Good News October 2026

100th Anniversary Celebration Edition

The painting of the original building is by former member Betty. Other paintings of the church are elsewhere in the newsletter.

It's a special edition! This month's newsletter will be about First Presbyterian of Jacksonville's history and our plans to celebrate the church's 100th anniversary on Saturday, October 10, from 1:00-4:00. We'll continue the historical tidbits section across several pages as we reflect on the last 25 years with memories and photos.

First Presbyterian Church, 2001-2026

During the last 25 years, there have been many opportunities for members to grow in faith. Sunday School and Summer Celebration provided Bible knowledge and experiences to encourage faith. A weekly Bible study/book study encourages conversation and sharing as well as deepening connections with others and with God. The youth of the church have been active in many facets of the church including worship, church activities, mission action, and Presbytery sponsored trips and retreats. Many have joined the church through confirmation classes.

Fellowship activities have included potlucks, Super Bowl Parties, Christmas caroling and parties, Mariners activities, and float-building for the Jacksonville Christmas Parade.

The church band provided accompaniment for congregational singing and special music. The FPC Ukulele Band formed and played about once a month in the worship service. They also shared their music in the community.

In service to the community the church shared their building with several organizations. Fellowship Hall was used as a voting location and by the Jacksonville High School choral department for concerts. Several groups met regularly in the building, such as Girl Scouts, TOPS, the Nothing-to-do group, and North Pulaski Retired Teachers.

First Presbyterian Church, 2001-2026, Continued

The church has been involved in a wide variety of ministry activities as they have responded to needs in the community and in the world. A weekly Sunday morning breakfast for our members was transformed into a community breakfast with as many as 120 people attending. Donations for the Rice Depot, Care Channel, Stew Pot, Tolleson backpack program, and Presbyterian Disaster assistance were collected. Members also volunteered their time with these organizations.

The church sent several members to the Presbytery of Honduras, some to aid with installing solar energy with Solar Under the Sun and one to help with a building project. Members supported the trips with rummage sales and donations. Dresses, shorts, and quilts were created by our members and shared with the churches in Honduras.

First Presbyterian Church, 2001-2026, Continued

During the COVID lockdown, the church met in the parking lot and found ways to safely worship, enjoy fellowship, and serve the community.

The need for a warming center was recognized. The church opened the fellowship hall for those who were unsheltered when the temperatures were dangerously cold. A church garden was established and the vegetables were given to families in the area and shared with the First United Methodist Church of Jacksonville to pass out in their food pantry. The church set up its Community Care Room to share food, hygiene items, and clothing with those in need.

In the last 25 years, two of our members have become Ministers of Word and Sacrament and two have completed a Certificate in Ministry and have become Commissioned Ruling Elders.

Who knows what the next 100 years will bring for First Presbyterian Church in Jacksonville? For today, we strive to follow where God leads as we continue to share the love of God with our community through our words and actions. How has God used this church to make a difference in your life? In what ways was the church vital for your growth in Christ? What are the hopes and dreams you have for the future of our church?

Church Notes

In September, Karen, Mary Lee, and Mary Jane attended the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network conference held in Knoxville in September; and Joanne and Duke volunteered with Mariners in Mission at Living Rivers on the Cahaba in Montevallo, Alabama.

First Presbyterian Ministers

Rev. J. L. Neely, 1927-1934
Rev. C. T. McCully, 1934-1940
Rev. J. P. Stevenson, 1941-1943
Rev. Lannie Parnell, 1944-1948
Rev. C. T. McCully, 1950
Rev. Jerry D. Otwell, 1956-1959
Rev. James C. Berbiglia, 1960-1962
Rev. Fred H. Babb, 1963-1969
Rev. John T. R., 1970-1970
Rev. Edward H. S., 1970-1986
Rev. Jimmie D. T., 1989-1997
Rev. David H. Dyer, 1998-2010
Rev. Debbie, 2010-2018
Rev. Elizabeth, 2019-2022
C. R. E. Mary Jane, 2023-present

Ministers, Themes, and Scriptures for October

October 4 Rev. Dr. Leslie Jos. 4:1-17 Matt. 22:1-10

World Communion Sunday "Tell Me a Story"

October 11 Rev. Dr. Brittany Psalm 100

100th Anniversary Worship Celebration

October 18 Mary Lee Psalm 96:1-9

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 Matthew 22:15-22

The Pharisees test Jesus with a question about paying taxes.

October 25 Michael Luke 9:51-56 Romans 14:1-12

"Faith Without Force: God Alone is Lord of the Conscience"

Attendance for August 30 and September

Aug. 30: 24 Sept. 6: 29 Sept. 13: 29 Sept. 20: 24 Sept. 27: 28

September Report from the Community Care Room

In the month of September we gave members of our community:

- 383 snack bags
- 110 hygiene packs, individual hygiene items, or first aid items
- 148 shirts, dresses, or hoodies and 88 pairs of pants or shorts
- 26 items such as socks or underwear
- 13 bags or backpacks
- 10 pairs of shoes, 2 hats, and 1 jacket
- 29 blankets
- 4 sleeping bags, 5 towels, and 1 Bible
- 3 servings of dog food

Thank you for donating your tithes, time, and items to this ministry. Your help makes a difference in the lives of so many of our neighbors!

Announcements

World Communion Sunday is October 4. Come and celebrate the Lord's Supper with the Body of Christ around the world. Rev. Dr. Leslie will preach for us.

The 100th Anniversary Celebration is October 10, 1:00-4:00. There will be a short program at 2:00. Please RSVP! And please contact Barbara or Beth if you can help with prepared food. And if you would rather donate money for purchasing food, that would also be appreciated! You can put your donation in the offering plate and add a note that it's for the 100th anniversary.

The worship service on October 11 will be a special service as we thank God for leading our church for 100 years. Rev. Dr. Brittany will be preaching.

Women's Circle will meet on October 12 at 10:00.

Bible Study meets each Wednesday at 1. The group is watching and discussing the series *The Chosen*. Everyone is welcome.

Prayer Requests from August 30 and September

Barbara J.
Beth H.
Bobby C.
Brian B.
Chris and Ella S.
Greg and Ann S.
McKenzie S.
Madison S.
Mark C.
Mark S.
Phyllis J.
Ronald
Yoshio and family

The C. family
The family of Jeannie G.

Prayers of thanksgiving that Catherine is back at home

Connect with Us
Sunday School 9:15
Worship 10:00

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firstpresjax.com

Mission Statement

The mission of First Presbyterian Church is to be disciples of Jesus Christ through worship, fellowship, and service.

Purpose

The purpose of First Presbyterian Church
is to love the Lord our God with all our hearts,
with all our souls, with all our minds, and with all our strength;
and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

First Presbyterian Church
1208 West Main Street
Jacksonville, AR 72076

PLACE
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If you are receiving this newsletter by mistake or would rather get one at the church in person, please let us know. If you know of someone who would like to receive this newsletter in the mail, please call us at 501-982-2876. God bless you!