



First Press

Weekly Newsletter

September 6, 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 next Study is called Cross Borders

Typically, borders are lines that separate two geographical areas: two countries, regions, cities, neighborhoods, and so on. For this study we are considering borders as points of separation, the lines imagined or real that separate us from them and you from me. God's creation is a full, rich, diverse place, a place where flourishing is inextricably entwined with that diversity. Our differences are cause for celebration and our unique voices compose a holy chorus. In Scripture, we see over and over again the stories of borders between people of different faiths, cultures, classes, genders, and ethnicities. Even communities that wandered had boundaries that they carried with them. The people of God are called over and over again to cross borders in order to live more faithfully, in relationship with one another and with God.

Here, we will focus on four aspects of the ways borders are crossed in Scripture and in the Christian life:

- Leave Your Comfort Zone
- Embrace Relationships
- Challenge Exclusion
- Speak God's Language of Love

Adult and Youth Sunday School

- On September 6, Jim Woelfel's class will continue through September 20 - *Varieties of Unbelief: George Eliot, Bertrand Russell, Simone de Beauvoir*. The American philosopher William James entitled his classic study of religion *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Over the centuries skepticism about and outright rejection of theistic beliefs have also been expressed in a variety of ways of thinking and sensibilities. In this series I will present four modern agnostic and atheistic thinkers and writers whose differences illustrate what I am calling the varieties of unbelief. Unbelief can range from brisk rejection and sharp criticism of Christianity and belief in God, at one end of the spectrum, to a deep sense of the mystery of human existence and a poignantly sympathetic appreciation of faith at the other.
- New class will begin on September 27th. Watching and reading the news and scrolling on social media can lead to sadness, fear, anger, and helplessness. We might even be grieving. But wait! There is always hope at the intersection of our current world crises and our faith! We can seek to grieve prophetically, seeing our world, even at its darkest, with the spirit and energy of the Hebrew prophets and the resurrected Christ. We are called to make a difference and contribute to the greater good. We will discuss the book, *Grieving Our Loss of Democracy* by Anne Hays Egan, with Rev. Marc Giedinghagen leading the discussion. Marc is a retired parish minister, chaplain and Clinical Pastoral Educator.

Youth Activities and Opportunities –

- We are canceling the event on Sunday, September 13 to make greeting cards, but be sure the CROP Walk is on your calendar for October 4th at 1:30. Sign up with Claire Boyette to walk for this great cause! Please keep Kelly and family in your prayers as they travel to Mayo's to get more information about her health.

Summer Sermon Series is called Epic Meltdowns in the Bible and How God Responds. It may help us in our own meltdowns or meltdowns around us to know that God Forgives, God Waits, God Humbles, God Protects, God Instructs and God Provides Help.

Pastor Helen's Monday Class will continue their study of the History of Religion in the United States on Mondays at 2 pm in the Fireside Room. Everyone is welcome to join in the discussion.

Join Us to support Social Justice this Sunday – September 6

Many members of our congregation put time, money and effort into supporting causes that focus on social justice issues. This Sunday the Matthew 25 Committee invites you to "show your colors" by wearing our blue FPC shirt or one from an organization or cause that you support. Together we will fill the sanctuary with a rainbow of colors as we gather for worship and communion.



Many Thanks from the Youth



A huge thank you to all who have donated games for our collection in support of the Homeless Resource Center. The youth met on Sunday to prepare and organize the games for drop off this week. A large part of the mission of our Homeless Resource Center involves working to restore dignity to our unhoused community members. This happens when people are seen and provided opportunities to experience "normal" things in life, regardless of their housing status. The chance to cool off / warm up in a safe environment where you can relax and set your possessions down, may be something we take for granted. The chance to sit with others and

enjoy recreation in a comfortable environment is another experience that we ALL need. Our game donations will provide options for the guests of HRC/LINK to enjoy, with the hope that they bring comfort, smiles and fun. Thank you for your donations. They are a living example of God's love in our hurting world.

Our next collection will be to supply the HRC with a stock of **adult-sized shoes**. We are looking for donations of any size or gender, gently used (or new) shoes. Donations can be brought to the church office or to me for collection. Kelly Jones-Grube, Youth Coordinator





Bowling with FPC Youth

Sixteen youth and friends met for bowling on Sunday night. Fun and fellowship were shared with winners from three lanes being Callie Livingood, Claire Lindemyer and Erinn Barcomb-Peterson. Each winner will pick a prize from our closet. We will plan to bowl again in the future!

Handbell Ringers Needed!

The Westminster Ringers Handbell Choir is looking for new ringers for both treble and bass bells. Rehearsals are held on Mondays, from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The group regularly participates in the 10:30 am worship service on the third Sunday of each month, September through May, with occasional additional services throughout the year.

FPC Westminster Ringers bell choir will celebrate 50 years of ringing in 2027! If you would like to be part of this dynamic and fun group of musicians, contact director Carol Fleeger at carolfleeger@yahoo.com or 225-235-9285. We are looking forward to having YOU join us!

Chancel Choir begins rehearsals on Wednesday, September 2, 2026. They meet every Wednesday from 7 to about 8 pm in the Sanctuary. If you enjoyed singing this summer, you might consider joining the choir during the school year. Everyone is welcome to join the choir!

You are invited to the 18th Annual Auction Party for Family Promise on September 20th from 5-8 pm at Maceli's. There will be both live and silent auctions. We at FPC often put together some baskets of gift cards for the silent auction. I will be in the Narthex beginning on August 30th to collect your donations of either gift cards or money for me to purchase gift cards.



You as the FPC congregation have always been generous in supporting this Family Promise Fund Raiser. Family Promise of Lawrence – changing the course for families facing a housing crisis.

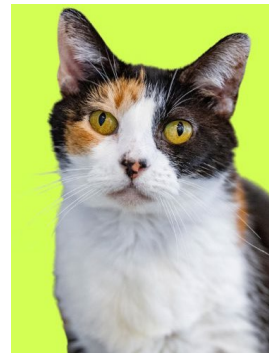
Thank you for your continuing love and caring for our community!
Blessings, Lois Dutcher



Blessing of the Animals



Several people have asked that we have a Blessing of the Animals service. So, on October 10th we plan to do just that! The Lawrence Humane Society has agreed to work with us on this project and in return we will help them with some much needed supplies. You can bring your donations of soft dog treats, dog and cat food, peanut butter, paper towels, sheets, blankets, small rugs, and spray cheese to the box in the Narthex. The Humane Society will bring some of their pets to share (adoption has to happen at their facility, so will not be available at this event). You might be a lucky person who can take a pet home for a day – if you are interested. Watch this space for more information as we get closer, but bring in those donations anytime!



**Presbyterian Women's Fall Gathering – Saturday, September 12, 2026 at 11:30 am
Fellowship Hall at FPC – Lunch will be provided. RSVP on the sign up sheet in the Narthex**

Julie Boyle, DCCCA Community & Donor Relations Manager will be sharing about the New DCCCA Hope House project. We will be collecting donations to DCCCA. The Eve Circle is our host for the day. All women of FPC are invited to the luncheon and speaker.



*Julie Boyle, DCCCA Community
& Donor Relations Manager*

From grassroots Lawrence beginnings to its growth into a statewide nonprofit agency, DCCCA continues to provide social & community services that improve the safety, health, & well-being of children, adults, families, & communities.



CROP Walk Reminder

We are getting super excited about the CROP Walk coming up on Sunday, October 4 at 1:30 PM! But we need your help in making the Walk a success! CROP Walks consist of two things: donating and walking.

1. Donating: We have a goal of raising \$3,000 through the CROP Walk. 75% of the funds raised will go to Church World Service to support their various ministries including child protection, disaster response, housing stability, and access to education. The remaining 25% stays local, meaning if we meet our fundraising goal, we will be able to make a significant gift to a hunger agency in our community. Can you help by contributing to the fund?
 - a. Donate: events.crophungerwalk.org/chw/event/lawrencecks
2. Walking: The physical act of walking reminds us of our shared responsibility to care for our neighbors. Just as we walk together, we share the responsibility of building a community where no one faces hunger alone. Our walking route is approximately 0.7 miles, flat, and paved. We will start and end at our church building, and we will also have a chance to see the new development at the Crossing. The map will be released on Walk Day. Anyone is welcome to join us!
 - a. Register: events.crophungerwalk.org/chw/team/first-presbyterian-church-15



Sponsor a part of the CROP Walk route

This Sunday, September 6 ONLY, we will have a table set up in the Narthex for church members to sponsor a section of the CROP Walk route in honor or memory of a loved one. All persons honored/remembered will be featured in a memory book available on Walk Day (October 4). If you are still interested in sponsoring a section after this Sunday, please contact Claire (claire@firstpreslawrence.org) with your submission. All submissions must be in by Sunday, September 27.

Have loose change taking up space in your purse or pockets? Consider dropping them in the CROP Walk donation basket!

A donation basket will be available on Sunday mornings at the coffee table in the Narthex. During the week, the donation basket will be moved to the church office. Every little bit helps!

[Click here](#) if you can help us get the word out about the CROP Walk!