



# First Press

Weekly Newsletter

First Presbyterian Church

March 1, 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.

## 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

- **Lenten Study** - Pastor Helen is offering a Lenten Study on Sunday mornings at 9:15 am in the Fireside Room. The class is called *The Grace of Les Misérables*. We will focus on the story of Victor Hugo's book and subsequent movies and musicals which challenge us to wrestle with the nature of grace, the fault of unwavering justice, the tragedy of poverty, the victory of love, the struggle for justice and ultimately hope.

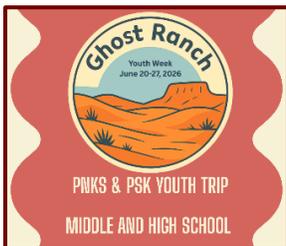
## Youth Activities

- **Birthday Card Creation Station** – On March 1<sup>st</sup> the youth will gather at Kelly's home (3113 Winston Dr.) from 5 to 7 pm to make birthday cards for the Deacons to send to our congregation on their special day. Snacks and supplies will be provided. All youth are welcome to help!
- **LINK is in need of metal forks**. If you have extras from that old set or run across some at a sale, please consider donating them to the FPC Youth or directly to LINK. Thank you.
- **BINGO! On Sunday, March 15**, the Youth and Fellowship Committee are teaming up to host BINGO. Meet in Fellowship Hall following worship at 11:30 am. Bring an appetizer, snack or dish

to share for lunch. Come check out our new prize cabinet and maybe win a game (or two) and pick your prize. Sign up on the Friendship Pad or call the office with your RSVP. 785-843-4171.

**Do you have something you want to add to the Youth calendar?** Need more information? Contact Kelly Jones-Grube at 785-979-2713 (please note the new number!) or [Kellygal78@hotmail.com](mailto:Kellygal78@hotmail.com)

**Pastor Helen's Monday Class** is meeting on Mondays at 2 pm in the Fireside Room. On March 2 we will start a new study on the history of religion in the US. This is a class Helen taught at Northeastern Oklahoma A & M college. We will survey the history of religion in America and its impact on social reform, politics and intellectual life. It will offer an opportunity to study the religions of the world and the influence faith and religion have exercised in American history. Everyone is welcome!



**PNKS Youth Ministry Team is hosting a Summer Youth Trip to Ghost Ranch in New Mexico!** The dates are June 20 – 26. All Middle School and High School youth invited to attend. The trip is being planned with the Presbytery of Southern Kansas as well, so there will be new people to meet! Today, March 1, there is a zoom meeting at noon which will include staff from Ghost Ranch to tell you about all the opportunities they offer. To join the meeting go to:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89980046145?pwd=L2NbgBccftMm6eMNdVPjdVOZa6E02w.1>

Meeting ID: 899 8004 6145

Passcode: 956368

**Lenten Theme:** Jesus' words are easily distorted and sanitized in our modern world. Following Jesus leads to a richer, more expansive life, but it's not necessarily comfortable. Jesus' ministry can be described as "radical" which comes from the Latin word "radicalis," meaning "root" or "ground." Therefore, the good news should bring us back to our roots. Emulating Jesus and embodying his teachings should ground us in who God created us to be. Can we be "good news" people in a world too often burdened by bad news? This Lent we will focus on what was central to Jesus' life and ministry: radical welcome, love for neighbor, care for the vulnerable, nourishment for the hungry, nonviolence in the face of injustice. At the heart of Jesus' teachings, we find liberation, love, mercy, and grace—all of which are meant to be very good news for us all.



**Pick up one of our Lenten Devotional Booklets** in the Narthex and follow along week by week. The theme is, "Tell Me Something Good" and will challenge you to see, hear, and feel some good news especially in a time when we all could benefit from something good!

**With the appearance of ICE officers** in our neighborhood, you might benefit from some of the information shared by our Matthew 25 group about how to help and to learn about your rights. If you are on Facebook you might look for the Sanctuary Alliance and "friend" them for real time updates. Thank you for your care for our neighbors and especially our friends in Small World. We received several calls alerting us to the situation on Tuesday.



**Our friends at Haskell Indian Nations University** are also feeling vulnerable during this time. Several students as well as FPC members joined in a demonstration against the way that ICE officers are handling their job in the Lawrence area.

**Grieving Together** – This is a new group at FPC and those who are working through the loss of a significant person in their lives (recently or years ago) are invited to come share their experiences moving through the grief. The group will meet weekly on Wednesday at 10:30 am in the Library. You may come every week or as often as the group meets your needs. It rarely is a good idea to manage grief on your own, but sometimes family and friends aren't quite right either. Come see if this group is the right one for you right now. Need more information? Contact Peg Livingood at [livingoods54@gmail.com](mailto:livingoods54@gmail.com).

**Next Sunday, March 8, we “Spring Forward”!** Be sure to set your clocks forward one hour before you go to bed on Saturday night so you can be to church on time! We don't want you to miss out.



**Sunflower Baroque** will present “Baroque Sonatas Early and Late” on Sunday, March 8 at 7:30 pm in Swarthout Recital Hall in Murphy Hall at the University of Kansas. The ensemble includes Paul and Joy Laird. The concert is free and the public is invited.

**The Deacon Love Fund** provided assistance with utility costs and rent for seven families. The needs continue to grow as we navigate the rising costs of housing, groceries, gasoline, as well as health care and more. Your gifts can help us help our neighbors who are trying to make ends meet with limited funds and fewer options. Please prayerfully consider a gift to the Deacon Love Fund. Thank you.

**We are hiring! Help us spread the word.** We are looking for someone to work in the church office part-time as an office assistant. This person will be the first person our members and guests encounter during the week, so we are looking for a friendly and helpful person to greet our guests on the phone and in person. Hours are 10 am to 2 pm and we can be flexible. The successful candidate will need to be able to use Microsoft 365, basic business machines, and be willing to learn how to use our database. This might be a great job for a mom with children in school or perhaps a college student? If you know anyone who might be interested, please ask them to call Linda Bridges at 785-843-4171 or send their resume to her at [linda@firstpreslawrence.org](mailto:linda@firstpreslawrence.org)

**In the meantime - 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

### **Matthew 25**

**Statement of Witness** With the urging of the Matthew 25 Cohort, the Session of FPC has endorsed a statement of witness as we attempt to live out a congruent faith in these troubling times. The full two-page statement is available at the Matt 25 table located in the narthex.

The work group constructing the statement included Jeff Southard, Henry Johns, Jim Woelfel, Cynthia Meyer with assistance from Mary Warner and Erin Barcomb-Peterson. The original statement came from First Presbyterian Church in Durham, North Carolina as people of faith are being called to be a voice of resistance.

**We, the people of First Presbyterian Church of Lawrence, KS,** will not remain silent. We are called by our humanity, and the God in whom we place our faith and trust, to raise our voices in witness and denounce as immoral, those forces within our government that are taking actions and imposing policies that are antithetical to our values.

Our witness is grounded in the prophets of ancient Israel and the ministry of Jesus. The prophets called out the rulers of the nation for their corruption, greed, and injustice toward those most in need in their society. The prophet Micah summed up the prophets' message: *“God has showed you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”* (6:8) Jesus continued the prophetic tradition. His ministry embraced those considered sinners and religious outcasts. He drew a contrast between the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world and was crucified because he disturbed the current political and religious order. Jesus called us to be a light to the world (Matt. 5:14) and a light that shines even in the darkness (John 1:5).

To read the complete statement please go to:

[https://www.firstpreslawrence.org/files/ugd/873495\\_576ad55f344543a6a8c0a1e918103dea.pdf](https://www.firstpreslawrence.org/files/ugd/873495_576ad55f344543a6a8c0a1e918103dea.pdf)

### **KIFA Day at the Capitol**

On March 10, 2026, we'll gather at the capitol to advocate for justice in our state with Kansas Interfaith Action (KIFA). Join us as we talk to legislators, rally together around our shared values, and build

community amongst people of faith across Kansas. Register now by visiting [bit.ly/KIFADay26](http://bit.ly/KIFADay26). There is a sign-up sheet at the Matt 25 table for planning carpooling.

**Stop by the Matthew 25 Table** in the Narthex on Sunday for information on how to support our immigrant community as ICE becomes active in our area.

**Help our Neighbors in Minnesota!** The Matthew 25 committee will have a table in the Narthex on Sunday with resources to support the Minnesota community standing up for our immigrant neighbors. We have information on making monetary donations and sending notes of support.

**Rescheduled!** Peace Mennonite Church and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation are co-hosting a free screening of the movie **SUGARCANE on Sunday, March 8 at 1:00 PM** at the UUCL church. Our



congregation has been invited to participate in this event as we have previously worked with Peace Mennonite on various Indigenous-related community projects (We Own This Now, Chief Lucy, Loss of Turtle Island). This event is part of the **SUGARCANE Faith Community Screening Tour**, which offers free in-person screenings of the film 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, restorative justice, and relational healing, especially as it relates to Indian Boarding Schools and the resulting intergenerational trauma. The tour is sponsored by Land Justice Futures and partnered

by the Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery. Movie Rated "R." Childcare provided. Inclement weather cancels. Check this Facebook event page ("Sugarcane Movie Screening Lawrence") for more information, especially in the event of bad weather: <https://www.facebook.com/share/18P9QqUh4D/>.

**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.