

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

PSALM 27:1, 4-9

¹ The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
⁴ One thing I asked of the Lord; this I seek: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. ⁵ For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock. ⁶ Now my head is lifted up above my enemies
all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the Lord.
⁷ Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me! ⁸ "Come," my heart says, "seek his face!"
Your face, Lord, do I seek. ⁹ Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger,
you who have been my help. Do not cast me off; do not forsake me, O God of my salvation!

SOLO

SECOND READING

MATTHEW 4:12-23

¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ¹⁵ "Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."
¹⁸ As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. ¹⁹ And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people." ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. ²³ Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

SERMON

"FOLLOW"

REV. ALISON PETERS

* HYMN #435

THERE'S A WIDENESS IN GOD'S MERCY

"IN BABILON"

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

INVITATION TO OFFERING

(Please place all tithes and offerings as well as any orange or blue prayer request cards in the offering plate.)

OFFERTORY SOLO

ALLEGRO
JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

STANLEY

* DOXOLOGY #658

GOD IS SO GOOD (Verse 1)

"GOD IS SO GOOD"

God is so good; God is so good; God is so good; God's so good to me.

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE CONCLUDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER- Ecumenical Version

(You are welcome to pray the Lord's Prayer with the version most familiar to you.)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

* HYMN #757

TODAY WE ALL ARE CALLED TO BE DISCIPLES

"KINGSFOLD"

* BENEDICTION

* RESPONSE AFTER BENEDICTION #306

BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS (Verse 1)

"DENNIS"

At FPC there is a tradition of joining hands while singing "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" to close our service.

You are welcome to do whatever feels comfortable during this time. There is no wrong way to participate in worship!
Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

POSTLUDE

MIT FREUDEN ZART
JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

* When this symbol precedes an element of the service, if you are able, please stand.
Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in **bold**.

This Morning's Worship Leaders

Preacher.....Rev. Alison Peters
Liturgist.....Sharon Squires
Director of Music Ministries/Organist/Pianist.....Judith Brown
Audio/Video Technicians.....Joe Aurigemma and Eric Ringler

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION-CORPORATION of First Presbyterian Church of Cumberland, Maryland is called by the Session for **Sunday, February 8, 2026**.

The purposes of the meeting are:

- To hear the Annual Report of the Session
- To elect an Auditor to the Auditing Committee
- To elect a new class of Ruling Elders
- To elect a 2026 Congregational Nominating Committee
- To receive the 2026 Budget
- To elect Officers of the Corporation
- To approve the pastor's terms of Call
- To conduct any other business properly coming before the Congregation-Corporation

-By Order of the Session



WELCOME: A very warm welcome to everyone who comes to worship with us here at First Presbyterian Church! We are proud to be a "Big Tent Church" where everyone is welcome to join us in worshiping and serving our Lord, Jesus Christ. We welcome and encourage worshipers of all races, all women, men, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, all political parties, and all walks of life to join us. We welcome you to worship with us.

WELCOME VISITORS: We are glad you found your way to First Presbyterian Church of Cumberland. For more information about opportunities to worship, learn and serve with us, we encourage you to visit the table outside the church office. You can also learn more about us at www.fpc-cumberland.org and www.facebook.com/First.Pres.Cumberland.

FRIENDSHIP PADS: Please locate and sign the red pad in your pew, tear off the sheet and place it in the collection plate during the offering. This important practice allows us to be mindful of new folks and long-time members as well, and is a good way to learn (or remember) the names of those with whom you are seated. **If you are visitor, please fill out the "Welcome to First Presbyterian Church" card in the pew rack and put it in the offering plate when it comes by during the service.**

PERSONAL LISTENING DEVICES: (amplifiers) are available in the back of the church for use during worship. Please see an usher for assistance.

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS: Please use the orange or blue prayer request cards, which are located in the back of the sanctuary by the bulletins to share any joys or concerns. Place the card in the offering plate once you have completed your request. The ushers will bring them to the pastor during the offering. The orange prayer request cards are also available in the pew racks.





CHILDREN IN WORSHIP: You are welcome to bring your child with you to worship. We have "worship bags" in the back of the sanctuary that include materials for drawing and coloring, as well as Bible stories and Bible word-find games. Our "To Families with Young Children" pew card contains information about why young children should be encouraged to come to worship and how parents and others can engage them more fully in worship. **Childcare is provided during worship as needed! Please see an usher if you have any questions.**

THE PRAY-GROUND is a special space in the sanctuary for our youngest children and their families. All families are welcome to come and sit in the right front pews with their children seated on the rug. This front row seat will allow God's youngest children to participate in the service in a place where they can see and hear best. There will be activities provided so that their little hands are kept busy while participating in worship. "Jesus said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it'" (Mark 10:14-15).

SANCTUARY FLOWERS: Please contact Michael Levitas or the church office if you would like to sponsor flowers for a special occasion such as a birthday or anniversary or in memory or honor of a friend or loved one. You may specify live or silk flowers.

PASTOR'S SCHEDULE

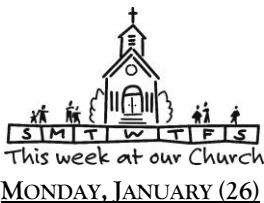
Pastor Alison is available when requested or informed of a need. If you are aware of someone in need of a visit or phone call, please call or text her to let her know. *[Fridays are generally her day off and she will respond when she is available.]*

Ways to contact Pastor Alison: 814-715-1681/revalisonpeters@gmail.com

To help with scheduling,
please reach out to the Church Office:



The flowers in the sanctuary this morning are given to the glory of God in loving memory of Barbara Leasure (Jan. 25, 1947-June 3, 2021) by Kathy Dowell.



This week at our Church

MONDAY, JANUARY (26)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
7:00 PM CHORAL SOCIETY REHEARSAL

TUESDAY, JANUARY (27)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY (28)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
12:15 PM STAFF MEETING
6:30 PM JOYBELLS REHEARSAL
7:00 PM NA MEETING

THURSDAY, JANUARY (29)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

FRIDAY, JANUARY (30)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY (31)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY (1)

9:45 AM ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
11:00 AM SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

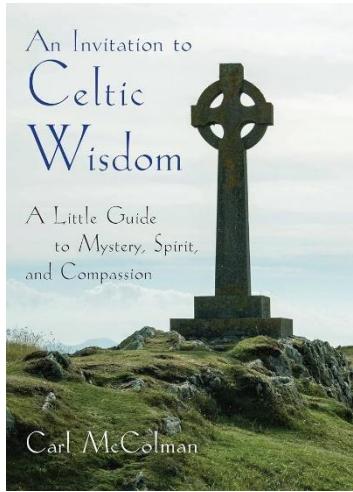
RULING ELDERS: CARL BELT & CINDY CORLEY

ANNUAL GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE: as of January 18, 2026

Total 2026 Pledges Promised	\$ 271,126.00
Pre-paid pledges	\$ 70,507.00
<u>2026 Pledge Balance Promised</u>	<u>\$ 200,618.00</u>
Pledge Balance Received Year-to-Date	\$ 20,128.00
Pledge Balance Promised Year-to-Date	\$ 11,678.00
Over/(Under)	\$ 8,449.00

ONLINE GIVING





AN INVITATION TO CELTIC WISDOM: A LENTEN BOOK STUDY
Thursdays: February 19th-March 26th (5:00 PM-6:30 PM) Dinner will be provided.

This six-week Lenten class taught by Pastor Alison invites us to explore the depth and beauty of Celtic Christian spirituality using Carl McColman's *An Invitation to Celtic Wisdom*. Together, we will journey through three themes—The Celtic Mystery, The Celtic Saints, and Walking the Celtic Path.

Our final class will be a virtual 'fireside chat' with the author, who will answer our questions and help us to close out our time together.

Grounded in Scripture and shaped by prayer, silence, creation, and community, this class offers a contemplative approach to Lent that encourages attentiveness to God's presence in everyday life and prepares our hearts to walk toward Easter with renewed compassion and hope. Please RSVP to firstpresbyteriansecretary@gmail.com by Sunday, February 8th to reserve a copy of the book. Books will be available in the church office on Sunday, February 15th.

BABY SHOWER ANNOUNCEMENT: God continues to bless FPC. Within five months, we will have two babies born into our church family. Allie Blank is having her second daughter at the end of March, and our Pastor, Alison Peters, is having her first child in May. The Congregational Care Committee is excited for their arrivals. The celebration is for everyone! Come and play, laugh and celebrate!

SAVE THE DATES FOR THESE SECOND SUNDAY SOCIALS:

Allie Blank's Baby Shower in the Fellowship Hall

February 8, 2026 - following worship

Food provided by Congregational Care Committee: Mexican Food

Baby Registry: Amazon Baby Registry "Allie Blank"

Gifts are optional

Pastor Alison's Baby Shower in the Fellowship Hall

April 12, 2026 - following worship

Food provided by Congregational Care Committee: TBD

Baby Registry: Amazon "Alison Peters" and Baby list "Alison Peters"

Gifts are optional

BABY SCAVENGER HUNTS: Three weeks prior to each baby shower the Congregational Care Committee invites our FPC family to join in "Baby Scavenger Hunts". Beginning on Sunday, January 25, as you walk into the side entrance and/or choir loft, look for hidden baby items. Once you find a baby item, place it in the basket located in the back of the sanctuary.

There will also be a baby bottle game in the hallway as you enter the church. Take a guess at the correct number of animal crackers for a chance to win!



Second Sunday: Baby Shower

PLEASE JOIN US FOLLOWING
WORSHIP TO HONOR

ALLIE BLANK

WE WILL CELEBRATE IN THE
FELLOWSHIP HALL TO ENJOY A ROBUST
MEAL, BABY BINGO, AND FELLOWSHIP,
TO SHOWER ALLIE AND BABY GIRL WITH
LOVE!

FEBRUARY 8. 2026

ALLIE'S REGISTRY MAY BE FOUND AT:
[HTTPS://WWW.AMAZON.COM/BABY-REG/ALLIE-BLANK-MARCH-2026-FROSTBURG/NZMCIGQ6CBZI](https://www.amazon.com/BABY-REG/ALLIE-BLANK-MARCH-2026-FROSTBURG/NZMCIGQ6CBZI)

RULING ELDER BIOS

BILL BUTTERMARK (CLASS OF 2029)

*Edited from Bill's lengthy and interesting bio which all are welcome to read in its entirety
(It is available in the Volunteer Office).*

Bill is a native of Glen Cove, NY and was baptized and confirmed in The Reformed Church of Locust Valley, NY. His family moved to Pomfret, CT when he was a teenager. College studies led him into a BS in marketing and also where he met his first wife, Susan Stransky.

In the early 1980s he accepted a management position at Hills Department Store in Cumberland and moved his family here for a short year. They were active members at First Presbyterian Church, participating in choir (Sue) and teaching 7th and 8th grade Sunday School (Bill). Many moves for advancement in retail management resulted in family disruption, divorce, another marriage, divorce, and another career in real estate appraisal.

Over the decades, Bill has been a member of several denominations. He is presently remarried to Susan and has three adult children who live out of the area. He and Sue live in Wiley Ford with their pets, two beagles and two cats. He loves history, particularly the history that permeates this area and looks forward to serving as an elder in the ministry of FPC.

JULIE COURTNEY (CLASS OF 2028)

Julie attended West Bethesda Presbyterian Church in Williams County, Ohio from birth. She was baptized there when a high school confirmand and was a Youth Advisory Delegate to the General Assembly in Denver, Colorado in 1973.

She became a member of First Presbyterian Church in 1979, participating in the choir, youth fellowship and Presbyterian Women's Mary-Martha Circle.

Julie has taught adult and youth Sunday School classes, gone on work camps with both youth and adults, helped with funeral receptions and Vacation Bible School. She has directed of the JoyBells since 1982.

Julie is am currently co-chair of the Faith Formation Team and on the Worship and Music Committee. She chaired the search committee for the Director of Christian Music, which brought Judie Brown back to our organ bench. She has served several times on the Nominating Committee.

Julie and her husband, Bob, have three children: Jon (Meghan) on the West Coast, Josh (Ashley) on the East Coast and Melissa in Tennessee. Their grandsons enjoy participating in church activities when they visit. Julie has a great love for our church family and appreciates the many ways we minister to each other and our community.

KATHY GETTY (CLASS OF 2029)

Kathy, her husband, Jeff, and their three daughters became a part of our church family a little over 30 years ago when they moved from Baltimore, MD to Cumberland. Kathy and Jeff had enrolled their children into Learning Tree and at the encouragement of longtime church member, Barbara Leasure, they decided to join First Presbyterian Church. Since then, they have volunteered in various capacities.

Kathy ushered, served in the nursery, participated in the Administration and Finance Committee, audited the church's financial records, helped to count the weekly collection, chaired the special organ fundraiser and co-chaired the Stewardship Campaign for the first half of her time as a member of FPC. For the past ten years, she has had the pleasure of serving as the chair of the Stewardship Campaign. Kathy had declined to join Session since she was working full-time and raising three children. But when Buck Belt approached her this year, she felt it was time to take on this expanded role and help the church she loves continue to grow.

LINDA MELLON (CLASS OF 2027)

Linda grew up in the Presbyterian Church in McConnellsburg, Pa. When her husband, Jim, and Linda had their daughter Jessica, they became members of First Presbyterian in Cumberland and Jessica was fortunate to have many children her age in the church. From Learning Tree to Youth Club, their family had an active church life.

Linda's education includes graduating from Penn State and the University of Illinois. After teaching for two years in a middle school in New York, Linda was hired as a physical education teacher at ACM. She retired in 2006, and then continued to teach fitness classes.

In 2010, Linda began raising Scottish Highland cows at her farm in PA. Jessica married Mick Burkett at the farm, with the cows in attendance. Linda has two wonderful grandchildren, James, 8 and Mary Alice, 5. They both enjoy activities at the farm. The two families only live two miles apart in LaVale, so they spend lots of time together.

Over the years, Linda has taught Sunday School, ushered and attended many classes at church. She appreciates the opportunity to be an elder at this time.

ERIC RINGLER (CLASS OF 2029)

Eric brings strong organizational and leadership experience to the Session. He is currently serving professionally as a Manager at Aetna, a CVS Health company. His journey to First Presbyterian Church began out of a need for a sense of belonging after struggling to find a faith community that fully accepted him and his partner Josh, who are members of the LGBTQIA+ community. He found a spiritual home and a welcoming church family here at FPC.

Since joining, Eric has dedicated himself to the life of the church, singing in the choir, serving on the recent PNC and as the technical lead responsible for creating and running the Sunday livestreams. He has accepted the nomination for Ruling Elder as a way to glorify God and to give back to the church that embraced him, hoping to use his gifts and talents to help guide the congregation's future. In his spare time, Eric is an avid theatre enthusiast. He shares his life with his partner, Josh, and their "fur kid," Lennox.

DEBORAH ANN ROPER (CLASS OF 2029)

Debbie was baptized into the Christian faith at age nine and has served as choir member, Vacation Bible School teacher, usher, and event planner. Debbie has been married to Gary Roper for fourteen years and together they have five children and nine grandchildren. They moved to Cumberland on October 31, 2022. They describe Cumberland as "Little Italy".

Debbie holds a master's degree in nursing administration and has fifty years of nursing experience. She is nationally recognized for her expertise in developing stroke centers across the United States.

Debbie describes one of her greatest achievements as owning a Bed and Breakfast in McKinney, Texas. She enjoyed helping to make memories and spoiling each of her guests, whether it was an event such as a wedding, an anniversary, a tea party, or making birthday cakes.

Serving others is Debbie's motivation. Debbie and Gary joined FPC in January of 2025 and immediately began volunteering for the Community Café. Debbie welcomes the opportunity to serve the congregation of FPC.