

July **NEWSLETTER** 2026

Dear friends,

As we conclude our summer series through Ecclesiastes—I hope you have enjoyed it as much as I have—we will continue exploring the theme of wisdom by turning to another biblical book that also has a reputation for making people uncomfortable: the book of James.

The title of this new series is “When Wisdom Sounds Harsh”. If Ecclesiastes often sounds weary, James frequently sounds blunt.

James does not mince his words. He speaks directly about anger, favoritism, wealth, suffering, speech, pride, patience, and prayer. He warns against self-deception. He challenges empty religion. He calls believers not merely to hear God’s Word, but to do it. For these reasons, James can sometimes feel unsettling. His words have a way of finding the places where our faith and our daily lives do not quite line up.

Yet James is not harsh for the sake of being harsh.

Beneath his sharp commands lies a deep pastoral concern. More than perhaps any other New Testament letter, James is interested in wholeness. In fact, one of the book’s key themes is the idea of being “double-minded”—living with divided loyalties, competing allegiances, and fragmented hearts. In his teaching, James wants believers to become people of integrity whose actions, words, and convictions are all moving in the same direction.

We live in a time when convictions are often measured by what we say, post, endorse, or oppose. James, however, is less interested in what we claim than in what we practice. He continually directs our attention toward the everyday realities of discipleship: how we speak to others, how we respond to adversity, how we treat those with less power, how we handle our resources, and whether our lives reflect the faith we profess.

This is one reason James has remained such an important voice within the Church. His teaching reminds us that Christian faith is not merely a collection of ideas to affirm. Instead, it is a way of life to be lived. Of course, James affirms that Christians do not earn God’s love through good behavior, nor do we save ourselves through our efforts. His concern is not with how people become Christians, but with what happens after they become Christians. When genuine faith takes root in our lives, James insists that it will bear fruit.

As we spend these summer weeks together in James, Tom and I hope we will hear his challenging and sometimes harsh words not as condemnation, but as an invitation—an invitation toward maturity, integrity, wisdom, and a faith that becomes visible in everyday life.

We look forward to exploring this practical and deeply relevant book with you.

Yours Aye,

Josh Mikelson Associate Pastor





Women's Ministry Team

The **Women's Ministry Team** is hosting a dinner and cornhole event (**PLEASE NOTE THE NEW DATE AND TIME**) on Wednesday, July 22 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm here at FPC! We will begin with a picnic style dinner and then have some fun playing cornhole. Please sign up in the Lobby at the Information Desk or outside the MPR. Questions? Please see Janet Young or Tasha Haley or call the office at 970-242-1923.

Exploring Scripture & Prayer



Hello, I am Jennifer McKenzie, I am the facilitator of Exploring Scripture and Prayer. We are a women's group who meet Monday mornings from 10:00 - 11:30 in the Gathering Place. We use Sunday's scripture passage and sermon for our conversations and close our time with prayer. We seek to learn how God's word can transform our head knowledge into heart knowledge. In order for us to be *Rooted in Jesus, Growing in His Love and Branching Out to Serve Others*. We invite you to come and join us.



Women's Caregiver Support Group

The **Women's Caregiver Support Group** meets the 3rd Friday of each month in the Fletcher Room at 9:30 am. If you are caring for a spouse or other person with dementia or a chronic illness, it helps to talk with others going through the same thing. We invite you to come to our group. Our next meet is July 17. For more information, please call Betty Rosenwald 970-314-9056.



Mission Team - Donations for the Pregnancy Center

The Pregnancy Center of Grand Junction opened in 1984. They offer free services and provide women with all available options to make an empowered and informed decision on their pregnancy including the first two years of that child's life with resources and services. We minister to men and women with the love of Christ and bring hope to every person we encounter. We believe everyone deserves respect and support and that every life has dignity and purpose.

During the month of July, the Mission Team is sponsoring a donation box for The Pregnancy Center.

Following is a list of items they currently need.

- **Boys clothing: 9-12 month**
- **Girls clothing: 9-12 month**
- **Newborn boy & girl clothing sets**
- **Baby towels sets**
- **New Bottles & Pacifiers**
- **Enfamil purple (Gentlease)**
- **Baby food, jars: fruit and vegetables, no meat please.**
- **Size 3 diapers**

Donation boxes are in the Lobby, and outside the MPR.



Installation of Josh Mikelson

Save the Date:

Installation Service for Josh Mikelson

The Session of First Presbyterian Church invites you to mark your calendars for **Wednesday, August 5**, as we gather for the installation of **Josh Mikelson** as Associate Pastor.

An installation service is a special occasion in the life of the church, celebrating God's call to ministry and the covenant shared between a pastor and congregation. Through worship, prayer, and fellowship, we will give thanks for God's faithfulness and look forward with hope to the ministry we will share together in the years ahead.

The celebration will include a service of worship as well as a time of food and fellowship. Whether you are a longtime member, a friend of the congregation, or a guest, **all are welcome** to join us for this joyful occasion.

Details are still being finalized, including the schedule for the evening. More information will be shared in the coming weeks. For now, please save the date and plan to be part of this meaningful celebration in the life of our church family.

Meat The Freshmen



**SAVE THE DATE! Meat the Freshmen
THURSDAY, AUGUST 20**

Each year we partner with The Christ Center and host a dinner for new CMU students. **VOLUNTEERS WILL BE NEEDED!** Keep an eye on the bulletin for more information as we get closer.

Pathways Birthday



FPC has committed to celebrating the birthdays of the people at Pathways homeless shelter every month. We are looking for volunteers on the following Fridays: for July 31st, August 28th, and September 25th at 5:30 pm. Time commitment is less than an hour. Please reach out to Tasha Haley for more information. tashahaley@firstpresgj.org



Senior Adult Ministry Luncheons

The SAM luncheon will be on Monday, July 13 from 11:30-1:15 pm in Fellowship Hall. This month will be a picnic themed potluck with hotdogs as the main dish, please bring a something to share. We will have a speaker from The Bravestone Project. The Bravestone Project is a victim centered, trauma informed 501c3 nonprofit organization located in Mesa County. Their focus is in helping victims/survivors of human trafficking and sexual traumas. Their mission is to help them find hope, healing, and restoration of their mind, body, and spirit.

GriefShare Support Groups



First Pres will be offering **two GriefShare support group** classes starting in August. One of the groups will be for men. One group will meet during the day. If you are interested in attending, please contact Charity Finnigsmier at sam@firstpresgj.org or call the church office at 970-242-1923. Details about these classes will soon be available.

Youth Summer Activities for 7th - 12th Grade

July 10 Outdoor movie night 8:00 -10:00 pm - outside the youth room. Come watch an outdoor movie and enjoy time together. Popcorn provided, bring a snack to share and your own seating.

July 27-31 Table in the Wilderness Camp, Centennial, Wyoming

If interested in any of these activities, please contact Sarah Queen
sarahqueen@firstpresgj.org

Kids Summer Activities

Mark your calendar for these activities for kids this summer!

July 1 – Water Fun Day for kindergarten through 6th grade. Come with your swimsuit and a towel! 2:30 – 4:30 pm in the Youth Room and east lawn

July 8 – Movie Day for kindergarten to 4th grade, 1 – 3:30 pm in the Youth Room

July 15 – Downtown Scavenger Hunt for 5th and 6th graders and their friends from 6 – 8 pm
We'll meet at the metal buffalo downtown and end at Enstrom's for some ice cream.

July 22 – Pottery painting at Angelo's for 5th and 6th graders from 2 – 4 pm. Cost is \$10.

For more info, contact Janet Young (janetyoung@firstpresgj.org) or
Tasha Haley (tashahaley@firstpresgj.org)

Outreach Information

Grand Valley Catholic Outreach - Position Open

One of our partners Grand Valley Catholic Outreach is looking for someone to fill a part-time (12-4, M-F) position as a Grant Writer. If you, or someone you know, is interested, experience is preferred, a college degree is required. You can email them with a letter of interest and resume to: careers@catholicoutreach.org. For more information regarding the position, you can email Emily at outreach@firstpresgj.org.

SAVE THE DATE! Hilltop's Annual Bash SATURDAY, AUGUST 29

Hilltop is hosting their Annual Bash to support Connection, a non-profit dedicated to helping young adults who are or are at risk of becoming homeless. Volunteers will be needed from August 28-30 for the event. More information to follow as we get closer to the dates.