

The First Word

The Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Littleton

-A Message from Pastor Murray	2-4
-RightNow Media	5
-Instagram	6
-Thankful	7
-Easter Pancakes Pastor Response Phone Line	8
-Leadership -Open Door	9
-Worship Schedule	10
-Shabby Sheep	11
-Thank you from A. Holt	12
--King Soopers	14
-Pray for....	15
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March 2026



Join us Sunday at 10am

“First Word” article & Worship Focus by Pastor Jonathan

This year our congregation is walking through Lent guided by Jill J. Duffield’s book “Lent in Plain Sight.” Duffield invites us to pay attention to the ordinary objects of daily life — dust, bread, coins, shoes, crosses — and to see in them the quiet, persistent work of God. Lent, she reminds us, is not only about dramatic sacrifice or grand gestures of faith. It is about noticing how Christ meets us in our ordinary everyday living.



At the same time, our ruling council has prayerfully, with discernment, composed a new mission statement:

“We welcome all to love, share, serve and grow in Christ.”

[Our Former Mission Statement:

“We Believe the Good News that all of Littleton is called Beloved by Jesus Christ and together we Belong to God’s Kingdom.”

This statement is beautiful, but it does not direct us to act, which makes it a vision statement. This is our overarching belief about who God calls us to welcome and be.]

The new statement composed by our session is beautifully simple. It is also profoundly demanding.

Because this mission, God’s mission entrusted to Jesus and Jesus’ mission entrusted to us, like Lent itself, is not primarily about what happens inside the sanctuary for one hour on Sunday. It is about how we live when we step back into the dust of parking lots, grocery aisles, classrooms, hospital rooms, and kitchen tables.

One afternoon, a member of a congregation was standing in line at a busy grocery store. The cashier was clearly overwhelmed. The line was long. A customer ahead of her was frustrated and sharp with his words. You could feel the tension in the air.

When it was her turn, instead of matching the impatience that had filled the space, she simply said, *“It looks like it’s been a long day. Thank you for being here.”* The cashier paused, exhaled, and her shoulders dropped. *“You have no idea,”* she said.

It wasn’t dramatic.

No sermon was preached. No hymn was sung. No offering plate was passed.

The process of writing a new mission statement began with each session member composing a mission statement; at the next meeting, each person was paired with another session member, and then the pairs were coupled with another pair. Finally the 8 session members discussed within a session meeting, reaching this conclusion

But in that small moment, the image of God in one chose to welcome and honor the image of God in another.

To love rather than ignore. To share kindness.

To give patience. To serve Christ by seeing Christ in another.

That is Lent in plain sight. That is mission lived in the ordinary.

Jesus rarely called his followers into spectacular religious performances. He met them while they were fishing, collecting taxes, walking dusty roads, preparing meals. He spoke of seeds and bread and coins and cups of water. He placed holiness right in the middle of daily life.

The call of Jesus followers has always been this: Not to escape the ordinary — but to live differently within it.

Our new mission statement is not aspirational poetry. It is a daily practice.

*We **welcome all** — not only those who think like us or look like us, but all who are made in the image of God and all whom Christ welcomes.

*We **love in Christ** — in ways that are patient, embodied, and courageous.

*We **share in Christ** — our stories, our tables, our burdens, our hope.

*We **serve in Christ** — not for recognition, but because Christ first served us and we be long to him.

*We **grow in Christ** — allowing everyday encounters to shape us, stretch us, and sanctify us.

Lent directs our eyes to notice — and invites our hearts to deepen.

*When we wipe dust from a shelf, we can remember that we are formed from dust and sustained by grace.

*When we break bread, we remember the One who feeds us and calls us to feed others.

*When we lace up our shoes, we remember we are sent people.

The ruling council's work on this mission statement was not merely administrative. It was spiritual. It was (*and is*) a way of asking:

Who are we called to be — right here, right now?

And the answer is not complicated. It is simple, even in how it is not easy.

We are called to live our faith in plain sight – in the places we go and with the people we encounter, if we are brave enough.

Not louder, necessarily. Not flashier.

But deeper. Truer. More attentive.

It can be as direct as acknowledging the struggle another person is currently facing. We are not being asked to fix it; we are called to be present. By engaging the reality and seeing the person, we lighten the burden; we see the image of God before us in everyday life.

This Lent, as we journey together, may we discover that the holy is already woven into our routines. May we see Christ in the cashier, the neighbor, the colleague, the stranger. May our mission not stay printed on paper, but be written in the small, steady acts of our everyday lives.

Because in the dust of daily living, Christ is already present.
And we are sent to follow.

From our mouths to God's ear, and from God's mouth to our lives.
Thanks be to God!

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

The Reverend Jonathan Murray
Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Littleton





rightnow MEDIA



March's RightNow Media selections

For this season of Lent, we've recommended several video series that will deepen your devotional life as we journey towards Easter, all from the huge selection of inspiring Christian content located at RightNow Media! Everything is accessible for you to conveniently enjoy from your computer or mobile device--absolutely free! Your account is already paid for through FPCL.

If you have any trouble creating your account, or accessing content, please contact Pastor Blakeley for assistance!

For general audience: "**Holy Habits**":

Pastor Derwin Gray guides you in this four-part series which will uncover four foundational behaviors for Christians. Seek a new way of living this Lenten season—one formed by the rhythms of holiness.

For youth and young adults: "**Jesus in our Generation**": Celebrated pastor and author Ben Stuart helps young people to explore some of the major areas in our lives that are impacted by modern culture. This study will help those in the next generation to better understand how to respond to cultural shifts in a way remains faithful to the unchanging truths of God's Word.

For general audience: "**The Narrow Path**". Author and pastor Rich Villodas leads a five-session series, ideal for Lent, which explores "how the subversive way of Jesus satisfies our souls." While the world offers a broad way leading to destruction, as Christ followers we can choose to take the Narrow Path of Jesus, leading to fullness, peace, and joy.



Instagram

Instagram

Adobe Stock | #350735755

SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

FPCL now has an Instagram account! Be sure to follow along for monthly and weekly information and updates on church happenings as well as photos and videos of our community events. Please send any submissions for the Instagram account to Ashley Renz. In order to follow the Instagram account, you must download the FREE Instagram app and register for your own account, then search @fpclittleton and click FOLLOW!

1. Stacey and Dave LeM preparing a delicious Italian dinner for over 100 people at the January Community Dinner. They do this every year, and it is such a blessing to our community and the CD committee!
2. Charlie G being a liturgist and helping with Whiz Kids. We need more like him, who takes time from his School of Mines studies, to help kids and serve First Pres!
3. For our great annual report, our budget that is still "in the black," and sharing of our progress with windows, A/C/heating and more. The gifts we have received will help us sustain all the projects in progress!
4. The men's group who are always making sure the socks and bars bucket is full!
5. The Welcome Center community assistance volunteers, who donate their time on Tuesday's. Sue C, Ruth M, Deb G, Mary D, Kevin H, and Cheryl B make that happen every week! Let any one of them know if you might be interested in helping with that!
6. For the few who continue to usher! We need more to do that!
7. For Mary Dailey and her friend, Tim M singing THE PRAYER. It filled the souls who heard them sing and brought tears to many eyes! To hear Tim sing in Italian was spectacular!
8. Our drive thru for Ash Wednesday and the beautiful service Pastor Blakeley gave to begin our Lent season.

I recently read a beautiful message by an anonymous writer, who shared so many thoughts about Lent! "It's is a quiet season of reflection, humility and renewal. It's a season for anyone who has ever needed a fresh start! It's a season for us to slow down - to look inward and begin again." During this time, we might try to be kinder and a little softer to others and remember that each day is a sacred gift. May we all have a gentle reset and a quiet new beginning! I had one at First Pres on Easter 2021, due to a simple statement by Pastor Cody Sandahl. He said, "Thank God for all the times He has been there for you in your life." I had heard that Easter was a "time for new beginnings," but that Sunday I began to live it! That Sunday turned my life around; and I am thankful every day for that simple message. For that amazing "new beginning" God blessed me with, and I knew that day, that God planned for me to come to First Pres. It was His plan for me! And our little church save me!

Pastor Rick Warren said recently that "God created the universe because He wanted a family - and that family is the church. His church is the only reason the universe exists....and the church has the highest motivation - God's love! 1 John 4:19 says, 'We love because He first loved us.' Isn't it incredible to know that the church, the whole reason God created the universe, is motivated by God's love? That's just another reason why there is no greater privilege than to be part of God's family." And that is why "Participation in a church is not a choice! It's a spiritual need."

Blessings to all, and may we all be worthy of His sacrifice for us and be an example of His love as we go through this special Lenten season and the days ahead!

Dee





Easter Pancake Breakfast

On Easter **Sunday, April 5th**, our friends in the Cub Scouts will again be preparing and serving a pancake breakfast in Ficklin Hall from **9-10am**. So whether you're coming to the 8am or 10am Easter service, plan to stop by and enjoy the food and fellowship

Pastor Response Phone Line

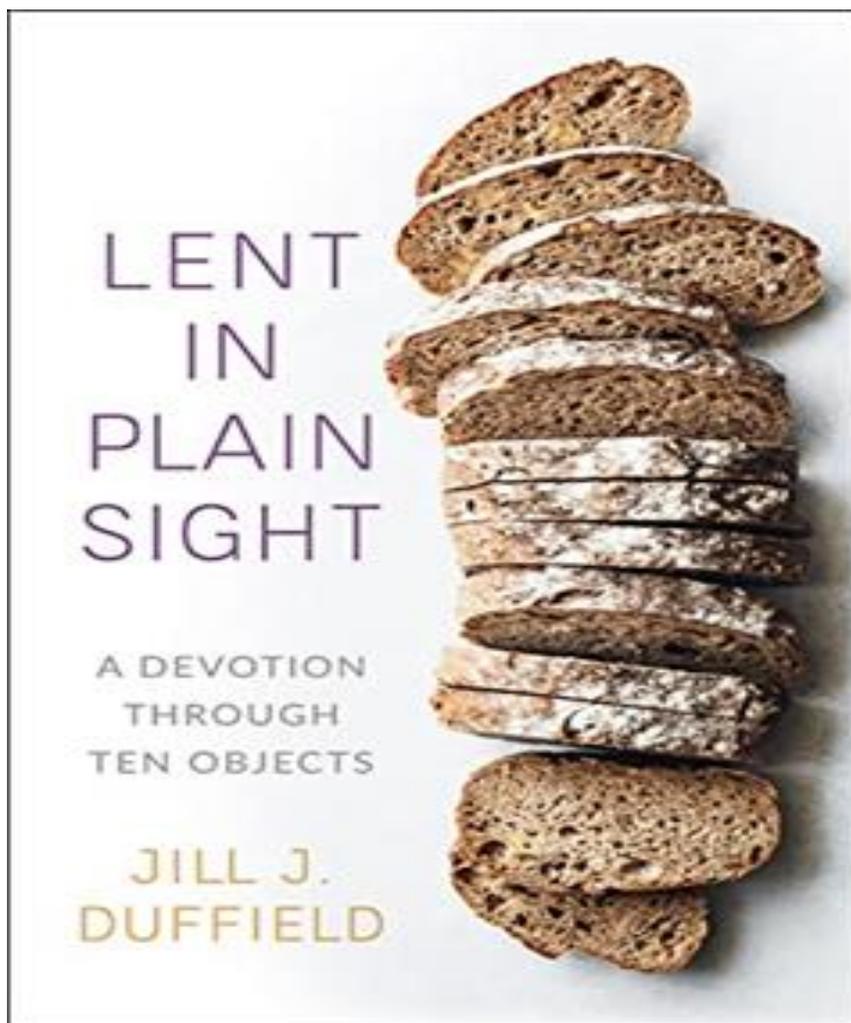
FPCL has a phone number specifically for emergency Pastoral needs. Keep this phone number handy to reach the Pastor on-call for emergency pastoral care. You can call [720-662-7277](tel:720-662-7277) directly to reach the Pastor on-call, or you can call the Main Church Office phone number [303-798-1389](tel:303-798-1389) and select #6 on the menu tree to reach the Pastor on-call for any emergency needs. You may need to leave a message, and this message will be sent to the pastor on-call, prompting them to get back with you.



Open Door Circle

will be meeting every
3rd Thursday,
at 10:30.

All women are welcome.
Please call Hedy L
with
any questions.



WORSHIP FOCUS through Resurrection Sunday

“Lent in Plain Sight” (a book authored by Jill Duffield)

- March 1: *Cross*
- March 8: *Lenten Cantata: “Amazing Love: Recalling Christ’s Sacrifice”*
- March 15: *Coins*
- March 22: *Shoes*
- March 29: Palm Sunday (**Bells!**) *Coats*
- Maundy Thursday, 6p.m. (4/2): *Towels*
- Good Friday, Noon (4/3): *Thorns*
- April 5: Resurrection/Easter Sunday: *Stones*
(8a.m. and 10a.m., with a Pancake breakfast at 9a.m. provided by our Cub Scouts)



Tuesday Evening Shabby Sheep

Calling All Women interested in joining the Tuesday Evening Women's Shabby Sheep Study/ Fellowship Group!

We are inviting you to join us! All Women are welcome!

We will be starting up our Spring study on Tuesday night March 3rd, 7:00 to 8:15 pm at church. This will be a 6 to 8 week study.

Please join us if interested!

If you have questions or would like to join us, please reach out to Janice F or Sue C.

We look forward to learning and growing together during this Spring study session !

Sue C and Janice F
Co- Facilitators

Wednesday Morning Shabby Sheep

Feb. 4 at 10 am started a new book

We will be doing a video study from
Right Now Media called
Every Thought Captive by Kyle Idleman.

Here is an overview of the 5 week study.

... In *Every Thought Captive*, you will explore a topic crucial for your spiritual growth: the battle for your mind. In Romans 12:2, we read these words: "Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." ... our lives are constantly being shaped and molded by the thoughts we think. Join pastor and bestselling author Kyle Idleman for a five-session journey where you will learn to actively and intentionally challenge your thoughts. This isn't a study on the power of positive thinking—or how you have the power to change your life—but about learning how God made your brain. He will transform your life as you learn to take every thought captive and submit it to the truth of his Word.



Dear Church Family,
We are doing great!

The move to Nebraska has honestly been one of the best decisions we've made for our family. It was bold. It was uncomfortable. It was a little wild. And it has paid off in ways we couldn't fully see when we packed the truck.

A huge thank you to all of you who helped us with gifts and contributions to make the landing a little softer and to give the girls a beautiful Christmas. I had every intention of writing each of you a thank you note, but I just haven't had a quiet moment to sit down and do it. Please know how grateful we are.

I am homeschooling the girls now, which feels both brave and completely right. It's been energizing, stretching, and surprisingly fun. We're building rhythms that fit our family instead of squeezing into someone else's systems. There's a lot of learning happening over here for all of us.

Giacomo got a job fairly quickly and is working in the kitchen at an elite Catholic school — and he absolutely loves it. He is completely in his element. Watching him come home fulfilled instead of drained has been huge.

The kids are thriving. There's way more space here. More calm. More margin. It's not perfect, nothing is, but it feels aligned.

And that's the word I keep coming back to: aligned.

We miss all of you. Truly. You were and are real community to us. The kind that forms you. The kind you carry with you. That doesn't disappear just because of state lines. Thank you for loving us so well when we were there. And thank you for caring enough to ask how we're doing now.

We are grateful. We are growing. And we are very, very thankful we said yes to this move.

With love,
Alexandra & Family

Minute for Mission

The mission committee will be holding its annual food drive for the Life Center during March. The Director said they could use any food, but they are always in need of foods with protein such as Spam, beans, tuna, salmon, peanut butter or any nut butter. We will be collecting food through **March 29**. There will be a container at the Windemere entrance and at the Littleton Boulevard entrance to place your donations.

Thank you in advance.



Dear First Presbyterian Church of Littleton (YY084),

The Kroger Co. Family of Stores is committed to bringing hope and help to the local neighborhoods we call home. Our stores are on a mission to not just part of, but to help create a stronger community. We recognize that every community has unique causes that need support. Thank you for being such an important organization in our community.

We encourage you to ask your supporters to link their loyalty card to your organization. Community Rewards is easy to use, The more your supporters shop with us, the more money your organization will earn!

We are committed to carefully protecting our customer's personal information. In order to meet their expectation of privacy, we have adopted a simple policy to never share a customer's personal information. Our privacy policy applies to Community Rewards participation as well. If you have any questions, please contact us via email or visit our website.

King Soopers email: KingSoopersCommunityRewards@kingsoopers.com or <http://www.kingsoopers.com>

For City Market email: CityMarketCommunityRewards@citymarket.com or <http://www.citymarket.com>

Thank you for being such an important organization in our community,

Community Rewards Staff





First Presbyterian Church of Littleton

1609 W Littleton Blvd, Littleton, CO 80120



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

Office Hours 9am-2pm Tuesday-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
Pastor Blakeley Winslow, Pastor of Christian Discipleship
Lydia Cooper, Office Manager
Mary Dailey, Director of Worship Arts
Karen A. Meersman, Director of Handbells & Children/Youth Music
Joan Lund, Financial Secretary
Tracy Eidson, Child Care

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

- 10:00 am Sunday Worship
- 11:30-12:30 1st and 3rd Sunday of the Month Bible Study



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