



Dear Friends,

During my time off in the month of July, my husband Chris and I traveled to Michigan for a family memorial service. It was my first time to visit Michigan, and I was delighted by all of the greenery and different kinds of trees (Christmas trees on the side of the road!). As a second-generation Kansan who spent lots of time in Wichita growing up, I was hopeful to see one of my favorite hallmarks of Midwestern summers. Surely enough, at around dusk little bursts of light would start appearing around the ground as amazing little insects began their nightly show. I adore fireflies (or lightening bugs depending on where you are from). My husband Chris actually asked me multiple times if I was alright because of the gasps I would let out when I spotted one. What a curious, fascinating creature which makes light from its own body. They do so to attract mates and communicate with each other, using a reaction of various enzymes and oxygen to produce bioluminescence.

As we watched and waited for the momentary flashes of light to appear, I found myself wondering out loud, "Do you think they know how cool they are? Do they know extraordinary what they do is?" Now, I know that insects don't quite have the self-reflection that we humans have, nor do they have a concept of "cool" or "extraordinary". But it did occur to me in thinking about this question that their light comes from the opposite side of their bodies than their eyes. They cannot see their own light very well, and they cannot possibly see the lines they create while they are making them.

It made me think about how this is actually true for all of us. Like a firefly, we are at a poor vantage point to see our own light. It is much easier to see the light of others around us than to see the luminescence of our own visibility and impact on the world around us. We have to live in faith that our efforts to be light make a difference to the world around us. Perhaps there are those who are affected by our light who we will never see or come to know. Those fireflies certainly didn't know how much joy and wonder they were bringing to my heart.

What might we learn from this metaphor of fireflies? First, don't be overly concerned if you have a hard time seeing your own light. I think that is normal, and part of what it means to live in faith by following Jesus and surrendering our light to God's will and not our own. Living in justice and mercy and love of God and neighbor are always acts of worship. They are worth it whether or not we can see how they glow.

Second, we need each other's perspective and encouragement. Is there someone you know who shines brightly and you have always assumed they knew it? My hunch is that they may struggle with self-doubt just like any of us. Point out the light that you see in those around you. In doing so give thanks to God who shines through us as God's beloved creation. I bet you will make someone's day, and perhaps even be the reason they don't give up or fall into discouragement. May God make us into a people who celebrate and support each other as we endeavor to shine our light.

With love,  
Pastor Ashley

## LITTLE FREE LIBRARY



Thank you to everyone who has donated books and Bibles to our Little Free Library. If you

are looking for a book to read, be sure to check out our library in the Geneva Room. Feel free to borrow a book to enjoy! We are always in need of

## SESSION UPDATE

Session met July 27, 2025. Here are some highlights.

- We all enjoyed the All-American Bar-BQ Potluck. Next month's Potluck will be the Salad Spectacular.
- UOP students will helping us with various tasks on the UOP Service Day, August 21.
- We will be hosting the Presbytery meeting at FPC on September 6.
- Our church emails are now being

## THANK YOU DOUG & CHERYL HUNT

Thank you to Doug and Cheryl Hunt for your leadership in the July 13th and 20th worship services.



## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Doug Hunt August 17

## AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

Gail & George Herron August 13  
Janet & James Sepiol August 19

## WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

August 3 Craig Holmes  
August 10 Gretchen Loudon  
August 17 Carol Dietrich  
August 24 Gail Herron  
August 31

## COFFEE & POTLUCK SCHEDULE

August 3 Tola Eley  
August 10 Carol Dietrich  
August 17 Jane Knoop  
August 24 Gail Herron  
August 31

## SUNDAY SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

08/03/2025 - No Sunday School  
08/10/2025 - No Sunday School  
08/17/2025 - Sylvia Cavanaugh  
08/24/2025 - Autumn Alessio  
08/31/2025 - Tola Eley

*If you are interested in helping to serve or volunteer, please contact the office.*



## MIDTOWN FOOD PANTRY



**We open on the second and  
fourth Wednesdays  
of each month from 2-3pm.**

The pantry has become a very appreciated place in our neighborhood and averages 80-100 shoppers during the hour it's open. Thank you to all the volunteers who make this event so successful. Some work behind the scenes donating food or money, setting up tables, shopping, preparing food bags and dividing eggs, bringing in plastic/cloth bags routinely, etc. Others man the tables, greet those who come, sort clothes, clean up after each event. We should all be proud of what we've created!

## SCHOLARSHIP 2025-2026



The Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that two scholarships were awarded this year. Both are to returning applicants. Matt Boga, who is a member of Reality church, is attending Western Seminary majoring in Ministry and Leadership. Chase Hanker (Tola Eley's grandson) is attending The University of Nevada Reno and majoring in Criminal Justice. We congratulate them and wish them much success.

## SEPTEMBER WINDOW

The deadline for submission of articles for the September 2025 Window is August 20th.

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE AUGUST 2025

We are already full blown into summer here at First Pres., and it seems almost into Fall. Most schools have started by the time you read this! Remember the "good old days" when school started right after Labor Day? I think they call this progress, but I, for one, don't always like progress. The good news is that the weather has been like Fall (mid 80's) but I hear that this will not last!

Alice Callistro in State College, PA, states it is unbearably hot there, with high humidity (my sister in Iowa says the temperature there is 95 degrees with 90% humidity making the heat index at 105 degrees!!) Alice misses us and our dry climate and sends hugs to us all. We miss you also Alice!! Stay cool!!

Mary Lou Hover thinks it has been extra warm in Salem, Oregon also, but she says it has rained a lot. This does not help her arthritis, but she has just started new medications. She thanks the Lord for her new meds and for showing her a new hobby of coloring sheets that relaxes her and takes her mind off the pain. She also misses us greatly.

Frances McPherson is now back in Stockton and would love to hear from us. She is at Noble Care Home, 2740 N California St, Stkn 95204. Prayers, a card or a visit would be much appreciated.

Cecelia Muller is very happy to have her daughter staying with her for a while. Cecelia lives in an almond orchard by herself and has family who come to visit every week, but to have overnight company is heavenly!! May God Bless you both with wonderful memories.

May you all have a wonderful rest of the summer and thank God continually for all our blessings. The bible tells us to ask God for what we need, and He will provide. What the world needs right now is God's wisdom, understanding, comfort, love and mercy. Lord, show us how we can help make this world a better place for everyone. Amen

Sylvia Cavanaugh  
Fellowship Committee

**Thank you to our volunteers for the month of July.**

- ♦ Worship assistants: Gretchen Loudon, Gail Herron, Carol Dietrich, Craig Holmes
- ♦ Sunday School assistants: Tola Eley, Yeji Cha, Autumn Alessio
- ♦ Coffee hour setup volunteers: Jane, Carol

**UOP STUDENT SERVICE DAY  
TO COME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN!  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 21 from 9am-1pm**

Volunteers needed to help host students please contact Holly or the office to sign up! We are excited to welcome them back and will need volunteers from our church to help host the students as they complete projects around our campus. If you are available to volunteer and would like to be a part of this fun day with UOP students, please contact the office.



**Family Promise will be here**

**August 31 to September 7**

Please contact Cheryl to sign up for bringing meals, overnight coverage, and enjoying time hosting the families who will be staying here on campus.



*First Presbyterian Church is committed to loving and serving all people, including those from diverse generations, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientations, and life experiences.*

*Whatever your story, you are welcomed by Jesus Christ  
And by his church family.*