

# WORSHIP LEADERS



Thank you Tom Bennett for preaching on July 6th. Your sermon on Freedom's Foundation was most appropriate on this Fourth of July holiday.



Thank you Pastor Paul Thomason for leading us in worship on July 13th and teaching us who our neighbors are.



Thank you Jean Williams for leading worship on July 20th and teaching us to be a Mary along with being a Martha.



Thank you Rev. Connie Bandy for preaching on July 27th. We enjoyed your message on the importance of prayer.



How excited we were to have Rev. Connie Bandy's granddaughter Bea join us again on July 27th. We were also delighted to meet Rev. Bandy's friend and neighbor Evelyn.



Thank you Ron and Mary Clow for serving communion on July 27th with cubes of bread and cups of wine (the pre-pandemic way).



Thank you Ron Clow for representing the Elders and introducing and sharing some background information on Pastor Steve Anderson on his first day as our Pastor on August 3rd.

August 3: Pastor Steve Anderson  
August 10: Dr. Jim Dunnan  
August 17: Mr. Ron Clow  
August 24: Pastor Steve Anderson—Communion  
August 31: Reverend Connie Bandy

## PRESBYTIDINGS August-September 2025

Worship: 10:30 a.m.

This Newsletter is a publication of First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City IL.

Steve Anderson: Pastor

Website: [www.firstpresbygibson.org](http://www.firstpresbygibson.org)

Meladee Ferguson: Executive Secretary

Mary Clow: Ministry Coordinator

Elizabeth Cope: Administrative Assistant



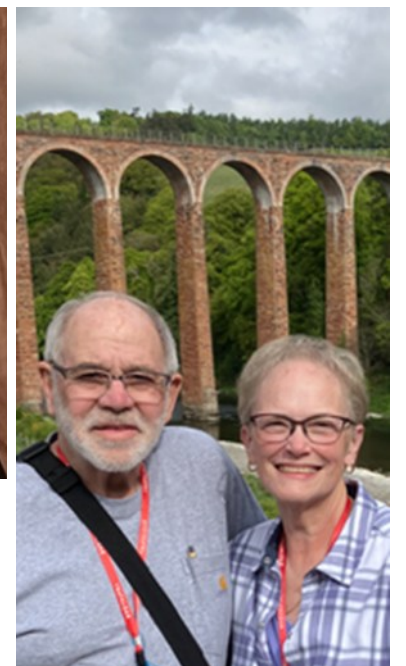
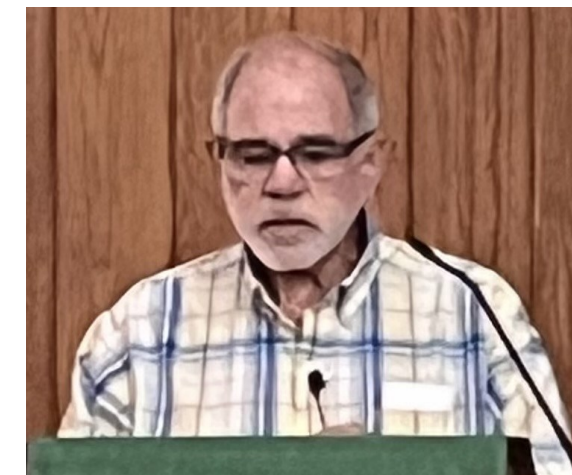
The Elders are excited to announce that they have hired Pastor Steve Anderson to serve as our pastor as of August 3, 2025. Pastor Anderson has been the Moderator of the Elders for several months and has 38 years of experience serving several Illinois churches. He has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, a Master's degree in Divinity and a Doctoral Degree in Ministry. He and his wife Jill live in the Loda area and have a blended family of 6 children and 6 grandchildren.

Pastor Anderson will be preaching two Sundays per month and on holidays, serving communion, making hospital or home visits as needed and will continue as our moderator. Pastor Anderson looks forward to helping us continue our mission work in the Community, and proclaiming the good news of God's love, forgiveness, and mercy.

A Congregational luncheon was held on the 3rd of August welcoming Pastor Anderson to our church.

Pastor Anderson can be reached at 217-737-4948 or by email at [pastorsteveanderson@gmail.com](mailto:pastorsteveanderson@gmail.com).

Pastor Steve Anderson's first sermon was titled "From Wall Street to Heaven's Gate" and enjoyed by all. The important point to remember was "The farmer was not called a fool because of his ambition to acquire more wealth but because he placed an infinite value on finite things, neglecting his relationship with God."



Pastor Steve and wife Jill



AUGUST—SEPTEMBER 2025

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

17 10:30 a.m. Worship with Mr. Ron Clow  Corn Belt Shrine Day North Park	18	19  4-7-Farmer's Market	20	21  5:30 Session	22	23 8-12-Farmer's Market
24 10:30 a.m. Worship with Pastor Steve Anderson— Communion will be served	25 Meladee will be away from the church office at Gai- ley Eye Clin- ic	26  4-7-Farmer's Market	27	28	29	30 8-12-Farmer's Market
31 10:30 a.m. Worship with Reverend Connie Bandy	1 Church of- fice will be closed in ob- servance of Labor Day	2  4-7 -Farmer's Market	3	4	5	6 8-12-Fermer's Market
7 10:30 a.m. Worship with Pastor Steve Anderson	8	9  4-7-Farmer's Market	10	11	12  5 p.m. Gibson City's Home- coming Tailgat- ing party	13 8-12-Farmer's Market  GC Harvest Fest
14	15	16  4-7-Farmer's Market	17	18	19  GC Friday Nights Under the Lights Car	20 8-12-Farmer's Market

First Presbyterian Church of  
Gibson City

See us on Facebook

Meladee's working hours:  
Meladee will be in the church  
office from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00  
p.m. Monday through Friday.

Elizabeth's working hours:  
Tuesday, Wednesday and Fri-  
day 8:30 to 1:30

Email addresses as noted below:

Meladee:  
[fpcgc60936@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpcgc60936@sbcglobal.net)  
[Office@firstpresbygibson.org](mailto:Office@firstpresbygibson.org)

Elizabeth:  
[ecope@firstpresbygibson.org](mailto:ecope@firstpresbygibson.org)

Pastor Steve:  
[pastor-  
steveandeson@gmail.com](mailto:pastor-steveandeson@gmail.com)

Phone #: 217-737-4948

FUN FACTS ABOUT AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

August has changed its number of days multiple times. In the ten-month Roman calendar, the months all had either 30 or 31 days, totaling 304 days in the year. Not only did Pompilius add January and February to the calendar, but he also reduced the number of days in August down to 29. It wasn't until Julius Caesar introduced the Julian calendar that it was left with 31 days, and it's stayed the same ever since!

August is also a little bit unique, most of the time at least. In a standard year, there is no other month that begins on the same day of the week as August. In a leap year, however, August begins on the same day of the week as February.

The full moon closest to the Autumnal Equinox, typically in September, is popularly known as the Harvest Moon. The name comes from the fact that the moonrise occurs shortly after sunset on these nights, providing an abundance of bright moonlight early in the evening. This was traditionally helpful to farmers harvesting their summer-grown crops, hence the name Harvest Moon.

International Talk Like a Pirate Day is celebrated globally on September 19th. This fun and quirky holiday encourages people to converse and jest in the manner of classic seafaring pirates. Originating in 1995 by John Baur and Mark Summers, it gained popularity when humor columnist Dave Barry covered it in a 2002 article. The day is marked by pirate-themed events, parties, and even special promotions, adding a touch of whimsy and swashbuckling fun to the usual routine.



HAPPY AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER!!!

BIRTHDAYS  
AND  
ANNIVERSARIES

August	September
12: John and Ruth Davis	17: Gene Roth
18: Valeree Johnson	17: Danny Heustis
21: Teresa Alexander	21: John Kirkpatrick
24: Tim and Janice Swanson	26: Val Hunt
31: Sandy Brucker	26: Ted Swanson

Val Hunt and friends enjoying Malt Madness on Tuesday July 22nd at Villas of Hollybrook.





## THANK YOUS!

Dear Session:

Thank you for the gift card for my birthday! I also wanted to express my gratitude for all of the warm welcomes I have received since beginning working for the church. I have enjoyed getting to know several members and look forward to meeting everyone else at the welcoming celebration for Pastor Steve Anderson!

Thank you, Elizabeth Cope

*Meladee, Thank you so much for sending me the Presbytidings each month. I really enjoy reading it and looking at the pictures. You do such a great job of putting it all together. (I have help, Mary Jo!) Enclosed is a contribution to help with the postage. Blessings, Mary Jo Kingsley (Thank you Mick and Mary Jo for your generous contribution! So glad you are enjoying the newsletter. It is a labor of love for Mary Clow and myself.)*

Dear First Presbyterian Church, Thank you so much for this scholarship. The funds will help me pursue my passion! Anna Warren

*I am very grateful to have been awarded the Presbyterian Church scholarship. Your faith in my potential inspires me to strive for excellence. This support will enable me to concentrate fully on my studies. Thank you again for believing in my future. I am committed to making the most of this opportunity. Love, Kyra Kietzman*

Dear First Presbyterian Church, Thank you so much for the \$100 we received in the mail. What a nice surprise! It was so thoughtful of you to think of the community band. We LOVE playing and are glad everyone enjoys our music! Your generosity is very appreciated! Kelly Tompkins and Holly Retherford

Frank Joseph Harwood's family would like to thank you for your thoughtfulness and kindness following his passing. Your support has been a great source of comfort and is appreciated more than we can express.

Eric Harwood and family  
(Frank's brother)

*On behalf of the ACT Theater Company I would like to thank your for your generous donation of \$720 for our summer theater program. On July 25th and 26th, we are presenting Seussical, courtesy of MTI and Space Pirates!, courtesy of Beat by Beat Press, as part of a Double Feature! At 7:00 p.m. Space Pirates will begin, with Seussical starting around 8 pm at the North Park Pavillion in Gibson City. We hope to see you there! None of this would be possible without your support. Thanks again for helping to keep the performing arts alive in our area. If you have any questions on our future plans, please do not hesitate to contact one of our board members. My cell number is 847-949-8287. Sincerely, Melanie Dammkoehler, ACT VP/Patron Coordinator –Board Members:*  
Amanda Broaddus  
Melanie Dammkoehler  
Dean Kidd Ann Spangler  
Cathy Steidinger Todd Thomas  
Megan Whitehouse  
Walker Willis

Thank you so much for the Gibson Bucks. They sure do come in handy and are so appreciated.  
Meladee Ferguson

*Thank you very much for the Gibson Bucks I was given from the drawing. It is greatly appreciated and will be put to good use. Thank you again, Sharla Williams*

Members of the First Presbyterian Church, Thank you so much, from the bottom of our hearts, for your kind words on the card you sent, and the donation in our son, Frank Harwood's name. Your thoughtfulness and generosity are much appreciated by the entire family, and we are especially grateful for your continued prayers of healing. Thanks again. God Bless, Randy and Nancy Monroe (Mary Clow's sister and Frank's Mom)



Our Administrative Assistant Elizabeth Cope and Husband Corey and daughter Abigale recently adopted a new puppy from Ruby's Rescue and Retreat. We understand from Abigale his name will be Donut. What a sweet and precious addition to their family.

## LUNCHEON FOR OUR NEW PASTOR

Catered by: Drummer Creek Catering



Beef Brisket  
Smoked Chicken  
BBQ Sauce  
Dinner Rolls  
Cheesy Potatoes  
Green Beans  
Corn Casserole  
Fresh Fruit Cup  
Brownie  
Chocolate Chip Bar  
Ice Tea  
Lemonade  
Coffee  
Water



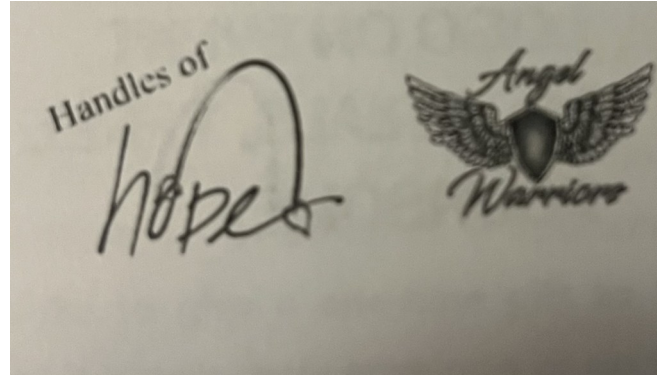
## SO MANY WAYS WE HELP OTHERS



Our Church donated \$1,000 to the Fundraiser for Beth Hansen and family after Beth suffered a stroke. Beth is one of the most delightful cashiers at County Market and has a long road to recovery.



Our church donated to the GoFundMe Fundraiser for Nora Harroun who passed away at the age of 35 from complications of open heart surgery. Nora is the wife of Ben Harroun, one of the owners of the Harvest Moon Drive In where her service was held. Nora's favorite movie "Pride and Prejudice" will be shown.



Our Church will be one of the Gold sponsors for the 18 "Hole of Hope" golf outing held by the local Handles of Hope and Angel Warriors on August 23rd at Indian Springs Golf Course. Their mission is to provide hygiene packs and supplies for people struggling through the year in Ford County. They are always in need of blankets, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, soap etc.



Our Church donated \$100 to each of the 42 volunteer community band members in appreciation for the five "Music in the Park" performances held in June at the North Pavilion. The band is sponsored by the GCMS Band Boosters. (See thank you note on Thank You! Page.)



## POETRY PAGE

### AT PEACE IN MY SHEPHERD'S ARMS

By: Mike Hastings (9-30-06)

At peace in my Shepherd's arms  
This lost sheep has finally come home.  
Now when the darkness comes calling  
I know it won't find me alone.

Once living without having life  
I was lost in both day and night.  
Alone and afraid of them each  
I couldn't tell darkness from light.

Then, in response to the Shepherd's voice  
I chose to heed His grace giving call.  
I found the true light of his saving love  
When I chose the true Lord of all.

The light of that love now surrounds me  
Since I've given to Him all control.  
His light lights the way there before me  
It drives out the darkness of soul.

At peace in my Shepherd's arms  
I abide now in comfort and ease.  
I found the best way to walk towards the light  
Was to approach the light on my knees.

At peace in my Shepherd's arms  
The darkness no longer has claim.  
Night or day, Christ lights my way  
With Him it's always the same.



### AN ARTICLE IN THE CULLMAN DAILY BY: Candace Schultze

Today the enemy whispered:  
"Where is your God now?"  
"If He's good, how could this happen?"  
And for a moment, I listened.  
For a moment, I felt the weight of a silence I  
couldn't understand.

But then—I remembered the truth.  
We live in a world wrecked by brokenness.  
Not by God, but by sin, by chaos, by the fall.  
This is not the home He created us for.

And still—I believe with everything in me:  
Jesus was there.

I believe He was in those cabins.  
He was in that current.  
He was in the rising water.  
He knows where.

When the darkness came, He held each girl  
close.  
When fear rose in their chest, He whispered  
peace.  
If their hands trembled, He took them in His  
own.  
If they cried out, He answered.  
If they felt alone—they weren't. Not for a second.

He was the lifeboat their eyes never saw.  
He was the arms holding them when no one  
else could.

And when their time came, I believe—  
He carried them Home Himself.

(Our Church donated \$5,000 to the Presbytery USA Disaster Fund to help with the Texas floods. The Guadalupe River rose 26 feet in just 45 minutes resulting in 136 deaths including children from Camp Mystic, a girls summer camp. Our church was featured on WCIA Channel 3 news for making the donation.)



FACTS AND FIGURES

MISSION COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS – JULY, 2025

<b>JULY</b>	
Year to date June.....	\$92,385.00
Team Building Breakfast 6-22.....	\$ 114.00
Little Achievers Daycare.....	\$ 5,000.00
Mary Clow (Nephews Funeral).....	\$ 1,000.00
Nancy Monroe (Sons Funeral).....	\$ 1,000.00
Eric Harwood (Brothers Funeral).....	\$ 1,000.00
Presbytery Disaster Fund Texas Floods.....	\$ 5,000.00
Phil/Elizabeth Birthday Gifts.....	\$ 100.00
Team Building Breakfast 6-24.....	\$ 233.00
Community Band Members.....	\$ 4,300.00
Beth Hansen Fundraiser.....	\$ 1,000.00
Team Building Breakfast 7-27.....	\$ 190.00
Nora Harroun Fundraiser.....	\$ 1,000.00
<b>Subtotal.....</b>	<b>\$112,322.00</b>

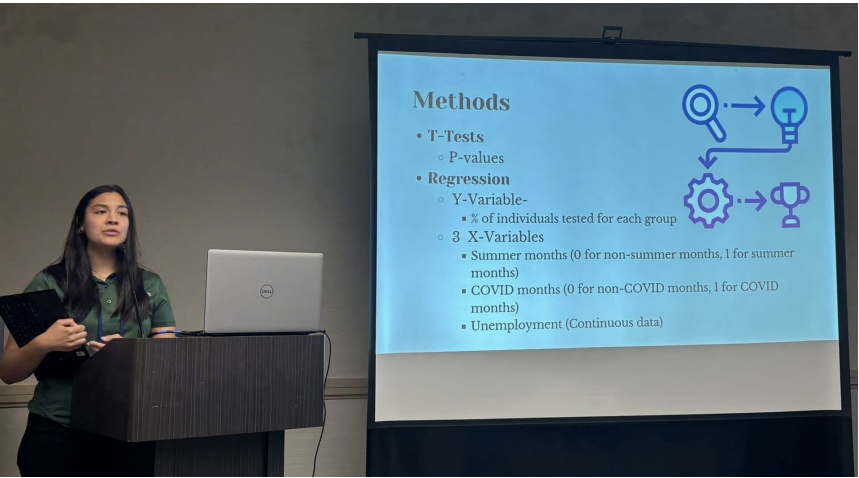
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Collection -GIBSON AREA SERVICE ASSOCIATION (GASA)

The Gibson Area Service Association was formed to replace the Gibson City Rotary Club which folded in October of 2023. Currently there are 50 active members and 31 supportive members. The organization was the idea of the dedicated local Rotarians who wanted to continue to serve the Gibson City Area. The mission is twofold. Help fundraise for projects and provide physical labor for community projects. They will also accept requests from other organizations to provide this type of support. The active membership dues are \$20 and supportive member dues are \$30 with all dues staying in the local community. The overall goal is to do something good in Gibson City. They are in the process of finishing up the agility ramp and tire tunnel at the dog park near the fishing pond area at the Jordan Industrial Park. They are also looking to make improvements to the Gibson City soccer fields. Upcoming fundraising events includes a Koozie handout on October 10<sup>th</sup> and Roctober Fest on October 11<sup>th</sup> at Marks on First. Our church recently donated \$500 for packets of flower seeds that were handed out on the street corners of Gibson City on April 11<sup>th</sup> for GASA’s Seed Day Fundraiser. Mary Clow, Jean Williams and Sharon Heavilin are members.



FALL IS ON THE WAY!

MORE CHURCH NEWS



Congratulations to Anneliese Kerchenfaut who was able to present her undergraduate research at the Applied Research and Economic Association annual meeting in Denver, Colorado.



Pictured above: Aizza Kerchenfaut is the winner of the Bible Word Search Puzzle for **JULY**. There were twenty one (23) who entered this month. Anyone receiving this newsletter is eligible to win a \$25 gift card to County Market, Subway OR Dairy Queen. Please see the **ORANGE** colored card in the center of this publication to play. Turn it into the church office by **SEPTEMBER 5TH!** Not at the church: mail it or place in the black box outside the south east church door. Be certain to read the Bible verses attached to each puzzle.



Addison Kerchenfaut was named Employee of the Month at Villas of Hollybrook. Addison is a hard-working, compassionate caregiver. She always gives 100%. The staff loves having her on their team.



Thank you Sandy Fairchild for playing the organ on July 13th while Beverly had the day off.



## THANK YOU FROM THE CLOWS

Words cannot express my sincere appreciation for the love and kindness Ron and I were shown by our Church Family in the loss and tragic death of my nephew Battalion Fire Chief Frank Harwood in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. This includes the donations made to me, to my twin sister Nancy and to my nephew Eric to help with travel costs and donations to the Red and Blue Foundation that coordinated and paid for the funeral services. We would also like to thank everyone for their visits and calls and the many cards and messages received during this sad time. I would especially like to thank Meladee Ferguson, Jean Williams, Sharla Williams and Elizabeth Cope.

My nephew was always my hero but is now a hero to the world. He is the oldest son of my twin sister and grew up in Wisconsin and served in the Army National Guard where he met his wife Meghan also serving in the National Guard. They served in Iraq together and after returning home, decided to get married and move to Coeur d'Alene. He then joined the Kootenai County Fire Department serving for 17 years working his way up to Battalion Fire Chief. They have two daughters.

The letter from Frank's Uncle Paul Harwood on the next page explains what we experienced upon our arrival at Coeur d'Alene. The Celebration of Life was amazing. Frank's casket was placed on top of a firetruck draped in black and driven to a golf resort where the funeral was held followed by Frank's 21 family members on a chartered bus. Citizens lined the streets with flags to show their respect. We were greeted at the resort by 3,000 additional firemen, policemen and army personnel standing at attention in dress uniform lining the road to the open-air facility overlooking Lake Coeur d'Alene. Greeting us inside was a 150 drum and bagpipe band and three army helicopters were flying overhead performing the "Missing Man Formation Flyby". The service was attended by 500 people inside and 500 people outside who were watching on a monitor. Frank's wife, brother and 3 friends spoke and a letter from his mother was read. The family was then taken by bus to the cemetery, where he received military burial honors including a 21-gun salute. Upon returning to the resort, Frank's favorite band was playing, food and drinks were served, and several yard games were being played by the many firemen and children in attendance. Frank loved being outside and playing yard games with family and friends. It is something Frank would have wanted.

It was apparent Frank was loved and touched many lives. One young lady on social media wrote he was her angel as she remembered his calm voice and blue eyes as he cut her out of a vehicle after a car accident. The bond between firefighters is amazing and they will not forget their fallen brother. He will be remembered in his community as a family man, leader, and firefighter. We ask for continued prayers for Frank's family as we try to live our lives without Frank but in the way he led his life. He will be missed, but not forgotten.

With great love, Ron and Mary Clow



## FRANK JOSEPH HARWOOD

*This was published in the Coeur d'Alene Newspaper*

To the wonderful people of Coeur d'Alene... the families and friends of both John Morrison Jr. and Frank Harwood stumbled into your city full of shock, sadness and yes, for some of us, anger. But something wonderful happened in the midst of this tragedy. It was you, the citizens of this small but tight community. The stories are endless. Families moving into a hotel and donating their homes for family members and friends coming from out of town. Complete strangers picking up restaurant tabs when they heard we were eating there. The endless lines of people that filled the streets for both services. The spontaneous hugs and tears when learning who we were.

Obviously, the two services were full of tributes and stories about John and Frank. Those incredible eulogies helped all of us start to move towards healing. The roller coaster of emotions is far from over for many of us who knew these brave men, but your overflowing kindness and many acts of love also helped immensely. Sadness does not last... Love does. On Behalf of all of us from both families, Thank you and God Bless!

Uncle Paul & Aunt Janice Harwood, Hayesville, N.C.

