

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Pastor's Update

This past year has been marked by both meaningful change and deep faithfulness. In 2025, you called me as your pastor, welcomed new staff, celebrated 170 years of ministry, and continued to care for one another and serve our neighbors with generosity and compassion. Through moments of transition – including Colleen’s retirement and the pause of our preschool – you remained rooted in your identity as a community gathered by God.



Our Annual Congregational Meeting gives us the opportunity to reflect on that shared life and attend to the business that sustains it. At the meeting, we will hear reports on the life of the church, receive a financial update, review my Terms of Call, and hear from the Nominating Committee as we prepare for the election of elders and deacons. We will also share updates on staffing and look ahead to the priorities guiding our life together in 2026.

Thank you for your trust, your faithfulness, and your commitment to this community. It is an honor to serve as your pastor, and I am excited to see what God will do among us in the year ahead.

Adult Discipleship - Allie Shoulders

Adult Discipleship continued to grow through shared learning, worship, and prayer. We strengthened an emerging tradition of gathering with our brothers and sisters at The Cove, coming together for learning and worship. In late January, we welcomed gifted teacher and biblical scholar Dr. Sandra Richter, who taught and preached on the book of Amos.



Throughout the year, Adult Discipleship partnered with congregational leaders to create accessible, participatory prayer practices for our church and community. These included Prayer Walking– *Blessing Our Block and Beyond*, Stations of the Cross in the Pacific Avenue courtyard, public scripture and prayer chalking, and a Day of Prayer in September in conjunction with the international 24/7 Week of Prayer. Together, these practices invited our congregation to pray for our neighbors, the world, and “the least of these.”

Caring Ministries - Ashley Patel

Caring Ministries has been a humbling and joyful place to serve this year, grounded in the call to be the hands and feet of Jesus so that no one walks alone. Since beginning this role in mid-October, I have been deeply moved by the way our congregation consistently shows up for one another with compassion and care.

Throughout the year, Caring Ministries accompanied people in times of illness, grief, and transition; offered prayer in worship and through our prayer chain; served communion to those who are homebound; and reached out through simple but meaningful acts of presence. From welcoming newcomers and supporting our military members, to visiting the lonely, celebrating new life, and offering comfort through memorial services, these ministries embodied Christ’s love in tangible ways.



Would you like to be part of what God is doing through Caring Ministries in 2026?



Community Outreach

Together, we express God’s compassion in our local community by serving the vulnerable and loving our neighbors. We address food insecurity through partnerships with FISH Food Pantry, Redwood Empire Food Bank, and Redwood Gospel Mission, and support immigrant communities through Catholic Charities and VIDAS. Through hands-on ministries—like the Nomadic Shelter, Bags of Blessings for the unhoused, and Angel Tree and ice-skating events with Kid Street School —we are shaped as much by this work as those we serve.

Global Missions

Our congregation continues its tradition of giving 11% of donated income to global and local missions, supporting six partners in places including Lebanon, Mozambique, and Colombia. Through the Oleari Scholarship Fund, we also supported advanced training for five emerging pastors and church leaders, including Tania Gonzalez, who visited us and shared about her work in Bosnia. Each week we lift up a mission partner in prayer, living out our call to serve the whole world God loves.

Children’s Ministries - Darcy Fluitt

This past year in First Kids has been marked by deepening community and connection. Families have formed meaningful bonds, and new families quickly discover multiple ways to connect beyond Sunday mornings—through Friday Night Supper Club, family worship experiences, camping, prayer groups, and joyful all-church events. These shared experiences help children feel known, safe, and eager to invite friends.



In this relational environment, children are growing as disciples of Christ—engaging Scripture, learning to use their Bibles, leading in worship, asking honest faith questions, and forming their own faith. As one preteen said after Easter, “The story is incredible when you actually think about it! The son of God defeated death... The story is INCREDIBLE!”

Youth Ministries - Cory Myers

Youth Ministries has been active in helping students experience Christ’s redeeming love and live it out in the world. This year, highlights included an international Mexico mission trip over Spring Break and ongoing local service through our Monthly Sunday Service Day. We’ve been moving from an event-driven approach toward nurturing a lived, everyday faith, and God is clearly at work among our middle and high school students.

Students participated in Bible study, fellowship, service projects, trips, summer camp, and special events, including ski trips, Zephyr Point camp, Mexico home-building, Middle School Olympics, regional outings, river days, overnights, and Christmas celebrations. We are deeply grateful for the faithful leadership of weekly volunteers Ava Stubblefield and Emily Stevens.





Building and Grounds

We held our first-ever Beautification Day, when volunteers gathered in fellowship while spreading fresh bark chips across the property, enhancing both the appearance of our grounds and the spirit of community. Another major accomplishment was the long-needed replacement of exterior classroom doors and the fire panel with modernized systems, significantly improving the safety and security of our building and all who use it.

Personnel

We are grateful for the leadership of interim pastor Dan Price during the first part of the year and have been blessed by our strong partnership with Pastor Aeryn as our new Head of Staff. 2025 marked 14 years of Colleen Soldate’s ministry on staff at FPC and she retired with much rejoicing in September. We were thrilled to welcome a new Director of Caring Ministries, Ashley Patel, who brings years of experience in social work as well as deep personal compassion. We were also joined by a new custodian, Fred Vega, a veteran and father of six girls.

Music & Worship



Chris Studer

It has been a joy to serve alongside the music staff at FPC—Doug, Deborah, Matthew, and John—whose gifts, experience, and mutual respect create a rich and worshipful music ministry. I am deeply grateful for our worship team and dedicated audio/visual volunteers.

This year we introduced new, theologically rich music influenced by rhythm and blues and contemporary gospel, including works from The Porter’s Gate, supported by the steady leadership of drummer John Marks. In November 2025, we also launched a weekly Wednesday evening Vespers service, offering space for singing, silence, and prayer, and introducing contemplative music—some newly written—alongside familiar hymns from Sunday worship. With elder Kayla Pastor, we introduced a new Blue Christmas service, which we plan to make an annual tradition.

Doug Wiggers

Chancel Choir participation remained strong, with focused preparation for major services including Easter, Christmas, the Christmas Concert, Legacy Sunday, and Pastor Aeryn’s Ordination and Installation. The choir’s leadership added depth and meaning to these significant moments in the life of the congregation.



The Handbell Choir continued to grow in both confidence and participation, becoming a stronger and more consistent presence in worship.

We also increased the use of instrumental music in special services, enriching worship through a broader range of musical expression and support for congregational prayer and song.

General Operating Budget Summary			
	<u>2025 ACTUAL</u>	<u>2025 BUDGET</u>	<u>2026 BUDGET</u>
CONTRIBUTIONS & DEPARTMENTAL INCOME			
Contributions	\$989,847	\$1,052,276	\$1,034,133
Investment Income	17,902	7,800	4,625
Facility Fees & Departmental Donations	22,545	16,640	24,300
TOTAL INCOME:	<u>\$1,030,294</u>	<u>\$1,076,716</u>	<u>\$1,063,058</u>
BUDGETED EXPENSES			
Ordained	\$135,711	\$190,670	\$173,602
Misc. Personnel	10,356	7,510	10,670
Children's & Family Ministries	59,124	57,550	131,382
Youth Ministries	73,672	68,520	69,488
Caring Ministries	95,264	93,020	40,086
Adult Discipleship	36,366	34,600	36,376
Music & Worship	169,721	171,080	175,054
World Missions	91,250	95,910	96,738
Community Service	21,528	23,090	20,598
Building & Grounds	143,480	144,010	120,024
Administration & Finance	<u>190,700</u>	<u>190,670</u>	<u>189,040</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES:	<u>\$1,027,172</u>	<u>\$1,076,630</u>	<u>\$1,063,058</u>
INCOME OVER EXPENSES:	<u>\$3,122</u>	<u>\$86</u>	<u>\$0</u>
DESIGNATED MISSION GIVING (Above and beyond operating budget)			
World Missions	\$25,480	\$12,452	
Local Mission Community Service	8,457	5,387	
PW Mission Project Sales Proceeds Donated	7,000	7,699	
TOTAL DESIGNATED MISSION GIVING:	<u>\$40,937</u>	<u>\$25,538</u>	
DISASTER RELIEF FUND BALANCE:	<u>\$15,263</u>	<u>\$16,614</u>	
RETAINED INCOME	<u>\$368,382</u>	<u>\$371,504</u>	
Beginning	2025	2026	