

# First Presbyterian Church North Shore



*“More people, more like Christ”*

## CHURCH PROFILE / LEAD PASTOR SEARCH

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Accepting applications at [FirstPresMASearch@gmail.com](mailto:FirstPresMASearch@gmail.com), or contact Cindy Fitzgerald at **508-783-2389**

# Who we are

## FOCUS

Our goal is *More People, More Like Christ*, and this is embodied in our intent to *Exalt* our God in our weekly worship together and in our daily lives, *Equip* our people to grow in understanding of the scriptures and enable them to share the Gospel, and *Extend* beyond the boundaries of church to bring the gospel to our local North Shore community and to the world beyond in accordance with the Great Commission as expressed in Matthew 28:16-20.



## OUR CONGREGATION

Our congregation is a mix of ages with both elderly retired folk, younger families, college and seminary students, and everything in between. We are not yet greatly diverse in ethnic and racial makeup but more diverse than the town in which we are located. Although we are located in Ipswich and many of our members live in Ipswich, we are a regional church with members and friends from across the North Shore.

Our worship service is a mix of traditional and contemporary music. It is followed by a time of

fellowship and refreshments and then the Christian education hour for all ages.

Average Sunday attendance before the COVID restrictions was 350. Current attendance is 250 with additional households continuing to stream services online. There are 278 communicant members including 22 covenant children, but we also attract many who are not members of our church but maintain membership in their home churches as they are students in the local area.

# Our region

## OUR TOWN

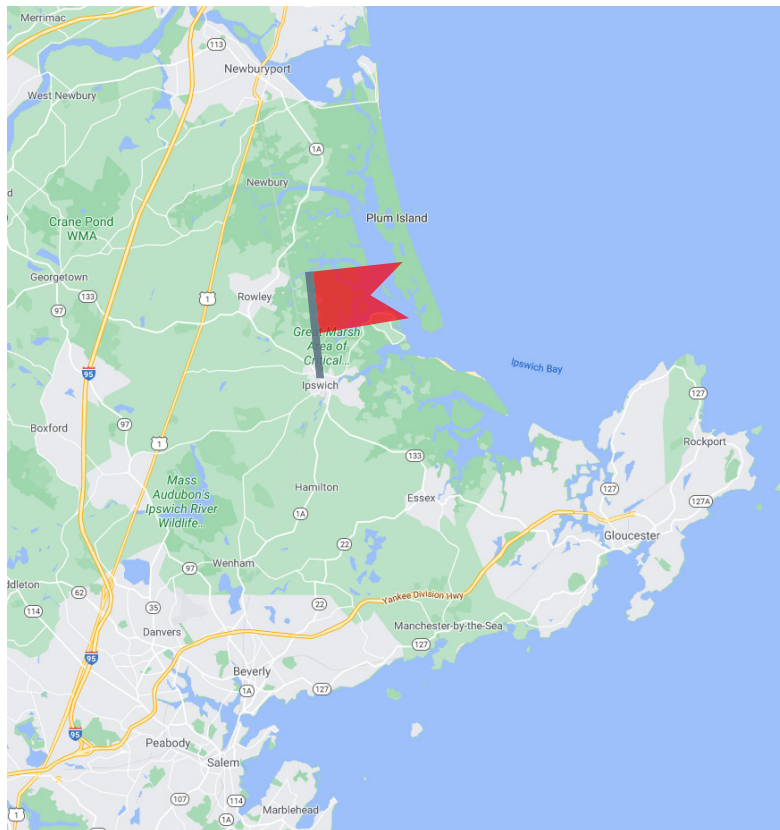
Ipswich is a seacoast town about 30 miles northeast of Boston, Massachusetts. It was founded in 1634 in an area that was known by Native Americans as Agawam. Ipswich boasts more surviving first-period homes (pre-1725) than any other place in the nation.

Today's population is a little over 14,000. The local churches include two Congregational churches, a Baptist church, a Methodist church, an Episcopal church, a Greek Orthodox church, a Roman Catholic church, and two Russian Orthodox churches in addition to First Presbyterian Church North Shore. Pre-COVID, a group of local pastors met regularly and includes the Catholic priest, the pastor of one of the Congregational churches, the Episcopal rector, the Baptist pastor, the Methodist pastor, and our pastor. Together they have sponsored a number of joint events, including Lenten activities, seminars on end-of-life matters, and discussions of Henri Nouwen's book *The Return of the Prodigal Son*. Additionally, over the last several years the churches have supported the Ipswich Refugee Program that helps to resettle refugees. Several members from our church have worked as English language tutors and advocates for refugee families.



## THE NORTH SHORE AREA

Ipswich is serviced by a commuter rail line to Boston and is located in Boston's North Shore region which contains many towns as well as some small cities, including Gloucester, Danvers, Beverly, and Salem. The North Shore also features Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Gordon College. The church has enjoyed a strong relationship with these two schools, and over the years we have had students, faculty and staff from these two institutions worship and serve with us. The church has served as an internship location for many Gordon-Conwell students.



# Our history

## FOUNDING

The origin of First Presbyterian Church (FPC) dates back to the mid-1950s when Gordon College and Divinity School moved out of Boston to the northeast coastal region of Massachusetts known as the North Shore. In 1959 a group called the Presbyterian Fellowship began meeting for Sunday services in the homes of two Gordon professors and their wives, Charles and Ruth Schaufele, and Burton and Esther Goddard. Worship was held in the Goddards' living room and Sunday school met at the Schaufeles' home.

## 1960s

In 1960 the church was received as First Presbyterian Church of Hamilton by the Presbytery of New York and New England of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The new church purchased the former Methodist church building on Railroad Avenue in Hamilton in 1961.

In 1964 the church called Wendell L. Rockey as its first pastor. He and his wife Trudi led the fledgling congregation through its formative years before taking another call from the Presbyterian Church of Cape Cod in 1975.

## 1970s

In 1976 FPC called Kenneth Ironside as its second pastor. Under the leadership of Ken and his wife Valerie the church continued to grow, with particular influx from the Gordon College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary communities. In the early 1980s Ken accepted another call from a church in New Jersey.

## 1980s

James Kern was FPC's third pastor from 1983 to 1990. In 1986 the church formed an expansion committee in response to the church's continuing growth. This resulted in the planting of another church, [Merrimack Valley Presbyterian Church](#), in nearby North Andover in 1987 under the leadership of John Van Meerbeke, a recent graduate of Gordon-Conwell. It also resulted in the purchase of our current property in 1988, formerly occupied by a retail store called The Christmas Angel that operated out of the current church office building. Jim and his wife Nan left FPC in 1990 to take a position at the Emmanuel Gospel Center in Boston.

## 1990s

God was quick to fill our new church building during the 1990s. Under the leadership of its fourth pastor, Charles Wingard, attendance at worship services more than doubled. During this time the church actively focused on foreign and local missions, sending missionaries to many areas around the globe. It also developed a vibrant youth ministry under the leadership of youth pastor Jon Evans, who is still with us today. By 1997 the church had launched a building program for a new Christian Life Center, which now enables us to conduct most of our activities on the church property.

## 2000s

Soon after the turn of the century FPC called its fifth senior pastor, David O'Leary, as well its first associate pastor, Greg Hills. Under their leadership the church continued to grow, eventually leading to the addition of a third worship service that adopted a more contemporary style. David and his wife Debbie led the church through a time of economic uncertainty emphasizing both the sovereignty and the grace of God in Christ.

# Our history (cont'd)

## 2010 – TODAY

In 2010 the church took another leap of faith by calling another associate pastor, Derek Baker, in anticipation of launching a second campus, which began in Danvers in September 2015. Derek brought a set of gifts that include church planting, preaching, teaching, music and shepherding.

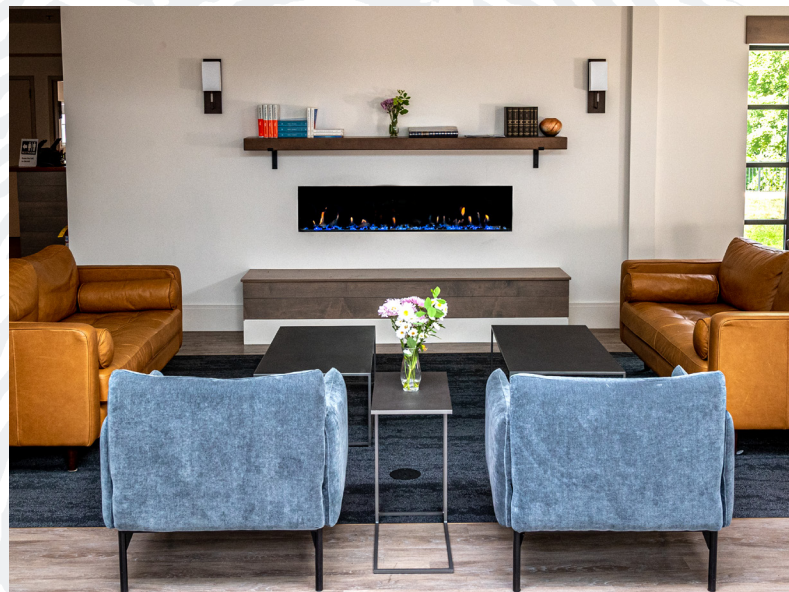
In 2012 Greg Hills became FPC's sixth senior (or "lead") pastor. Under God's sovereign guidance, we continue to pursue our vision, begun at that time, of *More People, More Like Christ*. We desire to be a people who Exalt in every moment, Equip for every purpose, and Extend to everyone.

From 2014 through 2016 FPC saw continued growth and purposeful transitions and expansion. We strategically adopted three overseas locations, referred to as "global epicenters" for global missions focus. Locally we launched a second campus in Danvers and began a building campaign for campus expansion in Ipswich. We also began a denominational transition into the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA).

In April of 2017 FPC was received into the PCA (Southern New England presbytery). Following the launch of a second campus, we saw growth in both locations. The Ipswich campus called Jonathan Conant as an associate pastor in January 2018. Our satellite location had grown to the extent that in 2021 the Danvers campus particularized as Center Grace Church and is now pastored by Derek Baker with Nathaniel Lee as their associate pastor. We continue to partner in the shared passion of global missions as well as some administrative matters. Center Grace currently meets in the nearby city of Beverly.

In January 2021 Greg Hills was called to serve as the Northeast Hub Director for MTW. In December 2022 Jonathan Conant accepted a pastoral call from Rye Congregational Church in Rye, New Hampshire.

In 2020 we began construction of the 'Glue,' an open-concept welcome center connecting our sanctuary with the Christian Life Center. Completed in August 2021, it includes a coffee bar, fireplace, and numerous meeting areas. This space provides a great opportunity to help knit our members together and support our church focus and vision.



The "Glue," FPC's new welcome center

# Ministries

## GLOBAL MISSIONS

For more than 20 years we have maintained an active role in supporting cross-cultural missions. We fund missions largely through Faith Promise giving (\$220,000) and focus on three global epicenters where the gospel is relatively unknown — the Arab world, Bangladesh, and China. We also fund college outreach at several locations in the United States, and outreach to people in eastern Massachusetts who are from our epicenter areas. We have a yearly missions conference in the fall that helps to bring the need for cross-cultural missions to our doorstep.

## LOCAL MISSIONS

Through local missions we reach out to the town of Ipswich and other North Shore programs including Amirah (support for women who have been trafficked), the Ipswich Refugee Program (helping refugees who are resettling in Ipswich), Straight Ahead Ministries (reaching adolescents in local detention centers), Family Promise (working with homeless families), and foster care (members serve as foster parents/families for children placed by the Massachusetts Department of Children and Family and as support groups for each of those core foster families).

## WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

Through a number of weekly Bible studies, various special events, and a popular annual retreat, we encourage the spiritual growth of our women of all ages. Partnering with local missions, we seek meaningful ways to reach out and support programs affecting women on the North Shore.

## MEN'S MINISTRIES

Men's Ministries seeks to provide opportunities for service and fellowship through monthly men's breakfasts, an annual retreat, and other outreach events, but the main vehicle for sharing life together is the continued growth and development of Discipleship Groups. "D-Groups" are composed of four or five men who meet on a weekly basis. D-Groups use various curricula but most use Gospel & Grace from Mission to the World. Men's Ministries has partnered with our epicenter in Bangladesh to disciple young believers, and several of our men have traveled to support the Dhaka Business Development Center.

## YOUTH MINISTRIES

We have separate and active middle school and high school groups that meet weekly, and many of our students are involved in mentoring relationships. We also support an annual youth missions trip; we call it our Missions 101 introduction. For many years we have gone to Voice of Calvary in Jackson, Mississippi, but recently we have been serving with the Providence Rescue Mission in Providence, Rhode Island. We support and attend the middle school and high school Deerwander Bible Conferences each summer and many of our members and staff volunteer their time there as well.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

This area involves not only our weekly Sunday Christian education program for our children but also Wednesday evening activities with BLAST and GLOW (boys and girls clubs), and a summer Vacation Bible School.

# Ministries (cont'd)

## 20THIRTY

Ministry to young adults in the area. Most of these are post-college age who meet regularly for fellowship and mutual support in the faith.

## FPC TRANSFORMS

FPC Transforms is our adult Christian education program held each Sunday morning. The program has been led by many within the Church body including elders, men's and women's ministries leaders, and others with the gift of teaching. FPC Transforms seeks to equip all of our members, from college age through our seniors, with quality Christian education programming. The goal is to further assist in the transformation process as we endeavor to make "more people, more like Christ."

## SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

We encourage our people to participate in small group ministry to encourage each other and to grow in our knowledge of the Word of God and to pray together.

## OUR COMMITTEES

The following committees support our ministries and administrative functions:

Budget and Personnel  
Children's Ministries  
Deacons  
Facilities Expansion  
Fellowship  
Foster Care Team  
Global Missions Team  
Local Missions Team  
Meals Ministry  
Men's Ministries  
Session  
20Thirty  
Trustees  
Welcome Ministry Team  
Women's Ministries  
Worship Committee  
Youth Committee

# Leadership

## STAFF

Jon Evans – Youth Director and Church Administrator  
Katie Souza – Director of Children’s Ministries  
Director of Women’s Ministries – open position  
Maureen Oh – Music Director  
Rosemary Minor – Office Manager

## SESSION

Meirwyn Walters – Moderator  
Jeff Azadian  
Jon Evans – Youth Director and Church Administrator  
Rob Joss – Clerk  
George Papanicolaou  
Russ Queen  
Greg Smith

## DEACONS

Ken Harding  
Dan Janssen  
Scott Knowles  
Kate McMillan  
Randy Rydbeck – chair  
Alycia Thornton  
Pam Whitmore  
Kendra Burke – Assistant Deacon  
Ed Porter – Assistant Deacon



# Lead Pastor description

Accepting applications at [FirstPresMASearch@gmail.com](mailto:FirstPresMASearch@gmail.com), or contact Cindy Fitzgerald at 508-783-2389

**The Lead Pastor of FPC shall meet the New Testament requirements for the office of teaching elder as listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. The Lead Pastor shall be responsible in concert with the Session of FPC to provide spiritual leadership and oversight for the congregation and her members at FPC. This consists of the following elements:**

## WORSHIP

**FPC seeks to worship God in spirit and in truth. The Lead Pastor will strive to inculcate a posture of worship in the congregation in all that we do throughout our lives. In addition, in conjunction with the Session, the Lead Pastor will be responsible for the overall tone, content, and focus of worship services and is expected to work in conjunction with participants to create a worshipful context consistent with our vision of “More People, More Like Christ.”**

- In conjunction with the Worship Committee, plan and lead Sunday morning worship services as well as other worship services of the church
- Oversee the ministry of the Preaching the Word of God on the occasions established by the Session
- Provide leadership for the preaching schedule to include pastoral staff, interns, and guest preachers
- Oversee the Celebration and Administration of the Sacraments: Lord’s Supper (1st Sunday of each month) and Baptisms
- Oversee admission of new members

## PREACHING AND TEACHING

**FPC loves preaching. The Lead Pastor will be the primary preacher for Sunday morning worship and is expected to be exceptional at exegetically uncovering truths in Scripture and challenging and comforting the congregation with those truths. FPC has a long history of strong, Reformed, exegetical preachers and we expect to continue that tradition.**

- Provide exceptional preaching, demonstrated by strong exegesis and exposition, timely, interesting and relevant illustrations, strong and clear actionable applications of biblical truths to our lives, and persuasive challenges/comforts to the congregation

- With relative frequency, lead adult Christian Education and Profession of Faith classes and other educational programs of the church

## DISCIPLESHIP / LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

**The Session of FPC seeks to be more intentional in our ministries with a renewed focus towards transforming lives through formal and informal discipleship. The Lead Pastor will play a key role in the development and implementation of this focus.**

- Work with the Session to develop and implement a plan for deeper discipleship and transparency as outlined in our Planning document
- Lead FPC toward a culture of pouring ourselves into each other’s lives, with the goal that everyone is being discipled, particularly members, and is discipling others
- Work with the Session to identify those in our congregation with leadership calling and gifts at each stage of their lives
- Oversee leadership training and development for congregational leaders
- Ensure that we are all on mission by consistently communicating the church’s vision and goals to the leaders and the congregation as agreed upon with the Session

## EVANGELISM

**FPC needs to better develop a culture of evangelism. The Lead Pastor must be personally and actively involved in multi-faceted evangelism.**

- Engage the congregation in personal one-on-one evangelism
- Encourage a culture of actively reaching out to

- those who do not know the Lord
- Oversee formal and informal training programs in evangelism
- Lead by example

## GLOBAL MISSIONS

**FPC has a long history of involvement in Global Missions. The Lead pastor is expected to be supportive of that focus.**

- Take an active role in working with the Global Missions Team (GMT) to plan the annual missions conference and work with the GMT in developing the next phase of global missions
- Actively support the Faith Promise initiative for funding of global missions
- Emphasize and model the importance of global missions to the congregation

## PASTORAL CARE

**The Session of FPC seeks a Lead Pastor who will play a leading role, in conjunction with the Session, in biblical counseling, spiritual comfort, and intercessory prayer for the needs of the congregation.**

- Counsel families and individuals in the church and refer people to professional counselors when needed
- Contact prospective members and inactive members inviting them into the community of the church
- Provide couples with premarital counseling
- Officiate at weddings and funerals
- Visit the sick and injured in homes and hospitals

## SESSION

**The Lead Pastor will personally invest in the spiritual lives of the Elders through informal and formal means.**

- Engage in spiritual relationships (mutual discipleship/accountability) with fellow teaching and ruling Elders
- Shepherd the Elders' families
- Serve as Moderator of the Session; including setting the agenda, task delegation, etc., in conjunction with the Elders

## CHURCH STAFF

**FPC seeks a culture of mutual support, accountability and cooperation among its staff. The Lead Pastor will oversee all church staff.**

- Act as chief of staff, leading and moderating weekly staff meetings of church employees
- Oversee and assist in the Associate Pastor's ministerial development
- Manage staff responsibilities and oversee personal spiritual development
- Work with Session to recommend roles and staff changes (additions or terminations)
- Provide annual written performance reviews of staff
- Ensure all staff with supervisory roles are providing annual written performance reviews to those under their care

## BROADER COMMUNITY

**The Lead Pastor will have a presence in the community, both specifically in Ipswich and the surrounding communities.**

- Cooperate with local churches in appropriate ecumenical efforts and witness
- Collaborate with and support the work of local community agencies and programs as appropriate
- Serve as a leading advocate for Congregational outreach efforts

## PRESBYTERY, GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**The Lead Pastor will be the main point of contact between the congregation and the different denominational entities.**

- Pledge to uphold the standards of the PCA and Book of Church Order (BCO)
- Participate in the required meetings/duties/ministries of Presbytery and General Assembly (GA)
- Report to the Session about the topics before the Presbytery and GA, and congregation as needed

## PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND DEMONSTRATED SKILLS

- A personal life characterized by holy living and an intimate walk with the Lord
- A rich personal prayer life
- A strong emphasis on the gift of preaching and teaching, applying the truth, wisdom, discernment and relevance of God's Word
- An unwavering commitment to, and a history of discipling others
- An aptitude for leading corporate worship and marshaling all components (music, confession, prayer, sermon etc)
- A heart for evangelism (both local and global)
- A commitment to pastoral care, with strong interpersonal skills, and an ability to work well and collaborate with others
- A strong, organized working style, with a demonstrated ability to delegate tasks, manage results, and work closely with others

## BACKGROUND/EXPERIENCE

- Current or qualified to be an Ordained Minister in the Presbyterian Church of America
- MDiv from a seminary which supports the teaching of Reformed Theology
- Demonstrated life and professional experience and qualifications to lead a congregation of more than 350 active members

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