

# Tidings

VOL. 71, NO. 1 - SPRING 2026



## A Faithful Presence

Reflections on the ministry of Rev. Dan Hutchinson



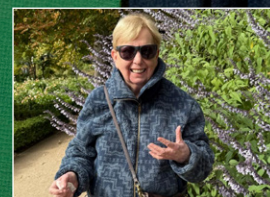
Prophecies fulfilled in Christ  
PAGE 9



Special Needs Ministry  
PAGE 10



What is the Legacy Society?  
PAGE 11



A Pilgrimage ... an Exodus  
PAGE 12



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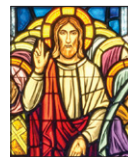
First 1885 Church  
SPRING 2026  
Vol. 71, No. 1



**Pastor Letter** ..... 3  
GRATEFUL FOR THE JOURNEY  
*Rev. Dan Hutchinson, Interim Pastor*



**A Faithful Presence** ..... 4  
REFLECTING ON THE MINISTRY OF REV. DAN HUTCHINSON  
*By Paul Marsh, First Church Communications*



**Prophecies Fulfilled in Christ** ..... 9  
CHURCH-WIDE STUDY CONNECTS PROPHECY TO FULFILLMENT  
*By Duff Points, Director of Adult Education*



**Special Needs Ministry**..... 10  
FROM RECOGNIZING A NEED TO REALIZING A VISION  
*As told by Pattie Gross and Jackson Seibert*



**A Pilgrimage ... an Exodus**..... 12  
FIRST CHURCH MEMBERS WALK THE PORTUGUESE CAMINO  
*By Joan Hoar, Historian Emeritus*



**Foundation Legacy Society**..... 11  
SUPPORT THE FIRST CHURCH FOUNDATION  
*By Katie Williams, Foundation Director*



**Thank you for mentoring new members**..... 15  
HELPING OUR NEWEST MEMBERS BELONG



**Parish Register**..... 14  
NEW MEMBERS AND MORE  
*Provided by Emma Myatt, Director of New Member Outreach and Kathy Wilson, Ministry Assistant to Member Care*

## Grateful for the Journey

*By Rev. Dan Hutchinson, Interim Pastor*

“My dear Bagginses and Boffins,” he began again; “and my dear Took and Brandybucks, and Grubbs, and Chubbs, and Burrowses, and Hornblowers, and Bolgers, Bracegirdles, Goodbodies, Brockhouses and Proudfoots... Eleventyone years is far to short a time to live among such excellent and admirable hobbits. I know half of you half as well as I should like and I like less than half of you half as well as you deserve!”

Thus says Bilbo Baggins toward the beginning of J.R.R. Tolkien’s The Lord of the Rings. I find myself echoing these sentiments (at least the positive ones!). It may not be 111 but having now entered my 14th year of service here at First Church, I can honestly say that it is too short a time to live among such excellent and admirable Presbyterians.

As I come to the end of my time here, the first thing that I want to do is simply to say thank you. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for the welcome I have received these past 13+ years. Thank you for embracing me as a young 27 year old, right out of seminary. Thank you for celebrating with Hanna and I when we got married, for rejoicing with us in the birth of our children, for giving me the opportunity to serve as your interim when Dr. Miller retired.

Thank you for sharing your lives with me. Thank you for giving me a space to grow as a pastor and as a man of God. Thank you for bearing with me. Thank you for patience and grace. Thank you to everyone who reached out to me whether by way of encouragement or by way of challenge. Thank you for allowing me to pray with you, to lament with you, to rejoice with you, to share the ups and downs of life with you. Thank you for listening to me. Thank you for honoring the call upon my life and for your willingness to take seriously the Word of God preached. Thank you for every shared moment, every conversation had, every attempt at seeking the Lord’s glory together. It has been a privilege.

As you know, April 26 is my last Sunday serving as your Pastor. Hanna and I will spend the month of May packing (and cleaning!) our home before moving back to Edmonds, WA. We are looking forward to spending a season with my side of the family as we seek God’s next call on our lives. Thank you for your prayers for us. Know that we will always keep you in our hearts.

Along with saying thank you, I wanted to offer a few words by way of encouragement. Perhaps you can think of them as lessons that I have been learning along the way:

**Remember that the Lord’s ways are not our ways, but they are always good.** I came to Tulsa planning on serving for two years. 13 years, a wife and three kids later, I am so grateful that God had other plans for my life. Friends, I do not know what the future holds (either for myself or for this church), but I know the one who holds the future. He is faithful. He is good. Full stop. Trust Him! And walk before Him in faith with hope and joyful expectation – even when things do not go as you had planned!

**Remember that you are not your own (and neither is the church!).** I love the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 6, “I am not my own, I have been bought with a price.” I am not my own. You are not your own. The church is not its own! We do not belong to ourselves. We are not here to serve our own interests. We do not exist by our own wisdom or understanding. We are the Lord’s; ransomed by the blood of Christ, adopted into the Father’s household, betrothed to the King of Kings and the Lord and Lords. Live like it. Live for the Lord and His glory. Hold your plans loosely, for you are not your own.

**Remember that the church is not a building you come to; the church is the body to which we belong.** Paul puts it this way in Ephesians 4, “There is one body and one Spirit...one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” There is one body! And, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians, no part of the body can say to another part that they are not needed. We need one another. We need to be in worship; we need to be invested in each other’s lives, praying for one another, lamenting and rejoicing together, spurring one another on toward faith and good deeds.

**Remember that God is in the business of using broken vessels.** 2 Corinthians 4:7, Paul writes, “But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.” I cannot tell you how many times over the past 13 years that I have walked into a situation where I was wholly inadequate. I cannot tell you how many times I have failed and fallen flat on my face. And I cannot tell you how many

times God has moved and worked in powerful and mysterious ways for His own glory. So be bold! God uses us according to His power, not ours.

**Remember that our chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.** Paul puts it this way in Colossians 3 that “whatever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” It can be so easy to worry or wonder if we are doing the right thing, and I think there is a freedom here...to simply ask the question: does this glorify God? Am I seeking God’s glory; God’s goodness to be revealed? Sometimes, that is all the answer you need to step out in bold obedience.

Finally, remember that in Jesus, the best is always yet to come. This echoes where I started. I do not know what God has in store for me, and I do not know what God has in store for you. I do know that God is faithful and that He loves His children. I cannot wait to see what God will do in and through this congregation.

To God be the Glory, now, forever, and always. Amen.

Rev. Dan Hutchinson



# A Faithful Presence

REFLECTIONS ON THE MINISTRY AND IMPACT OF REV. DAN HUTCHINSON

By Paul Marsh, First Church Communications

When Rev. Dan Hutchinson arrived at First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa in January 2013, it was not with the expectation of a long stay.

Fresh out of Princeton Theological Seminary, he came to Tulsa for what he thought might be a year—two at most.

Looking back, Dan's time here spanned more than a decade, and was marked by cultivating deep relationships and offering steady leadership that impacted the church in unexpected ways.

"I would not have stayed this long if not for the love and support of this congregation," Dan shared. "Everything about these years has been a true gift."

Through conversations, questions, and consistent engagement, Dan created space for others to grow—never avoiding difficult topics, but always approaching them with compassion and care.

## A MENTOR FOR STUDENTS

For **Sam DeVore**, Rev. Dan Hutchinson's impact was found not only in his teaching, but even more in his consistency.

For many who grew up in the youth ministry at First Presbyterian Church, Dan was a loyal presence during a formative season of life. Sam first met him as an eighth grader, when a young pastor quickly earned the trust of the students.

"Very quickly, we saw him in an older-brother way," Sam recalls. "He was humble and generous with his time, and you could tell he wasn't just there to teach us about Jesus—he wanted to show us Jesus in the way he befriended us and mentored us."

That relational approach defined Dan's ministry, he showed up—again and again—in both structured settings and everyday moments. Sam and Dan traveled on numerous mission trips together, including Belize and Israel, never missing their signature handshake pose. Whether teaching, checking in, or simply spending time together, Dan built relationships that extended far beyond programs and events.

"He wasn't just leading a ministry—he was investing in people," Sam says. "Looking back now, I don't know how he did everything he did. He had his hand in everything, and still made time for us individually."

Over time, that investment shaped not only Sam's experience, but seeing Dan's example fueled his desire to go into ministry himself.

"When I look at the scope of my life and who had the greatest influence on it, it was my pastor—it was Dan," he says. "In an earthly sense, I can't point to anyone else who's had a greater impact on where I am now."

For **Melissa Davis**, Rev. Dan Hutchinson's impact was most evident not in moments of certainty, but in seasons of doubt.

As a seventh-grade student wrestling with questions of faith, Melissa found in Dan a pastor who made space for the struggle.

"He never made me feel like I had to have it all figured out, and he didn't try to fix everything right away," she says. "He was willing to sit in those questions with me."

In seasons of skepticism — even moments of nearly walking away from faith — Dan offered both truth and comfort. "Sometimes God is much closer than we feel," he told her, "and how we feel doesn't change how close He is to us." Melissa remembers feeling both corrected and reassured at the same time. Dan's steady guidance pointed her back to what was true, while giving her faith room to grow over time.



## EARLY YEARS AT FIRST CHURCH

Dan's initial role as a designated pastor over Next Generation Ministries quickly became something more.

He arrived during a season of transition, stepping into meaningful responsibility early—helping in numerous ways with Awana, Pathfinders and Exodus, and leading UKirk and young adult ministries, all while building relationships across a congregation that eventually he would call home.

**Steve Wilson**, Director of High School Ministries, remembers those early years clearly. "I thought we'd have him for two years at most," said Steve. "He was too good not to move on. And then... he stayed."

That unexpected longevity became one of Dan's greatest strengths. Rather than passing through, he became rooted—investing deeply in people, in ministry, and in the lives of many throughout the church.

## NEXT GENERATION

Much of Dan's early work with First Church was spent with Next Gen. He was not simply leading programs—he was invested. Teaching, listening, showing up, and walking alongside students as they wrestled with faith, doubt, and identity in their middle school and high school years.

Students who first knew him as children would later sit under his teaching as teenagers—and eventually hear him preach from the pulpit. That kind of continuity is rare. And it is an extraordinary impression that Dan has left at First Church.





“He gave me the space to wrestle,” Melissa says. “And that made me want to keep coming back.”

Melissa vividly remembers what she describes as the greatest compliment she has ever received — not about who she was, but about what God had done in her life.

At a pivotal moment, after years of searching and wrestling with doubt, Dan spoke words that reshaped how she saw herself. With visible emotion, he told her, “You are what we pray for.” She could tell it meant something deeply personal for him to say it — that he had seen her questions, her growth and the work of God unfolding in her life.

That simple affirmation carried lasting weight. Looking back, Melissa sees that season not as a detour, but as a foundation — formed through quiet encouragement, honest conversation and a steady reminder that faith is built over time.

#### ENTRUSTED WITH MORE

Over time, Dan’s role expanded—not because he pursued advancement, but because he demonstrated faithfulness.

“He didn’t outgrow the role,” Steve said. “He was entrusted with more because he did it so well.”

That trust led to increased responsibility, including more preaching and teaching, greater leadership across staff, and he served as a steady presence in times of change.

His transition into Senior Associate Pastor—and later Interim Senior Pastor—felt natural to those who served alongside him.

#### A PASTOR TO THE CHURCH

As his role broadened, so did his influence. Dan became not only a leader of ministries, but a pastor to the whole church—teaching, shepherding, and guiding with a steady and thoughtful presence.

His preaching, strong from the beginning, continued to grow.

Clerk of Session **Joel Donohue** witnessed Dan’s growth as a pastor and preacher, saying, “Even early on, his preaching was good, and then it just kept getting better.” He developed into a communicator who could speak with both theological depth and pastoral clarity—grounded in Scripture, attentive to people, and shaped by the Reformed tradition.

“When Dan stepped into more leadership,” Steve reflected, “it didn’t feel like a stretch. It felt right.”

— Steve Wilson

#### FRIENDSHIP AND LIFE TOGETHER

While many experienced Dan as a pastor, others knew him as a friend. **Jackson Seibert**, director of middle school ministries, reflects on a friendship built over years of shared

life: “To most people, Dan is their pastor. To me, he’s my friend—who also happened to be my pastor... and my boss.”

“Dan and I have shared a lot of adventures over the past 12 years—starting with a sandwich at Trencher’s Deli, when he asked me to step into middle school ministry. That was the beginning of a meaningful friendship.



“While many know him from the pews, I’ve known him around campfires, over great food and coffee, and yes, hearing his anguish when the Packers beat the Seahawks.

“We’ve walked through life’s highs and lows together, with plenty of games, laughter and good meals along the way.

“After 12 years, I can say it’s been a gift. And while he may be stepping out of the role of pastor, I’m grateful he’ll always be my friend.”

#### A TRUSTED VOICE

Among staff, Dan became a steady and trusted presence—someone others could turn to for clarity, wisdom, and perspective.

Dan brought both conviction and humility to theological conversations, helping others think more deeply while remaining anchored in truth. “He doesn’t just give answers,” Steve Wilson said. “He helps you think.”

**Leah Craddock**, a former student in the Exodus youth group, shared, “I’ve turned to Dan as a student, after moving away and now again since returning to Tulsa—he has always offered wise counsel. He is grounded and consistently gives sound advice.” Now back in Tulsa, Leah has remained closely connected to First Church and serves as associate director of youth ministries.

#### A WORD OF GRATITUDE

As senior pastor until 2023, Dr. Jim Miller shared ten years working with Dan on numerous levels at the church. He has this to say on Dan’s impact:

“I stand in a long line of those deeply thankful for Dan’s presence at First Church—and for a ministry that has borne fruit in every direction for more than a decade.

“When I first met him, I noticed a ping-pong paddle in his backpack and had a sense he would fit right in. What I could not have known was how extensively the Lord would use his gifts to strengthen this congregation.

“In this season of transition, his faithful leadership as Head of Staff has been one of his greatest gifts to us.

“As we say farewell to Dan, Hannah, and their children, we do so with deep gratitude and full confidence that the Lord will continue to guide and sustain them in the years ahead.”



**Rev. Wambugu Gachungi** affectionately calls Dan “the Big Kahuna,” pointing to his wisdom, leadership and genuine care for others. Even amid theological differences shaped by culture, Wambugu says Dan led with humility and grace. He especially values the trust and camaraderie built in their Thursday pastors’ meetings, calling them a place of honest connection. “Dan is the full package,” he says, “a true gift from the Lord,” and a friend whose presence will be deeply missed.

**Rev. Julia Metcalf** shared, “Dan has been a wonderful leader for a staff and congregation who needed the presence of someone who leads with humility while modeling dependence on the way of the Lord. We have been shepherded so well by him as he has continued to point us to Christ and the peace, love and goodness found in the Good Shepherd. He has been a steadfast, encouraging and safe undershepherd, and we are thankful.”

**Rev. James Estes** adds, “It’s often said that when someone leaves after 13 years, one of the hardest things to replace is institutional knowledge. I feel that with Dan—but not just in the intricacies of ecclesial minutia, but in the cultivated garden of inside jokes and nerdy allusions, marked by side-eyed grins and knowing looks across the table. It’s a joy to work with someone attuned to the same irony in the same moment. It should go without saying that Dan loves the Lord, the church and the gospel. What makes him rare is his ability to take all of that seriously without taking himself too seriously. The Gospel is good news, and Dan carries that with a kind of playfulness—a steady delight in the work and in service to the Lord.”

### Timeline of Dan’s Faithful Service

#### JANUARY 2013

Rev. Dan Hutchinson arrives at First Church Tulsa, initially in conversation to serve as a pastoral intern for one year following seminary.

#### JANUARY 21, 2013

Dan officially begins his ministry at First Church. The role is expanded to Designated Pastor over Next Generation Ministries, allowing for a longer-term presence focused on children, youth, college, and young adults.

#### 2013–2014

Serves one year as a Designated Pastor, a time-limited call under Presbyterian polity. During this period, the pastoral staff experiences significant transition, requiring adaptability and collaboration.

#### 2014

Dan’s call changes from Designated Pastor to Associate Pastor, reflecting both the congregation’s confidence in his leadership and his growing sense of call to First Church.

#### 2013–2019

Leads Next Generation Ministries, working closely with directors, staff, and volunteers to support faith formation from childhood through young adulthood. His role gradually expands to include preaching, teaching, and broader pastoral care.

#### 2019

Begins preaching more regularly as pastoral responsibilities shift within the church. Leadership needs increase as staffing changes continue.

#### 2020–2021

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Dan helps guide the church through an unprecedented season of ministry disruption, innovation, and shared leadership.

#### POST-COVID (EARLY 2020s)

Dan’s role transitions to Senior Associate Pastor, with increased responsibility for preaching, leadership continuity, and staff support, particularly during pastoral sabbaticals and transitional moments.

#### 2024

Following the conclusion of a long-tenured senior pastorate, the congregation calls Dan to serve as Interim Senior Pastor, recognizing his deep institutional knowledge, pastoral heart, and steady leadership.

#### 2026

For over two years, Dan served as Interim Senior Pastor, head of staff, primary preacher, and shepherd during the season of discernment and transition, helping guide the congregation as it prepares for its next chapter.



### A STEP OF FAITH

As this chapter at First Church comes to a close, one of the most defining aspects of Dan's leadership is also one of the most revealing.

In a season where many would seek clarity, security, or the next defined step, Dan has chosen something different: He has chosen obedience.

Reflecting on this decision, Steve Wilson shared what stood out most: "He didn't need to know the next step—he just knew it was time to be obedient."

Dan did not pursue the permanent senior pastor role. Even more striking, he is stepping forward without a clearly defined next call. Such confidence in the unknown can only come from a deep and significant trust that the same God who called him to Tulsa will now lead him forward, even without a visible path.

Dan's story at First Church has always been about faithfulness—showing up, investing deeply, and responding to God's call one step at a time.

That same faith now carries him forward.

And it invites us, as a congregation, to do the same.

To trust that the God who has guided this church through every season will continue to lead—preparing the way for what comes next, even before we can see it.



# Prophecies Fulfilled in Christ

## CHURCH-WIDE STUDY CONNECTS PROPHECY TO FULFILLMENT

By Duff Points, Director of Adult Education

Our church family had the opportunity during Lent to read scripture passages and an explanation of the redemption story using the book *Redeemer Promised, Redeemer Fulfilled* by Greg Berkhouse. Jesus' story of salvation weaves through the Biblical accounts, and it helps us understand the scope and ingenuity of God's incredible rescue plan to redeem us.

The apostle Peter writes of the importance of paying attention to prophecies in his second letter.

*<sup>19</sup> We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. <sup>21</sup> For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (II Peter 1:19-21)*

According to Bible scholars, Jesus fulfilled 300+ Old Testament prophecies. The chart below provides examples of prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Let our hearts and minds be open to the amazing Word of God.

Old Testament Prophecy	Topic	New Testament Fulfillment
Isaiah 61:1-3	Prophecy fulfilled by Jesus	Luke 4:14-21
Zechariah 9:9-10	Triumphal entry	Mathew 21:1-11
Psalms 41:5-13	Betrayed by a friend	Matthew 26:14-25, 47-56, John 13:18-30
Psalms 35:4-21	Falsely accused	Matthew 26:57-68
Isaiah 53:8	Tried and condemned	Luke 23:13-25, Matthew 27:1-2; 15-26
Psalms 69:16-21 Isaiah 50:5-7 Psalm 22	Mocked and insulted Struck and spat upon by his enemies Died by crucifixion Hands and feet pierced Lots cast for clothes Thirsted on the cross Called out to God Agonized on the cross	Matthew 27:27-56 Mark 14:65 and 15:16-38 Luke 23:32-49 John 19:17-30
Psalms 34:19-20	Bones not broken, side was pierced	John 19:31-37
Isaiah 53:4-12	By his wounds we are healed	Ephesians 2:1-10, Hebrews 9:11-28
Isaiah 53:9	Buried in tomb of the rich	Matthew 27:57-61, John 19:38-42
Psalms 16:8-11, Mark 8:31-32 Mark 9:30-32, John 2:12-22	Raised from the dead	Matthew 28:1-10, Luke 24:5-8 Acts 2:22-32
Psalms 68:18	Ascended into heaven	Acts 1:1-11, Ephesians 4:8-10
Isaiah 28:16-18a, Psalm 118:19-24	Cornerstone	Acts 4:11, 1 Peter 2:4-10
Psalms 110:1	At God's right hand in Heaven	Matthew 22:41-46, Mark 16:19 Acts 2:22-40, 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 Revelation 19:11-21



# First Church Tulsa's Special Needs Ministry

A NEW STEP TOWARD BELONGING

As told by Pattie Gross and Jackson Seibert

At First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa, a new ministry is taking shape—one rooted in a simple conviction: everyone should have clear, meaningful access to worship and community.

This vision has been years in the making. And now, the time has come to bring it fully to life.

As the church continues seeking to serve the Tulsa community well, there is a growing recognition that this means serving all of the community—not just those who navigate church life with ease, but also those who may need additional support to participate fully.

That vision is now active through **Oasis**, the church's new Special Needs Ministry.

Following the approval of a proposal by Session, the church established Oasis and called **Pattie Gross** to serve as associate director, providing leadership and direction for this growing ministry.

Since launching in December, Oasis has already created dedicated spaces designed to support children and students in calm, welcoming environments. One, located in the Children's Ministry area, provides a low-stimulus environment where children can relax, reset and engage through sensory-friendly play. A second space in the Powerhouse supports e school and high school students, offering age-appropriate care and connection.

Children's Ministry space is open during the 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. hours on Sundays and also on Wednesday evenings during Awana. Each is supported by trained volunteers who help create an atmosphere where every child can feel safe, known and included.

"When we create thoughtful, supportive spaces," Pattie says, "people are able to engage more fully and experience a true sense of belonging."

For Pattie, this work reflects both lifelong experience and deep calling. With a background in recreation therapy, social work and global health, she has spent years advocating for accessibility in communities around the world. Now, she brings that same passion to First Church.

Looking ahead, the ministry will continue to grow. A next step will be the introduction of an Access Team at the 11 a.m. service—volunteers who will serve as a welcoming point of connection, helping individuals and families easily access available resources such as large-print bulletins, hearing devices, sensory tools and guidance to quiet spaces.

"We already have many helpful resources," Pattie says. "This is about making them visible, accessible and easy to use so families can fully engage in worship."

Plans also include quarterly respite nights—intentional evenings where children are cared for in a safe, engaging environment, giving parents a chance to rest and recharge. Over time, leaders hope to extend this offering to families across the Tulsa community.

But beyond programs and spaces, the heart of this ministry is its purpose. "This is about who we are becoming as a church," says Jackson Seibert. "When we create space for one another, it strengthens the entire body."

The goal is not to change worship, but to open it more fully—to ensure that every person, regardless of ability, can participate, be known and feel at home.

Because when the church reflects the fullness of its community, everyone benefits.

"If we build this well," Pattie says, "families will come."



"We believe everyone should have clear, meaningful access to worship and community."

— Pattie Gross



Caring volunteers offering engaging sensory activities will help create an atmosphere where every child can feel safe, known and included in our Oasis ministry areas.

# The First Presbyterian Foundation Legacy Society

By Katie Williams, Foundation Director

Springtime is a meaningful time to reflect on how the church has shaped each of our faith stories—Each one personal, different and truly our story. The heritage that took us from infants, toddlers, youth, young adults and adult hood is an incredible never-ending journey and the church is there to support each stage.

On any Sunday morning or various times during the week congregants find community, support and faith building experiences at First Presbyterian. It becomes our home, our family, and a place where we want to raise our children, grow closer to God and feed our faith. That is why the First Presbyterian Foundation is such an integral part of the life of the church.

We not only support the life of the church, but also take care of the facilities. I remember walking these halls as a child, teenager and now an adult and though the surfaces have changed the foundations have not. I want my daughter, and future grand children to walk in those same halls. That is why I am a legacy Society Member.

In 2004, The Legacy Society was established by the Board of Trustees. To join it is a donation of \$1,000. Then in 2022 we installed the incredible handmade glass and metal vine outside the sanctuary to celebrate those who gave \$25,000 or more to the Foundation. There are currently 65 leaves engraved with verses, names and quotes. They are placed by Eric Baker, the artist, as a celebration of the incredible gifts God has given. The engraving is unique and personal to each family and is a way to bring together the people who had dedicated their blessings through bequests to the church. They are the true foundation that generations to come will build on to continue the incredible history of First Presbyterian Church. Their like-mindedness and vision to share their gifts past their lifetime were the standard the foundation was built on.



The most important connection all our donors have is the love for their God, their church, their families and how as you put all those pieces together you have a place to build faith, community and a larger church family in perpetuity.

What legacy do you want to leave? As you look around the church and see the people who are wearing the legacy pin, ask them why? I think we all have a story about the connection we have at First Presbyterian and joining the legacy society will make sure the future generations have those same opportunities.

Over the next year, there will be several gatherings for Society members and people who want more information. If this interests you, please call Katie Williams.



To learn more about how to share your blessings with the First Presbyterian Foundation call **Katie Williams** at 918-292-9063.



Jewel Pierson with mentor Susan Reid



Tom York with mentor Dennis Koori



Lydia Gray with mentor Randie Tacker

# Thank you for mentoring our new members

Real connection happens when someone takes the time to walk alongside you. Our generous members are doing just that—building friendships, sharing life and helping our newest members feel truly at home. If you've ever thought about investing in someone's story, this is a meaningful place to start. Contact Emma Myatt, Director of New Member Outreach to get connected as a mentor.



# A Pilgrimage... an Exodus

Joan Williams Hoar, Historian Emeritus



Having celebrated Lent and Easter, perhaps this is the time to step forward on a new spiritual journey while exiting an old path. With that thought in mind, a Fall 2025 Camino provides a good analogy.

After a year's training and preparation, four First Presbyterian Church pilgrims, **Jane Wright, Vicky Wilcoxon, Carol Tipton,** and **Joan Williams Hoar,** boarded the flight to Lisbon, Portugal on September 20. Our ultimate destination was Santiago de Compostela via the Portuguese Camino.

We enjoyed a few days of sightseeing in Lisbon, including the Cathedral, the official starting point for the Portuguese "walking the way of St. James," before traveling north to Oporto. On the trip north, we visited Fatima, noted for its spiritual revelation to three young shepherds. A beautiful cathedral now anchors this holy ground.

In Oporto, we joined our small group, a total of eleven pilgrims of diverse faith backgrounds, all led by Episcopal Priest Father Steve Danzey, who lives in Lisbon. Father Danzey is an amazing patient spiritual leader imbued with a great sense of humor. We enjoyed our get acquainted dinner on Day 1. Day 2, after a breakfast orientation, we boarded a train to Valenca, Portugal, where we walked across the bridge from

Portugal into Tui, Spain, for dinner and overnight.

Days three through ten, we traveled the Camino, a 100 kilometer pilgrimage through small towns, villages, across streams, along forest trails...often joined by pilgrims from around the world. The common greeting, "Bom Camino:" Have a good journey, Happy Camino, Successful Camino. We understood the wishes and prayers for each other.

**"On the Camino, we found that every step forward was not just a journey across miles, but a movement deeper into grace."**

– Joan Hoar

On one such path, Jane and I met a young couple, chatted briefly, but did not see again till two days later in a small cafe. We joined them for lunch which provided an excellent response to the oft asked question, "did you have a spiritual experience?"

The young couple expressed a hope to begin their family. Jane understood and immediately accessed appropriate scripture on her cellphone Bible...the story of Hannah. A beautiful moment of grace between two ladies...different countries, backgrounds, generations. We shared the

moment as onlookers.

In the same vein, we were invited at one of the Eucharist services to express our burdens or concerns. Carol's prayers were being answered as the corporate prayers were lifted which was apparent with news from home the following day.



Vicky said, "I realized that solitude, as I initially thought when I began the Camino, was not the path God had to draw me closer to him. It was to experience the Camino journey with a global community of believers."

**"The peace that descended on the walk remains with me—it is my Camino souvenir."**

– Vicky Wilcoxon

My epiphany, if we may call it that, happened the very last evening during the Cathedral Mass, which included the Eucharist. I went forward with arms folded in position to receive a blessing. As I approached the priest, he looked at me and asked "do you want the host?" I shook my head "no." He asked again, "do you want the wafer?" I responded verbally "no." He then touched my head and offered a blessing. I walked away understanding that although he did not know me, he acknowledged me as a child of God at the Lord's table. I still have tears when I think of that moment.

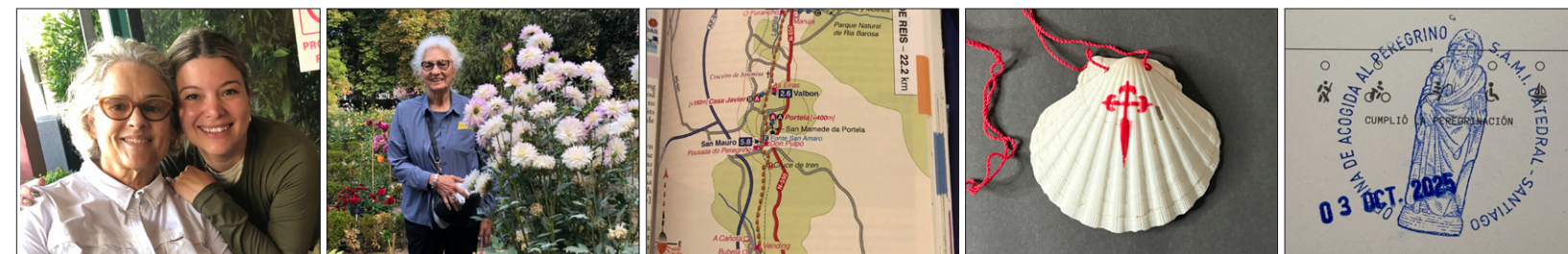
The other question frequently asked: would you do it again. Yes, but not at my age! Maybe 47, 57, 67, even 77, but not with 87 looming! My incredible pilgrim support group kept me upright and on the right path.

People make the pilgrimage for a number of reasons that often change along the way. Or maybe answered in an unexpected way. God has promised to provide what we need.



**"We were challenged, changed, and blessed by the experience."**

– Joan Hoar

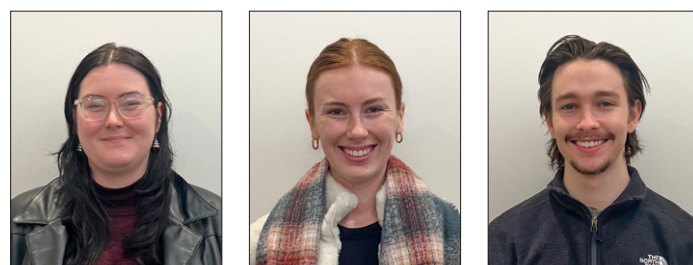


# Parish Register

## New members November 2025 class



David Berg Allen Faries Daphne Faries



Megan Gibbs Rachel Gibbs Matthew Harris



Jake Hawes Kevin Hearn Whitney Hearn



Abby Herrold Dalton Myatt & Annie Myatt Richard Ormond

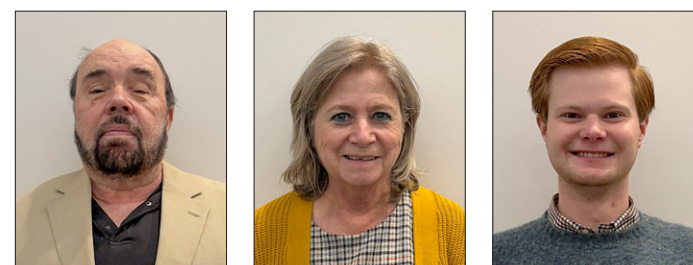


Jewel Pierson Margo Williams

## March 2026 class



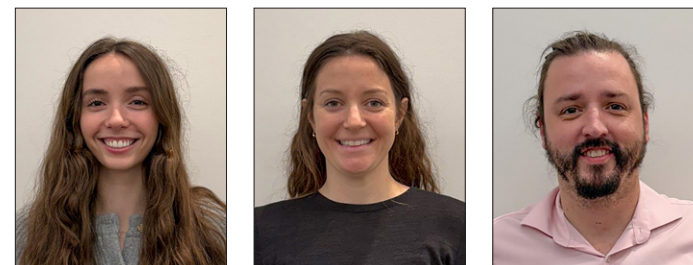
Emma Davis Blake Gerow Allison Hickey



Raymond Irwin Vicki Irwin Bridger McCasland



Joseph Moppert III Will Sutton Susan Todd



Reese Walker Amanda Wilson Wade Wilson

Interested in becoming a member of First Presbyterian?  
**Newcomer Gatherings:** Newcomers, whether new or longtime worshippers, are invited to join us for coffee, light breakfast, and fellowship as we get to know each other and learn about First Church. Gatherings are held quarterly.

**Membership Classes:** Interested in becoming a covenant member? Our membership classes, led by facilitators and pastors, help you learn about the church, how you can become involved, and provide resources and support to help you grow in your faith at First Church. No need to attend a Newcomer Gathering first. Classes are held quarterly.

Details for both newcomer gatherings and new membership classes can be found at [FirstChurchTulsa.org/newcomers](https://www.firstchurchtulsa.org/newcomers).

## The sacrament of baptism

**Scottie Anne Collins**, daughter of **Emily and Taylor Collins**, was baptized on October 12.

**Andrea Kaye Morgan**, adult, was baptized on October 12.

**Eloise Jean O'Neal**, daughter of **Lexie and Bob O'Neal**, was baptized on Oct. 19.

**Charlotte Elizabeth Crain**, daughter of **Caitlin and Bretton Crane**, was baptized on November 16.

**Palmer James Gerow**, daughter of **Carley and Blake Gerow**, was baptized on November 16.

**Leo Woodrow Raleigh Wright**, son of **Lizzi and Sam Wright**, was baptized on February 22.

**Jack Edward Schneberger**, son of **Bonnie and Adam Schneberger**, was baptized on March 1.

**Nyla Adrielle Kisitu**, **Elsie Wanjiku Kisitu**, and **Adalah Malaika Kisitu**, daughters of **Gladwell and Kenneth Kisitu**, were baptized on March 1.

**James Edward Frasier** was baptized on March 8.

**Lucy Sullivan** and **Elanor Sullivan**, daughters of **Rhiannon and Edward Sullivan**, were baptized on March 22.

## The celebration of Christian Marriage

**Jordan Chimento** and **Alex Field** were married on September 25.

**Elizabeth DeVore** and **Allen Massey** were married on October 25.

**Jeffrey Metcalf** and **Audrey Jones** were married on March 21.

## The joy of new life! We welcome:

**Joanna Lynn Evans**, daughter of **Katie and Brandon Evans**, was born on November 25.

**James Hunter Holstein**, son of **Whitney and Jonathan Holstein**, was born on November 29.

**Meredith Boone**, daughter of **Jackie and Drew Boone**, was born on January 19.

**Liam August Stember**, son of **Courtaney and Austin Stember**, was born on February 13.

**Chloe Tirzah Chikatipwa**, daughter of **Phrida and Gideon Chikatipwa**, was born on March 17.

## With gratitude for the resurrection:

**Virginia Talley**, a member since 2015, died on September 17.

**Levi King**, infant son of Lydia and Jake King, died on October 3.

**Jan Keene**, a member since 1966, died on October 19.

**Carolyn Woodard**, a member since 2000, died on October 27.

**Sarah Joyce Kunkel**, a member since 1998, died on November 9.

**Ed Hiserodt**, a member since 1981, died on November 9.

**Carol Langenberg**, a member since 2006, died on November 17.

**Rick Drisko**, a member since 1990, died on December 4.

**Scott Lewis**, a member since 2022, died on December 7.

**Vanda Simmons**, a member since 1977, died on December 8.

**Joe Robson**, a member since 1983, died on December 27.

**Roy Cail**, a member since 2008, died on March 6.

**Janet McCoy Mercer**, a member since 2008, died on March 9.

**Mary Belle Ruddle**, a member since 1990, died on March 20.



## Tidings First Church 1885

**Tidings: The Holy Spirit at work in and through the members of the First Presbyterian Church**

**Tidings** is a quarterly publication of First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa, 709 South Boston Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74119. Read past issues of **Tidings** on our website at [FirstChurchTulsa.org/Tidings](https://www.firstchurchtulsa.org/Tidings). Please direct questions or comments to [communications@firstchurchtulsa.org](mailto:communications@firstchurchtulsa.org) or call 918-584-4701.

**Editorial Team:** Duff Points, Lynn Fesperman, Kathy Wilson and Paul Marsh.

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Thank you to the Communications Committee for reviewing and selecting editorial for inclusion.

## Pastoral care

For pastoral needs, prayer requests, important family news or a change in contact information, please call 918-584-4701 or email Kathy Wilson at [kwilson@firstchurchtulsa.org](mailto:kwilson@firstchurchtulsa.org). To directly request prayer by the Guild of Intercessors, call Paula Peterson at 918-296-5548 or text 918-688-2163.

## First Church Tulsa online resources

Find all links at:  
[Linktr.ee/FirstChurchTulsa](https://linktr.ee/FirstChurchTulsa)





 **First Church**  
1885

First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa  
709 S. Boston Ave., Tulsa, OK 74119



Website: [FirstChurchTulsa.org](http://FirstChurchTulsa.org)  
Social media: [FirstChurchTulsa](https://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchTulsa)



See First Church in action!