

The Tower

April 2026



HOLY WEEK



First Presbyterian Church

340 South 5th Avenue
Saint Cloud, MN 56301
Telephone: 320-251-8277
www.fpcstcloud.org

Join us for Holy Week worship. Be sure to invite someone to join you..

Maundy Thursday (April 2)

Worship in the sanctuary at 7:00 pm.
A service of Communion.

Good Friday (April 3)

Joint worship (7:00 pm) with our friends from Peace UCC.

Worship at Peace UCC Church (402 8th Ave S).

Easter (April 5)

Easter breakfast (Serving starts at 8:30 am)
Worship at 10:00 am in the sanctuary.

Church Staff

REV. DARIN SEAMAN
Pastor

KRISTINA SCHAAB
Administrative Assistant

JULLIAN EUTENEUER
Music Director

LORA HANSEN
Youth Director

BRAD JOHNSON
Facilities Coordinator

PATTY SCOTT
Custodian

DON ONDRACEK
Assistant Custodian

Pastor's Reflections

In his book *Practice Resurrection*(2010) Eugene Peterson invites the reader to consider the church and its ability to practice resurrection in today's world. He writes:

Church is the textured context in which we grow up in Christ to maturity. But church is difficult. Sooner or later, though, if we are serious about growing up in Christ, we have to deal with church. . . Many Christians find church to be the most difficult aspect of being a Christian. And many drop out – there may be more Christians who don't go to church or go only occasionally than who embrace it, warts and all.

So, why church? The short answer is the Holy Spirit formed it to be a colony of heaven in the country of death. . . Church is the core element in the strategy of the Holy Spirit for providing human witness and physical presence to the Jesus-inaugurated kingdom of God in this world. It is not that kingdom complete, but it is a witness to that kingdom.(1)

The book invites us to practice resurrection. That is, we are called to practice resurrection in a culture of death. We live in a culture of failed nations, dying civilizations, dying marriages, and dying careers to name only a few. To practice resurrection is an intentional effort to look for life in the world amidst the death that surrounds us. It is a practice that looks forward to a day when life has the last word.

It is difficult to practice resurrection in our world. We read about a conflict in Iran, skyrocketing gas prices, brokenness all around us and violence just down the street and we begin to wonder about this resurrection hope to which we are called.

Every year, though, the church states it boldly: He Is Risen! We proclaim it because we believe that life has the last word and that God has overcome the death of this world. So, we joyfully gather as the body of Christ to proclaim Christ's victory over death and then throughout the season of Easter, to practice resurrection.

This Easter season may we indeed practice living out this good news. The grace and peace of Christ be with you all.



Rev. Darin Seaman

April Sermons

April 5 - Easter
 "Fear and Great Joy"
 Matthew 28:1-10

April 12
 "What's Next?"
 John 20:19-31

April 19
 "Easter Surprise"
 Luke 24:13-35

April 26
 "Easter Churches"
 Acts 2:42-47

(1) Peterson, Eugene. *Practice Resurrection*. Eerdmans, 2010, pp. 11-12.

Did You Know?

We talk about the Session frequently in our church and denomination. What does it mean? A session (from the Latin word *sessio*, which means "to sit", as in sitting to deliberate or talk about something) is a body of elected elders governing a particular church within presbyterian polity.

The members of the session are the pastor (Teaching Elder) and the other ruling elders. In most Presbyterian denominations, the pastor serves as Moderator of the Session and thus convenes or presides over the session. All elders have an equal vote in the session.

In some denominations, the pastor is given no vote. However, in a sitting body of an even number or with a quorum of the session counted, the pastor can break a tie with a casting vote. In the polity of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the pastor has a vote as a member of the session on any matters. However, the pastor will often refrain from voting except in tie situations. The pastor is not a voting member of the congregation.

First News

Do you receive the church's weekly email newsletter? First News arrives in your inbox on Monday mornings. It recaps the weekend's activities and looks forward to another week in the life of the church. If you would like to receive this weekly email newsletter, call the church office (320) 251-8277 and give us your email.

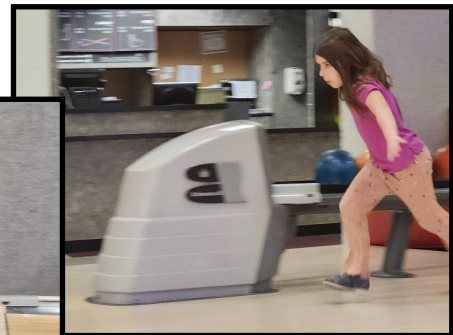
YOUTH

C.O.R.E. Youth Ministry



At the March youth committee meeting it was voted to continue to have our family socials the third Sunday afternoon of each month. We will continue with bowling at the Underground until the weather is warm enough to hit the beach. During warmer months we will have a monthly potluck at Melody Park in St. Joseph. This is a private park that provides fishing piers, swimming raft, playground, beach and picnic area.

All families are invited to join us so grab your kids and/or grandkids and prepare for awesome fellowship. The next family social is the 19th of April, 1:00 pm at the Underground.



2026 Easter Youth Celebration

Thank you to everyone who helped make the Easter Youth Celebration a success. Many people contributed in some way to this event.



Join us for a time of food, faith, and fellowship on Sunday, April 19th for the Community Potluck following Sunday Worship in Fellowship Hall.

Signup will be in the Main Entrance if you would like to bring something. Bring your favorite side dish or dessert to share if your last name begins with A-L. Last names beginning with M-Z should bring a main dish to share.

Who's Who in the Pew?

Tell us about yourself.

I grew up in the Christian Reformed faith in Raymond, MN. I came to St. Cloud after high school for college and met my husband, Ken, there.

We settled in Waite Park, and built the two homes we have lived in. We have three boys, who all were baptized and conformed at First Presbyterian Church which we joined after we married. Two live in MN and one in New Hampshire. We kept active with our kids through sports and scouting. All three boys achieved the level of Eagle Scout. We have eleven grandchildren and keep busy with our family and friends. I worked as a legal assistant/paralegal for 45 years and retired about three years ago.



Norine Schmitt

Where is the most interesting place you've been and why?

I traveled to Alaska for a legal conference. We had rented a jeep and were exploring the state. Early one morning, we came over a hill when the sun was rising. The sun was just hitting the top of Mount McKinley in bright rays of pink and yellow. We pilled over and watched the sun rise on the mountain top which peaked out from the clouds around it, and the moon still glowing in the background. It was such a spectacular site and made you realize the grandeur of the world God made for us and I felt so lucky to witness it.

What is a Bible verse or verses that hold deep meaning for you?

The book of Psalm is meaningful. In Psalm 24 it reads in verse 1. "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." Verse 5: "He will receive blessings from the Lord and vindication from God his Savior." Psalm 25:5 "Guide me in your truth and teach me for you are God my Savior."

What are favorite pastimes/hobbies of yours?

I camped and fished with my parents a lot. We would take road trips and I always got to be the map reader. I still love to camp, fish, and travel with family and friends. I also like to read a good book on the deck in the summer, take care of flowers, and listen to a good concert.

What are some small things that brighten your day?

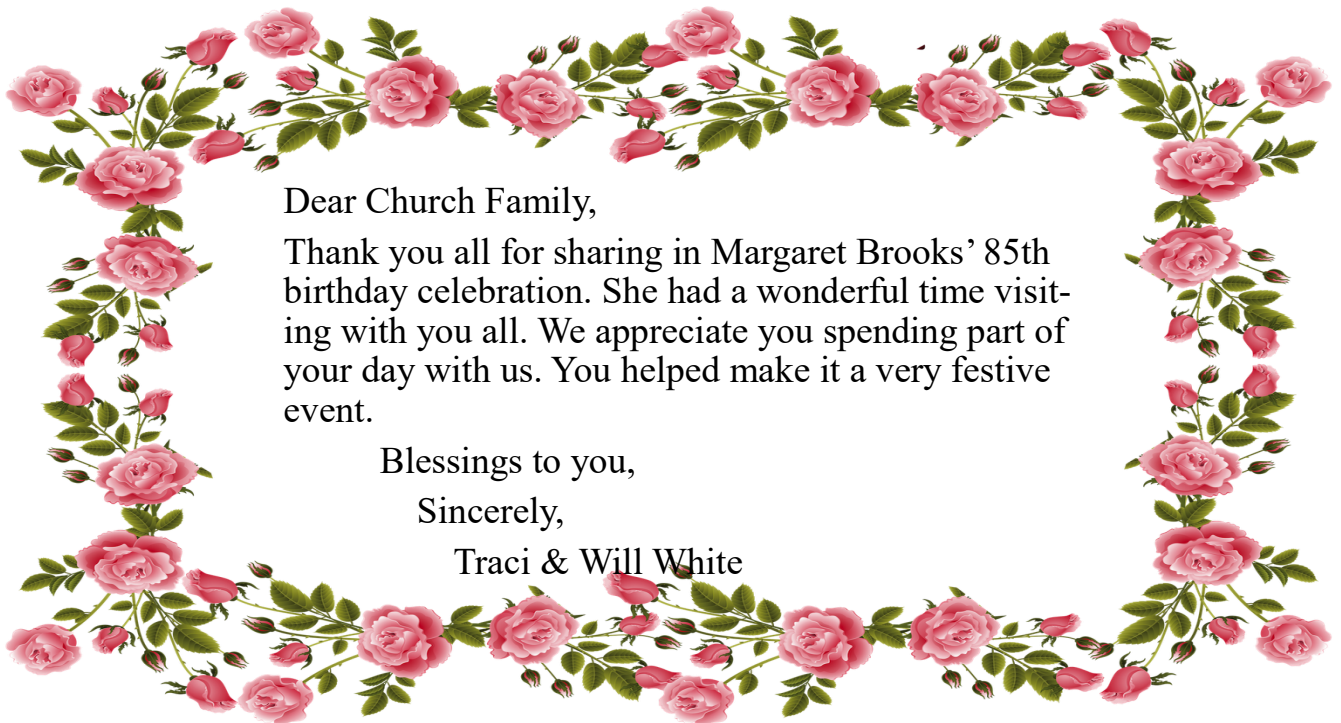
Now days it is watching the birds, squirrels and deer come out from the quarry and play, phone calls from the grandchildren telling me about their day, and a good sunrise/sunset.

If you could have been a cast member of any TV show past or present, which one would you pick to be on, and why?

Running Wild with Bear Grylls: The places he took his guests, his candid talks about life, and testing your own fortitude. (Just keep me away from the snakes!)

Given the choice of anyone in the world past or present, whom would you enjoy as a dinner guest and why?

I would love to have dinner with my parents again and have them meet my family.



Dear Church Family,

Thank you all for sharing in Margaret Brooks' 85th birthday celebration. She had a wonderful time visiting with you all. We appreciate you spending part of your day with us. You helped make it a very festive event.

Blessings to you,

Sincerely,

Traci & Will White

Deacon's Corner

As I sit down and prepare to write, I am watching nature come alive this morning. The birds are singing and my thoughts are on spring. We just recently set our clocks ahead an hour for daylight savings time. The temperature outside is warming up. The snow is almost gone and anymore that we get won't last long. God got us through another winter.



In Spring we celebrate Easter and the resurrection of Jesus. Plants start to sprout and grow after being dormant all winter. It is for sure a sign of new life. School will soon be out for the summer. The high school seniors will be graduating. Farmers will be planting crops. Oh but wait, one more snowfall.

Soon summer will be in full swing. Children will be playing outside, baseball games will be in full swing and before we know it, fall will be creeping up on us. The days will get shorter and the temperature will cool down. The farmers will be harvesting the crops that they tended to all summer. The leaves on the trees will turn from green to red, yellow and orange. The kids will get ready for another school year.

It brings me peace knowing that God is with us in every season. God, thank you for every season - summer, fall, winter and spring. Thank you for leading us and taking care of us. Thank you for hearing our prayers, all of the time. Help us to talk to you no matter how we're feeling. Help us to follow and trust in you during all seasons.

Submitted by Lori Smith.

2026 Easter Breakfast

Please mark your calendar to celebrate with family, friends, or other special people dear to you. Each breakfast will include scrambled eggs, bacon and sausage, fresh fruit, and your choice of muffin or croissant or hot crossed bun. Please join us on Easter Sunday, April 5.



We are offering two opportunities to participate:
 IN-PERSON BEFORE the 10:00 AM Worship Service, and
 CURBSIDE PICK-UP AFTER the 10:00 AM Worship Service.

We are requesting a \$10 donation for each Easter Breakfast. All proceeds support Feeding Area Children Together (FACT). Please reserve your Easter Breakfast by Monday, March 30. Reservations may be submitted by turning in the form to the church office or by placing it in the offering plate. For more information, please

Winter Chrysalis 2026

Theme: Our Daily Bread... Matthew 6:11. From February 20-23

Women's retreat was held at Clearwater Forest, which is a sanctuary for adventure, spiritual renewal, and personal growth since 1954. Over 5,000 youth, children, and adults participate in seasonal retreat programs and events in one year!



I recently attended the Winter Retreat for women and thoroughly enjoyed the theme with studies and presentations offered. The presenter/speaker was Reverend Elaine Boyd with "What Do You Knead?"

Some of her comments included: "Bread is mentioned over 400 times in the Bible as a sign of both physical and spiritual sustenance. This ancient symbol points us to a deeper understanding of God's radical faithfulness, grace and welcome for us, and encourages attendees to share what we received with others".

Small groups were important to campers and we were strongly encouraged to make it a priority to attend each session. It was worth it.

Stretch and Praise was balance and exercises plus music and reading before breakfast.

Drop-in-Crafts for a minimal cost were options for self-guided crafts with instructions for creative leisure.

Workshops were available; Chrysalis was on a Roll! It turned household ingredients into something beautiful and delicious to eat after class. Hopefully participants KNEADED to do this. There were a few more workshops from which to choose.

Exercise: snowshoeing, nature walks or yoga, and a masseuse were available during 'Free time'.

You can see why I enjoyed this retreat and am looking forward to Summer Chrysalis; August 13-16 with Anna Kendig Flores.

Save the date!

Submitted by Margaret Brooks



FINANCE COMMITTEE

Update of PayPal and Venmo

You may notice that some church events will now include a QR code for donations through PayPal or Venmo. These are simply additional ways to give if someone does not have cash or a check with them. Many people today carry their phones more often than their wallets, so this helps make it easier to participate in supporting church activities.

These digital donations will be used only for specific events, fundraisers, or special projects, not for our regular weekly offering. When a QR code is provided, it will clearly state the event or purpose. Any donation made through that code will go directly toward that event or project.

Our regular offering during worship will continue just as it always has. (The QR code in the bulletin directs you to our FPC Website to pay with a credit card.) PayPal and Venmo are simply additional tools that may be used occasionally at events to make giving more convenient for those who prefer it.

David Pennertz
Finance Committee

February 2026 Finances	YTD
Total Income	\$42,824
Total Expenses	\$106,303
Net over/under	\$ 37,134
	\$ 76,278
	\$ 5,700
	\$ 30,025

Our church congregation has very generous givers, and it is much appreciated.

Thank you everyone, from the Finance Committee

Tom Horn and Karen Ondracek



**Service Group — April
Chairs - Gail Aalderks and Michael Rutter**

Donna	Amore	Bill/Ronnie	Janssen
John/Phyllis	Bowden	Jim/Mary	Jost
Bob/Nancy	Butter	Richard/Dorothy	Lawrence
John	Detra	Ken/Debbie	Picha
Tom/Nancy	Horn		

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVERS SCHEDULE

Listed below is the Server Schedule for Sunday Worship. If you are unavailable for the assigned date, please swap with someone else scheduled that month. Also notify the office of any swaps. Thank you for your service to the Church.

	Worship Leader	Ushers (2)	Greeter (1/2)
04/05/26	Stephanie Merrell	Dan Owen & Linda Bettison	Mike Rutter & Gail Aalderks
04/12/26	Gene Williamson	Ryne Pentz & Duane Scherbing	Kari Ahles
04/19/26	Randy Hammond	LeRoy & Paula Tift	Nancy Coleman
04/26/26	Linda Bettison	Mike/Kim Tollefson	John Hoffman
05/03/26	Jackie Benn	John Bowden & John Hoffman	Randy/Kathy Arnold
05/10/26	Carrie Butter	Lynn Rae Olson/Carrie Raiche	John Detra
05/17/26	Michelle Chan	Ron/Karen Larson	Jan Larson & Lois Buchin
05/24/26	Rhonda Siltman	Gail Aalderks/Mike Rutter	Stephanie Randolph
05/31/26	Bobbie Lampi	Duane Scherbing & Lori Smith	Alvin/Michelle Chan

ANDERSON, Kimm	04/18
ATKINSON, Avery	04/24
ATKINSON, Harper	04/26
BRETHERTON, Raynee	04/02
BUCHIN, William	04/19
CABRERA, Isabella	04/02
ELG, Ron	04/21
GRITTNER, Debbie	04/01
HAMPLE, Barry	04/10
HANDLEY, Aiden	04/16
HYLLA, Sandy	04/19
JACOBS, Bev	04/20
JACOBS, Jenna	04/06
KADLEC, Stella	04/22



LUND, April	04/26
LUND, Dan	04/04
MARTENS, Mary Lou	04/27
NEUMANN, Darla	04/26
PENNERTZ, Katie	04/09
PENTZ, Charlie	04/05
RUTTER, Michael	04/01
SCOTT, John	04/30
SEAMAN, Bailey	04/12
VANASSE, Ryan	04/04
VARNER, Lyn	04/16
YU, Will	04/10

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web site: www.fpcstcloud.org

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
PERMIT NO. 311
Saint Cloud, MN
56301

Our Mission Statement

*"Bringing the Living Hope of
the Gospel to the World by
Knowing and Serving Jesus
Christ"*

Our Vision Statement

*"The Kingdom of God made
known one sacred space at a
time"*

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
BIBLE STUDIES**

Tuesday 9:00 a.m.
Men's Bible Study

Wednesday 9:15 a.m.
Women's Bible Study

Friday 7:00 a.m.
Men's Bible Study

*You're invited to join a study that
works for you!*

APRIL 2026

SESSION

Pastor Darin Seaman, Moderator
Bobbie Lampi, Clerk

Class of 2026: Tom Horn (Finance), Marsha Elg (Worship),
Bob Butter (Worship), Norine Schmitt (Personnel)

Class of 2027: Jim Anderson (Youth), Brenda Espelien
(Fellowship), Thijin Gatwech (Mission), Sandy
Ross (Fellowship)

Class of 2028: Rhonda Siltman (Mission), Jacob Priest (Property),
David Pennertz (Finance), Charlie Pentz
(Nominating)

DEACONS

Class of 2026: Michael Rutter, Gail Aalderks, Paula Tift, Mary Lease,
Carrie Butter

Class of 2027: Jackie Benn, John Johnson, Sharon Johnson,
Linda Sarff, Lori Smith