

OCTOBER 2026

FPC NEWSLETTER

Deeper in Christ, Further into the World



A KAIROS MOMENT: FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

By Scott Graham

Interim Senior Pastor

Occasionally, God allows us to shift from *chronos* time into *kairos* time.

Chronos is clock time. Seconds, minutes, months, and years. All time is precious (Ephesians 5:16), but *chronos* is, by its nature, “every day.”

On the other hand, *kairos* is a critical window of opportunity. Conditions align for a remarkable, perhaps once-in-a-lifetime chance to bring about lasting change.

It is a time such as Isaiah 43:19, when the LORD declares, “Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?”

May 27, 1827 was a *kairos* moment.

Protestants were able to celebrate the Lord’s Supper for the first time in the city of Baton Rouge. This marked the birth of FPCBR through its original 15 members. For some, it was the first time they had received communion in 25 years! One year later, a congregation of 36 raised \$3000 to purchase a lot and a little wooden chapel. A vision to further God’s Kingdom was birthed.

**“As we enter upon
a new period in the
church’s history we
are not unmindful of
the valiant little band
to whom, just one
hundred years ago,
our church owes its
origin.”**

100th Anniversary

Charge to the Church

1923 brought another *kairos* moment. The congregation voted to purchase a new site and broke ground on our present-day sanctuary in 1926. The cost was \$275,000, a bit over \$5 million in today’s dollars. What I love is that a congregation of just over 600 built a sanctuary that could hold (Lord, and fire marshals willing) 1000 souls. A year after building, the church was up to 900 members.

Here is the charge given to our church at our 100th anniversary:

They have long since passed to their reward, but their hopes and their prayers have found fruition in the church of today. The little group of fifteen has grown into a congregation of more than nine hundred; the modest frame structure which was erected has given place to the splendid edifice in which we worship today; but we serve the same Master and work for the same end - the advancement of His kingdom; and it is our earnest prayer that we may be found zealous and faithful and may not prove unworthy of the trust committed to us.

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 7 Young Adult Worship
 23 Lunch and Laughs with
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 25 Congregational Meeting
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 30 & 31 Created for Connection
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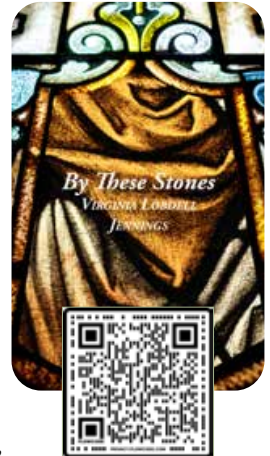
WHAT IS IN THOSE BOXES? *By Cate Heroman*

History and Archives Committee members, Bob Olsson and Pat Canfield, share treasures from the archives with Jill Garner of Story & Participation.

For years, our Church Archivists have quietly cared for the stories of First Presbyterian Church. Bob Olsson has faithfully tended and cataloged our archives, preserving photographs, documents, programs, artifacts, and other treasures earlier generations entrusted to us. Zora Olsson has helped bring that history to life through her research, presentations, and the stories she has shared in our newsletter. Their work, and the work of others who have cared for our history through the years, has preserved an extraordinary record of our church's life.

Now, as we approach our 200th anniversary, we have an opportunity to discover more of what they have preserved. In the months ahead, we hope you'll join us in exploring our story, sharing your own memories, and considering what we want to pass on to the generations who follow us.

Start exploring now. *By These Stones*, Virginia Lobdell Jennings's history of our church, was published for the 150th anniversary in 1977. The book is out of print, but a digital edition is now available as a flipbook.



Browse a few pages, revisit a familiar memory, or discover a story you never knew.

Explore *By These Stones* by scanning the code or visit https://fpcbr.hflip.co/BY_THESE_STONES.

THERE'S A PLACE FOR YOUR GIFTS!

Our 200th anniversary is a milestone for our entire church family, and we need your help to make the celebration happen! There are many ways to be involved, whether you have a special skill to share or simply a willingness to lend a hand.

Love our church's history? Help gather memories, research archives, or share stories. Enjoy writing or editing? Help us tell those stories. Creative hands are needed for crafts, sewing, woodworking, and displays, while musicians, storytellers, photographers, and tech-minded volunteers can contribute their talents as well. We also need people to connect with children and youth, welcome and serve through hospitality, decorate, and provide some muscle for setup and teardown.

You don't need a big commitment to make a difference. You can volunteer for one task or event, a short-term project, the April anniversary weekend only, occasional help, or a larger role. And if you're not sure where you fit, that's okay—we'll help you find a place.

Pick up a volunteer form, tell us what interests you, and return it to the offering plate or to the Connection Center. The QR code connects you to the online interest form. Questions? Contact Kelly Wood at kelly@fpcbr.org.

Join us in making our 200th anniversary a celebration to remember!



BEGINNING OF THE DARK YEARS AND THE CIVIL WAR *By Zora Olsson*

FPC Church History: Continued from the September 2026 Newsletter

The ministry of the Rev. Thomas Castleton marked a high point in First Presbyterian Church's early history. Even as political tensions mounted across the South, the congregation experienced a season of remarkable growth and financial stability. By 1859, membership had reached 139—the largest in the church's history to that point. The church's debt was paid, a manse was purchased, and the pastor's salary was increased.



Yet the prosperity of 1859 stood in sharp contrast to the change and turmoil that was approaching. The following year, Castleton resigned his pastorate and accepted a call to another church. Supply ministers temporarily filled the pulpit as the nation moved toward Civil War.

By 1862, the conflict had reached the church's doorstep. Union forces occupied Baton Rouge, and on August 5, the Battle of Baton Rouge brought fighting to the city. Many residents fled Baton Rouge for the relative safety of the surrounding countryside.

The disruption was reflected in the church's own records. After a report to Presbytery in 1862, there was a gap in the surviving records until Session minutes resumed in 1866. Yet through occupation,

battle and the upheaval of war, the congregation endured. First Presbyterian Church remained intact, ready to begin a new chapter when peace finally returned.

To be continued in next month's issue.

UPCOMING NOVEMBER EVENTS

15	"Surviving the Holidays"
15	Dedication Sunday
29	First Sunday of Advent

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

Rooted & Reaching is selling special 200th anniversary Christmas ornaments to decorate your tree. Look for pre-orders coming soon!



IT'S NOT TOO LATE: "MORE THAN CONQUERORS" WOMEN'S STAY TREAT

What does it actually mean to live with no condemnation? To know that we are beloved children and heirs of God? To trust we are secure in his grip, even when life brings suffering and uncertainty? To truly believe that God is for us? It's not too late to join Women's Ministry for "More Than Conquerors," a weekend retreat centered entirely on Romans 8. Nancy Spiller is planning our worship with Angie Weidel and Angelle High taking the lead singing.

Friday, October 2, 6–9 pm at Sherry Tucker's
Saturday, October 3, 8.30 am–12 pm in Dunham Chapel
(childcare offered for Saturday)



LUNCH AND LAUGHS WITH “AMERICA’S MINISTER OF ENCOURAGEMENT!”



Prime Time is hosting "America's Minister of Encouragement," Dennis Swanberg. Dr. Swanberg is a native of Monroe, Louisiana, and a former pastor. He now passionately embraces his calling to uplift spirits and spread the message of God's hope and love through the transformative power of laughter. His performances resonate with warmth, authenticity, and an unwavering commitment to instilling joy in the hearts of all who encounter his infectious humor.

Lunch begins at 11.30 am in the Reception Room. The program begins at 12.30 pm in the Sanctuary.

First Come, First Served.

We have just 90 slots available for lunch in the Reception Room.

Register early to reserve your spot. Bacon & Fig will prepare lunch:

salad, jambalaya, vegetables, bread, and dessert. The cost is \$35.

Scan the code or visit fpcbr.org to register by 11.59 pm on Thursday, October 15.



CREATED FOR CONNECTION COUPLES' WORKSHOP

Friday, October 30 & Saturday, October 31, 2026



“Created for Connection” couples’ workshops are “Hold Me Tight” workshops for Christian couples based on EFT, Dr. Sue Johnson’s Emotionally Focused Therapy. These experiential learning workshops are presented in a Friday afternoon—Saturday format. The workshops provide a context for couples to work together on designed structured exercises.

This program will help you ignite your romantic fire by experiencing new ways of connecting.

SPECIAL RATE FOR MEMBERS OF FPC: Please be sure to choose the “First Presbyterian Church Couples’ Price” option if you are a member of First Presbyterian Church. The fee for FPC members is \$175. The church will pay the remainder of your fee in support of your commitment to working on your marriage! Scan the code to reserve your spot.



GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE! BLOOD DRIVE, OCTOBER 4

Join us for our upcoming blood drive on October 4 from 8 am—1 pm. The LifeShare truck will be in the gated, church parking lot off of Convention St. Your generous donation can help save lives in our community. Please consider rolling up your sleeve and making a difference!



QUARTERLY STATEMENTS ARRIVING SOON

Keep an eye on your inbox—quarterly giving statements arrive soon. It’s a great time to reflect on the impact you’ve made this year. If you’ve made a pledge, now’s the perfect time to fulfill it. Every gift fuels our ministry and mission. Thank you for being a part of God’s economy!

REFORMATION SUNDAY CELEBRATION OCTOBER 25

Kirkin' O' the Tartans October 25



Every year on Reformation Sunday, we celebrate our Presbyterian heritage. In this service, we focus on what mattered most to our Scottish forebears: not ethnicity, but the gospel of Jesus Christ. From Scotland, we have inherited a passion for Jesus Christ as he is known to us in the Scriptures. Whatever

our ethnicity, let's celebrate the Scottish roots of our Presbyterian faith by wearing plaids, kilts and tweeds at our one 10 am Kirkin' O' the Tartans service on October 25. A congregational meeting will take place during the service for the purpose of electing next year's elders and deacons.

Calling All Clans!

Our Kirkin' O' the Tartans clan list is updated each year. If you'd like your Scottish clan called, please communicate its name by dropping a note in the offering plate, calling the church, or emailing Jaci (jaci@fpcbr.org) by October 19.

Congregational Meeting October 25: Elder and Deacon Election

The session has called for a meeting of the congregation during the 10 am Kirkin' O the Tartans service Sunday, October 25. The sole purpose of the meeting is the election of elders and deacons for the class of 2029. The congregational nominating committee, after receiving and prayerfully evaluating suggestions from the congregation during the summer, will nominate:

Elders — Class of 2029: Pat Canfield, Brett Furr, Ross Henry, Ron Hicks, Ben Hunter, Scott Kirkpatrick, Hank Mills, Hans Othmer, Donna Saurage, and Richard Setliff.

Deacons — Class of 2029: Rosemary Beall, James Burcalow, Jackie Cagley, Melissa Fabré, Ryan Harrigil, Arralee Hays, Aaron Keating, Caitlyn Klingman, Aaron Stratman, and Kaitlyn Wilson.

Register for the Kirkin' Lunch



Join us for a BBQ lunch in the Gym immediately following the Kirkin' service. Lunch will be smoked chicken, baked beans, mac n' cheese, roll and brownies. Register online at fpcbr.org. Cost per plate is \$15 for all ages.



SERMON TEXTS

Texts are subject to change.

OCTOBER 4

Luke 6:17–26

OCTOBER 11

Luke 6:27–36

OCTOBER 18

Luke 7:18–23

OCTOBER 25

To be determined

DEATHS

August 31, 2026
Jerry Stovall

September 23, 2026
Nancy Fogleman

DEDICATION SUNDAY IS NOVEMBER 15

Stewarding God's Grace

On November 15, we want to rededicate ourselves as a reply to Christ's beautiful grace. We'll make our financial commitments, and we'll also offer places where we might like to serve. Estimate of Giving cards will be in the pew racks and online at fpcbr.org.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NEWS AND EVENTS

Paid Childcare Workers Needed!

Calling all ladies at First Presbyterian Church who might like to work occasionally in paid childcare! If you are interested, visit fpcbr.org to sign up and indicate what days and times might interest you.

Welcome to the Lord's Table!



What a joyful milestone! On Sunday, September 13, this group of smiling faces met with our Session and were received as ready to participate in Communion. We celebrate with them as they grow in faith and take this meaningful step in the life of our church. Pictured from left to right: Emmie Stratman, Alice Maddox, Georgia Ann Klingman, Ellie Kate Botos, Lydia Bailey, Hazel Maddox, Claudius Barr, Sarah Grace Meredith, Sam Stratman, Benjamin Ferrari, and Bodhi McCall.

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS AND EVENTS

Confirmation Elder Breakfast

October 25

Our 6th grade Confirmation students and their sponsoring elders are invited to breakfast before Kirkin' O' the Tartan. Join us 9.30 to 10 am in the Reception Room.

Middle School Takes on Surge!



Our middle schoolers had a blast at Surge on September 2—laser tag, lots of laughs, and some friendly competition!

BIRTHS

September 10, 2026
Theodore Grayton Zoghbi
Parents are Bonnie Kate & Max

September 20, 2026
John Todd Charlet
Parents are Lauren & John Luke

BAPTISMS

September 13, 2026
Robert Milburn Vick
Parents are Stephanie & Stephen

Janie Rose Landreneau
Parents are Devyn & Jean Paul

September 20, 2026
Clara Estelle Neely
Parents are Sandi & Christopher

VOLUNTEER IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Contact Candace Walker
(candace@fpcbr.org) or visit our
Opportunities to Serve
webpage to see how you can
volunteer to help in the
So Loved nursery.

REACHING OUT. BEYOND OUR WALLS.

As we approach our 200th anniversary, we celebrate not only where God has brought us, but how he continues to work through us. Our gifts to mission partners tell part of the story of who we are—a church *rooted* in faith and *reaching* outward, connected to God's work in Baton Rouge and around the world. Each gift represents a partnership, a ministry strengthened, and an opportunity to share Christ's love.

Your generous donations allow our reach to extend across our community, nation, and around the world. Year to date, we have sent out \$290,865!

One of those partners is the Philemon Project in Beirut, Lebanon. Through its two GROW Centers, the Philemon Project serves vulnerable Lebanese children, Syrian refugees, and migrant families through Christ-centered early childhood education, adult mentoring, and food support. Children have a safe, nurturing place to learn and grow, while their families receive practical support, encouragement, and the opportunity to experience the love of Christ.

That same commitment shows up right here in Baton Rouge. The Catholic-Presbyterian Apartments provides affordable, independent living for low-income seniors low-income seniors with FPC providing financial assistance, Bible study volunteers, and prayer support. Providence Road Outreach Mission builds mentoring relationships and gives young people in North Baton Rouge opportunities to develop responsibility, character, and a sense of purpose. Through Created for Connection, couples receive practical, Christ-centered tools to strengthen their marriages and learn how to repair and reconnect when relationships become strained. Missions isn't only something that happens far away—it is also an investment in the lives of our neighbors, families, and community.

These numbers tell a story. They tell the story of who we are and how we are connected to God's plan—rooted in the faithfulness of generations before us and reaching forward to serve our neighbors, strengthen Christ's church, and share the gospel near and far. This is Rooted & Reaching in action.

INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP PARTNERS HARVEST FESTIVAL

Friday, October 30

International Friendship Partners (IFP) invites you to a Harvest Festival on Friday, October 30 from 6 to 8 pm at the Bealls' (Kyle, Rosemary, Nathan, Asher and Abigail - 1452 Glenmore Ave). This has become an annual IFP favorite! We'll play games, introduce internationals to some local culture, learn about theirs, and have a costume contest. The event will be catered but if you love to bake, our Cake Walk is the perfect place for your contribution. Please email LeeAnn Kozan to register or if you would like more information (leeannkozan@gmail.com).

FRONT YARD BIKES BASH

Sunday, October 25

Join our mission partner Front Yard Bikes for the Front Yard Bike Bash on Sunday, October 25, from 3–6 pm! The afternoon begins with a bike parade through Mid-City, including a stop for snacks and tune-ups, before returning to Independence Park for food, refreshments and fun. Adult registration is \$40, and kids ride free. Come enjoy an afternoon on two wheels while supporting Front Yard Bikes and its work to help Baton Rouge youth develop healthy, fulfilling and productive lives. Your participation helps provide programs, educational opportunities and meaningful connections for young people in our community. Details and registration information online at frontyardbikes.com/bikebash.



*Philemon GROW Center,
Beirut, Lebanon.*

CHAPEL & SANCTUARY FLOWERS

The Chapel and Sanctuary flowers are given . . .

. . . to the glory of God by
Tricia & Donovan Davis on
October 4.

. . . in loving memory with
thanksgiving for
Jonathan David Pugsley
honoring his birth date of
October 17 by his parents
and sister, David, Cathy, and
Catherine Pugsley, on
October 11.

. . . in loving memory of
Mary Ogle by Pat Canfield,
Brittany & Jamy Comeaux,
and family on October 18.

. . . to the glory of God and in
loving memory of
Mr. & Mrs. Don R. McAdams,
Mr. & Mrs. James C. McAdams,
Mr. & Mrs. James S. Carr, and
Miss Inez McDougald, by the
McAdams family on
October 25.

Chapel and Sanctuary flowers
may be donated by contacting
Kathy Mullins (225.603.4735).





ROOTED & REACHING, *continued from page 1*

What a wonderful word for us today, for now in our generation, a *kairos* moment beckons. A congregation that has been *rooted* deeply in Christ for 200 years can *reach* further into the world like few others. The ability to increase our local mission impact, as well as provide increased opportunity for our counselors, youth programs, theological education, spiritual formation and a vibrant Christian witness in the heart of our downtown is before us.

Between campus expansion and preparing for our anniversary, there are dozens, if not hundreds, of ways to get involved!

God is doing a new thing! Let's join together and follow him in it!

Scott

