

THE GRAPEVINE

First Presbyterian Church of Sandpoint, Idaho
January-February 2025

From the Pastor...

Here we are at the start of a new year. 2025 is a baby! This year is momentous, and January is a busy month of transition. In the United States, we witness a transfer of power following November's election. Dynamics of politics remind us that the definition of community is larger than we'd sometimes like to admit. We often limit ourselves by the way we think. Phrases like, "working with those on both sides of the aisle" in reference to government halls attempt to sound inclusive, but assume a division, a dichotomy that binds us to either/or modes of thought.

As the Sundays after Christmas merge into Epiphany on January 6, the season of Epiphany proclaims *God is with us*. God is with us. As if God could not be with us. Is this another either/or? Either God is with us, or God is not with us? The next step involves judgment, to say God is with us, but God is not with so and so. If God is not with us, or so and so, then life ceases. Nothing, no-thing can be in existence without God breathing life into it. God's continuous self-offering is what sustains all things, in and through Christ. To see the Christ Presence of God in all things as a great unifier that involves connection rather than separation (uni-fier, as in one) is a gift of the season.

Remember Epiphany? *Epiphaneia* in Greek. *Manifestation. Appearance.* Jesus Christ is revealed to the world (Jew and Gentile) as wise astrologers from the east travel to find a young child in Bethlehem. It is a star that guides them.

Maybe stars can guide us? According to space.com, around 85 percent of stars in our galaxy are binary stars, two or more stars in direct relationship, united by a common center of gravity. These celestial examples show either/or is actually both/and. Sometimes called double stars, these stars can do things together that single stars cannot. Sometimes there is great distance between them, and others touch and share stellar materials. There's a huge variety in how binary stars interact, but whatever plays out stems from their influence on each other and the commonalities they share.

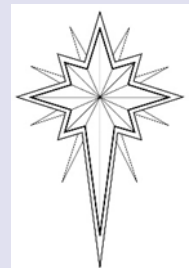
In a world of uncertainty and tension, we can be living witnesses to the miracle of divinity that permeates life. We can live as an alternative community that emphasizes points of contact and connection over fragmentation and division. This witness begins in our own heart. We're reminded of all this at the conclusion of Epiphany, on Ash Wednesday, when we are told:

*Remember you are stardust,
and to stardust you shall return.*

Happy New Year!

Peace and All Good,

Pastor Andy



THANK YOU, LEADERS

At the congregational meeting in December, new leaders were elected to serve on Session and in committees of the church. Other leaders were mentioned as well, those who conclude their term of service. Thank you, leaders, both those coming on and those rotating off. Those finishing a term include: Ruling Elders Sharon Anderson, Sue Helander, and Sylvia Humes; Memorial Committee, Don Helander; Nominating Committee, Sue Helander and Sylvia Humes; and Personnel Committee, Dyno Wahl. Thank you for your service!

Also, thanks to everyone who helps worship take place on Sunday mornings. From ushers to worship assistants to sound room technicians, many people serve weeks at a time, rotating from one role to another. Thank you for helping worship flow and being a welcoming presence for in-person worshippers.

To share a quote by a clergy colleague, “By the grace of God we can do things together, what by the design of God, we cannot do apart.”

Pastor Andy

2025 LEADERSHIP LIST

Elders elected by congregation via Nominating Committee for two-year terms

Through 2025

Judy Labrie
Mary Sturgis
Kirsten Thompson, Clerk of Session
Paula Vincent

Through 2026

Bill Love
Judy McComish
Lynn Pietz
Dyno Wahl

Memorial Committee

Paula Vincent, Ruling Elder, Stewardship/Finance
Dave Sturgis, At-Large member through 2025
Lexie de Fremery, At-Large member through 2026

Nominating Committee

Ruler Elder, Moderator—to be appointed by Session
Mary Sturgis, At-Large member through 2025
Jane Fritz, At-Large member through 2026

Personnel Committee

Paula Vincent, Ruling Elder, Moderator
Tim Cochran, At-Large member through 2025
Millie Rinker, At-Large member through 2026

Staff

Pastor: Andy Kennaly
Office Administrator: Dana Stockman
Financial Secretary: Susie Haskins
Treasurer: Natalie Miller (contracted worker)

Pianist: Annie Welle
Choir Director: Dana Stockman
Bell Choir: Amy Scott (volunteer)
Custodian: Ken Callison (contracted worker)

STEWARDSHIP, FINANCE, MEMORIAL

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

This past year, our total giving from tithes and offerings was **\$129,234**. Additionally, \$1,366 dollars were given to help offset the per capita expense. These gifts from members and friends make up the largest percentage of the total church budget and we are extremely grateful for all of the donations received in 2024. Through your generosity we can continue to fund our goals:

*To provide meaningful, life changing **WORSHIP** every week of the year;*

*To **NURTURE** people on their faith journey;*

*To **WITNESS** to our faith in ministry and **MISSION** beyond ourselves.*

Thank you for your gifts; we look forward to a great year to come.

FINANCE UPDATE

Pledges for 2025: At the time of this update, 21 pledges have been received. Our goal is to receive 32 pledge/service statements for 2025. If you have any questions about end of year giving statements or pledges for 2025, please contact Susie Haskins, Financial Secretary: [willandsoozie@gmail.com](mailto:wilandsoozie@gmail.com)

Budget Summary

<i>Income through November 30:</i>	<i>\$135,654</i>
<i>Expenses through November 30:</i>	<i>\$122,205</i>
<i>2024 Budget:</i>	<i>\$132,000</i>

Church Treasurer, Natalie Miller, is in the process of closing the financial statements for 2024. The completed end of the year information will be reported during the Annual Meeting in January as part of the Annual Report.

Two Additional CARES ACT Grants Received:

Last month we reported the receipt of an **Employee Retention Credit** in the form of a grant from the federal pandemic relief program. FPC was eligible to apply for this credit for specific quarters of tax years 2020 and 2021. FPC received checks for two additional quarters in November and December. These grants provided about \$8000 of miscellaneous income in 2024.

Judy McComish and Paula Vincent, Elders

Living with Dying: What Death Teaches Us About Living

Three Saturdays in February, 2025

10:00 am - 12:30 pm

First Presbyterian Church - Sandpoint
417 N Fourth Ave, Alder Street entrance

February 1: Death and Dying

February 8: Grief in its many faces

February 15: What Matters Most: How do we want to live

- Explore through sharing stories, experiences and activities.
- Explore what is helpful in walking with people who are grieving or facing their loved one's death.
- Explore what really matters in the end.

The sessions will be facilitated by Ginna Minervini, LCSW. Ginna is a psychotherapist and mindfulness teacher with over 20 years as a hospice volunteer and seven years working for a local hospice. She has extensive experience at the bedside and with people grieving the loss of loved ones.

Registration is required, space is limited.

Register for any session of the series or all three.

Suggested donation \$25 each session or \$60 for three.

Contact Sharon to register: sharonsharealike47@gmail.com

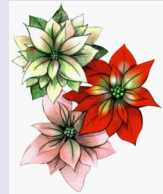
Or call the church office: 208-263-2047

MEMBERSHIP, OUTREACH, MISSION

Poinsettias

Thank you to the following people who provided poinsettias to help decorate the sanctuary in December.

- Mary and Chuck Bauer: in memory of our beloved parents
- Carol Curtis : in memory of Carroll Curtis, Naomi Curtis, Tim Curtis, and Beverly Dunn
- Sylvia Humes: in memory of Rose and Hal Seeskin
- Judy Labrie: in honor of the Moon family
- Judy McComish: in memory of Phil McComish
- Barbara Rolph: in memory of family
- Dave and Mary Sturgis: in memory of family
- Paula Vincent



Christian Education

The adult Sunday school group spent some time this fall identifying all the activities we were involved with outside of the Sunday morning hours.

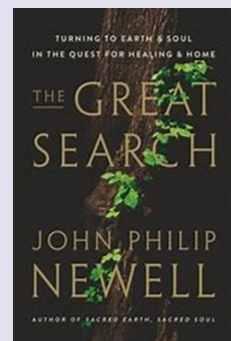
This poster shows them all. To see it in-person, visit the lobby inside the Alder Street entrance. This congregation is truly living and sharing the Christ within as we engage throughout our community, nation and world.

The Adult Sunday Gathering (Sunday School) will be starting a new book on January 5. If you would like to join us, please order this book. We are so excited to follow along with the different chapters as John tells us about many different writers over the years and different cultures. He is interested in how nature informs our spiritual journey and helps us relate to each other, to nature, and to God. (If you have trouble getting the book, we will get one for you.)

I hope to see you there.

My Heart to Your Heart,

Sharon Anderson



MEMBERSHIP, OUTREACH, MISSION

EARTH CARE OPPORTUNITIES---Even in the winter

The Earth Care Team is a small group, and has not made any headlines lately. But, soon, we will need to plan our goals for spring & summer. We will probably lead an Earth Care Worship Service in April. What else should we prepare for? If you have suggestions, or would like to join the Team, please talk to Lynn Pietz or Marilyn Robertson. In the meantime, we can all save our compost to enrich our home gardens: (coffee grounds, tea bags, veggie scraps, egg shells ,etc.) Even small efforts are helpful! And, of course, keep recycling.

Marilyn Robertson

SCAM ALERT

Hello Friends and Members of First Presbyterian Church of Sandpoint,

Some of you may have received a text message from someone pretending to be me. Once again, scammers are out there. It was not the real me.

I will not send those types of requests. In addition, for this particular message, the listed contact number was not my phone number.

There is nothing that can be done regarding spam texts. Only if they extort money is a crime committed.

Be as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves. Don't be fooled. Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks.

Peace and All Good,

Pastor Andy



MISSION

In early December, our church responded to a wide variety of needs in the community by sending a \$500 donation to the following local nonprofit organizations:

Homelessness: Bonner Homeless Transitions

Illness: Community Cancer Services

Mental Health: NAMI Far North Idaho

Domestic violence/child abuse: Priest River Ministries Advocates for Women

As the elder for Missions, I am interested in forming a committee to further our missions work during the upcoming year. Since Deacons no longer exists as a committee, this work has not been in the forefront (mostly due to my lack of understanding about what Deacons did!). Please join me in supporting the missions work of our church!

If you are interested in being part of the Missions Committee, contact me at jfmccomish@wayne.edu.

Judy McComish, Elder

FOOD BANK COLLABORATION

WE DID IT! We, together with the Methodists, collected 3,721 pounds during the months of November and December, beating last year's record of 3,000 pounds! First Pres. collected food each Sunday in the Helander's red wheelbarrow and hauled it to the Food Bank on Mondays. Food Bank volunteers each time were so grateful! As part of our collection, we spent a Friday afternoon in each month in the foyer of Super 1 Grocery asking customers to add a few extra things to their shopping lists and donate. Each time we added 600+ pounds.

One Monday both the Presbyterians and Methodists arrived at the Food Bank at the same time! At right is some of our "haul."



NOW for the PARTY!

Our tradition each year is to have a POTLUCK. This year it will be at the Methodist Church, Saturday, January 25, at 12 noon. Keep reading for details!

Lynn Pietz, Sue Helander, & Victoria Oliver

MISSION

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE FOOD BANK COLLABORATION CELEBRATION POTLUCK!

WHEN: Saturday, January 25, 2025, at Noon

WHERE: Sandpoint UMC (711 Main Street) in the Fellowship Hall

WHY: Our mutual collaboration resulted in only winners, and the Food Bank was the biggest winner of all!

WHO: EVERYONE! (Both congregations, the Food Bank volunteers and staff, and maybe even the Daily Bee.)

WHAT TO BRING: PLENTY!

Methodists will bring Main Dishes and Side Dishes.

Presbyterians will bring Desserts and Salads.

The Food Bank folks are our guests!

**Thank you to
everyone who
helped make this
collaboration both
fun and successful!**



FELLOWSHIP

Everyone seemed to enjoy the pizza party! I'd like to thank Judy McComish for all her help and of course all the wonderful folks who jumped in to help with the clean-up.

A thank you to Millie Rinker who assumes the responsibility of taking home linens to wash every Sunday. What a gem she is!!

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has participated in making our Fellowship time after church such a success. To me, that time is a big portion of the glue that holds us together as a family. Now that I am leaving Session and I don't know who will be taking over the responsibility, I do know they will be blessed with your on-going cooperation. Thank you again!!

May the New Year bring you joy and good health.

Blessings!

Sylvia Humes

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Happy New Year First Presbyterian Church!

Thanks to the generous help of the congregation, each week we have members serving as Worship Assistant, Ushers, and Livestream Volunteers. It's wonderful to receive messages selecting particular Sundays for service, and a few others who say "I'm available for X weeks, just put me in wherever you need me." What a wonderful way to show up for service in the church!

The Worship bulletin is prepared and printed in advance on Wednesdays, so the earlier we know who will be serving, the easier it is for Dana to prepare the bulletins.

For those who are helping out as ushers, you should find the prepared bulletins in the front by the entry door near the ramp or in the narthex on the Fourth Avenue entrance.

Each stack of bulletins also has a short page of instructions and tips for ushers to help make sure that all goes smoothly.

Interested in getting involved? Please contact the church office, Pastor Andy, or myself to be added to the roster of 23 or so folks who get emails from me recruiting and reminding each week.

Many thanks and many blessings!

Kirsten Thompson, 503-816-6384 or thompsonkj2019@gmail.com

FAMILY FAVORITES

Do you have a treasured (non-copyrighted!) family recipe that you'd like to share with the church family? Drop them off in the church office or email them to Dana at Office@fpcsandpoint.org. Please share a little info about the person who created the recipe, if you can.

My grandmother Lena Spencer was a kind, funny woman who could sing well, and was known for her cooking. She made this banana pudding recipe, from scratch, and each time my son John Whittington comes to visit, I make this. It is very sweet and not "diet" for sure, but we both almost crave it! Enjoy! —Lynn Pietz

GRANDMA'S SAUCE for BANANA PUDDING

1-cup sugar

1 T. flour (or can use cornstarch)

1 egg

1-cup milk

1 tsp. vanilla

Microwave this mixture in a glass bowl, on high, in 1-minute increments, stirring after each until thick. It takes me a total of 4 ½ minutes in my microwave.

When made into a sauce, add layers of bananas and vanilla wafers, and chill.

The flavor is better when chilled for several hours.



UPCOMING EVENTS



- 1/5** Undecorate the sanctuary after church
- 1/8** Worship and Music Meeting, 12:00 p.m.
- 1/15** Session Meeting, 1:30 p.m.
- 1/26** Annual Meeting, after church
- 2/1** Living with Dying: Death and Dying, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- 2/8** Living with Dying: Grief in its many faces, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- 2/15** Living with Dying: What Matters Most—How do we want to live, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- 2/16** 90th Birthday celebration for Gary Pietsch, after church in Fellowship Hall
- 2/25** March Grapevine articles due!



1/2 Shawna Kennaly
1/10 Mary Sturgis
1/11 Mickey Quinn
1/19 Jane Fritz
1/21 Dave Sturgis



2/1 Victoria Oliver
2/16 Gary Pietsch
2/25 Dyno Wahl
2/26 Dawn Linendoll

*Did we miss your birthday or get the date wrong?
Email the office and let us know!
office@fpcsandpoint.org*

Regular Monthly Events



Sunday

- 9:00 a.m. Adult Christian Education
- 10:30 a.m. Worship, In-Person and Livestream (<https://www.youtube.com/@firstpresbyteriansandpoint>)
- 7:00 p.m. AA meeting

Monday-Saturday

- 7:00 a.m. AA meeting

Monday

- 9:00 a.m. TOPS meeting (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)
- 6:00 p.m. Al-Anon meeting

Tuesday

- 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Book Study and Contemplative Prayer Group
- 7:00 p.m. AA meeting

Wednesday

- 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Choir practice in sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Rainbow Soup Kitchen community meal
- 7:00 p.m. AA meeting

Thursday

- 12:00 p.m. Al-Anon meeting
- 7:00 p.m. AA meeting



First Presbyterian Church

417 North Fourth Avenue, Sandpoint, Idaho 83864

208-263-2047

office@fpcsandpoint.org

www.fpcsandpoint.org

Ministers

Members and Friends

Pastor Andy Kennaly

pastorandy@fpcsandpoint.org

Pastor cell phone: 208-304-5488

Office hours

Tuesday 9:00-12:00

Wednesday 9:00-11:00