

# The Mustard Seed



## NEWSLETTER

Vol. 2025 Issue 6 First Presbyterian Church, Helena, MT

June 2025

### Ordination/installation of officers

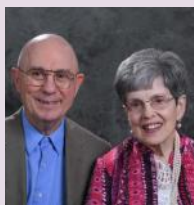
Newly elected Elders and Deacons will be ordained and installed Sunday, June 1.

#### ELDERS: CLASS OF 2028



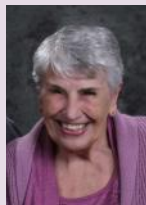
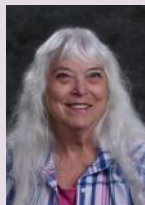
Jim Meyer, Butch Plowman, Carol Gneckow

#### DEACONS: CLASS OF 2028



Vicky Bryan, Art & Rena Bumgardner, Carole Massman, Ria Caussyn

#### THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE



Elders Karen Witte  
& Sheryl Eriksen

Deacons Merle  
Korizek & Darlene  
McNay

### Welcome, new members!

We will be welcoming several new members on Sunday, June 1.

Alysia and John "Mitch" Ryan are joining by letter of transfer. Max Oliver, Wanda Jewell, Sharon King and Sylvia Huntsman are joining by affirmation of faith.

Come, help us welcome them during the service and afterwards at Social Time!

### Pentecost, Service Recognition June 8

Sunday, June 8, is Pentecost Sunday, celebrating the gift of the Holy Spirit, which inspires the church in its ministry and mission.

The day will include a recognition of the gifts of service here at FPC!



We celebrated our newest Commissioned Lay Pastor, Dianna Goodman, in May.

## Financial giving opportunities

June 8<sup>th</sup> - Pentecost Offering

### Pentecost Offering

The Pentecost offering helps young people begin life with a strong start, giving them a solid foundation of faith formed in the first third of their life. Our congregation retains 40% of the offering to give to a group or organization in our community to benefit, support, or care for young people. Past recipients have been: Serious JuJu, a youth group in Kalispell; FPC Helena's Youth Group; and the Young Adult Volunteers assigned to the community of Chino. A recipient for this year's portion of the offering has not yet been chosen.

### One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

In April, we participated in PCUSA's One Great Hour of Sharing offering, which is given to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and the self-development of people. FPC Helena collected \$1690 to support these endeavors! Thank you for your generosity.

### The Friendship Center Campus Clean-up

In response to our offer to give our time and talents to local non-profit organizations, several people gathered at The Friendship Center to provide spring clean-up of the campus. Weeds were pulled, bushes were trimmed, and fellowship was enjoyed.

## Gift of Empathy study continues

The "Gift of Empathy" study continues this month.

Based on the book of the same name, the study meets Sundays, June 1, 15 and 22, at 11:20 a.m. Joy Edgar and Pastor Janet are leading the class. The sessions include a simple lunch.

You are welcome to join in for any or all of the discussions!



**The PARKING LOT will be CLOSED starting June 11 for sealing & striping.**

**C**an you believe it's June already?! We are halfway through 2025 and exciting things are happening!



Our worship of God and the work of the Holy Spirit on June 1 will be centered around Communion, welcoming new members and installing/ordaining new officers. We celebrate June birthdays with cake provided by Tonna Strasko. Thank you Tonna!

Sunday June 8 is Pentecost! "On the Day of Pentecost, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit descending in a mighty rush of wind and flame to inspire the church's proclamation of Christ's rising and to empower its mission and ministry to the world." (Presbyterianmission.org). Pentecost is often called the birthday of the church as over 3000 people repented and were baptized in response to Peter's speech. (Acts 2)

The Greek word "ἐκκλησία" is commonly translated as "church." Ekklesia means "In a Christian sense, those who anywhere, in a city or village, constitute such a company and are united into one body" (blueletterbible.org). The church has always been a gathering of people for worship in a religious meeting. But "Church" does not just refer to the building! As the song goes, "The church is not a building, the church is not a steeple....the church is a people!" (We are the Church by Avery & Marsh). Recognizing how First Presbyterian is a congregation of people, on Pentecost we will celebrate the choir and the gifts of service.

Again this year, Pentecost will be the choir's final Sunday before their summer break. It is always a blessing when the choir presents its gift of music and voice to the congregation. Thank you to each member and to our music staff- Les, Ann and Merle!

We want to celebrate the gifts of the congregation! FPC has many people serving in different capacities and through their gifts. It's time to rejoice and give thanks for them! Pentecost is the perfect Sunday to do this.

You too can celebrate Pentecost by wearing **RED** on June 8! Red is a reminder of the morning when a long awaited prophecy came to be (Joel 2:28-32) When the Holy Spirit came, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of the disciples in the meeting.

Pentecost 2025 will be a celebration of the Holy Spirit, music and the gifts of the congregation! Please join us!

I also want to invite you to take part in one of the ongoing studies offered this

## Elders & Deacons

with New  
Committee Chairs

### FPC Elders

**Patti Borsberry**

(Worship Chair)

**Jeff Chaffee**

(Personnel Chair)

**Barb Leland**

(Friendship Chair)

**John Bryan**

(Christian Ed Chair)

**John Warren**

(Nominating Chair)

**Jim Meyer**

(Administration Chair)

**Butch Plowman**

(Building & Grounds Chair)

**Carol Gneckow**

(Mission Chair)

**John Gneckow**

(Clerk of Session)

### FPC Deacons

**BJ Burns**

(Moderator)

**Kathy Chambers**

**Jill Cook**

**Bonnie Anderson**

**Ward Stiles**

(Vice-moderator)

**Vicky Bryan**

**Art & Rena**

**Bumgardner**

**Ria Caussyn**

**Carole Massman**

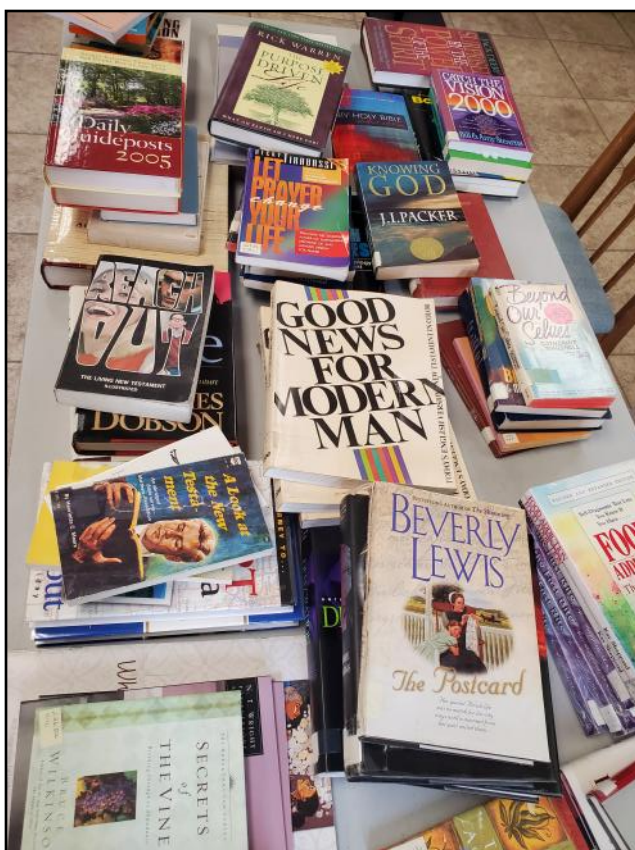
## Pastor's Desk

(Continued from page 3)

month: Thursday study on the Psalms, or the Gift of Empathy book study. We end this month with a visit from Rev. Jessica Crane Munoz Crane, Residency Director, Synergos, Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation and great food at the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday potluck!

*The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.*” – Psalm 126:3

Blessings,  
Pastor Janet



## Inspirational summer reading

Free books — duplicates of ones in our library—  
are available for the taking on the entryway table!

# MINUTES OF THE SESSION

**May 20, 2025**

The regular meeting and worship service of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Helena were called to order on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 6:35 PM by Pastor Janet Potter, Interim Pastor.

Pastor Janet opened worship with prayer followed by Scripture from Matthew 14:22-33 with a time of reflection. Worship concluded with communion.

Attendees included five new members and incoming officers. After a "get to know you" time, new members were excused.

Pastor Janet then opened and moderated a Session meeting, asking for a motion to accept Alysia and John "Mitch" Ryan by letter of transfer, and Max Oliver, Wanda Jewell, Sharon King, and Sylvia Huntsman by affirmation of faith into membership of FPC Helena. A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to accept them as members.

After the new members departed from the meeting, Pastor Janet accepted a motion to accept Carol Gneckow as an Elder, Class of 2028, and Ria Caussyn and Art and Rena Bumgardner as Deacons, Class of 2028. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

There was a quorum with the following Elders present: Arlyn "Butch" Plowman, Barb Leland, Sheryl Eriksen, John Bryan, Karen Witte, Jim Meyer, Patti Borsberry, Jeff Chaffee, and John Warren. Clerk of Session John Gneckow, Treasurer Leo Potter, and Deacon Ward Stiles were also in attendance.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to give Joy Edgar voice and Elder-elect Carol Gneckow voice and vote.

**APPROVAL OF DOCKET:** Pastor Janet asked for any additions to the docket. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the docket as presented.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the minutes of April 22, 2025, regular Session meeting as presented.

## **CLERK'S REPORT:**

	Active Membership as of March 31, 2025	89	
	Death of Corky Lord, April 4, 2025	-1	
	Active Membership as of April 30, 2025	88	

The Clerk noted that Glacier Presbytery is seeking nominations for a Teaching Elder and a Ruling Elder for Commissioners to the Synod of the Rocky Mountains. If anyone on Session or in the congregation might be interested, let Pastor Janet or the Clerk know.

## **INTERIM PASTOR'S REPORT:**

Pastor Janet attended Committee meetings: Deacon, Building and Grounds, Admin, Worship, Session, Scholarship, CE, and did visits to the hospital and homes.

Joy Edgar and Pastor Janet will lead a study on “The Gift of Empathy” on Sundays May 25, June 1, June 15, and June 22 following worship. Lunch will be provided.

A New Member class was held on April 27 with 5 interested persons. John and Vicky Bryan joined us. Pastor met with Sharon King on May 8 about membership.

A commissioning blessing and prayer for Dianna Goodman was held on May 4 during worship. Dianna presided over communion that day.

She attended several meetings in April regarding the location of Spanglish.

The potential daycare tenant remains interested in the first floor. However, due to unexpected issues from the county Licensing office, we have not finalized the lease.

The May Session meeting will include incoming Deacons and Elder, and new members. Thank you, Sheryl Eriksen and Karen Witte for their many years of service.

Looking ahead:

June 1-ordain and install new officers, welcome new members, and communion.

June 8-Pentecost Sunday will include a time to celebrate the work and service of the congregation.

Pastor Janet will be out-of-office June 11-15. Dianna will preach and lead worship on June 15.

Communion	Total	Breakout
April	66	47 in person, 18 online, 1 at home

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Administration Committee:** Chair Jim Meyer reported. A written report was submitted to Session.

Treasurer Leo Potter provided financial reports. He noted that in April, FPC had a good month financially with donations of \$22,299, bringing the YTD net income to \$10,226.

One Great Hour of Sharing had donations of \$1,690.

Vanguard accounts showed a loss of \$4,482 for April. The YTD change in value is \$18,220.73.

The Memorial Committee did not meet.

Adjustments to new transaction detail report was introduced and is thought to make it easier to follow transactions.

**B&G Projects:**

Discussed the fund raising for parking lot maintenance and kitchen renovation. Pastor Janet will be talking with some people in the congregation to be on a

committee to spearhead this.

Work needed on the Bell Tower for repairs from the ice jam will be approximately \$10,500.

The city is still pushing for repairs to the sidewalks. We have not received a bid from the potential contractor.

The next Admin meeting will be June 11, 2025, at 4:00 PM.

**Building and Grounds:** Co-Chair Butch Plowman reported. A written report was submitted to Session.

Sean Miller of Concrete Coatings Solutions has completed work on the decorative ramp, steps, and landing.

The new kitchen stoves have been installed. However, the fire suppression system has not been installed as the contractor is waiting for a permit from the city building department.

The van has been donated to the Flathead Bible camp (ELCA).

Committee members met with Darron Ramos, a Helena Sidewalk Technician, and Tyler Gauthun to inventory necessary repairs to bring the sidewalks up to code. We are waiting for an estimate from TAG Construction for the repairs. The City wants a plan for the sidewalk repairs by May 29.

Yellowstone Pavement Solutions will be sealing and striping the parking lot beginning June 11.

Approved a building use permit for Emma Watne to hold a 50-person anniversary celebration in Richardson Hall in June.

Approved John Keck's request to rent a parking space.

Next B&G meeting: June 11 at 10:00 AM.

**Christian Education Committee:** Co-chair Joy Edgar reported. A written report was submitted to Session.

This was the committee's first meeting to hopefully get the committee back on track and to work on the various things we are called to do according to the Book of Order. FPC currently has two Bible studies going—one led by John Coefield and the other by John Bryan. Pastor Janet and Joy Edgar plan to lead a pilot study on the "the Gift of Empathy" beginning May 25.

Joy would like to see a Youth Group revised. Vicky Bryan indicated an interest in leading one.

Pastor Janet noted that the committee still has a budget.

Next meeting: Monday July 14 at 12:00 PM.

**Friendship Committee:** Chair Sheryl Eriksen reported and a written report was submitted to Session.

Special treats were offered for the Easter Sunday service and were well received.

The Friendship Committee helped the Worship Committee with celebration of Dianna's commissioning as a CLP.

On Mother's Day May 11 the committee provided fresh flowers to the women and special friends who could not attend the service.

An outing is planned Saturday, July 19, to go to the First Peoples Buffalo Jump in Ulm. Dinner will be at the Tap House in Craig.

The FPC summer picnic will be held August 24 after worship at Kennedy Park in East Helena. Friendship will provide fried chicken. The congregation is asked to bring a dish to share. While there are tables in the shelter, participants are encouraged to bring their own chair due to limited seating.

June 8 is Pentecost and Service Recognition Sunday. Special treats will be provided for the social hour.

June 15 is Father's day. Special treats will also be available to honor our fathers and special men in our lives.

The fifth Sunday potluck will be held in Richardson Hall on June 29 following the worship service.

Next Meeting: June 1 at 1:00 PM.

**Memorial Committee:** The committee did not meet.

**Mission Committee:** Chair Karen Witte reported that the Committee did not meet.

**Nominating Committee:** No updates this month.

**Personnel Committee:** Chair Jeff Chaffee reported that the committee did not meet.

**Property Oversight Committee:** Elder John Warren reported.

The Committee is still looking at ways to get the Day Care Center into the church.

County daycare sanitation codes require appropriate handwashing and bottle washing stations in rooms used by children in diapers. If no children require diapers, is there still a need for the sinks in the rooms? Would the owners of the day care be willing to not take children with diapers?

The plumber indicated that the vent stack would be the costly part of the sewer hook up as it would have to go through the ceilings and roof. Some ideas were offered, one of which appears feasible although still incurring some expense. This would entail locating and connecting to a vent stack from the existing bathrooms.

Because the lease papers specify that the lessor is to pay the bill for modifications, a question was posed whether or not the church could pay for all or part of the costs. Doing so would also make the church more enticing to future potential lessors should the space become available in the future.

Also, Spanglish will not be able to continue using the second floor when they reconvene in Fall. The area currently has neither sprinklers nor DIRECT outdoor access in the event of an emergency.

Meanwhile, we will look for tenant(s) in the event the facility is unable to com-

ply with the city licensing requirements for day care. A suggestion was made that we might accept one tenant per available room rather than one tenant who needs all of the rooms.

**Synergos Committee:** John Warren reported that there is one candidate available for a call. FPC will interview the individual Thursday, May 22, on zoom. The Synergos board is looking at ways to expand the pool of applicants. Pastor Jessica Crane-Munoz will visit FPC on June 29 to explain the program.

**Worship Committee:** A written report was not submitted to Session. Co-Chair Patti Borsberry reported.

June 8th (Pentecost Sunday) will be the last Sunday that the choir will sing before its summer break. FPC will focus on all the various ministries of the church and those who serve.

The Committee is considering providing an outdoor service in August or September.

**Deacon Report:** A written report was submitted to Session.

During April, communion was served to no people at Touchmark, none at Son Heaven, and none at home. Two people were visited in the hospital. Four meals were supplied to homebound individuals.

A memorial service for Marsha Davis will take place on June 18 at 11:00 a.m. There will be lunch afterwards. Church members are asked to bring a side dish.

**A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the committee reports.**

**Old Business:** A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve John Gneckow as Clerk of Session, John Coefield as FPC Helena Commissioner to Glacier Presbytery, and Leo Potter as Treasurer for 2025/2026 church year.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to revive the Christian Education Committee. Members will include Dianna Goodman, Joy Edgar, Vicky Bryan, John Coefield, and Deb Whitcomb. John Bryan will be Chairperson.

**New Business:** Committee chairs were appointed and approved for 2025/2026: Jim Meyer-Administration; Arlyn “Butch” Plowman-Building & Grounds; Barb Leland-Friendship; Carol Gneckow-Mission; Jeff Chaffee-Personnel; Patti Borsberry-Worship; John Warren-Nominating; and John Bryan-Christian Education.

There being no more business to conduct, a motion was made, seconded, and approved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was closed with prayer at 8:50 PM.

The next Regular Session Meeting: June 17 at 6:30 PM.

John Gneckow  
Clerk of Session

## Trivia Question:

About 3,000 people became followers of Jesus on what day?

*(Answer on page 11.)*

# JUNE 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sa
<b>1</b> <b>10 am</b> Worship w/Communion <i>Ordination, Installation of Officers; New Members</i> <b>11 am</b> Social Time <b>11:20 am</b> 'Gift of Empathy' study	<b>2</b> <b>5 pm</b> Xpress Singers	<b>3</b> <b>11:30 am</b> Bridge <b>7 pm</b> AI Anon <b>7 pm</b> Scouts	<b>4</b> <b>2 pm</b> Choir	<b>5</b> <b>11 am</b> Psalms Study <b>6:30 pm</b> Chat Bridge <b>7 pm</b> AA	<b>6</b> <b>8:30 am</b> Pre-school Program <b>1:30 pm</b> Hand & Foot Cards <b>5:30 pm</b> District AA	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <i>Pentecost</i> <i>Choir Sunday</i> <b>10 am</b> Worship <b>11 am</b> Social Time <b>11:15</b> Deacons	<b>9</b> <b>1 pm</b> Mission <b>5 pm</b> Xpress Singers	<b>10</b> <b>10 am</b> Worship <b>11:30 am</b> Bridge <b>7 pm</b> AI Anon <b>7 pm</b> Scouts	<b>11</b> <b>PARKING LOT CLOSED</b> <b>10 am</b> Building & Grounds <b>1 pm</b> Friendship <b>4 pm</b> Admin	<b>12</b> <b>11 am</b> Psalms Study <b>6:30 pm</b> Chat Bridge <b>7 pm</b> AA	<b>13</b> <b>1:30 pm</b> Hand & Foot Cards	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <i>Father's Day</i> <b>10 am</b> Worship <b>11 am</b> Social Time <b>11:20 am</b> 'Gift of Empathy' study	<b>16</b> <b>5 pm</b> Xpress Singers	<b>17</b> <b>11:30 am</b> Bridge <b>6:30 pm</b> Session <b>7 pm</b> AI Anon <b>7 pm</b> Scouts	<b>18</b> <b>11 a.m.</b> Marsha Davis Service	<b>19</b> <b>11 am</b> Psalms Study <b>2 pm</b> Friendship Trip & Dinner <b>7 pm</b> AA	<b>20</b> <b>1:30 pm</b> Hand & Foot Cards	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> <b>10 am</b> Worship <b>11 am</b> Social Time <b>11:20 am</b> 'Gift of Empathy' study	<b>23</b> <b>5 pm</b> Xpress Singers	<b>24</b> <b>11:30 am</b> Bridge <b>7 pm</b> AI Anon <b>7 pm</b> Scouts	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <b>11 am</b> Psalms Study <b>6:30 pm</b> Bridge <b>7 pm</b> AA	<b>27</b> <b>1:30 pm</b> Hand & Foot Cards	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <b>10 am</b> Worship <b>11 am</b> Fifth Sunday Potluck	<b>30</b> <b>5 pm</b> Xpress Singers					

## June Birthdays



6th	Robert Andersen	14th	Barb Leland
8th	Rose Leavitt	18th	Marvin Carpenter
9th	Leo Potter	22nd	Sally Luke
10th	Joe Steffens Sr.	26th	Allen Chambers
12th	Janet Potter	26th	Jim Brainard
13th	Katie Spiroff	27th	Melissa Stiles
13th	Barrie Heinecke	30th	Jeannie Pullin
13th	Matthew Richards		



## June Anniversaries

5th	Terry Healow & Deb Whitcomb	19th	Mike & Ann Swisher
12th	Allen & Kathy Chambers	19th	Jim & Mary Brainard
14th	John & Candace Coefield	20th	Robert & Susan Andersen
18th	Steve & Linda Granzow		



### *Thank You for Your Generosity*

Thank you for your faithful giving to the ministry of FPC Helena.

Your financial support makes the proclamation of the gospel possible throughout the world! Our April net giving is here:

	April 2025	YTD
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$28,434</b>	<b>\$99,012</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$23,170</u></b>	<b><u>\$88,785</u></b>
	<b>\$5,264</b>	<b>\$10,227</b>

The online giving program can be found on the [fpchelena.org/giving](http://fpchelena.org/giving) website.

If you have any questions, please contact Treasurer Leo Potter at 815-980-5236.

*This is the day that the Lord has made:  
let us rejoice and be glad in it!*

### FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY

**IS ON BREAK**

**UNTIL NEXT FALL**

### FIFTH SUNDAY POTLUCK

**Sunday, June 29  
after worship.**

*Bring a favorite dish  
to share!*

### Trivia Answer

Pentecost (Acts 2)

### Cover photo

Cliffs along the Smith River

**First Presbyterian Church**  
535 North Ewing Street  
Helena, MT 59601

**[www.fpchelena.org](http://www.fpchelena.org)**

Sunday Service 10 a.m.  
Weekly Sermon on HCTV Cable Channel 189  
Wednesdays at 6 pm & Saturdays at 9 AM

**OFFICE HOURS**  
Monday - Friday  
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**406-442-4775**

**[admin@fpchelena.org](mailto:admin@fpchelena.org)**

Stamp  
here



*Spreading the Good News  
of Christ through Our Love,  
Words, and Actions*

Label here