



First Press

Weekly Newsletter

March 8, 2026

First Presbyterian Church

Our Pastor

Rev. Dr. Helen Hutchison

Email: 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** 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

- **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.

Need more information? Contact Kelly Jones-Grube at 785-979-2713 (please note the new number!) or Kellygal78@hotmail.com



- **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.

This 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.

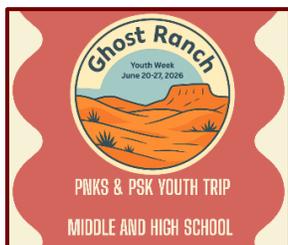
Rescheduled! Peace Mennonite Church and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation are co-hosting a free screening of the movie **SUGARCANE** on **Sunday, March 8 at 1:00 PM** at the UUCL church. Our congregation has been invited to participate in this event as we have previously worked with Peace Mennonite 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/>.

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Pastor Helen’s Monday Class is meeting on Mondays at 2 pm in the Fireside Room. On March 2 we started 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! Contact Amanda Littell at the Presbytery Office – alittell@pnks.org for more information.

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.



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.

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.

Financial Update

	Actual	Budget
Membership Gifts - February	\$ 39,830.00	\$ 40,572.00
Membership Gifts – 2026 – YTD	\$ 137,758.00	\$143,300.00

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

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. 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.

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.

Sign up for an Easter Lily on Sunday. Help us make the Sanctuary beautiful on Easter morning by providing an Easter Lily on the chancel steps. Order forms will be available on the table in the Narthex. Fill out the form and leave it in the offering plate or in the basket on the table. Please let us know who we are offering the flower in memory of or in honor of for the list that will be included on Easter Sunday.



Palm Sunday – Join us on March 29 to begin Holy Week. We will have palms for those who would like to wave them as they enter the Sanctuary and remember Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem singing Hosana!

Maundy Thursday Seder Meal and Communion – On Thursday, April 2, at 5:30 pm, we will gather in Fellowship Hall to learn about the Jewish Seder Meal that was served to the Disciples at the Last Supper. How does this beautiful Jewish celebration of liberation connect with our Christian beliefs? At the end of the (mostly) symbolic meal we will share a pot-luck dinner, so please bring a dish to serve 8 to 10 people. Bring a friend because everyone is welcome to join us at FPC!

Breakfast on Easter Sunday – FPC Youth will host breakfast on Easter Sunday beginning at 9:30 am. This is a biscuits and gravy fundraiser for the Youth. Your donation will help fund Youth Group activities. Come have a great breakfast before the Easter Worship. If you can volunteer supplies or to help, please contact Kelly at 785-979-2713. See you there!