

# The Tower

February 2026

## The Journey Begins

The season of Lent begins this year on February 18, 2025. Two special events mark the occasions.

## Community Dinner

A pasta dinner will be held starting at 5:00 pm. Look for the signup in the main entrance and share in the festivities for the special occasion. A free-will offering will help the youth ministries.

## Ash Wednesday Worship

Ash Wednesday worship is slated for 7:00 pm in the sanctuary. Ash Wednesday marks the first day of Lent, forty weekdays before Easter. The practice of placing ashes on the forehead symbolizes repentance and contrition.

More and more, Presbyterian churches are beginning to embrace the rituals of Ash Wednesday, and to give serious thought to the meaning of Lent. For Presbyterians, “it’s probably in the past 30 years that we’ve begun to kind of recover Ash Wednesday as part of our worship life,” said Paul Galbreath, theology professor at Union Presbyterian Seminary. Before that, “it was perceived as Roman Catholic, and was something that good Presbyterians didn’t do. Not that we really knew what it was — it was just foreign to our culture.”

“But what has made congregations more accepting of Ash Wednesday rituals has been a broader reassessing of the liturgical traditions and teachings related to Holy Week, the days right before Easter, and to the preceding weeks of Lent,” Galbreath said. Congregations focused on Lent talk of preparation and spiritual discipline, mirroring Jesus’ 40 days of prayer and temptation in the desert before he was killed.



## First Presbyterian Church

340 South 5th Avenue  
Saint Cloud, MN 56301  
Telephone: 320-251-8277  
[www.fpcstcloud.org](http://www.fpcstcloud.org)

## 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  
Asst Custodian

## Pastor's Reflections

At our annual meeting in January, Karen Ondracek announced that the "Finishing the Race" campaign has been completed. The debt is "paid in full." It was significant to celebrate the occasion and highlight the work that has been completed.



**Rev. Darin Seaman**

As a reminder, the project commenced prior to 2010 with a series of listening sessions and together you helped discern a way forward. The project included a new worship space, new electrical system, a new elevator on the west side, and improvements to a main entrance. The worship/fellowship space was later scrapped but replaced by air conditioning in the sanctuary.

Fundraisers were held to make a significant contribution for the down payment. We broke ground in May 2018 with a ceremony at the site. Construction took place during 2018 and 2019. A dedication of the new entrance took place on January 2019.

The entire time we worked with the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program of the denomination to secure a loan that was amenable to our needs. The loan was for a period of 20 years.

Because of your generosity, we are now debt free. I want to express my thanks to everyone who contributed to this project. There are too many folk to name in this newsletter but I wish to express my thanks for your work (steering committee, property folk, donors, critics, and a host of others who helped us along the way). Especially, we are grateful to God for every good and perfect gift.

The grace and peace of Christ be with you.

*Darin*

### February Sermon Titles

**Feb. 1**  
"Why Creeds?"  
Deuteronomy 4:6-9

**Feb. 8**  
"Salt and Light"  
Matthew 5:13-20

**Feb. 15 - TBD**

**Feb. 18 - Ash Wednesday**  
"We're Doing It Wrong"  
Isaiah 58:1-12

**Feb. 22 - First Sunday in Lent**  
Prayer Sermon series  
"Learning to Pray"  
Luke 11:1-13

## First Friday Concert - Gina Forsyth

New Orleans-based Gina Forsyth is an award-winning singer/songwriter, who is known for her wizardry on fiddle and guitar.

With an alto as unique as it is soulful, unpretentious songs that cut straight to the heart, and a wicked sense of humor, her live performances are legend. Considered one of the best Cajun fiddlers Louisiana (no small feat), Gina is in demand from other great Louisiana musicians to play club gigs and festivals, some of the same talent that backs her up when she plays as Gina Forsyth and Friends. Rheta Grimsley Johnson of Daily Journal probably sums up Gina best, "If you've ever wondered what happened to the gutsy folk singers who used to roam the earth with their instrument and protest, check out Gina Forsyth.



in

In the tradition of Guthrie, Dylan and Prine she is writing and singing, not just fiddling while America burns." Join us on **Friday, Feb. 6 at 7:00 pm** in the sanctuary. Tickets available online at [granitecityfolksociety.org](http://granitecityfolksociety.org)

---

## Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who supported our family during Bill's health challenges and passing. He will be missed but I am grateful for the hospitality and love shown by so many in the church. A special thanks to those who served in the kitchen during the dessert fellowship.

-Lynn Yueill and family

## YOUTH

### C.O.R.E Children's Ministry

#### Recap

We wrapped up the series "Follow the Star" and have now begun the series "Your Invited". Join us in inviting others to know Jesus.

We hosted our first Christmas and New Years Eve celebrations as outreach events this year. The Christmas party was very well attended by community members. Children were able to decorate their own Christmas cookie, enjoy a Christmas story, play games or do crafts while listening to peer's sing Karaoke. Thank you to all the volunteers that assisted with making this a fun and community engaging event.



Family Social  
Jan. 25th  
BOWLING



### Upcoming Events in February

- February 8, 2026 Souper Bowl
- February 15, 2026 G.I.F.T. 9:00 am
- February 18, 2026 Wednesday Meal
- February 28, 2026 Family Social 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

## MUSIC

Your voices, your time, and your willingness to serve through music mean more than I can express. Thank you for sharing your gifts!

To better accommodate the children who attend music on Wednesdays, we will rehearse on **Wednesdays at 5:00 pm** rather than Thursdays. Our rehearsal dates are:

Wednesday, March 11 | 5:00–6:00 pm  
 Wednesday, March 18 | 5:00–6:00 pm  
 Wednesday, March 25 | 5:00–6:00 pm



## Souper Bowl of Caring—Feb. 8

More than 35 years ago, the Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group:

*“Lord, even as we enjoy  
 the Super Bowl football game,  
 help us be mindful of those  
 without a bowl of soup to eat.”*

Since that day, more than \$220 million has been raised for local charities across the country through Souper Bowl of Caring. It has become a powerful movement that is transforming the time around the Big Game into the nation’s largest celebration of giving and serving.

Through this mission, young people learn what it’s like to make a positive difference in the world - as they collect food, raise money, and volunteer to work in charities that provide shelter to the homeless, goods to the hungry, and compassion to those in need.

Be part of this movement that is sharing God’s love with those in need. Please give generously on Super Bowl Sunday, February 8, 2026.

TACKLE



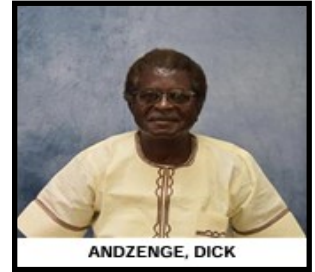
HUNGER

## ***Who's Who in the Pew?***

### **Tell us about yourself**

My name is Daniel (Dick) Taver'shima Andzenge.

Most people call me Dick. I was born and raised in Nigeria, a product of the Dutch Reformed Church Missions (DRCM) from South Africa and later, the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) of North America. Following a successful completion of Elementary, Middle and Secondary schools under the Calvinist Reformed Missionary tutorage, I went to Vom College of Health and Medical Sciences for my Nursing degree and RN Certification. Three years after graduating from Vom, I left Nigeria for the USA to study at Calvin University in Grand Rapids, Michigan. After Calvin university, I proceeded to Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, where I did graduate degrees in Medical Sociology, Holistic Health, Criminology and Social/Political Development. Following the completion of my PhD degree, I took a job at St. Cloud State University in 1992 where I have taught Criminal Justice and Victimology for the past 34 years. Besides taking a position at St. Cloud State University, I also joined a consortium of global scholars from Asia, Europe, the Middle East (Israel) to accepts a consultative relationship with the council of Europe and the United Nation on Crime Prevention, Conflict Resolution, Peacemaking and Restorative and Transformative justice.



### **How long have you been attending FPC? Before that, where have you attended?**

I have attended FPC since moving to St. Cloud in 1992. All my four children were confirmed in this church. Two of them were also married here.

### **Share anything you wish about your family/children**

My second son, Kaase and his wife Jenina live in Hanover, Germany. During Kaase's teenage years, he had many challenges, resulting in many sleepless nights for us. Our first son, Senenge and his son were in much distress when their daughter, Zasha, at the age of ten was diagnosed with cancer, which is in remission for three years. We were blessed to have this church as our family to offer prayers of support during these difficult periods. We continue to thank you and God for your prayers and a shared stewardship.

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

Dubrovnik, Croatia is one of the most interesting places I have been to. My first visit was in 1997 following the war in the Balkans. I saw brokenness and the ruins of a city and community and its people, following a brutal war. Our guide reminded us that the city state of Dubrovnik Republic, was the first independent nation state to recognize America as a nation at the declaration of American Independence in 1776. I have gone to Dubrovnik almost every year since 1997 and watched the economic and community rebuilding and recovery. Mostly, I am inspired by the city, the country and the people's resilience. It was in Dubrovnik that I received a message from a total stranger that affirmed my faith in God's covenant of Grace with me.

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

I received Christ on April 24, 1964, following a family devotional based on Ephesians 4:31-32. We cannot create our perfection but God, in His grace neutralizes our human failings, bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander and other evil thoughts and deeds, replacing them with kindness, tenderheartedness, and a forgiving spirit. We have no perfection, God in his divine grace redeems us.

**What are favorite pastimes/hobbies of yours?**

I enjoy and find peace in walking. I walk many miles routinely. I find walking peaceful and a time alone with God and Nature.

**What are some small things that brighten your day?**

The kindness and simple acknowledgment; a smile, greetings, of God's people.

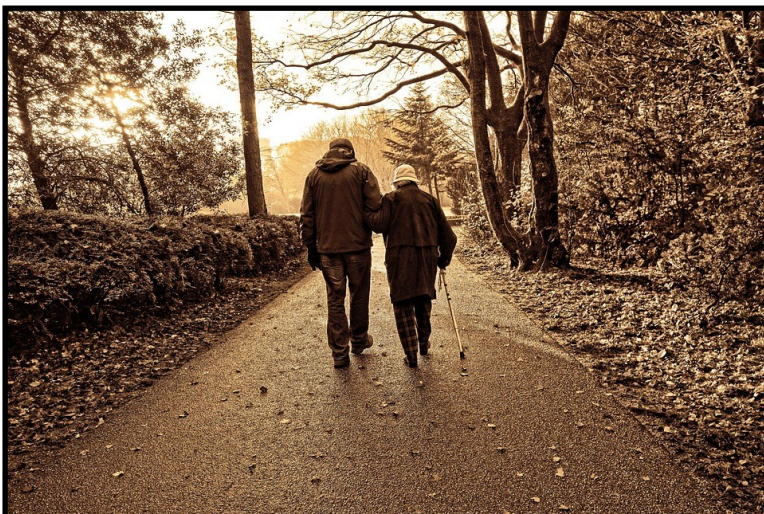
**Given the choice of anyone in the world past or present, whom would you enjoy as a dinner guest and why?**

Andy Taylor in the Andy Griffith's show. I found Andy's humanity very inspiring.

A random death row inmate facing death and a chance to examine their reflections the circumstances. Christ's last supper was such a situation; Christ knew death was eminent.

**Share anything unique or memorable you do/have done that others might not know about you.**

Directing programs globally on conflict resolution, peacemaking, restorative justice and victim services, bringing medicines and financial relief for the destitutes in Nigeria provides me very fulfilling opportunities to witness with humility.



## Deacon's Corner

Psalm 33:3      Sing to Him a new song.  
Play skillfully with a shout of joy.



I once knew a man who had a stroke. This stroke had occurred years before I knew him. It left him with the inability to speak coherently and the inability to move his right arm and right leg. He could not live at home. He lived in a nursing home. He lived there a long time.

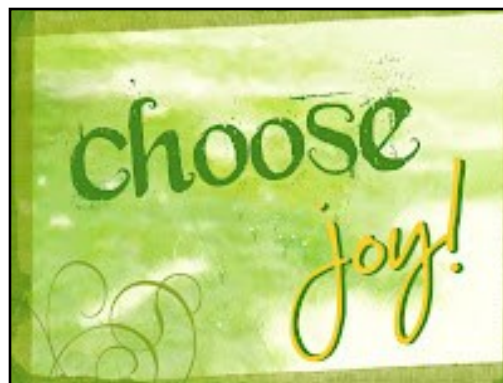
So those were the things he could not do. However, he could smile. He did a lot of that. The twinkle in his eye was real when you greeted him. He did his best to be part of a conversation. And for those who requested it, he could sing a few words. He could not talk coherently, but he could sing. This sparky fellow had a lot of hats. Some had the word “happy” on them. He may have a different hat every day. He took great joy in describing his hats in a verbiage that only he could understand.

By many standards, he had every reason to be sad or disillusioned. He did not choose that way. He chose a joyful way. The psalm says that we should sing a new song to Him. Play skillfully with a shout of joy.

Joy seems deeper than happy. Happiness seems to be a symptom of joy, a sign of joy. In Matthew 25:21, the Master advised his faithful servant to enter into the joy of your Master.

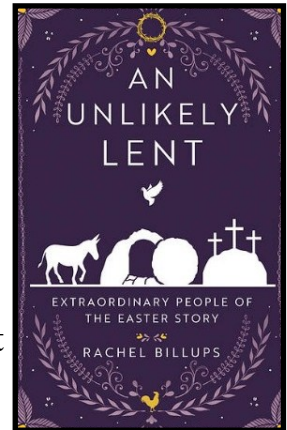
As a deacon, I have seen a lot of joy in those I have visited. It is a privilege to hear stories of joyful faith and living. I am grateful to in the presence of happy and joyful servants.

John Johnson



## Lent Discipleship Opportunity

Join Pastor Darin and others in reading together "An Unlikely Advent" by Rachel Billups. Individually, we will read the book and reflect on weekly questions Darin will pose.



About the book, "The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus are at the heart of the story of Easter. But the resurrection was not witnessed in isolation; it unfolded before a crowd. What might the stories of those women and men teach us today? How will they help us step into the story of Easter? Here, we can see what has been overlooked, not just in the grand moments but in the in-between: the silence, the side characters, and the questions." See Pastor Darin for a book.

## "Why do we pay per capita?"

In the PC(USA) per capita is a way of sharing the cost of being a connectional church – that is, a denomination where congregations, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly all share in governance and mission together.

Per capita is a set amount of money per church member that each congregation pays every year to help fund the work of the larger church. It supports the infrastructure that allows the church to be Presbyterian, where decisions are made together through elected representatives.

Per capita, at its heart, expresses connectionalism: we're not just local congregations doing our own thing but part of a larger body. It ensures equity: every congregation, large or small, helps sustain the shared mission and governance. And it keeps mission offerings and gifts free to go directly to programs and ministries, not administration.

In 2026, our per capita is set at \$47.00 per member. It is split a follows:

Presbytery	\$30.24
Synod	\$ 5.50
General Assembly	<u>\$11.26</u>
Total	\$47.00

## Service Group — February Chairs - Kari Ahles & Alvin/Michelle Yu/Chen



Addicott	Linda	Pentz	Ryne
Benn	Jackie	Siltman	Rhonda
Fautsch	Floyd and Elaine	Sticha	Jerry and Julee
Hammond	Randy	Yueill	Lynn

### 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.

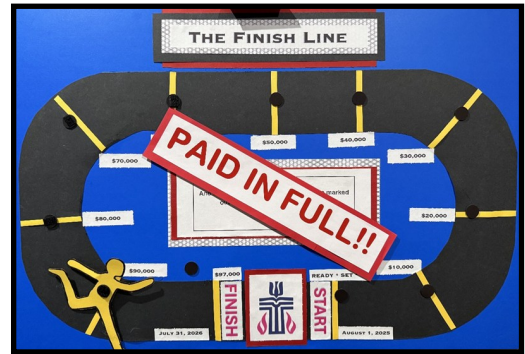
	Worship Leader	Ushers (2)	Greeter (1/2)
<b>02/01/26</b>	Jackie Benn	Linda Bettison & John Hoffman	Gail/Mike Aalderks
<b>02/08/26</b>	Bob Butter	Dan Owen & Ryne Pentz	Karen Larson
<b>02/15/26</b>	Bobbie Lampi	Leroy/Paula Tift	Lynn Rae Olson & Carrie Raiche
<b>02/22/26</b>	Michelle Chan	John Bowden & Shauna Seaman	Betty Payne
<b>03/01/26</b>	Dick Andzenge	Mike Rutter/ Gail Aalderks	Linda Bettison
<b>03/08/26</b>	Rachel Buchin	Randy/Kathy Aronald	John Bowden
<b>03/15/26</b>	Tamara Calhoun	Nancy Coleman & John Detra	Phil/Jeannie Chu
<b>03/22/26</b>	Rickie Espelien	Joe/Stephanie Jacobs	Stephanie Randolph
<b>03/29/26</b>	Nancy Horn	Lynn Rae Olson/Carrie Raiche	Norine/Ken Schmitt

Barbara Isaacson	02/02	Jackson Nikodym	02/16
Sharon Johnson	02/03	Paige Nutter	02/16
Daniel Calhoun	02/06	Dan Owen	02/20
Scott Varner	02/07	Steven Shaler	02/21
Grayden Ewing	02/09	Reese Baas	02/24
Mary Giese	02/09	Alvin Yu	02/24
Sharon Minet	02/09	Stephanie Jacobs	02/25
Chuck (Charles) Pelzer	02/09	Carole Lysher	02/25
Mary McMullen	02/10	Phyllis Bowden	02/26
Arlene Wickmann	02/14	Don Fortner	02/27
Jullian Euteneuer	02/15		



## Capital Campaign Overview

We reached a significant milestone in our congregation in January 2026. Our debt payment for the building project has been “PAID IN FULL”. **We are debt free!!**



Our new entryway started as a dream in 2010-2011. We broke ground in early 2018. The overall project estimate was \$1,800,000. This project included upgrades to the following areas: new main entrance, new elevator, air conditioning in the sanctuary, updated electrical in the sanctuary, new parking lot upgrades, and several other items.

A project of \$1,800,000 felt like a huge endeavor, even overwhelming at times. This project would not have been possible without the continuing support of all our members throughout the last 8 years.

We can accomplish all things when we do it together with the Grace of our God. The generosity of our members is incredible.

God’s blessings to each of you.

Karen Ondracek, Treasurer



Finances	December	YTD
Contributions	\$39,091.10	\$399,127.00
Expenses	\$67,798.11	\$399,127.00
Over/under	-\$28,707.01	\$ -0-



In December, the positive balance was given to youth, mission, given to youth, mission, Clearwater Forest, and Lowertown Project. In addition, \$6,300 was moved to our reserve account.



**First Presbyterian Church**  
340 South 5th Avenue  
Saint Cloud, MN 56301  
Telephone: 320-251-8277  
e-mail: admasst@fpcstcloud.org  
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

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

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

**FEBRUARY 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, Charlie Pentz

**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

Class of 2028: Kim Tollefson, Mike Tollefson, John Detra