



# First Press

*Weekly Newsletter*

First Presbyterian Church

November 16, 2025

## 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 [firstpreslawrence@gmail.com](mailto:firstpreslawrence@gmail.com)** 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.

## Sermon Series – What Is in Your Hand?

In November we are leaning into “What is in Your Hand?” This refers to God’s statement to Moses when he keeps saying he is not the one to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. God then reminds Moses that Moses has what he needs. It might be helpful for First Presbyterian Church to consider all the amazing gifts and resources that “are in our hands”.

## Children’s Sunday School

### • Sunday School Classes for Children

- On November 16 Joan Golden and Nancy Hodges will lead the lesson with the children in room 14 – We hope you will join us!

**Pastor Helen’s Monday Class** This week, Monday, November 17th, we will talk about “What Presbyterians Believe” about the second coming. In this class we will approach subjects that are often avoided in PCUSA (and many mainline churches). The class meets on Monday afternoon at 2 pm in the Fireside Room.

## Youth Activities

- **November 23** - Plan to shop together for our Family Promise family. Gather at FPC at 4:00 pm to head out to shop. Contact Kelly Jones-Grube for more information – [kellygal78@hotmail.com](mailto:kellygal78@hotmail.com)
- **November 30** – Stay after church and help “Deck the Halls.” We will also make ornaments with the EcoTeam and have a Pizza lunch.

- **December 7** – Annual Youth Holiday Party – We will gather at the Hoover-Elo home. Please RSVP to Kelly Jones-Grube
- **January 4, 2026** – FPC Winter Break Youth Retreat – 11:30 to 6 pm – will include art, cooking, lunch, games, service opportunities, fellowship time, and lots more! Other area church youth will be invited.

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

**Can we complete our puzzles? On November 16 after worship** we hope you will plan to stay for some snacks and to complete our puzzles! What have we discovered about what we have in our hands and how can we better use what we have? Come! Let's talk.



**On Sunday, November 16, we are hosting Turkey Tales Storytime!** First 5 Years students and their families are an important part of our FPC Community. Claire Boyette, our Mission Coordinator, has put together an intergenerational opportunity for us to read stories to the children. Join us on Sunday, November 16 at 6:00 pm. Sign up in the Narthex to read to the children.

### **Mission Events to put on your calendar!**

**Matthew 25 information for you – Coming Together to Address Hunger in Our Community - Just Food** is putting together a collaborative effort in Lawrence to address the pending and continuing crisis of food insecurity. With the unstable funding provided by the SNAP program, families, children, the elderly, and disabled are facing a dire emergency of food access. Data shows that for 2024, in Douglas County, an average of 4,832 individuals received SNAP benefits. FPC has been a long-time partner with Just Food, contributing food and volunteers. Please consider making a donation or volunteering your assistance. Monetary donations are recommended by Just Food as they are able to purchase food at a lower price, getting more “bang for the buck”. The online fundraiser through the Douglas County Community Foundation is now available [at this link](#). As part of the plan, community members can also sign up to volunteer to help through [United Way of Kaw Valley](#).

**Willow Domestic Violence Center** – The Willow builds safer communities through shelter, services, and support for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking in Douglas, Franklin, and Jefferson counties in Kansas. In addition to your gifts through the Special Christmas Giving, they are in need of gift cards to popular places with common goods, food, or gasoline, such as Walmart, Target, Dillons, QT, and Casey's. These gift cards are the most low-barrier, trauma-informed way we can help meet the needs of survivors. They are also currently out of, or running low on, the following:

Face wash and lotion, Body wash and lotion, shampoo and conditioner, textured hair products, baby wipes, hair gel, mousse, spray, razors, baby wash and lotion, cleaning products, laundry soap pods, tampons, deodorant, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, cold and flu medicine.

Please note that they can NOT accept:

Clothes, shoes, used bedding, electronics, furniture, baby accessories, used toys and stuffed animals, travel-sized toiletries, books, or opened hygiene items.

Please consider the Ballard Center, Community Children's Center, Clare's Community Closet, and Lawrence Community Shelter for those items not accepted at Willow.

**Mitten Tree** – The Mitten Tree is up and ready for your warm winter decorations! Bring mittens, gloves, scarves, blankets, and all things warm for those in need of warm things. Items accepted through December 7. Thank you!

**Star Tree** – After the mittens have been distributed, we will transform the tree with stars. Each star will be a request from one of the First 5 Years classrooms for items that they would like to have or need. Take a moment to explore the stars on the tree beginning December 14<sup>th</sup>!



**Special Christmas Giving** will be available beginning November 16. Order forms are available in the Narthex. Bring your checkbook or mark your requests for giving in the memo section of your check. We have nine organizations to support, and all are most appreciative of our help. Every year it is important to share what we are giving with others, but it feels like this year it is especially significant to help others in our community who may have been struggling to find the basics and don't have the energy or opportunity to make the holidays special. Perhaps we can help with that.



**Family Promise has invited us to volunteer** at their annual winter festival, Winter Wishes, on December 11! There are available volunteer shifts on December 10 and 11 at various times. Volunteer roles include preparing supplies and stuffing stockings, helping to set-up and decorate before the event, assisting with arts & crafts and other family activities, and more! This is one of many ways to give back this holiday season, and if this is something you are interested in, you can sign up using this link: <https://wkl.ms/3Lc5lz6>. Please sign up by December 1. Contact Claire with any questions you may have!

**Deck the Halls of FPC!** We hope you will plan to stick around after worship on Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. We know you might still be recovering from all the turkey you had on Thursday, but we are joining the youth to decorate the halls of FPC! There will be trees to decorate, wreaths and garlands to hang. The youth will be available to bring things up the stairs. The EcoTeam is making decorations and there might be some pizza around. Let us know you are planning to join in the holiday spirit by signing up in the Narthex.



**Music, Music and more Music!** In December we will be sharing the hope of our most beloved seasonal music.

**December 7** – Our children will start out the season with their version of “Go, Tell It on the Mountain” and you will hear them tell it!

**December 14** – The Chancel Choir will lead worship performing Vivaldi’s *Gloria* providing the setting for our Season of Hope. When we put God in charge, how can we despair? The music will lift your spirits.

**December 21** – It is Westminster Ringers turn to lead worship with their joyful ringing. They will have several pieces to share, so don’t miss this one.

**December 24** – Christmas Eve worship will begin at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary. There will be candle light and singing as we welcome the birth of the Christ Child.

The Lawrence Community Handbell Choir is **Ringin’ in the Season** and celebrating 10 years of holiday ringing! They will be sharing their Christmas Concert on

Friday, December 5 at 7:00 pm at First United Methodist Church in Topeka.

Saturday, December 6 at 7:00 pm at St. Margaret’s Episcopal Church in Lawrence.

Sunday, December 7 at 3:00 pm at First Baptist Church in Lawrence.

### Session calls a Congregational Meeting

On December 7th after worship the Session calls for a Congregational Meeting for the purpose of electing the Officers for the Class of 2028 and other open positions. We will also hear an update on our Solar Panels. We don't expect this to be a long meeting so we hope you will plan to stay to support our new Elders and Deacons!

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

Thanks to everyone who has reached out to me following Phillip's departure to his full-time job at KU. I am looking for some volunteers who could answer the phone (I will train you!) and the south door. There might be other projects to do while you are here but bring a book or something to do just in case! I have placed a sign-up sheet in the narthex showing 2-hour shifts. If you would prefer to do all four hours that is great too. I will keep the sign-up sheet updated as we move forward, so if you are not available now – you will have another chance!

Thank you so much for your willingness to help me out! Gratefully, Linda Bridges

Join the Justice Matters Team



Opening for  
Office Assistant

Learn more and apply at:



**Start Date:** January 2026

**Schedule:** Part-time, 15-20 hours per week

**Location:** 9th Street Outreach Center (9th and Tennessee), Lawrence, Kansas (in-office position)

**Pay:** \$20/hour

**The Presby Pickers shared their music during the Sunday School Hour on November 9<sup>th</sup>.**

