

FPC FIRST PRESS

First Presbyterian Church | Volume XXX, Issue 3 Jan 18, 2026 - Jan 25, 2026

Dear Church,

On Sunday, we celebrated the 210th birthday of the church. It was a wonderful day to share lunch together in fellowship, celebrate the outgoing elders and deacons, and recognize new officers who were ordained and installed in worship. I am so grateful to Presbyterian Women, the First Presbyterian Foundation, and the Congregational Life Committee for making the day possible.

I love our long history. Our church has seen so much. It existed during the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Industrial Revolution, the Great Depression, the First and Second World Wars, and the Civil Rights Movement. Over the course of history, I am sure our church landed on the right and wrong side of many issues, as all churches do. But what has remained is an unwavering faith in Jesus Christ and a commitment to serve—from the heart of the city to the ends of the earth.

I look forward to being a small part of our bright future. Let us, this week in our prayers, thank God for those who have gone before. And let us begin praying for all who will join us in the coming years. May our faithfulness and service continue.

In faith, hope, and love,
Tara



Sunday Worship Times

Early Service 8:30 a.m.
Late Service 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.

Lectionary

January 18:

Isa. 49:1-7
Ps. 40:1-11
1 Cor. 1:1-9
John 1:29-42

January 25:
Isa. 9:1-4
Ps. 27:1, 4-9
1 Cor. 1:10-18
Matt. 4:12-23

The Pastor on Call

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Faith in Action:

One Youth's Gift of Access and Belonging

My initial inspiration for the ramp was my brother James with special needs. Even though he is a member of the church congregation, he is often excluded from participating with the rest of the children because of his mobility challenges, such as when all the kids sit in the chancel during the Christmas pageant. I wanted to fix this. I wanted to make sure that he and others; guest performers during services with mobility issues, would be able to fully participate with their respective groups.



My process began with contacting my scoutmaster, Trevor Spear, who helped me throughout this entire project. He and I conducted a site walkthrough last spring, and determined with Russell that a portable ramp composed of four segments would be easiest to transport and install. I then reached out to a professional architect, Karl Winstead, and arranged to do another walkthrough with him to finalize the plans. He then graciously agreed to do a professional set of drawings, ensuring that the entire ramp is fully ADA compliant. After I received the drawings, I set out developing a proposal. I thought through all the potential challenges of the project, including what materials would be required, how I would feed the scouts present, and how I would ensure we had a great final product. After putting the proposal together, I presented it for approval to my Scoutmaster, my troop committee chair, FPC, and the local scouting council. Once each of these parties approved it I was ready to begin construction and acquiring materials.

A key component of FPC's requirements for the ramp was that it be made out of white oak to match the existing woodwork within the sanctuary. Since white oak is fairly heavy, in order to reduce the overall weight of the ramp, we decided to build an aluminum frame underneath the wood. Mr. Spear helped me get in touch with a local welder, Jeff Hurr, and he graciously helped us weld the ramp frame together. Welding was one of the coolest experiences of my life, as it allowed the construction to proceed much faster than it would if we were building it out of wood, and was also a unique experience that I hadn't done before. Scouts were able to help with measuring and cutting the metal pieces while Mr. Hurr welded them together. We did get to try some welds on scrap metal, but didn't weld the actual ramp since aluminum is notoriously difficult to weld.

Once the inner skeleton was constructed, I set out to lead a group of scouts in constructing the wooden paneling that would go over aluminum. This included the floor of the ramp, all the sides, and the trim that covers the plywood ends. Measuring this was quite difficult, as there are lots of complex angles involved in making sure that the wood lines up, but it was a very enjoyable process. We were able to measure and cut all of the wood parts over a couple of workdays, and begin to fit them together.

There were two main unforeseen challenges with this project: acquiring the trim pieces and the finishing process. We ultimately couldn't acquire the trim pieces in white oak, so we decided to go with red oak for a similar grain look and then stain it dark to match the dark woodwork within the sanctuary. The finishing also took much longer than expected, as we ended up putting four coats of polyurethane on the entire thing. This was challenging in December as it was often too cold to apply the polyurethane so we had to wait for the temperature to warm up.

Overall leading a group of scouts in building this Eagle Project was an incredibly rewarding experience and I was very glad to give back to a church family that has given me so much. Although it was initially inspired by James's own challenges with mobility, I hope that it will be used for many years to come to help many people fully enjoy our wonderful church.

Davis Baker

Let's be the church together... online.

Look up members in our church directory

Update your personal information

Give online - one time & recurring gifts

View giving history & print giving statements

Make & keep track of pledges

[Sign up or sign in](#) at onrealm.org



There is an exciting change coming to our church community. We will have a new app for our church that will enable us to better connect with one another, see the church's events and register for them, access a more complete church directory, see your giving in real time, and much more. Our new platform is called Realm.

By now, you should have received an invite to create an account in our new online community. This email will have come to you from "onrealmmail." It may have ended up in your spam folder at first, so please look there. Use the link in that email and follow the steps to create a password. Once you have an account, you can sign in.

Please complete these steps by January 22, 2026, as we hope to transfer completely off our old system soon. If you have any questions, please contact Jean Suber, Communications Director at the church office at 919-821-5750. In addition, Tyler and Dr. Bulger will be available during the church school hour this week if you have trouble getting connected.



[FACILITY USE REQUEST FORM](#)

As part of our ongoing commitment to good stewardship and clear communication, the church is implementing a new Facilities Use Request Form for all groups and ministries wishing to use church spaces. This simple tool will help us coordinate schedules, care for our shared facilities, and support the many ways our buildings are used for worship, fellowship, mission, and community outreach.

By gathering requests in one consistent format, church staff and leaders will be better equipped to plan throughout the year, anticipate needs, and avoid scheduling conflicts. The form also helps ensure that each group has the resources they need—whether that's room setup, technology, or custodial support—so gatherings can run smoothly.

All requests should be directed to our Facilities Manager, Russell Clark. A downloadable request form and a digital submission form are available on our website under the Campus Facilities page. Please complete the form and submit it online, or download and complete the form and return it to the church office and place it in the mail slot located on the door of Russell Clark's office.

Thank you for your cooperation as we take this step toward more thoughtful planning and faithful use of the spaces God has entrusted to us.



College Scholarship Application Now Available

Due by March 1, 2026

Offered by Presbyterian Women of New Hope Presbytery

Martha Ministry Newsletter

There they made him (Jesus) a supper; and Martha served...John 12:2

The congregation learned this Sunday that our friends Bradley Kraemer, Jan Barwick and Dick Moehring need our prayers as they journey through illness and surgery.

It was a joy to see Anita Enzor sitting in her pew on Sunday. The great and good news is that she is back at home after being in the healthcare unit at Glenaire.

We are saddened to learn that Karl Zinsmeister's oldest brother, Al, passed away on Tuesday in Rochester, Minnesota. Our prayers for peace and comfort go out to his family.



Volume VI, Issue 1 | January 8, 2026

Happy New Year, Wonderful Church Family!

I am very excited about the year ahead and the many ways we can expand our effort to love all of our neighbors, both in the community and world at large, in 2026.

I encourage you all to dream big with me about Missions and Outreach at FPC, which means I would love to hear any ideas you have about ways we can be more involved in hands-on missions in the community.

And, if you have a desire to join the FPC Mission Committee as an at-large member and learn more about the awesome things FPC does to help those in need, please reach out to one of the Mission Committee members or me and let us know of your interest. The 2026 Mission Committee is comprised of the following individuals:

Kathy Johnson – Staff Liaison	Ed Finley – 2026 Moderator and Elder
Nancy Austin – Vice Moderator and Elder	Janice Skelly – 2025 Moderator and Elder
Carol Anne Moehring – Deacon	Fran Yohman – Deacon
George Alexander – Deacon	Chris Northup - At-Large-Member
Margaret Peacock – At-Large-Member	Bill Miller - At-Large-Member
Keith Sykes -At-Large-Member	

MLK Day is around the corner on January 19th. I looked for organizations that were open on that day that we could partner with, to have a church-wide day of service, but was unsuccessful. I encourage you all to honor Dr. King's legacy of community action by organizing your own project. Some ideas might be to collect food items in your neighborhood, organize a project with your classmates or work colleagues, or perhaps help care for the environment by cleaning up a park or a neighbor's yard.

I look forward to the many ways that together, we can.

Many thanks for all you do to support Outreach and Missions at First Presbyterian – I am grateful for each and every one of you.

With gratitude and rejoicing!

Kathy



Mission Highlights



Catholic Charities
of the Diocese of Raleigh

Wake Relief, established in 1975 as an outreach ministry of Christ Episcopal Church is committed to providing emergency food to Wake County residents in need. They aim to empower clients with a sense of dignity and abundance and believe that no one should have to choose between paying bills and providing nutritious food for their family. Clients are referred by Wake County Social Services, area churches, school counselors or local outreach organizations. Referred clients receive one week's worth of nutritional groceries based on the size of their family once every 30 days.

Wake Relief depends on churches, companies, individuals, and civic organizations for food donations. All grant monies received go towards the purchase of food and paying rent for their pantry space. Wake Relief annually receives a grant from the FPC Mission budget. Additionally, FPC member Jane McMillan delivers FPC shares donations once a month. FPC member Jane Anderson represents our congregation on the Wake Relief Board of Directors.

Now located at 4 N. Blount St in Downtown Raleigh, Wake Relief operates as a choice food pantry. Their new space is bigger and allows clients to get what they truly need instead of what others think they need. And, they no longer have to share space with anyone. They were previously located on Tucker Street in Glenwood South in the old Ravenscroft School building and shared space with The Diaper Train.

Wake Relief has always been and continues to be an all-volunteer operation. They do not have a paid administrator. If you would like to volunteer with Wake Relief, call 919-307-8748 and leave a voice message. Shifts are 3 hours in length. They are open Monday & Tuesday from 1-3 pm, Wednesdays from 10am-Noon and every 4th Saturday from 10am-Noon.

FPC Shares | January Canned Fruit | Applesauce

Bring this item and/or your favorite non-perishable food donations to the church. There are FPC Shares receptacles on both sides of the Edge Lobby and in the Lisa Ham Gathering Space outside the sanctuary. Thank you!

Catholic Parish Outreach (CPO), the largest food pantry in Eastern NC, is celebrating 48 years of serving the Triangle community. CPO is a program of Catholic Charities, a 501c3 non-profit organization. In 1977, Sister Ann Joseph and Sister Louise Hill, from the Order of the Daughters of Charity, were sent to Raleigh to start a Catholic Charities program to provide direct services to the poor in downtown Raleigh. Recognizing the need for assistance was greater than two individuals could provide, they enlisted the support of the local Catholic community. As a result, St. Joseph, St. Rafael, Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Lourdes, and St. Mary parishes joined to form Catholic Charities.

What began in a converted barbershop moved in 2008 to a 16,000 sq. Ft. warehouse at 2013 Raleigh Blvd. to accommodate growth and demand. CPO provides emergency food assistance and, when possible, small children's clothing (newborn – preschool) and maternity clothing. In 2024, CPO served approximately 125-150 families per day with 1,900 volunteers, 3 full-time, and 2 part-time employees. They distributed over 3 million pounds of groceries to residents of Wake, Franklin, and Johnston counties.

Their mission is to serve our community's needy families and help combat food insecurity. Recent local hunger statistics indicate that 25% of NC children under 5 go to bed hungry, 2,200+ children are registered in Wake County public schools as homeless, 170,200 people in NC receive emergency food assistance every week, and 80% of NC households with children who receive food assistance do not know where their next meal is coming from.

CPO is open from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Families receive approximately one week of groceries and are eligible to receive assistance once every 30 days. No referral is needed.

FPC supports CPO with food donations from FPC shares, which John Thomas faithfully delivers monthly.