

# THE MESSENGER

| NEWS FROM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FORT COLLINS |

**WORSHIP+2**

**MIDWEEK  
EXPERIENCE**

**A SEASON  
TO REMEMBER**

**ALL  
CHURCH  
PICNIC**



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# From the Editor | BACK TO SCHOOL

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This time of year, school-aged kids cling to every last bit of summer. They savor every dip in the pool, every ice cream treat, every camping trip under the stars, every sunset on the back porch—because in Fort Collins, school starts this month.

The signs are all around us. Back to School sales fill the stores. Teachers prepare curriculum. Classrooms may have new light bulbs and a fresh coat of paint. School buses have been inspected, cleaned, and are ready for their routes.

Going back to school is a lot like starting a new year. New pencils, new schedules, new things to do and learn. At FPC, we're going back to school, too. Our programming year is about to begin. Children's Ministry is preparing new curriculum (p. 7). Worship+2 encourages us to grow and learn (p. 3). The Midweek Experience (MX) team is hard at work preparing discipleship, spiritual formation, and fellowship opportunities for all (p. 7). Even the King Soopers Rewards Card program is helping us keep the lights shining bright (p. 4).

We're getting ready to go back to school. We hope you'll join us and hop on the bus.

—Cathy Richardson

## THE MESSENGER

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**PUBLISHING GUIDELINES** | THE MESSENGER is a publication for the people, passions, and mission of First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins. The newsletter seeks to inspire, inform, instruct, challenge, and motivate its readers to become engaged in the ministry of FPC. We pray that adult readers in all life stages will aspire to be faithful disciples for Christ.

Articles that support FPC's purpose and mission will be **accepted on the 15th of each month**. All articles must be sponsored by one of the church's five Centers and are subject to the approval of the Editor. Submissions will be edited for length and suitability.

Article submissions will be accepted via e-mail to [crichardson@firstpresfc.org](mailto:crichardson@firstpresfc.org). Contact Editor Cathy Richardson for more information, (970)482-6107.



PASTOR'S CORNER

# WORSHIP+2

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**“And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another...” —Hebrews 10:24-25**

Wouldn't it be nice if there was a simple formula for growing in faith?

Growing up, I always loved math and especially that satisfying feeling of knowing that there's one right answer. Most of life isn't like that and often we struggle against it—wishing there was one right response to a tricky situation, one right thing to say that would fix a troubled relationship, one right decision when confronted with multiple options. Often all we can do is seek counsel from God and others for a good next step into the unknown, and then a good next step after that, and after that, and so on.

There is not one right way to grow in discipleship or some guaranteed formula for spiritual growth. The Holy Spirit is the active agent in any and all spiritual growth. Our part is mainly to show up and then respond to what the Spirit is doing in and through us. John Ortberg uses the imagery of a sailboat. All the power comes from the wind that we are not in control of, but we can raise the sail and orient it to catch the wind when it comes. How can we as a church support you in “showing up” and helping you be oriented to catch the wind of the Spirit? Well, we do have a simple formula for you to consider. Maybe you've heard us mention it as a church. Here's the formula:

## **WORSHIP+2**

Easy enough to remember as you prayerfully consider your commitments in the upcoming school year. What does it mean?

First of all: Worship, specifically regular corporate worship where the people of God gather to praise God and experience God in their midst. The first part of the formula encourages you to make corporate worship a central part of your weekly rhythm. Worship is not just about getting input about God. In these days of podcasts and blogs, you can get a lot of spiritual input, some of it quite good and even better than what you might get from the local church. We encourage you, though, to not let that take the place of corporate worship with a local body of believers. We believe something special happens when the people of God gather together—God shows up! God shows up in the music and songs, the Scripture and sacraments, the

prayers and sermons, and in the fellowship and community. We're so grateful to be able to offer live streaming as the next best thing to being there but for those who are able, we encourage you to be here “in the flesh” and experience the presence of Christ through his body, the gathered people of God. Maybe you will be blessed by your interaction with someone or maybe God will use you to be a blessing to someone.

Then there's the “+2.” We encourage you to:

1. Find a way that you can be nurtured in your faith—a setting where you can learn more, immerse yourself in the Bible, and be challenged and supported in your faith. A smaller interpersonal setting where you can develop Christian friendships—people who will support you in the challenges of life and pray for you. This might be participating in our new Wednesday night program or a Sunday morning class, being part of a small group, joining us regularly for the Wednesday noon Bible study, attending MOPS, or waking up early for the Thursday morning men's group.
2. Find a way that you can serve. We are called to “serve one another” and to love our neighbors by serving them. A local congregation relies on people willing to corporately join together in the ministry of the church. Serving is not just about getting a job done, it is also key to growing in faith. We grow in our faith when in obedience to Christ we move beyond our own needs to care for the needs of others. We grow through the relationships we form through serving. And we grow because when we join Christ in his work, we see Christ in action which enlivens and energizes our faith. Serving can be inside or outside the church: greeting, leading a small group, taking communion to those who can't come to church, helping build a Habitat home, tutoring someone from the Project Self-Sufficiency family or any of many possible ways. If you need help knowing what you might do, then talk to any staff member, Center Leader, deacon or elder and they can help you find places of meaningful right-fit ministry.

Worship+2 – regularly joining in corporate worship and then finding a setting where your faith is nurtured and a place where you can serve. It isn't a magical formula, but it is a helpful way of thinking through your involvement in FPC and how you are “showing up” to the work of the Spirit.

Blessings as we catch the wind of the Spirit in our lives as individuals and as a congregation.

—Cindy Frost



# THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

KING SOOPERS REWARDS CARDS HELP KEEP THE LIGHTS SHINING



Many of you have picked up a King Soopers Rewards Card, but do you know why it's important to use it? King Soopers gives back to the church for your purchases. As a result, the Rewards Cards help keep the lights shining at FPC.

For every dollar you spend using your Rewards Card on groceries, gas, or pharmacy items, King Soopers gives the church 5% cash back. (Western Union, Money Orders, Ticket Master, postage stamps, lottery tickets, and gift cards are not included.) What makes it even better is giving to the church in this way is FREE! There are no fees added.

### How to use your card:

1. Your card is loaded with \$5.
2. When you go shopping, pre-load it as you would any gift card. (Just tell the checker that you want to load your Rewards Card BEFORE checking out.)
3. You can use cash or credit card to load your card for whatever amount you need.
4. Then use the Rewards Card to pay for your groceries, gas, or pharmacy items.
5. Your receipt will tell the remaining balance on your card.
6. Use your card over and over and over—every time 5% goes back to FPC.

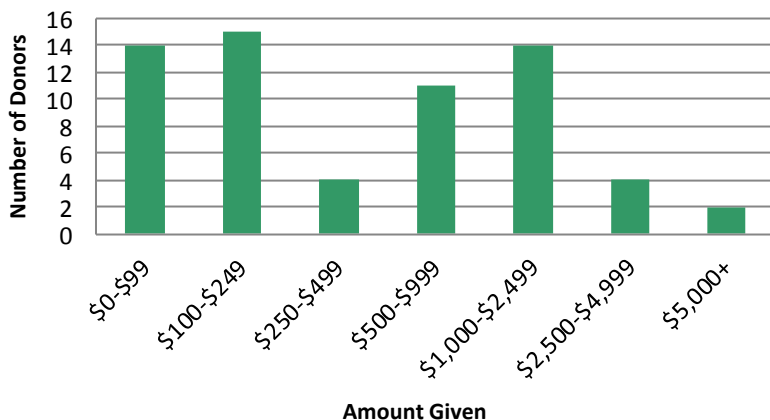
How does it add up? Say you spend \$500 per month on groceries, gas, and pharmacy items. When you use your Rewards Card, the church will receive \$25. Imagine 100 families participating at this level. That's \$2,500 to help the church operating budget—and it doesn't cost you a thing!

By using your Rewards Card to do your shopping, you are helping support the operation of the church. That little light will shine and shine and shine!



As of July 13, 2015

JOIN THE CROWD!  
Challenge ends  
August 31



# A SEASON TO REMEMBER

## MUSIC AND ARTS PLANS THEIR 2015–2016 SCHEDULE

The 2015-2016 Ministry through Music Schedule promises to be *a Season to Remember*. The first half the schedule features the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Bells of Christmas Concert at 7 p.m. on December 6 (mark your calendars!), and the ever popular Music Ministry Christmas Presentation at the 9:15 and 11 a.m. services on Sunday, December 13. Then, in the second half of our season there will be a special service to honor the retirement of our Interim Senior Pastor, Dr. Paul Parsons on Sunday, January 31, and the glorious celebration of Easter on Sunday, March 27. The Music and Arts 2015-2016 Schedule will conclude with the Colorado premier of the Mark Hayes Requiem on Friday, May 12, 2016. These special times along with many additional services and events will make the upcoming Music Ministry *a Season to Remember*.

I hope you will consider joining me and those currently involved in this ministry for the 2015–2016 season. The year begins with the startup of all the choirs following the Labor Day weekend. A complete listing of the schedule for the various ensembles is posted here.

If you would like to learn more, or join please contact Marvin Crawford, Director of Music and Arts at (970)482-6107 or [mrcrawford@firstpresfc.org](mailto:mrcrawford@firstpresfc.org). To God Be the Glory!

—Marvin Crawford

### FOR ADULTS

**Sanctuary Choir** (Adults & College)  
*Rehearsals Thursdays, 7–8:30 p.m.*

This passionate and dedicated group is the resident choir for our 9:15 a.m. Sunday worship service. This choir also prepares music for the Christmas and spring concerts, as well as other special services. New members are always welcome! There is no audition but an interview is required.

**FPC Worship Band**  
(Singers & Instrumentalists)  
*Rehearsals Wednesday Evenings,  
Year-round*

The FPC Worship Band leads worship weekly at the 11 a.m. Celebration service, as well as other services throughout the year. Participation is by invitation/audition only.

**Chancel Handbell Choir** (Adults & College)  
*Rehearsals Wednesdays, 7–8:30 p.m.*

This choir is an active part of worship services and concerts at First Presbyterian Church. Highlights include the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Bells of Christmas Concert in December and participation in a handbell festival in the spring. Participation is by audition/invitation only and is capped at 14 ringers. The ability to read music is required. *The group is always in need of substitutes for anyone unable to make a weekly commitment.*

**FPC Festival Chorus** (Adults & College)  
*Rehearsals Thursdays, 5 weeks prior to  
Christmas and Easter, 6:30–8:30 p.m.*

This choir is for those who are unable to make an ongoing weekly commitment but desire an opportunity to sing. Music is provided in advance of the first rehearsal for outside preparation.

### FOR YOUTH

**Jubilate Singers** (6th-12th Grades)  
*Rehearsals Sundays, 5:15–6 p.m.*

Is there a more joyful sound than a sanctuary filled with the energy of youth voices singing praise to God?! This choir for youth sings regularly in Sunday worship and also participates in the annual Christmas Presentation.

**Jubilate Ringers** (6th–12th Grades)  
*Rehearsals Sundays, 4:30–5:15 p.m.*

A youth bell choir for 10 ringers who have the ability to read music. This bell choir plays when prepared.

### FOR CHILDREN — NEW TIMES!

**Celebration Singers** (1st–5th Grades)  
*Rehearsals Wednesdays, 5–5:45 p.m.*

Our youngest and sweetest singers! This children's choir sings regularly in Sunday worship, as well as at the Christmas Presentation and Family Christmas Eve Service.

**Celebration Ringers** (3rd–5th Grades)  
*Rehearsals Wednesdays, 4:15–5 p.m.*

This bell choir introduces the fundamentals of ringing to children and provides the participants and opportunity to experience the joy of ringing a handbell. Regular attendance at rehearsal is a must and the ability to read music is not required!

Come and make a joyful noise unto the Lord and join us for a Season to Remember!

## A CHURCH OF CHARACTER

# FLEXIBILITY

**“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.”**

**—Psalm 90:2**

The character quality for August is FLEXIBILITY (vs resistance). Flexibility can be defined as: “Willingness to change plans or ideas without getting upset.”

Life is made up of change. This is true at home, or on the job or at school. People change, seasons change, fads change, and on it goes. We live in a world of unprecedented and constant change. No matter how hard we plan, our plans change and our lives change. But God does not change! His love and grace are the same yesterday, today and forever. He is always with us, no matter where we are or what we are doing.

However, to be able to deal with all those things in our lives that do change requires flexibility. A rigid and unbending spirit can be harmful, both to others and to the one who holds it. Sickness or the situation with our jobs can call for major changes in our lives. How do we cope with these things? How

do we stay at peace when changes disrupt our lives? Or how do we remain with a sweet spirit when changes occur, especially those created by others with whom we may not agree? Other people’s ideas and styles may differ greatly from ours. Sometimes in our families, sometimes in our churches, new situations arise that create turmoil. This may be especially true for those of us who are older. We often find it very difficult to be understanding and flexible. We should not give up personal convictions, but do need to try to understand other’s points of view.

It is also critically important for us to remember that it is God who ultimately orders our steps. “The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps,” Proverbs 16:9. This is not to say that we should not have goals or plans. They are important to an organized life, but we must always remember that God is the ultimate ruler in our lives and in the universe. God’s view is so all encompassing, whereas ours, in comparison, is so limited that we must yield every moment to His direction, even in the very midst of our planning and goal setting. So when our plans change unexpectedly, we need to remember that God has a hand in the smallest details of our lives. When changes come along, don’t be inflexible and disappointed. Be flexible, anticipate the best, and above all, trust God in all things.

### **PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Thank you for your prayers during the search for a new Senior Pastor for First Presbyterian Church! The PNC is continuing to review candidates as it also begins the initial interview process. Thanks to modern technology, these interviews will be conducted using Skype or Facetime with the PNC members in attendance.

Please pray for clarity, discernment, and unity in the decisions that will be made during this important time of winnowing the field of candidates. May God continue to be with First Presbyterian and the PNC throughout the course of this search.

—Pam Pierce



### **YOUNG ADULT SOCIALS**

Get together with other young adults once a month for social time. Grad students/young marrieds/recent grads are all welcome. This month, walk with us to the Rio for happy hour Sunday, August 16, 3–6 p.m. Kids can be dropped off for childcare at the church so we can have a break and some good adult fellowship. Watch the bulletin and the website for information about upcoming events.



# MIDWEEK EXPERIENCE

Being a new mom has taught me a lot, one thing that has stuck out to me is the time spending with family is extremely important. As Kevin and I are running different directions with work and daily responsibilities, we find it difficult at times to carve out time to spend as a family together. While it is difficult to get time together as a family in our own home, it can be difficult to spend time with our church family. As a member of Session and Discipleship and Spiritual Formation, I want to let you know that we have heard your cries for a desire to spend more time and grow in our faith together as a church family.

Following the amazing multi-generational midweek experience we had during Lent, we will be starting a new Midweek Experience (MX) on September 9!

The goals for creating MX are:

1. Create a Wednesday night Multi-generational Christ-centered gathering that provides an environment for whole-church discipleship, spiritual formation, and fellowship.
2. Provide an alternative location and time to enter in to our (FPC) Church family other than on Sunday mornings.
3. Provide structured programming for spiritual discovery, Bible education, and classes to meet the needs of our community, plus develop the infrastructure to all for new programming to be developed, fostered, and allowed to thrive.

4. Create an atmosphere of openness (contrasted to clique formation) welcoming diversity throughout our community.

We are excited about this new adventure we will be taking as a church family and we want to extend an invitation to all of you to join us.

Save the date! Midweek Experience (MX) begins September 9, with dinner starting at 5:15 p.m.! More information to come.

—Laura Reid

## FUN ON THE SECOND FLOOR

Leading up to the start of fall Sunday school classes, a wall on the second floor of the Education Wing is transforming. We are preparing for our fall curriculum for the nursery and preschool classes. Something new will be added to the wall each week. See if you can guess what the curriculum for the first Sunday (September 13) will be! If you guess the right answer and tell me, Kelly Regan, you could win a prize!

After September 13, you will see a complete wall change EVERY WEEK. Kids will have an interactive place to show everyone in the congregation the work they are doing in Sunday school. Come check it out! We are getting excited. I can't wait to see all the smiling faces on the second floor of the education wing this fall!

—Kelly Regan







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A colorful picnic poster with a light blue background. At the top, there is a string of colorful triangular bunting flags in shades of green, purple, blue, orange, and red. Below the bunting, the words "all church" are written in a purple cursive font, followed by "PICNIC" in large, colorful, hand-drawn block letters. The word "PICNIC" is split into colors: P (blue), I (red), C (green), N (red), I (blue), C (green). Below this, the date "Sunday, Aug. 23" is written in a large, dark blue font. Underneath the date, there are four lines of text in a purple font: "on the lawn at FPC following 10 AM worship.", "Bring your family and a blanket to sit on.", "Come enjoy this gift to the FPC family. Picnic food will be provided.", and "Donations towards food cost will be gratefully accepted." At the bottom left, there is a slice of watermelon with black seeds. To its right, the words "LET'S EAT!" are written in large, green, hand-drawn block letters. The bottom of the poster features a red and white checkered border.