

THE Penn Street Letter

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, FORT WORTH

FEBRUARY 2025 / VOLUME 25, NUMBER 2



Kirkin' OF THE Tartans

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

**11 A.M. SERVICE
IN THE SANCTUARY**

**12 P.M. LUNCHEON
IN THE GREAT HALL**



You're invited to the 28th annual Kirkin' of the Tartans service on Sunday, February 2 at 11 a.m. This annual service celebrates the Presbyterian Church's Scottish heritage and includes a colorful procession of tartan plaid banners and bagpipes. Following worship, there will be a free lunch featuring Scottish foods and entertainment in the Great Hall.

"Kirk" is the Scottish word for "church." Tartans, with their distinctive plaid, represent specific Scottish clans, regions, or regiments. The "Kirkin' of The Tartans" or "Churching of the Tartans" is the presentation of a Scottish family's symbol, its tartan, at church for blessing. The first formal "Kirkin" service in America was conducted at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C., in 1941.

This year we celebrate the Church of Scotland's 465th birthday. Before the Reformation, Scotland's official religion was Roman Catholic. Scottish minister John Knox led the Scots in establishing the Presbyterian Church as the national Church of Scotland in 1560. This year's Kirkin' will celebrate the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s historic roots in the Church of Scotland.

We welcome the Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka as guest preacher. Rodger Nishioka serves as the senior pastor at the Village Presbyterian Church in Prairie Village, Kansas. Prior to the call to join the pastoral staff at Village Church, he served for 15 years on the faculty of Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia. He was born in Honolulu, Hawaii and grew up at the Japanese Presbyterian Church in Seattle. He is the son of a Presbyterian pastor and is proof that you can be a pastor's kid and still love Jesus. His claim to fame is that he got to learn from Rev. Brian Coulter.



Want to be a part of the tradition and carry a tartan banner during worship? Call the church office (817.335.1231) or scan the QR code here.

Wear your family tartan or favorite plaid and don't miss this unforgettable celebration!

Pastor's Letter



Dear friends,

During the last weeks of cold weather, I am particularly grateful for all the ways you share God's love by providing a warm, welcoming space for those who struggle in this season. Thank you for your hospitality at Room in the Inn and for all the ways you greet our overnight guests with food and conversation. Thank you for your kindness in all of our ministries at Community Crossroads as you serve food and as you provide clothing, diapers, dental care, and hygiene products (and more!). As the body of Christ, you express our core values, empowering our neighbors with dignity and approaching all with compassion.

As we continue to grow in our faith and commitment to serving others, empathy is a key component of our Christian discipleship. Empathy goes beyond simply acknowledging someone's difficulties; it involves putting ourselves in their shoes. This deeper connection fosters trust and opens doors for meaningful relationships. When we approach

our ministries with empathy, we can better understand the unique challenges faced by those in need and provide more effective and heartfelt support.

To continue our cultivation of empathy within our congregation, we are excited to host the Cost of Poverty Experience on Sunday, February 23 from 4-7 pm at First Pres. This poverty simulation offers a powerful, immersive experience that helps participants understand the complexities and hardships of living in poverty.

I hope you will consider signing up for this transformative (and intergenerational: youth and adults are welcome!) experience. We hosted this at Community Crossroads in 2023, and past participants will tell you how helpful and insightful this exercise is. Please consider coming and inviting a friend as we continue the journey of empathy and Christlike compassion.

Peace,

Submissions

Submissions for the next issue of the Penn Street Letter are due Wednesday, February 19. Submissions for the weekly Penn Street Online emailed newsletters are due the Wednesday prior to each week's issue. Please send to Pam Burkholder at pamb@fpcf.org.

Follow Us

Do you follow First Pres on social media? Find us on the following sites and follow along for photos, reminders, encouragement, and more!



@firstpresfw



@firstpres_fw



@fpcf

First Presbyterian Church's Session

2025 CLASS OF ELDERS

Brian Cunningham
Jimmy DeFoor
Mary Susan Farrar
Vic Letbetter
Linda Northern
Lynda Richey
Amy Ryan

2026 CLASS OF ELDERS

Julia Bradley
Al Comeaux
Emily Hadley
Janie Lesok
Jane Mathis
Andrew Michalove
J.B. Smithson
Jay Stepp
Brian Wharry

2027 CLASS OF ELDERS

Mark Beasley
Leah Boom
Cesar Chavez
Judith Kinser
Ashli Smick
Judy Stricklin
Burch Waldron

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Retreats in February

MOMS Yenneagram Retreat February 7-8

Learn more and register: fpcfw.org/moms



This retreat combines yoga + enneagram at Camp Broadway on Eagle Mountain Lake. Come just for the day or stay the night! The cost is \$25 per person and begins Friday at 5 p.m. until Saturday at 3 p.m. Join Courtney Perry, Minneapolis-based Enneagram teacher and certified yoga instructor, for a weekend of whole-self learning with our minds,

hearts, and bodies. She utilizes yoga poses to enhance the learning process and to keep bodies engaged and moving throughout the retreat. (No prior knowledge of the Enneagram or yoga is required for this event.)

Presbyterian Women's Day Retreat February 22

Learn more and register: fpcfw.org/pw



This year's Retreat combines the power of women working together with mission goals. We will gather at First Pres on Saturday, February 22 from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. to enjoy fellowship, good food, fun, and work on mission projects together! We will tie fringe for fleece blankets for our neighbors at Presbyterian Night

Shelter and we complete "plarn" mats for our neighbors at Community Crossroads. Each one of us brings a strength to the group. Each one of us can do our part to create a whole. Cost is \$20 and includes lunch and chocolate charcuterie board.



FEBRUARY Calendar Highlights

Below are some highlights of special events happening in February. For a complete calendar, visit fpcfw.org.

SUNDAYS IN FEBRUARY

- 8 a.m. Worship in the Chapel
- 9 a.m. Worship in the Great Hall
- 10 a.m. Church School for all ages
- 10 a.m. Bible In-Depth
- 11 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary & Livestream
- 11:20 a.m. Younger Children's Choir
- 3:30 p.m. Youth Choir
- 4:30 p.m. High School Bells
- 4:30 p.m. Middle School Youth Group
- 5:30 p.m. Youth Dinner
- 6 p.m. High School Youth Group
- 6 p.m. Middle School Bells

MONDAYS IN FEBRUARY

- 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study
- 9 a.m. Formula & Diaper Ministry at Community Crossroads
- 9 a.m. Hot Breakfast & Choice Pantry at Community Crossroads
- 10 a.m. Wellness: Tai Chi
- 11:30 a.m. Clothing & Sack Lunch Distribution at Community Crossroads

WEDNESDAYS IN FEBRUARY

- 10:45 a.m. Bible In-Depth
- 11:30 a.m. Food & Clothing Ministry at Community Crossroads
- 11:30 a.m. Sack Lunch Distribution at Community Crossroads
- 5:30 p.m. WOW! Worship and Dinner at Community Crossroads
- 6 p.m. Grace Notes Rehearsal
- 7 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 7:30 p.m. High School Bible Study

THURSDAYS IN FEBRUARY

- 11:30 a.m. Food & Clothing Ministry at Community Crossroads
- 11:30 a.m. Sack Lunch Distribution at Community Crossroads

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

- 9 a.m. Preschool family meet-up at Play Street Museum

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

- 11 a.m. Kirkin of the Tartans Service & Lunch
- 6:30 p.m. Contemplative Worship Service in the Chapel

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15

- 10 a.m. Circles of Christ Field Trip to Dallas Holocaust Museum

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23

- 12:15 p.m. Elementary Screenagers Movie & Conversation
- 4 p.m. Cost of Poverty Experience

Be Inspired

Coming March 5: The Lenten Journey

On Ash Wednesday, we, as a church community, will begin intentionally preparing our hearts, minds, and souls for another Lenten journey, through Holy Week and into Easter. To begin that journey, the Spiritual Formation Committee will once again offer the deeply personal encounter with the scriptures to help lead us individually into this holiest of weeks: The Lenten Journey.

A self-paced opportunity for prayer, the Lenten Journey provides seven meditation stations, each focusing on one of the seven last words of Jesus and an eighth meditation station reflecting on the meaning of resurrection in our own lives. The full experience follows the metaphor of journeying as participants move from one meditation center to the next and may choose to walk our indoor labyrinth. Sacred space, silence, sensory experiences, new forms of personal prayer, and journaling all enhance our ability to receive what Christ offers.

Whether you can spare only a few minutes, or can stay for hours, come, walk with Christ in his passion, through his suffering, and into the resurrection.

On March 5, the Great Hall will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Facilitators will be available from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., 1-3 p.m., and 5-6 p.m. to answer questions and assist you in your experience.

Blessed are the Peacemakers... Lenten Covenant Groups

Spiritual Formation will offer three covenant groups this Lenten season, all based on Megan McKenna's book, *A Perfect Bowl of Light: Stories of Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Repairing the World*. McKenna is a theologian, storyteller, speaker, and writer who counsels communities facing conflict and struggles for justice. As such she has traveled the world collecting stories from a wealth of cultures. Through scripture and stories from diverse traditions, including the gospel narratives, Jewish midrash, Hassidic tales, Native American oral traditions and more, she presents insights on- and practices in- forgiveness, reconciliation, and restorative justice. We are called to be God's peacemakers and the first step in changing the world is reconciling our own relationships, beginning with the one with ourselves.

Groups are offered in Room 102 on Thursdays, March 6 through April 10 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. or 5:30-6:30 p.m., and Wednesdays, March 5 through April 9 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Register for the groups at fpcf.org/spiritualformation.



Lenten Class: Creating as a Spiritual Practice

March 9 through April 13 in Room 104

The practice of creating works of love and art by hand is personally rewarding and an opportunity to make space for peace and spiritual renewal in our lives. Whether you are a seasoned crafter or just curious about a new hobby, please join the First Pres Prayer Shawl Committee on Sundays during Lent as we explore Creating as a Spiritual Practice. This will be a time for spiritual reflection and fellowship for anyone who wishes to join us.

For those who have never picked up a needle or hook, members of the Prayer Shawl Committee will be on hand to help get you started. All knitting materials will be provided; if you wish to work on another craft project, you are welcome to bring your materials and join us for a season of creating, fellowship, and discipleship. This class will be held on Sundays during the 10 a.m. church school hour in room 104 from March 9 to April 13.

Betsy's Book People continues through May

First Presbyterian Church's book group, Betsy's Book People, meets on the second Monday of each month in the Parlor from 11 a.m. to 12 noon, September through May.

Upcoming Book Schedule:

- February: *Sing Unburied Sing* by Jesmyn Ward, led by Kay Love
- March: *The Weight of Ink* by Rachel Kadish, led by Joan Watkins
- April: *The Winemakers Wife* by Kristin Harmel, led by Paula Hawpe
- May: *The Art Thief* by Michael Finkel, led by Barbara Martin

Everyone is invited to attend the group, even if you haven't read the book! For questions or more information, contact Judy Nelson at 817.454.8870 or judytnelson@icloud.com.

Engage the World

Circles of Christ field trip to Dallas Holocaust Museum: February 15

Circles of Christ will take a field trip to Dallas to visit the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum on Saturday, February 15. We will meet at the museum at 10 a.m. Those wishing to carpool should coordinate to leave Fort Worth around 9 a.m. Limited spots are available, and tickets are only \$10 (reduced group rate). Please note if you do not pay for your ticket at time of registration, you will need to arrange to drop off payment at First Pres by February 12. Visit fpcf.org/circlesofchrist today to reserve your spot!



The Cost of Poverty Experience February 23

You're invited to the Cost of Poverty Experience on Sunday, February 23 from 4-7 p.m. in the Youth Center and Gym. The facilitator-led Cost of Poverty Experience offers a glimpse into the lives of low-income individuals and families living in our community - the obstacles, decisions, and consequences that impact them every day. This workshop is ideal for those who serve our neighbors at Community Crossroads or other ministries in our church like Room in the Inn as we continue, through God's help, to increase our compassion and empathy. Dinner is included with the experience. Scan the QR code here to register as a participant or a volunteer. Volunteers will need to arrive at 3 p.m. for training.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FORT WORTH

Community Crossroads

Spotlight on Ministry: The Wellcare Cleaning and Hygiene Ministry

At Community Crossroads, the Wellcare Cleaning and Hygiene Ministry provides essential items to those in need, including cleaning supplies, feminine hygiene products, hygiene kits, and adult diapers. The Wellcare Closet is open Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. until capacity is reached.

This small, but vital ministry is led by Jane Mathis and typically requires three volunteers to assist with organizing and distributing items, as well as a computer volunteer to manage records. Volunteers are needed from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on these days. Pictured here are three of the volunteers who keep this ministry going.



If you'd like to get involved and serve, please contact Malinda Morehead at mmorehead@fpcf.org for more information. Your time and care will make a lasting impact on our community.

Join us in sharing Christ's love through this hands-on ministry!

In 2024, Community Crossroads:

- Provided 17,413 households with groceries
- Provided 3,376 individuals with clothing
- Served 8,722 sack lunches
- Provided pet food to 3,850 pet owners
- Provided 1,856 hygiene items to individuals
- Provided 1,622 cleaning products to individuals
- Provided 6,796 diapers and 1,977 formula to parents
- Served 165 dental patients

A dedicated team of 4,891 volunteers contributed a remarkable total of 16,671 hours of service!

January Session Highlights

First Presbyterian Church's Session met on Sunday, January 19. Highlights from that meeting included the following items:

- Approved the 2025 budget.
- The 2024 Church Statistical Report for Presbytery was presented and received.
- Vision Squad presented ongoing plans.
- The Child and Youth Protection Policy Annual Report was shared.

First Pres Kids

Summer 2025: Save the Dates!

We can't wait for Summer 2025! We are so excited for the ways we will be able to learn, grow and have fun together. Registrations open March 1 at fpcfw.org/kidssummer.

Vacation Bible School

June 9-13, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

For 3-years-old (January 1, 2025) through 5th Grade

Cost: \$25

Mission on the Move

July 21-25, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

For entering 3rd through 6th Grades

Cost: \$25

Elementary Music and Arts Camp

June 9-13, 12 p.m.-4 p.m.

For entering 1st through 5th Grades

Cost: \$75, Optional Lunch: \$12

Music and Arts Camp Jr.

July 14-18, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

4-years-old through entering 2nd Grade

Cost: \$50

Summit 46 Conference at Mo-Ranch

June 17-20, Overnight

For entering 4th through 6th Grades

Cost: \$185



**Join Team First Pres
at the annual
Race 2 Remember Them
Saturday, March 1**

**Learn more and register:
fpcfw.org/wellness**

Submit your 2026 Elder Class Suggestions

The Nominating Committee is requesting suggestions for next year's elders. Any active member of our congregation may suggest other active members to the Nominating Committee to be considered for nomination. A suggestion does not constitute nomination. However, your suggestions are essential to the work of the Committee.

The spiritual growth and development of our congregation is entrusted to your officers (Ruling Elders). These are not honorary positions or rewards. They are offices requiring wisdom and maturity, exercised in service. The Ruling Elders elected will serve a three-year term beginning January 2026.



Submit your suggestions online using the QR code here.



Each month we'll highlight First Pres staff team updates, including new hires, anniversaries, and more.

FEBRUARY SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

We celebrate the following members of our team on their years of faithful service with First Pres:

February 2: Corey Scales, Lead Teacher (Toddlers), 1 year

February 19: Michelle Goodwin, Senior Director of Operations, 1 year

February 28: MaLinda Morehead, Program Manager, Community Crossroads, 3 years

CALLING ALL DENTAL PROFESSIONALS!

First Pres' Salt & Light Together, Inc. Dental Clinic, housed at Community Crossroads, is one of the many ministries supported by First Pres. We are actively looking for a General Dentist and Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) to join our mission of offering free dental care to our neighbors who need it most. The clinic is open 1-3 Mondays per month at 1516 Hemphill Street, Fort Worth, and is always free to patients.

If you're a Dentist or RDA interested in serving others, or if you know someone who might be, please reach out to the church office at hr@fpcfw.org.

Joys & Concerns

The following prayer concerns are those we have received as of January 23. In an effort to respect the privacy of those listed below, names are only printed once permission from the individual is obtained. Are you in the hospital or dealing with an illness? Let us know by contacting Parish Associate for Pastoral Care Rev. Ashley Drake Mertz or Parish Visitors Matt McGraw or Rev. Lynda Dinsdale. Let us keep the following persons in our thoughts and prayers this month...

With joy we celebrate...

The birth of Justice Traynham to parents Frankie Fuller and **Bear Duplisea**. Justice was born on December 22, 2024.

Our loving sympathy to...

The family and friends of Christopher Overton following his death on December 18, 2024. Christopher is the nephew of First Pres Maintenance Team member David Gallegos.

The family and friends of Blanca Deana Trevino following her death on December 24, 2024. Surviving First Pres family members include her aunt, **Mary Salazar**, and cousin, **Michael and Leti Salazar**, and **Dalia, Alejandro, and Santiago Salazar**.

Hillary Relyea and Ben Gerdts following the death of their son, Harvey Jennison Gerdts on January 2, 2025. Surviving family members include sister, Eleanor.

The family and friends of Betty Jane Talley following her death on January 3, 2025. Surviving First Pres family members include her son, **Richard Talley**.

The family and friends of Susanna Morales following her death on January 3, 2025. Surviving First Pres family members include **Becky and Rene Saldivar**.

The family and friends of **Henrietta Bailey** following her death on January 15, 2025.

The family and friends of Lynne Prater following her death on January 17, 2025. Surviving First Pres family members include her mother, **Harlene Satterfield**.

Our loving thoughts and prayers are with...

Vic Letbetter, Caro Jackson, Michael Martin, Sandra Davis, Wil'Lwin Chochola, Steve Brotherton, Nancy Lynn Scott, Kay Love, Gaylon Peyton, Ann Biggs, Pat Graham, Martha Brooks, Jo Ann Johnson, Elizabeth McCartney, Ronnie Sherwood, Capt. Rolf Tilley, Pat Richardson, Gail Davis, and Irene Howard, who are recovering from surgery or injury. We also pray for their caregivers.

Manning Day, Grace Comacho, Dick Coffey, Robert and Dinah Riddle, Tad Delgado and parents **Emily and Bryan Delgado, John Patterson, Larry Kinard, Amanda Deitz, Levi Deitz, June Sprott, Fred Wilson, Frances Blake, Phyllis Propes, Chuck Sullivan, Susie Kuipers**, and **Karl Travis**, who are dealing with illness or undergoing treatment. We also pray for their caregivers.

Our Caring Prayers for Extended Family include...

David Sloan, father-in-law of **Murray Hilyard**, Everett King (brother of **Barbara Holmes**), Ron Feagins (father-in-law of Blake Hargrave), Robert Mackay (brother of **Jane Mackay**), Dave Broz (uncle of Ashley Drake Mertz), Rebecca Montoya (mother of **Cheryl Mireles**), Lonnie Goolsby (father of **Kelle Tillman**), Lucy Redrow (daughter of **Leigh Ann and Grant Redrow**), Katie Loudon (sister-in-law of **Jaci Travis**), Anja Dangelimer (family friend of **Lauren Black**), Claudia Masser (daughter-in-law of **Carol Toombs**), Cameron Parmelee (granddaughter of **Sally and Bob Parmelee**), Jack Barber (son of **Liz Barber**), Andy Hedrick (brother of **Patti Bradley**), Jolie Paprskar-Mozingo (daughter of **Joy Paprskar**), Walter Williams (husband of **Rachele Williams**), Caleb James Baker (great-grandson of **Betty Tillman**), Terry James (nephew of **Rachele Williams**), Tahji Hoffman (great-niece of **Rachele Williams**), Paula Perkins (sister of **Susie Kuipers**), Audrey Hart (great-granddaughter of **Bob and Jane Trask**), Ann Welch (sister of

Andrea Frankenfield), Nancy Hatfield (mother of **Sarah Haddock**), Bill Neil (uncle of **Kenda, Nancy, and Ron Love**), and John DeMore (son-in-law of **June Sprott**).

Prayers for the safety of Pape Russell (grandson of **Barbara Russell**), who is serving in the US Navy. Prayers for the safety of **Diego A. Saldivar** (son of **Becky and Renee Saldivar**), who is serving in the US Navy. Prayers for the safety of Nathan Gunter (nephew of **Russell and Vivian Norment**), who is stationed in Korea.

We pray for safety and peace for those affected by conflict.

We pray for our mission coworkers: Cindy Corell in Dominican Republic, Jed and Jenny Koball in Peru, Cathy Chang and Juan Lopez in the Philippines. We pray for our partner congregations: Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist in Fort Worth and for the congregations of Buen Pastor, Resurrección, and Cidra Presbyterian Churches in Cuba.

Welcome, New Members!

Please join the Evangelism Work Group in welcoming these new members.



Laurie Kane joined First Pres by reaffirmation of faith on Sunday, January 19. Laurie has a United Methodist background and has been visiting First Pres for a few weeks. She is a RE/MAX realtor.



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1000 Penn Street
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Three lit white candles of varying heights are shown against a dark, textured background. The candles are lit, with visible flames and a warm glow. The tallest candle is on the left, a medium one in the center, and a shorter one on the right.

Contemplative Worship Service

*First Sundays
6:30-7:15 p.m.
in the Chapel*