

# FIRST PRESS



## Selah, Breathe, & Play

Unlike the rest of the First Pres year, August is a breath between series and themes. From September to Thanksgiving, we have *Fall Quarter*; Thanksgiving to New Year's is *Advent/Xmas*; from New Year's to Ash Wednesday is *New Leaf*; from Ash Wednesday to Easter is *Lent/Holy Week*; from Easter to Pentecost is *Final Stretch*; and June-July are *The Summer Institute*. But August? *Selah*. We try to have fewer meetings and more reflection. With September programming coming up, August is the calm before the storm—the "sabbath" of the First Pres year. But what does *Selah* mean?

The word "Selah" appears 71 times in the Psalms and 3 times in the book of Habakkuk. *No one knows what it means*, but biblical scholars and theologians

*(continued on page 2)*

# PASTOR NOEL ANDERSON



have proposed several interpretations based on its context and usage. Here are the most common interpretations:

## 1. Musical or Liturgical Instruction

**Instrumental Interlude:** In this view, the singers would pause, and the instruments would continue playing—in other words, **GUITAR SOLO!** Many scholars believe *Selah* is a musical term indicating a pause in the singing or playing of instruments. Sometimes while playing a song, it's good to let the music express the Spirit without words.

This might be silence, but it might also be *heartfelt jamming*.

**Lift Up:** Some suggest *Selah* comes from a root meaning "to lift up," possibly signaling to lift up voices or instruments, or even to modulate the music. So, *yeah*, guitar solo.

## 2. Reflective or Meditative Prompt

**Spiritual Pause:** *Selah* may serve as a kind of "Amen" or sacred punctuation, inviting the hearer to stop and allow the words just spoken or sung to "sink in." Whenever we worship or read Scripture, this happens naturally. We are struck by something and consider the spiritual significance of what was just read.

Psalm 46: "Be still, and know that I am God... *Selah*." Here it seems to invite meditation.

This would mean that the Psalmists were trying to engineer the exact spots for meditative insights. This is dubious as the word *Selah* isn't uniformly used in this way, so I'm sticking with guitar solo or

other instrumental break (please, no lengthy drum solos!).

## 3. Structural Marker

**A Break Between Stanzas:** In several Psalms, *Selah* marks a change in tone or theme, functioning as a natural divider between sections. Sometimes there is a shift in voice, perspective, or subject. The mood may change from lament to hope or from confession to praise.

In Psalm 3, after David expresses his fear of enemies, *Selah* follows the line "But you, O Lord, are a shield around me..." —possibly prompting reflection on God's protection. But again, this usage is neither uniform nor consistent. Guitar solo it is!



While the exact meaning of *Selah* remains somewhat mysterious, it most likely served a musical and meditative purpose—remember, *Psalm* means *song*. Whether it marked a musical interlude or a moment of theological reflection, *Selah* invites readers and listeners alike to slow down and listen for the more profound truths in the Psalms.

That's our August—pause, reflect, tune up your guitars, and get ready for September. May God bless us all with insights for our life together, *Growing in Christ, and Making Him Known.* †



# ELEVATE WITH MATT SHOOL



## God isn't asking you to be perfect—just present

Ashley Earnis | Christian Parenting | July 16, 2025

### The Beautiful Chaos

There are days when the floor is covered in cereal, the baby's crying, someone needs help with math, and dinner hasn't even crossed your mind. It's messy. It's overwhelming. It's real life. And on those days, it's tempting to wonder if we're even getting this "Christian parenting" thing right. But the mission remains the same: to raise our children to know and love Jesus—even in the mess.

### God's Grace is the Foundation

Scripture reminds us that his grace is sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV). Our parenting doesn't rest on our perfection, but on his provision. We will mess up. We will lose patience. But his mercies are new every morning (Lamentations 3:23 ESV). When we confess, reset, and reorient our hearts toward Christ, we show our children what real faith looks like—not a flawless one, but a faithful one.

### Discipleship Happens in the Ordinary

Teaching our children to follow Jesus doesn't always happen during devotions or church. It often happens while folding laundry, grocery shopping, or whispering prayers over scraped knees. In Deuteronomy, parents are instructed to talk about God's commands as they sit, walk, lie down, and rise up (Deuteronomy 6:6–7 ESV). Every mundane moment is a holy opportunity.

### We Are Shaped As We Shape Them

Parenting is sanctifying. God uses the challenges, tears, and sleepless nights to form us too. He is shaping our character just as we are stewarding our children's hearts. He's making something beautiful out of what feels broken, something holy from what feels hard. We aren't alone in the trenches—he is with us, strengthening and sustaining.

### Don't Forget the Mission

When the dishes pile up and the voices get loud, remember your mission: not to raise perfect kids, but to raise kids who know the perfect Savior. Keep pointing them to Jesus with your words, your actions, and even your repentance. That is the mission—and in God's hands, even your mess can become a ministry.



# YOUNG DISCIPLES WITH KEVIN CLINTON

Hello everyone,

As summer quickly comes to an end, school and fall programming are just around the corner. Here's a car bingo game you can enjoy during those last-minute road trips before we settle back into the new school year routine. Fall programming will resume in September.

If anyone is interested in being a part of Wednesday Nights and other fall programs, please contact Kevin Clinton, Director of Children's Ministries, [Children@fpc-upland.com](mailto:Children@fpc-upland.com). Wednesday Night's theme will have a focus on stewardship and taking care of God's gift of the Earth. We are looking forward to the start of the new program year.



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## MEET YOUR TRUSTEES

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### Gary Custer, President



Hi, I'm Gary Custer (on the right, with my wife Becky). I'm President of the Trustees at FPCU for the 2025 – 2026 year. This is my 5<sup>th</sup> year serving on the Trustees, and I have served with many talented and dedicated servants of Christ. My wife Becky and I came to California in 2014, after retiring in 2012, to be closer to our son, Dr. Paul Custer, and our Grandson, Graham. We have not been disappointed, as this allowed us to be a part of their lives that we could not have had 2000 miles away. We joined FPCU in October 2019, after attending since Easter of that year. We enjoyed the preaching, the music, the people, and the opportunities we saw to serve Christ. Thank you, FPCU, for welcoming us here.

This picture is supposed to be of me, so that you would know me better, however I thought you would like to see one of the activities Becky and I enjoy at FPCU that helps us know others at FPCU better. We were in this "Group of 8". It was a time of "good eats, good conversations and just plain fun". If you would like to know others you worship with, why not be a part of "Group of 8". Contact Shawn Kathol, for further guidance.

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### Sue Frazee, Vice President



Sue Frazee and her husband, Steve, became members of FPCU in 1989. Their daughter, Sara, was baptized and raised in this church. Sadly, Steve passed away in 2018. Sue continues to live in the house he built for them with her two golden doodles. She keeps busy cruising, traveling with her friends, and playing bridge and other games. She is currently an elder and a trustee. She is chair of the Gather team and enjoys helping to provide fellowship opportunities for the congregation. Sue enjoys serving her church and prays that with the grace of God, she can continue to do so.



## Van Romine, Treasurer



Leads all IT activities for a membership association, including managing accounting staff, writing policies and procedures, interfacing with CPA firms, preparing for annual audits, and reporting to the Finance Committee each month.

## Shawn Kathol, Secretary



Shawn Kathol is happy to serve as Secretary on the Board of Trustees. Drawing on his background as a systems engineer/architect, Shawn enjoys tackling challenges and helping things run smoothly behind the scenes. Outside of church, he and his wife, Pamela, love camping and exploring the outdoors, spending time with their four kids and granddaughter, and hiking local trails with their energetic Husky, Piper.

## Paul Sindelar, Assistant Treasurer



Paul is our Assistant Treasurer. He is a retired Engineer. At FPCU, he has previously served as a Deacon, an Elder, and an Elder Trustee. He has also served as the head of Personnel. My prison photo is to the left.



## **Red Cross Blood Drive** **First Presbyterian Church** **of Upland**

**Location: Fellowship Hall**  
**869 N Euclid Ave**  
**Upland, CA 91786**

**Monday, September 8, 2025**  
**9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

Please visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter: FPCupland to schedule an appointment.

Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass](https://RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass) to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.



**Give blood 8/29 to 9/21 for 1 of 4 mystery tees with an iconic Red Cross x PEANUTS design, ltd. qty!**



11838 | Order ID: 940219 • Item ID: 9153722 • Qty: 1 of 1 • 8/29/25 - 2025-APC-0400-AR06 • 231118

**Download the Blood Donor App | [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org) | 1-800-RED CROSS**

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# WORSHIP WITH JIM SMIRL

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## OUR VISION: GROWING INTO CHRIST TOGETHER

At the heart of our community at First Presbyterian Church of Upland is a shared vision—one that centers on what it truly means to grow into Christ. This vision is not just a statement; it's a direction, a calling, and a shared commitment that shapes how we live, serve, and walk together in faith.

We begin with the call to be **Deeply Committed**. We long to be more than casual believers; we strive to be fully committed followers of Jesus Christ—100% Christians. This commitment touches every part of our lives as we seek to live out our faith authentically and wholeheartedly.

But commitment doesn't mean perfection. In fact, our vision recognizes that faith is a journey, not a destination. That's why we aim to be **Ever-Growing**. There is no finish line in our relationship with God—only forward movement. We believe that each day brings new opportunities to learn, deepen, and grow in the knowledge and love of Christ. Our joy is in the journey, and we walk it together, trusting that God is shaping us along the way.

Community is essential to this vision. We are **Deeply Connected** to one another through our shared life in Christ. Faith is not something we do alone—it is nurtured and strengthened in relationships. Whether in worship, fellowship, small groups, or acts of service, we grow best when we are together—sharing faith, hope, love, and life.

Finally, we are called to be **Ever-Sharing**. God has entrusted us with time, treasure, and talents—not for ourselves alone, but for His purposes. We are givers, not takers, joyfully offering what we have for God's glory. We share the Good News of Christ's grace with our neighbors and with the world, always looking for ways to reflect His love in both word and deed.

This is our vision. It is bold, it is challenging, and it is filled with grace. As we walk this path together, may we be shaped more and more into the likeness of Christ—deeply committed, ever-growing, deeply connected, and ever-sharing.



## GATHER WITH SUE FRAZEE

Your Gather team has had a busy July serving up the food and ambiance for the Summer Sunset Series. Everything was donated, and the potlucks were outstanding. We were able to provide the much-anticipated program without dipping into the general fund thanks to your generosity.



## AUGUST PRAYER CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1- Hallihan	2- Hansen
3	4- Harkins	5- Hebert	6- Hester	7- Hesterman	8- Holtrust	9- Honeter
10	11- Howie	12- Hunt	13- John	14- Joiner	15- Karros	16- Kathol
17	18- Kaufman	19- Kemngang	20- Kiertzner	21- King	22- Kler	23- Lutz.
24	25- Masiya	26- Mba	27- McClelland	28- McCormank	29-McCrea-Foster	30-McMullen
31						

**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.

Pray for those who are homebound or in convalescent care:

Dolores Karros, John Dooley, Beth Brinkley, Florence Lutz, Dick Davidson

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

## *August Birthdays*

02 Heather Decauwer  
02 Judy Haas  
05 Judy Pavalella  
07 Noel Anderson  
09 Presley McMullen  
10 Ebie Fogle  
12 Martha Hebert  
14 Bill Grist  
14 Randy Righetti  
16 Trevor Kemngang  
16 Lelivald Kemngang

19 Kevin Clinton  
23 Eken Mba  
28 Margaret Pilcher  
28 Becky Custer  
28 Jessie Masiya  
28 Van Romine  
31 Bill Howie

We would also like to extend birthday greetings to any other **August** 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!**

AUGUST						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Hart Hall Occupied
3 10am Worship with Communion	4 Personnel	5 9am <b>Knitters</b> 6pm <b>Serve</b> 7pm <b>Gather</b>  AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	6 9am Coco's Bible Study 5pm Elevate	7 5:30pm <b>Deacons</b> 6:30pm <b>GROW TEAM</b>	8	9
10 10am Worship	11	12 5pm <b>Worship</b> 6pm <b>Trustees</b> AA Groups- HH & upstairs Radiant Church GR	13 9am Coco's Bible Study 5pm Elevate	14 12:30pm <b>Preschool Board</b>	15 5-8pm Radiant Church HH	16
17 10 am Worship	18	19	20 9am Coco's Bible Study 5pm Elevate	21	22	23
24 10 am Worship	25	26 AA Groups- HH & upstairs  6:30pm <b>SESSION</b>	27 9am Coco's Bible Study 5pm Elevate	28	29	30
31 10 am Worship Healing Ser.						





**GROWING IN CHRIST,  
MAKING HIM KNOWN**

**Deacons**

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

**Trustees**

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

**Staff**

Noel Anderson, Senior Pastor  
Matt Shool, Youth Ministries  
Kevin Clinton, Children's Ministries  
Jannina Guzman, Office Manager  
Gael Lecce, Receptionist

**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

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