



First Presbyterian
Church of Littleton



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JULY 2026

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE PC(USA)?

The name 'Presbyterian' is one of the mainline church denominations in the U.S.A. 'Presbyterian' used to be a familiar term, but few know the remarkable story behind how we came to be. To be Presbyterian is to be part of a tradition that stretches across centuries, continents, and cultures. It is a tradition rooted in faith, guided by Scripture, and continually seeking to follow Jesus Christ in a changing world.

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

The Presbyterian tradition traces its roots to the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s. While Martin Luther's reforms spread through Germany, another movement emerged in Switzerland under the leadership of theologian John Calvin. Calvin emphasized God's grace, the authority of Scripture, and the responsibility of Christians to live faithfully in every area of life.

A Scottish reformer named John Knox studied Calvin's teachings and carried them to Scotland. There, the Presbyterian form of church government was born. Rather than being led by bishops or a single authority figure, like the Pope, Presbyterian churches were governed by elected elders — ordinary faithful people called to spiritual leadership.

The word "Presbyterian" comes from the Greek word *presbyteros*, meaning "elder." When Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants arrived in North America, they brought this faith tradition with them. The first presbytery in the American colonies was established in Philadelphia in 1706.

A CHURCH SHAPED BY HISTORY

Like the nation itself, Presbyterianism in America has experienced seasons of growth, conflict, and transformation. Presbyterians played significant roles in education, missions, and public life. Many colleges and universities, including Princeton, were founded by Presbyterians seeking to educate both clergy and citizens.

The church also wrestled with difficult issues. In the nineteenth century, Presbyterians divided over questions involving slavery and regional loyalties during the Civil War era. Northern and Southern branches developed separately, reflecting the deep divisions of the country itself. Yet throughout these years, Presbyterians remained committed to the conviction that faith is not merely private. Following Christ involves engaging the world with compassion, justice, and hope.

REUNIONS AND NEW BEGINNINGS

One of the great stories of Presbyterian history is the story of reunion. In 1983, two major Presbyterian denominations — the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church in the United States — came together to re-form the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), commonly called PC(USA).

This reunion represented more than an organizational merger. It was a witness to reconciliation and a recognition that Christians are called to seek unity even after periods of disagreement and separation. The newly formed denomination embraced a vision that combined strong theological roots with a commitment to mission, education, justice, and ecumenical partnership. Several convictions continue to shape PC(USA) congregations today:

GOD'S GRACE COMES FIRST.

Presbyterians emphasize that salvation is a gift from God, not something we earn.

SCRIPTURE GUIDES US.

The Bible is the church's primary authority for faith and life, interpreted through prayer, study, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

JESUS CHRIST IS LORD.

At the center of everything is the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

SHARED LEADERSHIP MATTERS.

Elders and ministers work together to lead congregations, reflecting the belief that all believers are called to ministry.

FAITH LEADS TO ACTION.

Following Jesus means caring for neighbors, seeking justice, feeding the hungry, welcoming strangers, and working for peace.

IMPORTANT TRANSITIONS

The church has expanded opportunities for women in leadership, strengthened commitments to racial justice and reconciliation, and engaged in conversations about inclusion, human sexuality, and the role of the church in a rapidly changing society. Not every transition has been easy. Presbyterians often describe themselves as a church “*Semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei*” or “*reformed and always being reformed according to the Word of God.*” This phrase reflects a willingness to continually ask where God is leading the church next. The PC (USA), is not perfect, and no denomination is... but I have found that the PC (USA), with the shared leadership of evaluation, proposition of a way forward through prayerful discernment, and discussion leading to a vote to be a faithful way to proceed.

While we, as members, may not agree on every issue, Presbyterians strive to remain in conversation, trusting that discernment of God’s leading happens best in community.

WHERE WE ARE TODAY

Today's PC(USA) is a diverse denomination serving communities across the United States and around the world. Through congregations, mission partners, disaster assistance ministries, educational institutions, and advocacy efforts, Presbyterians seek to bear witness to God's love in practical ways.

The ongoing challenge is to be a church that discovers fresh ways to worship, serve their communities, build relationships, and share the good news of Jesus Christ.

OUR PLACE IN THE STORY

Our polity is not a ‘top-down’ – it is actually a bottom-up. Just as we draw on elected elders from within the congregation, it is the elected elders serving on session who hold the greatest authority. A group of sessions (aka ‘local churches’) form a Presbytery, and a group of Presbyteries form a Synod – all of the Synods create the General Assembly (GA). The GA meets every other summer (even numbered years)

The action items at General Assembly originate from a session, are voted on by the local Presbytery, and if they are to be raised at General Assembly, a second Presbytery must affirm the action item.

I present this information because the GA has just met, and in the next 12 months, the elected commissioners to our Presbytery will have voice and vote (of their conscience) to support the recommendations or not. If a majority of Presbyteries do not affirm, then the proposal fails. If a majority of Presbyteries affirm the recommendations, the proposals are ratified, and our *Book of Order* is updated. The *Book of Order* is Book 2 of our constitution – Book 1 being the *Book of Confessions*; our theology, as understood from God's Word, comes first.

Together we strive to hear God's Word through the multitude of people whose trust in God guides their call to live out their faith in, with, and for all of God's people.

Being PC(USA) is about more than belonging to a denomination. It is about being part of a living story — a story that began with reformers seeking to follow Christ faithfully, continued through generations of believers who built churches and served their communities, and now continues through us. As Presbyterians, we inherit a rich tradition of thoughtful faith, shared leadership, compassionate service, and trust in God's grace.

By worshiping faithfully, serving generously, growing spiritually, and loving our neighbors, we become the next chapter in the Presbyterian story. Each of us, individually and collectively, must engage God's prompting as we trust ourselves to God and answer:

How will we live out that calling today?

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev Jonathan Murray".

The Reverend Jonathan Murray
Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Littleton



A MINUTE FOR MISSION – LIFE CENTER

The Mission committee would like to thank all of you that brought items of food in for our annual food drive. Our newest committee member, Kevin Hagen, delivered 173 items of food to Life Center. They were very appreciative as are we.

Thank you again.



CELEBRATING NEW LIFE AT FPCL

We are grateful for the safe delivery of our Twin, Great Grandsons.
Declan Daniel and Conrad Douglas to Brooke and Austin Forde on June 12, 2026.

Prayers for this young family.

Dan and Tanya Smith.

A MINUTE FOR STEWARDSHIP – HEART AND HOME UPDATE

**“The one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion...” —
Philippians 1:6**

2026 has been a full and productive year for the Heart and Home Campaign, and we’ve made major progress in improving our home for ministry in Littleton. This month, the Stewardship Team is sharing a clear snapshot of expenditures and funding through May as we move into the final stretch of our campaign.

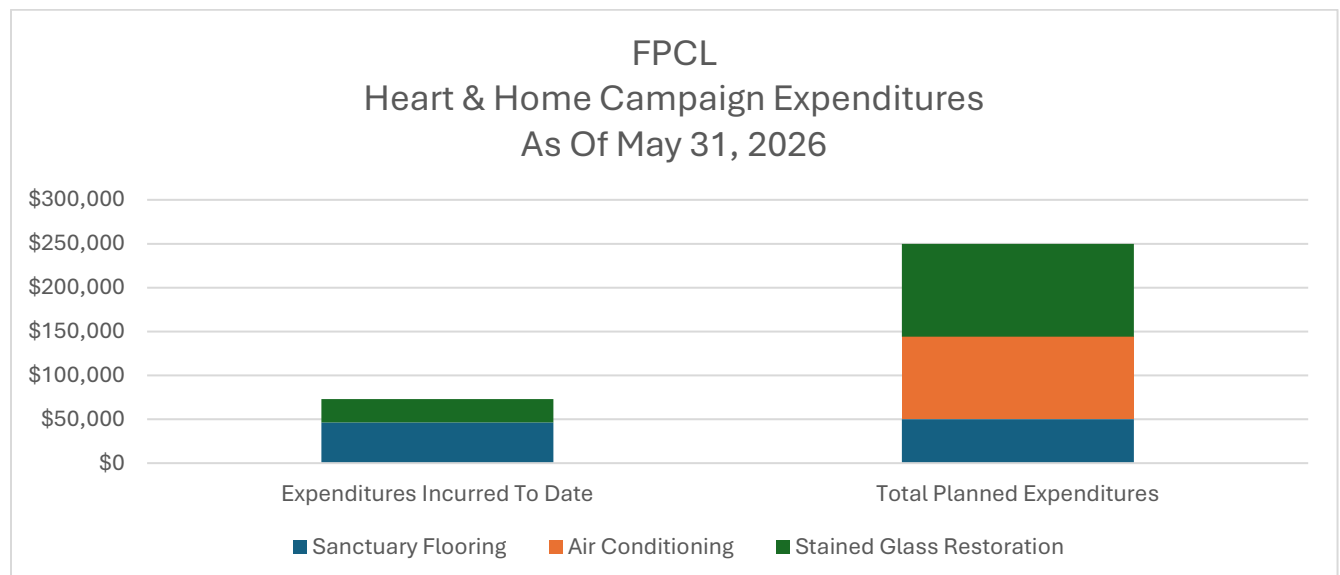
We began with a two-year goal of raising **\$250,000** to complete four major projects:

- Sanctuary carpet and flooring
- Stained glass window repair and restoration
- Air conditioning to replace the swamp cooler
- Sound system / IT improvements

Church leadership agreed to prioritize the most actionable items, use a cash-based “pay-as-you-go” approach, borrow internally only when necessary, and continue fully supporting the operating budget.

Project Expenditures

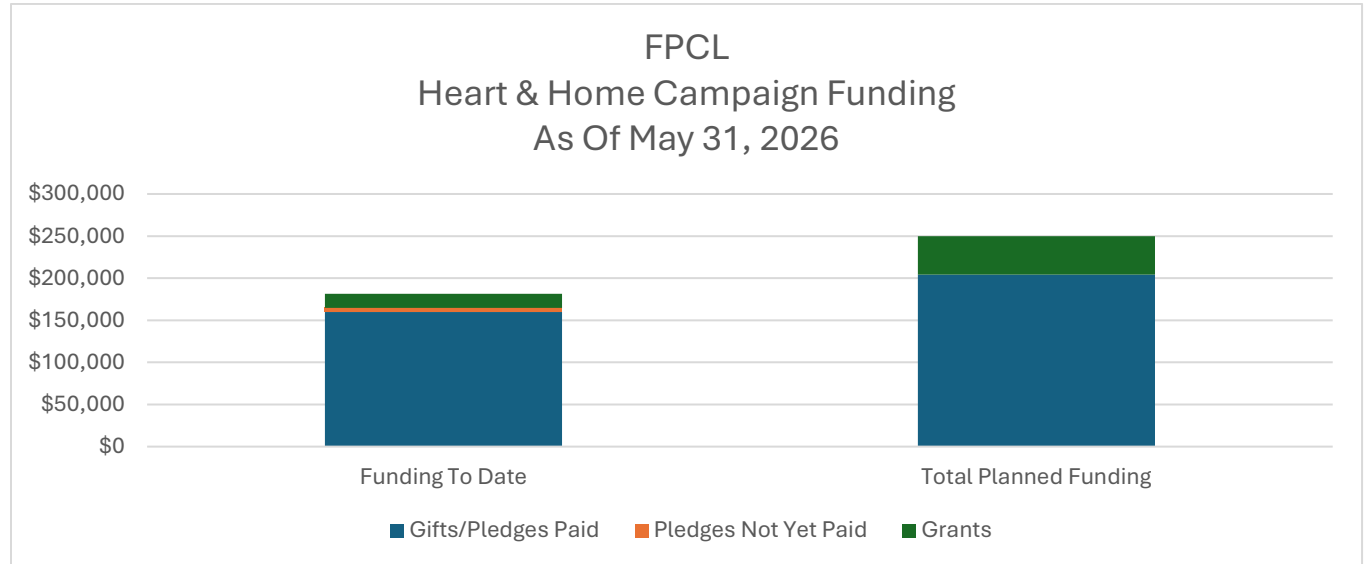
- **Sound system / IT:** Removed from the campaign after Session adopted the Subsplash system into the operating budget in early 2025. *Money budgeted for this was moved to the stained glass window project to attain higher cash matches for grant applications.*
- **Flooring:** Completed in the sanctuary, entry, balcony, and Chandler Hall — **\$46,400.**
- **Stained glass restoration:** Payments to Watkins and DeepRoots to date — **\$26,470.**
- **Air conditioning:** Installation is nearly complete. Front Range Mechanical has performed most of the work without billing yet; we anticipate a final cost of **~\$94,000.**
- **Future stained glass phases:** Pending grant approvals, remaining work is estimated at **~\$100,000.**



Campaign Funding

We have been blessed with remarkable generosity:

- **Total contributions received: \$181,569**
- **Total gifts, grants, and pledges paid: \$176,628**
- **Pledges not yet received: \$4,941**
- **Grant funds awarded but not yet received: \$29,137**



What Remains

To reach our goal and complete the work ahead, we still need to secure the following **by February 2027**:

1. **~\$14,120** to pay Front Range Mechanical for the air-conditioning installation.
Although FPCL has the funds overall, many pledges are designated specifically for stained glass, creating a temporary deficit in the renovation account.
2. **~\$25,000** in anticipated matching funds for the final phases of stained glass restoration, pending state grant approvals.

There are many moving parts, and we're grateful for your patience and engagement. If you'd like to talk through any details, please reach out to **Dave LeMay, Don Meersman, Kathy McDaniel, or Jeff Colwell**.

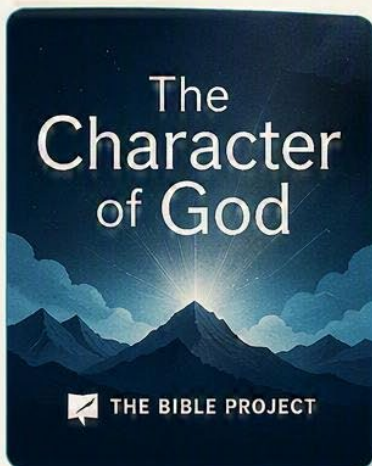
Thank you for your generosity and commitment. We look forward to worshipping with you in our beautifully renewed sanctuary all year long.

Your Stewardship Team –

Dave LeMay (chair)
Sue Chandler
Dee Getzinger
Trey McDowell
Don Meersman
Nat Opperman
Don Wendell



July RIGHTNOW MEDIA *picks*



GENERAL STUDY

The Character of God

The Bible Project

<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/434053>

If you were to name the attributes of God, what would you name?



Love?



Gracious?



Merciful?

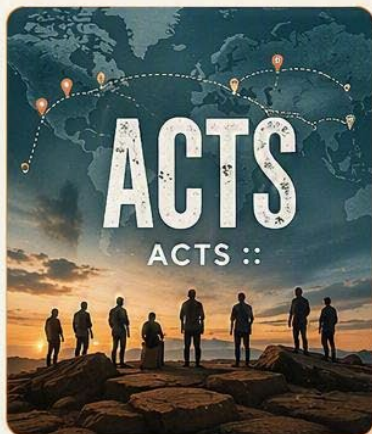


Vengeful?



Demanding?

Learn about the foundational description of God's attributes found in the book of Exodus.



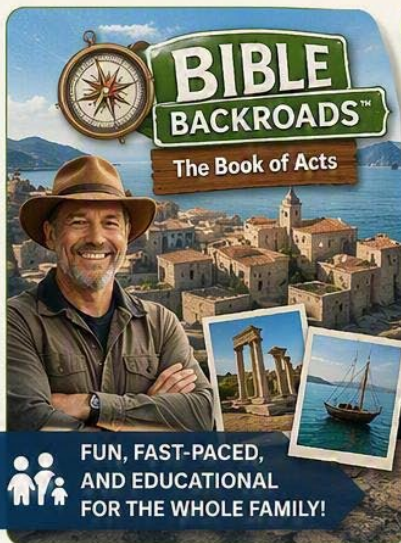
COINCIDES WITH SUMMER SERMON SERIES

Acts: Acts :: RightNow Media

Francis Chan +5

<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/886827>

In this compelling six-part series from the book of Acts, church leaders from nations around the world equip us to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Join Francis Chan, Anne Zaki, Chadwick Mohan, Anand Mahadevan, Jorge Salazar, and Kwasi Amofo, and be inspired to lead as servants, overcome opposition in community, face persecution with boldness, and reframe your workplace as your mission field.



KIDS:

BIBLE BACKROADS™ - The Book of Acts

<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/790668>

Dave Stotts, host of Drive Thru History®, explores the scripture, history, geography, archaeology, and impact of the Book of Acts in the New Testament. The home base for the series is Dave's Garage™, a state-of-the-art, extended reality lair where almost anything is possible. In addition to teaching with a collection of monitors, maps, animations and artifacts, Dave treks outside his garage for special adventures in Israel and the entire Mediterranean region. Designed for all ages, BIBLE BACKROADS™ is fun, fast-paced, and educational, encouraging families to dig deeper into the Biblical accounts together.



FUN, FAST-PACED,
AND EDUCATIONAL
FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!



Thankful for —

-The great picnic the Deacon's and the scouts had for us! The food was great and so fun to just visit with others! But the best part to me was seeing some of the VBS kids climbing trees and trying to fish in the creek with a stick! They were laughing and just having fun!

-All the great work that Gilbert Kubwimana is doing at LOVE WITH ACTIONS in Rwanda, which our Mission supports. He was recently able to buy a bus to help disabled children get where they need to be for help!

-Thankful that Henry Singleton was able to return to church after his major brain surgery!

-The farewell gathering for Blakeley the Friday after VBS was over. The helpers loved sharing pizza with him and then, he was surprised with a cake and gathering up by the sanctuary! Sue Chandler worked a miracle to get this all to happen! And how lovely of Roberta Wheeler, a former member, to come from Ft. Collins and help with the surprise! And thanks to Karen Meersman for having us all sing, "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

-For the young helpers at VBS who came every day. The kids loved them! Teagen Wille, Ben and Betsy Renz, a young woman named Laura and others I did not know the names of were fantastic! They were all wonderful and helped the VBS kids make many memories!

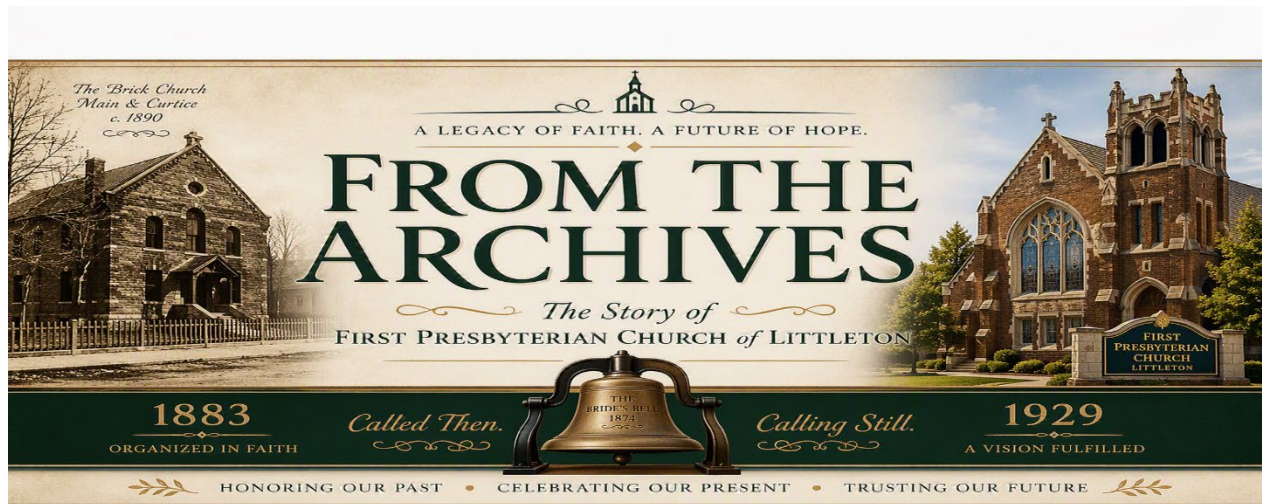
-For one of our guests at the May Community Dinner who was there at my table in February 2025 when I got a call that night that my daughter had been in a horrible ski accident. He asked Lynda my daughter's name so he could pray for her! I knew he still was, but last month he came up to me and asked how she was "by her name," and said, "I will still pray for Alisha as I am sure it was traumatic." This is what CD is about and who we are as a church!

-John Wesley said, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can to all the people you can, as long as ever you can!"

-Kindness is revealed in the little things. How we speak to people who can do nothing for us. How we respond when no one is watching. How we care for those who are vulnerable. Compassion has a way of revealing what is happening inside our hearts. A gentle spirit, a caring word, and a willingness to show kindness to all of God's people may seem small, but these things leave a lasting impact. The world needs more of kindness. So may we remember to never measure our lives by our possessions, because the most important things are the hearts we touched, the smiles we created and the love we shared. This is how I see us at First Pres. May we all help people feel this having been at our little church on the corner!

Blessings,

Dee



From a Bold Vision to a Brick Church:

The Early Years of First Presbyterian Church of Littleton

In the spring of 1883, Littleton was still a young frontier town. Dirt roads connected scattered homes and businesses, horse-drawn wagons rattled through the streets, and the South Platte Valley was only beginning to emerge as a settled community. Yet among the merchants, farmers, craftsmen, and families who were putting down roots, there was a shared desire for something more than prosperity. They wanted spiritual community—a place where faith could be nurtured and neighbors could gather in worship.

It was in that setting that the First Presbyterian Church of Littleton was organized in 1883. The congregation began with a small but determined group of believers who envisioned a lasting Presbyterian presence in the growing town. Their faith was strong, but their resources were limited.

Rather than construct a new building immediately, they purchased an existing structure already familiar to local residents: the Brick Church at the corner of Main and Curtice Streets in downtown Littleton. The building had originally been erected by a Reformed Episcopal congregation and stood as one of the community's best-known landmarks.

The Brick Church quickly became much more than a place for Sunday worship. During a period when schools, churches, and civic life were closely intertwined, it served as a gathering place for celebrations, meetings, special events, and community life.



Generations of Littleton residents passed through its doors for baptisms, weddings, funerals, holiday services, and countless Sunday mornings.

One of the church's most treasured possessions was a bell that predated the congregation itself. Given to the earlier Reformed Episcopal church in 1874, the bell acquired a special nickname after it rang in honor of Reverend James McFadden and his bride. From that happy occasion forward, it became known as the "Bride's Bell." Long before telephones, electronic calendars, or text messages, its voice carried across the countryside, calling worshipers to gather and announcing moments of celebration and remembrance.

As Littleton entered the twentieth century, both the town and the church flourished. New businesses opened, families settled in the area, and improvements in transportation brought increased activity to downtown streets. Membership at First Presbyterian grew alongside the community. Sunday School classes expanded, church organizations multiplied, and the congregation became deeply involved in the civic life of Littleton.

Growth, however, brought challenges.

The location that had once seemed ideal was gradually becoming less practical. The church stood in the busiest section of town, surrounded by increasing commercial activity and traffic. Church records noted that worship services and Sunday School classes were frequently interrupted by the noise of wagons, automobiles, and the growing bustle of downtown life. What had once been the heart of Littleton was becoming a crowded place for contemplation and worship.

Years of discussion followed. Church leaders debated whether the congregation should remain downtown or seek a new home better suited for future growth. Some believed the historic Brick Church should be preserved indefinitely. Others recognized that the congregation needed additional space and a more peaceful setting. The question was not simply where to worship next Sunday—it was what kind of church First Presbyterian hoped to become in the decades ahead.



Read next month how one woman's extraordinary gift gave new life to a congregation with growing pains...

WORSHIP FOCUS:

We continue our sermon series

"Spirit on the Move"

(a walk through the Acts of the Apostles)



JULY 5:

When Margins Reshape the Church Acts 6:1-7



JULY 12:

Beyond Familiar Roads Acts 8:26-40



JULY 19:

Blinded into New Sight Acts 9:1-19

Guest Preacher: Rev. Katie Palmer



JULY 26:

God Shows No Partiality Acts 10:1-35

Guest Preacher: CRE Beth Hewlett



AUGUST 2:

When the Church Disagrees Acts 15:1-21



AUGUST 9:

An Unfinished Story Acts 28:16-31



Upcoming SPECIAL MUSIC



JULY 5

Men's Ensemble & Matthew Dailey

JULY 12

Justin Peterson, trumpet

JULY 19

Traci Kern Piper, soprano



Annual Backpack Mission

Help Us Make a Difference!

It's time for our **Annual Backpack Project!**

We are blessed to already have all the backpacks we need —
— but **we DO need your help** to fill them with meaningful support.

Our Goal: \$1,750



Deadline: July 15

This will allow us to include a **\$50 gift card** in each backpack, providing
real help and dignity to those receiving them.

Your monetary donations will directly impact individuals and families in need.
Every gift brings us closer to our goal!

Thank you in advance for your generosity and support of this mission.

QUILT SHOW AND USED BOOK SALE QUICKLY APPROACHING!!!

First Presbyterian Church of Littleton



Presents the 23rd Annual

Western Welcome Week

**Quilt Show &
Used Book Sale**

**Come enjoy the beautiful quilts displayed in our Historic
Sanctuary (built in 1929 by Jules Jacques Benois Benedict)
and Used Book Sale!**

Quilt Drop-off Day: Thursday, August 13th 12-6pm

Quilt Show & Used Book Sale: Friday, August 14th 12-6pm

Quilt Show & Used Book Sale: Saturday, August 15th 8:30am-3pm

****Quilts must be picked up on Saturday, August 15th @ 3pm**

A beautiful hand quilted mission quilt has been generously
donated to the Peacemakers to be included in a chance drawing
on Saturday August 15, at 3:00pm. All proceeds from the Quilt
Show will benefit "Faithfully K-9" - a service to our veterans,
who provide individual dog training.

Chance Tickets: **\$1** each or **6** for **\$5**

Proceeds from the Used Book Sale will benefit Whiz Kids Tutoring.

We will begin collecting used books, puzzles, games, DVDs,
and CDs July 1st in the Welcome Center.

Contact Kathy Frear at 303-241-3405 or kathyfrear@gmail.com
to arrange a drop-off or pick up.

**** LAST DAY TO DONATE BOOKS: SUNDAY, AUGUST 9th ****

1609 W. Littleton Blvd. Littleton, CO 80120

www.littletonpresbyterian.org www.westernwelcomeweek.org

VBS PICTURES!!



FINANCE REPORT FROM JOAN

May was a good month financially for First Pres. We had a surplus for the month that wiped out the year-to-date loss. Pledged support was higher than budgeted for the month and expenses were contained. Giving statements were sent out recently. Please take a moment to review those to be sure you are on track for completing your pledge for 2026. Hoping this note finds you enjoying your summer. Thank you for your continued support!

Joan M Lund

	May 2026		Year to Date 2026	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Income	\$41,454.08	\$29,375.00	\$ 190,014.21	\$ 191,149.00
Expenses	\$38,513.13	\$35,909.35	\$ 189,331.27	\$ 192,813.77
Operating Surplus/Deficit	\$2,940.95	(\$6,534.35)	\$ 682.94	\$ (1,664.77)



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF LITTLETON
1609 W. Littleton Blvd., Littleton, CO. 80120
303-798-1389 fpcl@fpcl.org

Office Hours 9am-2pm Monday-Thursday

Office Phone Number 303-798-1389

Office Email fpcl@fpcl.org

Pastoral Care Emergency Line 720-662-7277

Staff Members

Pastor Jonathan Murray, Minister of Word and Sacrament

Mary Dailey, Director of Worship Arts

Karen A. Meersman, Director of Handbells & Children/Youth Music

Joan Lund, Financial Secretary

Matthew Dailey, Interim Office Administrator

Jessica Lund, Bookkeeper

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

- 10:00 am Sunday Worship

Vision Statement

We Believe the Good News that all of Littleton is called
Beloved by Jesus Christ
And together we Belong to God's Kingdom

Mission Statement

We Welcome All to Love, Share, Serve and
Grow in Christ

