

# First Reports

First Presbyterian Church  
Evansville, Indiana



SEP/  
OCT  
2024

[www.fpcevvl.com](http://www.fpcevvl.com)

## From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe it has been twenty months since I joined you in ministry. The goal that you have all been working so hard toward is now happening. Your new pastor is about to join you. You may not be able to see all the changes that have happened since I arrived, but they have been significant. I'd like share what I've seen happen since Kevin's passing.

First, Wendy and John VanderZee did amazing work with helping with initial support and work in the grieving process after Kevin's death. The Staff and Session were especially in need of the critical work that they did in order to keep this church's leadership functioning and able to keep doing the work that was needed. And, of course, their work with all of you was an important step in the healing of this congregation to be able to move forward in a healthy way.

When I arrived, that initial tidal wave of grief had passed, but the work of grieving and moving forward needed to continue. The VanderZees helped start the important work of putting together committees by forming the Worship and Christian Education Committees. Both of these groups have been doing wonderful work, blessing our worship and especially the spiritual growth of the children and youth of this church (think of our strong youth program, the pilgrimage to Iona, and a growing Sunday school program). Casey Calvert has done an incredible amount of work to see that repairs and upkeep to the church happen. The Technology Committee oversaw the upgrade of the audio/video equipment for the live streaming of worship, and the Mission Committee recently identified a Mission Coworker for the church to support (which of course I'm always happy to see as I was once a Mission Coworker). The Generosity and the Finance Committees have worked hard and continue to work hard to ensure the church is financially sound to move forward into its next century of ministry. All this is to say that God has been working through you a very difficult time in the life of the church; working and blessing you in so many ways and now blessing you with a new pastor who will bring with her a new vision and new energy. Our God of grace and love will continue to bless you in and through Pastor Mary Beth.

Transitions are never easy. They can be exciting, but they always present new challenges as much as they present new opportunities; life is all about transition and transition is about growth. We aren't the same person from year to year. We need to change in order to grow and become the person or church that God wants us to be. So I ask you to embrace this new transition with openness, curiosity, energy, and excitement. God is making a new day for you and that is a good thing!

Rob once asked me what I would tell my next church about you. I will tell them that I worked with a great staff, a hardworking and dedicated Session who rose to their highest leadership capacity in order to lead a church in crisis, and a congregation that fiercely loves and is devoted to each other. The love you have for one another is truly something to behold. You do have a sense of family and that is so beautiful to see. I thank you for the opportunity to serve with you during this past year and a half. It has been a time of growth for me, too. I am grateful for the gift of love and friendship you have extended to me. I know that Pastor McCandless will soon feel that gift of love and friendship as well. I thank you for your support and I look forward to hearing about the new and exciting work you are doing in ministry as you move forward into this new path that God has set before you.



Blessings,

*Pastor Anna*  
Pastor Anna

## September Worship

This month, we'll be joined in worship by several familiar faces as we prepare for the arrival of Pastor Mary Beth:

September 8	Celebration of Communion and Pastor Anna's last Sunday
September 15	Rev. Wendy VanderZee
September 22	Elder Rob Henson
September 29	Rev. John VanderZee and the Blessing of the Animals
October 6	World Communion Sunday and Pastor Mary Beth's first Sunday



Read on in this issue for details of all that's going on at First Pres, and make time in your schedule to join in worship this and every week!

## Pastor Nominating Committee



The Pastor Nominating Committee extends its heartfelt gratitude to everyone who came to the congregational meeting on August 18 to vote to call Rev. Mary Beth McCandless as our next installed pastor! Our work was sometimes frustrating, but often inspiring, as we reviewed all the candidates to make our final recommendation. Getting unanimous approval from all who voted was the best blessing we could ever have received!

We are excited about this next phase of the ministry of First Pres, and with great joy we look forward to the future!

- Yours in Christ, Steve Wylie, PNC Chair

## Children's Education

This school year is going to be an exciting one for Children's Education at First Presbyterian Church. Not only are we welcoming our new pastor, but we also welcome some new teachers and a new curriculum to our Sunday Mornings. Our new curriculum is *Follow Me: Biblical Practices for Faithful Living*. *Follow Me* is a three-year curriculum that is based on practices that Jesus modeled and taught, and can be used with children of multiple ages, as well as youth and adults. It even has a section that allows for *Practicing the Practice At Home*.



Each of our teachers will be assigned a different practice and will teach approximately 4 lessons concerning that practice over the course of a month. We welcome the following teachers this year: Carrie Aiken, Erin Carver, Elesha Downs, Sarah Groves, Francie Hubbard, Bonnie Rinks, Emily Rosenquist, and Jenny Singleton.

We are still in need of a second adult in the classroom each week to meet our church safety requirements. If you would be willing to volunteer as a 2<sup>nd</sup> person in the classroom (*no preparation necessary!*), please email or text Carrie Aiken ([carrie@fpcevv.com](mailto:carrie@fpcevv.com) or 812-484-2545). The more the merrier!

And mark your calendars for a brief **Meet and Greet for children and teachers after the 10:30 Service on Sunday, September 8** in Fellowship Hall. We'll see you there and together we'll get this program year off to a great start!

## First Friday Recitals

Our next few First Friday recitals will feature duos - in September, organ and soprano, and in October keyboard and flute:



Friday, September 6, at 7:00 p.m. we welcome Christine Westhoff, soprano, and Tim Allen, organist, to the historic First Pres Sanctuary. Christine specializes in oratorio and sacred music and has made a number of recordings that range from classical to American standards. Tim has worked in cathedrals, churches, universities, and schools on both sides of the Atlantic, as a church organist, choir trainer, and recitalist. This summer he added a new twist to his skills by becoming the organist for the Double-A baseball team, the Arkansas Travelers.

Friday, October 4, Robert Cart, flute, and Starla Raley, piano, will share a program featuring works by composers from the Midwest (Valerie Coleman, Jake Heggie, Ned Rorem) and beyond.

Plan to bring your friends downtown on both of these dates to start each month with great music and fellowship!

## Blessing of the Animals

A favorite morning - the annual "Blessing of the Animals" service - returns on Sunday, September 29 at both morning services. For more than twenty-five years we have welcomed our animal friends into the building for this special service. Just a reminder: pets need to be on leashes, in cages, in carriers, or in aquariums/terrariums, and remembrances of former animal companions are welcome, too!

This is a great day to invite your friends, neighbors, and co-workers to First Pres as we welcome all winged, two-leggeds, four-leggeds, and no-leggeds to worship for "The Blessing of the Animals" on Sunday, September 29.



## Period Predicament

What do girls do when their families do not provide them with the menstrual pads or tampons they need? Some will miss school for four to six days every month. The luckier ones visit the school nurse who can give them a Period Pack. As part of a Welcome Back event, First Pres' Presbyterian Women is holding a Periods Plus Party on Wednesday, September 25 at 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

It will be a time for the church's women (and girls!) to greet old and new friends in a relaxed atmosphere, play a few (goofy?) games, enjoy some dessert (healthy or decadent) and assemble packs of menstrual and general hygiene supplies to be donated to area middle schools and Ivy Tech.



In preparation, all congregation members are invited to contribute items for the Period/Hygiene Packs. Appropriate items are full-sized shampoo, bars of soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste, small tampons and regular or light-day menstrual pads. They can be placed in containers that will be in the lobby on Sunday, September 8 and 15. Then Presbyterian Women will shop for remaining needed items. Checks (made to First Pres; memo: Period) will be happily accepted. Questions? Contact Jean Beckman, [jb37@evansville.edu](mailto:jb37@evansville.edu).

## First Light Youth Group

FLYG had a great turnout at our 2024-25 Kick-off on August 25. Our Junior and Senior High kids gathered at the Aiken home for some food, fun, and fellowship! This year FLYG will be asking "what is our role and responsibility within the whole of God's creation," and "what are some simple ways that we can be the light in our often dark world?" There are several activities planned around the theme of "Creation Care" including field trips and service projects. Alongside our projects we will always have time for a little "fun and games" and of course, Pizza!

In September, the group will prepare food to be served at United Caring Services and go Hiking at the Garden of the Gods in Illinois; in October, a visit to the International Food Festival at the Islamic Center of Evansville and assembly and distribution of Halloween Bags is on the calendar.

FLYG regularly meets on Sunday evenings from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. All Junior and Senior-High students are welcome and invited to bring friends! For more information, contact Children and Youth Education Coordinator Carrie Aiken ([carrie@fpcevv.com](mailto:carrie@fpcevv.com) or 812-484-2545).



## You're Invited



First Pres' own Jerusha Van Camp has received her Masters of Divinity, and been examined, recommended for Ordination and called to provide spiritual leadership and governmental support by the Presbytery of Ohio Valley! On Saturday, September 14, at 11:00 a.m. First Pres will host a service of worship celebrating Jerusha's ordination as Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA). All are welcome to attend.

# September



## SEPTEMBER

- 2 MONDAY LABOR DAY  
Church Office Closed
- 4 WEDNESDAY  
7:00 p.m. Education Committee\*
- 6 FRIDAY  
7:00 p.m. First Friday Recital: Organ and Voice
- 8 SUNDAY  
11:30 a.m. Sunday School Meet and Greet  
11:30 a.m. Music Support Committee
- 9 MONDAY  
6:30 p.m. *Book Group*  
6:30 p.m. Personnel Committee\*
- 10 TUESDAY  
6:00 p.m. Finance Committee
- 11 WEDNESDAY  
6:00 p.m. Session Meeting
- 14 SATURDAY  
11:00 a.m. Ordination Service: Jerusha Van Camp
- 15 SUNDAY  
11:30 a.m. Justice/Peacemaking Committee
- 16 MONDAY  
10:00 a.m. Mission Committee
- 18 WEDNESDAY  
11:00 a.m. Generosity Committee  
5:00 p.m. Worship Committee
- 20 FRIDAY  
Church Office Closed through September 27
- 25 WEDNESDAY  
Church Office Closed through September 27  
6:00 p.m. PW Periods Plus Party
- 26 THURSDAY  
Church Office Closed through September 27  
5:30 p.m. *Little Lambs Board Meeting*
- 28 SATURDAY  
9:00 a.m. First Light to Garden of the Gods
- 29 SUNDAY  
No First Light

# October

# OCTOBER

- 2 WEDNESDAY  
7:00 p.m. Education Committee\*
- 4 FRIDAY  
7:00 p.m. First Friday Recital: Flute and Piano
- 6 SUNDAY  
11:30 a.m. Music Support Committee
- 7 MONDAY  
6:30 p.m. *Book Group*
- 9 WEDNESDAY  
6:00 p.m. Session Meeting
- 11 FRIDAY  
6:00 p.m. Haunted Historic Evansville Ghost Walks
- 12 SATURDAY  
6:00 p.m. Haunted Historic Evansville Ghost Walks
- 14 MONDAY  
6:30 p.m. Personnel Committee\*
- 15 TUESDAY  
No Choir Activities - Fall Break!  
6:00 p.m. Finance Committee
- 16 WEDNESDAY  
5:00 p.m. Worship Committee
- 17 THURSDAY  
No Youth Choir Activities - Fall Break!  
6:00 p.m. Full Choir Rehearsal
- 19 SATURDAY  
11:00 a.m. Installation Service:  
Rev. Mary Beth McCandless
- 20 SUNDAY  
11:30 a.m. Justice/Peacemaking Committee
- 21 MONDAY  
10:00 a.m. Mission Committee
- 26 SATURDAY  
5:45 p.m. Dinner and A Movie  
7:00 p.m. Silent Movie: *Nosferatu*
- 27 SUNDAY  
No First Light
- 29 TUESDAY  
No Choir Activities - Fall Break!
- 31 THURSDAY HALLOWEEN  
No Youth Choir Activities - Fall Break!  
4:00 p.m. First Light - Halloween Bag Handout  
6:00 p.m. Full Choir Rehearsal



- SUNDAYS  
8:30 a.m. Wide Awake Worship  
9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Worship  
11:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour  
5:30 p.m. First Light
- MONDAYS  
6:30 p.m. *LABOR DAY  
NA Group*
- TUESDAYS  
11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting  
3:45 p.m. Choir Teens  
4:45 p.m. Handbell/Chime Rehearsal  
5:45 p.m. Choristers Rehearsal
- WEDNESDAYS  
1:00 p.m. *Little Lambs Store Open*
- THURSDAYS  
4:00 p.m. Choir Beginners  
4:45 p.m. Choristers Rehearsal  
6:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
- FRIDAYS  
Church Office Closed
- SATURDAYS  
10:00 a.m. *Little Lambs Store Open*

\*Meets via Zoom  
*Items in Italics are non-FPC events*



## From the Pastor-Elect

Greetings!

I continue to be amazed by what God has done and is doing with us! As I've said before, Murray and I have been acutely aware of the movement of the Spirit in and through this process of discernment. We were overwhelmed by your presence and spirit as we began to connect with you in mid-August - thank you for such a gracious welcome! We are looking forward to getting settled in Evansville and I am looking forward to this tremendous new season in ministry and life.



In the meantime, I'm in the midst of doing my best to leave well as I move from the people I've served and loved for the past six years. I'll be honest with you (always) this is emotionally complicated! I'm filled with counterbalancing feelings:

- **excitement** (for what's next with you – First Pres!) and *reticence* (as the pastoral relationship with the folks at West Bethesda and West Eagle Creek Presbyterian Churches comes to a close);
- **joy** (look at what God is doing in, through, and with us) and *sorrow* (there are some folks in my current congregations I will never physically see again on this side of heaven);
- **gratitude** (for what God has done and is doing) and some *dread* (sorting, packing, moving – need I say more?!)

But this is normal. You wouldn't want me to serve as your pastor if I didn't feel all the feels in this time of transition, so as I prepare to preach September 1, 8, and 15 in Ohio, I will be praying for you. And the churches I serve now will be praying for me and for you. (As I hope you will pray for me and for them!) As these congregations celebrate the ministry and life we've shared (at West Eagle Creek on September 8 and West Bethesda on September 15), I will be anticipating joining you October 1 and preaching for World Communion Sunday, October 6.

I'm sure some of you are wondering about some practical things so here's a little information:

- 1) Have you found a place to live?  
Yes! We've signed a lease agreement for a guest house within walking distance of the church.
- 2) Has Murray found a place to move his business?  
Yes! *Murray's Cool Cars* will be moving to a dream location warehouse/showroom in Vincennes.
- 3) Can we friend you on Facebook or follow you on Instagram?  
Absolutely! I'm @mbmccandless on any platform I'm on. Email me at [mb@fpcevv.com](mailto:mb@fpcevv.com) if you don't get a timely response!



Finally, as you say your goodbyes (thank you for your work, Anna!) and experience some of your own joys and sorrows, please take time to go to the chapel and spend some time with the prayer/activity stations. The stations are designed for all ages and stages (parents, you can take some things home to do - like the hands - and bring them back.) You don't have to do every station at once (unless that's how you roll) and you can do some things more than once if you want. The prayers and dreams and ideas and hopes that you share will help us as we get started in October. So get ready, First Pres! Get ready, Evansville! We'll see you before you know it!

Peace and Presence,

*MB*

Mary Beth McCandless ([mb@fpcevv.com](mailto:mb@fpcevv.com))

## Make a Joyful Noise!

This the perfect time to enroll yourself and your children in the music programs of First Pres. The Handbell program for experienced ringers (1+ years of Chimes) meets on Tuesday afternoons at 4:45 on the second floor. Handbells play in worship approximately once per month. Adults are welcome to join the groups and be part of this intergenerational ministry. (Contact Robert at 812-423-6297; [robert@fpcevv.com](mailto:robert@fpcevv.com))



The Choir School has a more extensive rehearsal schedule on Tuesdays and Thursdays and is open to all children, teens, and adults in Grades 2+. More and more studies are showing the benefits to health and wellbeing of singing in choirs. Join ours, and make a joyful noise!

## Office Schedule



The church office will be closed the week of September 23 while Church Office Administrator Lora Blaylock is on vacation. Classes, rehearsals, and groups will continue to meet at their regular times that week, and regular office hours of Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. will resume on Monday, September 30.

## A Season of Peace

Each fall, First Pres participates in the PCUSA's Peacemaking Program, which is an invitation to join with people of faith from around the country and the world for *A Season of Peace*, a month-long pilgrimage designed to deepen the pursuit of peace for congregations, small groups, families, and individuals. This season is a time of growth, encouragement, challenge, inspiration, and education which invites you to consider your own relationship to peacemaking and justice.

One way you can take up this invitation is by [subscribing](#) to daily reflections from the PCUSA delivered to your email (digital booklets of the devotions are available [HERE.](#)), and even more information and resources are available on the PCUSA's [website](#).



On October 6, we will celebrate World Communion Sunday, remembering that whenever the church gathers for worship, we are assured of Christ's peace. In addition to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (and our first service with Pastor Mary Beth), we will receive the Peace and Global Witness offering. This opportunity to give is unique among the denomination-wide offerings in that 25% of the offering stays here in the Evansville area, benefitting a local peace-promoting organization determined by our Mission Committee.

Through our participation in *A Season of Peace*, we are extending Christ's peace throughout our community and our world. We begin at the communion table with our siblings in every time and place, and celebrate the peace we find there as we commit to building a more just and peaceful world.

## Calling All Readers



Book Group at First Pres meets next on Monday, September 9, 6:30-8:00. A Zoom option is available; contact Francie Hubbard ([francie@myhubbards.com](mailto:francie@myhubbards.com)) learn how to sign in. We'll discuss *Lady Clementine*, a historical novel about Winston Churchill's wife, by Marie Bennett, author of several popular books about significant women. On October 7, the book will be *Fever in the Heartland*, a historical account of the early twentieth century expansion of the Ku Klux Klan in the North, beginning in Evansville and the state of Indiana.

## Happy September and October Birthdays!

### SEPTEMBER

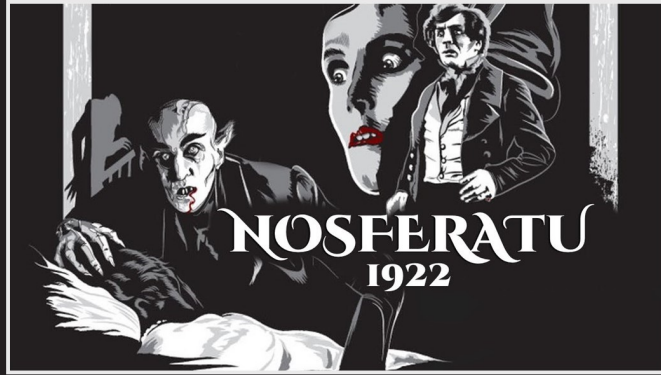
Anne Asbury	1
Elizabeth Becker	2
Leo Peyronnin	4
Sam Ungar	6
Mark Fox	7
Mallory Singer	7
Brennan Downs	9
Carolyn Stilwell	9
Maria Mastropalo	12
Roger Colman	14
Jenni Rodgers	14
Jerusha Van Camp	15
Martha Goldman	17
Suzana Josenhans	17
Eli Pearce	20
Andrew Singleton	24
Tiffany Ball	25
Jean Beckman	25
Barbara Moorman	25
Charlotte Roth	25
John Whinrey	25
Susan Colman	26
Anna von Winckler	26
Sharon Rea	29
Lora Blaylock	29
Garnet Ungar	29
Gail Kelley	30
Kyler McReynolds	30



### OCTOBER

Karen Kuykendoll	1
Lynn Kyle	1
Diane Reynolds	1
Katie Ruthenburg	1
Deborah Shepherd	2
Gina Robinson Ungar	2
Peter Ungar	3
Eddie Erickson	4
Jane Bernhardt	5
Joey Hubbard	8
William Nicholls	8
Marilyn Moore	9
Austin Boyle	10
Laura Haywood	12
Miles Moore	12
Pat Wu	12
Analisa Hein	14
Susie McCool	15
Barb Witte	16
Lillian Montgomery	17
Sandy Ehlen-Martin	20
Beth Mottley	23
Art Mengon	24
Hugh McKinney	25
Caroline Haynie	26
Tom Stein	27
Mary Colvin	28
Lisa Jones	28
Regan Stein	29

Save the Date!!!!



Saturday, October 26, 2024

7:00 p.m.

Free Admission

Murnau's classic vampire movie will feature a live soundtrack  
improvised by First Pres' own Robert Nicholls.

First Presbyterian Church ~ 609 SE Second St ~ Evansville IN 47713 ~ [fpcevv.com](http://fpcevv.com)



First Presbyterian Church  
609 South East Second Street  
Evansville, IN 47713-1107

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE PAID  
EVANSVILLE IN  
PERMIT NO. 909