

The Chimes

July 2025

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Freedom in Faith

By Katie Eatherly

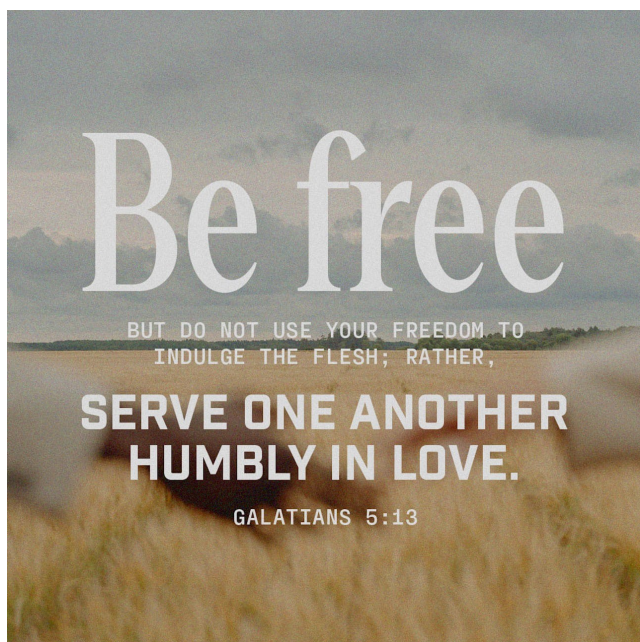
As fireworks light up the sky and flags wave proudly across our neighborhoods, the Fourth of July invites us to remember and celebrate the gift of freedom. For many Americans, Independence Day is a time to honor the sacrifices made for our country's liberty. But for people of faith, this holiday is also an opportunity to reflect on a deeper, eternal kind of freedom — the freedom we receive through Christ.

Galatians 5:1 proclaims, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." This verse reminds us that spiritual freedom is not simply about the absence of oppression, but about living in the fullness of God's grace — no longer enslaved to sin, fear, or shame.

In our nation, freedom often means the ability to choose, speak, gather, and worship openly. These are beautiful and hard-won rights. Yet Scripture reminds us that true freedom is not just political or personal — it's spiritual. Through faith in Jesus, we are set free from the burdens that hold us back: guilt, comparison, insecurity, and the pressure to prove ourselves. In Christ, we are fully known and fully loved.

As we celebrate our country's independence, we're invited to consider how we use our freedom — both as citizens and as followers of Christ. Paul writes in Galatians 5:13, "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love." Freedom in faith calls us not to focus inward, but outward — to love, serve, forgive, and extend grace.

So this July 4th, as you gather with friends and family, grill burgers, watch parades, and marvel at fireworks, take a moment to thank God not just for national liberty, but for the deeper freedom found in Christ. And ask yourself: how can I live into that freedom today, in ways that bring love and light to those around me?



Scriptures for July

July 6

4th Sunday after Pentecost

2 Kings 5:1-14

Psalms 30

Isaiah 66:10-14

Psalms 66:1-9

Galatians 6: 1-16

Luke 10: 1-11. 16-20

July 13

5th Sunday after Pentecost

Amos 7:7-14

Psalms 82

Deuteronomy 30:9-14

Psalms 25:1-10

Colossians 1:1-14

Luke 10:25-37

July 20

6th Sunday after Pentecost

Amos 8:1-12

Psalms 52

Genesis 18:1-10a

Psalms 15

Colossians 1:15-28

Luke 10:38-42

July 27

7th Sunday after Pentecost

Hosea 1:2-10

Psalms 85

Genesis 18:20-32

Psalms 138

Colossians 2:6-19

Luke 11:1-13



Personnel, Stewardship, and Finance Update

The Personnel Stewardship and Finance Committee has had their first discussion about the 2026 Stewardship Campaign for First Presbyterian Church. We are looking ahead, pondering a theme and thinking of our future needs. Stewardship is the careful and responsible management of God's gifts. It's about recognizing that everything we have belongs to God, and we are accountable for how we use it for His glory and the well being of others. Stewardship can be wanting an abundance or looking at the scarcity. But another way to think about stewardship is sufficiency.

There has not been an abundance in our past budget. Because of scarcity, we have withdrawn funds from endowment to meet sufficiency. In 2026, our budget will increase by approximately \$20,000 to call our new pastor. There are interviews, travel expenses, moving expenses, and incidentals. We are asking for families to join us in thinking about the church's 2026 expenses. During the summer months, please pray about your financial pledge, your covenant, your promise to the future ministry of FPC. Our Stewardship Campaign will begin in October and be completed before Thanksgiving.

What will your promise be?

Youth Mission Trip July 20-25

Our youth will be heading to Campbell Farm in Wapato, WA from July 20-25 for a week of service, growth, and community. Campbell Farm is a mission and retreat center rooted in hospitality, justice, and care for creation. While there, our youth will engage in hands-on projects, connect with local ministries, and reflect on what it means to live out their faith through service. Please keep the group in your prayers as they prepare for this meaningful journey!

Cliff Laycock Celebration of Life

Please join the Laycock family in honoring the life of Cliff. July 6 from 3 - 5 at First Presbyterian Church, the Laycock family will have an open house. All are welcome to join to share in the memories.



All Ages Tie Dye Water Fight

Join us on July 6th at 12:30 for a BBQ Lunch and old-fashioned summer fun. Wear white and prepare to get colorful as we have a tie-dye water fight.

You're invited to bring a side dish, donate materials, or support with clean-up

Jam Needed!

It's berry time in the Puyallup Valley! We are in need of freshly canned jam, for the Jambassador program. Anyone willing to prepare jam, which is presented to our first time worship visitors, can pick up a box of new 4-ounce jars to assist in the preparation of the project.

If you would like to donate funds or donate 4-ounce jam jars, please bring your donation to the church office. All jam needs to be canned (No freezer jam). Brush up on your jam-making skills and create a tasty gift for our first time visitors. Any jam variety is welcomed and appreciated.

Eileen And Callie's Place

Young Women Aging Out Of Foster Care

Jeremiah 29:11 states: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." This hope is what drives the staff at Eileen and Callie's Place, an organization that mentors and assists young women aging out of Foster Care. Their goal is to create a new "normal" for these girls by mentoring them with educational goals; assisting them with employment skills and goals for a future; and, helping them dream of a better life. Many of these girls do not remember a birthday party, so an annual Birthday Bash is held with celebrates each girl by pampering them with hair styling, clothes shopping and nail care. The day ends with a birthday dinner. This year the birthday event will happen at Evergreen College on July 19th. Mentors and funding are an ongoing need.

FPC Regeneration goals requested information on local organizations that help young people aging out of Foster Care. Eileen and Callie's Place is one of several organizations in our area that works toward educational and employment independence.

40% of the Pentecost Offering stays with the local congregation for use with young people. Eileen and Callie's Place is being considered for our congregation's donation.

Community and Global Discipleship Book Study

The C&GD Committee is announcing a book study this coming Fall. We will be discussing the book

Poverty By America, by Matthew Desmond.

This book looks at the forces that keep the poor in that situation, and how it could be changed. It is available at book stores or on line. Discussion times are to be announced as we get closer to Fall. Contact Pat with any questions.

Men's Breakfast

The Christian Education committee is hosting a men's breakfast each third Saturday of the month. We will have food fellowship and a speaker with a message. Mark your calendars. Please let Bill Klouse know you are joining us at klouseb@gmail.com

Our next meeting will be July 19th at 8am. Breakfast will be at Crockett's.

Each guest will pay their own check.

See you there!

The Pew-Creaking Ghosts of First Presbyterian

A Short Story Inspired by Two Absolute Mysteries

By Katie Eatherly

Every town has its secrets, but in the quiet dusk of Puyallup, the strangest tales swirl around *First Presbyterian Church*. Not about the sermons, or the stained glass, but about two mysterious figures known as Jordan and Trygve, the teenage ghosts who haunt its halls.

No one knows where they came from. Some say Jordan was a prank-loving youth kid who vanished into the boiler room during a 90s lock-in and reappeared only in whispers and sudden bursts of laughter echoing from empty classrooms. Trygve, it's said, wandered in from the forest one stormy night, soaked and shoeless, and decided the church's forgotten attic was as good a place as any to settle.

Trygve is tall, wiry, and has an odd habit of making fluorescent lights flicker in perfect time to the sanctuary piano. He wears a cut-off muscle tee made of shadows and leaves behind the scent of Extra Bold Ginger Ale and candle wax. Jordan is quieter and thoughtful, often seen hovering near the youth bulletin board, reorganizing sticky notes and writing cryptic encouragements in Sharpie.

They don't like Sunday mornings—*too loud, too early, too much perfume*. But they love youth group lock-ins, evening committee meetings, and anytime someone forgets to turn off the Keurig in the church kitchen. They've been known to rearrange the Fellowship Hall chairs into labyrinths, add fake announcements into the bulletin ("Coming Soon: Extreme Baptism 2.0"), and sneak into the AV booth to add surprise sound effects to sermon slides.



Despite their tricks, they're harmless. Maybe even helpful. Miss Cheryl swears it was Trygve who fixed the jammed window in the nursery last December. And everyone agrees Jordan's responsible for returning the lost bingo cage before the Presbyterian Women's luncheon—though no one saw him do it.

These days, the youth group leaves out a couple of juice boxes and half a bag of Doritos in the hallway on Friday nights. Not for guests. Not for the janitor.

But for Jordan and Trygve—First Pres's very own pew-creaking, note-leaving, always-lurking ghost boys. Who says church isn't exciting?

