

THE MESSENGER

| NEWS FROM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FORT COLLINS |

HELPING WELL

**STONE SOUP
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
TEAM BUILD**

**SUMMER
MUSIC CAMP
PRESENTS
THE LOST BOY**

What's Inside | CONTENTS

- 3 Pastor's Corner: How Many Ministers?
- 4 How Do We Spell Per Capita?
- 5 Pastor Nominating Committee Update
- 6 Helping Well
- 7 MOPS Summer Play Date Schedule
- 8 Church of Character: Dependability
- 9 Stone Soup Team Build for Habitat
- 10 "Think Abouts"
- 11 Music Camp Presents The Lost Boy
- 12 Hometown Nazareth VBS

From the Editor | SUMMER SUN

After a rainy May, I find myself welcoming summer with a Pete the Cat quote, "The birds are singing. The sky is bright. The sun is shining. I'm feeling ALRIGHT!" Pete puts on his cool, blue, magic sunglasses and helps his friends see the sunshine in their no good, very bad days.

At FPC, we are ready for the sunny days of June. Kids ages 3 through 5th grade will fill the building with songs and laughter during Vacation Bible School June 8–12. It's not too late to register (p. 12) or to donate and help (p. 9). Later in the month, MOPS moms will gather for summer play dates and enjoy the warmth of friendship and fun (p. 7).

Other summer activities at FPC encourage us to share the sunshine by "helping well." Mark your calendar for the visit from Plant with Purpose's Executive Director Scott Sabin (p.6). He'll share how FPC is responding to the needs of the poor in the Dominican Republic. Back in Fort Collins, plan to join the Habitat for Humanity Team Build and help the Gonzales family get a new home (p. 9).

Summer is a great time to remember to put on the cool, blue magic sunglasses of gratitude and share the sunshine of faith. Invite a friend, co-worker or neighbor to church! Here the birds are singing, the sky is bright, the sun is shining and everything is all right.

—Cathy Richardson

THE MESSENGER

A PUBLICATION OF
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
531 SOUTH COLLEGE AVENUE
FORT COLLINS, CO 80524
(970) 482-6107
WWW.FIRSTPRESFC.ORG

MINISTERS | THE CONGREGATION
INTERIM SR. PASTOR | PAUL PARSONS
ASSOCIATE PASTOR | CINDY FROST
EDITOR | CATHY RICHARDSON

PUBLISHING GUIDELINES | THE MESSENGER is a publication for the people, passions, and mission of First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins. The newsletter seeks to inspire, inform, instruct, challenge, and motivate its readers to become engaged in the ministry of FPC. We pray that adult readers in all life stages will aspire to be faithful disciples for Christ.

Articles that support FPC's purpose and mission will be **accepted on the 15th of each month**. All articles must be sponsored by one of the church's five Centers and are subject to the approval of the Editor. Submissions will be edited for length and suitability.

Article submissions will be accepted via e-mail to crichardson@firstpresfc.org. Contact Editor Cathy Richardson for more information, (970)482-6107.



HOW MANY MINISTERS?

Every “Discovering FPC” class starts with a PowerPoint presentation introducing potential new members to the ministry of our church. One of the questions that I have asked every class has been the question, “How many ministers do we have in this church?” Over the years the answers have varied: “four,” “five,” “three,” and lately, “two.” Every so often we get someone who suspects some kind of trick question or who has learned well the Reformation doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers” and they correctly connect up that the number of ministers in the church matches the number of members in the church.

Whether someone from the class makes the connection or not, I use this as a teachable moment reinforcing that each of us is called to minister to others—to serve, to demonstrate God’s love, and communicate the grace of Christ. We read in Ephesians 4:11–12 that God gave gifts for some to be prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and He gave those people with those gifts the purpose of “equipping the saints for the work of ministry.” We in church leadership are to equip everyone in the church (the saints!) for works of ministry.

My cousin just reminded me of the metaphor of the sponge. Think of a sponge, filled with water but then squeezed out as it is put to practical purpose. Think of a sponge that just gets filled but never gets squeezed out. It soon gets stinky from mold and mildew and soon needs to be disposed of. We in the church aren’t called to sit back and soak up what is happening in worship and classes like a sponge, but

are called to apply what we are receiving as we allow ourselves to be squeezed out for the sake of the others. Maybe we get squeezed by applying what we’ve learned to our daily relationships. Maybe it’s through taking that spark of an idea or prompting that came through a sermon and bringing it to God in prayer and exploring with God over time what He would have us do with it. Maybe it is agreeing to serve in the children’s or youth ministry or lead a small group so that you can help facilitate the learnings of others. Maybe it’s using your gifts in ways that will build others up and build up the ministry of the church.

It is a rare new member class that “falls for” my second question, “How many missionaries does FPC have?” By this point they are on to me and recognize that we have as many missionaries as we have ministers in this congregation—which is the number of members (and active participants!) that we have. Just like every member is a minister called to serve one another with the gifts that we have received and called to build up the body of Christ, so every member is a missionary called beyond the walls of the church to reach out with the Gospel. We are missionaries when we proclaim the love and grace of Christ through embodying His love to those we encounter in our daily lives and to those who we seek out who are hurting. We are missionaries when we communicate the good news of Christ’s redemption by partnering with Christ in the redemptive ways that He is at work in our city and in our world through supporting with our time, talents, and treasures organizations like Realities for Children, Project Self-

Sufficiency, or Habitat for Humanity. We are missionaries when we engage people in those conversations about the hope that we have in Christ or when we tell stories of the big or small ways that we have seen God at work in our lives.

On the last night of his life, Jesus prayed to God earnestly for us His followers, “As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world,” John 17:18. My prayer is that we all would continue to grow into our God-given roles as “sent ones”—sent as ministers and missionaries, called to take what we have received and give it to others. May God give us the grace to live into this high calling!

—Cindy Frost

HOW DO WE SPELL PER CAPITA?

AND WHAT IS FPC DOING ABOUT IT?

At our congregational meeting, held on May 3, the Session made a special presentation regarding what is commonly called “per capita” in Presbyterian circles. The presentation included some education about what per capita is and does; a recounting of FPC’s recent history with per capita; and a review of how our present Session has grappled with the controversy of per capita for us as a congregation. Here is an overview of what was shared.

WHAT PER CAPITA IS AND HOW IT IS USED

Per capita is a set amount of money (called an “apportionment”) per active member that congregations are asked to pay to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Presently, this apportionment is \$40 per active member. These funds are used to provide certain services at the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly levels of government, the largest portion of which goes to the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks to which FPC belongs. These services include the following benefits for FPC:

1. Pastoral Care
 - Providing for pastoral care to pastors
 - Assisting congregations which are in pastoral transition by helping them identify and place an interim pastor
 - Assisting congregations in pastoral searches through training and advising PNC’s
 - Providing regular training and support for Commissioned Ruling Elders, who often serve churches that cannot afford a full-time pastor
2. Preparation for Ministry
 - Helping shepherd inquirers and candidates preparing for ordination to Christian ministry
3. Congregational Ministry
 - Providing training for ruling elders, deacons and clerks of session
 - Offering direct facilitation of conflict management
4. Highlands Camping and Retreat Ministry
 - Offering camp and retreat facilities for congregational use

5. Governance and Administration
 - Managing Presbytery financial resources
 - Arranging, coordinating, and preparing for meetings of Presbytery

The Constitution of the PC(USA) does not mandate the payment of per capita by congregations. It is considered a “benevolence,” a gift from a congregation that acknowledges that they benefit from the PC(USA)’s system of government, and that the expenses associated with coordinating and performing the functions of that system should be shared by all that receive those benefits. Whereas the PC(USA) Constitution makes no provision for a Session to withhold per capita as a form of protest, it does acknowledge that individuals may exercise freedom of conscience regarding actions taken by the church.

FPC’S RECENT HISTORY WITH PER CAPITA

Because of decisions made by the denomination, FPC’s Session took two actions in January 2013:

1. The General Fund of FPC be restricted from any funds being used to subsidize the Per Capita Apportionment from higher councils of the PC(USA)
2. Additionally, a separate, restricted fund be established to enable congregants to voluntarily support the work of the PC(USA)

These actions amounted to what one might call an “opt-in” stance. The Session would no longer pay to the Presbytery an annual amount of money (a portion of which the Presbytery would then pass on to the Synod and General Assembly) corresponding to the number of active members at FPC. However, any individual in the congregation that would want to underwrite the expenses associated with coordinating and performing the functions of the higher councils of the PC(USA) can “opt-in” to paying per capita. This could be done either by sending in \$40 to FPC, indicating that it should go the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks as per capita, or by sending it directly to the Presbytery. This second action provided “relief of conscience” for those who believed their consciences were being violated by the first action of Session. These two actions are still in effect for FPC today.

PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

UPDATE

Praise God from whom all blessings flow... The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) received wonderful news from the Committee on Ministry (COM)! COM approved the Ministry Information Form (MIF) and Transitional Mission Study at its meeting on May 14. With the approval of these two documents, the PNC will soon be ready to start looking at candidates for the position of Senior Pastor. If you have a recommendation for the position, please have the candidate send the PNC a resume by mail or email (pnc.firstpresfc@gmail.com). This email is only for communication with applicants; any other communication to this email won't be received.

Thank you for your continued prayer on the behalf of the PNC. Please know that your prayers are making a difference for the PNC, and they have been of great significance in the progress made thus far. Because the Transitional Mission Study was approved by COM, it is now available to the congregation at www.firstpresfc.org/pnc and in the church office.

—Pam Pierce

A REVIEW OF OUR PRESENT SESSION'S DELIBERATIONS REGARDING PER CAPITA

At the congregational meeting, Pastor Paul shared that when he arrived at FPC, he assessed that there were a number of "hot button" issues that an attempt should be made to resolve during this transitional time. Of those issues, per capita is the one that remains, and he believed it would be wise to address it before a new senior pastor should arrive. Thus, early this year he brought it back to Session for a review. Throughout the discussions that have followed, it is his opinion that the Session has shown no disrespect for either viewpoint, nor has there been any desire of winning or losing. Rather, the Session has shown itself dedicated to doing what is best for the congregation, no matter where that leads. In line with the recent sermon series on Romans 14 and 15, he shared that the Session seeks to protect our peoples' freedom of conscience on this matter, that no one be coerced either to pay per capita or not to pay it.

In seeking feedback informally from the congregation, what the Session has discovered is that there is still significant fear, anxiety, and tension about this issue. To date, there does not appear to be the kind of emotional margin within the congregation to make any change in the stance taken in January 2013. Making such a change would likely do damage to the steady state equilibrium we presently have, a homeostasis which is a high value to the church in the search for a new senior pastor. The Session will have the opportunity to review per capita as a budget item for 2016, when budget deliberations happen in the fall. But for the present, we continue in an "opt-in" mode, not paying a set amount as a Session to the Presbytery, but providing relief of conscience to those of you to opt-in, for whom payment of per capita is called for by your conscience. If you would like to contribute monies to the per capita apportionment that has been requested by the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks, you may do so by 1) writing a check to FPC with "per capita" written on the memo line, or 2) sending your check directly to the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks, 7257 W. 4th Street, Unit 4; Greeley, CO 80634, also indicating on the memo line "per capita" and indicating that you are a member of FPC in Fort Collins.

HELPING WELL

RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF THE POOR IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

As more individuals and groups in the church read books like *Toxic Charity* or *When Helping Hurts* we are reminded of the need to grow in understanding how best we can respond to the needs of the materially poor in empowering and effective ways. We can learn a lot from organizations like Plant With Purpose who are doing it well and who are constantly seeking to improve and learn from the best practices being developed.

We have an opportunity to learn more through our partnership with Plant With Purpose in several ways in the coming months.

1. Scott Sabin, the Executive Director of Plant With Purpose, will be preaching at FPC on June 7 concluding our sermon series of Practicing Resurrection in Mission. Hear him live or live-streamed at the 9:15 or 11:00 a.m. services.
2. Join us for lunch with Scott Sabin at 12:15 p.m. on June 7 to hear more specifically about Plant With Purpose and its “helping well” approach that centers on Environmental Restoration, Economic Empowerment, and Spiritual Development.



3. We will have a mission team heading to the Dominican Republic the last week of July and we will be eager to share with you what we have learned about Plant With Purpose and about helping well. Stay tuned for our trip presentation in August or September.

—Cindy Frost



GRATITUDE

FROM DR. CHRIS ISICHEI

Dr. Chris Isichei wishes to sincerely thank First Presbyterian Church for its ongoing support of the Faith Alive Hospital in Jos, Nigeria. If you want to learn more about his sermon from May 17, titled “God-sized goals,” there is a chapter in the Faith Alive book devoted to that topic. Books are available for free in the church office. An audio download and streaming video of the sermon are also available on media page of the church website.

Donations for the hospital, and especially for a much-needed ambulance, are always appreciated. For more information, contact Erika Nossokoff, erika.wadso@gmail.com.



Summer Play Date Schedule

Monday, June 22nd at 10 am

Spring Canyon Park - 3156 S Overland Trail, Fort Collins

Monday, July 13th at 10 am

Farm Day at Trista's House in Severance

Monday, July 27th at 10 am

Boardwalk Park/Windsor Lake - 100 North 5th St, Windsor

Monday, August 10th at 10 am

River Fun at Lindsey's House (Picnic Rock area)

For more information, join us on Facebook at
[Facebook.com/groups/mopsfortcollins](https://www.facebook.com/groups/mopsfortcollins)
or Meetup at www.meetup.com/MOPS-Moms-Next-of-Fort-Collins-at-First-Presbyterian-Church/



A CHURCH OF CHARACTER

DEPENDABILITY

The character quality for June 2015 is **DEPENDABILITY** (versus inconsistency). Dependability can be defined as: “Fulfilling what I consented to do, even if it means unexpected sacrifice.”

The dictionary suggests that dependability is being “trustworthy.” We all recognize the trait. Often we say, “You can count on me,” or “A man’s word is his bond.” The character trait of dependability is indispensable in business, in politics, and in home life. When it is lacking, many different problems result. So how can we further develop the character trait of dependability? Consider the following five keys to being a dependable person:

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU PROMISE

The value you place on your commitments will determine your dependability. Recognize the seriousness of giving your word. When you promise someone something, be

realistic. Promising more than you can deliver only prevents others, whether it is co-workers or your children, from believing you in the future. Recognize what your words mean to others, and keep your word, even if circumstances make it difficult.

STARTED! Take the initiative to work through any difficulties you may encounter along the way.

CORRECT MISTAKES

A dependable person recognizes mistakes (and we all make them) and takes responsibility to correct them, even if no one else notices the problem. Your credibility with others is increased if you have a commitment to excellence in all that you do. Make prompt corrections if needed, and stand behind your work and actions at all times.

“Great occasions for serving God come seldom, but little ones surround us daily.”

— St. Frances de Sales

CLARIFY EXPECTATIONS

Ask questions in order to clarify other peoples’ expectations before you agree to something. Don’t make assumptions. Get the details you need in order to do what you promise.

GET IT DONE!

Good intentions will not make you dependable. Think through the process, gather the information, materials and expertise needed and then GET

HAVE A GOOD ATTITUDE

Maintain a good positive attitude in everything that you do. Hopefully, this will influence those around you to also be positive rather than complaining. Look at various challenges as opportunities to learn new skills or have new life experiences. A positive attitude will go a very long way in making life’s path more enjoyable every day!



WELCOME NEW A/V COORDINATOR CHAD PHILLIPS

Chad Phillips is originally from Knoxville TN, where he grew up playing and using his voice in churches all over the southeast. His passion for worship arts lead him to his degree in recording arts, and to work as a recording engineer for Black Bird Studios in Nashville. He is also currently working towards his Masters in fisheries and aquatic microbiology, at CSU, and can be found on the river with his two beautiful little girls.

Please help us welcome Chad to FPC!

“STONE SOUP” TEAM BUILD FOR



Saturday, June 13 is the day that is set aside for FPC to participate in the Stone Soup Team Build for Habitat for Humanity. Those who are willing to help can sign-up on Habitat’s website, FortCollinsHabitat.org. On the website, click on the VOLUNTEER button and follow the instructions. Your group name will be “First Pres.”

On June 13, you only need to bring yourself, water, sun protection, and a willingness to help provide the Gonzales family a new home. Please sign-up on the Habitat website so we can have a good count of the number of volunteers. This helps work planning and the number of box lunches that Habitat will be providing. If anyone has specific dietary requirements, please let Jim Fischer know at fcnative@comcast.net or (970)222-6050.

Even if you don’t have kids age 3–5th grade, you can support Hometown Nazareth Vacation Bible School! Volunteer, sponsor a child’s registration fee, or help us with our shopping list. Bring donations to VBS Headquarters in the Grand Hall on Sundays or to the Church Office during the week. Thank you for your support!

Food Donations Needed:

- raisins and dates
- apricots
- small pretzel sticks or bites
- snack size Ziploc bags
- paper Dixie cups
- cucumbers (fresh)
- 36 oz. containers of plain hummus (fresh)
- 36 oz. containers of vanilla/honey yogurt (fresh)
- 36 oz. containers of plain yogurt (fresh)
- baby carrots (fresh)
- celery (fresh)
- bags of pitas (fresh)



Other Donations/Loans:

- Small lids from toothpaste or milk
- On Loan: area rugs that have a Bible-time appearance
- On Loan: blankets that have a Bible-time appearance
- On Loan: baskets that have a Bible-time appearance
- On Loan: artificial fruit, especially grapes

“THINK ABOUTS”

PONDERING CHANGES THAT MIGHT HELP YOU REACH YOUR GOALS

During the school year, I supervise student teachers at the University of Northern Colorado. When I observe these teachers, I fill out a form that values their “Strengths” and “Weaknesses.” I’ve always found it odd to write down a “weakness” and then hand it to someone to improve upon. Therefore...I have changed my own personal observation form to what *I* think it should say (and yes, I still have my job there!). I write down strengths, and then I write down “think abouts.” I believe that a person will always look at a “think about” and ponder that, but will rarely look at something that says “weakness.”

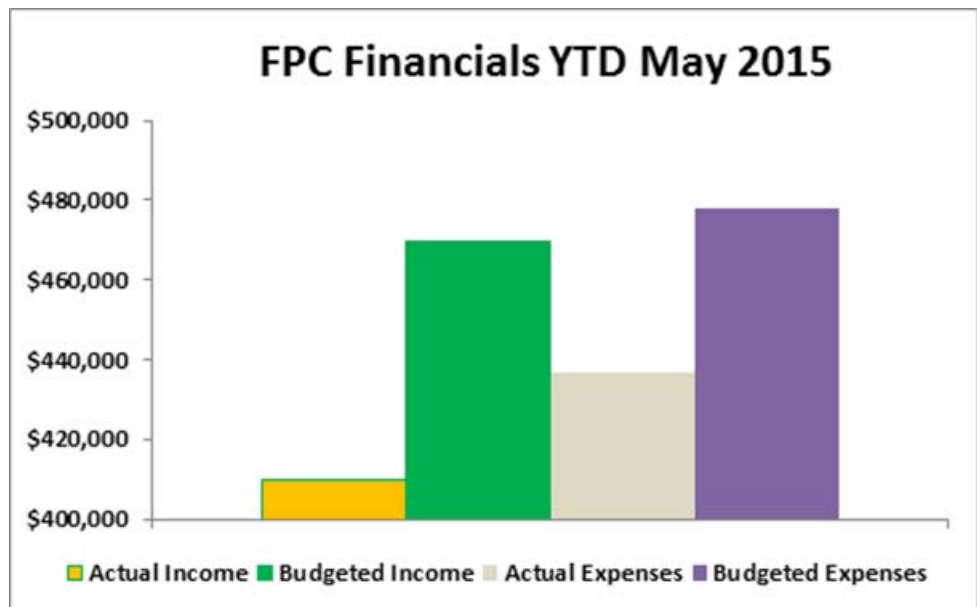
So... I have some “think abouts” for you today. Things that I think are worth pondering, and things that might just aid you in reaching some goals you have set for yourself.

1. Promise yourself that you will talk health, happiness, and prosperity as often as possible.
2. Promise yourself to make all your friends know there is something in them that is important and that you value.
3. Promise to assume best intent...and then *act* with best intent.
4. Promise to be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own success.
5. Promise to be a little kinder than necessary.
6. Promise to give so much time to improving yourself that you have no time to criticize others.
7. Promise to look down on someone *ONLY* if you are helping them up.
8. Promise to remember that if you are irritated by every rub, you will never be polished.
9. Promise to remember that character consists of what you do on the third and fourth tries.

And most importantly...while working to reach goals you have set for yourself, remember that human endurance has an end to it. You need a power source beyond yourself. Be on the lookout every day for what God is doing in your life. He’s there.

—Marge Rice

The Session wants to communicate to the congregation the financial state of affairs of the church on a monthly basis. This chart is meant to do that in a more readily accessible manner. If you have follow-up questions, contact the Business Office.





SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL MUSIC CAMP PRESENTS
THE LOST BOY

Do you remember that Jesus was lost in the temple as a 12-year-old boy? Maybe He was not lost but His earthly parents sure thought He was! During summer Sunday school, we will learn more about Jesus as a kid. How? Through music! Kids, come to Summer Sunday School Music Camp every Sunday beginning May 31 at 9:15 a.m. and by July 26 we will have the musical, "The Lost Boy" by Allen Pote, ready to present in Shepardson Hall between services. Jesus was a boy, being about His Father's business in the Temple.

All children, Pre-K (starting Kindergarten this Fall, 2015) through 5th grade are welcome to be a part of Summer Sunday

School Music Camp. I recognize that families will have vacations and activities during the summer. It is my goal make sure children who are only able to come several times are very comfortable participating the musical on July 26. We will be using several songs from VBS as well as several new songs.

For more information, contact Alice Crawford, acrawford@firstpresfc.org or (970)482-6107.

—Alice Crawford



Periodicals Postage

PAID

Ft Collins, CO 80525

USPS No. 562110

531 S. College Avenue | Fort Collins, CO 80524



(970) 482-6107 | firstpresfc.org

"THE MESSENGER" (U.S.P.S. 562110) is published monthly by First Presbyterian Church, 531 South College Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80524. Periodicals postage paid at Fort Collins, CO. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to 'THE MESSENGER', First Presbyterian Church, 531 South College Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80524. The publisher of this periodical reserve the right to edit all material submitted.

Vacation Bible School begins June 8!

It's not too late to register for Hometown Nazareth VBS at FPC! Join us June 8–12, 9 a.m.–12 p.m. daily for a trip back in time to Jesus' hometown. Kids age 3–graduating 5th grade can visit the Marketplace where there will always be something new to make, taste, or see. Plus

hear stories about Jesus' boyhood from his mother, Mary!



Visit firstpresfc.org for more information and register before June 5.

