

Messenger Light

September 11, 2024



Sanctuary

At the March meeting of the Session, our Worship and Music committee brought a recommendation regarding improvements to our sanctuary worship space. Two presenting safety issues were identified: 30-year-old carpeting that was buckling and could no longer be stretched that created a trip hazard for members with limited mobility, or poor balance, and narrow chancel stairs that created an ongoing risk of tripping/falling. The proposal for addressing these concerns was to replace the existing carpeting with tile and to recommend rebuilding the stairs to make them safer. In addition to addressing the safety issues identified, replacing the carpet with tile has long been recognized as something that would improve the acoustics of the sanctuary for musical performance. As Session discerned this course of action, they suggested that if the chancel stairs were to be rebuilt, accessibility should be prioritized. Additionally, building out the chancel stairs would likely necessitate the removal of one, or two of the front rows of pews. Worship and Music recommended adapting the next five rows of pews to make them movable/removable to accommodate smaller worship gatherings and potentially large orchestral ensembles. With this direction, and approval in principle from the Session, we engaged the help of the Keers/Kilcup families and their company, Facility Build. They came in, assessed our vision of the project, and produced preliminary drawings to confirm that they understood what we were proposing: the replacement of flooring and a rebuild of the chancel to make the stairs deeper/safer while also including a lift for those physically unable to use stairs. The session approved the conceptual drawings and sent the project back to Facility Build for pricing.

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Church Office Hours Monday—Thursday 8:00am to 2:00pm

Our staff members can be reached individually by phone or email between 8am and 2pm, Monday through Friday:

Matthew Miller

505-764-2902

Essie Koenig-Reinke

505-764-2903

Leon Lake

505-764-2914

Carolyn Rhodes

505-764-2906

Alona Watchman

505-764-2911

Sharon Baca

505-764-2900

If you have an after-hours emergency, you can reach pastoral staff through our helpline at 505-764-2910

**First Presbyterian
Church (USA)**

215 Locust Street, NE
Albuquerque, NM 87102
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www.firstpresabq.org

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Now that Session has the price tag, we are following up with questions about how such a project might be financed, whether this work can be phased and the impact that would have on the final price tag, and how such improvements would impact our congregation. This is where you come in. As a Presbyterian church, we entrust the discernment of our mission and ministry to the Elders elected by the congregation who sit on the Session. Several Elders have indicated a desire to hear from church members about these proposed improvements. What questions or concerns do you have? A listing of current active Elders to the session can be found online at <https://firstpresabq.org/about/elders-committees>.

Your program and pastoral staff believe these improvements would allow us to expand the use of our sanctuary and the reach of our ministry. It does beg the questions why this, why now? From a practical perspective the answer to the second part of that question is that there are very real safety considerations. The first part is a little more nuanced. Anyone can see that our sanctuary is not as full as it used to be for the 11 AM worship service on Sunday morning. Is it wise to spend this kind of money on a declining practice of the church? If serving ourselves and our own needs were a gospel ethic, that would be a valid question. But such an attitude is not one worthy of our calling as Christ's church. We do not exist simply to make ourselves more comfortable. We exist to love and serve our neighbors and we believe that our sanctuary has value to the community beyond the worship hour on Sunday morning. It is a rehearsal space, a performance space, and a community space. We have hosted everyone from the candidate forum held by the Faith Coalition for Immigrant Justice to the Albuquerque High Christmas music program, to the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande, and many more. We know from our preschool, A Child's Garden, and partnerships with the Boy and Girl Choirs, that participants in those programs who have no other church affiliation often consider this to be their church, even if they are not active in membership. We believe that improving this sacred space to make it even more flexible and accessible would expand how we understand ourselves as a church, and the ways in which we are called to love our neighbors by making space for them, safe space, sanctuary. We use that word for a reason, and it is something our community is hungry for. While there may be other spaces for groups to use, few rival the beauty and capacity of our sanctuary or unconditional love and welcome to which it bears witness. I and the Session value your questions and input as we discern how God may be at work through these proposed improvements.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. H. ...".

Calendar for the Week

Thursday, September 12th

- ABQ Girls' Chorus, 4:00pm in Choir room
- High Desert Pipes and Drums rehearsal, 6:30pm in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, September 15th

- In-person Fellowship Hall Worship Service at 8:30am
- Through the Bible Class at 9:45am in CE Room 219
- Adult Sunday School at 9:45am via Zoom/In-person in Kerygma Room
- Godly Play Sunday School, 9:45am in CE Room 210 & 211
- In-person/Livestream Sanctuary Worship Service, 11am
- Mental Health Committee Lunch/Presentation, 12:15pm in Fellowship Hall

Monday, September 16th

- Enchanters, 5:45pm in Choir room
- Women's Chorus Rehearsal in F.H. at 6:30pm

Tuesday, September 17th

- Manzano Mesa Cloggers, 4:00pm in Westminster
- Mission Committee meeting, 3:30pm at East Central Ministries
- ABQ Boys' Choir, 5:00pm in Choir room
- Worship & Music Committee meeting, 5:30pm in Kerygma room
- Sandia Pipes and Drums rehearsal; 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall
- Opera Southwest rehearsal, 6:30pm in Choir room

Wednesday September 18th

- Social Service Network meeting, 11:30am in Fellowship Hall
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm in Choir Loft

Thursday, September 19th

- ABQ Girls' Chorus, 4:00pm in Choir room
- High Desert Pipes and Drums rehearsal, 6:30pm in Fellowship Hall

Friday, September 20th

- Family Camp at Ghost Ranch

Saturday, September 21st

- Family Camp at Ghost Ranch

Sunday, September 22nd

- In-person Fellowship Hall Worship Service at 8:30am
- Through the Bible Class at 9:45am in CE Room 219
- Adult Sunday School at 9:45am via Zoom/In-person in Kerygma Room
- Godly Play Sunday School, 9:45am in CE Room 210 & 211
- In-person/Livestream Sanctuary Worship Service, 11am
- Family Camp at Ghost Ranch

Tuesday Study & Prayer Group

The Tuesday Study and Prayer Group will not meet for the next 2 weeks, Sept 17 and 24. We will resume meeting on zoom on October 1 at our usual time.

Giving Options

FPC works in our ministries to reach out to members of the church and our greater community. You can send contributions by mailing checks to the church:

First Presbyterian Church

215 Locust Street NE, Albuquerque, NM 87102

You can give online at www.firstpresabq.org, click on the yellow "Give Online" button in the menu bar. Follow the instructions in the new window that opens to make your donations.

*** Remember to pay your Per Capita! The 2024 amount is \$37.00. You can pay in person or online.**

Fiber Arts Group

Our fiber arts group is on the 4th Sunday of each month in Fellowship Hall, at 9:40 am. We are meeting this month on September 22nd after the 1st service in Fellowship Hall.

Participate in Our Small Group Survey!

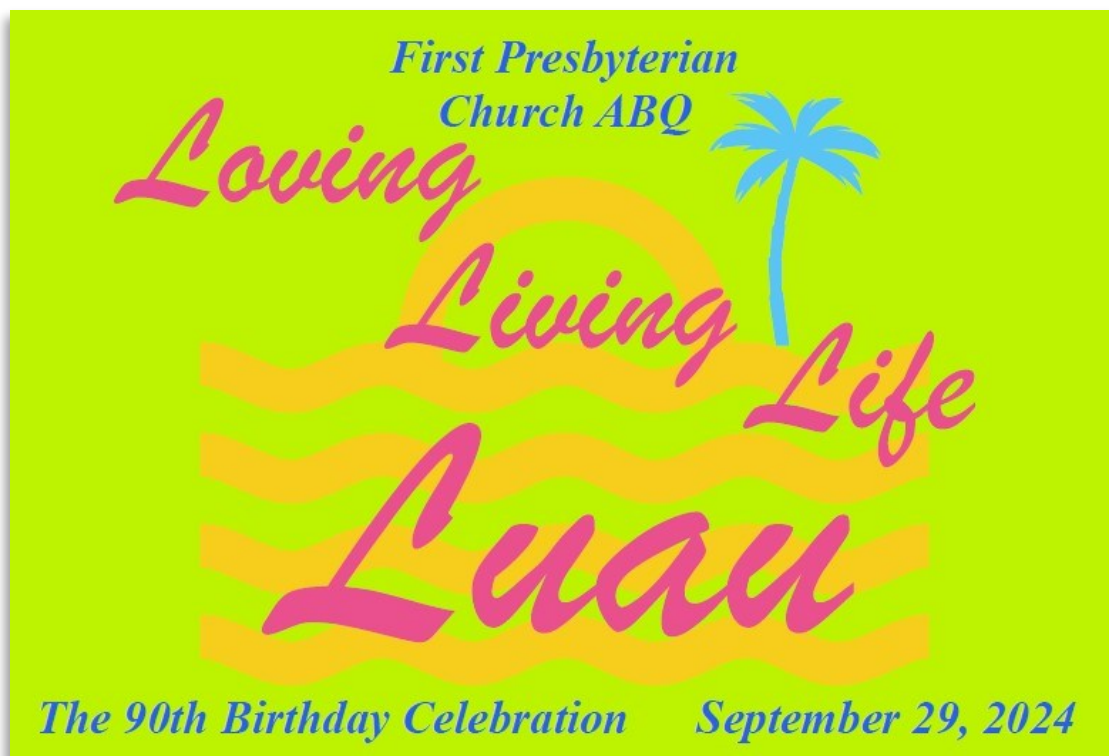
The Community Life Committee is currently in the process of starting to nurture new small groups, and we would love your help to make that happen by filling out a quick survey. If you are interested in being part of a small group or are curious about what kinds of small groups we are thinking about, Click on the link below and fill out the questions on the google form. We hope to have all responses in by Sunday, October 6. We look forward to hearing from you. Survey Link:

<https://forms.gle/bLT0yMvt8V5PE1mG7>

Reminder: We are always accepting donations to our Rio Grande Food bin (canned/dry food) and to our HopeFound box (household supplies). These ongoing ministry partners are always in need of extra supplies!



2024 90th Birthday Worship Service and Celebration



You are cordially invited to the 2024 90th Birthday Worship Service and Celebration taking place on September 29th. First, there will be a communion worship service in the FPC sanctuary at 11am. Afterwards, please join us in Fellowship Hall for a birthday celebration and luau, as that is our theme for this year: “Loving Living Life Luau”

2024 Blessing of the Animals

Blessing of the Animals

Saturday, September 28th at 10:00am



- Food donations will be accepted to benefit homeless pets. We are accepting the following: Small 8 lb. bags of puppy, adult, senior dog food; Small 6lb. Bags of kitten, adult, senior cat food; Small (3 oz.) or Medium (12 oz.) cans of cat food; 16 oz. cans of puppy, adult, senior dog food; Or Gift Cards to PetCo or PetSmart.
- You can also make online donations to Feeding Pets of the Homeless that provide pet food and emergency veterinary care to pets that belong to people experiencing homelessness.

Please visit petsofthehomeless.org to make a donation!

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI BY PARTICIPATING IN A SPECIAL SERVICE FOR PETS AND THEIR FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN THE OUTDOOR COURTYARD AT FPC. PETS OF ALL KINDS ARE WELCOME; THIS INCLUDES STUFFED ANIMALS!



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Mental Health Committee

The Mental Health Committee will host a presentation featuring Sam Rhodes of the Albuquerque Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) on September 15th following the eleven o'clock service. Sam will introduce us to de-escalation techniques used to calm a situation down with a disruptive individual, as well as discuss the workings of the CIT.

There will be a meal provided, and Sam will speak afterwards, so we request that attendees please sign up at the church office so we can plan to have enough for everyone. Please come and welcome Sam in Fellowship Hall on September 15th at 12:30.

What's really happening at the Border? Would you like to find out?

The Mission Committee is sponsoring a Border Encounter at the El Paso/Juarez border. You may have attended a Sunday School class last year when Rev. Dr. John Nelson spoke with us about conditions at the border and about the possibility of an Encounter. We know conditions at the border change constantly and are not 'as depicted by the media'. This is an opportunity to see and listen and learn some truths about what is happening there. It is an opportunity for you to bring back to our congregation impressions and information you have gained.

Tres Rios Border Ministry Foundation, located in El Paso about 50 feet from the border, partners with Abara, described as a community of peace builders, to provide Border Encounters. We will be housed in the Abara Guest House located within their facility. Meals are provided.

The dates are November 12th through 14th, three days and three nights. We can take a group of 5 – 8. A passport is required.

Tres Rios Border Ministry Foundation is an agency of the Tres Rios Presbytery (Texas). More information is available on the following websites.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/tres-rios-border-foundation-connects-presbyterians-to-the-border-and-beyond/>

<https://www.abara.org>

If you are interested in attending, contact Carol Marr at cmarr2142@gmail.com or 505-710-4616 as soon as possible.

2024-2025 Albuquerque PCUSA Churches

YOUTH EVENTS

More information and signups for local events will be sent out a month prior to the event. Summer Trip information will be available early in the new year.

SAT. OCT 26 8 am - Hike to End Hunger (Location TBD)

FR. NOV 22 Presbytery Of Santa Fe Fall Youth Retreat
(More information coming)

SAT. DEC 21 6 - 8 pm - River of Lights at ABQ Bio Park
(\$15 per student)

FR. FEB 7 6pm - Youth Lock-in @ First Pres ABQ
(\$25 per student)

SAT. APR. 12 9 am Departure - Santuario de Chimayo Visit
(bring money for lunch in Santa Fe)

SUN. JUN 1 Noon - Rest & Renew Picnic (Location TBD)
(Bring a picnic blanket or hammock with you)

END OF JUNE Youth Week @ Ghost Ranch

**JULY 28
2025** July 28-31 - Presbyterian Youth Triennium in
Louisville, KY (HS Only)

✉ ESSIE.KR@FIRSTPRESABQ.ORG

☎ 913-638-1708

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES NIGHT



VS



A Child's Garden is hosting a fundraiser by selling tickets to the 9/22 matchup with Loudon United FC. Please consider showing your support by purchasing tickets through this page.

\$5 of every ticket sold through this page will go back to the organization as they raise money for their cause.

Please scan the QR code below to purchase discounted tickets.

2024 SEASON

