

THE MESSENGER

| NEWS FROM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FORT COLLINS |

A SAFE PLACE

**INSPIRATION
IN GOD'S
CREATION**

**STUCCO, LATILLAS,
AND FRIENDS**

REJOICE IN THE UNEXPECTED

FALL 2022—VOLUME XLII—ISSUE 3

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From the Editor | THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

It's fall, y'all, and pumpkins are all around. Before we get used to falling leaves, football, and apple cider, it will be time for pumpkin carving and candy treats. Autumn arrives with 50 shades of orange, making me want to sing, "This little light of mine..."

Have you read the children's story about how we are like Jack-o-lanterns?

One crisp autumn day, the Lord goes out to the pumpkin patch and picks us out. He carefully carries us inside, where He washes us clean. He scoops out the gunk, the seeds of sin and evil. Then, His love fills our heart and puts a smile on our face. And in the end, we shine with a light that no darkness can extinguish.

Matthew 5:16 says, "...Let your light shine before others." Ever since our 150th Anniversary celebrations, I've thought of ways First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins shines God's light in the heart of the city and beyond.

Whether we provide a safe place for community partners (page 7), or a grief group for those suffering loss (page 6); whether we walk for the hungry (page 12), or read to understand another way to care for creation (page 10); whether we welcome new friends (page 14), or make a child feel at home (page 15); whether we worship or study or pray or just love one another—First Presbyterian Church radiates in this community and has for 150 years.

We are not hiding our light under a bushel. Our toothy grins are here to stay. As we launch into the next 150 years at FPC, may we continue to shine brightly and boldly in the heart of the city and beyond.

—Cathy Richardson

**The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness can never extinguish it.**
—John 1:5

THE MESSENGER

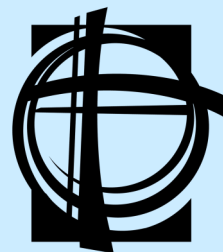
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PUBLISHING GUIDELINES | THE MESSENGER is a publication for the people, passions, and mission of First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins. The newsletter seeks to inspire, inform, instruct, challenge, and motivate its readers to become engaged in the 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

JOY TO THE WORLD



Hello Friends,

On Sunday, August 28, we concluded worship by joining our voices together to sing, "Joy to the World!" I know we ordinarily sing that hymn during the Christmas season, but it seemed an appropriate conclusion to our church's weeklong celebration of 150 years in Fort Collins. There truly was a lot of joy experienced and shared together.

Our 150th Gala banquet at CSU was sold-out and overflowing. It was a beautiful setting for all who gathered. A rousing "Pop Up History" featured eight different people sharing first-person monologues as if they had lived during one of our past 20-year spans. Our Sanctuary Choir wrapped up the event singing, "Shall We Gather at the River" (sung by our founders 150 years ago).

Wednesday, August 24, was family night on the front lawn as we welcomed local entertainers and educators Jeff & Paige. Then on our anniversary, August 25, we gathered over 130 people (at 6:00 a.m.!!!) to the Poudre River Whitewater Park for a sunrise service and cinnamon roll fellowship. We could not have hoped for a better turnout or that the sun began to fall over faces a few minutes into the service. It was glorious.

Following worship on the 28th, we heard stories from three of our long-time members in the sanctuary while others set up the parking lot with a stage to welcome a Northern Colorado award-winning band, the Gasoline Lollipops. Another beautiful night gathered about 250 people who came for the music and also to support our mission partner, The Matthews House – raising over \$4,000 for this great organization. Joy to the world, indeed!

Now we turn our calendars to fall and the beginning of a new program year. You'll find many wonderful ways to worship, learn, connect with one another and serve our church and community in the coming weeks. I encourage you, as always, to stay up to date with announcements in the worship bulletin, our weekly emails, our website, and our Facebook page.

Finally, an important truth to remember is that celebrating our history, as wonderful as it has been, will have been a missed opportunity if it does not also launch us with renewed energy and vision for our future. This fall, we will explore some of the ways God is calling us forward as a church with A Heart for the City. See you soon.

Peace,
Corey

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FORT COLLINS

a heart for the city: 1872–2022



For the past 150 years, our congregation has been an enduring beacon of Christ's light and love for our community. This summer, we celebrated this extraordinary anniversary with a historical timeline display, a birthday gala, glorious church services, a children's concert, sunrise worship down by the river, interviews with 50-year members, and a benefit concert with the Gasoline Lollipops—all highlighting our theme, "A Heart for the City."

We want to extend a huge thanks to everyone who worked behind the scenes to make our anniversary celebrations so incredibly memorable. While this marks the end of one chapter in the history of First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins, we begin anew with our hearts and minds attuned to God's vision for our future in the heart of the city, across the country, and around the world.





**Photos by
Andy Lang, David Mills,
and Cathy Richardson**

I lost my husband on August 26, 2020, suddenly and unexpectedly. When he died, I was in shock and couldn't cry or express my feelings for some time. A friend from First Presbyterian Church introduced me to the grief group and Dr. Alan Wolfelt's work, and then I began the healing process.

I am a Trauma Therapist in Fort Collins, but in this grief experience, I knew I needed support. One of the things I did was join the FPC grief group to continue to do my work of healing. I felt very alone and lonely—feelings that are so hard to work through. My two boys lived out of state, and I didn't have family to support me. Plus, I felt I needed to be there for my sons as they grieved their dad. My grief group work, in addition to doing counseling and listening to Christian music when I got stuck, saved me. I began slowly to move forward. I will forever be grateful to my grief group colleagues for opening their hearts, sharing their stories, and supporting me in mine.

Not long after, I began searching for further teaching in grief and trauma work. I attended a training by Dr. Alan Wolfelt, an international leader

in loss, grief, mourning, and death who lives here in Fort Collins. He has a certification program for individuals that attend five of his seminars. Then, with the FPC Foundation's support, I attended a second training. When Renée Brunsting asked me to be a part of facilitating and leading the Grief Group Program for FPC, I was honored!

I have learned so much from Wolfelt's coaching already. The first thing I learned is that grief is different than mourning. Grief is our internal process, and mourning needs to be an outward shared expression. In addition, if we don't do this outward mourning, we won't ever heal to a place where we can live and love fully again. When we attend a funeral service for our loved one, it's really just the beginning. We begin to say hello to our grief, mourning, and the healing process. He teaches that we must walk through the painful feelings of darkness before we see the light again.

I think about the verses in the bible, "Jesus Wept," and "Blessed are those who mourn." It is so important to mourn the losses of our loved

ones and take those first steps along the journey of healing. I will forever be thankful for Corey, FPC, Renée, and my grief group companions who supported me as I traveled my grief journey—and as I continue to travel. My experience has made me passionate about helping others through their grief.

This fall, we will begin a Grief Group based on Wolfelt's teachings, using his book, "Understanding Your Grief." Groups will be open to both members and non-members. The program is intended to companion you on your own unique grief journey. We hope you will join us. (Contact Renée Brunsting to express your interest, rbrunsting@firstpresfc.org).

I want to extend a special thanks to the FPC Foundation for supporting my training with Dr. Wolfelt. I hope and pray the lessons we have learned from him will bless others for years to come.

Despite tremendous loss, I truly want to live well, love well, and live a life of meaning. I think we all do! I am excited to connect more with those along the journey.

—Pamela O'Grady



A SAFE PLACE

FPC PROVIDES SPACE FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Sunday morning activities come and go, but what happens at First Presbyterian Church during the week? Did you know we host over 25 outside programs each week? Most of them are directed by our community partners. Over the past six years, FPC has become a place of counseling, resources, hope, and tools to move from surviving to thriving. The list of needs is extensive, whether it is food insecurity, language barriers, substance abuse, financial hardship, or academic deficiencies. But beyond our onsite ministries, who provides resources and opportunities?

In 2019, we became a Community Life Center for The Matthews House. Since then, they have offered over two dozen programs in our facility, reaching youth, families, and the community. This year, The Matthews House will provide programs including

- English as a Second Language (ESL) classes
- Second Generation Parent Café (one in English and one in Spanish, providing parents and caregivers with skills and resources to parent effectively)
- Learning Hub (a graduation support program for PSD high school students), and
- Summer Zone (a summer enrichment program for students ages 8–14)

In addition, Drugbusters, a rehabilitation and counseling group for those struggling with addictions, has met weekly at FPC since 2007. McBackpack provides supplemental food to students and families who would otherwise not have enough food over the weekend and uses FPC as a storage and packing facility. FPC hosts several of The Family Center/La Familia programs, too. Plus, we have been home to Boy Scout Troop 82 for 90 years! But those are just a few of the “regulars” in our building.

New partners include Stand Down, a once-a-year resource event for homeless veterans; Music Together, providing music and movement for children 0-4 years old; and Adult Academy Orchestra Rehearsals by Off the Hook.

Our community partners have described us as a safe place for their clients and participants to meet. While we very much want to reach out to our community to serve their needs, we are already welcoming those who also have a heart for the city to provide a safe place for families to heal, grow, and ultimately thrive.

—Kimberly Shober

FPC FACILITIES USE DURING AN AVERAGE WEEK:

- **25+ external programs offered**
- **6 days of childcare provided**
- **4+ days both kitchens are used**
- **3 organist practices, 3 music rehearsals, and 2 dance classes take place**

COMMUNITY PARTNERS FPC WILL HOST THIS YEAR:

- **Community Music Rehearsals/Concerts**
- **Larimer Chorale**
- **New Horizons Band**
- **Off the Hook Orchestra rehearsal**
- **Music Together classes**
- **Centennial Children’s Choir**
- **Rocky Mountain Chamber Choir**
- **American Guild of Organists recital**
- **AYMS Studio recital**
- **CO Bach concert**
- **CSU Organ Week lessons**
- **Todd Wilson Organ concert**
- **Jeff & Page concert**
- **Family Support Programs**
- **Family Housing Network (FFH)**
- **The Matthews House**
- **Project Self-Sufficiency**
- **Realities for Children**
- **McBackPack**
- **The Family Center/La Familia**
- **Family Leadership Training Institute**
- **Larimer County Department of Health**
- **The Health District**
- **Stand Down**
- **Front Range Choral Alliance**
- **CROP Walk**
- **Crossroads Safehouse**
- **Drugbusters**
- **Boy Scout Troop 82**
- **Interfaith Council**

INSPIRATION IN GOD'S CREATION

CAMPING TRIP HIGHLIGHTS FLORA AND FAUNA



After three summers, Denise and I continue to be inspired by the scenery and the incredible array of biodiversity that we see during our time on the FPC all-church camping trips in Rocky Mountain National Park. This year, we also found inspiration in Corey's camping sermon, "Stewards of Eden," which he shared under clear blue skies, among towering pine trees, at the foot of Emerald Mountain.

We particularly appreciated the biblical context that Corey provided in his message. The Scripture, Romans 1:19–20, provided an excellent retrospective of our thoughts while we wandered and photographed in RMNP. "Since what may be known about God is plain....For since the creation of the world, God's... eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made..."

Corey's story about quick stops of park tourists suggested that slowing down and *really* looking, really paying attention would be more productive for us all. He later mentioned that it is easy in the mountains to "find a space in solitude and sit in quiet and listen." A

quote from John Muir colorfully underscored a potential result: "Thousands of God's wild blessings will search you and soak you as if you were a sponge..."

Later in his sermon, Corey again used one of our favorite phrases, "Consider the birds of the air and the lilies of the field." Just before the Sunday morning service, I saw a northern goshawk streak by the site of the service. This hawk is regarded as one of the fiercest and boldest raptors of the northern forests and is a species of conservation concern. At the other end of the spectrum of considering "the birds of the air," we saw a male broad-tailed hummingbird making display dives behind Corey as he spoke. I was trying to pay attention to Corey, but I did wonder if the hummingbird was attracted to Corey's red shirt (a favorite color for hummingbirds)! As for the "lilies of the field," the fantastic diversity of wildflowers got a lot of our attention and led to a wide range of photos.

Real-life examples highlighted another topic in Corey's message. The Meister

Eckhart quote, "If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature—even a caterpillar—I would never have to prepare a sermon," followed a sighting of a western tiger swallowtail butterfly, apparently imbibing the "nectar" of the children's bubble-making solution just before the service. The swallowtail was not a caterpillar, but it had been one.

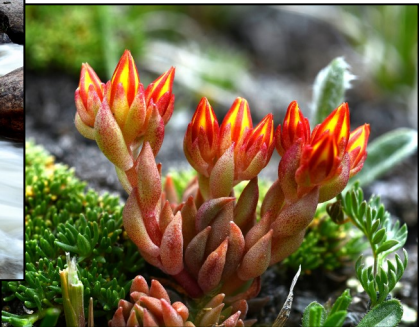
We thank Corey for bringing our observations, photos, and accompanying thoughts into "sharper focus." Now, we will look forward to our next adventure at FPC's 2023 All-Church Camping Trip, July 20–23. Join us!

—Dean Biggins

Postscript: At the beginning of his message, Corey introduced us to "our calling" as people of faith to care for God's creation. Near the end of the message, he invited us to "immerse ourselves in and pay attention to God's beautiful creation." Please consider joining the FPC creation care group if those statements resonate with you. Contact me or Walt Schuchmann for more information.

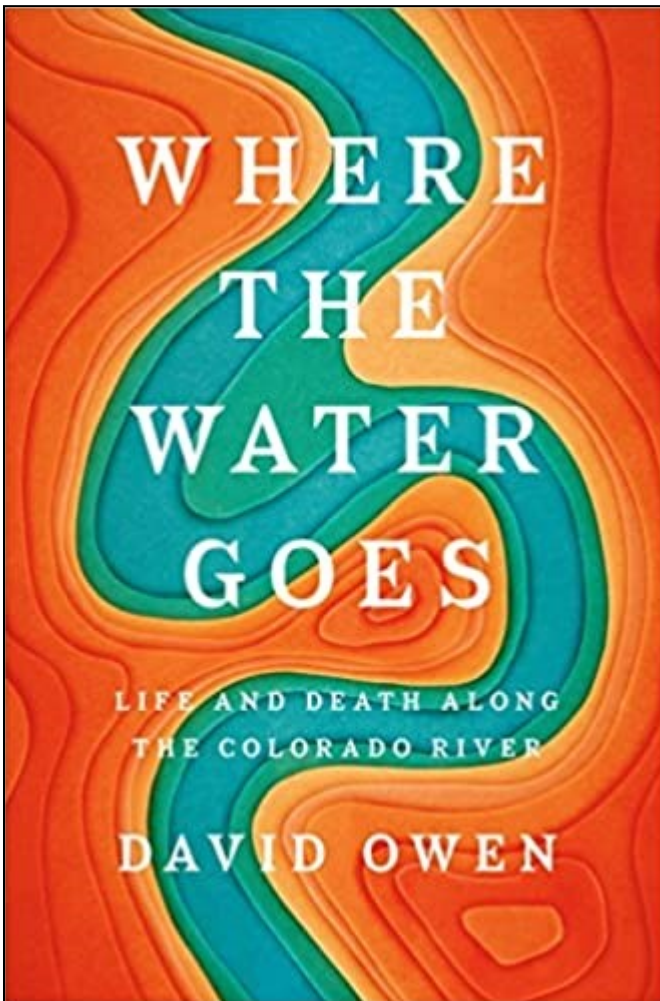


Photos by
Dean Biggins



LIBRARY CORNER

THE WORD SOURCE



Where the Water Goes will be November's selection for FPC Reads. We hope you'll join in the reading and conversation. It's an eye-opening and easy-reading education about where our water comes from, where it all goes, and how even more than the gallons that actually flow down the Colorado River are owned or claimed by someone. It's particularly relevant as we watch the shrinking levels of Lakes Powell and Mead and the local matter of whether Glade Reservoir will be constructed northwest of Fort Collins.

The book draws one into the 100-year history and drama of 1922's Colorado River Compact, with all the benefits it has provided to millions of people and all the resource-draining that has paralleled that benefit. The Compact is a remarkable document whose intent was to work out the sharing of Colorado River water among seven western states and Mexico. It has evolved to contain the work of Herbert Hoover, Congress, the National Guard, the Supreme Court, Henry Kissinger, and beyond.

The story includes Fort Collins and our front range area, resourced from the North Grand River Ditch near Cameron Pass since about 1890, capturing west-slope snowmelt that would otherwise flow into what was then the Grand River (thus, Grand Ditch, Grand Lake, Grand Junction). The name Colorado River was adopted in 1921. Long Draw Reservoir, built in 1930, stores the western slope water for release to the east. With its water use established so long ago, the Grand Ditch has a legally strong "senior" right to the water it claimed in 1890, and to which it eventually acquired a legal right under the Compact.

The retelling of such "takings" of water region-wide, of how the "rights" to specified amounts of river and groundwater were created, and the troublesome modern consequences, are a fascinating story. Owen guides one through the geography, politics, engineering, population changes, and agriculture that have shaped today's circumstances.

You'll find the book a relaxed trip along the river, from its nearby headwaters to its dried-up end in the Mexican desert. At towns along the river's course, you'll meet individual farmers and community populations served by the river. Owen describes a vast network of dams, reservoirs, pipelines, concrete canals, dirt ditches, irrigation systems, and environmental impacts. Water use conflicts illustrate the complexities of the Colorado River Compact law.

"Complexity" is an understatement. Illustrations of legal challenges over who has a right to how much river water make the law and its flaws understandable yet leave one wondering how the contesting of the historic water rights that have led to overuse will ever be resolved. Happily, Owen and others cite some optimism that an emerging necessity for cooperation may bring successful management to the river's resources and all it provides.

NOTE: Copies of ***Where the Water Goes*** will be in our FPC Library and the public library. Used hardbound and paperback copies on Amazon cost a small fraction of new retail.

—Tom Tonoli

Where the Water Goes: Life and Death Along the Colorado River By David Owen, Riverhead Books 2017

AUTUMN OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The Adult Spiritual Formation Committee has been busy organizing new education and discipleship opportunities for the fall. Here's a little of what we have planned.

On Sunday mornings beginning Sunday, September 18, Dr. Steve Cooley will lead an exploration of pictures of Jesus over time in our adult Sunday school class. His eight-week class will look at the broad issues of images in our culture and then the images of Jesus in the popular paintings of Warner Sallman. From there, the class will explore various representations of Jesus in the early church. In November, Cheryl Toliver will lead us in a two-session class looking at the biblical calling to discipleship.

FPC members also will have the opportunity to participate in Midweek eXperience or MX on Wednesday nights. This year, MX focuses on the community awareness and vitality emphasis of the Matthew 25 Initiative recently adopted by our Session. To that end, our Fort Collins Community Awareness Forum began with a

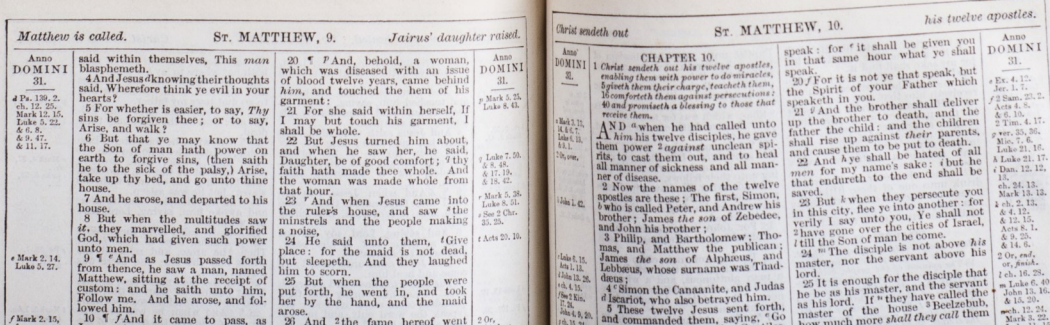
discussion of what the Matthew 25 Initiative is and will continue with a variety of speakers, including Claudia Menendez from the Fort Collins Inclusion and Equity Office; Dr. Ellison Carter from CSU, who will speak on the intersection of poverty and pollution; and our own member, and Jan Stallones, who will speak on recognizing and responding to hate groups. There will also be presentations from the Food Bank for Larimer County about vulnerable populations, Krystal Langholz, who has ties with Oweesta, an organization that works with native Americans, and Crossroads Safehouse, whose mission is to provide services to victims of domestic violence. MX dinner is served from 5:15–6:00 each Wednesday evening, followed by the presentation and discussion from 6:00–7:00 p.m.

Finally, FPC Reads will continue throughout the fall with several books that are sure to encourage thoughtful reflection and discussion. In September, the group is reading *Falling Upward* by Richard Rohr, which tackles the subject of aging and spirituality.

Then in October, the group will turn its attention to Matthew Desmond's *Evicted*, which focuses on housing issues. Finally, in November, the group will study *Where the Water Goes: Life and Death Along the Colorado River* by David Owen, exploring water availability issues. The church purchased copies of these books to sell to the congregation for the reduced price of \$10. Each month, discussion groups, led by Miriam Nelson, will meet during the second and fourth weeks to discuss the book, and participants will have the option of attending a 9:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m. group. Check the Adult Ministry page of the church website for more information, <https://firstpresfc.org/adults/>.

A lot is going on this fall, and the Adult Spiritual Formation Committee hopes everyone will find the various opportunities both meaningful and enriching. There is something for everyone, so join us!

—Lynn Johnson



What is the CROP Hunger Walk?

CROP Hunger Walks are community-led interfaith events that raise funds to end hunger locally AND around the world. Everyone is welcome to join!

Your participation impacts individuals and families in more than 35 countries. In many developing nations, people could walk up to six miles a day to get food and water. One in nine people worldwide lack access to clean water and a healthy diet. We walk to show solidarity and to bring awareness while raising funds for permanent change.

From its birth in 1969, CWS-sponsored CROP Hunger Walks have grown to include walkers of all ages, faiths and backgrounds in more than 500 communities throughout the U.S.

The CROP Hunger Walk is the only nationwide Walk that addresses hunger both locally and globally.



Why We Walk



Local

Partner with and support 1,600 local food banks and soup kitchens - Gather in solidarity with others in your own community to end hunger and poverty.



Global

Show solidarity with the millions who walk miles every day in search of food and water. Support individuals impacted by poverty and disaster through CWS.

The Impact

CROP Hunger Walkers raise more than **\$6 million** annually to bring help and hope to those who need it most.



PHOTO: PAUL JEFFREY

Support 1,600 US-based hunger-fighting organizations



Water systems and increased access to safe drinking water



PHOTO: SHANLEY STUDIO

Tools and training to help families grow the food they need



Livestock to give families food security and economic stability

Fort Collins CROP Walk
Sunday, October 2, 2022
12:45 PM Registration
1:00 PM Walk



This rain-or-shine, three-mile group walk starts from FPC's parking lot, winds through Old Town, and ends back at FPC. It's about an hour of good fellowship with FPC members and other area churches. Donations benefit the Food Bank for Larimer County and Church World Service, which this year added food and shelter service in Moldova for Ukrainian refugees to its water well and crop/nutrition programs. Consider making a donation to the FPC Youth walk team, which has won the city's "Best Eater" team award for five years straight.

To donate or join the walk, visit this short link: t.ly/C-ex.

Around the block. Around the world.

STUCCO, LATILLAS, AND FRIENDS

FPC YOUTH BUILD FENCES AND RELATIONSHIPS ON SUMMER MISSION TRIP



On June 26, a group of six youth and three adults loaded into the FPC van and headed down to Taos, New Mexico. None of us really knew what to expect on this trip other than that we were building a house with the local Habitat for Humanity group. Little did we know that while there, we would learn an entirely new set of skills in a very short amount of time and build relationships that would last a lifetime.

WE BUILT A FENCE

Our first project while in Taos was building a Coyote Fence. This popular fencing style used in New Mexico consists of spruce or fir branches or latillas tied to an all-steel welded frame. In one day, the students put up the metal framework, tied the latillas, and completed the fence, "I really enjoyed working on the fence...before there was no fence. It was very rewarding to build something from nothing," said Ha (names abbreviated for confidentiality). Watching the kids use power tools, teamwork, and some serious ingenuity to build this unique fence was impressive. I loved that they encouraged each other, laughed together, and created a friendly competition to see which group could make the best Coyote Fence.

STUCCO, STUCCO, & MORE STUCCO

We spent the vast majority of our time learning all about stucco. We learned how to mix, apply, and smooth out the imperfections of stucco. By the fourth day, the youth were pros! These kids worked tirelessly to finish the outside

stucco of the house before the dedication. "They not only taught me to stucco, but work ethic, and to see things in a different way," said He. Each of them worked diligently to finish the house's stucco and to clean and set up for the dedication. It was an absolute honor to be present while the Barsano family received the keys to their new home. Not only did we have the privilege of working alongside the family to help build their new home, but we also had the opportunity to break bread with them and get to know them during our time in Taos. "It was exciting to meet and work with the owners as we heard her story and journey with housing...it gave perspective on how many hours and volunteers it took to pour so much love into a home," said M.

LOTS OF LOVE AND LAUGHTER

Ha said, "Our connection has deepened and grown throughout this trip." It really wouldn't be a youth group trip without the bonding that goes hand-in-hand with a road trip, working together, and living in close quarters for a week. Watching the kids work together to figure out how to build three-tiered scaffolding was awesome, but watching them laugh, sing songs, and tell jokes was absolutely breathtaking. At the end of every day, they were exhausted but fulfilled and happy. We gathered in the house, made dinner, laughed, and reminisced about the day (sometimes until late at night). Early the next morning, they were up with smiles on their faces, eager to do it all over again. At the beginning of the trip, I asked

them why they were there and what was their purpose on this mission trip. While each of them had multiple responses, one response was the same: "to connect" with each other and with the community.

INTENTIONS

Each youth had a purpose or intention for their time spent in Taos that they strived to fulfill while there:

- "To have new experiences and grow as a person....put more good in the world." —C
- "To help others directly and build deeper connections with those around me." —M
- "Connecting with and helping a community that doesn't benefit me." —S
- "To make a difference and help others." —Ha
- "To help others." —Q
- "To help out the community, learn in ways other than school and also grow in my faith and have fun!" —He

Some would say spending a week with a bunch of teens and building a house in the heat of the summer may not be the best idea. However, watching those teenagers serve others, perform back-breaking work, connect with local volunteers, laugh with their friends, and grow in their faith and as human beings was one of the greatest experiences I have ever had!

—Carlie Hoskins

REJOICE IN THE UNEXPECTED

CINDY COUCH BRINGS 30 YEARS OF PASSION AND EXPERIENCE TO FPC

If you've lived on earth for more than a moment, you know life is full of unexpected events. Sometimes life's surprises are positive; a relationship is restored, a job promotion comes out of the blue, or an MRI comes back negative. Other surprises are unwelcome; a car crash, a recession, an unwanted diagnosis. No matter what, for better or for worse, life is full of the unexpected. One of the reasons we gather at church is to celebrate and hold one another in the expected and unexpected events of our lives.

Just like us, our church experiences the unexpected. People move away, or their circumstances change, and church staff come and go for all sorts of reasons. Such was the case a few months ago when we had an unexpected need to hire an Interim Music Director.

I was with Pastor Corey a few hours after the need arose. We were sitting around a table wondering what we were going to do when he looked at me and said, "Do you know what Cindy Couch is up to?"

I have known Cindy for almost 20 years. She was the Music Director at the church I served in Austin, Texas. Since moving to Colorado, I have kept in touch with Cindy. And, for the last several summers, she has lived in Fort Collins for a few months. Corey had gotten to know her during her visits. He also knew that in 2021 she decided, after 30 years of service, to leave her Church in Texas—not to retire, but to see what unexpected things might bubble up.

When Corey asked if I knew what Cindy was up to, he had no idea that she was planning on arriving in Fort Collins just a few days later. Committee meetings were quickly put together; interviews were held; references were checked;



Welcome new Interim Director of Music and the Arts Cindy Couch (and Biscuit) to FPC!

and, in record time for Presbyterians, our church hired a new Interim Director of Music and the Arts. We weren't expecting it. Cindy wasn't expecting it. And yet—here we are!

Cindy Couch comes to us from Texas as one of the most accomplished choral directors in the state. She was the choral director of high school state competition-winning choirs for over 30 years. She won't tell you this, but once, she was awarded the Texas Teacher of the Year. In addition to her accomplished career training and conducting high school choirs, she was the Music Director at Central Presbyterian Church for 30 years, where she developed a skilled and dedicated chorus while shepherding a loving community of musicians for decades. She has also been a guest conductor for choirs worldwide, from Aspen, Colorado, to Leysin, Switzerland, to Munich, Germany. And she was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to Japan (ask her about Japanese choral

music!). Needless to say, her musical "chops" are extraordinary.

As impressive as her resume is, one thing I love about Cindy most is her openness to the movement of the Spirit in the World. One member of the FPC choir described Cindy as being "unabashedly vibrant." I think that is an accurate description, and I think much of her vibrancy comes from her ability (her gift) to see the Spirit—especially amid the unexpected.

I hope each of you will try and spend some time with Cindy. Her enthusiasm for singing, love for God, and unabashed vibrancy are gifts to the Music Ministry and to our whole church. At the very least, I trust that all of us, when we find ourselves moved by an anthem or a beautiful solo, will remember the beauty that can come from unexpected things.

— Joseph Moore



from the Director of Children's Ministries

We are back to a full program year—finally!

One of the greatest gifts we give to our children is a sense of belonging. We want to provide ways for our children to feel like an integral part of our church. We will be providing ministry opportunities for, with, and by our children:

Sunday School

Sunday School will be offered during the 9:00 a.m. service. And, because we believe that our children should experience worship with their Church Family, we have built in several "Kids in Church" days when we will not have Sunday school and children will be encouraged to worship in the Sanctuary. (See schedule at right.)

Midweek eXperience (MX):

From September–November 9, kids will gather after the 5:15 p.m. MX family supper for games, crafts, home work help, books, various group-time activities and themes from 6:00–7:00 p.m. (We realize that your children need time that is not "sit and listen" oriented.) This time will be supervised and have several choice-based activities. Our theme for the fall is Fruits of the Spirit Mad Science!

Church Family Events (Intergenerational):

Check out the green events on the schedule for events designed to encourage our kiddos to get to know their church grandmas and grandpas, aunts and uncles and cousins.

Kid's Missions:

Look for opportunities for your children to help someone else, inside and outside the FPC walls. Children are often our greatest ministers.

To volunteer, contact Pam Armstrong:
parmstrong@firstpresfc.org

Visit firstpresfc.org
for updates
and registrations.



Year at a Glance

First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins Children's Ministries

FOR kids! WITH kids! BY kids!

09/11/22	9 AM Sunday School Kick-off
09/14/22	5:15 PM MX Starts
09/23/22	6–9 PM Parents Night Out (PNO)
10/12/22	5:30–7:00 PM Fall Festival
10/16/22	9 AM Family Sunday ~ Kids in Church!
10/28/22	6–9 PM Parents Night Out (PNO)
10/30/22	10:30 AM–12:00 PM Trunk or Treat
11/16/22	5:30–7:30 PM Advent Celebration
11/18/22	6–9 PM Parents Night Out (PNO)
11/27/22	9 AM First Sunday of Advent ~ Kids in Church!
12/09/22	6–9 PM Parents Night Out (PNO)
12/11/22	9 AM Christmas Festival of Music ~ Kids in Church!
12/18/22	10:30 AM Christmas Program
12/25/22	9 AM Christmas Morning ~ Kids in Church!
01/01/23	9 AM New Year's Morning ~ Kids in Church!
01/20/23	6–9 PM Parents Night Out (PNO)
01/22/23	5:30–8:30 PM Games through the Ages
02/12/23	10:30 AM–1:00 PM Make Cupid Cards
02/21/23	5:30–8:30 PM Mardi Gras Celebration
02/24/23	6–9 PM Parents Night Out (PNO)
03/12/23	9 AM ~ Kids in Church!
03/24/23	6–9 PM Parents Night Out (PNO)
04/02/23	9 AM ~ Palm Sunday Procession ~ Kids in Church!
	10:15 AM–1:00 PM Easter Egg Dyeing
04/09/23	9&11 AM Sunday School Resurrection Celebration
04/28/23	6–9 PM Parents Night Out (PNO)
05/13/23	3–5 PM KIDS TAKE A STAND!
05/19/23	6–9 PM Parents Night Out (PNO)
05/21/23	9 AM Last Day of Sunday School
06/04/23	9 AM Playground Church begins
6/12–16/23	VBS!
06/18/23	9 AM VBS Sunday
7/20–7/23	All-Church Camping Trip





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[MIDDLE SCHOOL + HIGH SCHOOL
YOUTH GROUP]
Sundays, 6:00-7:30 PM