# THE MESSENGER

NEWS FROM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FORT COLLINS |

**CELEBRATING 150 YEARS** 

A LIVING LEGACY

SHELDON JACKSON a pioneer of the faith

FAITHFUL FOUNDERS

SUMMER 2022—VOLUME XLII—ISSUE 2

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# From the Editor | HISTORY

History. In preparing to celebrate FPC's 150th anniversary this summer, we have discovered a lot about the history of our church.

- As they gathered on the banks of the Poudre for the very first worship service, the church founders sang "Shall We Gather at the River" and "The Church's One Foundation."
- In 1878, Rev. D.E. Finks earned an annual salary of \$900.
- In 1899, the organist earned \$2/week.
- In appreciation for his service, First United Presbyterian Church purchased a new Model T Ford for the Rev. W.E. Schureman in 1914.
- FPC's first female Elder was Mrs. Clyde Young in 1944.
- The highest enrollment in Sunday school was 994 in 1961.
- During the 100th Anniversary celebrations in 1972, members were asked to dress in period costumes from 1872. They even asked the men to grow sideburns to add to the atmosphere!
- The church moved its location to the corner of College and Myrtle with a congregation of 600. By 1973, membership had grown to 2,050.

... and lots more! Some tidbits you'll find on the visual timeline posted on a symbolic river on the ramp walls across from Shepardson Hall. Others you'll find in summer bulletins in a section titled "Did You Know?"

More important than the history you'll find at FPC is the heart. You will find *real* people sharing the life-transforming Word and love of Jesus Christ, glorifying God, serving in mission locally and internationally, and growing in faith and community—all demonstrating a heart for the city for the next 150 years and beyond. Come celebrate that with us!

—Cathy Richardson

#### **THEMESSENGER**

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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.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FORT COLLINS

#### PASTOR'S CORNER

**CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF MINISTRY** 



Hello Friends,

On Sunday, August 25, 1872, a small group of faithful disciples gathered on the banks of the Poudre River and formed the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Collins ... a year before Fort Collins was officially a city and four years before Colorado was admitted to the Union as the 38th state. For the past 150 years, our congregation has been an enduring beacon of Christ's light and love for our community and extended its reach to others across the country and around the world.

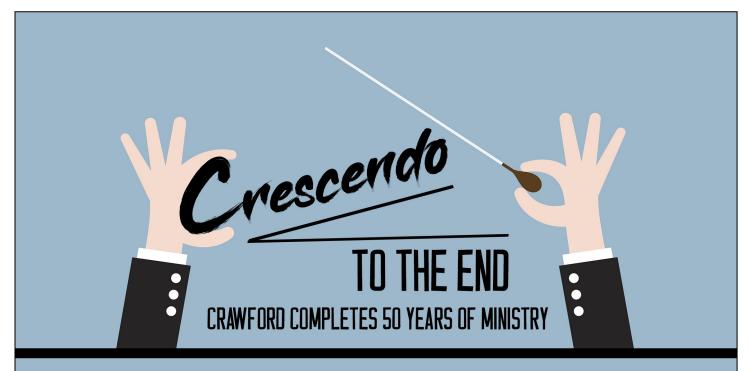
This summer we celebrate this historic anniversary with our theme: A Heart for the City. We will not only recall cherished memories and stories of lives changed through compassion and care, but will also mark the end of a chapter and the beginning of the next one. With hearts and minds attuned to God's vision for our future, we will gather for a variety of wonderful events and encourage you to get these on your calendar now:

- Over the summer, you will experience a dynamic timeline of our history unfold in the grand hallway outside of Shepardson Hall and thematic displays in the glass case on the west side of that ramp.
- Saturday, August 20 150th Anniversary Gala in the Colorado State University Grand Ballroom (Lory Student Center) from 5:00-8:00 p.m. This premier event will include a wonderful banquet dinner, fellowship, testimonies from our past, inspirational music, and some surprises. You can purchase tickets on our website, on Sunday mornings after worship or in the church office for \$40.
- Sunday, August 21 Worship will include festive music, special guests and an encouraging message in celebration of our anniversary.
- Wednesday, August 24 Our Children's Ministry is sponsoring a family event on our front lawn featuring musicians Jeff & Paige, who bring science and nature to life through kid-delighting music and stories.
- Thursday, August 25 On the actual day of our anniversary, we will host a 6:00 a.m. Sunrise Service at the Poudre River Whitewater Park, including refreshments.
- Sunday, August 28 In our parking lots, we will host a benefit concert for our partner, The Matthews House, featuring the highly acclaimed Gasoline Lollipops at 6:00 p.m.

Many of these events will benefit from additional volunteer support and you will find an opportunity to sign up at the 150th Anniversary information table on Sunday mornings. If you are interested, but not able to attend in-person, you can also call the church office to let us know.

Our hope and prayer for these festivities is that they offer an opportunity for us to gather and celebrate, but more importantly, to be renewed and energized as we launch into the next 150 years of faithful witness and service.

Peace, Corey



Dear FPC Family, Sanctuary Choir, and Chancel Bell Choir,

My final weekend as Director of Music and Arts at FPC was filled with affirmation, fellowship, and worship. I am profoundly touched by the outpouring of cards, words of thanks, and the rich worship that was experienced on Sunday, May 22. To be enabled by the Holy Spirt and the privilege to unite with the choir, bells, instrumentalists, and the congregation to use music as a vehicle for ministry through music was a blessing beyond words. I truly was able, as one choir member said, to crescendo to the end!

As I begin a new chapter in my life, I will forever hold in my heart how I have been supported and loved over my 15 years at First Pres. I offer a particular word of gratitude to those in the Sanctuary Choir, Chancel Bell Choir, and the children and youth that have participated in the music program over my time at the church. Their commitment and dedication to ministry through music, support, and love for me deeply touched my spirit and soul. Music creates a special bond for singers, ringers, and



After 50 years in ministry, Marvin Crawford passed the baton following his final worship service at First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins on May 22.

director, and most importantly, it has been the wheels that have empowered our worship as a congregation.

I now leave you with my heartfelt gratitude and deep appreciation for the journey we have experienced together. And to the gifted and talented staff, I wish you my very best as you guide this congregation forward for the cause of Christ. May the Lord bless and keep you, and may your best days in ministry and fellowship be ahead!

Faithfully and with loving gratitude!

-Marv Crawford

## **A LIVING LEGACY**

#### KLON E. MATTHEWS EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED FOR 2022

A cherished member of First Presbyterian Church, Klon Matthews left a living legacy with the education fund he established through our church's Foundation. He was a life-long public-school educator and administrator and an outgoing and exuberant disciple of Christ. In 1999, his wife, Eileen, set up the Klon E. Matthews Scholarship Program to honor his commitment to education by supporting young Christian men and women in our church who have the desire to grow in their walk with Christ and pursue higher education.

Precious gifts like these to our Foundation are acts of charity and hope for the future of our church family. While the principle of these gifts is retained in the Foundation's perpetual fund, the income and earnings continue to provide secure, stable funding for God's work through our church for generations to come.

To date, the Klon Matthews Scholarship fund has distributed \$25,000 in college scholarships to equip and encourage students in our congregation.

Haley Josephson and Tanner Sandstrum were awarded this year's scholarships. What follows is a little more about them.

On behalf of the Matthews family, the FPC Foundation Board, and the Klon Matthews Scholarship Committee, congratulations to Haley and Tanner! All of us at FPC are so deeply grateful to Klon and Eileen Matthews and their legacy of charity and generosity that has benefited so many of our young adults, and will continue to do so in the years ahead.

-Audrey McDill

Haley Josephson graduated from Fossil Ridge High School in May. She plans to attend Colorado State University with a concentration in Environmental Public Health. She is grateful for this scholarship because it allows her to pursue her education without worrying about some of the cost, and it is also confirmation that her hard work throughout high school has paid off. She has been involved with the youth group at First Presbyterian Church since sixth grade, and that has allowed her to make connections with many different people who she now calls friends. "The youth group has allowed me to grow both as a person and in my faith, and I would not be the same without it," said Haley.

Tanner Sandstrum is 18 years old and recently graduated from Windsor Charter Academy. He will be attending AIMS community college in the fall and hopes to transfer to CSU next year. He's interested in studying information technology. First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins has been a part of his life since he was four-years-old. "I have grown up in the church (because my mom works there!), attending VBS,

Sunday school, youth group, and more. I've particularly liked volunteering at VBS, attending Highlands Camp, and going on retreats with the youth group. My favorite part is Easter and Christmas Eve services, listening to the bell choir and the brass quintet—because I play trumpet myself!" said Tanner. His biggest activity at FPC was his Eagle Scout project which he completed last fall. The project included raising funds, planning, recruiting volunteers, and leading the work days where crews topped off the playground with mulch and restored the benches on the south side of the building. Tanner continued, "My involvement with FPC over the years has helped me grow as a person. I have learned to be a more compassionate, kind, thoughtful, and caring individual. FPC has helped me get closer to my family, my community, and to God. Thanks to the generosity of the Matthews family, I won't need to pay off student loans. I will be able to focus my time on studying and giving back to my community. I am so grateful for all that First Presbyterian Church has given me."







Huzzah! We had a wonderful week at Vacation Bible School. There were 60 kiddos and 40 volunteers. We sang and played and learned all about the Armor of God. Our little knights went on a quest to find the Belt of Truth, the Shoes of Peace, the Breastplate of Justice, the Shield of Faith, and the Helmet of Salvation. The enthusiasm and joy of our kids filled our halls. The sense of fun and dedication of our group leaders, station leaders, and their helpers made this a week for our children to remember. One parent shared this with me: "We were on a bike ride earlier, and my four-year-old daughter got a little nervous. I told her that I was with her, and then she said to herself multiple times, 'God's with me, I'm strong.' Thanks for giving space for my kids to learn about God from other people."

Thank you, everyone, for your support. God was indeed on the move!

—Pam Armstrong





### LIBRARY CORNER

#### THE WORD SOURCE

The Word Source Library at FPC has recently added the following items for your summer reading pleasure. Browse our library anytime by going to firstpresfc.org. The Church Library is found under the Ministries tab. You can also find us at fpcfc.scoolaid.net.

Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know About the People We Don't Know, by Malcolm Gladwell. This is the June selection for FPC Reads.

All That She Carried, by Tiya Miles. The journey of Ashley's sack, a Black family keepsake.

Searching for Sunday, by Rachel Held Evans. The author's story of her thorny relationship with the church.

In the Footsteps of St. Paul, (DVD). Actor David Suchet's adventure following the travels of the apostle Paul.

Where the Light Fell, by Philip Yancey. A revelatory memoir about the bonds of family and the dangers of extremist faith.

You Can and You Will, by Bill E. Wright. The story of Hal Kinard who helped shape the character of a generation in a small town (Fort Collins).

In Defense of Kindness, by Bruce Reyes-Chow. Pastor Reyes-Chow writes about how kindness (which is different from being nice) can help everyone and possibly change the world.

The Deepest Belonging, by Kara K. Root. A story about discovering where God meets us.

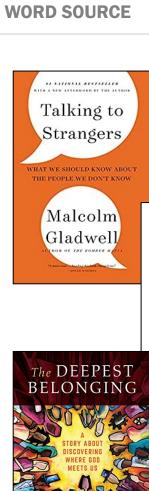
Same Kind of Different as Me, by Ron Hall. Hall's memoir detailing his relationship with a homeless man which developed into a lifelong friendship.

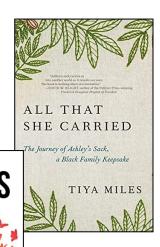
Prayer in the Night, by Tish Harrison Warren. A powerful and frank approach to the difficulties in our lives in this uncertain world.

Looking for God in Messy Places, by Jacob Owensby. A book about finding, practicing, and growing in hope.

These Precious Days, by Ann Patchett. Essays on home, family, friendship, and writing.

Love in the Time of Bertie, by Alexander McCall Smith. The latest installment in the 44 Scotland Street series.





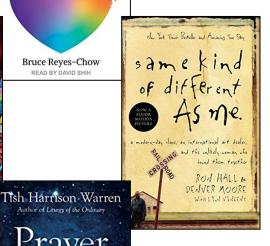
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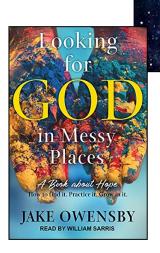
Why It Matters, ow It Changes Our Lives, a How It Can Save the World

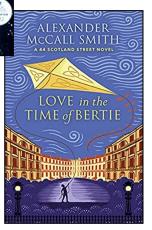
Bruce Reyes-Chow

For Those Who Work

or Watch or Weep









Building on our Biblical values and long history of community engagement, and in response to the Matthew 25" initiative of the Presbyterian Church (USA), our congregation commits itself to broaden and deepen our mission partnerships. We will work to build awareness of issues and opportunities, to develop relationships that inform and extend our engagement, and to pursue commitments that build God's kingdom. In Fort Collins our commitment includes walking alongside our neighbors by providing active encouragement, volunteers, financial support, and use of our building to multiple mission partners, including many that serve Fort Collins's growing Latino and other diverse communities."

Session's decision followed a year in which we have been testing whether this initiative is a good fit for our congregation. Along with continuing our long-term mission partnerships, we have added two new mission partners: the Fort Collins Rescue Mission and the Interfaith Solidarity and Accompaniment Coalition (ISAAC). We have also raised awareness of race and poverty issues in a variety of ways, including FPC Reads and a fall adult education series where we heard from civic leaders about issues in our local community. We have continued our long-standing practice of opening our facilities to a wide range of mission partners.

In the year ahead we plan to explore ways to broaden and deepen these practices, including exploring ways to engage more members of our congregation in mission-related activities. It is not expected that any single Matthew 25 congregation will be able to do it all or that issues of race and poverty are easily solved. The power comes from the collective witness of the Presbyterian Church on important issues of our day, as an expression of the Biblical values of justice, mercy, and reconciliation. For more information, contact Dave Campbell (dave.c.campbell@ucdavis.edu) or another member of Session.

> Matthew 25 in the PC(USA): A bold vision and invitation

Actively engaged in the world 👪









## A DYNAMIC TEAM

MIRIAM NELSON REJOINS THE FPC STAFF

The search team for the Director of Welcome and Involvement and the Session are thrilled to welcome back Miriam Nelson into a newly expanded position. Church leaders, in prayerful consideration of our needs and resources, reconfigured this important leadership role over two months and reposted it at the beginning of May. In announcing their choice, the search committee's chair, Dana Wysong wrote:

"The Search Committee for the Director of Welcome and Involvement enthusiastically and unanimously announces Miriam Nelson as the new full time Director of Welcome and Involvement at FPC. Miriam brings a wide range of experience both in and out of church settings to this position, and deep and broad relationships within FPC. Her abilities, expertise and talents will continue to enrich FPC as a thoughtful and innovative staff member and leader. While continuing her previous duties as Director of Welcome, Miriam will serve as a liaison to three of our Ministry Centers: Caring, Welcoming & Involvement; Discipleship & Spiritual Formation and Mission & Outreach; as well as organizing and implementing new and established programs for our congregation."

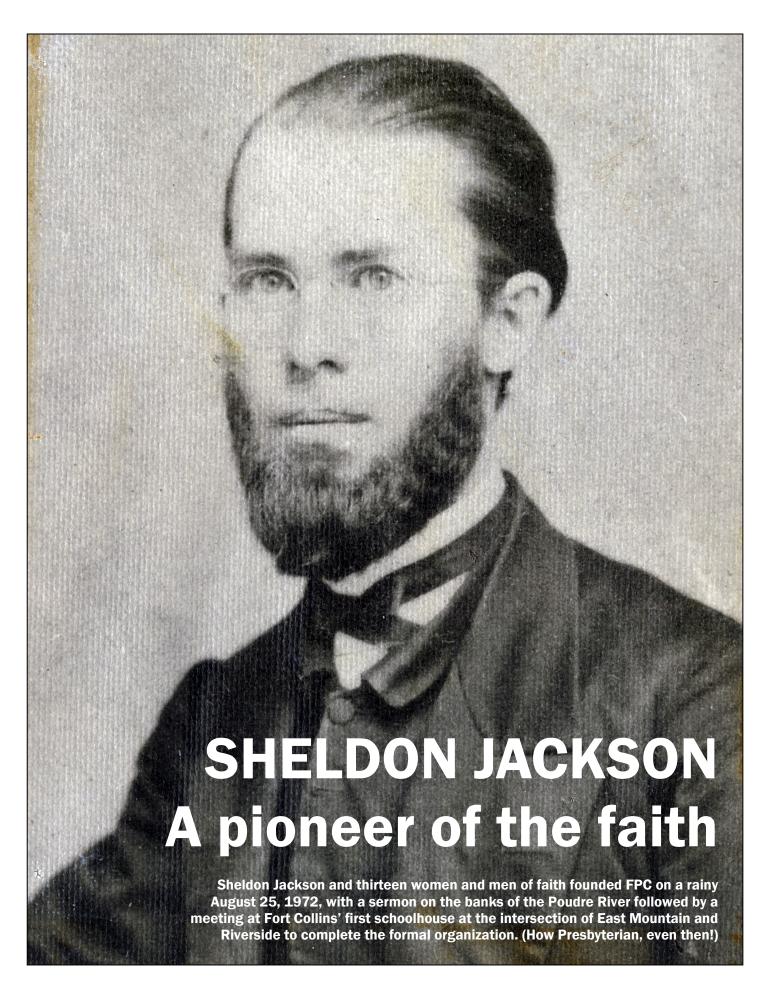


Miriam, who has been and is continuing as our Director of Welcome, will begin this expanded role on June 29.

# Celebrate Our Church Family with a First Presbyterian Church 150th Anniversary T-Shirt

You will love these eye-catching, comfy t-shirts ready to wear at home, while doing errands, or at city-wide events. Help spread the word about our amazing church community and our 150th anniversary celebration. T-shirts are available each Sunday following the service or by stopping by the church office. Sizes for the whole family. Cost: \$15 each or a donation.





Sheldon Jackson was born in 1834 in Minaville, NY. His parents encouraged a career in mission from a young age. Jackson graduated in 1855 from Union College in Schenectady, New York, and from the Presbyterian Church's Princeton Theological Seminary in 1858. In school, he was "of slight build, physically small, a sufferer at times from poor health and weak eyes" and "averse to all that was rough and demoralizing" (Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, September 1952). Jackson, five feet tall, sought an overseas mission assignment in Siam or Bogota, South America, but was turned down because the "Board (of Foreign Missions of Presbyterian Church) considered him to be lacking in physique." In 1857 assigned him to be "a missionary to the Indians" upon graduation from seminary.

After graduating from seminary in 1859 and wedding Mary Vorhees, a childhood friend, Jackson served as a teacher, pastor, and Superintendent of Missions in Oklahoma, Minnesota, and Wisconsin and organized or assisted in establishing 23 churches. During the Civil War, he briefly served with the Union Army in Tennessee as a representative of the United States Christian Commission to promote the spiritual welfare of the soldiers.

He received a series of appointments in 1869, starting with an assignment by the Presbytery of Missouri River as "Superintendent of Missions for Western Iowa,

Nebraska, Dakota, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Utah or as far as our jurisdiction extends." A subsequent additional appointment added Colorado. He made his initial headquarters in Council Bluffs and, by year's end, had traveled nearly 29,000 miles and established churches in Wyoming, Utah, Dakota, and Montana.

In 1870, he moved his headquarters and family to Denver and began a decade of great service in the Rocky Mountains as the **Presbyterian Missions** Superintendent for six western states and territories. In his Rocky Mountain years, he founded numerous churches, 27 of which were in Colorado. According to his Account Books, he traveled 173,514 miles during his seven years in the Rockies. He traveled by stagecoach, horseback, on foot, and occasionally by train when available. As to the impact of his stature on his work, he dryly remarked later in life, "If I had been more stalwart in height, I could not have slept so many nights on the four-and-a-half -foot seat of a Rocky Mountain stage."

In 1877, Jackson first journeyed to Alaska and began his involvement there. In 1881, he and his family left Denver for the East, and he increasingly focused on Alaskan mission and education. In 1885, he was appointed General Agent of Education in Alaska, working to organize, establish, and direct schools serving native peoples while continuing mission work on behalf of

the Presbyterian and other denominations. He continued his efforts on behalf of the education and economic wellbeing of Alaska natives from offices in Alaska and Washington until ill health forced his resignation in 1908.

In an interesting aside, Jackson recognized in 1890 that Arctic Eskimos were starving due to the depletion of their natural food supplies—including the killing and scattering of caribou by hunters. He urged Congress to fund the introduction of reindeer. When they failed to act, he appealed to the public for funds. He bought trade goods and journeyed to Siberia in 1891 to procure reindeer and begin their introduction to Alaska. He followed up with more reindeer the next year, and finally, in 1893, Congress appropriated funds and officially sanctioned Jackson's reindeer initiative.

He was a founder of the Alaska Society of Natural History and Ethnology, the precursor of today's excellent Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka. Between 1887 and 1898, he collected and purchased objects from each of Alaska's Native Peoples, which constitute the foundation of the museum's collection.

A Tlingit training school in Sitka founded in 1878 was destroyed by fire in 1872, and Jackson intervened to arrange the construction of a new facility. The school continued its mission and was named in his honor after Jackson died. A college

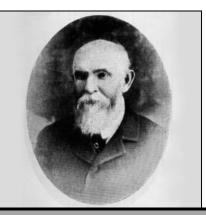
program was organized in 1944, and the high school program ceased in 1966. The Presbyterian Church relinquished its authority for the operation of Sheldon Jackson College in 1972, and the school ceased operation in 2007. In the early 1980s, at least three FPC work groups "enjoyed the beauty of Sitka, Alaska while working at Sheldon Jackson College."

Jackson passed away in North Carolina in 1909. Over his career, he traveled over one million miles, personally founded 80 Presbyterian churches, and opened the way for the organization of many more. He frequently exceeded his authority and ignored limitations from back East. When funding was not provided, he raised funds on his own and often visited seminaries to recruit young men for work in the West. His efforts live on at FPC, across the Mountain West, and Alaska, and according to the 1952 Journal, he personally had much to do with the strong position of the Presbyterian Church in the West.

—Walt Schuchmann







# FAITHFUL FOUNDERS

"On August 25, 1872, on the north bank of the Poudre River, 13 men and women of faith founded the First Presbyterian Church." Who were these faithful folk? The 13 charter members of FPC are listed as Mrs. George E. Buss, Andrew Cowan, Mrs. Rebecca Lyon, J. H. Mandeville, Mrs. Caroline M. McAdams, Miss Hattie G. McAdams, Mrs. Alice M. McGiffin, W. M. Neece, Mrs. Mary E. Peterson, Mrs. Mary S. Peterson, George T. Sykes, Mrs. S. C. Sykes, and Mrs. Christina Vescelius. Our Articles of Incorporation, filed in December 1873, list Andrew Cowan, J.C. Matthews, Henry C. Peterson, William C. Stover, William S. Vescelius, and A.K. Yount, who were selected the first trustees of the church. But who were they?

I would guess these faithful members were a lot like the melting pot of churchgoers we have in our congregation today: business owners, government leaders, philanthropists, jacks-of-all trade, husbands and wives—a vibrant congregation who were grounded in the grace of Jesus Christ and committed to being Christ's hands and feet in ministry and service.

In 1862, The Homestead Act allowed Union army veterans and citizens to acquire 160 acres of land where they would live, build a home, make improvements, and farm the property. Soldiers from Camp Collins, including John H. Mandeville, claimed the land and were some of the first settlers in Fort Collins.

Although they were not allowed to own property or vote in the 1860s and 1870s, women made up nearly 70% of our charter members. History abundantly tells the story of the men of Fort Collins. But there's less about the women. In 1866-1877, George E. Buss brought his family to Colorado by covered wagon. His wife, Amelia (above middle), kept a diary about the journey and her first year in Fort Collins. She wrote that the women felt lonely and isolated.

Teacher, county jailer, deputy clerk, and entrepreneur John C. Matthews (above right) was known for his "utmost faithfulness and fidelity," according to Ansel Watrous in the History of Larimer County. Matthews also ran a general store with William C. Stover. The mercantile's home was the Old Grout building, the first brick store building in Fort Collins – and, before the original Presbyterian church building was erected, a meeting place for First United Presbyterian Church. One of Matthews' most significant gifts to the community was that, together with Arthur H. Patterson, Joseph Mason, and Henry C. Peterson, he gave the gift of land to the state in order to secure the location of the agricultural college that became Colorado State University.

Henry C. Peterson (above right) came to Fort Collins in 1859 and was considered the first white civilian at the fort. Although he was a millwright, he came to Colorado to pursue adventure

with the gold rush. He found work as a gunsmith for the soldiers, cut the logs, and built Mrs. Elizabeth (Auntie) Stone's boarding house, the first hotel in Fort Collins. In 1867, Peterson and Stone established a grist mill which they operated until 1873. Continuing his construction, Peterson built the first schoolhouse in 1871, burnt the first kiln of brick, and built the first brick house in 1873 on Lincoln Avenue. Peterson married Mary Lyon on April 8, 1872.

A.K. Yount and his wife Ella established the first successful bank in Larimer County. When A.K. Yount died after being run over by a train in 1876, Ella continued to operate the business and became one of Fort Collins' most prominent businesswomen.

Over the past six months, I've worked with Sara Hunt, Peg Mussard, Grant Sherwood, Sharon Miller, and the 150th Anniversary team to create a visual timeline of the past 150 years at FPC. We've come across so many interesting people and stories along the way. The first 13 and the first trustees are just some of those who represent what FPC has always been—a witness to the love of God for all people in the heart of our great city.

—Cathy Richardson



"On August 25, 1872, on the north bank of the Poudre River, 13 men and women of faith founded the First Presbyterian Church." This August, we invite you to join us as we mark 150 years of FPC ministry with a heart for the city.

# August 20–28, 2022

Saturday AUG 20

Gala Dinner — CSU Ballroom

5:00 PM — This premier event will include a wonderful banquet dinner, fellowship, testimonies from our past, inspirational music, and some surprises.

Sunday AUG

**150th Celebration Worship** — FPC Sanctuary

9:00 AM — Worship will include festive music, special guests, and an encouraging message in celebration of our anniversary.

Wednesday AUG

**Jeff & Paige Family Concert** — FPC Lawn

5:45 PM — Our Children's Ministry will sponsor a family event on our front lawn featuring musicians Jeff & Paige, who bring science and nature to life through kid-delighting music and stories.

Thursday AUG

**150th Anniversary Sunrise Service** — Whitewater Park 6:00 AM — On the actual day of our anniversary, "come down to the river" for a Sunrise Service at the Poudre River Whitewater Park.

Sunday AUG

**Matthews House Benefit Concert** featuring Gasoline Lollipops — FPC Parking Lot

6:00 PM — We will host an outdoor benefit concert for our partner, The Matthews House, featuring the highly acclaimed Gasoline Lollipops.

For more information, visit firstpresfc.org.



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