



# First Press

*Weekly Newsletter*

First Presbyterian Church

January 18, 2026

## Our Pastor

Rev. Dr. Helen Hutchison

Email: [helen@firstpreslawrence.org](mailto:helen@firstpreslawrence.org)

Helen will be in the office Monday through Thursday.

## Our Mission

We are a community of Christ's disciples who celebrate God's inclusive love by ministering to one another and the world.

## Church Office Hours

9 am to 3 pm Monday through Friday.

## Welcome!

We encourage everyone to come as you are, be who you are, and be in community with us! Whether you are joining us virtually or in-person, as a long-time member or a first-time guest, we are happy to have you with us anytime! If you are new to First Presbyterian Church, please let us know you are here by signing the **Friendship Pad**: If you are worshipping with us online either live or recorded please **email us at [linda@firstpreslawrence.org](mailto:linda@firstpreslawrence.org)** letting us know you joined us in worship. We look forward to getting to know you. If you are interested in membership at FPC please talk with Pastor Helen.

**Cards of Encouragement:** Blue cards found in the pew rack ~ please put in offering plate and we will send them out in the mail.

## Youth Activities

- **Sponsoring Souper Bowl of Caring** on February 8<sup>th</sup>. We will also have a Pregame Tailgate Event following worship. A can of soup (or two or three) will be your ticket to the event. The Chiefs might not be in the Super Bowl this year, but hungry children are still in the game. Bring your can of soup and cheer for your team – whoever gets to play this year!

**Do you have something you want to add to the Youth calendar?** Need more information? Contact Kelly Jones-Grube at 785-691-7445 or [Kellygal78@hotmail.com](mailto:Kellygal78@hotmail.com)

## Children Sunday School

- **Sunday School Classes for Children**
  - Our Children gather for fun and adventure in Room 14 at 9:15 am. Everyone is welcome to be a part of the fun!

## Adult and Youth Sunday School

- **Earth Care Forum for 2026** begins on January 18. Earth Care and the Kansas Legislature presented by Zach Pistora, Director of Kansas Sierra Club and Kansas State Legislature Lobbyist. Zach will share earth care legislation occurring and pending in the state legislature. He will also suggest legislation that needs to be initiated.

**Pastor Helen's Monday Class** is meeting on Monday afternoons at 2 pm in the Fireside Room. They are currently studying the Lord's Prayer. Everyone is welcome!

**Volunteers needed to work in the church office.**

Thanks to everyone who is helping in the church office. I have placed a sign-up sheet in the narthex showing 2-hour shifts. I will keep the sign-up sheet updated as we move forward. Thank you so much for your willingness to help me out! Gratefully, Linda Bridges

**Coming up in January!**

**January 18** Star words are still available in the Church Office if you would like to have one. They will also be available on Sunday morning.

**January 19** The Church Office will be closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday

**Our Stewardship Campaign, "What Is that in Your Hand"** has been successful in several ways. As of December 29, we have received 90 pledges totaling \$405,448.00 and we are grateful! We also have only a few missing pieces to our puzzles. That is an apt description of our lives together – we all have missing pieces and must depend on each other to fill in the gaps. In addition to returning your puzzle pieces and making your pledges for 2026, you told us how you are or would like to participate in the life and ministry of First Presbyterian Church. If you indicated new ways you would like to be a part of the church, you will be hearing from someone about how you can do that. So, remember, just because you don't recognize the phone number it might be someone offering an opportunity for service, fellowship, friendship, and/or ministry!

**Oh, the weather outside might be frightful** - During this season when the weather can change without warning, the Session has determined that if the Lawrence School District closes schools, then the Church Office will also be closed. In the event of a storm system affecting us over a weekend, please check our website [www.firstpreslawrence.org](http://www.firstpreslawrence.org) or our Facebook page at First Presbyterian Church Lawrence KS for information about building closures and or changes to worship times.



**Welcoming First Time Guests to FPC** One of the functions of the Welcome Committee is to welcome new guests at FPC. This used to be done by the "Muggers" who delivered information about us and a FPC mug. When we ran out of mugs, we decided to change to delivering a bag, and the name was changed to the "Bag Brigade". A "Bagger" is contacted by the office if a delivery is needed in the week they volunteered to deliver. The office organizes the Bag and the delivery information for the Bagger. The Bagger then

welcomes a new guest with a Bag with information about our programs. It is as easy as that. This is a volunteer opportunity that does not require heavy lifting, cooking, gardening, cleaning or committee meetings! Join our Bag Brigade! Contact the Church office (785-843-4171) if this is your cup of tea. Another thing EVERYONE can do is encourage a new guest to provide contact information so we can deliver the Bag. We can also provide a Bag for pick up if they provide an email address. Thank you!

**FPC has Medical Equipment to share!** In December we loaned eight items to folks who were mostly having surgery of some kind. We also had 16 items returned from folks who are finished using them and wanted someone else to have the opportunity to borrow something. We have walkers, toilet risers, canes, peddlers, bath chairs, transfer benches, knee braces, crutches and commodes, to name a few. If you are in need or know someone who is, be sure to let them know this service is available. These items are expensive to purchase – especially for only a short time! Thanks for getting the word out. We also accept most donations.

**Just Food** The barrels in the Narthex and at the South Entrance are waiting for your donation of non-perishable items for Just Food. During this uncertain time many people find themselves having to choose between food and medicine or housing or heat. Help them make a better choice! Thank you.

**Family Promise News** Many things are happening in Family Promise these days. FPC has just completed their host week with Connect Church. Our youth made Stuffed Shells, Salad, and Brownies for our Family Promise dinner on Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. Eva Alley, Jan Roth, and Lois Dutcher hosted seven adults, 1 youth (14 years old), 5 children (5-6 years old), and 5 children (1 year and under). Nearly a full house at Mount Hope! FPC also provided \$100 worth of toilet paper, paper towels, garbage bags, and all-purpose cleanser. Thank you to all who helped in any way and especially to our youth! They loved all of your offerings.

**Mount Hope Enrichment Activities** – This is a new program of Family Promise held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. This is a chance to share skills, laughter, and learning with the families in the program.

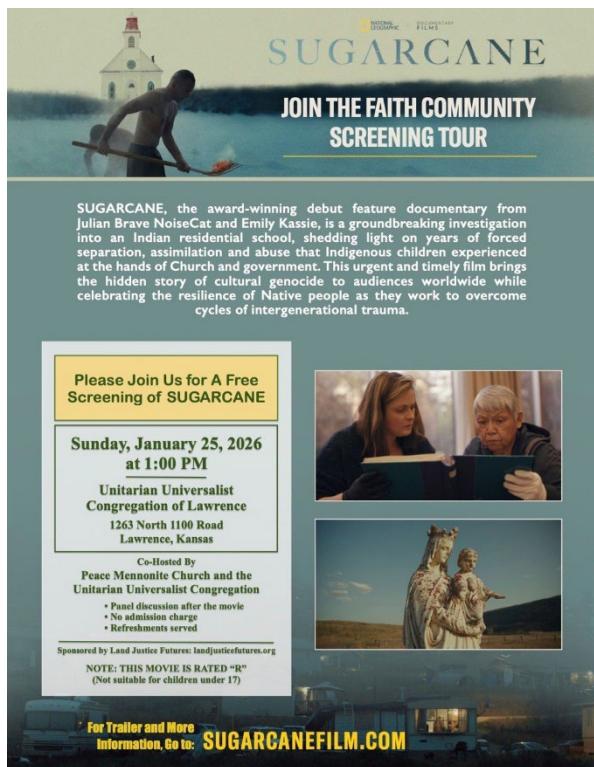
- The Second Tuesday is cooking night. Volunteers will guide families in preparing a dish together. Please note the recipe or dish you plan to share.
- The Fourth Tuesday is Games, Reading or Movie Night. Family Promise has games, books, and movies available at Mount Hope. If you want to bring your own selection, please let us know.

Each evening will be planned around this schedule:

**Set up from 5:30 to 6:00    Activity from 6 to 7    Clean up from 7 to 7:30.**

Please contact Lois Dutcher if you are interested in this new opportunity to reach out to the families at Mount Hope. You can reach her at [grammydutcher@yahoo.com](mailto:grammydutcher@yahoo.com)

Thank you to all at FPC for your continued support of Family Promise. Blessings in the New Year!



**“Human Needs are Human Rights”** was the theme of this year's rally at the Capitol led by Kansas Interfaith Action held this past Wednesday. FPC was represented by Margie Dyck, Henry Johns, Anna Shouse, Dave Kyner, Linda Watts, Cynthia Meyer, and Thad Holcombe.

*Rabbi Moti Rieber, executive director of Kansas Interfaith Action, which helped organize the rally, told the crowd, “We are living in troubling times. America is showing its dark underbelly.” Rieber and other speakers addressed food insecurity, voting rights, climate change, health care, reproductive rights, public education, and immigration enforcement — themes that also appeared on handwritten signs throughout the crowd. (credit Kansas Reflector)*

**FPC and the Matthew 25 Cohort is a proud sponsor of** the showing of the movie **“Sugarcane”** on January 25 at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation located at 1263 N. 1100 Rd. Peace Mennonite Church is co-hosting the event with UUC. The screening is free and open to everyone.

The screening is part of the Sugarcane Faith Community Screening Tour, which offers the free screening to communities of faith to support conversations around truth and reconciliation. The goal of this program is to encourage Christians and other faith groups to engage in discussions focused on shared understanding, courage, and repair. The tour is sponsored by Land Justice futures and partnered by the Coalition to dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery. The movie is rated “R”. If inclement weather occurs, the event will be cancelled.



## Fellowship Opportunities in 2026

The Fellowship Committee has plans to host the following events this year. While they are responsible for the planning, they could use our help to make all of these events fun and enjoyable for all of us. If you can help setting up or cleaning up or in some other way, please contact Chris Heider at [v.c.heider25@gmail.com](mailto:v.c.heider25@gmail.com). You can volunteer for one event or several. Helping hands are a great way to meet new friends!



**February 8 - Pre-Game Tailgate Party** begins at 11:30 in Fellowship Hall. Bring your favorite tailgate food to share with everyone. Chips and salsa, roll-ups, wings, meatballs, sliders, whatever is your favorite! We could use help before worship, setting tables and getting water pitchers ready. After the party, please help clean up.

The Youth are sponsoring the Souper Bowl of Caring so please bring a few cans to fill their football field and help support the hungry in Lawrence!

### Coming up later in the year:

March – TBD

April – Maundy Thursday Potluck

June – FPC Picnic

July – Ice Cream Social

August – School Year Kick Off

October – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chili Cook-Off

December – Christmas Dinner

**Are you interested in a bigger commitment?**

**We are always looking for people to serve on our committees and teams.**

**Learn a new skill! Join the Sound Board Team.** They will train you on sound, the camera, or the board. It takes at least two to make the live stream happen, so the more folks who know how to do this the better off we all are. We have at least 20 to 25 people who regularly join us via You Tube on Sunday morning and about that same number who watch the recording later in the week. Lots of people depend on our Sound Board team!

If you like being outdoors and helping people have access to healthy vegetables and herbs you need to consider being on the **Community Garden Team**. They will be planting the winter garden before you know it and will need folks to water and weed. Signing up for times that work for you and a frequency that fits your schedule can offer satisfaction that you are a part of a food solution!

The **Memorial Garden Committee** is in need of people who can help keep the garden clear of weeds, mulched in the spring and fall and stays a nice place for our friends to visit and be with their loved ones. The work is seasonal and sporadic, but we can let you know when we need help.

Do you have a knack for working with flowers? The **Worship Committee** is looking for someone or a team to be in charge of the **Sunday flowers**. We have a place for people to sign up to provide the flowers, but sometimes there isn't anyone signed up and we need to have something at the front of the Sanctuary – even well-placed greenery is helpful. We have a closet full of vases and baskets for use as well as silk and faux flowers. Contact Erinn Barcomb-Peterson if you are interested.

**Ushers and Greeters** - Can you provide a welcoming handshake or wave on Sunday morning? We are looking for people who can greet at the front doors or usher folks into the Sanctuary. This is especially important for our guests! It is always nicer to be greeted with a smile and helpful information when you are new to a place. Commitment can be as little or as much as your schedule will allow. Sign up on the Friendship Pad or call the church office. Thank you.