

# What's Inside | contents

- 3 Pastor's Corner
- 4 Full to the Brim
- 5 Why We Became FPC Members During a Pandemic
- 6 Deacons Reimagined
- 7 Spotlight: FPC Foundation
- 8-9 Passing the Baton
- 10 KidsFirst
- 11 Library Corner
- 12 Save the Date: FPC's 150th Anniversary

# From the Editor | FULL

I was about four-years-old when I came home from preschool and eagerly showed my mother that I had learned to pour water from a pitcher without spilling. I said the secret was "two hands" on the pitcher. I was so proud of my control, coordination, and newfound skill. Kids are messy and learn restraint, caution, and self-control growing up. We're taught to stop when we are full.

Thirsty? We fill our cups. Hungry? We eat until we're satisfied. Need a change of season? Step outside and fill your lungs with spring air. Going for a drive? Fill 'er up!

Being full is the goal—but not too much. Life becomes unbearable when we are overfilled, overwhelmed, overstressed. We even cry over spilled milk.

This Lent, I wonder if we need to *unlearn* some of that restraint, caution, and self–control to live a life abundant. God's grace is full to the brim and overflowing—He wants us to pour it out. His love has no limits, no top, no brim. He fills us up and keeps going. What's more, He wants us to spill it everywhere!

Sometimes, faith is messy. This Lent, fill up. Splash around. Flood the world with God's "full to the brim" grace.

—Cathy Richardson

# **THEMESSENGER**

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 531 SOUTH COLLEGE AVENUE FORT COLLINS, CO 80524 (970) 482-6107 WWW.FIRSTPRESFC.ORG

MINISTERS | THE CONGREGATION
SENIOR PASTOR | COREY NELSON
EDITOR | CATHY RICHARDSON

PUBLISHING GUIDELINES | THE MESSENGER is a publication for the people, passions, and mission of First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins. The newsletter seeks to inspire, inform, instruct, challenge, and motivate its readers to become engaged in the ministry of FPC. We pray that adult readers in all life stages will aspire to be faithful disciples for Christ.

Articles that support FPC's vision and mission will be accepted. All articles must be sponsored by one of the church's five Centers and are subject to the approval of the Editor. Submissions will be edited for length and suitability.

Article submissions will be accepted via email to crichardson@firstpresfc.org. Contact Editor Cathy Richardson for more information, (970)482-6107. Check www.firstpresfc.org for specific issue deadlines.



# **PASTOR'S CORNER**

### **FULL TO THE BRIM**

Hello Friends,

After the recent deep freeze we've experienced, it is truly a testament to hope that we offer this "Spring" edition of The Messenger. In addition to noticing whether or not a groundhog sees its shadow, watching the Winter Olympics and the Superbowl, this is also the time of year we enter into the season of Lent and then Holy Week and finally, Easter Sunday. After not being able to be together in person the past two years, we are hopeful (there's that word again) that we will increasingly join together in person for worship, study, and fellowship this time around. At the same time, we will offer most of these experiences online for those who are more comfortable.

Lent is often a season known for giving up or letting go, a season for confession and repentance. While these are all important disciplines and practices in our faith journey, we are going to reorient our approach to Lent this year, given that so many of us have already experienced so much loss and lament over the past two years. This year, instead of giving up or letting go, we are going to invite you to be "Filled to the Brim," adapting a worship series developed by the creative team at A Sanctified Art. Here's how they introduce this theme:

The scriptures for this Lenten season (in the Revised Common Lectionary, Year C) are filled with parables and promises of God's abundant and expansive grace. Jesus as a mother hen, a prodigal son welcomed home, a fig tree nurtured with care and hope, precious oil poured out lovingly and freely, stones shouting out with praise —these sacred texts are brimming with a gospel of grace. We've done nothing to

deserve or earn this grace, and yet, like water, it spills over. Full to the Brim is an invitation—into a radically different Lent, into a full life. It's an invitation to be authentically who you are, to counter scarcity and injustice at every turn, to pour out even more grace wherever it is needed. When we allow ourselves to be filled to the brim with God's lavish love, that love spills over. It reaches beyond ourselves; like water, it rushes and flows, touching everything in its path.

We recognize that traditional iterations of Lent often emphasize restraint, confession, and piety. Full to the Brim doesn't ignore or deny sin and suffering. It doesn't absolve accountability for wrongdoing. Instead it contextualizes our faith. If love is our beginning, how can we live our lives led by love's promises? It reminds us to live fully—as we pursue justice and hope, or express grief and gratitude. And so, this Lent, let us trust—fully—that we belong to God. Let us increase our capacity to receive and give grace. Let us discover the expansive life God dreams for us.

I'm looking forward to diving into these stories from scripture with you and learning together how to experience faith "full to the brim," especially after some of the challenges we have recently faced and continue to navigate. In addition to experiencing these themes during our Sunday morning 9:00 a.m. services, we are also launching a unique Sunday evening worship service during Lent, offered for six weeks from Sunday, March 6-Sunday, April 10 (Palm Sunday).

"Sunday Night Live" will begin at 5:30 p.m. in Shep West with an intergenerational meal around tables that concludes with an invitation to share communion each week. At about 6:00 p.m., we will move into a smaller worship setting in Shep East for a 30-40 minute service that includes contemporary music and participatory elements that will creatively engage participants to experience the themes in new ways. We expect that some people may choose to attend this service in addition to Sunday morning in the sanctuary, and some may choose to attend instead of Sunday morning. All ages and stages of life are welcome. Pam and Carlie will lead time with children and youth – sometimes separately at 6:00 p.m. from the adults and sometimes together.

We have a wonderfully creative and passionate team of volunteers helping to plan and lead these services. I expect we will adapt and evolve a bit week by week as we discover who shows up and what works well to offer a meaningful service of worship in a new style and setting. I can't wait!

Wherever, whenever, and however you choose to experience the season of Lent this year, my hope (there's that word again) is that this is truly a time when you (singular and plural) are filled to the brim with God's grace and goodness. God is good—all the time. All the time—God is good.

Peace, Corey



## **LENTEN WORSHIP**

### **ASH WEDNESDAY**

March 2 | 7<sub>PM</sub> With all that you are

### THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

March 6 | 9AM & 5:30PM Even in the desert

### THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

March 13 | 9AM & 5:30PM Under God's wing

### THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

March 20 | 9AM & 5:30PM You are worthy

### THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 27 | 9AM & 5:30PM Prodigal grace

### THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

April 3 | 9AM & 5:30PM Brazen acts of beauty

### **PALM SUNDAY**

April 10 | 9AM & 5:30PM Even the stones cry out

### **GOOD FRIDAY**

April 15 | 7<sub>PM</sub> A cup of sorrow

### **EASTER SUNDAY**

April 17 | 9AM & 11AM An expansive life

The scriptures for this Lenten season are filled with parables and promises of God's abundant and expansive grace. We've done nothing to deserve or earn this grace, and yet, like water, it spills over. Full to the Brim is an invitation—into a radically different Lent. It's an invitation to be authentically who you are, to counter scarcity and injustice at every turn, to pour out even more grace wherever it is needed. This lent, let us discover brimming gospel of grace that God dreams for us.

# SUNDAY EVENING GATHERING

SUNDAY NIGHT LIVE, March 6-April 10 | 5:30 PM A family meal followed by communion and worship

# **HOLY WEEK SERVICES**

MONDAY, April 11 | 12 NOON Cynthia Paquette, First United Methodist

> TUESDAY, April 12 | 12 NOON Rob Cowles, Genesis Project

WEDNESDAY, April 13 | 12 NOON Student from LuMin Ministry

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 14 | 12 NOON Jane Anne Ferguson, Plymouth UCC

GOOD FRIDAY, April 15 | 12 NOON David Williams, Abyssinian Christian Church

# STUDY

### **SMALL GROUPS & SUNDAY SCHOOL**

The Full to the Brim Devotional Booklet includes scripture commentary, poetry, visual art, coloring, and written reflections.

Find more information at firstpresfc.org



# WHY WE BECAME FPC MEMBERS **DURING A PANDEMIC**

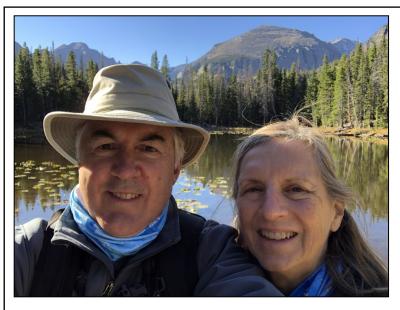
Finding a home church in a pandemic is not easy – especially for new residents. Joyce and I sold our home in Indianapolis and moved to Fort Collins in August 2020. We researched and visited several local churches online and eventually attended one place in-

person in spring 2021, but we did not find any church that we resonated with. However, our sense of dissonance began to disappear when we researched First Presbyterian Church and decided to visit in-person on Memorial Day weekend.

Several people warmly welcomed us our first Sunday at FPC. Linda Wagner talked with us at length, getting acquainted and telling us about some of the history and activities of FPC. She introduced us to Miriam Nelson, with whom we quickly felt a connection. Soon, we joined the

summer book discussion group led by Miriam. The books we read and interactions with others in the group were significant influences in our beginning to feel at home at FPC and wanting to become members. We wanted to be a part of a church that has compassion for refugees and other immigrants. We saw that heart in our discussions of The Newcomers: Finding Refuge, Friendship and Hope in America, and when learning about FPC partnerships with organizations such as Matthews House and Sara and Doug Hunt's engagements with international students at CSU. Creation care is important to us. When discussing Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the

Teachings of Plants, we learned that others at FPC share our values and that FPC is a certified Earth Care Congregation. The Warmth of Other Suns revealed deep and subtle aspects of racial injustice in America and caused several of us to repent personally and



Greg and Joyce Osland joined First Presbyterian Church in September 2021.

for our nation. We want to be a part of a church that helps heal the broken places in our world.

Our experiences at the weekly worship services as we were considering membership were consistently positive and uplifting. We appreciated Pastor Corey's well-organized, thoughtful, Word-based sermons. I recall one sermon on getting to know and engaging with others as we collectively came out of the pandemic isolation. One takeaway for me was the encouragement to listen without judgement as I become acquainted with new people and to avoid making inferences based on one obvious characteristic. And surprisingly to us,

we connected with and were moved to worship by the traditional choir and organ music. We felt at home with the values, beliefs, and people of First Pres.

Over the summer we began to get acquainted with several people with

> whom we shared similar interests and a similar life stage, as well as with some who are at different stages. At the new members class we met a number of couples who had also moved to Fort Collins during the pandemic. Joyce and I accepted the reality that the pandemic limited our interactions with others and the ministry opportunities and activities of FPC. But as we considered the mission of FPC, its recent history, the hearts of church staff and members and plans of the church, we decided to join First Presbyterian during a global time of

uncertainty. In September 2021 we became members. Joyce and I look forward to deeper involvement with our new church home as we collectively come out of the pandemic.

-Greg Osland

Are you interested to learn more about FPC Membership? Plan to attend our Discover Membership Class scheduled for Sunday, March 6, from 10:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. You will find out more about who we are as a church and what we believe, plus meet church leaders and staff. RSVP to Miriam Nelson, mnelson@firstpresfc.org.

# **DEACONS REIMAGINED**

### **BOARD REORGANIZES INTO FIVE FOCUSES**

The Deacon Leadership Team alongside the current Deacons have developed a reorganization plan. Approved by the Center for Caring, Welcome, and Fellowship and the Session at their January meetings, the reorganization will convert the current individually commissioned Deacons to a Board of Deacons. Fifteen Deacons will serve staggered three-year terms in five areas. The Board will also elect a Moderator and Vice Moderator to facilitate meetings. Renée Brunsting, Director of Caring, and Rev. Glenn Perica, Parish Associate, will continue to serve as staff leadership. This new Board of Deacons model will begin July 1, 2022.

The reorganization hopes to broaden the scope of the ministries, provide greater continuity in the Deacon teams, and allow Deacons to work together to more efficiently meet the needs of our church family and the broader community. Current Deacons will serve in one of five new areas. Additionally, as part of the reorganization, the Senior Involvement Ministry will merge into Fellowship, and a new Welcoming team has been created.

Duties are outlined below but are not necessarily limited to only these duties. We hope there will be opportunities for creative ideas to enrich and expand the Deacon's work. Many faithful volunteers currently serve in these areas, and we are blessed as a church for their service. The five ministry areas are:

### **CONGREGATIONAL WELCOMING** COMMUNICATION **FELLOWSHIP WITNESS OUTREACH** The Deacons in this Deacons in this area will **Deacons in this** This ministry area area will focus on send cards and make area will manage focuses on outreach visitation and calls to those in our the Deacon Fund coordinating communion. This church family who are (Emergency greeters for involves making visits experiencing a life Assistance) and Sunday morning and serving transition, illness, or will continue the worship and communion to recovery from surgery. special events. partnership we have with individual church Cards and calls will also They will also be sent to celebrate members in their **Project Self**assist church staff homes and long-term important life events **Sufficiency by** with the new care facilities. Deacons and provide a thank-you providing member classes in this area will also to those serving in the financial three or four times coordinate meals as ministries of our church. assistance at a year. needed for members **Christmas and** who are recovering Easter to clients from illness, surgery, or of this non-profit childbirth. organization.

We look forward to the Deacons continuing their good work and we are excited to see what the future brings as the Board of Deacons enrich our congregation with their caring ministries!

-Julie Willson



# SPOTLIGHT: **FPC FOUNDATION**

If you were at the Annual Meeting on February 6, 2022, you heard FPC Foundation President Jean Troxell report on the activities of the foundation in 2021. A total of \$51,010 was distributed to our church and its ministry programs, including \$25,000 to the church operating budget.

Our church is blessed to have its own foundation that provides a secure opportunity for members and their loved ones to leave a living legacy by donating any part of one's assets to a perpetual fund. Anyone can make a gift to the Foundation, in any amount, at any time.

Examples of endowed funds with a specific purpose (restricted) for ministry impact include music, education, children, mission outreach, seniors, the columbarium—and our newest fund, the Hanna Caring Ministry Endowment.

Gifts to our Foundation are acts of hope for the future of our church! Through God's grace and gifts of generosity, our church will be well equipped to serve others well into the future. As a faith community, we thank God for all these thoughtful and generous donors over the years whose gifts have grown the scope of this Foundation and the impact of FPC ministry.

### **How the Funds are Managed:**

- The investment policy of the Foundation is to invest in a market basket of stocks and bonds that are managed with a minimum of fees or expense. Current holdings are approximately 52% stocks, 46% fixed income, and 2% cash.
- Each year the Board of the Foundation determines a percentage spending goal to preserve capital in perpetuity and to enhance the ministries of FPC.
- Gifts without restrictions provide funds that the Board can designate with approval of Session. For the last five years, these unrestricted funds have provided an annual contribution to the operating budget of the church
- After each calendar year, the financial activities of the Foundation are submitted to an independent accountant for an annual review of the financial position of the foundation which is presented to the Board.

### First Presbyterian Church Foundation — Facts and Figures

- Founded in 1979 and incorporated on January 14, 1980.
- Portfolio Value on December 31, 2021 was \$2,182,440, after annual ministry distributions of \$51,010.
- Over the past five years, Foundation distributions have totaled \$210,000 and the performance of the endowment portfolio has averaged 10% per year
- The Foundation Board consists of up to 9 directors who are members of FPC and serve for a term of 3 years but no more than 6 consecutive years. The Board meets quarterly to ensure responsible fiduciary oversight. Anyone interested in serving on the Foundation Board, please contact Jean Troxell.

### HANNA ENDOWMENT

"My wife Virginia passed away two weeks before our 60th Wedding Anniversary and it was in my heart to honor her in some way.

"I remembered hearing that the Caring Ministry team of our church often had ideas on how to extend their ministry of care but didn't always have the resources, so I established the Hanna Caring Ministry Endowment through the FPC Foundation in memory of Virginia Hanna."



At the time of Virginia's death, R.J. and Virginia Hanna had been members of First Presbyterian Church for 46 years. They both experienced first-hand its caring fellowship and support. R.J.'s hope for the future, his FPC year 47 and beyond, is that others may add to this endowment so that it grows in capacity, enabling the caregiving servants of FPC to be supported and encouraged in their ministry with annual funding from the Foundation.

# **PASSING THE BATON**

### MARVIN CRAWFORD COMPLETES 50 YEARS OF MINISTRY

At the end of May, after 50 years of Ministry, Marvin Crawford, FPC's beloved Director of Music and the Arts, will pass the baton—literally. He has waved that baton in Fort Collins since 2007, the culmination of a half century leading countless of the faithful in worship through music, prayer, excellence, and

devotion.

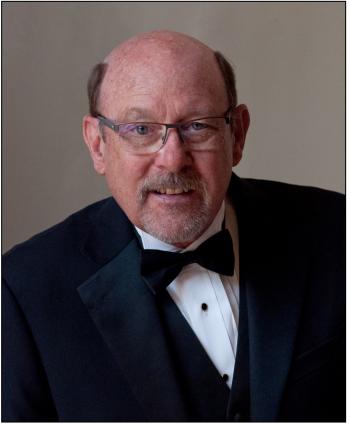
Marvin Crawford was born and grew up in Boise, ID, where he attended First United Methodist Church, Cathedral of the Rockies Church, with a membership of 2500. Since it was important to his grandmother, he began piano lessons in the first grade with Ada Haulser. She got Marvin involved in the church music program when he was in second grade, resulting in his participation in the church music programs through high school. David and Nancy Wehr and Wayne and Harriet Richmond, his home church choir directors, were very influential in his interest in and love of music. Through these musicians and a faith experience, Marvin felt called to pursue music ministry at

Westminster Choir College, alma mater to his music mentors.

In an interesting foreshadowing, while touring with the Cathedral of the Rockies high school choir, he participated in a worship service at First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins in 1970.

In 1971, Marvin enrolled at Westminster Choir College (WCC), where he earned a Bachelor of Music Degree in 1976 with a major in church music (emphasis in organ and a minor

in voice). While studying at WCC, Marvin met his future wife Alice, who was pursuing a similar career path. Realizing that her organ skills exceeded his (she indeed became an accomplished organist), Marvin decided he would focus on directing choirs and



handling the administrative end of their work as a team in music ministry. They married in 1974 and returned to WCC to complete their degrees. While still students, their first joint church music call was to St. John's United Methodist Church in Keyport, NJ, where they worked with 12 choirs; they were compensated \$85 per week plus an apartment. Marvin described the Alice and Marvin team as "pistons and people" — "pistons" for Alice's work as organist and work with children's music, and "people" for Marvin's work with choirs and bell choirs.

Drawn to the region by family, they moved to Aloha, OR upon graduation from WCC to serve the Aloha Community Baptist Church (1976-1981). While in Oregon, two children joined the Crawford family, Jerald Monroe Crawford in 1976 and JoAnn

> Marie (Crawford) Buckman in 1981. The U.S. bicentennial in 1976 was likely eclipsed by newly awarded degrees, a new position, and a new baby!

> When the positions of Music Director and Organist at Cathedral of the Rockies in Boise, ID, became available in early 1981, the Crawford family accepted the call to return to Marvin's hometown and church of his formation, serving 12 choirs with 300 people per week. During this time, Marvin also directed a community chorus for two years, wrote a series of articles on youth choirs for Choristers Guild, and attended two summer choral workshops at WCC led by Robert Shaw. Woven through 25 years of his music calling, Marvin also took part in the Ghost Ranch Vocal Camp,

first as a high school student and later as the Co-director and Voice Instructor for the vocal camp at Ghost Ranch **Education and Retreat Center in New** Mexico.

In 1991, Marv and Alice moved their family to Boulder, Colorado, beginning a 10-year journey with the First Presbyterian Church. Adult and High School choirs each had 120 members, with the high school choirs touring annually and performing in nearly all states except the Dakotas and the New England States.

In 1993, Marvin completed a Masters of Music Education Degree at Boise State University with an emphasis in choral conducting. His thesis, in collaboration with John Rutter, was a comparison of the Rutter and Faure Requiems. Marvin had the opportunity to personally meet with Mr. Rutter while attending a Mid America Production Concert under Rutter's direction, which culminated in a performance at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Marvin completed all but the dissertation for a Doctorate of Worship Studies at the Institute of Worship Studies in Orange Park, FL, where he received an Advanced Graduate Certificate of Worship Studies. The Institute, now named for its founder and first director, Dr. Robert Webber, is the only graduate institution in the country to focus exclusively on worship education.

In 2001, the Crawfords returned to the eastern U.S. to continue their music ministry at The Falls Church Episcopal Church in Falls Church, Virginia, locating them closer to Alice's family.

But the call of the West and grandchildren brought them back to Colorado in 2007 for Marvin to serve in music ministry at First Presbyterian Church in Fort Collins. Marvin emphasized that they felt called not because of the church's denomination but because of the congregation itself.

Marvin's deep faith and biblical understanding have served as the core of his music ministry. He has used his expansive musical talents and skills to draw people closer to God in praise and service. He does indeed perform ministry through music.

Next, this faithful servant will complete his ministry at FPC, put down the baton, and perhaps pick up a fishing rod for his well-deserved retirement. Marvin is ready for some time to travel, work on home projects, go through 50 years of choral music and scores, and then rewire. Marvin will also continue to direct Bells of the Rockies, Northern Colorado's premiere auditioned handbell choir.

The Center for Worship Music and the Arts invites you to celebrate Marvin's retirement at a special final worship service Sunday, May 22, at 9:00 a.m. and at a reception following. Please join us in saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant—and thank you for the lifetime of music."

> -Beverly Michoski and Marian Railsback



# Ministry FOR Kids

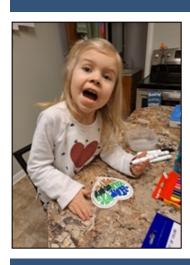
### Vacation Bible School 2022—June 6–10, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

At Knights of North Castle VBS, students will enjoy an interactive, energizing, Bible-based good time as they go on a quest in search of the king's armor. They will become knights and discover how to serve God and God's mission for their lives. North Castle is hidden in a frozen land. The king's valiant knights are on a quest in search of the king's armor. But the armor isn't what they think it is! Kids "armor up" with truth, justice, peace, faith, and salvation at Knights of North Castle VBS. They learn to "be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power" (Ephesians 6:10).

Also, plan to join us for VBS Sunday on June 12 to sing our VBS songs and celebrate with a bouncy house party after church.

Be watching the bulletins, emails, and the VBS display in April for ways you can get involved. Register and volunteer now on our Kids First webpage, https://firstpresfc.org/kidsfirst/

# Ministry WITH Kids





This Valentine's Day our kids spread the love by coloring and sending valentines to the folks on our Caring Ministry's "cards and calls" list.

"The kids had so much fun doing it!" one parent said.

Another parent said, "My son took so much care and pride in his valentine! He really thought about each color and each word in the message. He couldn't wait to send it and tell someone that Jesus loves them!"

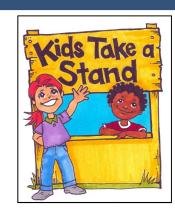
Our church family gives our kids so much love, it feels good to give some back.

# Ministry BY Kids

# Kids Take a Stand—May 15, 2:00–4:00 p.m. on the FPC Lawn

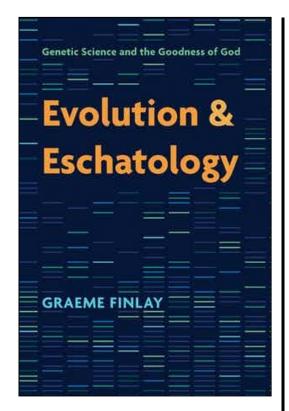
Does your child want to make a difference? Have they ever wanted to have a lemonade, bake sale, or original art or talent stand? Well, here is their chance. The Kids First program and Missions and Outreach Center are sponsoring an event on the FPC lawn where kids can set up a stand to raise money for a local non-profit. And when your kiddo is taking a break from fundraising we will have fun activities like games, snow cones, and giant bubbles!

Register your child for a stand at t.ly/PMNY



# LIBRARY CORNER

### THE WORD SOURCE



Graeme Finlay, Evolution and Eschatology: Genetic Science and the Goodness of God, Eugene, Oregon: CASCADE Books. 2021

Graeme Finlay lives in New Zealand, where he does cancer research and is a pathologist at the University of Auckland. He is also thoughtful about science and the Christian faith. In this book he celebrates the truth in genetic evolution (in natural history the best adapted survive) a wonderful creative process that has filled the Earth with some five billion species over three billion years, from microbes to vertebrates, notably humans. He likewise celebrates the goodness of a creator God (in eschatology, the end toward which we are headed), destining humans for loving others in a community of faith, redeemed through Jesus Christ incarnate.

Finlay describes two unfolding histories, the phylogenetic over the millennia and the biblical events, the Hebrew people in their promised land, their fortunes and misfortunes, their hope for a promised Messiah, a role fulfilled in Jesus, born in Bethlehem, reared in Nazareth, crucified in Jerusalem, giving up his

life for the saving of myriads of his disciples, across now thousands of years, with eternal life offered as long as Earth shall last. Both stories contain events that took place in ancestral times, facts of the matter, as well as interpretations.

Finlay faces "the big questions." For him the evolutionary story and the eschatological story are not alternatives, but complements. Both stories contain elements of chaos and of creativity, of simplicity and increasing complexity, of inheritance and freedom, tragedy and destiny. We need those multiple ingredients of both stories to go deep enough to be wise. This book is not an easy read. But every hour you spend with it open before you, I guarantee you will be better put in your place! I know because it happened to me.

-Holmes Rolston





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'THE MESSENGER' (U.S.P.S. 562110) is published quarterly by First Presbyterian Church, 531 South College Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80524. Periodicals postage paid at Fort Collins, CO. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to 'THE MESSENGER', First Presbyterian Church, 531 South College Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80524. The publisher of this periodical reserve the right to edit all material submitted.

# FIRSTPRESBYTERIANCHURCH FORT COLLINS a heart for the city 1872–2022

Join us as we celebrate
First Presbyterian Church's
150 years — a heart for the city
August 20–28, 2022

AUG **20** 

Gala Dinner CSU Ballroom

AUG 21

**150th Celebration Worship** FPC Sanctuary — 531 S. College

AUG **25** 

**150th Anniversary Sunrise Service** Whitewater Park — 201 E. Vine

AUG 28 Matthews House Benefit Concert featuring Gasoline Lollipops FPC Lawn — 531 S. College

All are invited and welcome!

Watch for more details this spring at firstpresfc.org.