



**THE GRAPEVINE**  
**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SANDPOINT, IDAHO**  
 September 2023

From the Pastor...

When we lived in Minnesota and I served as Program Director at Clearwater Forest, the stone house we lived in was a few yards from the lake. In the winter between retreat groups, I would walk outside the garage, across the driveway, and pull my sled with ice fishing equipment out onto the lake. I'd use my hand-crank auger to make a few holes in the ice. You could tell if winter was harsh if the ice was three feet thick, a milder winter only got two feet thick. Either way, I got my exercise and often shed a layer during the hole-making process. Black crappie, walleye, northern pike – these were the fish species I pulled out of the holes. But eventually the ice melted, and winter was over. No more walking on water. Back to the whirlwind of summer camp, which was a good energy in itself, but very different than the quiet of winter between retreat groups.

Returning from a Sabbatical has a similar feel. Time set aside to plumb the depths of things that are usually outside the regular focus of daily life, with quiet reflection, spaciousness, less responsibility for others; a sabbatical is unique. Coming back is good in many ways, but it is a different energy.

The return also means I begin a job search to supplement my time and income. As a part-time pastor of 20 hours per week, non-church income is needed. This means another part-time job in addition to pastoring will be in the works. This will also be another way I can be involved in the

larger Sandpoint community. Current interviews involve doing something with the school system, possibly helping with an after-school program.

As time goes forward and the schedule becomes filled with structure as fall arrives, remembering stories from the Sabbatical will be part of integrating the experience with life's larger narrative. I am thankful to have had that time and the experiences, literally from coast to coast (Oregon and California Pacific to Boston MA Atlantic). I am glad that things went well at the church over the summer and many people shared in leadership through creativity and collaboration. Thank you to everyone! Remember that this week, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, worship is at 9:30 a.m., but next week, on Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, worship switches to the fall calendar of 10:30 a.m. Before that, the adult study begins at 9:00 a.m. as we use The Hagios Study Series, the Gospel of Matthew Scripture Study, the Beatitudes and Francis of Assisi. See you soon!

Peace and All Good,  
 Pastor Andy



## SABBATICAL MOMENT

In my newsletter article, I mention the stone house at the church camp in Minnesota where we lived for three years. On the Sabbatical, we visited the camp and were able to paddle a canoe out on Clearwater Lake one evening. It was great to be on the water, to see and hear the loons call out, and enjoy a quiet evening away from the land-loving mosquitos.

As we paddled by the house we once lived in, I looked back over the garage doors and noticed the snowshoes I had mounted above each of the two bay doors. One set of snowshoes had wooden tails (those were mine, over where I parked the truck) and one set were more oval shaped (those were Shawna's above the mini-van spot). I hung them up because we had gotten new ones. Those old snowshoes were well used, from many trips during our time at Northland College to life in Montana and then Minnesota. Seeing the snowshoes brought back lots of memories of the many years we lived in various places.

Although people at the camp now have no idea who put those up as decorations, for me it was a reminder that our time made a difference in the larger arch of history. Although I'm not at the camp anymore, there are a few vestiges, evidence that we are part of a larger tradition. Seeing them was also a symbol of changing contexts, as snowshoes nowadays are not usually constructed from wood and interwoven straps, but rather lightweight aluminum and synthetics. But back in the day, those relics served us well.

It was good to visit Minnesota and visit friends we hadn't seen for over 12 years. We also ducked into northern Wisconsin and stopped by the Presbyterian Church in Bayfield, Wisconsin. They have very similar numbers as we do for membership and worship attendance, but their million-dollar endowment has supplemented their diminishing budget up to now. We also went to Northland College, the campus where Shawna and I first met in 1987. Strange to walk around the new buildings and sports complex on a cloudy day in July and realize there is nobody left in that organization who knew us when we were in school. Several of the administrators and teachers we knew have died. So coming full circle is a dynamic that allowed some sort of closure, and we have a new appreciation for who we are and where we live now.

Many thanks to our friends, Bobbi and Todd Pointer who loaned us a car to make the 1,000 mile loop up to Ely, over to Ashland, and back to Minneapolis!



## CLERK'S MAY/JUNE SUMMARY

During the last session meeting we authorized switching banks from Umpqua to another "best choice" relative to fees and service. We've followed through by opening accounts at Washington Trust...checking, savings and a CD. We've "surrendered" (banking term for closing safe deposit box) the box at Umpqua and have purchased a fire safe to hold the documents. We'll keep Umpqua accounts for a few months until all checks etc have cleared. This transition amounts to an annual savings worth making the change.

### Building and grounds

Paula Vincent, Judy Labrie and Don Helander (a leadership huddle) met to identify expenses beyond maintenance and repairs that should be done this summer. We're proceeded on the following projects after approval from session.

- New energy efficient blinds for the fellowship hall. Completed \$1,000
- Replace ailing (unrepairable) A/C unit for the sanctuary. A contractor has been chosen and we're in queue. Anticipated cost \$7,000
- Work on solutions for the Alder street winter gutter/downspout/sidewalk ice buildup. Cost \$3,000 +/-.

There's been some other building use requests and minor decisions to keep the church rolling during Pastor Andy's absence and the summer season where the session doesn't formally meet.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Helander Clerk of Session

## Summer Building Uses

A topic that gets kicked around in various church committees and conversations is how to make good use of the church building when it's not in use for church activities. Particularly, on weekdays.

In addition to the 12-step groups with on-going meetings, this summer there were several opportunities to share indoor spaces with good, I'd say missional, endeavors. The Bonner County Human Right Task Force held a retreat for board members and trainings for staff and volunteers. The BCHRTF folks continue to express appreciation for the coziness of the spaces and friendliness and support of FPC members.

Also, in another missional opportunity, FPC in a way partnered with Maureen Ballard, Certified Acupuncturist, by offering affordable space for a Community Acupuncture pop-up clinic. Maureen set up a clinic with five zero-gravity chairs in the classroom across from the office and offered affordable acupuncture sessions to clients. The fee was basically by donation with a suggested scale of \$15-\$50 per session. In the month and a half of operating 3 days per week, Maureen said there were an average of 8 clients per day with several repeating sessions.

Maureens last day in the clinic was Wednesday, August 30. It was a delight to see her kind, generous nature at work and doubly delightful feeling the benefits of getting "pinned". Will we see her in the clinic next summer? That is yet to be revealed!

Blessings of late summer,  
Judy Labrie, Building Use



## DRIVING TO CHURCH ON SUMMER SUNDAY MORNINGS

Driving to church on summer Sunday mornings from my home in the picturesque Selle Valley is always a pleasure. Selle Road is quiet as weekend traffic of horse and boat trailers replaces weekday work vehicles.

Some Sundays I wave to neighbors from the German Baptist faith as they drive to their home church services. Often confused with Mennonites because of their similar dress habits, these are the same folks that drop by our small farm on the Sunday before Christmas to sing carols. Marianne and I host them in our barn along with her three horses. Perhaps next year we will construct a nativity manger for their special visit.

After turning south onto US 95, I drive past two churches. Formerly called the Hidden Valley Church because of its location on Hidden Valley Road, this Church of God affiliate changed its name to Harvest Valley Worship Center a couple years ago.

Entering Ponderay, “The Little City with a Big Future,” takes me past the Church of the Nazarene. My only visit inside this large combination church/school facility was for the memorial service for a forestry colleague several years ago.

On June 25, I arrived early as several others joined in to set-up for our outdoor service in the Peace Garden. One person was absent, however. Gary Jones tested positive for Covid the night before and he was scheduled to lead the service. Having read through a draft of his meticulously prepared message on Matthew 5:5, I knew just how much time he had spent in preparation. Sharon Anderson stepped in on a moment’s notice and did an amazing job of reading Gary’s words of wisdom. Paula Vincent filled in as worship assistant. Mickey Quinn’s technology wizardry livestreamed from the Peace Garden to our virtual congregation. And, the service turned out just fine, except we missed Gary.

Afterwards, we gathered in Fellowship Hall to offer birthday wishes to Millie Rinker.

While driving home with good thoughts about our outdoor service and reflecting upon Gary’s words spoken by Sharon, I noticed the Nazarenes worshipping on the ball field adjacent to their building. They started this summer tradition a year or two ago, most likely to meet Covid protocols.

A couple miles to the north, I observed the congregation of the Harvest Valley Worship Center gathered outdoors for a picnic.

Yes, summer Sunday mornings are special. Especially so when we worship in the Cathedral of the Outdoors.

Bill Love, Elder  
Worship and Music

## Stewardship, Financial, Memorial

September 2023

### Stewardship Committee

*Romans 13:8-10*

*Owe no one anything, except to love one another;  
for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.*

In an overview of the lectionary readings for September, the Rev. Greg Allen-Pickett, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Hastings, Nebraska, made the following observation:

*“The Bible clearly reminds us that God loves us no matter what; we are beloved children of God, fearfully and wonderfully made. So, we are called to love ourselves, so that in turn we may be able to love others.”*

Members of the congregation recently brainstormed a list of ways FPC of Sandpoint shows love for our neighbors in addition to our weekly services.

The gift of open space in the Peace Garden, including a “Little Free Library”, gets frequent visitors.

Vegetables are grown in raised garden beds and donated to the food bank.

Space is offered for community use and local chapters of AA, Alanon and PFLAG are welcomed to meet there.

The sanctuary is frequently used by many of the local music schools and groups for recitals and community concerts.

Pastor Andy writes a monthly article published in the Pastor’s Corner of the Daily Bee.

Financial donations and FPC volunteers support the Bonner Food Bank and Bonner Homeless Transitions.

Congregation members volunteer in many ways at Sandpoint Senior Center serving as meal delivery drivers, food service helpers, and helping with special/ fundraising events.

FPC partners with the Bonner County Human Rights Task Force by providing and supporting space for retreats, training and community gatherings.

The congregation hosts benefits such as the St Patrick's Day dinner to support the Senior Center and a dinner to support Ukrainian refugee families resettling in Spokane.

FPC continues to support a local Ukrainian family that has resettled to Sandpoint.

For two months in 2023, FPC experimented with an acupuncturist by offering space for affordable community acupuncture sessions in a summer pop-up opportunity.

FPC sponsors a stretch of Highway 95 through semi-annual clean up drives.

This is only a partial listing of ways FPC members and friends extend the gift of love in our community. **Thank you to all who volunteer time, specific skills, prayer, and finances in support of these ministries.**

### Finance Committee

Available budget information is summarized below.

Income received and expenses paid year-to-date are slightly ahead of the budget.

Combined financial assets in investment funds, savings and checking accounts total \$100,735 which compares with a June balance of \$105,960. This reduction of funds reflects the expenditures approved by Session for long term maintenance and repair. The Fellowship hall blinds and the sanctuary air conditioning unit have been replaced with the use of five thousand dollars (\$5000) from the long-term building fund.

Pledge giving is current with the budget and the generosity of members and friends continues to be a blessing.

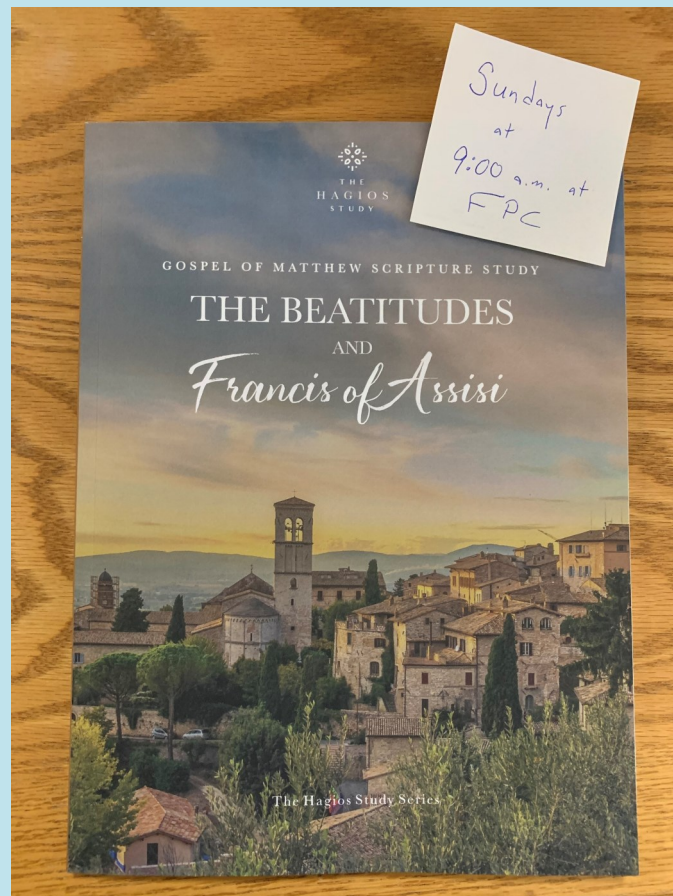
YTD Income through July	YTD Expense through July	YTD Budget
\$75,353	\$76,765	73,792

Respectfully submitted,  
Paula Vincent, Elder  
Stewardship, Finance, Memorial

## MY WILD MUSINGS AUGUST 27, 2023

Christian Education 2023-24 As we move into fall, not knowing where the summer went, I'm beginning to think about Christian Education. Several folks said they would like to do a Bible study for the fall and as a result, I found this study – “The Beatitudes and Francis of Assisi.” After reading the first chapter, I'm excited to see where we go with this study. This is a workbook type of study, you can also access it online by going to “Hagios”. Judy has purchased about 5 copies so if you want one just ask her to put your name on one. The cost is \$20.00. After talking with Millie and Mary Sturgis, who just finished a study of the Beatitudes, it seems appreciate to invite both morning classes to join together for this study. After a few weeks we can evaluate if it is working for everyone and make a final decision at least for the duration of this study.

Job 12:7-12 “But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind. Does not the ear test words as the tongue tastes food? Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring understanding .





My 'summer project' has been the mural down the highway wall in Hope. Sunday mornings have been perfect as the traffic (sadly) is sparse at best... We are almost done! So, see you soon.

Kath





Sacrament of Communion Sunday September 3 during worship

Deacon Meeting Sunday September 10, 2023 after worship

Session Meeting September 19, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

BCHRTF Meeting September 30, 2023 from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m.



## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

### September Birthdays

**1 Sylvia Humes  
2 Judy Labrie  
7 Marge Pietsch  
21 Carol Ballard  
24 Karen Rockhill**

## Regular Monthly Events



*Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m. In-Person and Livestream*

*Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. Starting September 10, 2023*

*Adult Christian Formation Class 9:00 a.m.*

*Monday - Al-Anon 6:00 p.m.*

*Tuesday - Contemplative Prayer Group 1:30 p.m. to 2p.m.*

*Book Study and Contemplative Prayer Group 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.*

*Second and Fourth Tuesday - 6:00 p.m. PFLAG*

*Wednesday - 6:00 p.m. Al-Anon on Zoom*

*Thursday - 12:00 p.m. Al-Anon*

*7:00 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous*





**First Presbyterian Church**

*Ministers: Members and Friends*

*Pastor Andy Kennaly*

*417 North Fourth Avenue, Sandpoint, Idaho 83864*

*208-263-2047 [office@fpcsandpoint.org](mailto:office@fpcsandpoint.org)*

*[pastorandy@fpcsandpoint.org](mailto:pastorandy@fpcsandpoint.org)*

*Pastor cell phone: 208-304-5488*

*[www.fpcsandpoint.org](http://www.fpcsandpoint.org)*