

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit

Do you remember the story about “Jesus with skin on”? It goes like this: it’s about a child who is afraid to sleep alone on a dark, stormy night. She calls out to her mom who tells her that Jesus is right beside her. The child replies, “But mom, right now I need Jesus with skin on!”

Quite honestly, I think we all need “Jesus with skin on.”

I consider myself to be a moderately strong Christian. I have the Word of God hidden in my heart. At any given moment, I could probably quote you half a dozen scriptures about God’s love, goodness, and mercy. But the times I remember, the things that are most special to me, are the times that someone allowed themselves to be “Jesus with skin on” to me.

One of the most special was a few days after my daughter Joanna died. There was a knock on the door and we looked out to see the local Catholic priest standing on the steps of the Christian Missionary Alliance parsonage. This was unheard of in this little town of Arlee. But there he was.

He came in and ministered to us as only one who knows the problems and pressures of the pastorate could, although, as he said, he does not know a parent’s heart. What courage it must have taken for him to knock on that door! I was privileged to tell him how much that meant to us when I saw him some 25 years later!

Why do I tell you this story? Because although the Holy Spirit is indeed our counselor, advocate, helper, intercessor, and comforter ... God the Holy Spirit lives in us. And to keep in step with the Holy Spirit, we need to be sensitive to those times when we are the ones called to be “Jesus with skin on” for a fellow traveler.

When have you been called to be Jesus “with skin on”?

How are you being called to be that now?

And yes, the Holy Spirit is all those things.

The Holy Spirit
is our
Comforter
Counselor
Helper
Advocate
INTERCESSOR
STRENGTHENER

Happy Birthday

OCTOBER

Keyna	Myers	3
Penny	Adkins	4
Lyn	Felsthamel	5
Kenneth	Neill	6
Dee	Taylor	9
Ann	Messelt	16
Risa	Paul	16
Debbie	Holman	18
Devan	Smith	18
Donna	Lewis	23
James	Carter	28

Blessing the Pets

October 19

12 - 3 p.m.

Garth



The Presbyterian is a monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church of Great Falls
Deadline for submissions: 20th of each month

Send pictures or story ideas our way
Email articles, ideas and/or pictures to:

secretary@firstpresgfmt.org

Subject: NEWSLETTER

For images, please include the name of photographer and any information you’d like added to the newsletter.

First Presbyterian Church Operating Fund Activity Report August 2025

	Total	
	Actual YTD	Budget YTD
Revenue	\$ 181,431.78	\$ 215,505.28
Total Expenditures	187,538.89	207,864.28
Net Operating Revenue	\$ (6,107.11)	\$ 7,641.00

Calendar for October:

- 1: **Wednesday**
10 a.m. Galatians Bible Study
- 2: **Thursday**
8:30 a.m. Coffee with Risa
- 5: **Communion Sunday**
- 8: 10 a.m. Galatians Bible Study
- 9: 8:30 a.m. Coffee with Risa
10:30 a.m. Grandview Service
6:30 p.m. Session
- 12: 12:00 p.m. Personal Prayer Sanctuary
- 14: **Thursday**
10 a.m. Iris Service
3 p.m. Finance Committee
3 p.m. Worship Committee
- 15: **Wednesday**
10 a.m. Galatians Bible Study
- 16: **Thursday**
Coffee with Risa
- 19: **Sunday**
11:30 a.m. Prayer Graham Parlor
12:30 - 2 p.m. **Blessing the Animals**
- 20: **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**
- 22: 10 a.m. Galatians Bible Study
- 23: **Thursday**
8:30 a.m. Coffee w/Risa
- 29: 10 a.m. Galatians Bible Study
- 30: **Thursday**
8:30 a.m. Coffee w/Risa
Newsletter Mailing



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The Presbyterian

Embracing Grace
Embracing Community

Publication of First Presbyterian Church Great Falls Montana

October 2025

First Presbyterian celebrates the sacrament of baptism



Gathered before family and friends Emilio Bejamin Landa and Xavier Alonso Landa, sons of Alonso and Emma Landa were baptized during an outside service September 7. Present were Estelle, Alonso's mother and members and visitors of First Presbyterian Church. Interim Pastor Risa Paul officiated

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

Matthew 28:18-20



Save the date for

Fall Follies!! Sunday, November 16

Enter the Talent Show
Bid on Silent Auction Items
Enjoy Delicious Food
Buy Unique Items
Have Lots of Fun

Watch for more details soon . . .



FELLOWSHIP NEWS

From Ann Marie Miller, Fellowship Moderator

Coffee Hour: Much appreciation and a huge thank you to all who have contributed goodies to our Sunday Coffee Hour and to those who have helped with clean up. The fellowship in the room is heartwarming. Come join us, all are welcome.

Future dates for your calendar:

Dinner and a Movie 6 P.M. Wednesdays

The Chosen, Season 5. Look for more information in our weekly bulletin. The sign-up sheet for dinner contributions will be in Social Hall. Dinner is served promptly at 6 PM.

11/30/2025 Advent begins

11/30/2025 Sunday - Decorating the church following worship service

1/04/2026 Sunday - Undecorate the church following worship service

Let's Meet in Graham Parlor

The next all-church prayer session will be September 21 after the regular church service in the Graham Parlor at 11:30. Greet your friends in the Social Hall, grab a snack and a cup of coffee, and come up to the Parlor. We will be praying for the church, our friends, and any other thing that you might want to lift up to God. We can even pray for you!



Raspberry

Almost October, and there it was,
draped over the fence,
ripe as July, and as seductive—
a stranger's bit of paradise.

It wasn't mine. Perhaps
I should have left it there,
flashing like a cardinal
in the autumn light.

But, still, the world
offers itself so lavishly, as if
it will not be refused.

Sometimes I call this "grace."

Sometimes I simply taste it
as a perfect raspberry,
out of season,
savored seed by seed,
Persephone's fruit.

Ted Loder

By Starfish Scholar
Rhizza A. Valderama

My Trip to Malaysia: A Gift from God

When I stepped into the airport terminal, I knew this was the beginning of my journey alone. I got teary-eyed when I looked back at my family who sent me to Malaysia.

It was my first time traveling internationally and using my passport. I'm glad that I could Google all of my questions inside Terminal One. As I was looking around me, I saw a lot of foreigners and Filipinos who were waiting for their check-in and flights. I was a bit scared, and I do not know what to do. While I am still there, I am texting my family to see if they have already gone and are going back home. When I boarded the plane, I told myself, yeah, it is happening, and it sank in my mind that I need to travel alone.

I never thought that travelling alone was fun. I met the other participants of our conference, and they are all nice. I met my roommate, and she is so kind. We realized immediately that we've known each other for a long time. We visit the Petrona's Tower with them (a popular tourist spot in Malaysia) and have fun taking pictures of the tower. I enjoyed the food as we came back to our hotel, just right beside the mall (also known as the biggest mall in Kuala Lumpur). There were a lot of choices, and I told myself this would be my cheat week since I had been watching what I ate for the past few months. To enjoy staying there.

The following day was more exciting as we started the training. It was time to get to know the 26 participants, from various nations, including Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, the Philippines, and India. It was great as we engaged with each other, since we have sessions online, unlike today. I saw them face-to-face, and I realized that I can speak in English, but I lack confidence because I am not good at it, which is what I thought to myself. I love the sessions because I didn't know I could be friends with everyone.

I never regretted joining this course (as my husband Paulo pushed me so hard to join this training) because aside from learning, this time for me is very precious; each day is new, and it renewed my physical and spiritual journey as a person who has been crashed before. Each lesson had an impact on me, and I thought I had forgotten the past, I thought I was moving on, I thought I had forgotten the pain. I realize it is still in my senses, and my body is still in the process of healing. I feel bad as I got mean to myself, trying to forget everything, just as I thought this was the way to move on. But one of

my teachers there taught us that it is the right thing to do. Honestly, I got teary-eyed silently as I do not want somebody to see me crying.

What's best is that we have a new circle of friends, and we have so much fun. There is no such feeling as when you come to this country and you are different. They are all friendly and kind, and I love all of them. We are like children playing with the icebreaker games, shouting and enjoying the time together before our dinner outside, thankfully, at a place where we can do this. Our teachers are also all nice, as they joined us, and I saw that they enjoy spending time together. We laugh so much that no one cares. I will remember that in my heart because I can laugh freely without watching people around me. I have new Filipino friends, and I enjoy having them with me. We go to different places because it is easier to communicate. (If they read this, I know they will smile.) We have a good time together, take pictures, and send them to our loved ones in the Philippines.

Most importantly, I would like to thank the people who supported me in this training; it would never have been possible without you. I know you know who you are as you read my article, and I will be forever thankful for your lives since you all believe in me that I can do this.

I was blessed to have been part of this training on how to preach the gospel. I know in my heart there is more confidence, not to be afraid to share the word in the world.

As I return to the Philippines, something in me has changed. I don't know what it is, but I know God will use me for something more in His ministry. I am so thankful that He is so faithful and He shows me that He is greater with all the things that I just knew about Him. I do not deserve this, but He gives me more than I could ever ask for. I thank the Lord for the opportunity to be in Malaysia and have a good time with my newfound friends, and to gain more knowledge as I continue my journey with the Lord. This is huge, as I travel alone. I've checked in alone with different hotels, walked alone through the streets to explore more places, eaten alone, and watched their cultures. There is nothing like being with the Lord. God makes it fun, colorful, wonderful, and perfectly in tune with my life as I serve Him. Yet I always told myself not to thank me because I want the Lord to reward me.

God will show you that He is not like others. He is awesome. Thank You, Lord! For making this time so memorable.

Presbyterian Women Are Still on the Move!

At the September Presbyterian Women (PW) meeting held on August 20, the group discussed several options on how to spend the money garnered from the PW-sponsored rummage sale earlier this year. We decided to support the Glacier Presbytery-wide project as presented in the August PRESSbyterian issue.

We bought Four books for either boys or girls aged 8-10 to take to the Glacier Presbytery meeting in October. Other groups have purchased items to fill duffle bags. The bags will be given to child services organizations for children in distressed situations. The duffle bags give children a sense that they have something that belongs to them.

The PW will continue to determine how the money can be effectively spent at the October meeting. That meeting will be on October 18 (Saturday) at 10 a.m. at Toni Larson's home (3400 Bison Lane). All women who attend First Presbyterian Church as welcome to attend.



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MONDAY - THURSDAY 8 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

FRIDAY 8 A.M. TO NOON

SUNDAY SERVICE: 10 A.M.

FELLOWSHIP FOLLOWING SERVICE

ALL ARE WELCOME

Me, My, Me, My, Me, Me.

How I Prayed This Morning

Dave W. Jacobs



*"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me
and know my anxious thoughts,
and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead
me in the everlasting way."*

(Ps. 139:23-24)

Now is not the time for me (and I can only speak for myself) to pray for our nation or my 'opponents,' but rather to pray for my own heart that has a tendency to cover up the same faults I see so clearly in those I disagree with.

"O Lord show me my sins, show me my hypocrisy, show me my faults. O Lord help me to focus on me and You and leave others alone. O Lord may I see no brother or sister in Christ as my opponent, and certainly not as an enemy. Lord have mercy. Lord help me."

That's how I prayed this mourning...just in case you were wondering. ;-)

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It's knowing that somebody cares enough to leave something

You wouldn't believe the number of kids I've seen cry in bathroom stalls, stuffing notebooks in their pants because they bled through.

My name's Evelyn. I'm 68. I mop the floors at Lincoln High every night after the last bell. Most folks don't notice me. That's fine. Invisible people can see a lot.

I see the football players strut like kings, the girls in glittery sneakers whispering in packs, the shy kids trailing behind like shadows. I see which lockers get slammed shut with laughter and which ones stay empty, untouched, like even the metal knows its owner doesn't belong.

One Tuesday night, late fall, I saw her. Jessie. Fifteen, maybe. She sat on the bathroom floor, knees pulled tight, face blotchy. She had wrapped her sweatshirt around her waist, but I could see the stain anyway. Her hands were trembling as she tried to fold notebook paper, sliding it into her underwear like it was going to help. My heart broke so hard I had to lean against the wall.

I didn't say a word. I knew that look—humiliation mixed with panic. Talking only makes it worse. So, after she left, I unlocked the last locker at the far end of the hall. Nobody used it anymore. I put a small grocery bag inside: a clean T-shirt from my son's old college days, a pack of pads, and a note scribbled on a receipt: "You're not broken. Take what you need."

The next morning, it was gone.

I thought maybe she'd never use it again. But the following week, I left another bag—some socks, a little bottle of lotion from the dollar store, another note: "You matter more than you know."

Gone again.

By December, it wasn't just her. Someone left a granola bar in there. Another day, I found a pair of mittens. Then a sticky note with messy handwriting: "Thanks. Whoever you are."

It snowballed.

One Friday, I came in to sweep and saw three girls huddled at the locker, whispering. One slipped a toothbrush inside. Another shoved in a hoodie. They glanced around like they were smuggling diamonds. When they saw me, they froze, eyes wide. I just winked and kept walking.

The Giving Locker, they started calling it.

By January, kids were checking it between classes, not just to take but to leave. Notes with doodles: "Stay strong, girl." Little bags of Skittles. Hand warmers. A new spiral notebook. Even the star quarterback dropped off a six-pack of Gatorade once, mumbling something about "for whoever's thirsty."

Word reached the teachers. Some rolled their eyes, said it was a distraction. One even tried to tape it shut. But when that happened, the students raised hell. They stormed the principal's office, waving little notes they'd saved from the locker. One girl stood up, voice shaking but fierce, and said, "That locker kept me alive when I thought I didn't matter."

Silence. Heavy and real.

The principal didn't shut it down after that. Instead, he asked me to keep an eye on it. Like I hadn't been all along.

But here's the thing: it stopped being mine a long time ago. It belonged to them. To Jessie. To every kid who ever stared into a mirror and felt less than human. To every boy too ashamed to admit his shoes had holes. To every girl who thought she had to hide blood and tears and hunger behind a fake smile.

One afternoon, I caught Jessie again. She wasn't crying this time. She was standing tall, slipping a box of pads into the locker. Her cheeks flushed when she saw me, but she smiled. A small, brave smile. "Thank you, Miss Evelyn," she whispered.

I wanted to tell her it was nothing. Just old underwear and cheap chocolate bars, just scraps from a cleaning lady's paycheck. But that would have been a lie. It wasn't nothing. It was everything.

The last week of school, I found a note taped to the inside of the locker door in bright purple ink. It said:

"It's not about what you take. It's about knowing someone cares enough to leave something."

I stood there in the empty hallway, mop still dripping, tears streaking my cheeks.

You see, we keep waiting for grand gestures—new programs, speeches, government funds. But sometimes change starts with an old woman slipping a pad and a candy bar into an unused locker.

The world tells these kids to toughen up, to stop whining, to figure it out on their own. But life is hard enough without carrying shame on top of hunger and loneliness.

That locker taught me something: You don't have to be a teacher or a parent or a hero to make a difference. You just have to notice. And do the small thing in front of you.

So if you're reading this—next time you see a chance to slip kindness under the door, or into a locker, or across a counter—don't hesitate.

Because what looks like nothing to you might be the only thing holding someone together.