

March 2026

FIRST PRESS

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HANFORD



FINDING OUR BEARINGS — AND LOVING EVERY MINUTE

There's a moment, somewhere between unpacking the fourteenth box and realizing you have absolutely no idea where the nearest hardware store is, when a move stops being an adventure and starts feeling like a geography exam you didn't study for. Tara and I have had a few of those moments since landing in Hanford. But here's the thing — even the bewilderment has been delightful.

After years of living in the sprawling, traffic-snarled, perpetually-under-construction orbit of Los Angeles, we were ready for a change of pace. What we didn't fully anticipate was just how good that change would feel. Hanford is the kind of place where the sky actually goes all the way to the ground. Where you can drive somewhere without factoring in an extra forty minutes for the freeway. Where people wave. Just — wave. For no reason other than basic human warmth. We are absolutely here for it.

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PASTOR NOEL ANDERSON

We've been gleefully exploring the area like two tourists who somehow got to keep the hotel room permanently. Downtown Hanford has already charmed us with its historic courthouse square and its honest-to-goodness small-town character. We've poked around Visalia on more than one occasion, discovering wonderful spots to eat and wander, and Kingsburg — with its Swedish Village personality and sweet community feel — has become a genuine favorite. There is something wonderful about having a whole region to discover rather than simply new exits on the same old interstate.

Speaking of discovery: we have not yet found all of our places. You know what we mean — the go-to breakfast spot, the dentist you actually trust, the restaurant that becomes "our restaurant." We are humbly and enthusiastically accepting recommendations. If you have a favorite taqueria, a reliable plumber, a hidden-gem café, or a farmers market we absolutely cannot miss, please tell us. Immediately. We are serious. Write it on a napkin if you have to.

Now, we must address a matter of some personal embarrassment. We are, by history and temperament, not cat people. We want to be honest with you about that from the start. And yet — here we are, accompanied by two cats who have somehow made themselves completely at home while we were still figuring out which light switches do what. They have claimed their windowsills, established their routines, and regarded the whole transition with a regal indifference that frankly we found a little insulting given how anxious we were on their behalf. They are fine. They are better than fine. We are taking notes.

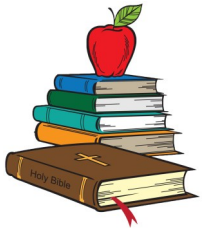
But underneath all the lightness and the laughter of new beginnings, there is something deeper stirring in us both. We did not come to Hanford simply for the slower pace or the open skies, wonderful as those gifts are. We came because we believe God has something beautiful and purposeful in store — for this congregation, for this community, and for the two of us as we seek to walk faithfully alongside you.

First Presbyterian has a history worth honoring and a future worth pursuing with imagination and courage. We long to become true members of this family — not just familiar faces at the front of the sanctuary, but neighbors, friends, fellow learners, and fellow servants. We want to know your stories. We want to understand what Hanford needs, what it hopes for, and where the Spirit is already moving in ways we haven't yet had eyes to see.

The gospel is, after all, always good news for here — for this street, this town, these people. We are eager to discover together what it looks like to proclaim and embody that news in fresh, creative, and genuinely winsome ways. Not because the old and true needs replacing, but because every community deserves to hear grace spoken in a voice it recognizes.

God has brought us together — that much we are sure of. And we are equally sure that we've only just scratched the surface of what He intends. So here we are, Tara and I (with two happy dogs and the cats, who remain unimpressed but cooperative), grateful, expectant, and so very glad to be home.

Now — about that restaurant recommendation....



A Note From:

Co-Directors of Children's and Youth Ministries
Mary Kinney and Sandy Mills

Hello everyone. We have had such a wonderful time this last month with our children and youth. On February 8th, Marj Froberg joined us for Youth Group and demonstrated how to make frosting and how to decorate cookies in different ways. Marj made and supplied beautiful heart shaped cookies, and our youth were able to decorate them using different styles of frosting application. It was amazing to see each student's unique creativity shine. We all had such a great time together. We hope to share another time of cookie decorating later in the year.

We have some exciting events coming up. Our youth have partnered with the Missions Committee to continue our church's Blessing Bag outreach. The youth have researched items to include in the bags, and all the items have officially arrived! We are looking forward to holding a Blessing Bag event on March 15th after church. We would like to invite the congregation to join us in packing the bags together. We are excited to continue this mission project for our local community.

February 15th was our last day of 9am Sunday School classes for a period. We are taking this time to allow our teachers to refresh.

On February 22nd, Mary Kinney will begin a Confirmation Class during Youth Group for our Middle School and High School students. We would love for your student to attend. We will be spending several months in teaching and discussion together. We will continue to have dinner, fellowship, worship, prayer, and games. We look forward to learning and growing together.

Our Youth Tri-tip Fundraiser is coming up soon. It is officially time to begin purchasing tickets. Please consider helping our youth raise funds for this upcoming year. Proceeds will be used to help send our students to camp and for other trips and events throughout the year. We truly appreciate your support. The tri-tip lunch will be on April 26th after church.

Thank you for all your continued support and prayers. We truly appreciate it. It is so wonderful to be a part of a church body that truly loves and supports one another. Thank you for being like a family to our children and youth.

In His love,
 Sandy Mills

Upcoming Events:

- March 8: Youth Group (5 – 8pm)
- March 15: Blessing Bag packing event (after church)
- March 22: Youth Group (5 – 8pm)
- March 29: Palm Sunday
- April 12: Youth Group (5 – 8pm)
- April 26: Tri-tip Fundraiser (11:30 – 1pm), No Youth Group



“Shepherding The Shepherds”

Standing Stone Ministries With Dan and Maureen

What is Standing Stone Ministry? Standing Stone Ministry began in 2002 to provide pastoral guidance for pastors and their spouses, with a focus on building strong, healthy marriages, navigating crises, and warding off disasters so their ministries may flourish. Field shepherds come alongside pastors, their spouses, and single ministry leaders in loving confidential relationships to help, guide, restore, and encourage them to health and wholeness. All their support is free to pastors and their spouses and provides a place of safety to be truly honest in their own personal walks. As healthy leaders, they can promote healthy, congregations, and healthy congregations can reach the community around them for life in Jesus. Additionally, Standing Stone provides one-on-one mentorships and weeklong retreats for couples where a mentor couple hosts a ministry couple in a vacation home, leading them in relationship building exercises and goal-setting and again, at no cost to Pastors for this service.

The aim of Standing Stone is to help build stronger ministry couples—which in turn creates strong followers of Jesus who will advance the Kingdom of God. The goal is that as these leaders are revitalized, they in turn revitalize their followers.



Who Are Dan and Maureen?

First Presbyterian Church Missionaries, Dan and Maureen, are Standing Stone Field Shepherds who have been serving the Lord through Standing Stone Ministries a little over a year now and they are stepping into 2026 full of hope and joy. They hit the road hard and running their first year and currently help approximately 40 individuals and 2 couples that they minister to together. They continue to add new ministry leaders to their care and new members to their support team. In December 2025, they picked up 6 new clients and they will be hosting at least 2 Standing Stone Retreats this coming year.

Maureen says, “It is hard to believe we’ve only been officially shepherding for a year, especially since most of our clients didn’t begin until February or March. In many ways, it feels like we’ve been doing this forever, yet it still feels fresh and new and this season feels like the blessing of realizing you’re finally doing what God has been preparing you for all along. Every experience – joy and pain, learning and loss, mistakes and triumphs – has mattered.”

Dan and Maureen celebrated 38 years of marriage on January 16, 2026 and they are very thankful for prayers and support! Please pray for them for health: body, mind, spirit, and strength, protection, and continued financial support.

Church DEACONS

Did you know the “loose change” (coins and paper bills) in the offering plates on the first Sunday of each month goes to the Deacons as their main source of income for their operating expenses? What is this monthly stipend used for? I’m glad you asked!

Deacons are considered the hands and feet of the Lord. We are charged with caring for the congregation as well as those in the community around us. Your Deacons take this job very seriously, providing comfort and care to the home bound through visitation, cards, calls and rides to church, shopping and doctor’s appointments as needed. We support the sick, injured and hospitalized through cards, flowers/balloons, visits and meals. We present an engraved baby spoon to new babies born to members. Care packages are sent to our military members out on deployment. The many community outreaches we provide, or support locally are our blanket ministry, food and clothing bin, laundry love, the shower ministry, meals on wheels, the Episcopal Soup kitchen and Refuge Armona to name a few. We also set up and provide memorial receptions for members of our congregation free of charge to the bereaving family at this difficult time, although donations are always welcomed.

As you can see, to do all these things we use our time and talents, but we also need monetary resources to accomplish our task, which we couldn’t do it without you and your support. So, THANK YOU for supporting your Deacons each month, or whenever you can, by putting a little bit of “loose change” either directly in the offering plate or in an offering envelope the first Sunday of the month, which is usually Communion Sunday. Your monetary gifts are greatly appreciated and go directly to helping members of the congregation and the local community.

Submitted by—Marj Froberg

1 Peter 4:10: Using gifts to serve one another as stewards of God’s grace.



UP COMING



- Mar 1** Communion Sunday
- Mar 2** C.E. Meeting @ 10am
- Mar 5** Choir Practice @ 11:30am
- Mar 8** Daylight Savings Begins, Worship Meeting @ 11:15am, Youth Group @ 5pm
- Mar 9** *Finance Meeting @ 12pm, *Missions Meeting @ 7pm
- Mar 10** Deacons Meeting @ 12:30pm
- Mar 12** Choir Practice @ 11:30am
- Mar 15** Blessing Bags Packing Party
- Mar 19** Session Reports Due, Choir Practice @ 11:30am
- Mar 22** Youth Group @ 5pm
- Mar 24** Session Meeting @ 6:30pm
- Mar 26** Choir Practice @ 11:30am
- Mar 29** Palm Sunday
- Mar 29-Apr 3** Village of Hope Mission Trip
- Apr 2** Maundy Thursday Service @ 6pm
- Apr 5** Easter Sunday, Communion Sunday
- Apr 14** Deacons Meeting @ 12:30pm
- Apr 15** Hope for the Journey @ 6:30pm, 1st Press Articles Due
- Apr 16** Session Reports Due
- Apr 21** Session Meeting @ 6:30pm
- Apr 22** Hope for the Journey @ 6:30pm
- Apr 26** Youth Tri-Tip Dinner Fundraiser
- Apr 29** Hope for the Journey @ 6:30pm

* via Zoom

Reminder! The Deacons would like to remind you to bring clothing and nonperishable food to help those in our community who are in need. Collection baskets are available in the church hallway near the backdoor.



Summary of Feb. 20, 2026 Session Meeting

Deacons

- Reported 78 took communion on February 1st during worship
- Approved \$35 each to The Episcopal Soup Kitchen, Laundry Love, and Meals-On-Wheels

Clerk's Report

- Reported Members as of February 1, 2026 total—74
- Approved Annette Rajskup as Clerk of Session for 2026

Pastor's Report

- Approved up to \$2500 for new desk & computer monitors
- Approved dissolving the rental agreement with John Singh effective ASAP

Buildings & Grounds

- Approved up to \$24,000 to repair/replace the HVAC for the Fellowship Hall

Christian Education

- Approved \$500 to host the Hope for the Journey Conference Simulcast
- Approved VBS 2026 on June 22-26, 9am-noon
- Approved moving Book Club to June 17th
- Approved moving Youth Play Day to June 13th

Other

- Approved up to \$2000 for handheld radios for campus monitors

SHOW HOPE

HOPE
for the Journey

CONFERENCE

April 15th—May 20th, 2026
6:30—8:30 PM



Jolly 1's & 2's

Opportunities to attend events in March and April are the following:

March 8, "The Sound of Music" is being shown at the Fox Theatre @ 2:00. The cost is \$10 if you purchase tickets ahead of that date or \$12 on the day of the showing.

Kings Symphony performs on March 15 @ 4:00 at the Fox Theatre. Featured will be a student who has shown exceptional talent on an orchestral instrument. The cost for seniors is \$15.00. The concert usually last about 1-1/2 hours. Several of our church members perform in the symphony.

On April 18, the Storybook Garden has a fundraiser. It will be their 6th annual Mystery Theatre and is titled "Small Town Dirt." It is an outdoor event with members of the Kings Players approaching tables and answering your questions about the murder. Prizes are awarded to those who solve the mystery. The cost is \$75.00 and starts at 6:00. Cocktails and raffle tables are available. Optional dress is 50's style. The phone number to reserve tickets is 559-500-9966 or you can contact Janet Harader to reserve tickets for you.

~ Janet Harader



Thank You to all those who helped to make a special Welcome Celebration for Pastor Noel & Tara on Feb. 1st. The food was amazing thanks to everyone who brought food for this special occasion. Also, many thanks to all those who helped with set up and clean up. We are very blessed that Pastor Noel answered God's call to serve our congregation.



MARCH

Birthdays & *Anniversaries

- 2 Ellen Matsubara, Kelly Voyles,
- 5 *Randy Edwards & Diane Sharp
- 6 Cora Kopp, Avery Mills
- 9 Jim Rajskup
- 16 Sally Gordon, Emmett Montoya
- 18 Faye Kopp
- 28 *Don & Janice Mills



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

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Hanford, CA 93232

Place
Stamp
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STAFF:

Noel Anderson pastor@fpchanford.org	Pastor
Mary Kinney Sandy Mills youth@fpchanford.org	Co-Directors of Youth & Children's Ministries
Annette Rajskup office@fpchanford.org	Office Administrator
Melissa Wescoat bookkeeper@fpchanford.org	Bookkeeper
Brooke Winterowd	Nurse & Childcare Coordinator
Nancy Roller nancyroller8@yahoo.com	Custodian

Church Office Hours: 9:00am—12:00pm (Mon—Thur.)
Send prayer requests to hanfordfpcprayer@gmail.com
other information to office@fpchanford.org