

The First Word

The Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Littleton

September 2025

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Join us Sunday at 10am



Being the Church Beyond the Walls

One of the clearest reminders from God's Word that the church is not confined to a building is in the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus proclaims:

¹⁴ *"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵ People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."* (Matthew 5:14-16 NRSVUE)

Here, Jesus describes the church not as an institution to gather behind walls, but as a living presence in the world. The Greek word translated "good works" is *kalá érga* – these "good works" is more than just doing "nice things."

kalós means "beautiful, noble, of high quality,"

érga refers to our deeds or works.

So Jesus is not talking about occasional acts of kindness but a way of life that is visibly beautiful, a witness to the goodness of God.

The point is clear: what we do in the community is how others experience God's love. If we hide that light within the walls of the church, it loses its purpose.

I'm reminded of a story from a small congregation in a farming town. Each year during harvest season, the church set out tables on the sidewalk with free water and sandwiches for workers coming in from the fields. At first, it seemed like a small act of hospitality, but over time, those workers began to see the church as a place of safety and care. One farmer said, *"I've never gone inside, but I know this church is for me because they meet me where I am."*

That is *kalá érga* in action — deeds that are not just good, but beautiful, because they reflect God's presence in life of everyday people, meeting them where they are.

There was a meme I saw on social media the other day... I found it interesting that I read it in five different places. It said:

"You do not change the world by going to church;

We will only change the world by being the church."

Our calling is to continue living in ways, both inside and outside the sanctuary, that demonstrate God's goodness: *kalá érga*.

-Sunday worship renews us, grounding us in the grace of God.

-Monday through Saturday gives us the opportunity to "be the church" in neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, stores and parks.

Every time we show compassion, offer encouragement, extend welcome, we are embodying *kalá érga* – shining the light Christ has placed in us.

Here's the 'so what?': we cannot wait for people to come through our doors before we share and show God's goodness. We need to go to them.

What is one way you will let your light shine this week?

If you need some ideas, perhaps you will:

- Take a meal to a neighbor you know is struggling.
 - Invite a coworker or neighbor out for coffee, and listen and support them.
 - Volunteer at a local shelter or school.
- Speak words of encouragement in a place where criticism usually dominates.

As a church family, we will also be exploring new ways to serve together outside our walls — whether that's partnering with local organizations, offering space for community needs, or simply showing up in places where people least expect to see "church."

What happens in worship, fellowship, bible study, mission, etc, within the building that is FPCL, cannot stay here. Because Jesus doesn't call us to be hidden lamps. Jesus calls us to be a light to the world, a city on a hill. May our *kalá érga* — our beautiful deeds — shine so brightly that others cannot help but see God's love through us.

May we never hide that light, but set it on a stand, high, so the whole community can see the beauty of God at work.

May the grace and peace of God through Jesus,
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
be with you today and always,



The Reverend Jonathan Murray
Pastor, First Presbyterian, Littleton





The Chancel Choir will begin a new year on Sunday, September 7th. All members are welcome and encouraged to share their voices for worship services at FPCL. The choir rehearses on Sunday mornings at 8:30 am on the fourth floor of the church and sings at the 10 am service. Choir sings 2-3 weekends per month with special choral performance services during Advent and Lent. Please join us on Sunday, September 7th for our first rehearsal and contact me on Sundays at church if you have any questions.

Mary Dailey, Director of Worship Arts

I would also like to share a special thank you to all the singers and musicians we joined us during the summer to enhance our worship services with their musical talents.

WORSHIP FOCUS

Scripture Shapes Us:

September 7: 1 John 4

Love in Action:

September 14: Jesus commands us to 'Love our Enemies'

September 21: Jesus commands us to 'Love the Stranger' [*Music Dedication Sunday*]

***September 28:** Jesus commands us to 'Love our Neighbor'

**Today we welcome Gilbert Kubwimana, Executive Director of "Love with Actions;" a mission initiative in Rwanda that is transforming the community*

***In an attempt to be where the people are: Saturday, October 4, Pastor Blakeley and Pastor Jonathan will be at a local dog park to offer a "Blessing of the Animals" (all animals are welcome and so are you!). We will also host a drive-thru 'blessing of the animals' in the parking lot of FPCL - more details to follow!*

What Disciples Do:

October 5: "Follow Jesus" [*World Communion Sunday*]



2025 WWW Used Book Sale

Many, many thanks to all who participated in this years' fun and very successful WWW Used Book Sale! A final total raised of \$1,184.16 over the 2 days of the sale will certainly benefit our Whiz Kids site! We couldn't have done it without the tremendous amount of books donated by our congregation and the community over the last few months! From book sorting to book set-up (including card table lending!) and, ultimately, to the book sale itself and clean up following the sale, assistance from Mary L, Ruth M, Mary D, Joy C, Ibbie S, Pastor Blakeley Winslow, Ed and Linda M, Justie E, Don M, Sheri W, Dick and Cathy G, Cheryl B and family, Jess K, Lydia Cooper, Sue and Scott C, Connie S, Boy Scott Troop 444, and Kathy F over the last few months was very much appreciated to keep the process running like a well-oiled machine!

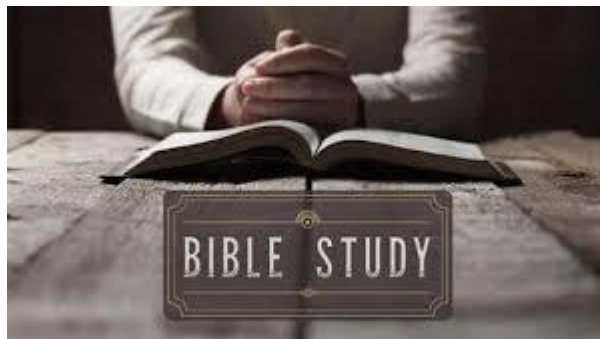
Thanks to all for your time and dedication!!!



Minute For Mission

Through the generosity of our church, we were able to give away 41 school backpacks each with a \$50 gift card in them. We include that card in a letter to that child from our church written in both English and Spanish plus Pastor Jonathan and Lydia made prayer cards to include. THANK YOU. THANK YOU. THANK YOU!!!





Sunday Bible Study

Bible Study is on the 1st and 3rd Sundays, following worship. Bring a 'brown bag' lunch and join us as we discuss God's Word to us. Both children and Adult Sunday Bible Study will meet, starting in Ficklin Hall for lunch.

Men's Bible Study

Join in the fellowship and study,

(2 studies that alternate every other Monday between a morning study and an evening study).

Morning Study 7:00am

Evening Study 6:30 pm

Contact Scott C for morning information,



Many Thanks To....Connie S and Doug L for all the weeding, watering and cleanup around our church. Also to Rick W and Don M for cleaning up the NW corner of our parking lot.

Thankful for another grandparents day on August 4th, who all enjoyed an educational program from a K9 officer and his partner, B, the dog! Officer C also demonstrated all things on his patrol car. This is such a wonderful program that gives grandparents a time to be together with other grandparents and have fun! This program is everything and more, that the late Adonna H, intended it to be!

Thankful to Blakeley for two youth group gatherings. The youth all had lots of fun!

Thankful for Ben and Betsy R, playing for us on Sunday, August 3rd. with Ben on the piano and Betsy playing a violin! Just beautiful to see and hear!

Thankful to Ashley R, singing *HERE I AM LORD* on August 10th! She has such a beautiful voice!

Thankful to the Mission team being able to donate 41 backpacks with a \$50 gift card in each for children in our area. GOD IS GREAT!!!!

Thankful for the Peacemakers beautiful hangings of the four seasons. Each stitch was made with a prayer.

Thankful for the WW Week book sale that made \$1164 for the Whiz Kids. And to see Kathy F healthy and leading the group of volunteers for the book sale with Mary L, was such a huge blessing!

Thankful for all the volunteers who put all the beautiful quilts out and raised \$705 for Habit of Humanity! It took MANY people, starting with lots of energy from Jennie S. And thankful for all the greeters, especially Joy C, who was there most of the time.

Thankful for the great Stewardship team and several spouses, Dave and Stacey L, Sue and Scott C, Nat O — and a new church visitor, Kevin H, having a successful drive-thru on Saturday, the 23rd, in our church parking lot, to collect things for the ARC drive!

One thing was very obvious during the planning for the successful Western Welcome Week activities. So many worked so hard, showing that true fulfillment comes from serving others. When we dedicate our lives, living a life in service to our church and others, we are able to find purpose, peace and a deeper connection to our community. First Pres showed that big time during our WWW celebration. Watching all the volunteers with welcoming smiles on their faces reminded me of a favorite scripture of mine in James 2:17 - "Faith without works is dead." We showed we are really living our faith for God. I pray we all focus on making a positive impact, with one act of service at a time... with one person at a time!

Blessings,

Dee





The joyful tradition continues! A huge THANK YOU to the dozens of church and community members who made it possible again this year!!

Our annual Quilt Show began in 2003 as a 120th birthday celebration for our beloved First Presbyterian Church of Littleton in conjunction with Littleton's Western Welcome Week. Then, as now, we welcomed hundreds of visitors into our beautiful sanctuary, filled with a kaleidoscope of colorful quilts. It is a significant outreach event each year as community members join with church members in sharing their quilts for display, helping with the display set up, hovering over the quilts as guardian angels, and making donations to benefit a local charity.

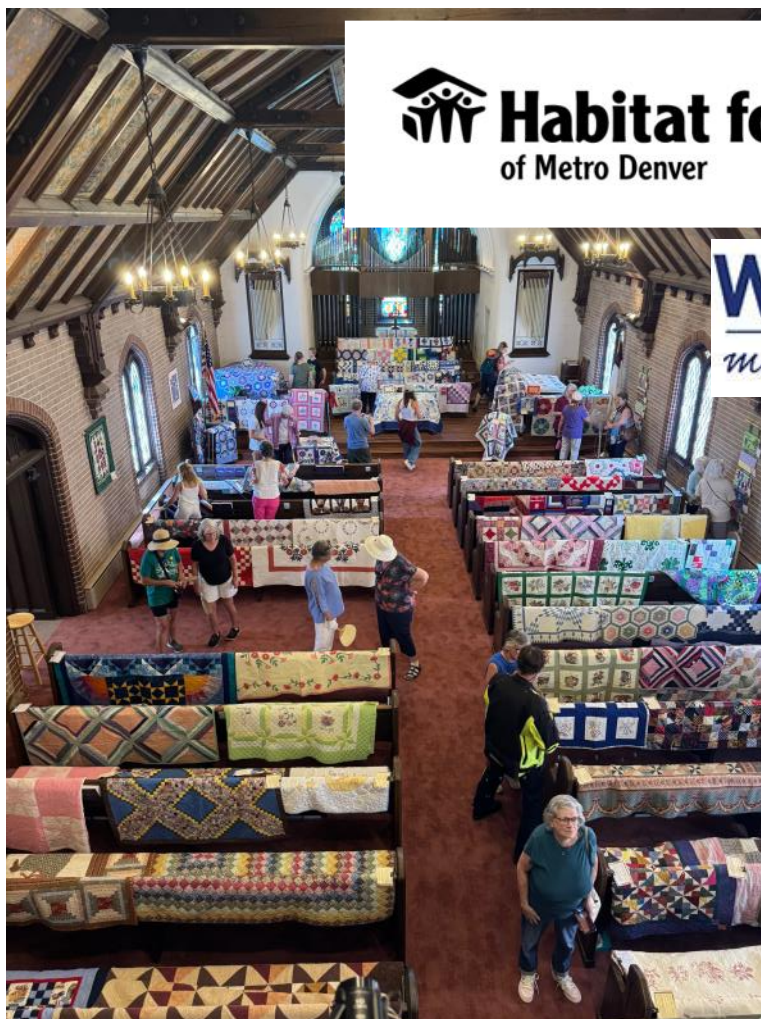
We had 163 quilts on display this year, 69 of them from church members and 52 from the wider community. In addition, our guests enjoyed a special display of 42 quilts made over the last one hundred years by the W family, and accompanied by Abbie W demonstrating hand quilting appliqué technique.

Ticket sales and donations for our beautiful hand quilted, Amish quilt totaled \$705, which will be given to Metro Denver Habitat for Humanity. The winner of this year's quilt, Mary D, has graciously donated it back to us, so that we can use it to make more money for charity next year!

To all those who sold and bought tickets, loaned us their treasured quilts, helped display and protect the quilts, brought visitors to the show, and so generously gave their time, energy and talents in a multitude of other ways to make this show such a success, a very deep and sincere THANK YOU !!!

Gratefully,
Jennie S
2025 Quilt Show Chairman





Whiz Kids
more than tutoring!



Great News!
The Tuesday evening Shabby Sheep
Fall Session is Starting up again on September 23rd,
7 ~ 8:15 pm.

We are kicking off our Fall study on Tuesday evening, September 23rd from 7 to 8 in the evening.

This first gathering will be a social time to catch up, reconnect, and enjoy some snacks together. We will meet up in the Shabby Sheep room on the 4th floor. We invite you attend on the 23rd even if you are not sure you can continue with the Fall study or haven't done a study with us before.

During this kickoff gathering, we will also introduce what our Fall study will be. The first session of our study will actually start on Tuesday October 7th at 7 PM.

We look forward to seeing returning women and welcoming new faces to our Tuesday evening Shabby Sheep group.

Please reach out to Janice F or Sue C if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Minute for Stewardship– Still Standing

This month, our committee member Dee G was inspired by a story she heard on the broadcast [Music & the Spoken Word](#). The message resonated deeply with her and reminded her of the spirit of First Presbyterian Church of Littleton (FPCL).

A House in Rome

A few years ago, a gentleman visited an old Italian home in Rome. It was charming—fresh flowers adorned the window boxes, the shutters had been recently painted, and the front porch light glowed warmly. But upon closer inspection, he noticed imperfections: patches of stucco had fallen away, revealing the stone beneath, and cracks marred the surface.

Curious, he asked the guide why this home was featured so prominently. She replied: “This home is representative of each of us. It is not perfect, but it is still standing.”

Years later, that simple statement still echoes in his heart. He reflects on his own life—his flaws, his struggles—and finds comfort in the idea that, like that old home, he too is still standing. Imperfect? Yes. Still trying? Absolutely. That memory inspires him to keep growing: to repent, to ask forgiveness, to say “I’m sorry.”

Imperfect, Yet Radiant

None of us will be perfect in this life. But we can keep striving. Like that old Italian home, we can:

- Leave our porch light on, offering warmth and welcome to others.
- Fill our window boxes with flowers—acts of kindness that brighten someone’s day.
- Keep our shutters open, letting in the light of our Heavenly Father and allowing our love to shine outward.

Even in our imperfections, we can be a blessing.

The Spirit of FPCL

This is what First Pres is. We may be old and small, but we are MIGHTY in our love for Him and His people. May we continue to be “still standing” and “keeping the light on” for many decades to come—a safe, grace-filled place for all who enter.

See you in church!

Dave L (Committee Chair)

Sue C

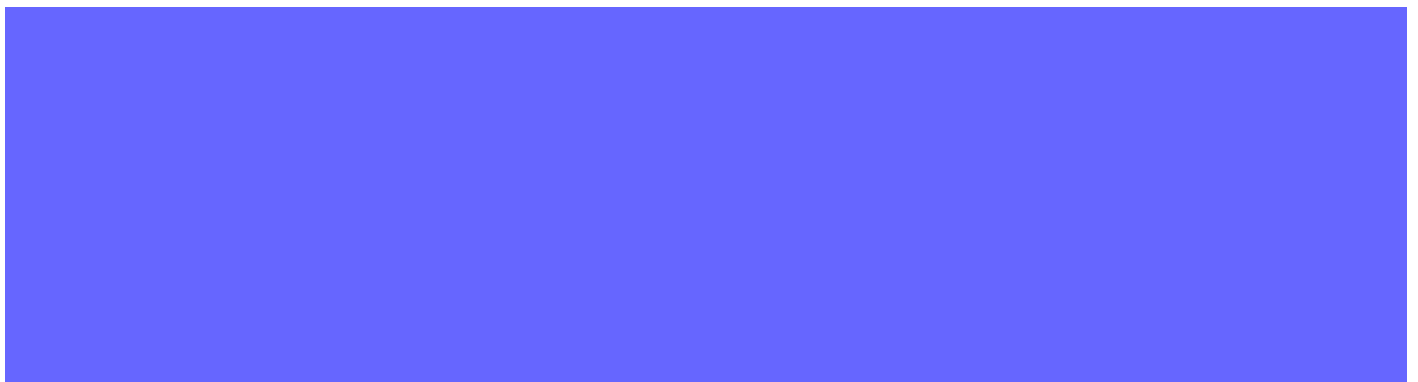
Dee G

Don M

Trey M

Nat O

Paul P





**New Banners for the Sanctuary are titled: “*For Everything There Is a Season...*”
from Ecclesiastes**

The FPCL Peacemakers have designed and quilted eight new banners for the Sanctuary depicting the four seasons of the year. These new banners will be incorporated during ordinary time in the liturgical year. Members of this group include Blythe L, Kathie M, Monica K, Hannah K, Elaine M, Morgan T, Linda G, Sharon J, Ruby G, Zen S, and Michelle B. Each quilted banner has a verse written on the back side.

The Autumn Banner quilt block was designed by Morgan Toomey. It states “...the year’s last, loveliest smile.” By William C B

The Spring Banner quilt block “Strength and Union” was designed by Elaine Martin. It states “It’s Spring again, the Earth is like a child that knows poems by heart.” By Rainer M R

The Winter Banner quilt block was designed by Monica Klein. It states “I pray this winter be gentle and kind, a season of rest from the wheel of the mind.” By John G

The Summer Banner quilt block “Moon Over the Mountain” was designed by Blythe Lund. It states “God made the starry sky; the mountain, and the moon that lights up the night sky. The warmth of the summer soothes the soul.” By Blythe L

The new banners debuted on the walls of the church on August 17, 2025 the weekend of the annual Quilt Show. We appreciate the beauty and workmanship in each quilt and thank all the quilters for their talent and creativity. These banners will be enjoyed for many years to come.



Leadership

Elders: Trey M-Clerk of Session, Don M, Rick W, Sue C, Beth O, John K, Jeff C and Paul P

Presbytery Commissioners: Rick W and Kathy M

Deacons: Joy C, Becky G, Jess K, Jennie S, Deb G, Kathy F, Serena A, Justie E Maria F, Janice F

Stewards: Karla F, Kathy M, Stephany C, Cheri B



Hello from Pastor Blakeley

Children's and Youth outreach events

Our most recent FPCL Children's ministry outreach event happened on Sunday, July 27th—our first annual “Thrift Store Scavenger Hunt”! We had a great group of eight kids, along with several adult volunteers, taking part in this interactive adventure. After having lunch together at the church, the kids listened to a devotional about some of the Treasure-related Parables of Jesus, and how the most valuable thing we could ever find, and hold onto in life is a personal relationship with our Savior! Then we headed over to the nearby ARC Thrift Store. The group split up into two teams, which each had just 15 minutes and a \$20 “budget” to purchase a variety of items related to a Scavenger Hunt list. Then we came back to the church where the teams presented their items, and adults voted on which group had made the best and most creative choices. Each child got to pick a special item to take home with them, while the other things they bought are going to be re-purposed for use in the Children's ministry! Our latest Youth Group outreach event took place on Sunday, August 3rd “Snackin' and Sleuthing”. This included eating lunch together at the new Snarf's Sandwiches in downtown Littleton and then going from there to match wits with the challenging scenarios presented at the Mystic Escape Rooms. We split up into two teams, both of which managed to “escape” from their rooms in the nick of time! It was fun, interactive, and ideal exercise for team-building, which everyone enjoyed. Then we went back to the church and finished by hearing a devotional led by Dylan P, who served as a Pastoral Intern at FPCL back in the Summer of 2024. He talked about how in life the true “escape” to our problems is not found in anything the world can offer, but through knowing God personally, in Christ. The youth shared their own experiences about facing some of the challenges typical of the teenage years, and related well to this lesson. This event was neat because we had a young lady who is about to begin Middle School “graduate” from our Children's Ministry to participate in her very first FPCL youth event!

FPCL compassion in action!

In my experience over the past several years doing pastoral care at FPCL, our church family always responds promptly whenever there are member needs. A great example of this came earlier in the year when dozens of FPCL members signed up to help provide weekly meals to the F family while Kathy was undergoing cancer treatments. And recently we've been doing it again! Heidi T, who has been very

active this year in helping with our Children's ministry and Vacation Bible School, suffered a leg break requiring surgery, and so is currently unable to drive, with very limited mobility. When I raised the possibility of some meals being delivered to her home while she recovered, she was so appreciative! In **Galatians 6:2**, Paul urges us to **"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."** These meal deliveries provide a chance to do much more than just share food. They remind us of the importance of human contact and interaction—things that we can take for granted, but are suddenly so missed when an illness or accident forces us to withdraw from our usual routines for a while. So I want to take this opportunity to express a huge THANK-YOU to everyone who has helped with the meal deliveries for both the Frears and Heidi. You are putting "feet to faith" and represent just one more reason that people find the FPCL community so endearing. Our church family doesn't just wait for or expect the staff alone to do ministry, they take action, and lead by example in the footsteps of Jesus! And here is the link if you would like to sign-up to take a meal (either homemade or from a restaurant) to Heidi!



July's AWGG with Littleton's Paint Box Guild!

It was such a fun morning on Monday, July 7 as the Adventures with Grandparents and Grandchildren program hosted 6 grandchildren with their grandparents. God is so good, he sent one family as a drop-in when they pedaled their bicycles by Pastor Jonathan straightening the banner on the corner lawn!

The kids played hopscotch, giant Jenga and bubbles as the families gathered. Then the kids and grandparents put their competitive spirits and chasing skills to the test with a couple of fun relays and a rousing game of duck, duck, GOOSE!

Our program was presented by Fredia C and Toni C of the Paint Box Guild. They shared their gifts and passion for painting with the group as the families enjoyed painting rocks together. The kids were excited to share many of their beautiful creations around the church grounds. If you look closely along the sidewalk next time you come through the Windermere entrance, you may just spot one!





AWGG Summer 2025 Finale with LPD K9 Officer Parker Choate and his K9 Partner!

Monday, August 4 was our final Adventures with Grandparents and Grandchildren gathering for this summer, and it didn't disappoint! What a treat to receive an educational program from K9 Officer C and his K9 partner, B. The kids and grandparents were full of questions and Officer C answered every last one. Of course the excitement ramped up when everyone received B's trading card and sticker! Officer C then demonstrated the lights and loudspeaker on his patrol car, and B came out to meet his fans! Following snack and conversation about B, we beat the summer heat with yard games including the giant parachute, water relays and water balloons! The kids were sad to leave and the grandparents all expressed their gratitude for having something in the community to do with their grandkids that they didn't have to plan! A HUGE thank you to the entire planning and volunteer team!



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF LITTLETON

1609 W. Littleton Blvd., Littleton, CO 80120

303-798-1389 • fpcl@fpcl.org • littletonpresbyterian.org

FPCL STAFF and Their Hours

Please call the church office for contact information. 303-798-1389

Rev. Jonathan Murray, Minister of Word & Sacrament ————— Tues & Thurs 9-2

Rev. Dr. Blakeley Winslow, Pastor of Christian Discipleship ———-Mon 9:30-2:30, Tues 1-4:30

Wed 10-3:30

Lydia Cooper, Office Manager ————— Tuesday-Thursday 9-2

Mary Dailey, Director of Worship Arts

Karen 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

KING SOOPERS REWARDS

We are happy to help people sign up anytime
if you have not already.

Remember, every time you use your King Soopers rewards card
you are helping
to raise monies for our church.

Any questions, please call Sue Chandler, 303-347-9191.



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*