

Arms of Faith

March
2026

Faith Presbyterian Church

Dear Faithfuls,

It's the day after the Crazy Sock Day, I mean, the Annual Meeting. As I reflect on what a great morning it was, I'm also aware that one or two people asked about the typographical error on the 2026 budget - that it wasn't 2025, but it was the 2026 budget. Several people proofed the Annual Report - and all of them missed it, because they are human. ☺ We see what we expect to see.

First, a big thank you to **Marc Wagoner**, our treasurer for the extraordinary work he does to keep our financial records up to date. As a former accountant, I deeply appreciate what he does.

Second, I want to lift up the messages of the budget. There is tremendous good news in our budget. For starters, our congregation pledged \$292,500 for 2026. We are averaging 90 people in worship currently. That's an average of \$3,250 per worshipper for 2026. Granted, that isn't how it plays out; some give more, some give less, all giving according to their ability. However, I listen to my colleagues who serve other churches talk about approving deficit budgets. They do not have faithful, generous stewards like we do. I am honored to serve a church of faithful givers!

The budget also shows that you respect and care for the staff. For 2026, session approved 4% raises for all staff. As a number of you have heard, one church I served did not give any raises for five years, which becomes actually a decrease in compensation. It is an honor to be amongst a congregation that takes care of its staff members.

And, a third message is the extraordinary mission giving of this congregation. (This actually comes from the 2025 profit and loss statement - we'll see what happens in 2026.) Marc produces a detailed chart of where our mission dollars have gone. Just a few examples: \$6,290 to One Great Hour of Sharing and \$5,900 to Christmas Joy; \$2,515 from the Thanksgiving offering, and \$14,847 has been used for the clothing giveaway (please note that we did apply for and receive a grant for this mission. What is significant is that we got a grant for *mission*, not for bricks and mortar.) \$13,029 was spent in general mission giving. Our total mission giving for 2025 was \$74,777! (Please note - this is from pledged giving and also extra giving - still extraordinary!)

Whoever said that numbers were boring? Not when you look at them and discover the good news: generous stewards, caring for staff, extraordinary mission giving! Yes, there was a minor typo in the Annual Report - but the rest of the news in that document was exceptional!

Peace,
Becky

Session Highlights

The metropolitan area got 8" of snow on February 19 – the night session was scheduled to meet. We postponed the meeting until February 26, which is after the deadline for newsletter submissions.

The session will be acting on several items including:

The elders' hopes and dreams for 2026 – let's hope we can make these a reality!

Hearing about a significant change at the Presbytery level – the combining of the Commission on Ministry and the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (**Bob Meyer** and **Doug Bogenhagen** are on these commissions.)

A report on the National Offerings which are being reduced from four offerings to three offerings – you will hear more about this soon.

Will an elder a day pray for our congregation throughout the year. (Let's hope they say 'yes!')

Please pray for your elders as they lead this church **to share Christ's love, spread Christ's Word and care for others.**

Sightings

It took a village to host the movie night featuring *The Way*. Thank you to **Lynda Shafer** for supplying the pop – and peanuts and M&Ms; to **Angie** and **Tim Madden** for bringing a real popcorn machine and making delicious popcorn; **Shayla Hall, Debbie Kippley** and **Marc Wagoner** for setting up the screen, the projector and the computer; and, then when the DVD wasn't working right, there was a combination of 5 of the people mentioned figuring out how to stream the movie. Thank you!

The Scouts Are Cooking Up Pasta!

Scouts 461G (i.e., the girls of the troop) are hosting a "Geti That Spaghetti" on Friday, March 20, 2026, from 5:30 to 8:30 pm, in our Family Life Center. This is a fundraiser for the troop, and also experience for the girls in cooking for a lot of people.

The menu will be spaghetti with marinara sauce, meatballs, if you want them, cheese sauce if you prefer, or butter sauce with Italian seasoning; garlic bread, salad with either Italian or ranch dressing, cookies and lemonade, iced tea or water.

Enjoy spaghetti? Want to support the Scouts? Then please come Friday evening, March 20, and enjoy a delicious meal! (More about tickets and cost soon!)

Your Session

Clerk of Session - Joe Seda

Discipleship	Lynda Shafer
Facilities	Matt Kasprzak Jim Willett Doug Bogenhagen
Fellowship	Joni Huddleston
Finance	Angie Madden
Human Res	Bob Meyer
Mission & Ev	Janice Miner
Worship	Al Zimmerman

Streaming Sunday Worship Service at 10:00 am

We continue to broadcast the worship service on Facebook. If you do not have computer access, you may listen to the service by calling 1-844-855-4444 and entering access code 716966#.





Holding Babies is a Clothing Giveaway "Job"

Many Giveaway shoppers come with their children and babies. It's very challenging to hold a baby in one arm and look through clothing with the other hand. Usually, our pastor takes on the very hard job (not!) of holding babies so that shoppers can shop freely. But, at the last Giveaway, the pastor was at a retreat and so **John O'Brien** fulfilled the Baby Holding job. Looks like he enjoyed it! Thank you, John!

Clothing Give Away Update

The next Give Away will be March 28. (Please note the change of date.) We will be sorting on March 4, 11, 25, April 8, 15 and 29.

Special thanks to Brad, Melanie, Bob, Ginny, Steve and Joe for helping to set up for the last Give Away. Thanks to every one who has donated or helped in any way. We couldn't do this without your support!!!!

John and Terri &
the Mission & Evangelism Committee



The next Lunch Bunch will be at
Spaghetti Works
8416 Park Dr., Ralston
on Friday, March 6th at 11:30 a.m.
Come and celebrate ??? Something.

Sign up at church by March 4th or
contact Sharon Fleming at 402 709-2103 or
sfleming43@aol.com for your reservation
or if you need a ride.

Faith Presbyterian Church

Becky Balestri, Pastor

8100 Giles Road, La Vista, NE 68128

402-331-6944

Web page: www.faith-presbyterian.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/faithpresby

Office hours: Monday - Thursday
9am - 5pm



March Birthdays

- March 6 Karen Seda
- March 9 Terri O'Brien
- March 9 Sandy Stiverson
- March 13 Ken Andersen
- March 13 Maynard Boehler
- March 17 Katelyn Norman
- March 19 David Wennstedt
- March 22 Pat Neubert
- March 24 Angie Madden
- March 26 Abby Hansen
- March 31 John Tresemer

Transitions Group

When a family member's memory starts to change and decline, it is a challenge for the people around them. If you are in this situation, Faith Church is here for you. A small group of members and friends meets monthly, all of whom have a family member with some form of dementia. We share our experiences. We listen. We comfort and console, and we even give a little advice.

If there is a member of your family that is transitioning to the next stage of life, a time when their memory isn't good, you are invited to be part of this group on the third Friday of every month, at 10:00 am in Room 1 – the comfy room. Coffee is always served.

Questions?

Please call Becky Balestri at 402-709-0568.

WHAT IS A PILGRIMAGE WEEKEND?

What Is A "Pilgrimage" Weekend? You may have heard about "pilgrimage" and wondered what it is like. It is a renewal weekend similar to a Roman Catholic Cursillo or a Methodist Walk to Emmaus. Great Plains Pilgrimage is held at Camp Calvin Crest near Fremont, Nebraska, where we sleep in lodge rooms and eat great food. Transportation can be provided, to help you disconnect from the day-to-day secular world. You are invited to "Come as You Are"! Just be yourself, be accepted and be loved. God will meet you there. Throughout this very meaningful weekend, God will surround you with His love. You'll experience grace, music, laughter, worship, and various talks to help you find the path God has chosen for you.

The weekend is an experience that can act as a stepping stone, to help you return to your own daily environments spiritually nourished. Men and women are inspired to love one another more deeply as they serve the Lord, however each individual person feels called by God to serve others. Come join others on their faith journeys and be blessed. Our next Pilgrimage weekend will begin at 11:00 a.m. Friday, March 20, 2026. A special closing ceremony will complete the event by 3:30 p.m. Sunday, March 22. For more information or for registration forms, please contact Chrissy Story at the following email address: gppcommunications1@gmail.com. You can also contact Chuck or Lynda Shafer, Angie Madden, or Al Zimmerman.



*Our lifework is sharing Christ's love,
spreading Christ's Word, caring for others.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 5:00pm Table Tennis - FLC 6:00 pm Crossroad Connection	2 6:30 pm Pickleball 6:30 A Cappella Omaha	3 10:00 am "Right Sizing" seminar - FH 6:00 pm Scouts	4 7:00 am Campus Life 9:00 am Sorting clothes 10:00 am Yesterday's Kids 11:00 am Chair Exercises 1:00 pm Mission/Evang meeting 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	5 11:00 am Walking Club 6:00 pm Table Tennis - FLC Committee Meetings 4:30 pm Worship mtg 5:00 pm Fellowship mtg 6:00 pm Discipleship mtg 7:00 pm Facilities mtg	6 8:30 am Men's Donuts & Dialogue 11:30 am Lunch Bunch	7 9:00 am - 3:30 pm Pilgrimage mtg - FH
8 Daylight Saving Time begins 5:00pm Table Tennis - FLC	9 5:45 pm Book Club 6:30 pm Pickleball 6:30 A Cappella Omaha	10 1:00 pm PW 6:00 pm Scouts 6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	11 7:00 am Campus Life 10:00 am Yesterday's Kids 11:00 am Chair Exercises 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	12 11:00 am Walking Club 6:00 pm Table Tennis - FLC 7:00 pm Finance meeting	13 8:30 am Men's Donuts & Dialogue 7:00 pm River City Squares	14 8:00 am Men's Breakfast
15 5:00pm Table Tennis - FLC	16 6:30 pm Pickleball 6:30 A Cappella Omaha	17  6:00 pm Scouts 6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	18 7:00 am Campus Life 9:00 am Sorting clothes 10:00 am Yesterday's Kids 11:00 am Chair Exercises 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	19 11:00 am Walking Club 6:00 pm Table Tennis - FLC 7:00 pm Session meeting	20 8:30 am Men's Donuts & Dialogue 10:00 am Transitions Group 5:30 pm Scouts Pasta Feed FLC 6:00 pm A cappella Omaha FH	21 9:00 am - 9:00 pm A cappella Omaha - FH
22 5:00pm Table Tennis - FLC	23 6:30 pm Pickleball 6:30 A Cappella Omaha	24 6:00 pm Scouts 6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	25 7:00 am Campus Life 9:00 am Sorting clothes 10:00 am Yesterday's Kids 11:00 am Chair Exercises 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE 9:00 am	26 11:00 am Walking Club 6:00 pm Table Tennis - FLC	27 8:30 am Men's Donuts & Dialogue 7:00 pm River City Squares	28 9:00 am Clothing Giveaway
29  PALM SUNDAY 5:00pm Table Tennis - FLC	30 6:30 pm Pickleball 6:30 A Cappella Omaha	31 6:00 pm Scouts 6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	Sunday Worship 10:00 am Fellowship 9:30 - 9:55 am			