

# FIRST PRESS

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF UPLAND



## GOD GAVE US A "JIGSAW PUZZLE" FOR CHRISTMAS

When I was a kid, we used to put together jigsaw puzzles during the holidays. It was relaxing, challenging, and enjoyable. No one felt anxious about making a mistake or taking too long to finish. It was a process filled with both disappointments and successes. But the journey was part of the fun. As you all know, the two secrets to solving puzzles are: (1) find all the edge pieces, and (2) pay close attention to the picture on the box. The rest is just patience and perseverance. In 2026, we start the work of finding God's choice for our next pastor. Like solving a jigsaw puzzle, we must constantly "check in" with God. We must ask the question, "Lord, how will

*(continued on page 2)*

---

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES WITH VAN ROMINE

---

we recognize your pastor for Upland?" After praying this, we must listen carefully to the answer, as the Holy Spirit guides and directs us. This is not easy. In fact, there are three famous examples in the Bible, where God sent a leader to the people of Israel, but they either didn't recognize or didn't follow God's choice.

First, the choice of Moses as leader was questioned repeatedly by the people of Israel, and even by his own brother and sister:

- Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses... At once the Lord said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, "Come out to the tent of meeting, all three of you." ... he (The Lord) said, "Listen to my words: ... "Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" (Numbers 12)

Second, the prophet Samuel struggled to find (and almost overlooked) David, who was the last among the sons of Jesse to be presented:

- But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." ... Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The Lord has not chosen these." So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" (1 Samuel 16)

Third, the choice of Jesus was questioned by the people of Nazareth in his own hometown, despite all the teachings and miracles that he performed:

- "Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him." He was amazed at their lack of faith. (Mark 6).

At the end of 2025, God gave us a jigsaw puzzle for Christmas. We are all crowded around the fold-out table with hundreds of pieces scattered in front of us. To solve it, we must listen, search, recognize, accept, and follow God's choice for the next pastor of FPCU. Rest assured, as God's people, we know God's Voice:

- "... the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ... and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." (John 10).

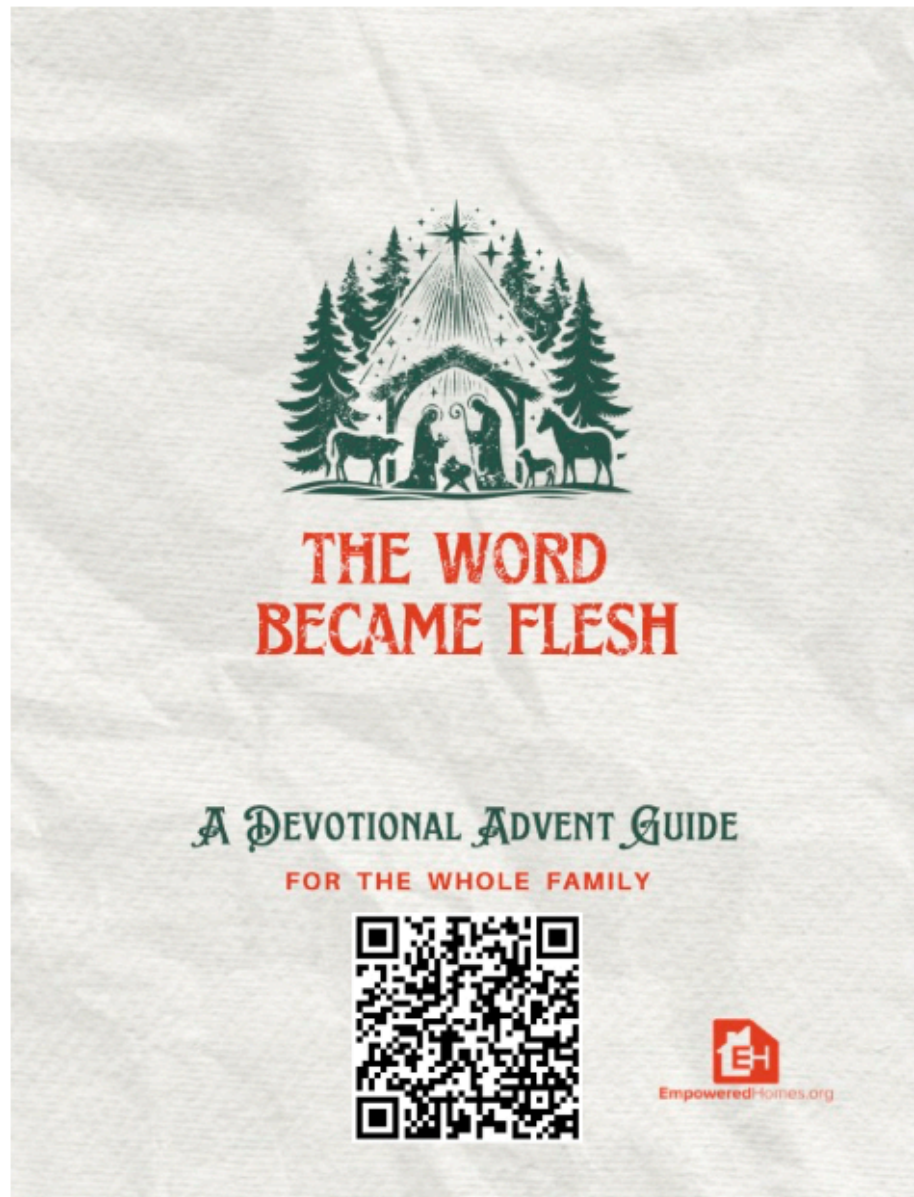
It will take a while to finish the puzzle. Each of us may insert only one puzzle piece into the final picture. But, without everyone's contribution, the picture will be incomplete. Let's come together and join in the fun. When the puzzle is solved, we will take great joy in confirming God's Will for our congregation. †

## ELEVATE WITH MATT SHOOL



# PARENT RESOURCE

Scan this QR code to open a valuable family resource on celebrating the Advent.





---

## WORSHIP WITH NATHAN STEWART

---

### Enhancing Connection: The Role of Technology in Worship

Over the past two years of being part of our church community, serving on the worship team committee, and supporting Sunday services as the Service Media Director, I've seen firsthand how thoughtfully used technology can strengthen worship. When technology works well, it does not draw attention to itself; it supports clarity, connection, and a shared worship experience.

A primary role of worship technology is enabling participation. Clear audio ensures that scripture, prayers, songs, and sermons are heard with ease, while projected lyrics and readings help congregants like you stay present and engaged. For visitors and longtime members alike, this consistency helps create a welcoming and accessible environment, something we all can take pride in cultivating. Technology also extends worship beyond the sanctuary. Our livestreams and recorded services allow those who are homebound or unable to attend in person to stay connected to our church community, reinforcing that worship is not limited by location.

As Service Media Director, my role is to help ensure these tools run each Sunday smoothly through close collaboration with our pastors, musicians, and staff. Alongside a small but mighty team, we work behind the scenes to prepare, adapt, and support each service, doing our very best to ensure worship is delivered with care, consistency, and excellence. When preparation and coordination happen behind the scenes, worship can flow without distraction, allowing the congregation to focus entirely on prayer, music, and reflection. Ultimately, technology in worship should serve the sacred moment, not compete with it. When used with intention and care, it becomes a quiet partner in ministry, supporting our mission to worship together with clarity, reverence, and connection.



## GATHER WITH SUE FRAZEE

On December 14th, Gather hosted the annual Brunch with Santa for young and old! It was a wonderful time of fellowship and festivities to celebrate Christmas.









## CHRISTMAS CONCERT & FAREWELL LUNCHEON



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF UPLAND PRESENTS

# CHILI COOK-OFF

SUNDAY,  
JANUARY 17TH

Start preparing your recipes!



## WE ARE STARTING HOMEWORK CLUB!

When: January 21, 2026  
Wednesday nights  
Time: 4-5 pm

Students can sign up to stay for  
dinner from 5-5:30 pm

Purpose: Adults help elementary  
students one-on-one with their  
homework

We will need a staff of volunteers to  
help our students. If you would like to  
help or have questions, please call  
Kim Reghetti (909-285-6801) or  
Sue Frazee (951-237-3244).





*Get a lift from LIFT*  
(Ladies in Fellowship Together)



## Song Sung Cute!

**FPC Preschoolers Will Treat  
Us with Songs and Director  
Misty Wren To Talk About  
What's New at the School**

**WE START EARLIER! (THIS MONTH ONLY)**

**Friday, January 9, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm, Hart Hall**

**Doors open 10:15 – Program starts promptly at 10:30**

Who doesn't need a little cuteness this time of year? We are in for a treat this January when kids from our own preschool will entertain us with songs. Preschool director Misty Wren will then share with us all about the latest about the preschool. And, of course, she will tell us about the ways we can help!

Wren has been director of the FPC preschool since 2016, following 20 years working and directing in preschool education. She and her staff are fully certified in early childhood education as well as in additional requirements such as CPR and first aid. "I love being part of this church and part of the community," she said. "I have seen the program grow and seen it through its struggles."

Be sure to be on time at 10:30 – we begin promptly with the program, starting with the preschool. Worship songs and devotion will follow, then we will enjoy a brown bag lunch and fellowship. Beverages are provided – or you can bring your own.

***Foothill Family Shelter  
Needs Your Support***  
Show your love each and any  
month by bringing your donations  
of food and personal care items.

**For more information  
contact Carol Diess,  
626-482-8862, or  
sbbmom@aol.com**

***Thank you for your generous donations to support LIFT***

JANUARY						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 New Year's Day  <i>OFFICE CLOSED</i>	2	3
4  10am Worship with Communion	5  5:30pm Bells  Personnel	6  6pm Serve 7pm Gather AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	7  5pm Elevate	8  12:30pm Preschool Board Mtg. 5pm Beginning Bells 5:30pm Deacons 6:30pm Grow	9  L.I.F.T. 11am  Please refer to Page 9 for the time change and details	10
11  10am Worship	12  5:30pm Bells	13  9:30am Knitters and Quilters 5pm Worship 6pm Trustees AA Groups- HH & upstairs	14  5pm Elevate	15  5pm Beginning Bells	16	17  Scouts 12-4pm Sanctuary 2-5pm Activity Rm.  Chili Cook-off
18  10 am Worship	19  5:30pm Bells  Office Closed MLK Birthday	20  9:30am Knitters and Quilters AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	21  5pm Elevate	22  5pm Beginning Bells	23	24  Girl Scouts Hart Hall 8am-1pm
25  10 am Worship Congregational Meeting	26  5:30pm Bells	27  AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR 6:30pm SESSION	28  5pm Elevate	29  5pm Beginning Bells	30	31



## JANUARY PRAYER CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1-Masiya	2-Mba	3-McClelland
4	5-McCormick	6-McCrea-Foster	7- McMullen	8- Merryman	9-Morgan	10- Mowery
11	12-Mulligan	13-Murdy	14- Ogot	15-Oji	16-Olson	17-Pavarella
18	19- Phillips	20-Plicher	21-Polchow	22-Richardson	23-Righetti	24-Rihs
25	26-Riivald	27-Roman	28-Romine	29-Ruggles	30-Rumisek	31-Runner

**Please pray for healing and restoration for:**

Jean Vanvieldt, Felicia Foreman, Bill Howie, Lynn McClelland,  
Joni Stallings, David Brinkley, Kay Hester, Iris Joiner, Marie Swenson, Bob Summers,  
Terry King, Jerry Wilson, Robert Chaffino

Pray for those who are homebound or in convalescent care:

John Dooley, Beth Brinkley, Dick Davidson

Please call Gael in the office if we need to update any information. Thank you. 909-982-8811.

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

01 Barbara Bimber	20 Frank Fogle
03 Linda Russell	20 Joni Stallings
05 Carol Zahniser	23 Sarah Richardson
05 Ken Kaufman	30 Barbara Hansen
08 Diane Schreiber	
09 Bob Carder	
16 Don Cook	
17 Janet Hunt	
17 Jan McCrea-Foster	
19 Karolyn Bragg	
19 Pamela Ogot	

We would also like to extend birthday greetings to any other **January** babies not on our list. If you know of a member's birthday that needs to be added, please call Gael in the church office @ 982-8811. Thank you, and

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL OF YOU!**



**GROWING IN CHRIST,  
MAKING HIM KNOWN**

**Trustees**

Gary Custer, President  
Sue Frazee, Vice President  
Van Romine, Treasurer  
Shawn Kathol, Secretary  
Paul Sindelar

**Deacons**

Becky Custer  
Heather Decauwer  
Carol Diess  
Loreto D'Monte  
Ebie Fogle  
Lisa Murdy  
Constance Phillips  
Kim Righetti  
Sue Sindelar

**Staff**

Matt Shool, Youth Ministries  
Jannina Guzman, Office Manager  
Gael Lecce, Receptionist

Misty Wren, Preschool Director  
Nadina Rearte, Director's Assistant

**Elders**

William Anguka  
Gary Custer  
Georgia Decker  
Frank Fogle  
Sue Frazee  
Diane Hallihan  
Trevor McMullen  
Pam Polchow  
Randy Righetti  
Van Romine  
Jim Smirl  
Donna Strowger  
Tony Webner

**First Presbyterian Church of Upland**

869 North Euclid Avenue  
Upland, CA 91786

OFFICE: 909.982.8811  
PRESCHOOL: 909.982.8616

email: [office@fpc-upland.com](mailto:office@fpc-upland.com)  
website: [FPC-UPLAND.COM](http://FPC-UPLAND.COM)