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OFFICE HOURS
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The Changing Colors of the Church's Season

Did you see our new white table cover that the Worship Committee and Debra Royce did? You had to notice it fast on Transfiguration Sunday before we changed to purple. It will be back with new matching paraments on the lectern and pulpit at Easter.

Have you ever wondered why and when those colors change? The colors were not set until the 12th century. But by the 4th century they were common in the western church. They are used to set mood more than any particular theological meaning.

The church year begins with Advent, the 4 weeks before Christmas. The two periods of waiting of examination, and of repentance, Advent and Lent, are symbolized by purple.

Some churches use purple for Lent and Blue for Advent.

The seasons and Sundays of special rejoicing are red. This would be Christmas Eve and Pentecost ... and also special services like an ordination.

The Christmas season (the 12 days of Christmas) are white or gold. Then after Epiphany we go to green. Green is used for "ordinary time." Those Sundays when we are not in a special season. Transfiguration is white and is always the Sunday before we start Lent.

Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday, is purple, and symbolizes repentance. We change back to White with Easter although we have no color, and no decorations for our Good Friday Tenebrae (Darkness) service.

The Easter season ends with Pentecost Sunday – 50 days from Easter. That is Red!!!

And the rest of the year is that LONG stretch of green known as ordinary time. – Right up to a Sunday of White for Christ the King Sunday – the last Sunday of the Liturgical Year before we start all over again.

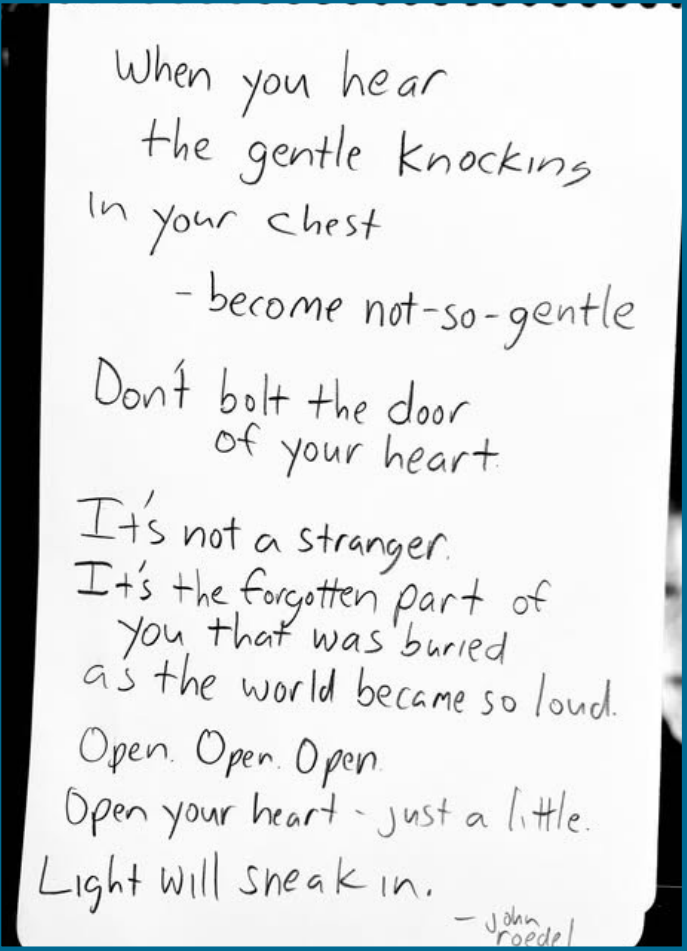
These colors are not law. There are no liturgical color police to make sure we do it "right." They do not have some deep theological meaning. But I love the thought that we, like Christians for centuries, use these colors to help with setting the mood and the beauty of our service.

For me, I choose to wear a stole (the scarf thing around my neck) not for you all, but for me. It reminds me that what I do, and what I say – are not for me – or for you – but for that audience of One.

Enjoy the colors! And especially enjoy and thank Debra Royce and the Worship Committee for our new white paraments.

You Know who you Are!
By Denise Mort

You know who you are. In your toolbox, there are four hammers, two of them identical. Or the dark corners of the kitchen cupboard hold heaps of things that might be useful someday, but someday hasn't come yet. Perhaps it's time to dive into that overflow of items, get ready to donate to the annual rummage sale. There are a few changes from past years. The sale is moving back to the church, but in Faith Village. This gives us the opportunity to accept donations before the sale. To donate, sooner than later, come to the church in the morning. In fact, better if you call first. To make sure someone is there to open the door for you. If it's something heavy, bring along someone strong person to help. Presbyterian Women are organizing the sale. If you have questions, a PW member can get an answer for you. Last day for donations is June 3. The sale will be set up June 4 and open on June 5 and 6. So, rummage around and find some treasures for the PW Annual Rummage Sale.



When you hear
the gentle knockings
in your chest
- become not-so-gentle
Don't bolt the door
of your heart.
It's not a stranger.
It's the forgotten part of
you that was buried
as the world became so loud.
Open. Open. Open.
Open your heart - just a little.
Light will sneak in.
- John Roedel

Article No. 20***Reaching the Next Generation*** *By Starfish Scholar Rhizza A. Valderama*

We returned to teaching almost 6 months ago at a new school. We followed the principal where we first taught and it was the nearest school to our house. Just seeing the students made me eager to teach, especially since it had been a while. And I've learned so much. I honestly thought the kinds of stories we heard from students were only on TV dramas or in books. But that they are real and happening in the lives of these kids was eye-opening.

Sometimes the most mischievous ones are the ones dealing with the hardest challenges. They are being abused, beaten, and many face impossibly high expectations from their parents. Is the problem with the parents, or is it something in the environment they're in? I try to understand.

One of the guidance counselors was my teacher in high school and I am so grateful to share all this with her. She shares about the issues students face, especially in the many coming from broken homes. It's hard to imagine these young students already feeling so burdened. In our surveys, suicidal thoughts are becoming more common because they feel unloved and unvalued; that nobody cares about them.

After Christmas break, while we were teaching, we heard the shocking news: a student had taken their own life. We had noticed no signs nor did anything from our surveys show their suicidal thoughts. Where did we fall short in our teaching? I was reminded that without our teaching, perhaps more would have taken this choice. That really struck me. And we decided to be more aggressive in addressing these thoughts and helping the students.

We were in the final month for the year. The grade 10 students would be leaving to continue their studies. I prayed they would

remember what we taught. We pushed for them to know that they are loved both by the Lord and by us. While we were doing this, I saw students kneeling and crying. I had never witnessed this before. As we left, they were in tears, which made me realize just how much they needed God and His love in their lives, how much they need to know someone cares.

As a team, we're praying about follow up. There might be a new principal coming so we may not be able to continue there next school year, to follow up with these students. We're also praying for the creation of a Student Center where we can gather the students and continue to minister to them.

The work is not finished, Please pray for continued open doors to teach and share His Word on school campuses here in the Philippines. Even though we're far apart, your prayers are so powerful.

All the glory belongs to God alone.

***"Then he said to his disciples,
"The harvest is plentiful
but the workers are few.
Ask the Lord of the harvest,
therefore
to send out workers
into his harvest field."***

Matthew 9:37

**Feasting and
Fasting
Lenten Soup Suppers
All Are Welcome
See Calendar for dates
and places**



“Gathering together to nourish our community.”

Our next week to staff FISH-WEEK OF April 20th to 24th

**KATHY
TONI**



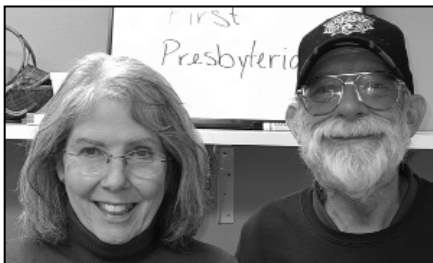
**BRIAN
JANET**

**JANE
BRIAN**



**SHIRLEY
DAVE
PAULA**

**BARB
DEAN**



FELLOWSHIP NEWS

Ann Marie Miller, Fellowship Moderator

Freezer Status

Good News to report! We have a new freezer in the Social Hall Kitchen. It’s not the same size as the old one, but it will work out fine. We will have to be more diligent in labeling anything stored in the freezer and rotate often. So, if anybody feels like baking coffee hour items for the freezer, we are back in business! Don’t forget to sign up for a Sunday to volunteer for snacks – everyone will thank you.

Check the “events” on the Social Hall tables for upcoming activities. We’ll need volunteers for Lenten Soup Supper cookies and soups—sign-up lists will be available. Thank you in advance for your help.

Thank you to all who help provide treats, set up, clean up and put away on Sunday mornings. You are appreciated.

Seven ways to grow in the Spirit

Feed on Scripture:

Regularly read and study religious texts to understand the foundation of faith.

Pray Consistently:

Develop a regular conversation with God, asking for strength and expressing thanks, even and especially when times are hard.

Serve Others:

Put faith into practical action by serving in the community.

Connect with Community:

Engage with fellow believers for fellowship and support and to create a deeper understanding of the community.

Practice Gratitude:

Be grateful in all things and all circumstances.

Put beliefs into action:

Demonstrate your beliefs to those outside of your faith group by becoming active in the local community.

Cultivate Inner Virtues:

Practice temperance, patience, goodliness, kindness, and self-control.

MARCH PENSAMIENTOS Pastor Risa Paul

Lent is often referred to as a journey. And our theme this year, exploring what we mean when we say that Jesus is the Way play that journey story.

As I begin my own countdown towards retirement (third time IS the charm, isn't it?) I think of the journey that brought me to this place. And how many things in that journey gave me just exactly what I needed here.

Have you ever traced your own spiritual way? Where did it begin? Who are the important people that you have met along your camino (spanish for way). And as you think about that,

remember the thin places along your journey. Are there some places where you seemed able to touch heaven? Where the realm of the spirit seemed particularly close?

But Lent is not just for looking backward and seeing where we have been, it is also for finding a new path forward. A new way (for us) that is most probably actually an old way. I love all the seasons of the church year, but especially as I have become more contemplative in my faith, Lent has become my favorite. I find it deepens my faith and lengthens my walk on the Way every year.

"There is a certain innocence about beginning, with its excitement and promise of something new. But this will emerge only through undertaking some voyage into the unknown. And no one can foretell what the unknown might yield.

There are journeys we have begun that have brought us great inner riches and refinement; but we had to travel through dark valleys of difficulty and suffering. Had we known at the beginning what the journey would demand of us, we might never have set out.

Yet the rewards and gifts became vital to who we are.

Through the innocence of beginning we are often seduced into growth.

When the heart is ready for a fresh beginning, unforeseen things can emerge. And in a sense, this is exactly what a beginning does. It is an opening for surprises. Surrounding the intention and the act of beginning, there are always exciting possibilities. ...

beginnings have their own mind, and they invite and unveil new gifts and arrivals in one's life.

Beginnings are new horizons that want to be seen; ...
What is the new horizon in you that wants to be seen?"

John O'Donohue, from To Bless This Space Between Us

**Happy Birthdays
MARCH**

- Lisa Schamp** **2**
- Marsha Costello** **5**
- Rena Burleigh** **12**
- Karen Grindeland** **13**
- Kathryn Quast** **14**
- Jennie Yates** **20**
- LeAnn Bronk** **28**

The Presbyterian is a monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church of Great Falls
 Deadline for submissions: 20th of each month
 Send pictures or story ideas our way
 Email articles, ideas and/or pictures to:
secretary@firstpresgfmt.org
Subject: NEWSLETTER
 For images, please include the name of photographer and any information you'd like added to the newsletter.

First Presbyterian Church Operating Fund
Activity Report December 2025

| | Actual YTD | Budget YTD |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue | \$320,392.48 | \$323,258.00 |
| Total Expenditures | 273,688.33 | 314,229.00 |
| Net Operating Revenue | \$ 46,704.15 | \$ 9,029.00 |

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Calendar for MARCH:

- 1 **Sunday** Communion
- 3 **Tuesday**
Noon Souler Energy
3:15 p.m. Mission
4:00 p.m. Property
- 4 **Wednesday**
10:00 a.m. Galatians-Deep Dive
11:30 a.m. My 1 Word/Sack Lunch
6:00 p.m. Soup Supper (OSLC)
6:45 p.m. Movie: "The Way", Part 2
- 5 **Thursday**
8:30 a.m. Coffee @ Miss Kitty's
- 8 **Sunday** DAY LIGHT SAVINGS!
11:30 a.m. Personal Prayer Sanctuary
- 10 **Tuesday**
10:00 a.m. Iris Service
3:00 p.m. Finance
3:00 p.m. Worship
- 11 **Wednesday**
10:00 a.m. Galatians-Deep Dive
1:00 p.m. Outreach
6:00 p.m. Soup Supper
6:45 p.m. Movie "Godspeed: The Pace of Being Known" (OSLC)
- 12 **Thursday**
8:30 a.m. Coffee @ Miss Kitty's
10:30 a.m. Grandview Service
6:30 p.m. Session
- 15 **Sunday** Corporate Prayer
Graham Parlor
- 18 **Wednesday**
10:00 a.m. Galatians-Deep Dive
6:00 p.m. Soup Supper (FPC)
6:45 p.m. Movie: "Butterfly Circus"
10:30 a.m. NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
- 19 **Thursday**
8:30 a.m. Coffee @ Miss Kitty's
- 21 **Saturday**
10:00 a.m. Presbyterian Women
- 24 **Tuesday**
5:30 p.m. Deacons
- 25 **Wednesday**
10:00 a.m. Galatians-Deep Dive
6:00 p.m. Soup Supper (FPC)
6:45 p.m. Movie: "I Heard the Owl Call My Name"
- 26 **Thursday**
8:30 a.m. Coffee @ Miss Kitty's