FIRST UNITED
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Called to be a Light on the Hill

October 26, 2026

Dear Church Family ,

WE ARE READY! Well, we are almost ready.

We are grateful to the committee that secured the call for our new senior pastor, Rev. Jessie Light-Wells, into the community of this church. We are thankful to the volunteers who have worked throughout the year to keep our facilities and grounds, our missions and ministries, our finances and staff well cared for. We witnessed God's grace in the extraordinary gift of Rev. Stewart Smith who graciously nurtured our faith family through the interim process. So, we are nearly ready to "Turn the Page To the Next Chapter" in the life of First United Presbyterian Church.

As you know, our church functions much like any successful family. We coordinate schedules, invite guests to our home, meet friends where they are, support our community, demonstrate love toward one another, tell stories and – we make a family budget. This budget helps us plan for essential needs and informs how our income is directed. The FUPC church family budget for 2027 is $ 945,566. Significant adjustments to the budget were made both on the revenue side and the expense side to more closely match historical spending and anticipated revenues. While these changes have netted a small decrease in the overall budget total, we will need an increase in giving from the congregation of close to $20,000 which is a 3% increase from last year. A few of the major changes made to the budget totals include:

1. A decrease of 30,000 on the unpledged offering total on the revenue side. Several who made generous unpledged gifts during 2025 chose to pledge in 2026.
2. A decrease in maintenance line items in the properties budget of 30,000 on the expense side. Our building maintenance accounts have been replenished, and those funds will be used in the future.
3. 3.6% Cost of Living Increase for all staff (which matches the increase for Social Security for 2027).
4. Higher costs for required Board of Pensions family medical benefits for Called and Installed pastors necessitated increases for the Senior Pastor and the anticipated Associate Pastor.
5. Increases were made in the line items for the Youth Mission Trip and the Youth Ministry program to accommodate the needs of a growing youth program.

Our income must be ensured to meet this budget, and our pledges determine financial security for the coming year. It's that simple. "Turning the Page" will necessitate that each of us prayerfully consider increasing our pledges by 3 %. If you have not pledged in the past, we strongly urge you to help meet our church's financial goals in this way.

On **Sunday, November 1st,** Tom Verdery and Stewart Smith will present the Challenge Budget on behalf of the Stewardship Committee immediately following our worship service. They will allow time for open discussion and answer any of your questions. **Sunday, November 8th,** is Dedication Sunday, when you can bring your pledge cards forward during worship. If you are unable to attend you may complete your pledge online (instructions are on the back of the enclosed pledge card).

We are ready to perceive something new, something challenging, something vibrant and relevant, something blessed. We cannot know what God has in store for our faith community until we enter into the next chapter. We have experienced God's grace through the many hands and hearts that have supported our church with their time, talents and generous donations. "The Next Chapter" at FUPC will require all hands, and faithful hearts, on deck to sail into 2030 when we celebrate our bicentennial. Let's pledge to generously foster God's plan for us.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the Co-Chairs of the Stewardship Campaign. We are humbly honored by the faith placed in us to encourage generous stewardship.

Yours in Christ, the hope of our changing world,

David and Gayl

David and Gayl Clay