

Living Out God's Call to Joy and to Justice

THIS WEEK – August 31 – September 6

To submit a Prayer Request for the Monday Message:

- ✓ text or email Pastor Kathy (512-466-5662; fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com) by Sunday evening
- ✓ email the church office (fpchurch@sbglobal.net) by Sunday evening
- ✓ give Pastor Kathy a written prayer request on Sunday morning
- ✓ fill out one of the Prayer Request cards in the pews and place it in the Offering Plate

Prayer Requests and Updates

- Prayers for the people of Afghanistan as they work to recover from the powerful August 31 earthquake that has killed more than 1,400 people and devastated many remote villages. This BBC article link has updated information: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cpqvqeg3nz5o>
- J.J. Avila, husband of Beverly, is in San Antonio this week for surgery to remove a cancerous skin growth on his toe.
- Sher Wilkes requests prayers for her friend Beronica Aguilar, who is dealing with a medical problem.
- Continued prayers for Estelle Davenport, as she recovers from three fractures in her elbow area. She is at Windsor Las Palmas Nursing Center, Room 110; 1301 East Quebec Ave, and ready for visitors. Cards can be sent to: The Gardens at Brookridge; 1301 W. Ridge Road, Apt. 214, Pharr, TX 78577
- Continued prayers of healing for Bernard Tabali, as he deals with a chronic leg wound. Bernard's son Emmanuel reports that, following good care in Austin, Bernard is much improved and hopes to return to McAllen this month.
- Prayers of celebration and rejoicing with Emmanuel and Ruth Tabali at the birth of their daughter, Ayanna. Ayanna joins big brothers Adam, Aaron, and Aidan.
- Prayers of healing for Judy Prater, sister-in-law of Miranda Prater, who is experiencing persistent health challenges.
- Prayers of strength and encouragement for Gail Keyes, as she continues with immunotherapy treatment for lung cancer. Cards may be sent to: 3334 Country Club Drive, Edinburg, TX 78542.

This Week's Moment of Beauty – (well, maybe more humor than beauty, but please enjoy)

This link is to a video of Steve Martin and the Steep Canyon Rangers singing "Atheists Don't Have No Songs": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmwAD7nHqaY&list=RDe0iXfnyAZhs&index=13>

This Week's Moment for Peace

On September 7, we will begin a *Season for Peace* in preparation for receiving the Peace & Global Witness special offering of the PC(USA) on World Communion Sunday. Each weekly Message between now and October 5 will include a thought or prayer for peace. This week's is "A Psalm of Peacemaking" from the PC(USA).

We live in a time of Kairos.

when humanity stands on the border of a promised time,
when God's people are summoned to obedience and faithfulness
to preserve God's creation,
to stand with the poor and oppressed everywhere, and
to stand together as the people of the earth;
when with confession and with humility we repent of
our blindness to the division and war in our own hearts and in our own land,
our obsession with money and our pursuit of power,
our irrational belief in security through weaponry, and
our worship of secular gods.

We are called

to be obedient to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace,
who loves the whole world and
who invites us to be stewards of the earth and servants of his people,
to be co-workers in the new Creation.

Let us be peacemakers.

Let us be called the children of God,

speaking boldly with moral conviction to the nation and to the world,
building, with God's grace, a new moral order in the world community; and
acting now for world peace, an enterprise of justice, an outcome of love.

Announcements –

- The Session has called a **Congregational Meeting** for Sunday, September 14 following worship for the purpose of hearing and acting on a report of the 2025 Nominating Committee. The slate of officers to be presented: Ruling Elder, Class of 2026: Dana Friedman; Ruling Elder, Class of 2028: Kathy Garfield and Joe Massey; Trustee, Class of 2028: Margie Karst.
 - Please note that the 2-person slate nominated for the Class of 2028 is complete. The Session has approved reducing the size of the FPC Session from 9 members to 6 by electing 2 Ruling Elders rather than 3 for each of the next three incoming classes.
- The Christian Education Calling will host a **Fellowship Lunch** for Christian Formation Sunday, September 14, following worship. Thank you to all who volunteered during the August 31 Children's Time to bring a pasta dish, salad, or dessert for the lunch (we'll be sending reminder messages next week). If you did not sign up, but can provide a dish, please contact Lita Simpson (lita.mojicasimpson@gmail.com)
- The **Christian Formation Sunday** program will include information on how you can engage with the ministries of FPC, including: Home Communion and other Congregational Care activities; Worship support such as collecting the offering or preparing communion elements; assembling Local Assistance food and hygiene bags; assisting with closet clean-out and Rummage Sale preparation; and opportunities with mission partners.

- There has been talk around the church for a while about clearing out the overstuffed closets and cupboards for a Rummage Sale. CE has set a date for that sale – October 11, with two clean-out days on Thursday, September 25 and Saturday, September 27, and a set-up day on Friday, October 10. If you'd like to help on any of those days, please contact Lita Simpson or Pastor Kathy. And, if you would like to clean out a closet or cupboard at home and add your items to the sale, please bring those contributions to the church by Saturday, September 27.
- **Sunday School** will resume on Sunday, September 21, meeting in the Parlor at 9:00 on Sunday mornings. We will begin the year with a peacemaking curriculum from PC(USA) before shifting to *Feasting on the Word* curriculum in October.
- **The Chancel Choir** has returned from summer break. If you would like to join the choir in leading worship through song, contact Robert Garza, FPC Choir Director, at 956-720-2301 or rob_grza10@yahoo.com. Practice is at 7:30 p.m. each Wednesday in the Choir Room.
- The next **Church and World** lunch and conversation will be Sunday, September 21 following worship. If you'd like to suggest a topic for discussion, please contact Pastor Kathy.
- **Space for God** is on hiatus and will resume in the fall.

Calendar

- Monday, September 1 – Church Office closed for Labor Day
- Monday, September 1: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. – The Player's Studio rehearsals; Fellowship Hall
- Tuesday, September 2, 10:00 a.m.: Staff Meeting; Library
- Wednesday, September 3, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.: Library open for Mid-Week Prayer
- Wednesday, September 3, 7:30 p.m.: Choir Practice; Choir Room
- Saturday, September 6, 2:00 p.m.: RGV Colleague Group meets with General Presbyter Bobby Musengwa; San Pablo Presbyterian Church, Weslaco
- Sunday, September 7, 10:30 a.m.: Worship; Sanctuary and Facebook Live
 - *Season for Peace begins*
- Saturday, September 13, 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: PW Fall Gathering; First Presbyterian, Mission
- Sunday, September 14 – Christian Formation Sunday
- Sunday, September 14 – Called Congregational Meeting to hear and act on a report from the Nominating Committee

Session Highlights – August 19 Stated Meeting

- The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Kathy.
- The Session discussed a recent newsletter post by Mission Presbytery General Presbyter Bobby Musengwa entitled "Reimagine the Church's Future". We will use the contents of this article for congregational conversations about the future of First McAllen. The first conversation (over a light lunch) will be on Sunday, September 28 following worship.
- Heard Treasurer's Report from Dana Friedman. The church has received the second of four planned withdrawal of \$15,000 from our Texas Presbyterian Fund endowment accounts.
- Heard Clerk's Report from Nancy Pruneda.
- Heard Pastor's report from Pastor Kathy
 - Shared Prayer Requests
 - September 7 - October 5 will be a Season for Peace in preparation for receiving the *Peace and Global Witness* Special Offering on October 5.

- Follow-up report on next steps plan from July 15 Called meeting regarding property / building options.
- Discussed need to reinstate annual Staff Evaluations.
- Discussed moving Session meeting time away from evening to enable people who prefer not to drive at night to serve on Session. The change will begin with the October meeting on Sunday, October 16 following worship.
- Discussed an opportunity to participate in / host a Rise Against Hunger event, possibly in January 2026. The Session approved moving forward by seeking partner congregations / organizations for the event.
- In preparation for the September 28 conversation to *Reimagine the Church's Future*, the Session asked Pastor Kathy to determine whether there are MP congregations comparable to ours in size and demographics who have made progress on similar projects of discernment and planning.
- Heard Elder reports on ministry areas
 - Congregational Care is overseeing Home Communion visits with members unable to attend worship.
 - CE will structure Rally Day with information about ministry areas.
 - Several Committees / ministry focus areas are either operating at low levels or entirely dormant due to lack of Session and congregational engagement
 - Session members overseeing ministry areas will work to personally invite congregation members to participate
 - Property: several building issues continue to require special attention.
 - The recent replacement of light bulbs in the sanctuary ceiling involved bulbs with newer technology than our current lighting equipment can handle. The Session discussed three options and decided for the time being to go with the no-cost option of turning the new ceiling lights on and off at the breaker box upstairs rather than upgrading the system.
 - The A/C has received new freon and some necessary maintenance / repairs. The aging system has some parts which can no longer be repaired or replaced.
 - The Children's Bereavement Center reported another issue with suspected mold in a cabinet near a leaking A/C unit. The area has been tested by an accredited agency, and we are waiting for the report. The A/C unit has been disabled to stop any further water leaks.
 - Heard a report from the Nominating Committee. They hope to have a full slate of Ruling Elder candidates to present to the congregation by mid-September.
- The meeting was closed with prayer.

September Anniversaries

Joe and Julianne Garza

David and Ann Rowland

September Birthdays

2 - Bob Simpson

21 – Eduardo (Eddie) Mendoza

26 -Crystal Simpson

12 - Alan Tittle

22-Cam Henry

27-Elizabeth Gearhart

13 - Keara Hudler

24 - Ismael Cantú

28-Andrea Hudler

21 - Veda Burtchell

John Wright III

Renée Vorbach

Financial Report through July

2025	Revenue	Expenses	Net
MTD (July)	\$36,557.29	\$30,150.23	+6,407.06
YTD	\$170,597.30	\$216,557.33	-\$45,960.03

NOTE: The July Revenue includes a transfer of \$15,000 from the church's endowment account into the Operating Fund. The Session has approved regular withdrawals from the endowment to cover the budget shortfall, for a 2025 withdrawal total not to exceed \$75,000.

Lectionary Readings for September 7

- **Jeremiah 18:1-11**
- **Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18 (sermon text)**
- **Philemon 1-21**
- **Gospel: Luke 14:25-33**

²⁵ Now large crowds were traveling with him, and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰ saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' ³¹ Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he cannot, then while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³ So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

The Word of the Lord / **Thanks be to God**

Prayer for the Week – from Jeremiah 18

O Lord, you are the potter,
we are the clay.
Take our lives, O God,
and remake us anew.
Pour out your Spirit upon us,
that we may be filled with living water.
Fit us for your purposes,
that we may be wholly yours. Amen.

Source: *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2022*; p. 203

ON-GOING INFORMATION

WORSHIP LINK: Link for Facebook Live streaming worship services:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=first%20presbyterian%20church%2C%20mcallen%2C%20tx>.

ZOOM LINK: Link for all FPC Zoom meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86050357489?pwd=VkhqODg0NjlFS2VTSm91UFFOSjVjQT09>

Meeting ID: 860 5035 7489 Passcode: 912217

CHURCH WEBSITE: <https://www.mcallenfpc.org/>

On-going Life of the Church

- **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance** serves people impacted by disasters of all types. If you would like to support the work of PDA, you can do so here: <https://pda.pcusa.org/>
 - Many people come to the church for food and hygiene bags. To help with that ministry, make a financial contribution or purchase any of these food items for our cupboard:
 - peanut butter crackers
 - tuna packets
 - fruit cups / applesauce
 - potted meat / Vienna sausages
 - protein bars
 - cereal bars
 - beef jerky
 - bottled water
 - **Face masks** are available in the Narthex for anyone who would like to mask up during worship.
 - **“Leave a Prayer / Take a Blessing”**. A table in the Library has materials to write a prayer and post it on the bulletin board. Prayers can be shared or private. Printed blessings are available.
 - The **church staff** holds weekly meetings on Monday morning. If you have an item for the staff to discuss, please send it to fpchurch@sbcglobal.net or fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com.
 - There are 2025-2026 **Presbyterian Planning Calendars** available from the church office.
 - **Church Office Hours** are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday - Thursday, or by appointment.
 - How to reach Pastor Kathy: fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com; 512-466-5662
 - How to reach the church office: fpchurch@sbcglobal.net
 - All mail for the church should be sent to P.O. Box 1029, McAllen, TX 78505.
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Recent and On-Going Prayer Requests:

- Spud Brown requests prayers for the well-being of the FPC congregation and the world.
- Crystal Simpson and her daughter Emi Williams; 14110 Blazey, Houston, TX 77095
- Mauricia Friedman; 7505 North 33rd Street; McAllen 78504.
- Nadine Force; 820 North 22nd Street, McAllen, 78501. Phone: 956-532-8978
- Lou Helt; Brookridge Senior Living, 1301 W. Ridge Road, Apt. 229, Pharr, 78577; 956-601-0823.
- Amanda Snoke (Kathy Garfield's daughter).
- Jack Harrieff requests prayers for his brothers:
 - Jim, who has liver cancer. Jim has chosen not to pursue chemo and radiation treatments.
 - David, who has end-stage Parkinson's, his wife, Gaila.
- Prayers of continued healing and strength for Kathy Garfield's cousin, Dan Winn.
- Ellen Boyd; Brookridge Senior Living; 1301 W. Ridge Road; Pharr, TX 78577.
- Margie Karst; 3334 Country Club, Edinburg, TX 78542.
- Spud and Jan Brown; 208 E. Kiwi Street; McAllen, Tx 78504
- Ruth Groves; Brookridge Senior Living; 1301 W. Ridge Road; Pharr, 78577.

- Elizabeth Gearhart; 9601 Union Road; Plymouth, IN 46563
- Rita Cochran; The Gardens at Brookridge; 1301 W. Ridge Road, Apt. 111; Pharr, TX 78577
- Mary Lou and Lee Anderson; 2600 S Finley Rd., Apt. 3609, Lombard, IL 60148.
- Gale Ryan's sister, Lark, who has responded well to breast cancer treatment.
- Jesse Peña requests prayers for his sister Susan.
- Dick and Gwyn Kozma; 15 Hawthorne Drive, Newnan, GA 30263.
- Prayers for Chris and Kelly Leonard and their nephew Grant.
- Donna Rowland, David's mother who is experiencing health and memory challenges.
- Prayers for continued stroke recovery for David Massey, son of Joe and Jinny.
- Rev. Jacob Lee and First Korean Presbyterian Church, McAllen.
- Cassidy Joule, friend of Sher and Drue Wilkes, who has been diagnosed with breast cancer.
- Marilyn Travis, wife of Andrea Hudler's father Paul.
- Dan Eggers
- Melinda Wright
- Duke Dashbach
- Sharon Willets; 316 Hazlett Ave., Wheeling, WV 26003.
- Anna Finn, Mary Ellen Schneider's sister-in-law, has been diagnosed with lung cancer.
- Prayers that Dalton Moes might experience growth toward robust mental health.
- Jim McLeod, younger brother of Vinson McLeod.
- Carl Walborg, son of Shirley Pippin's good friend Mary Ann Walborg, diagnosed with cancer.
- Connor Magee, Mark and Joyce Magee's grandson.
- Mary Ann Walborg, good friend of Shirley Pippin, as she deals with health and cognitive issues.
- Prayers for peace in the Middle East.
- Cisco Villa
- Anthony Trevino
- Stephanie McCrory
- Prayers for all who are hungry or lonely or without shelter this day.
- The people of the *colonias*.
- Prayers for the people of Cameroon. PDA link: <https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/cameroon/>

September Blessing:



May the Artist who crafted you
continue to shape your heart;
may the Christ who commissioned you
charge you with purpose;
may the Spirit that stirs you
help you to carry the cross;
that you may honor your Creator and bless the world.

