



# the Chimes

February 2026

F I R S T P R E S B Y T E R I A N C H U R C H

## A Pastoral Message

**And when Jesus** had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with who I am well pleased." Matthew 3:16-17

On January 13, 2018... my day and life took a very unexpected turn. My wife and I were headed to Allegheny General Hospital Pittsburgh to visit a parishioner who had been involved in a bad accident over the Christmas Holidays. I remember saying to Nel... I think I feel better today than I have for a long time. We were going to the hospital... then spend the day dining and enjoying the city of Pittsburgh.

As we came out of the Tunnels to the always beautiful view of Pittsburgh... we turned to go along the river on 376. In a short distance... traffic was stopped due to flooding on a lower street. I stopped... and glanced at my rear view mirror. A truck was headed at me... full speed. He had not noticed the stopped traffic. He would end up plowing into me and two other vehicles. We came to rest pinned against the cement median. But... other than a mangled car... It appeared that we were fine. We both just kept saying.. you ok? You ok?

Over the next couple hours they would clean up the wreck and tow away our vehicle. I remember the police officer saying... where do you want me to take you? We decided to go on to the hospital... do the visit... and wait in the cafeteria for our kids to come get us. We got to the hospital... "apparently" went to visit the parishioner (apparently being key) and just outside his room on the eighth floor... I dropped from a fairly significant stroke. I'm told that it seemed like they got to me before I hit the floor.

I would spend the next week in intensive care... then general admission... then transferred back to West Virginia to a rehab facility for a month... to then finally do outpatient therapy for another four months. I had lost most use of my left side and my ability to find words when trying to speak.

My family and I know that I am blessed by the presence of God's gifts in everyone from the police officers that day... to the Doctors... the nurses... the staff ... the therapist... and the endless line of supportive friends. That is never lost on me!

Fast forward to a couple months ago on my Tour WV trip with WVU President Benson. We were at a hospital facility in the Eastern Panhandle.  
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- 10:30 a.m. **Worship Service**
- 9 a.m. **Sunday School, Handbell Choir**
- 10 a.m. **Children's Handbell Choir & Chancel Choir**

*Worship Service is in-person and online at [fpcfairmont.com](http://fpcfairmont.com) & Facebook*





# Musical Notes from John Morrison, Director of Music & Organist



**It's time** to mark your calendars for the next cantata! The Chancel Choir has begun rehearsing for the cantata which will be Sunday, April 5 during worship. It is called "Praise the God of Resurrection: an Easter Cantata" and features the music of Mark Hayes, Lloyd Larson, Joseph M. Martin, and Ruth Elaine Schram.

On Palm Sunday, March 29, we look forward to welcome the West Virginia Brass Quintet to the worship

service. The handbells will be ringing on February 1, February 8, and February 22.

The Chancel Choir anthems in February are: Sing to the Lord! Alleluia! By Joan J. Pinkston, Be Thou My Vision, arr. Mark Hayes, The Servant Song, arr. Tom Fettke, Perfect Peace and Rest: Like a River Glorious by Havergal and Shackley, and To Trust Him More by Stead and McDonald.

Here are some February concerts coming up in Fairmont: Friday, February 6 at 7:30 p.m. The Morgantown Jazz IX in Wallman Hall Theatre at FSU (Neil King who played trumpet for the Christmas Eve service is a part of this group.)

Sunday, February 22 at 3 p.m. Cellist Julian Schwarz is performing works for cello and piano as part of the Fairmont Chamber Music Society Concert Series at St. Peter's the Fisherman.

Admission is free for the February 6 concert and the February 22 is ticketed.

May the peace of Christ be with you,

John Morrison  
Director of Music and Organist

## SESSION MEMBERS

As of December 2025, three ruling elders time on Session expired— Joe Jernigan (Property), Amy Koon Christian Ed), and Amy Turluck (Administration). Below are a few of their accomplishments as a ministry team lead. Thank you for your leadership, sound judgment, compassion, and service to First Presbyterian, Fairmont.

### Administrative & Finance Ministry Team

- Prepared an employee hiring packet to assist with on-boarding new employees
- Prepared a form to document a donation
- Prepared a new Suspected Abuse & Neglect Reporting form
- Identified the policy on Racism & Harassment for inclusion in the Session Manual

### Christian Education Ministry Team

- Always ensured Compassion Sunday was recognized & a special offering shared with our sponsored child on their birthday & Christmas
- Ensured success of Vacation Bible School
- Ensured student & adult nursery attendants were interviewed & hired as needed
- Schooled youth on Children's Bells

### Property Ministry Team

- Ensured elevator lift & boiler system, which had been in place since 1990s, were replaced
- Prepared documentation that assured stained glass window restorations
- Ensured compliance to required inspections
- Proudly shared sanctuary architectural design with Fairmont State University

students

Again, thank you for your faithful shepherding; may God bless you richly; we are eternally grateful for your sacrifice and service. *Submitted by Nancy Carnes*



**NEW SESSION** members, Eric Hauser and Earl Sweet are installed by George Lilly as Pam Nolan, acting clerk and Session member assists.



# First Church's News & Notes

## Mark Your Calendars

- **Material for the MARCH 2026 issue of The Chimes is due by Friday, February 20 at noon. THANKS!**
- **Session Meeting: February 17 at 6:30 p.m.**
- **Men's Breakfast: Tuesdays at McAteer's at 8 a.m.**
- **Women's Breakfast: February 12 at 9 a.m. McAteer's**
- **The Hive (trampoline park) Bridgeport: February 16, 2 p.m.**

## Winter office hours could change

Just a reminder that office hours may be affected by winter weather. On days the Marion County schools enact a 2-hour delay, the office will be open from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. School closings will likely result in a full closure of the office. Please call the office before heading in.

If you have an urgent need for pastoral care and you are not able to reach someone in the office, please contact a session member for assistance.



## Congregational survey from Session

First Presbyterian Church, where our commitment to fostering a nurturing and inclusive environment guides all that we do, is in a time of transition. We invite both newcomers and longtime members to join us in our journey of faith, fellowship, and service. As we move forward in this important time for our congregation, we want to make sure every member feels heard and valued. Gathering your feedback will help us reflect on our community's strengths and areas for growth, especially as we prepare for new leadership.

Our first step is to look at who we are as a church. To support this effort, we are launching a congregational survey that gives everyone the opportunity to offer honest feedback about their experiences and hopes for our church. This is a chance for you to highlight what makes First Presbyterian special, as well as to share thoughts on challenges and new possibilities for our community. Assessing where we have been, where we are and where we would like to go will allow us to share this information with potential candidates.

There will be options for sharing your thoughts – paper survey or an online link. The more input we have from all of you, the more information we have to share as we write about our church.

Paper surveys will be available in church and there will be boxes at the office and Jefferson Street entrances to

place your completed survey. The survey will also be sent in an email as well as a link for the online survey. Your participation is vital to this process, and we encourage everyone to take a few moments to share their perspectives. Whether you contribute through the paper survey or online, your voice will help shape the future direction of our church and ensure we continue to grow together in faith. If you have any questions, please reach out to a Session member. Submitted by Pam Nolan

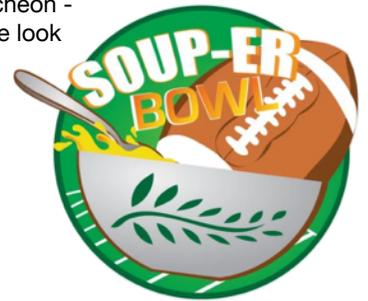
## Hospitality events for February

February 1: Cookies in the Social Room

February 2: Hospitality Team meeting at 10 a.m. in the parlor.

February 8: Souper Bowl Luncheon -

This is always a favorite and we look forward to seeing everyone at the luncheon. Come hungry and leave full!



## Thank you to the Nominating Committee

I wanted to thank Deanna Kritzer and Eric Hauser for agreeing to serve on the Officer Nominating Committee in 2025. It was due to their involvement, experience, sharing of ideas and responsibilities that we were successful in meeting goals of the committee. Thank you. Submitted by Nancy Carnes

## A Pastoral Message cont. from page 1

Touring with a group of Doctors and staff... I got paired up with a Neurologist who specialized in strokes. He mentioned that he had previously been in Pittsburgh before moving there. I started to tell him my story... and he stopped me... and said... right side stroke... left side paralysis? I was stunned. Yes.... I said. He smiled and said... I noticed the left side face drawl when we met. I had never been told that by anyone. Even family!

To say I was caught off guard...would be an understatement. I've thought a lot about that moment as this year's anniversary came and went. I've come to terms with the following: Some are gifted with an ability to see things more closely than others. Some look at us with a deeper glance and see all of who we are...and not just who we present. Some... are like God! For in God... He sees the entirety of who we are. Our left side drawls... our flaws... our tears... our smiles. He sees all of us! And in that... he proclaims... My Son/My Daughter...My Beloved... In Whom I am Well Pleased!

Thanks be to God!

Dan Kimble



# CONTACT INFORMATION

OFFICE HOURS: 9 AM - 1 PM ON MONDAY THRU THURSDAY

Phone (304) 366-2628

Fax (304) 366-2662

Email: [office@fairmontfirst.net](mailto:office@fairmontfirst.net)

Web: [www.fpcfairmont.com](http://www.fpcfairmont.com)

## Children & Youth Ministry

Happy February!

We're excited to share what's been happening in our church community and what's coming up this month.

First, we are thrilled to welcome Nancy Carnes as our new Team Lead for Christian Education. Nancy brings wonderful energy and a deep passion for ministry, and we are grateful for her leadership as we continue to grow and learn together.

In January, our Church Retreat was right here at the church. Members and staff participated in boundary training and other development sessions designed to strengthen our ministry and deepen our connections with one another. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make this a meaningful time of learning and reflection.

Our children and youth had a busy and creative month! They made pipe cleaner flowers and greeting cards for our shut-ins, sharing joy and

encouragement. The youth group also enjoyed a fun game night on Zoom, full of laughter and fellowship.

We're also launching a group chat on the SportsYou app for parents and kids. This will be a helpful space to ask questions, stay connected, and keep up with our events calendar. If you'd like to be included, please see Jane for details.

### Looking Ahead to February

Trip to The Hive (Bridgeport): Join us on Friday, February 16, at The Hive near the mall. We'll meet there at 2 p.m. Please RSVP through the church office or via the Evite.

**Camp Registration:** Camp registration is now open! If you have any questions about camp options or the registration process, please speak with Jane or any member of the Christian Education team.

Thank you for your continued support and participation in our church community. We are grateful for each of you and look forward to another wonderful month of learning, fellowship, and faith.



*Staff*

Pastor

### Director of Music

John Morrison  
[music@fairmontfirst.net](mailto:music@fairmontfirst.net)

### Discipleship Ministry Coordinator

Jane Mead  
[discipleship@fairmontfirst.net](mailto:discipleship@fairmontfirst.net)

### Office Coordinator

Karen Mersinger  
[office@fairmontfirst.net](mailto:office@fairmontfirst.net)

### Sexton

Joe Miller  
[sexton@fairmontfirst.net](mailto:sexton@fairmontfirst.net)

### Nursery Attendants

Pam Proctor  
Abby Shuck

### Sunday School

Brigitte Gapen

### A/V Tech

Chris Ward

*Session*

### CLERK OF SESSION

Kathy Snider

### ADMINISTRATION

Pam Nolan  
Earl Sweet

### OUTREACH

Terri Bunner

### PROPERTY

Eric Hauser  
Rob Steele

### WORSHIP & MUSIC

Penny Roberts  
Pam Stalnak

### CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

Nancy Carnes

### HOSPITALITY

Janet Miller  
Deanna Kritzer

*Treasurer*

Roger Kritzer

# February Nurturing Faith Ideas

## SCRIPTURE

### February 1: Fourth Sunday after Epiphany - Read Matthew 5:1-12

Jesus was a teacher. Throughout his life, he taught his disciples, and those in the crowds that gathered around them, about God and God's ways. Here he speaks a word of hope to those in difficult circumstances as he teaches about how God's ways and will are different from how we as human beings think. Who is a teacher who has helped you understand more about God?

### February 8: Fifth Sunday after Epiphany - Read Matthew 5:13-20

Jesus tells his disciples they are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Salt changes things, particularly how they taste and are preserved, and light brightens things around us up, taking away some of the scariness. How, as a follower of Jesus, are you changing things around you for the good and making things less scary?

### February 15: Transfiguration of the Lord - Read Matthew 17:1-9

Here we find the story of Jesus' transfiguration while he was on the mountaintop with the disciples Peter, James, and John. There they heard a voice from heaven say, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." How do you think the disciples felt when they heard the voice? How would you have felt? How do you listen to Jesus today?

### February 22: First Sunday in Lent - Read Matthew 4:1-11

After he was baptized, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness where he was tempted by the devil. It was a time for reflection and preparation as Jesus got ready to go about his work as God's Son on earth. The devil encouraged him to take care of his own needs, test God's faithfulness, and rule the world, if he would only follow the devil. Instead, Jesus chooses to follow God and do what God wanted. How have you been tempted to not follow God and God's way? What happened?

## FEBRUARY

### Birthdays

2/2	Mike Stalnaker
2/3	Ken Miller
2/8	John Schooley
2/10	Margot Willis
	Nancy Carnes
2/18	Jim Nolan
2/20	Ella Harvey
	Oliva Harvey
2/21	Ed Cummings
2/26	Patty Priester
2/27	Dave Roberts

### Anniversaries

2/2	Sarah Armstrong & Thomas McClure
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### Prayer List

Teresa Simms  
Joe Criss  
Jason Burdette  
Joseph Hutson  
Emma Keener  
Amy Koon  
Barb Starn  
Family of Martha Dolores Hughes  
The Bonnett Family  
Dave Yazvak  
Rev. James Morley  
Brad & Donna Dodd  
Ella Morris  
Steven Satterfield  
Judy Shaver  
Peggy Twyman

### December/January Pledges & Gifts

December 24	\$376
December 28	\$2,710
Christmas Joy Offering	\$1,097
Total to date:	\$4,183
Total for 2025	\$218,599.50
January 4	\$9,095
January 11	\$605
January 18	\$1,275
January 25	\$1,515
Total:	\$12,490
Total to Date:	\$12,490

February Ministry  
Volunteers

Liturgist: Ken Miller

USHERS : Ed Snider (captain), Kathy Snider, Joe Jernigan, & Benita Jernigan



*The church with a  in the heart of the city!*

*the* **Chimes**  
*February 2026*

F I R S T P R E S B Y T E R I A N C H U R C H



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
301 JACKSON ST.  
FAIRMONT, WV 26554