

APRIL 2026

# MISSION STUDY REPORT

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GREENWOOD

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### **The Vision Statement of FPC Greenwood:**

We aspire to be a beacon that encourages people to live with hope, confidence and peace through the saving grace and love of Jesus Christ.

### **Introduction**

This Mission Study Report represents the collective voice, memory, and hope of First Presbyterian Church of Greenwood, South Carolina. It is the fruit of a season of intentional listening - to one another, to our community, and to God - undertaken during a significant time of transition in the life of our congregation.

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The process began in late 2025 and culminated in the Vision 360 Workshop held on March 21, 2026, facilitated by Pinnacle Leadership Associates. Along the way, we gathered input through 12 congregational listening sessions involving 107 participants, a Crossing Thresholds institutional health survey completed by 118 members, and a community survey of 14 Greenwood residents familiar with FPC. Together, these voices paint a rich and honest portrait of who we are, where we stand, and where God may be calling us next.

The report is organized around three movements: Looking Back, Looking Around, and Looking Ahead. Each section builds on the last, grounding our future discernment in an honest assessment of our history and our context. Our prayer is that this document will not gather dust on a shelf, but will serve as a living, working resource - a guide for the congregation and a gift to the Pastor Nominating Committee as it undertakes the important work of calling our next pastoral leader. We offer it in the spirit of Abraham, who trusted God's call and journeyed on by stages toward a land and a future he could not yet fully see (*Genesis 12*).

## **Section One: Looking Back**

Any faithful journey forward begins with an honest look at the road already traveled. This section invites us to do exactly that — to pause, remember, and give thanks for the rich history and enduring legacy of First Presbyterian Church of Greenwood. For nearly 150 years, this congregation has been a spiritual home, a community anchor, and a source of grace for countless individuals and families. Understanding who we have been, and what God has already done among us, is essential preparation for discerning who we are called to become.

### **A Brief History of FPC Greenwood**

First Presbyterian Church of Greenwood traces its roots to early Presbyterian activity in the Long Cane region, where ministers from the Synod of New York and Philadelphia helped establish Rocky Creek (later Rock Presbyterian Church) in the late eighteenth century. By

around 1850, as Greenwood grew, some members began meeting closer to town in a shared worship space known as The Chapel, located in the former Presbyterian High School building. This group formally organized as First Presbyterian Church in 1883 with fifty-nine charter members, and by 1899 had completed its first sanctuary—now called Alexander Hall.

Through the twentieth century the church expanded steadily, adding an educational building in 1924, constructing a new sanctuary and office complex in 1958, and converting the original sanctuary to Alexander Hall. Membership grew to roughly 1,000 during the long pastorate of Dr. Robert L. Alexander (1951–1967). The congregation also played a central role in revitalizing Rock Presbyterian Church in 1956 and became the mother church to Fraser Presbyterian (founded 1947) and Westminster Presbyterian (1981). Today, located at 108 East Cambridge Avenue, First Presbyterian remains a historic and active spiritual center for the Greenwood community.

### **The Church Campus as an Asset**

The FPC campus and programs have been responsive to the needs of the community throughout the years.

- Turner House:
  - purchased to add to the church campus was the original Greenwood Soup Kitchen started and managed by FPC volunteers. Later relocated to the larger United Center building where it currently serves daily lunch. Volunteers from FPC still provide time and funding to serve this outreach.
  - Boy Scouts also used the Turner House for activities
  - Habitat for Humanity had an office in the building
  - Original LOGOS programming and youth programs used the building
  - A food pantry initially operated by FPC volunteers moved to United Center
  - Building later demolished because of cost to renovate
- Alexander Hall has been used for:
  - Blood drives
  - Community meetings/meals
  - Packing meals for overseas missions
- Sanctuary:

- Lander recitals/concerts
- Community information meetings—Dementia presentation
- Musical concerts open to the public

In partnership with Workcamps of America, FPC has hosted two TWIG (Together We Impact Greenwood) workcamps in the summer, hosting young people from around the country, who painted and repaired homes of elderly and families in need.

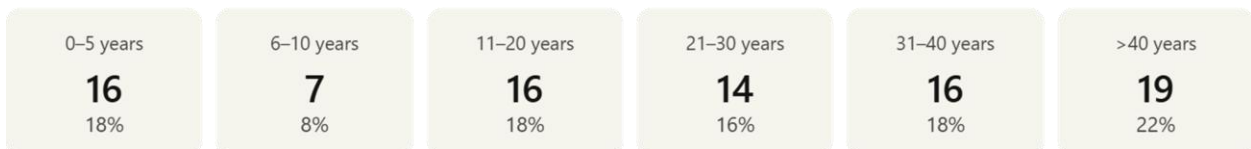
### Summary of March 2026 Listening Sessions

In late February and early March 2026, consultant David Brown conducted twelve congregational listening sessions - plus a dedicated staff session - gathering direct feedback from 107 participants who represented a broad cross-section of the congregation's tenure and experience. From newer members of five years or less to lifelong members who have called FPC home for more than four decades, every tenure category was well represented, reflecting a genuine effort to hear from as many voices as possible across the life of the congregation. The goal of these sessions was straightforward: to create an open and honest space where members could share their stories, name what they treasure, and speak candidly about the challenges and opportunities they see facing the church as it enters this season of transition.

*Note: total response count does not always add up to 107 due to some participants not directly answering all questions, and percentages do not always total 100% since a single participant might have multiple answers to a single question.*

#### Tenure breakdown

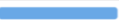
Total respondents: **88**








When asked what brought them to First Presbyterian Church, participants pointed most often to lifelong family connection or having been born and raised in the congregation

(31%), followed closely by a personal invitation from a friend, neighbor, or family member (25%). The quality of preaching and pastoral leadership (22%), Presbyterian tradition and background (20%), and programs for children and youth (16%) were also significant factors. What keeps people here tells an even more compelling story: an overwhelming 72% of participants cited people, relationships, and a sense of family as the primary reason they remain at FPC, far outpacing any other factor. A sense of belonging and feeling at home (36%), opportunities to serve and be involved in ministry (25%), the music program and traditional worship (22%), and pastoral leadership (20%) were also named as important anchors for congregational loyalty.

### What Brought You Here?

Theme	Count	%	Distribution
Born/raised here or lifelong family connection	27	31%	
Invited by friend, neighbor, or family member	22	25%	
Preaching / quality of sermons	19	22%	
Presbyterian background / tradition	18	20%	
Spouse / partner brought them	14	16%	
Programs for children / youth / families	14	16%	

### What Keeps You Here?

Theme	Count	%	Distribution
People / relationships / sense of family	63	72%	
It feels like home / sense of belonging	32	36%	
Opportunities to serve / be active / ministry involvement	22	25%	
Music program / worship style / traditional liturgy	19	22%	
Preaching / pastoral leadership (Kyle, Brad, Dave, etc.)	18	20%	

When asked to describe FPC in three words, participants produced a word cloud dominated by terms like *Friendly, Loving, Tradition, Caring, Welcoming, and Belonging*, words that paint a picture of a congregation with deep relational warmth and a strong sense of identity rooted in faith and community. Other frequently appearing descriptors included *Active, Supportive, Mission-driven, Bible-focused, and Compassionate*, suggesting that members also value the congregation's engagement beyond its own walls. However, the word cloud also included more sobering descriptors such as *Cliquish, Aging, Stagnant, Sleepy, and Dwindling*, an honest and important counterpoint that reflects the concerns of at least some members about the congregation's vitality and openness to those outside its established circles.



community has its own distinctive character, needs, and opportunities that shape the particular form our mission must take.

This section examines the broader demographic and religious landscape - nationally, at the state level in South Carolina, and locally in Greenwood County - alongside the insights gathered from our congregational health survey and community survey. Together, these perspectives help us understand the river we are swimming in, and the specific neighborhood into which God has placed us. The goal is not anxiety, but clarity - the kind of honest, eyes-open awareness that allows a congregation to respond with faithfulness and creativity rather than fear.

## **Demographic Shifts - Local and Global**

### **The Changing American Religious Landscape**

Pew and PRRI survey data drawn from over 36,000 Americans across a period of two decades document a steady and accelerating decline in Christian affiliation over the past two decades:

- In 2007, 78.4% of Americans identified as Christian, with 16.1% unaffiliated.
- By 2014, Christian identity had dropped to 70.6%, while the unaffiliated rose to 22.8%.
- By 2021, Christian identity fell further to 63%, with the unaffiliated reaching 27.4%.

By 2023, the religiously unaffiliated (27%) had become the single largest religious category in America, surpassing White evangelical Protestants (13%), White mainline Protestants (13%), and White Catholics (12%). Other significant groups include Black Protestants (8%) and Hispanic Catholics (8%).

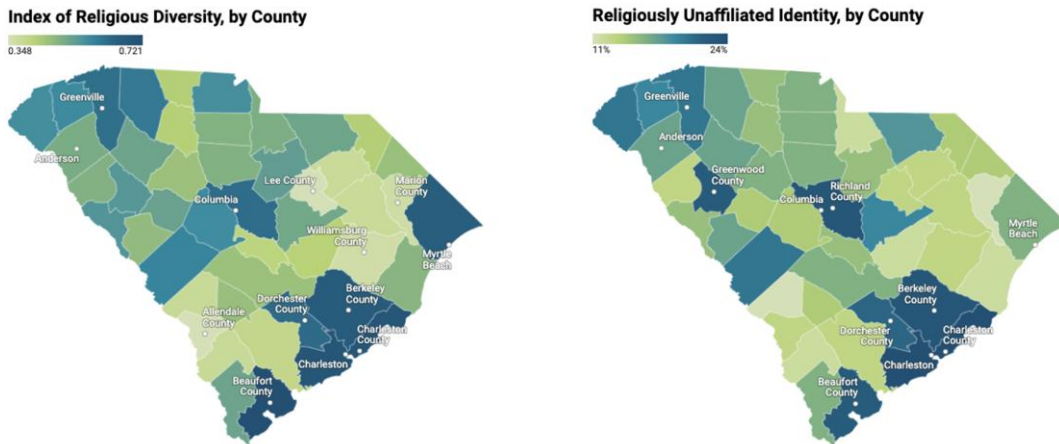
### **State-Level Trends in South Carolina**

South Carolina remains more religiously active than the national average, but reflects similar directional trends. The 2023 religious breakdown in the state was:

- White evangelical Protestant — 22%

- White mainline Protestant — 20%
- Religiously unaffiliated — 19%
- Black Protestant — 18%
- White Catholic — 8%

The unaffiliated population in South Carolina (19%) is notably lower than the national figure (27%), reflecting the state's stronger overall religious culture. County-level data showed that while Greenwood County sits in a moderately low range for religious diversity compared to urban and coastal counties like Charleston, Beaufort, and the Greenville area, the county has a remarkably high level of “unaffiliated” residents.



## Implications for the Church

These trends in the American religious landscape should not be seen primarily as a crisis but as context. Several factors compound the challenge for congregations: people are more scheduled and time-constrained than previous generations, loyalty to institutions broadly is declining, and the cultural "place" of clergy and congregations in community life is becoming more peripheral. At the same time, spiritual sensitivity and the desire for meaningful community remain high - suggesting that spiritual hunger is present even as traditional institutional forms of religion are losing their hold.

## Insights from Congregation and Community Surveys

### *Crossing Thresholds Community Survey*

First Presbyterian Church received Crossing Thresholds congregational survey responses from 118 members, who rated 80 statements across twelve ministry dimensions on a 1–5 scale. The overall mean score of 3.93 out of 5.0 reflects a congregation in solid institutional health — with specific cultural gaps that represent the clearest leadership opportunities for the season ahead.

<b>118</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>3.93</b>
Total Respondents	Age 65 or older	Attend 3–4×/month	Overall Mean Score

Category	Avg. Score	Rating
Lay Leadership	4.17	Strength
Staffing & Organizational Structure	4.13	Strength
Pastoral Care	4.01	Good
Facilities & Campus	4.01	Good
Conflict Management	3.97	Good
Volunteers & Serving Culture	3.96	Good
Online Presence & Technology	3.82	Good
Identity & Mission	3.83	Good
Newcomer Integration	3.81	Good
Finances & Stewardship	3.75	Good
Small Groups & Discipleship	3.54	Fair
Membership & Expectations	3.51	Fair

### *Key Strengths:*

1. Lay Leadership & Governance (the congregation's highest-scoring area) - Members affirm that lay leaders partner well with clergy, rotate according to governance documents, and find joy and meaning in their service. Financial management systems, mortgage health, and constitutional governance all score among the highest items in the survey.
2. Pastoral Care & Community - "This is a caring church community" scored as the third-highest individual item in the entire survey. Congregational care systems are affirmed as effective, and members broadly accept care from lay persons - a healthy indicator for a church navigating pastoral transition.
3. Facilities & Campus - The worship spaces, with their aesthetics and capacity, scored the highest of any individual item. The campus is seen as clean, well-maintained, and a genuine asset for ministry. This context supports the Community Life Center conversation as an extension of an already-valued physical campus.

### *Key Opportunities for Growth:*

1. Small Groups & Discipleship Culture - The aspiration for growth in small group discipleship is present; but the responses indicate that the infrastructure to deliver that growth is not. This gap is the single highest-leverage opportunity in the survey.
2. Membership & Expectations - The membership category reveals genuine ambiguity about what membership means at FPC. "Membership is linked to discipleship" and "We find ways for non-members to serve and lead" both scored among the lower items — suggesting that membership may be creating quiet barriers for newer and younger participants.
3. Newcomer Integration Systems - FPC excels at initial welcome. Greeters are effective and the church involves newcomers when ready. The gaps are downstream: follow-up systems after a first visit, signage and navigation, and integration into small groups. The warmth is real; a more intentional process is being developed.
4. Online Presence & Digital Mission - While online worship was rated by respondents as very high, online engagement as active community scores critically low. For a congregation seeking to reach younger families, who explore churches digitally before visiting, this gap has real strategic consequence.

### ***Greenwood Community Survey***

As part of the Mission Study process, a community survey was sent out to a number of neighbors and partner organizations, resulting in 14 responses from Greenwood residents who have familiarity with First Presbyterian Church but are not members of the congregation.

The word cloud generated from community respondents' descriptions of FPC was dominated by terms like *Traditional*, *Welcoming*, *Beautiful*, *Compassionate*, and *Giving* - broadly consistent with how members describe their own congregation, and reflecting a positive public identity rooted in faith, hospitality, and community engagement. At the same time, words like *Insular*, *Snobby*, and *Swayed by Culture* appeared alongside more affirming descriptors, offering an honest outside perspective that echoes some of the internal concerns raised in the congregational listening sessions about cliquishness and accessibility.



Community respondents identified poverty and housing, addiction and recovery, food insecurity, youth and family needs, outreach to Lander University students, and broader spiritual needs as the most pressing needs in the Greenwood community — areas where FPC's location, resources, and existing partnerships position it well to make a meaningful contribution.


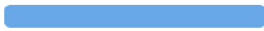

Written comments from community respondents affirmed FPC's reputation as a well-respected, mission-oriented congregation and valued community partner, while also encouraging the church to be more visible and vocal in addressing the community's needs, and to ensure that its warmth extends genuinely to those outside its existing social circles. For example: "Your church is valued in our community both as a place of traditional worship and as a place that cares for the wellbeing of others" and "You have a great location for outreach and missions so please consider doing more of that."

**Self-Identified Opportunities and Challenges**

The congregational listening sessions surfaced three interconnected concerns that participants returned to again and again, and which together define the most critical work facing First Presbyterian Church in the season ahead.

### 3 Central Opportunities / Challenges



Theme	Count	%	Distribution
Attracting & retaining young families / people in their 20s–30s	38	44%	
Family Life Center (FLC) — direction, decision, and deployment	30	34%	
Pastoral search — finding the right next minister	9	10%	

The single most frequently cited issue was the challenge and opportunity of attracting and retaining young families and people in their 20s and 30s, which was named by 44% of participants. Members are keenly aware that the congregation skews older, and that without intentional effort to welcome and integrate younger generations, the long-term vitality of the church is at risk.

Equally prominent was the need for clarity and a unified path forward on the Community Life Center project, named by 34% of participants. This concern is closely related to the “young families” challenge, as many members envision the facility as a potential tool for engaging young families and creating new entry points into the life of the congregation. Members expressed a desire not just for a decision, but for transparent and consistent communication from leadership about what that decision is and what it means for the congregation's future. The CLC question has lingered long enough that it has become, for many, a symbol of the church's ability to move forward together with shared purpose.

Finally, 16% of participants specifically named the pastoral search process - identifying the right qualities in a next minister and conducting a thoughtful, prayerful search - as a pressing challenge and opportunity. While this was the smallest of the three central concerns in terms of raw numbers, it is arguably the thread that connects the other two: the right pastoral leader will be essential to navigating the CLC decision and building the kind of congregation that can reach and retain the next generation.

**FPC Greenwood’s Financial Position**

***Annual Budget and Expenses***

**2026 Budget Compared to Average Budgets (2022–2025)**

<b>Account</b>	<b>2026 Budget</b>	<b>Avg. 2022–2025</b>	<b>\$ Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Personnel	\$760,069	\$718,762	<b>\$41,307</b>	<b>5.75%</b>
Financial Oversight Committee	\$65,225	\$54,596	<b>\$10,630</b>	<b>19.47%</b>
Benevolences	\$85,275	\$65,319	<b>\$19,956</b>	<b>30.55%</b>
Building and Grounds	\$176,160	\$161,716	<b>\$14,444</b>	<b>8.93%</b>
Christian Education	\$15,720	\$14,095	<b>\$1,625</b>	<b>11.53%</b>
Congregational Care	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	0.00%
Music	\$28,100	\$20,200	<b>\$7,900</b>	<b>39.11%</b>

Youth and Young Adults	\$10,000	\$8,981	<b>\$1,019</b>	<b>11.34%</b>
Fellowship	\$22,200	\$26,725	<b>-\$4,525</b>	<b>-16.93%</b>
Administrative Expenses	\$67,800	\$67,625	<b>\$175</b>	<b>0.26%</b>
Worship	\$7,800	\$4,575	<b>\$3,225</b>	<b>70.49%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,240,349</b>	<b>\$1,144,586</b>	<b>\$95,763</b>	<b>8.37%</b>

*2026 Budget Highlights*

Overall budget increase: 8.37% compared to the 2022–2025 average.

- Largest percentage increases:
  - Worship (+70.49%)
  - Music (+39.11%)
  - Benevolences (+30.55%)
- Personnel, the largest budget category, increased modestly at 5.75%.
- Fellowship reflects a strategic reduction of 16.93% relative to historical spending.
- Several areas (Administrative Expenses, Congregational Care) remain essentially flat.

**The Endowment**

First Presbyterian Church (FPC) is blessed to have an Endowment. The Endowment is an incorporated arm of the church that oversees the investment and distribution of funds given by individuals to the church for specific and non-specific purposes. Beginning in 1986, the Endowment has managed funds received from the sale of property, wills, direct contributions, and sale of personal property. The Endowment Bylaws state that the purpose of the Endowment is to provide support and benefit, principally in the form of financial assistance to FPC for conducting its religious, charitable, educational, and other related exempt purposes.

There are two funds within the Endowment, the Unrestricted Fund, and the Restricted Fund. Most applications received by the Endowment are funded from the Unrestricted Account. The Restricted Fund has thirteen categories within the fund with specific guidelines from the donor on how the funds are to be spent. Most funds have a limit on the amount that can be disbursed in a year. Six of these funds pertain to financial aid for

students to attend college, nursing school, full time seminary, or Camp Fellowship. Other funds are restricted to use for Christian Education, Music/Arts, Missions/Outreach, sanctuary flowers, and Building and Grounds.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Year end balance</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Funds awarded</b>
2025	\$ 4,710,489	\$ 2,902,404	\$ 1,808,094	\$ 313,364
2024	\$ 4,573,966	\$ 2,918,836	\$ 1,655,130	\$ 115,857
2023	\$ 4,256,191	\$ 2,775,483	\$ 1,480,708	\$ 119,762
2022	\$ 3,945,397	\$ 2,625,564	\$ 1,319,832	\$ 89,411
2021	\$ 3,664,349	\$ 2,752,998	\$ 911,351	\$ 111,724
2020	\$ 3,205,634	\$ 2,390,717	\$ 814,817	\$ 111,926

***The Capital Campaign / Community Life Center***

A group of members presented a request to the FPC Session to consider the addition of a gymnasium type building for use by the youth of the church and community. As a result of that request, the Session appointed an ad hoc committee to gather information.

Family Life Center/Capital Campaign timeline:

- March 2023 - FPC Session approved an exploratory committee to gather information on the possibility of constructing a “family life center” (FLC) on the church campus. The vision for this building was to provide recreational opportunities to attract and retain our youth as well as provide space for other church needs and activities.
- August 2023 - Session approved application to Endowment to fund A&E services to develop conceptual drawings and estimates for the building.
- December 2023 - Contract signed with A & E firm
- June 2024 - Conceptual drawings and cost estimate (\$4.5 million) completed
- August 2024 - FLC discussed in congregational meeting, with request for more information on the FLC
- November 2024 - Congregational meeting to approve Capital Campaign
- Throughout 2025 - Capital Campaign \$2.8 million pledged
- November 2025 - Endowment/FPC purchased adjoining structure/property which could alter the location/plans for Community Life Center (formerly FLC).
- April 2026 - Session appointed committee to move forward with recommendations for action on the CLC

## Ongoing Programs and Ministries of FPC

- Sunday Worship – 9:00am and 11:00am through the school year; 10:00am during summer months
- Sunday School classes - children K3 - 5th grade, middle and high school youth, adults
- Wednesday Night Fellowship - dinner and programming for children, youth, and adults
- SNY - Sunday Night Youth - 6th - 12th grade
- WEY - Wednesday Evening Youth - 6th - 12th grade
- EGGS - Exalting God at Sunrise - 6th - 8th grade
- Children's SHINE Choir - 1st - 5th grade
- Bible School (summer) - K3 - 5th grade, adults Bible Study Classes
- Presbyterian Women - PW Coordinating Team, eight women's circles
- Men of the Church
- Books and Spirits - Book Group
- Secret Angels - serves members attending college
- Community-wide Lenten luncheon and worship service
- Shawl Ministry
- Stephen Ministry

## Church Campus - Current Usage and Maintenance

Since 1979 Noah's Ark Preschool has been a ministry of First Presbyterian Church to serve the children and families of the congregation and the community in a Christian environment. Noah's Ark has provided Christian education to members' children and as an outreach to the community to encourage children to develop interpersonal relationships with others and to teach them about the love of God for all people. Noah's Ark Preschool is a half-day program that runs with District 50 apart from the start/end dates and currently has 84 children enrolled for the 2025-2026 school year.

Other organizations that are partners of FPC:

- *Seventh-day Adventist church* - On Saturdays, a Seventh Day Adventist Hispanic fellowship meets in a large Sunday school room for their services, one in the morning and one in the evening. Since their meetings began at First Presbyterian in November 2025, their membership has grown considerably.

- *Palmetto Girls Sing (PGS)* - a community choir for girls 4<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade, meeting in two sections: Lyric Singers and Grace Notes. Membership is by invitation and audition. Students learn vocal technique, music reading skills, and have a vibrant social energy in parties, retreats, and a rigorous performance schedule. The Director is Amy Fennell, a top Music Educator and teacher in Greenwood Schools. PGS is funded by the Church, donations, and tuition.
- *The Greenwood Festival Chorale* - a community organization for adult singers, currently directed by Steve Skinner (Director of Music Ministries at First Presbyterian Church of Greenwood). GFC presents 3 concerts a year: Fall, Spring, and Summer. GFC is funded by ticket sales, advertising revenue, member dues, and gifts.
- *Festiva* - Festiva is the moniker of FPC's concert series presented on Sunday afternoons at 4 pm. Festiva exists to familiarize attendees with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ through programs and experiences that affirm the culture of a Christian world view. The series is funded through donations, bequests, and grants.
- *Boy / Girl Scouts* – FPC has a long history of supporting scout troops, both boys and girls, which currently meet on Monday evenings during the school year
- *Kirkin' 'o the Tartan service* - An annual celebration of our Scottish heritage, complete with bagpipes, drums, and a parade of family tartans. The service is marked with prayers of thanksgiving and a reminder of belonging to a family of Christian ancestors.
- *Lenten luncheon* - We participate, along with other local churches, in Lenten luncheons and worship services marking the weeks of Lent leading up to the celebration of Easter.
- *The National League of Junior Cotillions (NLJC) Greenwood County Chapter* offers etiquette, manners, and ballroom dancing classes for 6th and 7th graders in Alexander Hall.

The age of the buildings on campus necessitates constant care and maintenance. A long-term plan has been developed with estimated costs to forecast the financial and material needs.

Completed projects include:

- the remodeling of the kitchen in Alexander Hall (fellowship area)

- installation of a lift to provide access from Alexander Hall to the main floor
- new doors, windows, lighting, alarm system and painting
- renovation of the Byrd garden

Major ongoing projects include:

- the purchase of the adjacent Wingard building
- proposed demolition of the gas station/Wingard building,
- exterior painting.

The budget for Building and Grounds in 2026 was \$176,160.

## Current Staffing

**Brad Christie** — *Interim Pastor* (who has been serving as Parish Associate for Congregational Care)

An experienced pastor and professor, with degrees from Davidson, University of Virginia, Duke and Erskine, who has served FPC in several capacities, and currently also serves as a moderator in Trinity Presbytery.

**Elise Collins** — *Director of Christian Education*

A Wofford and Vanderbilt graduate and preacher's kid / missionary kid who is passionate about faith formation and calls FPC both her church family and work home.

**Steve Skinner** — *Director of Music*

Leads all music ensembles and choirs, with a heart for helping every worshipper discover the joy of singing praises to God.

**Cliff Cain** — *Theologian in Residence*

A retired professor with dual doctorates in systematic theology and environmental science who moved from Missouri and brings a deep passion for faith, creation care, and lifelong learning.

**Jade Green** — *Director of Youth and Young Adults*

A Lander University alumnus and former rugby recruit from Wisconsin, who is dedicated to building meaningful relationships with FPC's youth.

**Lauren Trantham** — *Noah's Ark Preschool Director*

A Lander University Early Childhood Education graduate whose own three children all went through the Noah's Ark program, giving her a personal love for the ministry.

**Lea Jones** — *Secretary*

A devoted church staffer who genuinely loves her job and brings warmth and dedication to keeping the church office running smoothly.

**Nan Smith** — *Financial Administrator*

A Greenwood native who manages all accounting, payroll, deposits, disbursements, and financial reporting for the church.

**Juston Erskine** — *Building Superintendent*

In this newly-developed full-time role, Juston is responsible for maintaining the church buildings, grounds, and property. He reports to the Senior Pastor and Buildings & Grounds chairperson.

**Vince Plotczyk** — *Sexton*

A full-time staff person making sure our church facilities are always clean and well maintained. Vince sets up for special events and works with the Building Superintendent overseeing large-scale projects.

## **FPC's Mission Partners**

First Presbyterian Church works with and supports a number of local and global mission partners. Key community partnerships include: Greenwood Pathway House, Burton Center, and Faith Home. The church also supports missionary families and organizations worldwide. Total mission giving amount budgeted \$85,275 in 2026; with additional funding coming through the endowment.

### **Local & National Level**

- Beyond Abuse
- Boys & Girls Club
- Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts
- Burton Center Foundation
- Faith Home
- FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) Lakelands
- Fellowship Camp

- Food Bank-Greenwood County
- Greenwood Pathway Inc
- Greenwood Soup Kitchen
- Greenwood Community Home Repairs
- Hands-on-Mission
- Healthy Learners - Spelling Bee Team
- Hospice of Piedmont
- Kairos Prison Ministry
- Meals on Wheels
- Project Linus
- Salvation Army
- United Ministries
- Young Life
- Voice for Children Foundation

### **Global Level**

- New Missionary
- James & Jodi McGill (Niger)
- Nancy / Shelvis Smith-Mather (Sudan)
- Kenya Faith Missions
- Pakistan Mission
- Honduras Culuco Scholarship
- Center for Development in Central America
- Volunteers In Medical Missions

## **Section Three: Looking Ahead**

Having looked back at our history and outward at our context, we turn now to the most important question of all: Where is God calling First Presbyterian Church of Greenwood in the years ahead? This section does not offer a rigid strategic plan, but something more organic and more honest - a set of commitments and potential pathways that emerged from our communal discernment process, grounded in prayer, data, and conversation.

Two categories of forward movement are presented here. The first is a Transition To-Do List: a set of near-term priorities that should be addressed during the interim period as we

prepare to call our next pastor. The second is a collection of Missional Pathways: longer-horizon directions that reflect where our congregation senses God's invitation to grow, serve, and engage more deeply. Both are offered not as final answers, but as faithful starting points for the journey ahead. We believe the best days of God's work in and through First Presbyterian Church are still to come.

### **Transition To-Do List**

During the Vision 360 Workshop, participants reviewed the insights from the surveys and listening sessions. In conversations around tables and in the larger group, the following items emerged for a "transition to-do list." These items should be given particular attention in the upcoming months, as the church prepares to search for and call the next pastor.

- Ground the transition process in prayer and congregational discernment
- Clarify a unified path forward with the Community Life Center project; clearly communicate a decision from the Session and/or the CLC Committee to the congregation
- Conduct a staffing audit – roles, needs, dreams, etc
- Give additional attention to communication during the transition and search process, understanding that confidentiality may prevent sharing of some details
- Finalize this Mission Study document, gain approval from the Session, and present to the congregation and Presbytery

### **Potential "Mission Pathways"**

In addition to the "transition to-do list," the following potential mission pathways were developed during the Vision 360 workshop, reflecting the collected insights from the listening sessions, surveys, demographic information, etc. These mission pathways define critical, tangible ways for the church to move forward in pursuing its mission over the next few years. They answer the question: *"How might we better be a beacon that encourages people to live with hope, confidence and peace through the saving grace and love of Jesus Christ?"*

These pathways communicate the discernment and direction of the church as it seeks its next pastoral leader and should be a tool for the Pastor Nominating Committee in undertaking its search.

***Pathway #1: Listen to Our Neighbors***

Create opportunities to ask questions and listen deeply to our neighbors to discern their needs and learn from their perspectives; begin with groups that already have some relationship to the church (ie, Noah’s Ark)

Identify target populations in the Greenwood community with whom the church feels called to serve (young families, early retirees, Lander students)

***Pathway #2: Develop the Community Life Center Project***

In April 2026, the Session formed a new committee to advance plans and preparation of the initial Family Life Center, through the next phase of development toward the building of a facility as needed. The Community Life Center Committee (CLCC) is an ad hoc group with this mission:

1. Reeducate the congregation on the purpose and mission of the Community Life Center with the goal of gaining complete buy-in.
2. Provide regular updates on financial status, building plans/architecture, and timeline for future actions.
3. Create a clear and regular communication plan with Session and church.

***Pathway #3: Create a Formal Communication Plan***

Create a formal communication plan that will address both internal and external communication, including digital media, helping the church to better tell its story in the broader community and invite people to join in the life of faith

***Pathway #4: Intentionally Cultivate New Congregational Leaders***

Developing new congregational leaders and offering them opportunities to serve with accessible entry points / levels of commitment

### ***Pathway #5: “Stay Above the Fray”***

Navigating the challenge of polarization and creating space for people with divergent views to find a place in the family of Christ

### ***Pathway #6: Deepen Strategic Mission Partnerships***

Develop strategic mission partnerships with existing community organizations, particularly as the church may soon have the CLC as a “ministry hub”

## **Conclusion**

First Presbyterian Church of Greenwood stands at an important moment in its long and faithful story. This Mission Study shows a congregation with deep strengths - a rich history, a caring and committed community, strong lay leadership, and a campus that has served Greenwood for generations. As one survey response put it, “This is a caring church community,” a truth echoed throughout the listening sessions and community feedback.

The study also names the key challenges ahead: reaching and retaining young families, discerning a clear path forward on the Community Life Center, strengthening discipleship and small-group systems, improving communication, and building better structures for welcoming newcomers. These are not signs of decline but invitations to renewed purpose. As the report notes, the goal is “honest, eyes-open awareness” that leads to faithful and creative action.

Looking forward, the congregation is well-positioned to deepen its mission, expand its community presence, and call a pastoral leader who can help guide this next chapter. The commitments outlined in this study - listening well, investing in younger generations, strengthening ministries, and engaging the community - provide a hopeful and actionable roadmap.

Above all, this report affirms that God is still at work in and through First Presbyterian Church. May this Mission Study serve as a beacon of encouragement as FPC steps into the next stage of its journey with hope, confidence, and peace.