



AUGUST 2026

With open eyes, open minds, open hearts, and open hands, we are becoming God's love in action

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Oak Tree Learning Center Invites You To...

Building relationships can be fun and fulfilling. It also will take time, energy, and imagination. For just over four years now FPCSB has been host to the Oak Tree Learning Center supporting community families (~50 children) with affordable early childhood education right here on our campus. Recently we've been working with the staff to transform the old dishwashing room turned storage space, into a beautiful room ready for a new fridge, freezer and shelving to accommodate their newly approved food program subsidized by the county. Thanks to Dan Direen, Dave Thomas, James Welte, Sherman Ballard, and our efficient and expert electrician Deon.

As we continue this relationship with Oak Tree, we are looking at ways to further engage our two communities. One way is by inviting more of our FPC folks to participate in Oak Tree events in more direct ways. You will find a list of upcoming activities with a brief invitation of ways to participate. If you are interested in participating and helping to foster this relationship in any of these activities please reach out to the church office.

+Pastor Brian

Upcoming Opportunities to Participate and Partner

August 28

End of Summer Celebration Event

Be an FPCSB Table Host – Hand out information, answer questions about our church, and invite someone to worship.

September 25

Back to School Community Day

Be an FPCSB Table Host – Hand out information, answer questions about our church, and invite someone to worship.

October 23

Halloween Trunk or Treat

Help plan a theme and decorate an FPCSB Table (Trunk). Do you have an idea for a fun theme, game, and/or want to hand out candy?

Be an FPCSB Table Host – Hand out candy, answer questions about our church, and invite someone to worship.

Stay in Touch



(909) 882-3308



<https://fpcsb.net>

pres.first@gmail.com

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday
8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Pastor's Reflection: God-Sized Wonder and Awe



My father was a provider - that was his 'love language'. He always made sure we had what we needed; maybe not always what we wanted, but certainly that which we needed. Two things in particular, that I have passed along to my own children, is that there will always be food on the table and a roof over our heads. My commitment to my family is that the mortgage will be paid, and the fridge will be full.

I have not needed a fancy house or a particular style home, a place to call our own will suffice. But food is another story. I not only love to try new foods and return to favorites, I love what food can mean for so many. The pyramid image of Maslov's hierarchy of needs shows that the first two and foundational needs to address are very basic – physiological and security. Much more simply put, food and shelter. In Matthew 25:35 Jesus shares a list of ways to serve others and the first two he explains are the same, "for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,". And our very own Food Ministry at First Pres. offers food sustenance to many facing food insecurity in our community.

Why is this so important, and what does this mean? Making sure people are fed and feel safe is the first act of compassion, mercy and grace. When people are physically nourished and feel safe, they can be more ready to explore a spiritual nourishing.

For example, many of our committees and groups gather around food after having been invited into someone's home (church building included). Hospitality is more than just food and shelter, it is a way to care for each other's wellbeing, and to be able to embody and become examples of Christ's love.

This month in worship we will explore the fruit of the spirit paired with food from scripture. I invite you to approach this sermon series with a deeper understanding of how Christ calls us to address each other's basic needs so that we can address our spiritual needs. Arrive at worship ready and open to receive hospitality in a way that invites us to taste and see that God and scripture is good. Our first act of compassion, mercy and grace is to make sure all are fed and feel safe – a roof over our head and food on the table. This is how we love our neighbor, and how we share Christ's love.

Feeling Satiated,
Rev. Dr. Brian S. Symonds

JOIN THE FUN!

SUMMER SOCIAL

New Date! Sunday, August 9, 2026

Directly after Worship (~11:30 a.m.)
In and around Fellowship Hall

Fun for all ages!
Hot Dogs! Games & puzzles!
Waterslide!

Wear or bring a swimsuit & towel to slide!

Enjoy hot dogs, sausages, and vegan hot dogs, buns (including gluten free), chips, and cookies.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SAN BERNARDINO
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NOTES

August Celebrations

Aug 1 Amy Gano
 Aug 8 Tim Usher
 Aug 9 Jackie McKee
 Aug 10 Aaron Saenz
 Aug 11 Ryan Michael Mantei
 Brent Nord
 Kurt & Lisa Star
 Aug 12 Yvonne Rios-Kasinger
 Aug 15 Alexia Aguilar
 Ashley Ballard
 Ramon Ramirez
 Aug 17 Joanne Ballard
 Ethan Gano
 Aug 19 Aaron Rueda
 Aug 20 Elle Carlos
 Aug 25 Gill & Jane Snyder
 Aug 26 Beatrice Star
 Valentina Valenzuela
 Aug 27 Jessica Edwards
 Aug 28 Sarah Alyda Fletcher
 Aug 29 Jim & Sheila Cimino
 Aug 30 Wanda Gernux
 Shannon Nolin

Financial Report as of as of June 30, 2026

General Fund			
	Actual	Budgeted	Over/(Under)
Pledges	\$172,875.32	174,732.00	(1,856.68)
Other Income*	\$114,765.79	104,509.58	10,247.21
Expense	\$299,133.00	293,003.78	6,129.22
Net Income	(11,491.89)	(13,762.20)	2,270.31

Division Consolidation		
	June	Year to date
General Fund Net Income (Expense)	(10,206.67)	(11,491.89)
Deacons Net Income (Expense)	513.37	1,810.06
Net Operating Income (Expense)	(9,693.30)	(9,681.83)

The First Press, the newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino, is edited by member Wendy Lamb. Please submit content to Wendy at newsletter@fpcsb.net. The deadline for the newsletter is the Fourth Wednesday of each month (the day Session meets. As you work on minutes, think about newsletter.) **The deadline for the September newsletter is August 26.**

Keep Military Members in Your Prayers

Sgt Jacob Allen

US Marines, MFR Band, New Orleans, Louisiana

Lt. Alejandro J. Balandran

US Navy, Yokosuka, Japan

Corporal Ethan Gano

US Marines, Yuma, Arizona

Seaman Mark Munz

US Navy, San Diego, California

Lt. Junior Grade Wade Phillip Preciado

US Navy, Groton, Connecticut

Petty Officer First Class Robert Sandoval

US Navy, Jacksonville, Florida

Petty Officer First Class Noah L. Wierenga

U.S. Coast Guard Sector San Diego

CW3 James Bentley Wilson

US Army, Joint Base LewisMcChord, Washington

Food Ministry Update

by Rick Rodriguez

Our food inventory was running low at the beginning of July, but thanks to the dedication of our Food Ministry team, the generous support of our congregation and friends, and the prayers of so many, our shelves are once again well stocked with items for both our cooking and non-cooking food bags (see photo to the right).

Feeding America of Riverside & San Bernardino (FARSB), our primary food source for Tuesday and Thursday distributions, had been unable to provide canned vegetables or peanut butter for several months. In July, however, we received more than 2,000 cans each of corn and green beans, 1,200 jars of peanut butter, and a large supply of spaghetti and other pasta. These are staple items that help us provide balanced food bags to the families we serve each week.

Our Saturday Food Distribution on July 18 followed its familiar routine. Volunteers prepared the dry food bags on Friday, interns assembled the cold food bags early Saturday morning, and we distributed food to 217 households. We were blessed by the help of 10 church members and friends, along with a wonderful group of interns who served with enthusiasm (see photo below).

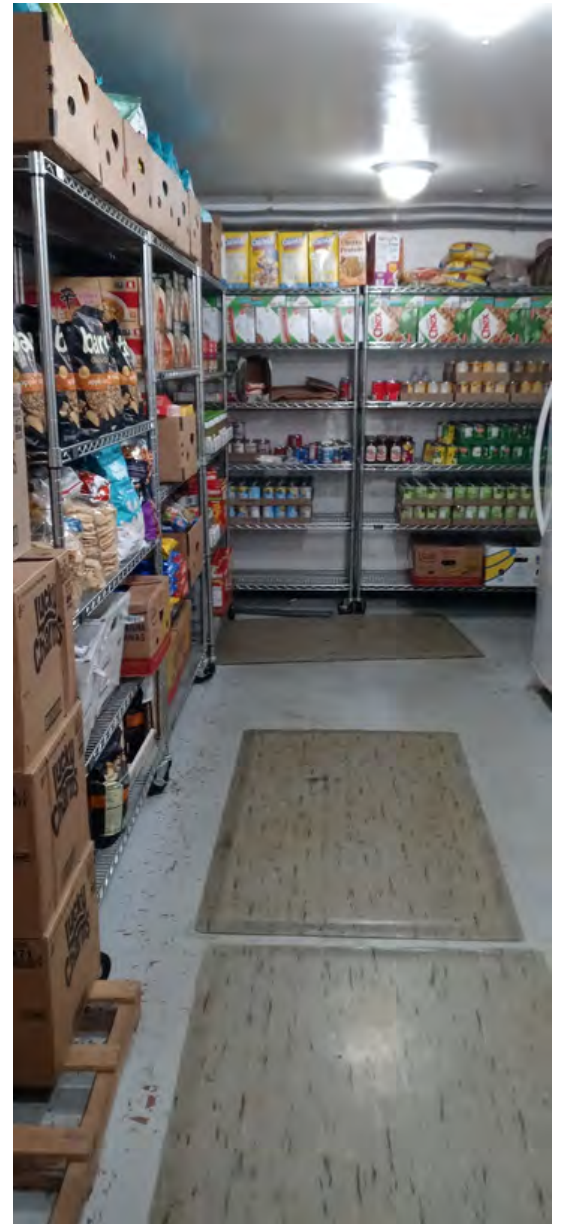
This distribution was especially meaningful because it marked the last one for two of our graduating interns before they begin new chapters in their lives.

Liliana (Lily) Aceves leaves for UC Berkeley on the day of our next Saturday distribution. Lily has faithfully served with the Food Ministry since her freshman year at San Bernardino High School. During the past year, she worked alongside Teo Fletcher greeting families in the vehicle line, collecting numbers, and calling out where to put however many sets of food. Lily and Teo have developed a special friendship, and she will be greatly missed by Teo, the food ministry, and her many friends.

Jessica Flores is preparing to begin her second year at the University of La Verne. Before returning to school, the rest of her summer is committed to her work on political campaigns. Jessica has also been a faithful and valued member of our Food Ministry team, and we are grateful for her service.

Our August Saturday Food Distribution will also be the last for seven more graduating interns. Six will be attending UC Davis, and one will be heading to UC Santa Barbara. While it is difficult to say goodbye to so many talented, compassionate, and experienced young people, we are excited to see where God leads them in this next season of their lives.

Please keep all of our graduates in your prayers. We are deeply thankful for each of them and for everyone whose generosity, volunteer service, and faithful prayers make this ministry possible.



3 weeks ago Rick and I were wondering how to make bags without cans. What a difference a few orders make. Celebrate with us! We have a ton of green beans!

A Ton of Green Beans!

by Marilyn Kraft

As our Food Ministry has grown, so has the challenge of moving and storing larger quantities of food. When a load is estimated to be more than three pallets, we contract with **David Lim of Highland Transport** to pick it up. David also transports our monthly USDA Commodity Distribution food from Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAP).

David's truck can carry 7–8 pallets at a time. At each food bank, the warehouse forklift drivers lift each pallet onto the truck, but then those pallets have to be moved around in the truck (see picture). David drives them to the church, and unloads them into Fellowship Hall, where Rick, our interns, and other volunteers sort and move everything into four primary storage areas: the food closet, south storage, Fellowship Hall, and Room 12.

July was a great example of why this partnership matters. We made 10 trips to Feeding America Riverside–San Bernardino (FARSB), and David handled the two largest loads. Together they totaled **9,873 pounds**—nearly five tons, the vast majority of the **13,000 pounds of food** acquired from FARSB during the month. (Plus all of 6,255 lbs of food from CAP).

Among the FARSB deliveries were **2,040 cans of corn** and **2,040 cans of green beans**. Each pallet held 85 cases of 24 cans—more than a ton of vegetables per pallet! What does one ton of green beans mean for our ministry? At our current pace of 550 cooking bags each month, a single pallet of 2,040 cans provides enough green beans for more than 3½ months of Tuesday/Thursday distributions.

Since we never know when these items will be available again, stocking up when we can is essential. Even better, those 2,040 cans cost only \$420—an incredible value that allows us to stretch every donated dollar.

We are grateful for the many people who make this possible: David Lim for safely transporting these large loads; the dedicated staff at the FARSB warehouse; our generous donors who make food acquisition and professional transportation possible; our hardworking interns and volunteers who do the heavy lifting, restocking, bagging, and distribution; our staff who support us and pay the bills; and Rick, who somehow manages the daily puzzle of finding room for it all. Every pallet that arrives is another reminder that God provides through many willing hands.



The Season after Pentecost

"In the summer, the days were long, stretching into each other. Out of school, everything was on pause and yet happening at the same time..."

— Sarah Dessen, *Along for the Ride*



We've explored Prayer, and now it's time to dive into Fruit and Giftedness – Summer Sermon Series'

Having now seen and experienced what it is like to worship in Fellowship Hall, I have been pleasantly surprised by the flexibility and relaxed atmosphere the space provides. It is good to allow God to invite us into different spaces and acts of engaging each other. We will continue this summer by providing more sensory acts of worship. August will be a discovery of pairing the fruit of the Spirit with different kinds of food from scripture – taste and see that the Lord and scripture is good. And September, through contemplation, we will dive into how to better see the gifts in others which God is constantly revealing around us...we just need to looking for and expect to see it. I pray that this season becomes for you a time to let yourself experience different modes of worshipping and witnessing God's goodness.

+Pastor Brian

Sermon Schedule: Aug/Sept

August theme - Fruit of the Spirit – Food from Scripture

An exploration of the fruit of the Spirit paired with tastings of food from scripture, while worshipping at tables

August 2 – "The Fruit of Love: Agape"

August 9 – "The Fruit of Peace: Eirene"

(Summer Social following worship)

August 16 – "The Fruit of Gentleness: Prautes"

August 23 – "The Fruit of Faithfulness: Pistis"

August 30 – "The Fruit of Patience: Makrothymia"

(Worship in the Fellowship Hall)

September – Mutuality of Giftedness: Discerning Missional Vocation

Pastor Brian will lead the congregation through theological assumptions and scriptural references from his doctoral thesis on the congregational work of discerning missional vocation.

September 6 – "Sent: A Missional Community"

September 13 – "Presence: Designed for Relationship"

September 20 – "Heard: A Storied People and Land"

September 27 – Preacher TBD

(Worship in the Fellowship Hall)

Pastor Brian will be away Sept 27

Session 2026

Brian S. Symonds, Moderator; Amy Smith, Clerk of Session

Class of 2026: Sue Alexander, Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis

Class of 2027: Patrick Morris, Susan Skoglund, Katie Smith, Neal Williams

Class of 2028: Robin Edwards, John-Paul Fletcher, Jonathan Horstmann,

Lynda Savage



Helping those who help us

By Dave Thomas

About 3 years ago while I was a Deacon assigned to our Food Ministry program, I became acquainted with Laray who works in the meat department at Stater Brothers on 40th Street. I frequently needed to order large amounts of products from the meat department and Laray is my go-to person. Although our orders are quite large at times, Laray is very humble and always does her best to fill our orders promptly, even though it is on top of her regular duties of keeping items stocked on the store shelves. Recently I became aware Laray needed some assistance at her house with gardening and while at her home I noticed her side gate was completely detached from her house. As I had recently transitioned to our Deacon's Community Outreach program I felt this was an excellent opportunity for us to help someone in our community who helps us. I was able to secure a gardener who did a one time clean up of her yard and with the expert help of Dan Direen, he was able to construct Laray a brand new gate. Laray was completely unaware of our intentions and was very appreciative of our church helping her. Unrelated, Laray has recently been attending our worship service, if you happen to see her, feel free to say hi.

Thank you to those of you who help support our Deacon's programs either financially or by dedicating your time to serve as a Deacon, it's nice to be able to make a difference.

Board of Deacons 2026

Mindy Rueda, Moderator; Steve Smith, Pastoral Support

Class of 2026: Kristine French, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda, Chris Wright-Thomas

Class of 2027: Richard Rodriguez, Jim Siegmund, Kyle Smith

Class of 2028: Rebecca Allen, Amy Gano, Dave Thomas, Brent Nord

First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino

The Rev. Dr. Brian S. Symonds

Pastor

Head of Staff

The Rev. Dr. Stephen W. Smith

Pastoral Support

Laurie Stafford

Ministry of Visitation

First Presbyterian Church

August 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	27	28 9:00am Food Distribution	29 12:00pm Staff Meeting	30 9:00am Food Distribution	31 9:30am Kerygma	1 9:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 10:00am Straight Up AA 1:00pm Jenna Morin Memorial Service
2 Communion Sunday 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	3 5:00pm Worship Committee	4 9:00am Food Distribution	5	6 9:00am Food Distribution	7 9:30am Kerygma	8 10:00am Straight Up AA
9 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service 11:30am Summer Social	10 3:00pm PW Coordinating Team 5:00pm Nurture Committee	11 9:00am Food Distribution	12 12:00pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm Mensch Group	13 9:00am Food Distribution	14 9:30am Kerygma 10:30am Food Bagging	15 9:00am Deacon Food Distribution 10:00am Straight Up AA
16 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service 12:00pm Deacons	17	18 9:00am Food Distribution 1:00pm Buildings & Grounds Committee	19 1:00pm Stewardship Committee	20 9:00am Food Distribution	21 9:30am Kerygma	22 10:00am Straight Up AA
23 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	24	25 9:00am Food Distribution	26 First Press Deadline 12:00pm Staff Meeting 5:15pm SESSION Dinner 6:00pm SESSION Meeting	27 9:00am Food Distribution	28 9:30am Kerygma	29 7:30am Symphonie Jeunesse 10:00am Straight Up AA
30 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	31	1 9:00am Food Distribution 12:00pm Circle of Faith	2	3 9:00am Food Distribution	4 9:30am Kerygma	5 9:00am Symphonie Jeunesse 10:00am Straight Up AA

Please check the calendar on the website for the most up-to-date information for August. https://fpcsb.net/events_links/calendar

Our Mission Statement

Moved by the Spirit, we strive to create an open and inclusive community embodying the love, forgiveness, and grace of Christ which we extend to ourselves, each other, our neighbors, and our world through nurturing relationships, creative celebrations, continuous learning, and transformational service.