

# Shepherding the Flock

## *Notes from February Session Meeting, March Called Session Meeting and March Called Congregational Meetings*

### **Notes from Session meeting on February 24, 2026:**

Pastor Will's devotional was based on John 8:12 and also one of Dr. Martin Luther King's Easter sermons. The theme centered on Jesus being the light of the world, and even when things seem dark, God's lights cannot be blocked. This is what Easter tells us also.

### **New Member Candidates**

David and Jane Kalshoven attended as new members candidates and described their faith journey, what brought them to FPC, and what led them to become members. They commented on their appreciation of FPC's bible-based preaching and teaching, and the warmth and welcome they were met with as visitors. They were asked a few questions by Session and answered the questions asked of all new members candidates, according to the Book of Order. Session voted unanimously to receive David and Jane Kalshoven as new members.

### **Report of the Clerk | Elder Lolly Lawrence**

The nominating committee kick-off meeting was scheduled for March 5. The deacons who will serve on the nominating committee are Jamie Roberts and Sharon Mikkelson. All elders to update their job description.

### **Pastor's Moment | Pastor Will Wilson**

- Will offered thanks for all the condolences and support from the Session and the congregation on the recent death of his father.
- The Lenten Bible study at MNM's has started, based on the book of John.
- Lenten suppers have started on February 26. There is a time of worship before the dinners, the theme for this year is The Beatitudes.
- We're seeing attendance of around 175 people on Sundays, which feels good and robust. It's great to see the sanctuary almost full. We are also seeing a large number of people online watching our church services.
- Received very positive comments on the recent youth retreat.

### **Discussion Items | Personnel, Finance, Strategy Team**

#### *Finance – Monty Cordell*

Monte brought the following policies in draft form and asked for Session review:

- Policy on Protection and Access to Congregational Giving Information
- Giving Information Giving Data Confidentiality & Use Expectations

Monte also provided a financial update. The faith budget creates a \$102k financial gap for Session to collectively manage. Session agreed to move toward closing the faith budget gap by growing the congregation, re-engaging inactive members, providing more giving options, using more special funds, and reducing costs. Also, Session will think about approving expenses from each ministry area prior to purchasing.

Income and expenses were both under budget by nearly the same amount. The projected cash balance for the end of the month is on budget as a result. Nonetheless, if no other actions are taken, we will start to run out of money in June.

Given the number of people watching the service online, it would be a good idea to put the QR code for giving into the video, during the offertory.

*Personnel – Rick Mueller*

Ben Ehrets' 20-year anniversary at FPC is March 6, 2026 and a celebration will be held the following Sunday.

*Strategy Team - Lolly Lawrence, Emily Bauer, Barb Cash, Monty Cordell,*

The team brought several documents to the meeting for review. One was a strategic ministry reflection and next steps proposal, another was a draft of strategic ministry initiatives, and a third was a scripted facilitator outline for listening sessions. These were created using input from the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) session that the Session participated in in October. Items were grouped into six categories, including:

1. Outreach and community presence
2. Worship and spiritual formation
3. Volunteer engagement and participation
4. Financial and facilities usage
5. Communication and congregational trust
6. Leadership and long-term sustainability

The team proposed that we hold listening sessions on each of these categories to give the congregation a chance to provide input and suggest initiatives. We will start the listening sessions in April with "Outreach and community presence."

**Consent Agenda – M/S/A Unanimous**

*Clerk of Session*

- Approve meeting minutes from annual congregational meeting on 2/1/26
- Approve meeting minutes session meeting on 1/6/26
- Acknowledge annual statistical report
- Set a congregational meeting for March 8, 2026, to allow the congregation to vote on Jim Fitzgerald as a congregational representative on the nominating committee.
- Accept Allie Devine's request to be removed from FPC membership.

*Mission*

- Pledge \$0 to John Knox Presbytery on the 2026 General Mission Pledge form. This motion reflects the process followed last year. Mission giving funds will be allocated directly to the John Knox Presbyterian Missions rather than routing them through the John Knox Presbytery.

*Worship and Music*

- Approve the choir to holding an Easter Flower Fundraiser

*Finance*

- Approve congregational meeting frequently asked questions (FAQ) and responses.
- Approve monthly financial metric for the Connector and website

### **Building and Grounds | Elder Ryan Horst**

- Bathrooms in the education wing are scheduled to have grout cleaned towards the end of March.
- B&G team continues to address the ever-growing list of items around the church.
- Roof leak in the Gathering Space was repaired. Several folks helped out with emptying buckets and moving the bookshelves when the water started coming down the west wall. Once things fully dry out, drywall repairs will be addressed.
- Currently working with on resolving issues with Door 6 lock controller.
- Planning to do carpet cleaning once the winter salt season is past. Narthex, Chapel and some of the Gathering space will be done first, maybe others depending upon quotes.
- Reviewing building use agreements

### **New Member Outreach | Elder Kyle Halweg**

- Took a team (including youth group members and Angela Himegarner) to walk the neighborhood to the west and north of FPC to invite them to visit FPC. Found that some of the homes are not yet finished or are not yet occupied. Received a friendly welcome from those they found at home. Kyle is optimistic that we'll be able to get people to visit, especially with upcoming Lenten worship and dinners, and other activities. Want to keep a fun, positive, and welcoming approach to outreach.

### **Adult Nurture & Spiritual Growth | Elder Jim Fitzgerald**

- Working on an event for 11/1 where "mystery authors" will present. Hoping to also hold the baptism for the Wilson's second daughter at this event. More to come. This is being underwritten by donors.
- Began new Tuesday a.m. Bible Study @ M-N-M's Coffee House on 2/18/26. Pastor Will leading study on John's Gospel. May expand invitation beyond our church.
- Adult Sunday School class (Life Compass) beginning a new study on John's Gospel on 2/22/26.
- Women's Light Team (3/25) and Men's Group (3/18) are sponsoring all-congregational dinners after Lenten mid-week services. Encouraged to "bring a friend."

### **Mission | Leslie Strangfeld**

- Outreach to our local mission partners is in progress to get to know them, learn about their work, understand their needs, and explore ways we may be able to support them.
- Outreach is underway to recruit members for the Mission Committee.
- Submitted John Knox Presbytery mission pledge
- Met with finance to work through what mission has available to it from a financial perspective. Transitioned related Missions files and discussed 2026 charitable giving plans, etc.

### **Personnel | Rick Mueller**

- Pastor Will has used bereavement leave per our policy
- Work will continue to finalize family leave policy
- Please share names of people who may have an interest in participating on a personnel committee that reviews personnel related policies and helps to love, celebrate and support our staff.

### **Stewardship | Elder Barb Cash**

- Attended a follow-up meeting to brainstorm ideas gathered during the SWOT exercise conducted at the Session Retreat in October 2025.

- The Endowment committee will be meeting with the Presbyterian Foundation on 2/23 to discuss our focus on planned giving. We have draft brochures, a video and will feature Legacy Planned Giving Day on an upcoming Sunday
- We are reorganizing the donation page on FPC's website, considering including the Wish List, Legacy Planned Giving and comments about stock, and qualified charitable contributions.
- We also are planning to publicize our goals for the General Fund, considering putting that information in the Connector and the webpage.

#### **Worship and Music | Elder Amy Lewis**

- Jamison is organizing an ecumenical cantata for Good Friday to be held at FPC at 7 pm
- Jamison is organizing an Easter flower sale.
- The music director search committee met on 2/8/26 to work on the job description. They are also working with office staff on updating the application process.

#### **Additional Topic**

We have received an anonymous donation from a member to provide the most updated version of the Presbyterian hymnal. Session voted to accept the donation. This will be communicated to the congregation before the new hymnals are rolled out.

#### **Notes from Called Session Meeting on March 1, 2026:**

The purpose of the meeting was to approve a new member. Blaine Hedberg reviewed his faith and life journey and answered the membership questions. Session voted unanimously to accept Blain Hedberg as a new member.

#### **Notes from Congregational Meeting on March 8, 2026:**

The purpose of the meeting was to elect Jim Fitzgerald as a congregation-at-large member of the 2026 nominating committee. He will replace a member who was elected and then decided not to serve.

The congregation voted to elect Jim Fitzgerald to the nominating committee. There were no nominations from the floor.