



First Presbyterian Church of Hanford

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A fellowship brought together through God's prevenient grace to grow closer to God

FIRST PRESS

January 2024



"Making God's Word Priority"

Pastor Tim Brown

Approximately 92 percent of Americans own at least one, and the average household has three. Two-thirds say it answers the basic questions of life, and the next president--whomever he or she is--will eventually take a solemn oath on it. It is the Bible and remains unchallenged as the world's all-time bestselling book. However, Americans are showing themselves to be remarkably ignorant of biblical basics and reading it less and less.

One Gallup survey, for example, shows that fewer than half of Americans can name the first book of the Bible (Genesis), only one-third know who delivered the Sermon on the Mount (many named Billy Graham, not Jesus), and one-quarter do not know what is celebrated on Easter (the Resurrection, the foundational event of Christianity).¹

What would happen if we spent 2024 seriously reading and applying God's word? I want to challenge all of us to spend 15 minutes reading systematically through the Bible each day. Why read the Bible? Why go to all that trouble? Here are 10 reasons to read the Bible:

1. Reading the Bible shows us God's character. The Bible is our definitive source for answering our questions about God.

"In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven" (Hebrews 1:1-3).

2. Reading the Bible teaches us to imitate God.

"Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children" (Ephesians 5:1).

3. Reading the Bible helps us discover our next step.

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" (Psalm 119:105).

4. Reading the Bible keeps us from sin.

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11).

Newport, Frank. "Fewer in US See the Bible as the Literal Word of God." July 6, 2022. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/394262/fewer-bible-literal-word-god.aspx>

5. Reading the Bible helps us renew our minds to know God's will.

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:1-2).

6. Reading the Bible allows us to be certain of what God said. The Bible is our final authority.

"Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:17).

7. Reading the Bible allows us to receive the wishes of our heart.

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you" (John 15:7).

8. Reading the Bible is how we learn about the gospel.

"You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life" (John 5:39-40).

9. Reading the Bible gives us courage.

"Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:8-9).

10. Reading the Bible helps us to be fruitful.

"... but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither — whatever they do prospers" (Psalm 1:2-3).

Imagine how our lives would be different if we read God's word each day and reflected on this question; "How will I be different because of what I have read?" Many Bible reading plans are available. If you need help picking a plan, please let me know. Let's make God's word a priority in 2024!



Deacon's Article for First Press January 2024

Happy 2024! As we ring-in the New Year we are also bringing in a new class of Deacons. But, before we welcome in the new, we need to thank the outgoing Deacon Class of 2023 for their hard work, deep dedication, selfless giving of their time, talents, and endless energy. In scripture, Deacons were known as "the dirty feet" people, since they traveled many miles on dusty roads bringing comfort and caring to the home bound, and those in need. The Deacons at FPC have traveled many roads and miles fulfilling their spiritual mission. We want to thank Julie Baker, Martin Keast and Marj Froberg for their willingness to serve with giving hearts over the past 3 Years. They will be missed, but knowing this group they will continue their service to FPC through other ministries.

We are very excited to welcome the Class of 2026; Julie Baker (returning for another 3-year term), Jeanne Rich and Teresa Voyles, as well as Joanna Jones filling a vacant seat in the Class of 2025. They bring to the board renewed energy, fresh ideas, and spiritual commitment. Welcome Deacon Class of 2026! We thank you for listening and answering the calling to serve.

~ Marj Froberg



A Note From:

Children's and Youth Director
Sheri Winterowd

Happy New Year 2024! How exciting to be at the beginning of a fresh new year, with so many possibilities, opportunities, hopes, and dreams stretching out in front of us! In my childhood, I was greatly helped in my spiritual growth by regular church attendance and participation. Our family went to Sunday morning Sunday School and worship every week and most Sundays we returned in the evening for another service. I feel so grateful for all the sermons, Bible studies, songs, prayers, testimonies, and missionary reports I experienced, and I have seen, heard and felt so much of the goodness of God in the life of his people and his church. Parents and grandparents, one of the greatest gifts you can give your children and grandchildren is to prioritize coming to Sunday morning worship services and regularly participating in the life of our church. This year, I purchased a book by well-known motivational speaker Zig Ziglar, who was also an outspoken Christian. I confess I bought it solely based on the author and title, God's Way is Still the Best Way, which resonates deeply with me because I believe it wholeheartedly. One of the pastors of the church I attended in childhood often repeated a phrase to drive home the importance of giving our best of everything to God, and it has stuck with me over the years. **Only one life, t'will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last.**

Indeed in life, where we spend our time, energy, attention, money, and passion is a barometer to us and others of what we value. Are we seeking to know God and obey His word? Are we in regular fellowship with our church through Sunday morning worship? Do we serve in any way to further the cause of the gospel? Do we donate 10% of our income to our church? Are we willing to be known as a Christian and be a witness of the goodness, grace and love of Jesus Christ? As your church staff, it would be our joy this year to continue to serve alongside those who faithfully serve and to welcome those who have not yet found a place to serve. It would be our joy to see greater commitment to studying God's word and prayer.

May each of us redouble our efforts to fearlessly follow God's way and to bring others along with us on the journey. I have much work to do in my own walk of faith; let us learn and grow together. Please reach out to me if I can be of any encouragement or support to you on your journey of spiritual growth!

Upcoming events:

January 17 - Body Life Dinner and Bible Study classes begins

January 20 or Feb 3 - Volunteer Ministry Training event (watch for invitation and details)

February - First Communion Class (watch for dates and RSVP info)



UP COMING



- Jan 1** *New Year's Day (office closed)*
- Jan 2** Deacon's meeting @ 6pm
- Jan 7** *Communion Sunday*
- Jan 8** Finance meeting @ 10am
Church Growth meeting @ 1pm,
*Missions meeting @ 7pm
- Jan 11** *Session Reports Due*
C.E. meeting @ 1:30pm
- Jan 12** Memorial for Fran Bettencourt @ 10am
- Jan 14** B&G meeting @ 11:10am
Worship meeting @ 11:15am
Youth Group @ 5pm
- Jan 15** *Martin Luther Kings Jr. Day (office closed)*
First Press articles due
- Jan 16** Session meeting @ 6pm
- Jan 17** *Annual Reports Due*
BodyLife Begins @ 5:30pm
- Jan 20** Leadership Training for Elders & Deacons @ 8:30am
- Jan 24** BodyLife @ 5:30pm
- Jan 26—27** Presbytery meeting (Moraga, CA)
- Jan 28** Annual Congregational Meeting @ 11:30am
Youth Group @ 5pm
- Jan 30** *Investment meeting @ 7pm
- Jan 31** BodyLife @ 5:30pm

* via Zoom



Summary of Dec. 19, 2023 Session Meeting

Deacons

- Reported 83 and 6 homebound took communion in Nov.
- \$100 each to KGM, Meals-on-Wheels, and Laundry Love

Clerk's Report

- Reported Active Members as of Dec. 1, 2023 total—89
- Presbytery meeting January 26-27 in Moraga, CA
- Annette Rajskup was elected as commissioner to POPS

Pastor's Report

- Annual Congregational meeting set for Jan. 28th @ 11:30am as a lunch format
- Reported new CA law will require signs posted pertaining to CCW holders

Building & Grounds

- Approved Tree Trimming ±\$2800
- Approved replacing lighting fixtures in Fellowship Hall ±\$1000
- Approved replacing roof tiles and renting lift ±\$600

Christian Education

- Approved BodyLife (Jan 17—Mar 20)
- Approved Communion Class for students in either Jan. or Feb.
- Approved Tri-Tip fundraiser to help with Calvin Crest scholarships
- Approved hosting VBS with Lori Porter as director

Church Growth

- Reported good turn out for Pizza and Caroling

Finance

- Approved taking an offering during Christmas Eve service
- Approved the 2024 budget as suggested by Finance
- Approved \$125 Staff Awards
- Approved designated accounts to receive funds should FPC finish the fiscal year with a positive balance.

The New City Catechism

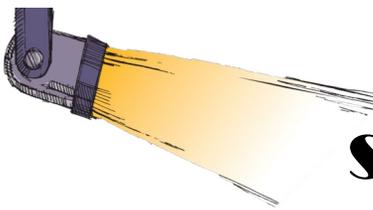
52 Questions
& Answers
for Our Hearts
& Minds

Introduction by
Kathy Keller



Can anyone keep the law of God perfectly?

Since the fall, no human has been able to keep the law of God perfectly.



fpc Family Spotlight



The Kinney Family

Chuck and Mary Kinney met at Hanford High School in 1990 and their romance began to blossom in 1993 when they started dating. After graduating from Hanford High, both Chuck and Mary attended College of the Sequoias in Visalia where they received associate degrees then both went on to graduate from University of California Santa Barbara. Chuck graduated with a BA in Geography and Mary with a BA in History of Art and Architecture.

Chuck and Mary returned to Hanford to establish their family upon graduating and on December 4, 1999, they were married at First Presbyterian Church. Chuck has been a life-long resident of Hanford and currently works as the Kings County Director of Community Development. Chuck has served as a Ruling Elder for FPC and Clerk of Session, but he can be found most Sundays leading the media ministry team.

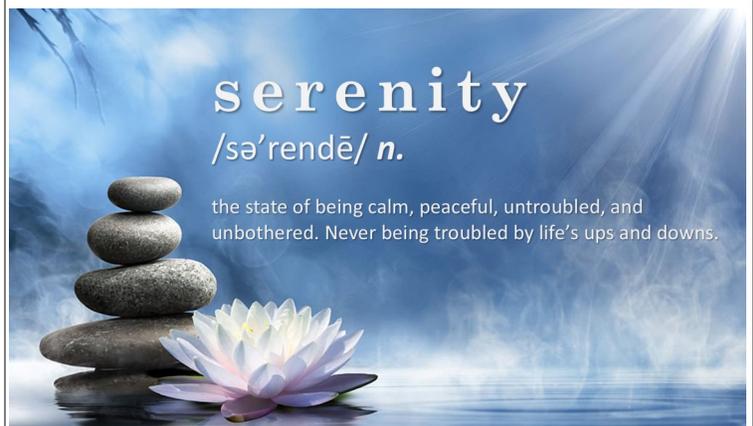
Mary spent her early childhood in Chino, but her family moved to Hanford when she was twelve. She is an art teacher at Kit Carson Elementary. Mary leads the Junior High and Senior High Sunday School and assists in various ways by lending her creative spark. She has also served as a Ruling Elder for FPC.

Chuck and Mary have three children. Grace is 19 and married Tobin Gibson in November 2023. Grace also works at Kit Carson Elementary as a teacher's aide while she is attending the College of Sequoias with aspirations to be a teacher. Tobin works for Miller Rental and Lawnmower Man and attends the College of Sequoias, where he studies construction. They are active members of Calvary Chapel.

Michael, 17, is a Hanford High School senior who plays water polo and swims for the Bullpups. He actively participates in the First Pres youth group and volunteers as the camera operator for FPC's online ministry. He enjoys video gaming and sports.

Hope, 15, is the youngest of the Kinney children. She is a sophomore at Hanford High, plays water polo, and swims for the Bullpups. Hope enjoys watching theater, reading, and being creative. She is an active participant with the youth of First Pres, and she volunteers in the nursery.

As a family, the Kinneys enjoy playing rummy tiles during family dinners. When asked, "Where would you take a dream family vacation," Chuck and Mary say without hesitation, "We would go to Disney World." The First Presbyterian family is blessed to have the Kinneys!



New Sermon Series -- "Serenity Now!"

Serenity is sometimes defined as the state of being calm, peaceful, untroubled, and unbothered by life's ups and downs. How can we live in a consistent state of serenity and stress less? Join us on Sunday mornings at 10 AM starting January 7, 2024, for a new sermon series entitled, "Serenity Now!" as Pastor Tim teaches from Psalm 23.

January 7 "Overcoming Worry"

January 14 "Rest for the Weary Soul"

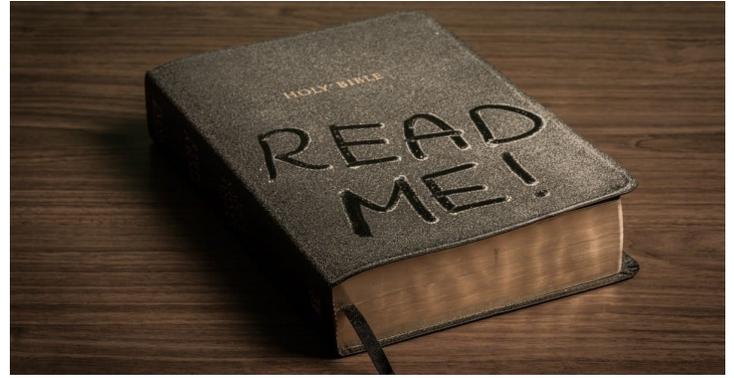
January 21 "Healing Damaged Emotions"

January 28 "Help During Troubling Times"

February 4 "Dealing with Deep Wounds"

February 11 "Facing the Future Confidently"

January Reading Plan

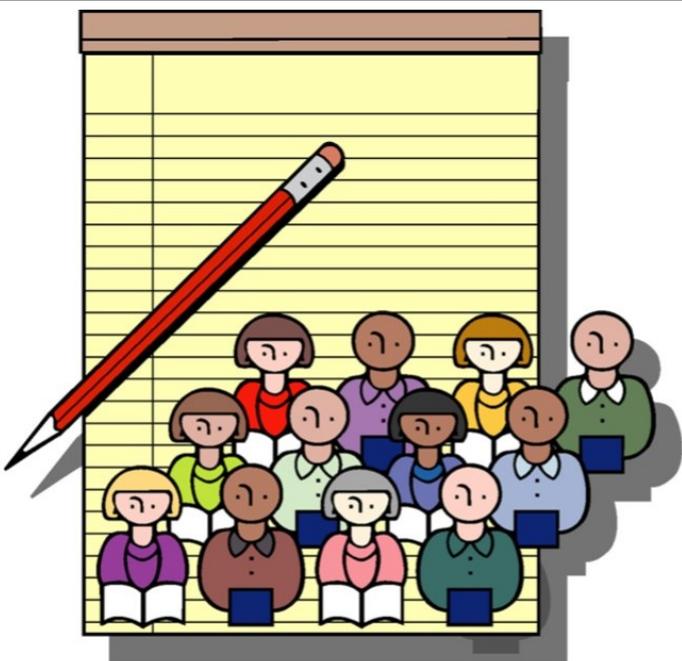


Daily Bible Reading Program

Chronological Plan

1-Year Plan. These readings are compiled according to recent historical research, taking into account the order in which the recorded events actually occurred. This is a fantastic plan to follow if you wish to add historical context to your reading of the Bible. If the schedule provided is followed, the entire Bible will be read in one calendar year.

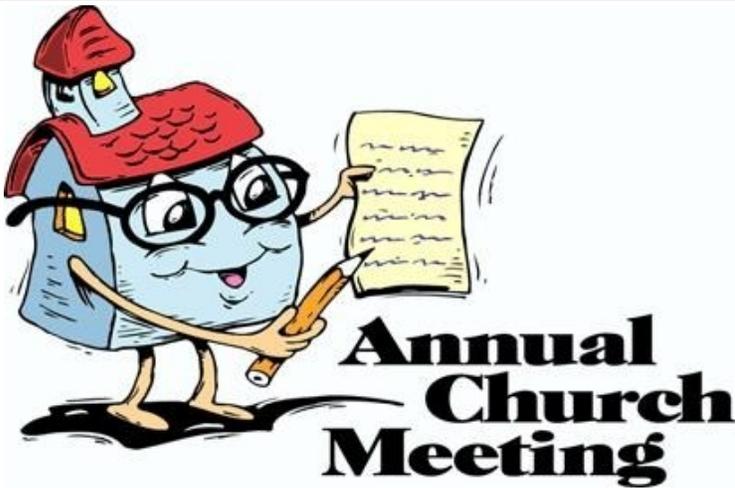
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|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Genesis 1-3 | 18. Genesis 19-21 |
| 2. Genesis 4-7 | 19. Genesis 22-24 |
| 3. Genesis 8-11 | 20. Genesis 25-26 |
| 4. Job 1-5 | 21. Genesis 27-29 |
| 5. Job 6-9 | 22. Genesis 30-31 |
| 6. Job 10-13 | 23. Genesis 32-34 |
| 7. Job 14-16 | 24. Genesis 35-37 |
| 8. Job 17-20 | 25. Genesis 38-40 |
| 9. Job 21-23 | 26. Genesis 41-42 |
| 10. Job 24-28 | 27. Genesis 43-45 |
| 11. Job 29-31 | 28. Genesis 46-47 |
| 12. Job 32-34 | 29. Genesis 48-50 |
| 13. Job 35-37 | 30. Exodus 1-3 |
| 14. Job 38-39 | 31. Exodus 4-6 |
| 15. Job 40-42 | |
| 16. Genesis 12-15 | |
| 17. Genesis 16-18 | |



Elder & Deacon Training

January 20th

8:30am—2:00pm



Jan. 28th

11:30am in the Fellowship Hall

Faith & Fellowship

Jolly 1's & 2's

Jolly 1's & 2's will begin the New Year by sharing a meal at Gozen Restaurant in Visalia. We will travel there on January 18. Plan to be at the church parking lot by 11:00. Janet will try and make a reservation for 12:00. If you need a ride, let Janet Harader know so we can pick you up on the way. More information about future events will be in the February First Press. You may call Janet at 583-8817 or on her cell phone 367-5658. Anyone in church is invited to attend our events.



"Powerhouse"

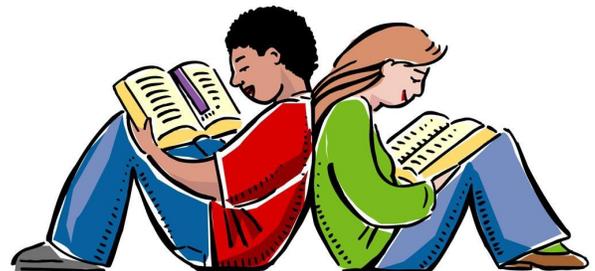


Children's Church
(ages K—5th)

SUNDAY MORNINGS
@ 10:30 am

(children attend church, then are released to their classes)

2nd & 4th Sunday of the month
at 5:00pm



YOUTH GROUP
grades 6th—12th

Reminder! Deacons hope you can bring clothing and nonperishable food to help those in our community who are in need. Collection baskets are available in the church hallway outside the Fellowship Hall.



Exercise class

The FPC exercise class
M, W & F mornings @ 9:00am in the
FPC Outreach Building (220 Dewey Street)

JANUARY

Birthdays & *Anniversaries

- 8** Wellman Jue
11 Annie Jackson
15 Don Mills
16 Grace Gibson
17 *Charles & Susan Feaver
18 Meg Connelly, Ken Tazelaar
19 Alysha Rajskup, Michael Christoph
22 Steve Wartman
24 Brady Porter, Carley Watson
26 *Kelly & Teresa Voyles

Please contact the office with any updates, additions or corrections. We don't want to miss anyone or list your special date incorrectly.

P O Box 1185
Hanford, CA 93232

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Athena Smith bookkeeper@fpchanford.org	Bookkeeper
Nancy Roller nancyroller8@yahoo.com	Custodian

Church Office Hours: 9:00am—1:00pm (Mon—Fri)

Send prayer requests to hanfordfpcprayer@gmail.com
other information to office@fpchanford.org