

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF HIGHLAND



THE LARGER VIEW



Volume 19 Issue 8

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Dear All,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Happy August! What a blessing it has been to be in beloved community with all of you and with the PC(USA) denomination as a whole over the past month! I again extend my gratitude to all of you for blessing our commissioning to serve at the 227th General Assembly in Milwaukee. I wrote my July letter early on in the assembly, and now I have been home long enough for the experience to really sink in. Wow, what a beautiful, challenging, and meaningful experience it was! Such is the way of the Holy Spirit when people are gathered to discern God's will together! We recently included a helpful summary of decisions made in our Sunday bulletin, published by The Presbyterian Outlook. We have also added it to this edition of the Larger View to make sure that everyone has access to it. If you would like a more in-depth look at some of these items, I recommend checking out articles on their website: <https://pres-outlook.org>. Also, please feel free to ask Heather and me about the work that was done!

All of the work was important for the thriving of the body of Christ, but it was the gathering of the faithful in beloved community that mattered the most. Commissioners represented every presbytery across the country, bringing together a remarkable diversity of people with unity of purpose in seeking God's will and responding to Christ's call. We worshipped together, ate together, debated together, worked through hard things together, had fun together, and cared for each other. There were certainly differences of opinion on many things, but we stayed together in community even so. Such is the way of Christ!

Board Shorts

Scripture in the Park

Summer Sunday School

School Supply Collection

Save the Date

Choir

General Assembly 227

Prayer List

First Presbyterian Church
of Highland
8727 Delaware Street
Highland, IN 46322



*The Mission of First Presbyterian Church of Highland
is to be
the HEART, HANDS, and FEET of Jesus Christ*

The most profound embodiment of beloved community occurred near the end of our work together. The assembly was considering the motion to declare Israel's destruction of Gaza to be genocide and to call for an embargo on weapon sales to Israel. As people were debating, the moderator from the 214th General Assembly, Rev. Dr. Fahed Abu Akel, stood up and shared his story of trauma and survival as a Palestinian Christian who had to flee his home and leave his mother in Galilee as a 4-year-old due to Israeli occupation. He had flown across the country overnight just to share his story and lift up the importance of our action as Presbyterians. As he courageously stood there and spoke, several other moderators from past assemblies surrounded him and laid their hands upon him for support. It was a moment of profound holiness. It was an embodiment of the Kingdom. It was a reminder that although our denomination's name is PC (USA), we are not a nationalist church. The body of Christ lives across the globe, and we are called to do the work of love, justice, and peace in partnership with our siblings everywhere in God's good creation!

First Presbyterian Church of Highland knows what it means to be called as partners in Christ's service! I am regularly amazed by how we embody the same beloved community that we experienced at the general assembly, in our own mustard seed way. We recently heard Jesus' teaching that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed. We may be small, but our love is boundless. And we do small things with great love! As you read through the pages of this edition, please be inspired by what we are able to do! Consider the magnitude of the impact of love when our work is added to all that is being done by the body of Christ across the globe!

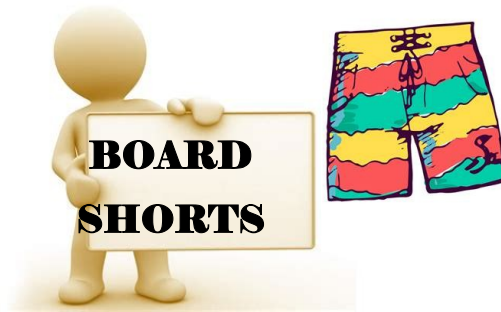
I leave you with these words from *Matthew*:

Jesus put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

In Christ and with Love,

Rev. Tyler





SESSION

- Beginning in September, we have decided to ask congregation members to sign up for fellowship refreshments and serving, in order to give our ministries a break. Coffee and cold drinks will already be prepared by a Session volunteer. Sign up in the fellowship hall for a Sunday!
- September 20th will be our fall kick-off, and a brunch will be hosted by Session for that Sunday.
- Thanks to Hunter Balczo for coordinating our August calendar fundraiser and to Jeffery Savage for coordinating salad sales! We appreciate the congregation's support to help our general fund.
- Session reviewed our financial status and found that the ministries and committees are below budgeted amounts for expenses and revenue is somewhat better than expected. We have not yet had to transfer Endowment money to cover our expenses.
- Clerk Jean Smith received a Thank You from Book, Brushes, & Bands for Education (BBB4E), located in Hammond IN. Following our rummage sale, we donated 267 books left over from the sale for distribution to people in the community at no charge. BBB4E participated in the Munster 4th of July parade and distributed free books along the route.
- Pastor Tyler thanked Session and the congregation for supporting Heather and him for their trip to the GA (General Assembly). You can read about the important actions of the GA in the bulletin and also here in the Larger View.

TRUSTEES

The following projects were discussed at their last meeting.

1. The boilers are being worked on.
2. The front Sanctuary door refinishing is currently on hold, but will be done when weather improves. The side door of the old sanctuary needs to be repaired.
3. Filters in AC units in the Sanctuary have been cleaned.
4. 3 sprinkler heads still need to be replaced and the windows in both the men's and women's washrooms on the first floor will need to be repaired or replaced.
5. Trees on the sides of both sanctuaries need to be trimmed and weeds growing inside fenced area on the north side of building and along the south side of building need to be cut down. The weeds along Highway and in front of the sanctuaries have been sprayed.

DEACONS

- SunShine Bags: Graduation gift cards were sent.
- Prayer Shawl Ministry: The Prayer Shawl committee work diligently to make beautiful comforting shawls.
- Blessing Box: Deacons continue to fill and maintain the Blessing Box daily.
- Sharon's Table: Deacons continue to prepare and disburse meals this summer. Due to conflicts in summer schedules, meals were prepared and delivered on Wednesday, July 15th.
- Sackurday: Kelly LaFlech, Kamri and Eric prepared and distributed 40 meals in June. Kelly LaFlech and family will again prepare and hand out lunches on July 25th.
- Smock Grant: Smock Foundation funds continue to assist members of our congregation in need. This fund has been a blessing during the recent storms.
- Prayer List: The prayer list was reviewed and updated.



Treasurer's Report

For the Month of
June 30, 2026

	Month of June	Monthly Budget	Year to Date
Operating Revenue	\$11,517.15	\$10,427.08	\$100,967.05
Operating Expenses	13,097.83	15,630.44	90,735.89
Excess (Deficit)	(\$1,580.68)		\$10,231.16



Do It Now

Author Unknown

Submitted by Lois Fozkos

If you have hard work to do, do it now.
Today the skies are clear and blue,
Tomorrow clouds may come in view,
Yesterday is not for you; do it now.

If you have a song to sing, sing it now.
Let the tones of gladness ring
Clear as song of bird in spring.
Let each day some music bring; sing it now.

If you have kind words to say, say them now.
Tomorrow may not come your way.
Do a kindness while you may,
Loved ones will not always stay; say them now.

If you have a smile to show, show it now.
Make hearts happy, roses grow,
Let the friends around you know
The love you have before they go; show it now.



SUMMERTIME “SCRIPTURE IN THE PARK”

Our summer Bible study and discussion group, called **“Scripture in the Park”**, is going well. We’re joining weekly with folks from Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Schererville at Redar Park in Schererville. There are 2 sessions left this month: Aug. 6 and 13, from 6:30-7:30 pm. We meet at the picnic shelter; feel free to bring a Bible, something to drink, and a lawn chair (or you can sit at the picnic tables, whichever is more comfortable). If you have any questions or need directions to the park, contact Heather Casiano at hcasiano@fpchighland.org.



SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our Kids’ Summer Sunday School has one more class scheduled, on Sunday, Aug. 2. We’ll start in the Fellowship Hall at 10:30 am (adults are welcome to go to worship), and then we’ll join the worship service at the end of the sermon so that all can be part of communion that day.

All kids age 4 and above, including grandkids, nieces/nephews, and neighbor kids are welcome! If you have any questions about Summer Sunday School, contact Heather Casiano at hcasiano@fpchighland.org.





FAITH DEVELOPMENT

BIBLE PRESENTATION

Congratulations to Khloe Agbor, who received her Bible during worship on July 19! She completed 3rd grade during this past school year, and it is our tradition and honor to present her with her own Bible. Enjoy reading the stories and learning more about God and Jesus and you grow, Khloe!



SCHOOL SUPPLY COLLECTION

We're collecting school supplies to support students and teachers in the Highland area! If you'd like to participate, you're invited to bring a few school supplies to worship on August 9 & 16 to be donated to a local Highland school. If you aren't able to come to worship, supplies can be dropped off Mondays-Thursdays, 8 am to noon, in the collection bin near the church office from August 10-20. If you'd like to help but can't make it to the church building at all, you can mail in a monetary donation marked for school supplies, and we'll do the shopping for you. Thank you for your help in equipping our local students and teachers!

Needed school supplies include:

- ***Boxes of facial tissue (such as Kleenex)**
- ***Disinfectant wipes**
- ***Hand sanitizer**
- ***#2 pencils**
- Crayons – box of 24
- washable markers – box of 8
- dry erase markers, low-odor
- glue sticks and bottles of glue
- highlighters
- single subject notebooks, spiral & composition style
- wide-ruled loose leaf paper
- pocket folders
- scissors
- colored pencils – box of 12
- pink erasers

*most requested supplies by the schools



SAVE THE DATE!

It's still summer, but our fall Faith Development options will be here before you know it. Save these dates in your calendar, and watch for more details in the bulletins and the September Larger View as it gets closer:

Sunday, Sept. 20 – Fall Kickoff and Brunch after worship

Wednesday, Sept. 23 – BYOB (Bring Your Own Bible) begins, 7-8 pm

Sunday, Sept. 27 – “The Bible in Today’s World” class begins, 9 am



As we're all aware, the price of just about everything continues to rise. In an effort to keep the congregation informed, it was decided by the Board of Trustees to publish the amounts of our NIPSCO, water and phone bills in the Larger View monthly. In explanation of the bills, keep in mind that the NIPSCO bill includes gas and electric; the water bill includes two meters for the old sanctuary and the rest of the building; and the phone bill also includes internet service. Hopefully, this explains in part why our budget numbers are what they are. Below are the amounts for July.

	<u>July</u>
NIPSCO	675.74
Water	197.92
Phone	424.55
Maintenance	200.00



Gifts were given to the Endowment Fund in Memory of Marie Smith:

Bob & Charlotte Abernethy, Peter & Gale Churitch, Rodney & Peggy Fozkos, Marjean Reed, Jean Smith



August Liturgists:

8/2: Vimary Couvertier Cruz
8/9: Tracy Oprea
8/16: Robbie Casiano
8/23: Heather Casiano
8/30: Hunter Balczo



August LiveStreaming

8/2: Robbie Casiano
8/9: Jean Smith
8/16: Tristan Casiano
8/23: Tracy Oprea
8/30: Nolan Severson



Choir practice will resume on Thursday,
August 27th, at 7:00 PM.

Choir will resume singing during Worship on
Sunday, September 13th.

News from the Pews



REMINDER TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Vacation season is here, and many of us will be travelling and visiting. Please be mindful that even in your absence, your place here will be cooled, lit, and the water will still be flowing. Our church relies solely on the pledges and generosity of our members and friends to operate.

Please give prayerful consideration to keeping your pledges and contributions current because your church's expenses continue, even when your schedule does not permit your attendance in worship.



Please continue to place items in the Blessing Box and take items if you are a person in need! Items most commonly donated: canned goods with pull tabs, socks, toilet paper, non-perishable foods, small snacks, toiletries, baby wipes and diapers.

Please do not donate homemade or perishable items.



- | | |
|----|-------------------|
| 1 | Carolyn Ham |
| | Yvonne Suroviak |
| 7 | Judy Toren |
| | Marie Smith |
| 10 | Kylie Agbor |
| 13 | Suzanne Goldsmith |
| 19 | Bonnie Perryman |
| | Cara Scott |
| 22 | Jeff Savage |
| 25 | Delaney Rae Toren |
| 26 | Karson Agbor |
| 30 | Lewis Owen |
| 31 | Marjean Reed |



The Per Capita for 2026 is \$45.08 per member.



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

If you don't already follow First Presbyterian Church of Highland on Facebook and Instagram, please start doing so and sharing our posts with your friends! @firstpchighland



PERSEVERING toward WHOLENESS

The 227th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, addressed constitutional governance, racial justice, gender justice, denominational finances and the direction of the church, laying groundwork for work continuing through the next assembly.

Co-moderators elected, GA228 to be held in Puerto Rico

Commissioners elected the **Rev. Marta Pumroy-Cordero**, border ministry coordinator for the Tres Rios Border Foundation in Tres Rios Presbytery, and the **Rev. Dr. Kristopher D. Schondelmeyer**, pastor and head of staff at First Presbyterian Church in Davenport, Iowa, as co-moderators. They will preside at GA228, June 11-22, 2028, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Commissioners also **approved full, in-person assemblies**, including an exhibit hall, beginning in 2030.

Budget and per capita

Commissioners approved a **balanced \$188.4 million unified budget** for Presbyterian Life & Witness (PL &W) and the A Corporation for the 2027–2028 biennium, about \$5.8 million more than the previous budget: \$90.45 million for 2027 and \$97.92 million for 2028. Per capita rates were set at \$13.04 in 2027 and \$12.72 in 2028.

General Assembly Relationships

The GAR Committee approved the new Organization for Mission, the structure for the General Assembly as the denomination's highest council, and **established PL&W** and its governing board.

Israel/Palestine

Commissioners approved RIW-04, declaring that the **Israeli government has violated international law** prohibiting genocide in its war in Gaza. As amended, RIW-04 directs the denomination's Office of Public

Witness to advocate against U.S. military sales to Israel and purchases from Israel. It also encourages members to avoid products from Israeli companies linked to violations of international law.

Constitutional interpretation, missiology, and mission co-worker dismissals

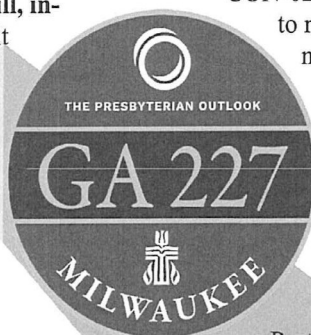
Following testimony on staff dismissals during **World Mission's closure**, the assembly approved CON-02, directing PL&W and the A Corporation to revise employment policies to prohibit nondisclosure covenants for employees, with a report due to the 2028 assembly. RIW-01 calls for review of the processes that terminated mission co-worker positions and World Mission. RIW-02 directs the development of a new missiological statement for global engagement.

Pastors will now be required to complete **boundary and abuse-prevention training** at least every three years. An overture to remove the Board of Pensions' medical coverage requirements was rejected.

Commissioners referred CON-10, which seeks an authoritative interpretation of monogamy, for discussion within the theological framework proposed in GEN-09, "Beyond Changing Families."

Gender and Sexuality Justice

The Constitutional Interpretation Committee **rejected a call for a special study of the Olympia Overture amendments**, citing related proposals GEN-06 and GEN-09. GEN-06 directs the development





of a mechanism that would allow congregations to indicate their openness and readiness to call an LGBTQIA+ candidate on their Ministry Discernment Profiles. Candidates would be allowed to view congregational responses. GEN-09, “Beyond Changing Families: Flourishing Relationships and Belonging,” seeks a theological framework and a study guide on human sexuality and gender that reflect the PC(USA)’s commitment to full inclusion.

The assembly reaffirmed support for **access to medically necessary gender-affirming healthcare** and approved development of a survey collecting non-identifying information about sexual misconduct in church settings.

Climate and Environmental Justice

The Climate Justice Committee approved CLJ-02, “Changing Course for a Green Future,” **directing divestment from more than 50 companies** by 2030 and barring new investments in them. All CLJ items were placed on the consent agenda, including a call for education on regenerative farming and prioritizing responses to the climate crisis.

White Christian nationalism

Commissioners voted overwhelmingly to declare White Christian nationalism and similar ideologies “**a theological error**” incompatible with the teachings of Jesus Christ; language changes in the *Book of Order* require presbytery ratification. Commissioners rejected an amendment that would have removed references to White Christian nationalism from the Special Committee on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Race report.

Racial justice

The Racial Justice Committee advanced several recommendations **strengthening the denomination’s**

anti-racism work, including RAC-04, “The Report from the Special Committee on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on Race,” directing “PL&W to create a tracking system that displays the progress/completion of all GA business... related to race, racism, and White supremacy ...”

RAC-01 calls for PC(USA) entities to report to the 228th GA on implementation of RGJ-13, the 2022 Report from the Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force. RAC-03, the “Resolution on Liberia Project 180,” explores establishing theological learning and repair, and developing **acknowledgment and apology for Presbyterian involvement** in and support of the American Colonization Society and its lasting effects on Indigenous Liberians.

Ordered ministry

The Theological Education and Ordination Committee approved changes **modernizing preparation for ministry** while preserving Presbyterian ordination standards. ORD-02 clarifies that ministry preparation in G-2.06 and G-2.07 of the *Book of Order* applies to those training for the ministry of Word and Sacrament; it requires a two-thirds presbytery vote. ORD-03, addressing collaborative ministry teams, was approved; ORD-04, seeking removal of the time-of-service requirement for ruling elders in mid council roles, was not.

A new confession

A newly appointed special committee will continue **considering a new confession**. The draft seeks to articulate Christian faith in response to contemporary challenges including racism, economic inequality, environmental degradation, violence and political polarization.

For full stories about General Assembly or other news from the PC(USA):

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Bluesky: [@presoutlook.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/presoutlook.bsky.social)





Prayers & CONCERNS



Pray For...



Anthony
Brady Vanes
George Griner
Guy Hendricks
Bill and Anettia Holmes
David Markley
David Kingen
Diana and Ray Mendoza
Janet Orem
Cindy Waltz and Sister
Yvonne Suroviak
Georgette Sknerski
Jakob Holden
Denise Matthys
Jan Oprea
Florance Cody
Annie & Mike Windstrup
Kevin Windstrup
Rick Parker
Gary Everhart
Ella P.
Melissa J
Keren, Zuriel & Gedeon
Darlene O'Brien
Charles
Dustin
Noreen
Tyler Gall
Trina & Scott
Sue Heth
Jean & Clara
Wendy
Jessica S.

Barbara Morton
Doug and Sue Matthews
Janet Terpstra
Glen Nahler
Tom
Jana Tolley
Larry & Bonnie Perryman
Delta Rose
Winnie Owen
David Hamblin
Mom Bechtler
Marian Clayton
Luana Sulkowski
Katie
Rita Stromczek
Edna Cruz
Jerry & Rena Martinez
Jean
Kim
George
Jessica
Mike Kelly
Lupe
Tammy
Barb
Dave Shelborne
Kali Rosalia
Rick
Shirley McKnight
Renee Williams

- We pray for migrants in this country and across the world.
- We pray for the people of Cuba, Haiti, Iran, Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan, Ukraine, and Venezuela.
- We pray for victims and survivors of gun violence.
- We pray for peace and peacemakers!
- We pray for people experiencing chronic physical and mental illness
- We pray for first responders and front-line medical workers
- We pray for the health and safety of our service men and women as we pray for an end to the wars that put them at risk
- We pray for the unemployed, the under employed and the homeless.
- We pray for all children in the world.
- We pray for the work of the Holy Spirit within the life of FPCH and within each of us, that we may indeed be and make disciples each new day.
- We pray for our home-bound loved ones.

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In order to keep the prayer list current, we need your input. If there are people you would like to have added or if there is someone who can be taken off the list, please call the Church Office (219-838-6850).