christ and realizing that our place was taken. We are already living eternally with God through our baptism, yet we are still here stuck in our sinfulness and the sin of the world. As followers of Jesus, we are to be trying to separate ourselves from sin by moving more closely to God.

Already, but not yet, or as Paul tells the church at Corinth:

'For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known' (1 Cor. 13:12, NRSV)

We can't see it all around us, and yet, we are there already and we are not quite there yet. We know that we are a part of God's kingdom, but we can't fully understand it, yet.

FPCL is moving forward... following the path God has put before us through discernment, prayer, listening and responding to God's prompting – even if/when we get it wrong. I have been there several times, where you really can't see that next step because of dim vision as if looking into a mirror, and that... rather THIS is the time we come together and step out trusting (*faith-ing*) the One who is faithful.

So...

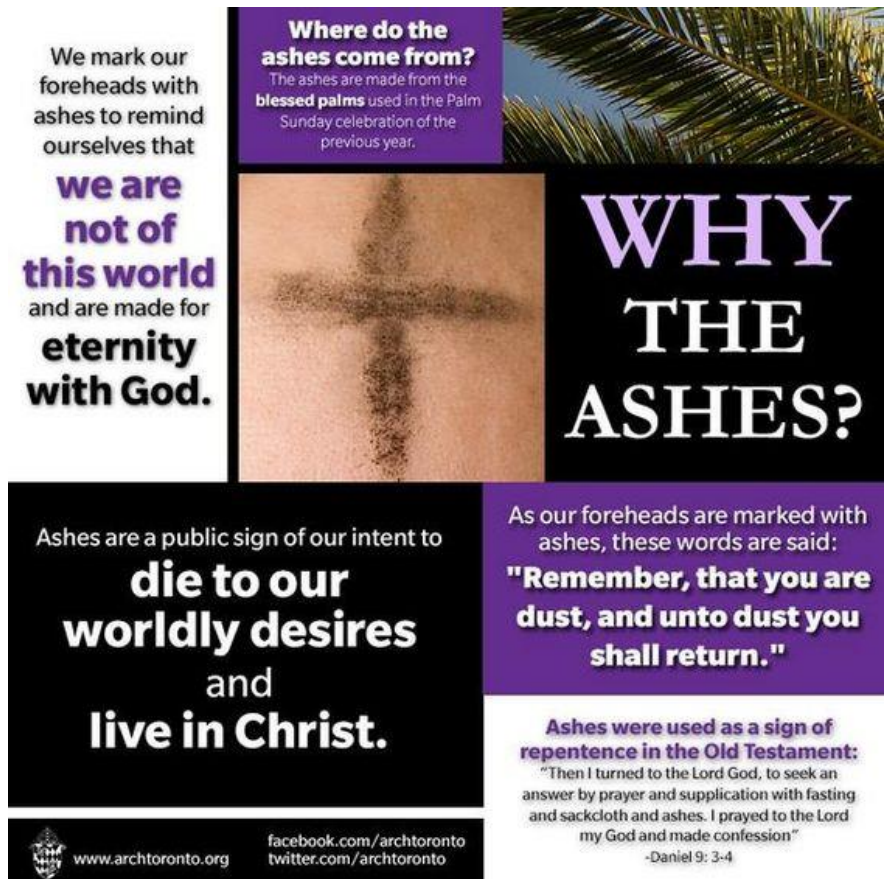
Hold on.

Know the promises of God are true.

And know when Easter comes (March 31) we will again say 'Alleluia'!



Reverend Jonathan Murray  
Pastor, First Presbyterian, Littleton  
Email: [jonathan@fpcl.org](mailto:jonathan@fpcl.org)



**We mark our foreheads with ashes to remind ourselves that**  
**we are not of this world**  
and are made for **eternity with God.**


**Where do the ashes come from?**  
The ashes are made from the **blessed palms** used in the Palm Sunday celebration of the previous year.

**WHY THE ASHES?**

Ashes are a public sign of our intent to **die to our worldly desires** and **live in Christ.**

As our foreheads are marked with ashes, these words are said:  
**"Remember, that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return."**

**Ashes were used as a sign of repentance in the Old Testament:**  
"Then I turned to the Lord God, to seek an answer by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession"  
-Daniel 9: 3-4

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**Believe Beloved Belong**

## Winter and Spring 2024 Children's Ministry Events



**\*Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup>: 1pm-3pm—Valentine's Pizza Party—**

First Presbyterian Littleton, 4<sup>th</sup> floor—devotional, pizza, making Valentine's cards, and indoor games!

**\*Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>: 10am-11:30am—Bookstore visit—**Spell Books

(co-owned by FPCL's own Amanda Boldenow! 2376 Main St, Littleton, CO 80120) Kids will pick out a Christian book, followed by lunch at Chick-Fil-A

**\*Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup>: 9am-11:30am—Easter Sunday —**

First Presbyterian Littleton—enjoy a pancake breakfast in Ficklin Hall, attend the 10am worship service, followed by an Easter Egg hunt on the church lawn!

**\*Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>: 11am-2pm—Train Day!**

Colorado Railroad Museum (17155 W 44th Ave, Golden, CO 80403)

Enjoy train exhibits, model railroads, and take a train ride!

**\*Friday, May 17<sup>th</sup>: 4pm-6pm—Spring Fever lawn games**

First Presbyterian Littleton—enjoy a Bible lesson followed by ladderball, cornhole, Twister, Jenga, and other outdoor games on the church lawn, along with snacks and drinks.

## Winter and Spring 2024 Youth Ministry Events

**\*Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>: 6:30pm-9pm—Ice Skating!!--**Parker Ice Trail or downtown Louisville—TBD...Outdoor ice skating, FPCL will cover admission and skate rentals, you can also bring your own skates.

**\*Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>: 7pm-8:15pm—First Impressions Youth Gathering —**

First Presbyterian Littleton—Snacks, games, and a devotion.

**\*Friday, March 8—Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>—Rest Fest 2024 —**

Ponderosa Retreat Center, Larkspur CO—Gather with youth from across Colorado for worship, speakers, and lots of fun activities! Cost is \$149 and includes meals. FPCL may be able to cover a portion of the costs.

**\*Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>--First Impressions Youth Gathering**

**\*Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>: 4:30pm-8pm—Scavenger Hunt!--**First Presbyterian Littleton is the start and finish point, as your team will travel around the city to gather clues to find the prize! Then we'll go eat together afterwards.

**\*Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>: 7pm—8:15pm--First Impressions Youth Gathering**

**\*Tuesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>: 7pm—8:15pm—End of school year party—**First Pres. Littleton

# **FREE COMMUNITY DINNER LAST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH 6:00 – 7:00 PM**

## **February 27, 2024**

**Doors Do Not Open Until 6:00**

**Where – First Presbyterian Church  
1609 W Littleton Blvd.**

**MENU:** Chicken in creamy Italian parmesan sauce, mashed potatoes, herbed green beans, tosses green salad, Seasonal fruit and handheld desserts



**Questions- (303) 798-1389**

**<http://littletonpresbyterian.org/dinner>**

**All Are Welcome!**

**Thinking Ahead or is it Time to Say Good-Bye?  
WWW Quilt Show Team Needs Your Help!**

The beautiful annual Western Welcome Week Quilt Show has been a staple of FPCL's evolvement in Littleton's Western Welcome Week for 20 years!.

However, the team's numbers have dwindled and without your assistance, the show will not be able to continue. The WWW Quilt show team needs a COMMITMENT of 20 volunteers to continue. The show dates are August 15—17th. There are many ways to help, but the Thursday set-up is the most critical! Also, volunteers are needed to help Friday and Saturday during the show and Saturday afternoon to help return the borrowed quilts to their rightful owners.

We must register for the event in April and the donation quilt must be created. We are asking for your commitment by March 29. Please contact Blythe Lund or call the office to sign up or for more information.



## Mission Committee News

The mission committee will hold a food drive during the month of Feb for Life Center. Any non-perishable foods are appreciated. Also consider spices, non-refrigerated milk, oils and various staples like sugar. There are bins under the table as you enter the church on the Windermere side. Thank you in advance for making this a successful drive.

Donations were made in January for Love, INC and one of our missionaries, Jory Bayne.



The annual Congregational Meeting will be held on February 18, following the 10 am worship service. All reports must be submitted to Elinor in the church office no later than Thursday, February 1. Please submit the reports as a WORD document if at all possible. Include photos or clip art separately as a jpg file. Remember to make them short and sweet—no longer than 1 page.



## Adult & Children's Sunday School

Watch for the Sunday School survey that is coming soon. Pastors Jonathan and Blakeley are interested in hearing your suggestions for Sunday class topics.

The Nursery is available on Sundays during worship.

## Dates to Remember

- ★ Thursday, February 1: Deadline for Annual Reports.
- ★ Wednesday, February 14: Lent Begins. Ashes to Go drive through in parking lot—Noon to 1pm
- ★ Wednesday, February 24: Ash Wednesday Worship— 6:00pm Pastor Jonathan Murray preaching
- ★ Sunday, February 18: Annual Congregational Meeting.
- ★ Friday, March 1: Memorial Service for Carolyn Roark at 1:00pm
- ★ Saturday, March 2: Memorial Service for Eileen Witt at 11:00 am Reception to follow.



**An Easier Way to Give Online!**  
**Scan the QR Code with your phone! It will take you directly to our website where you can give online!**

## ***A Minute for Stewardship—You Can't Out-Give God***

***Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.” Luke 6:38 (NLT)***

*Stewardship's message today comes from a “Daily Hope” devotional written recently by Pastor Rick Warren. We thought it nice to share broadly this month.*

“God wants you to be generous because He wants you to be like Him.” — Rick Warren

When you give from a heart for Jesus, your goal isn't to get a blessing. But the truth is that God will bless you.

You can't out-give God. When you learn to be generous like God is generous, he promises that you will end up with more. This is God's economy.

Sometimes it seems like God is saying: “Let's see who can out-give the other. You give to me and to other people, and I'll give to you—and we'll see who wins.”

And God always wins! He says over and over in Scripture that you will end up with more if you learn to be generous. Sometimes those blessings will be material. But sometimes they'll be the spiritual blessings that come from a generous heart.

Jesus says, “Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back” (Luke 6:38 NLT).

What is Jesus saying here? Imagine you're going to a market to buy grain. You bring a burlap sack and pay to have the whole sack filled. As the shop owner is pouring grain, you press it into your sack. Then you gently shake the sack so the grain settles down even more. You want to fit the maximum amount of grain.

Jesus is saying that God's blessings are the same. When you give generously, he'll give so generously that you'll have to make room for more.

He gives in full measure—and then some—when you learn to be generous like him. The way you give to others is the way God will give to you. He wants you to be generous because he wants you to be like him. You can't become more like Christ without learning to give generously.

This is one of the most important decisions you will make: Is your life going to be about giving away what God has blessed you with? Will it be marked by a joyous desire to grab hold of God's promises as you let go of the things of this earth?

*“The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.”* You determine how much God blesses your life.

Thanks to all of you for all you give to this ministry. See you in church!

Your Stewardship Committee:

Dave LeMay, Chair    Trey McDowell    Sue Chandler    Dee Getzinger    Don Meersman  
Nat Opperman

## TUESDAY Night Women's Bible Study



Our evening Shabby Sheep bible study is changing back to Tuesday evenings with a new study starting February 13, 2024

**When:** Tuesday evenings, starting Feb. 13, 2024, 7pm for 8-10 weeks

If you are a Community Dinner helper and want to participate in this bible study, we can work around those once a month Tuesdays.

**Where:** Shabby Sheep room - 4th floor

**What:** "When Changing Nothing Changes Everything" by Laurie Polich Short.

This is an 8-session DVD study from RightNow Media and has a book that follows along. You can choose to just join us Tuesday evenings to watch and discuss the DVD sessions or you can read the book or do both. Reading the book is totally optional.

Contact Sue Chandler ([mesue35@aol.com](mailto:mesue35@aol.com)) or Janice Fagan ([JLFagan69@gmail.com](mailto:JLFagan69@gmail.com)) if you are interested.



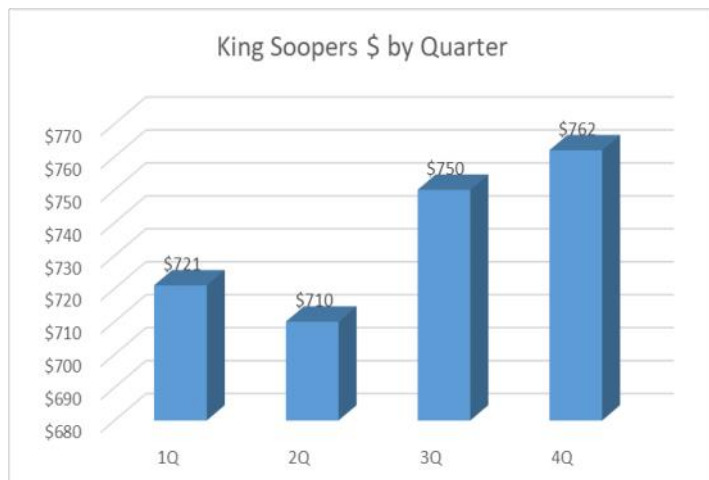
### Daytime Shabby Sheep Update!

The daytime Shabby Sheep Bible Study is starting up again. We will be studying "Unshakable Hope" which is a series on the Right Now app. We welcome any and all women of our church to join us. You can come any Wednesday at 10:00 and we'd love to have you. Any questions please contact Loretta at 303 549-7185 or Betsy at 303-908-5193.

### KING SOOPERS REWARDS QUARTERLY REPORT (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter and total year 2023)

We are happy to announce that we received our 4<sup>th</sup> quarterly payout for 2023 from the King Soopers Community Rewards Program. **We received \$762.** This was for October through December 2023.

**For 2023 we earned a total of \$2,943 for the church.** Below is a graph that shows our giving by quarter in 2023:



We had over 66 folks that used their cards in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2023. Thank you to those who participated ! If you haven't yet signed up for this program, please consider joining it to help the Church. We can walk you through the sign-up process over the phone or can help you sign up sometime after Church.

**Please reach out to Sue Chandler with any questions.  
303-347-9191**

## ***I Thank God Every Time I Remember You!*** ***Philippians 1:3***

I believe it is important to “thank” people for doing services in this church. It exemplifies who we are — a very giving church, with very giving people.

- ♥ So thankful for all these gifts in January —
- ♥ For the wonderful “meet and greet” we had on January 6 for Pastor Murray to get to know he and his lovely wife and children. So many came, and it was wonderful to see how every made him feel so welcome.
- ♥ For the “full house” we had on Pastor Murray’s first Sunday with us on January 7. What a great way to begin the new year. And how lovely to see people still standing in line to meet him after the service an hour later. This is who we are - welcoming and caring!
- ♥ For Ben Renz ushering to start the new year. It is wonderful to see our youth now “serving” at a young age!
- ♥ For Dave and Stacey LeMay preparing a homemade Italian sausage and meatball entree for the first Community dinner in 2024.
- ♥ For Sue Chandler representing First Pres on the 16 day trip to Rwanda with other men and women from St. James and Golden Presbyterian Churches. They will serve mothers of handicapped children and their families at Love With Actions - Good Shepherd school. The team will also be working with women’s groups in the small villages with the help of Shalom ministries. First Pres has supported both of these ministries in past years and has been supporting Gilbert Kubwimana for many years with his non-profit, LOVE WITH ACTIONS; and he has been out to visit our church a number of times in the past.
- ♥ For all the members who came on Saturday, Jan. 13 to take down all our beautiful Christmas decorations.
- ♥ For Blakeley having great plans for the youth to begin the new year.
- ♥ For the great nominating committee led by Dave LeMay with Don Meersman, Trey McDowell, Jan Hole and Maggie Ashworth.
- ♥ For the elected Elders — Sue Chandler, Rick Wilson, and Beth Opperman. Sue and Rick have served before and are graciously serving again.
- ♥ For the elected Deacons - Deb Graham, Joy Carreno, Jess Karet, and Jennie Staritzky. Joy agreed to serve another term. So thankful for her!
- ♥ For the great messages Pastor Murray has given us — how to have faith, listen, and keep moving forward.

As I reflect on God’s presence, I want to share a story I read decades ago, about two little boys. One little boy asked the other one, “Why do you believe in God? You cannot see Him.” The other little boy said, “You can’t see the wind either, but you can “feel it.” May we all “be still” and feel His presence and His love for us!

May others see you, may they see you as a reflection of His love. Dee Getzing



***FPCL Loves Our Nursery Volunteers SUE CHANDLER, JANICE FAGAN, MARIA FRANKLIN, JAN HOLE, SHERI WYATT, SARAH HEFFERN, CAROLINE & ELLIOT GRAHAM, ELIZABETH & BEN RENZ, Thank You All! Mary Lareau***

## **Dollars and Sense – A Word from Finance**

With God's help and FPCL's always-generous members, there's wonderful news with 2024 pledges. At this writing, Financial Secretary Joan Lund reports that we have received 58 pledges for 2024 from members who also pledged in 2023, with 44 of them showing a pledge increase; the overall average increase is 10% for these previous pledgers. Our total pledge trend has shown no increase since 2017 – until now. Adding in several NEW pledges for 2024, our proposed 2024 pledge budget shows an overall 15% increase over the 2023 budget. Hallelujah!

First -- this suggests that First Pres is doing some things right in carrying out God's work in our outreach to our neighbors with Community Dinners, Vacation Bible School, and help for the needy and homeless; our overseas missions who help struggling, less fortunate people with the very basics of life; perhaps it's the warmth, inspiring music, and personal value of our Sunday morning services; it surely includes happy gatherings of members at a potluck, picnic, Bible study, or just plain socializing; or perhaps it's making the world a better place through the teachings of Jesus.

Also – it's a true sign of faith to increase a pledge when many of us are being financially squeezed. High inflation is still here, and property taxes will be taking a jump for many of us. As a congregation, we are clearly putting God first; the scriptures say we will be repaid many-fold.

Malachi 3:10 – *“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”*

Like each of us, First Pres's expenses have increased significantly. This outpouring of support will allow First Pres to continue our current staffing level and programming, and bodes well for our future sustainability.

From your Finance Committee – THANKS to Pastor Bill, Pastor Blakeley, the Stewardship team, and our church leaders for pointing out FPCL's needs and opportunities, to each of you whose support has made this financial blessing possible, and to God who continues to guide us to be the best that we can be in carrying out his work.

*Scott Chandler, John Ansted, Susan Strauss, Dick Graves, Charles Kellogg, Dave LeMay (ex-officio), and Joan Lund (ex-officio), Beth Opperman (co-moderator), and Bob Chapman (moderator).*

## **FPCL STAFF**

**Please call the church office for contact information. 303-798-1389**

Rev. Jonathan Murray, Minister of Word & Sacrament

Rev. Dr. Blakeley Winslow, Pastor of Christian Discipleship

Mary Dailey, Director of Worship Arts

Karen Meersman, Director of Handbells & Children/Youth Music

Elinor Packard, Office Administrator

Joan Lund, Financial Secretary

Tracy Eidson, Child Care

## Please Pray for....



The family and friends of Carolyn Roark upon her passing. The family and friends of Marian Becker upon her passing, Jan Hole, Phil Ansted, Betty Anderson, Jill Van Den Bos, Kathy McDaniel, Donna Farris, Jan & Russ Fuiks, Jon Heggie, Joyce & Rollie Fuller, Joy Carreño, Judy & Bob Macdonald, Lonna Williams, Joan Cook, Eileen Witt, Pat & Jaime Yrastorza

### In Service to Our Country

Major Ricky Casburn; Capt. Connor Venrick; Brett Wilson; Sgt. Benjamin Lund, Jordan; Bobby Johannsen; Connor McDaniel, Army; LCDR. Per Rychecky, Germany; Donnie Donahue, Marines; Nathaniel Syron; Cpl. Isaiah Boehm, Ft. Carson CO; Jeremy Colwell; Cameryn McKinnell, USAF; Maj. Wm McKinnell, USAF; Ulises Serrano

### Missions

Jory & Mallory Bayne; Metro Denver; Presbytery of Zimbabwe; South Asia Mission; Highline Place; Love INC, Love With Actions( Rwanda)

## Financial Update

	December 2023		Year to Date 2023	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
<b>Income</b>	\$64,875.47	\$54,467.46	\$ 464,167.98	\$ 447,194.96
<b>Expenses</b>	\$42,509.33	\$41,779.29	\$ 430,057.39	\$ 480,808.66
<b>Operating Surplus</b>	\$22,366.14	\$12,688.17	\$ 34,110.59	\$ (33,613.70)

We finished the year with extraordinary giving. The surplus for the year of \$34,110.59 was moved to restricted funds. The finance committee will present recommendations to session as to how best to use those funds. We are looking forward to this with new leadership to advance the missions of First Pres. Thank you for your continued support.

### Leadership

**Elders:** Trey McDowell-Clerk of Session, Maggie Ashworth, Jan Hole, David LeMay, Don Meersman, Rick Wilson, Sue Chandler and Beth Opperman, Presbytery Commissioners: Rick Wilson and Kathy McDaniel  
**Deacons:** Joy Carreño, Becky Gibson, Cheryl Baughman, Kathy Frear, Julie Johnston, Jess Karet, Jennie Staritzky and Deb Graham  
**Stewards:** Connie Strandberg, Cheri Blanchard, Karla Fergurson, Kathy McDaniel



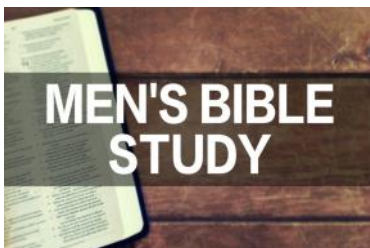
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### Join in the fellowship and study

2 studies that alternate every other Monday  
between a morning study and an evening study.

**Morning Study 7:00am \* Evening Study 6:30 pm**

Contact Scott Chandler for morning information.

### OFFICE HOURS

**Monday—Thursday 9am to 2pm, Friday 9am to Noon, Closed Saturday**

### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- **10:00 am Sunday Worship**

♦ **FIRST WORD NEWSLETTER:** The DEADLINE for the March newsletter is February 16th

### **Interested in Joining FPCL?**

If you are considering joining First Presbyterian Church or would just like to know more about it, contact Elinor Packard at 303-798-1389 ext. 1