

THE Penn Street Letter

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, FORT WORTH

JULY 2025 / VOLUME 25, NUMBER 7

SUMMER at First Pres



Summer in the Psalms series continues

Spend your Summer in the Psalms at First Pres! Now through August 31, we're exploring these ancient songs and prayers in a vibrant sermon series that invites us to reflect on themes of praise, lament, thanksgiving, and trust. Whether you're on the mountaintop or in the valley, there's a Psalm for you. Don't forget to grab your free beach towel - perfect for summer lounging and staying grounded in God's Word. Want to go deeper? Check out July's daily readings here and catch up anytime with weekly sermons on our podcast, available wherever you get your podcasts.

Christmas in July Youth Pool Party: Sunday, July 13

Join us for our Annual Youth Pool Party on Sunday, July 13, from 5-7 p.m. at the Hudgens' home (contact Josh or the church office for the address). It's the perfect way to cool off, hang out, and celebrate summer with a festive twist!

We'll have pizza for dinner, plenty of pool time, and of course, the return of our legendary Funny T-Shirt Exchange! Bring a wrapped t-shirt (the funnier, the better!) in recycled or creative wrapping—just keep it under \$10 if you're buying one. Thrift store finds and old favorites are totally fair game!

So throw on your best Christmas-in-July vibes, grab your towel, and get ready for an evening of laughter, swimming, and unforgettable memories. You won't want to miss it!

All Church Pool Party: Friday, August 8

Get ready to make a splash—it's time for our Annual All-Church Pool Party! Mark your calendar for Friday, August 8, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Forest Park Pool (2850 Park Place, Fort Worth 76110).

This is your chance to cool off, kick back, and connect with your First Pres family in the most refreshing way possible. Whether you're diving in, floating along, or just enjoying the good company poolside, there's something for everyone. Best of all? It's completely free for the First Pres community—and everyone's invited!

So grab your swimsuit, bring your best poolside vibes, and enjoy an evening of fun, fellowship, and summer celebration.



summer IN THE PSALMS

JULY READING PLAN

BOOK 2:

July 1: Psalm 44
July 2: Psalm 45, 46
July 3: Psalm 47, 48, 49
July 4: Psalm 50
July 5: Psalm 51
July 6: Psalm 52, 53, 54
July 7: Psalm 55, 56
July 8: Psalm 57, 58
July 9: Psalm 59, 60
July 10: Psalm 61, 62, 63
July 11: Psalm 64, 65
July 12: Psalm 66, 67
July 13: Psalm 68
July 14: Psalm 69
July 15: Psalm 70, 71
July 16: Psalm 72

BOOK 3:

July 17: Psalm 73
July 18: Psalm 74
July 19: Psalm 75, 76
July 20: Psalm 77
July 21: Psalm 78.1-31
July 22: Psalm 78.32-72
July 23: Psalm 79, 80
July 24: Psalm 81, 82
July 25: Psalm 83, 84
July 26: Psalm 85, 86
July 27: Psalm 87, 88
July 28: Psalm 89

BOOK 4:

July 29: Psalm 90, 91
July 30: Psalm 92, 93

Pastor's Letter



Dear friends,

As we continue our *Summer in the Psalms* series, many have shared with me and your other

pastors how meaningful the daily reading plan has been as a discipline to experience the fullness of *The Psalms*. One of the recurring refrains has been, "the Psalms are giving voice to my prayers." That is part of the beauty and power of the Psalms – they have been both songbook and prayerbook for God's people for three millennia. When we read, study, pray, or sing a psalm, we are united with the faithful who have come before us. It is so inspiring...

During the month of July, our Sunday preaching psalms continue to invite us into the rhythm of praise and prayer experienced throughout the book of Psalms. Our journey in July invites us to offer praise to God, our King (Psalm 95:1-7); to seek God's judgment on false gods (Psalm 82);

to lament with the exiles grieving the loss of their home and way of life (Psalm 137:1-6); and to celebrate God's glory in creation and God's love for humanity (Psalm 8). It will be an inspiring month of worship – in person and online.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and light to my path. (Psalm 119:105)
May your journey this month, accompanied by the Psalms and the witness of our ancestors in the faith, be both lamp and light as you live out your faithful discipleship.

God's peace,

Michael

Submissions

Submissions for the next issue of the Penn Street Letter are due Wednesday, July 23. 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 or submit them online using the QR code here.



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!



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@firstpres_fw



@fpcf

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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

June Session Highlights

First Presbyterian Church's Session met on Sunday, June 22. Highlights from that meeting included the following items:

- Josh provided a recap of the Youth Mission trip to Asheville.
- Ashley reported that the Congregational Care Committee hosted a thank you lunch for all their volunteers – with over 60 people in attendance.
- Our Grace Presbytery commissioners shared a report from the May 31 meeting in Weatherford.
- The Christian Formation Committee gave an interpretation report on their work and that of the four Work Groups that make up the committee.
- May 2025 budgeted financial statements were presented and reviewed.



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

JULY SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

We celebrate the following member of our team on her years of faithful service with First Pres:

Olivia Gutierrez, Lead Teacher (2s), 7 years



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

SUNDAYS IN JULY

- 8 a.m. Worship in the Chapel
- 9 a.m. Worship in the Great Hall
- 10 a.m. Wonder, Love & Play Children & Youth Church School
- 10 a.m. Faith & Film: The Chosen season 2
- 11 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary & Livestream
- 1:30 p.m. Grief Support Group

MONDAYS IN JULY

- 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
- 12 p.m. Picnic with Prophets
- 3 p.m. Community Crossroads Summer Cooling Station
- 7 p.m. Engaging Faith Discipleship Group

WEDNESDAYS IN JULY

- 11:30 a.m. Food & Clothing Ministry at Community Crossroads
- 11:30 a.m. Sack Lunch Distribution at Community Crossroads
- 3 p.m. Community Crossroads Summer Cooling Station
- 5:30 p.m. WOW! Worship and Dinner at Community Crossroads
- 7 p.m. Summer Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAYS IN JULY

- 11:30 a.m. Food & Clothing Ministry at Community Crossroads
- 11:30 a.m. Sack Lunch Distribution at Community Crossroads
- 3 p.m. Community Crossroads Summer Cooling Station

FRIDAY, JULY 4

Church closed for Independence Day

SUNDAY, JULY 6

- 6:30 p.m. Contemplative Service

SATURDAY, JULY 12

- 8:30 a.m. Enneagram Workshop

SUNDAY, JULY 13

- 5 p.m. Christmas in July Youth Pool Party

MONDAY, JULY 14

- 9 a.m. Music & Arts Camp Jr. (through July 18)

MONDAY, JULY 21

- 9 a.m. Mission on the Move (through July 25)

THURSDAY, JULY 24

- 5:30 p.m. Thursday Around the Table Potluck

Be Inspired



Back by Popular Demand: Enneagram Workshop Series

"You can't know God without knowing yourself, and you can't know yourself without knowing God," said John Calvin. The Enneagram is a time-tested tool for this lifelong journey of self-discovery and spiritual growth.

First Pres is offering two Enneagram seminars in July, and a third seminar in the fall that has been expanded into a four-week course. Attend all three or choose the sessions that best support your personal growth. Learn more about these courses and register at fpcf.org/spiritualformation

summer Seminars

- **July 12: Know Your Number.** Learn Enneagram basics: Centers of Intelligence, Triads, Stances, and discover your type.
- **July 26: Growing into Your Healthiest Self.** Explore how to use Wings, Stress/Security numbers, and address childhood messages and wounds.

Time: Saturdays, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Location: Youth Center

Lunch: Optional, \$10

Cost: Free (includes resource notebooks)

Fall Seminar Course

- **September 7-28: Growing Home: The Spirituality of the Enneagram.** Dive into the spiritual dimension of the Enneagram - holy ideas, virtues, and practices that help each type reconnect with its true essence. This third seminar requires more time and depth, and is offered as a four-week course.

Time: Sundays, 2–4 p.m.

Location: Room 100

Cost: Free (includes resource notebooks)

Busy Women's Bible Study: Discover the Drama, Depth, and Relevance of 1 & 2 Samuel

Come be part of a welcoming group where fun, fellowship, and meaningful discussion come together as we explore the books of 1 & 2 Samuel. These powerful stories of Samuel, King Saul, and King David are not just ancient history—they speak directly to our lives today.

Together, we'll dive into the biblical narrative from multiple angles—spiritual, historical, and geographical—and reflect on what these stories reveal about God, leadership, and ourselves. Whether you're new to Bible study or a seasoned reader, this study promises to be both enriching and relevant.

We will meet on Mondays from September 8 through November 10. Each session will begin at 11:20 a.m. with a time of prayer and fellowship, followed by group discussion starting at 11:30 a.m. Meetings will take place in Room 310 at First Presbyterian Church. Our study book is available for purchase on Amazon. Feel free to bring your lunch to enjoy during the discussion. The study will be led by Karen Steffler.

Questions? Contact Lisa Waldron (817.239.3807 or lisawaldron58@gmail.com) for details or support.

Penn St. Arts welcomes Organist Convention

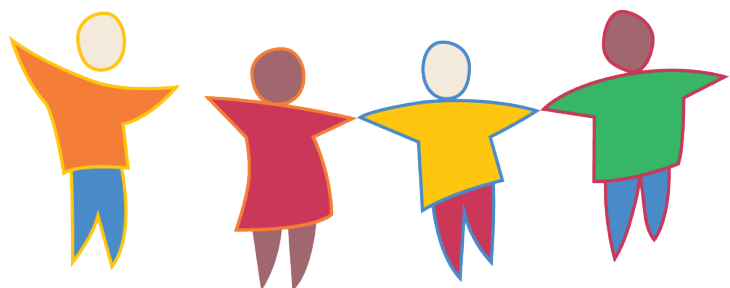


You're invited to a special free organ recital on Wednesday, July 2 at 11 a.m. in the First Pres Sanctuary, hosted by Penn St. Arts as part of the American Guild of Organists Convention – Fort Worth.

Experience the incredible talent of Dr. Alcee Chriss III, a Fort Worth native and internationally acclaimed concert organist. Known for his dynamic performances and musical versatility, Dr. Chriss will showcase the full power and beauty of the pipe organ in a program that spans multiple genres.

Don't miss this unforgettable musical event—open to all and free to attend!

Engage the World



Help touch up the Mural at Community Crossroads!

In just a few weeks, we'll be giving the beautiful mural at Community Crossroads a much-needed refresh—and we need your help to make it shine again!

We're putting together a team of volunteers to power wash and touch up the mural, restoring its vibrant colors and powerful message for all who pass by. Whether you're an experienced painter or just someone who loves to lend a hand, there's a place for you on this team.

This is a great opportunity to serve, connect with others, and be part of something that brings beauty and hope to our community. Plus, it's a lot of fun!

If you're interested in helping out—or just want to learn more—please reach out to Robyn (robym@fpcfw.org).

In May 2025, Community Crossroads:

- Provided **1,503** households with groceries
- Provided **292** individuals with clothing
- Served **715** sack lunches
- Provided pet food to **334** pet owners
- Provided **206** hygiene items to individuals
- Provided **197** cleaning products to individuals
- Provided **470** packages of diapers and **144** cans of formula to parents
- Served **23** dental patients
- A dedicated team of **191** volunteers contributed a remarkable total of **1,806** hours of service!



In June, the WOW! (Worship on Wednesday) team had the joy of visiting Downtown Health and Rehabilitation Center. We shared a heartfelt Pentecost devotional inspired by Acts 2, lifted our voices in hymns celebrating the Holy Spirit, prayed together in community, and patients expressed their creativity through watercolor painting.

WOW! (Worship on Wednesdays) offers worship each Wednesday from 5:30-6 p.m., followed by a hot dinner at 6 p.m., and community activities for all ages from 6:45-7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome - bring a friend and come as you are!

Do you have something that you love to teach or share with others? Come share your talents with folks at Community Crossroads on Wednesdays from 3-4:30 p.m. during our Cooling Station before Worship on Wednesdays this summer. Do you have skills in gardening, dancing, art, jewelry-making, music, phone photography, poetry writing, spiritual/meditative practices, or card tricks? Whatever excites you, come share your passion with others. If you need supplies, we can work with you. To sign up or for more questions, please contact Leah Wyckoff (leahw@fpcfw.org).



Asheville Youth Mission Trip: June 2025

First Pres high school youth participated in a powerful and meaningful mission trip to Asheville, North Carolina, in partnership with Asheville Youth Mission. Throughout the week, we engaged in hands-on service with local ministries addressing food insecurity, housing, and poverty. Many of the individuals and communities we served alongside shared stories of loss and resilience following the devastating flooding caused by Hurricane Helene last Fall, giving our group a deeper understanding of how natural disasters continue to impact vulnerable populations. Through daily reflections and devotionals, our students explored the connections between faith and justice, deepened relationships with one another, and grew in their understanding of God’s call to love and serve our neighbors. We concluded our trip with a day and night spent at Montreat Conference Center for a time of rest, fellowship, and reflection.



Joys & Concerns

The following prayer concerns are those we have received as of June 25. 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 marriage of **Eric Tilley** to Karla Rodriques Tilley. First Pres family includes Eric's parents, **Jarret and Katie Tilley**, and grandmother, **Janelle Eklund**.

The birth of Adam Bewley Goldsmith on April 16 to parents Elizabeth Bewley and Brian Goldsmith. He joins big brothers, Wesley and Matthew. First Pres family includes grandparents, **Mary Stewart and Ed Bewley**.

The birth of Severan (Seve) Samuel Redrow on May 27 to parents **Jillian and Colin Redrow**. He joins big sister, Vivian Redrow. The birth of Ayodeji "Deji" Elias Ayoko on May 9 to parents Violet (Hamre) Ayoko and Femi Ayoko. First Pres family includes grandparents, **David Hamre and Karen Redrow**.

Our loving sympathy to...

Family and friends of June Sprott following her death on June 25, 2025. Surviving First Pres family members include her daughter and son-in-law, **Allyn and Steve Toth**, and grandchildren, **Sean, Michael, Marc and Alyson Toth**.

Family and friends of Cindy Reynolds following her death on June 11, 2025. Surviving First Pres family member includes her mother, **Marilyn Anderson**.

Family and friends of Lucy Reid Wilson following her death on June 10, 2025. Surviving First Pres family members include her daughter and son-in-law, **Lisa and Burch Waldron**.

Family and friends of Claudia Masser following her death on June 6, 2025. Surviving First Pres family members include her father-in-law and mother-in-law, Randy and **Carol Toombs**.

Family and friends of **Marty McGuffin** following his death on June 4, 2025. Surviving First Pres family members include his wife, **Pam McGuffin**, son and daughter-in-law, **Brian and Sidney Goodfriend**, and grandsons, **Bo and Bauer Goodfriend**.

Family and friends of **Ann Entz** following her death on May 30, 2025.

Family and friends of Allyne Robertson Johnson following her death on May 11, 2025. Surviving First Pres family members include her son and daughter-in-law, **Randall and Gena Johnson**, and grandchildren, Grant Johnson, Allison Iyescas, and Kelly Worrell.

Our loving thoughts and prayers are with...

Phil Grossman, Carol Sue Hammett, Betty Elliott, Janelle Eklund, Paul Allen, Heather Martin, Marion Lester, Betsy Pepper, Gail Stewart, Wil'twin Chocola, Steve Brotherton, Nancy Lynn Scott, Gaylon Peyton, Ann Biggs, Pat Graham, Martha Brooks, Jo Ann Johnson, Elizabeth McCartney, Ronnie Sherwood, Pat Richardson, Gail Davis, and Irene Howard who are recovering from surgery or injury. We also pray for their caregivers.

John Wright, Margo Dean, Judy Stricklin, Roxy Sherwood, Rachele Williams, Manning Day, Grace Camacho, 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...

Alex Allen (daughter of **Fred Oberkircher**), Martha Meador (mother of **Martha Letbetter**), Ron Feagins (father-in-law of Blake Hargrave), Dave Broz (uncle of Ashley Drake Mertz), 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**), 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**), 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**), Nancy Hatfield (mother of **Sarah Haddock**), Bill Neil (uncle of **Kenda, Nancy, and Ron Love**), and John DeMore (son-in-law of

June Sprott).

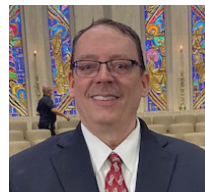
Prayers for the safety of Pape Russell (grandson of **Barbara Russell**), who is serving in the US Navy. Prayers for the safety of **Diego A. Saldivar** (son of **Becky and Renee Saldivar**), who is serving in the US Navy. Prayers for the safety of Nathan Gunter (nephew of **Russell and Vivian Norment**),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

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

We pray for our 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!

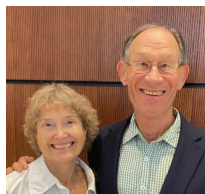
*Please join the Evangelism Work Group
in welcoming these new members.*



Chris Burks was baptized and joined First Pres on June 15. Chris has been worshipping at First Pres for several months.



Daniel Castaneda joined First Pres on June 8 by reaffirmation of faith. Daniel has been visiting First Pres for a few months and works in IT for American Airlines.



Sue and Royce Chancellor joined First Pres on June 1 by transfer from Song of Life United Methodist Church in Queen Creek, Arizona.

Sue and Royce are the parents of Meg Coulter and have been worshipping at First Pres for several months since relocating from Arizona. Both are ordained elders in the PC(USA).



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THE
Penn
Street
Letter

Wellness Together invites you to

THURSDAY AROUND THE TABLE

*Enjoy delicious food and connect with
fellow members of the First Pres community.*

**Thursday, July 24, 5:30 p.m.
First Pres Atrium**



**Please bring your favorite main dish, side, salad,
or dessert. Drinks will be provided.
RSVP with the QR code here.**

Questions? Contact Barbara Reece (817.863.3924).