



Building a Wider Welcome



First Presbyterian Church Asheville
2026

OUR VISION

First Presbyterian Church of Asheville is committed to being a **vibrant downtown congregation** where we experience the **boundary-breaking love of Christ** through radical hospitality, deep relationships, and shared ministry.

Following a **period of renewal and intergenerational growth** since 2022, we are looking to the future with hope and confidence.

Building a Wider Welcome will help ensure FPCA remains a thriving downtown congregation for decades to come—**extending an ever-wider welcome and serving as a vital hub for ministry and mission in the heart of our community.**



“Welcome one another,
therefore, just as Christ has
welcomed you, for the glory of
God.”

– Romans 15:7





WHY NOW?

Now is the right moment to act. First Presbyterian Church of Asheville is experiencing **renewed energy, strong financial health, and growing participation across generations.**

As downtown evolves and surrounding properties are redeveloped, we have a critical window to secure accessibility, address essential maintenance, and enhance the spaces that embody our ministry. **Acting now ensures that our church remains a thriving, welcoming presence in the heart of Asheville for decades to come.**

- **Critical timing for parking accessibility:** Surrounding surface lots are slated for redevelopment, while downtown demand increases and worship attendance grows. We need to strategically address parking because, without action, our accessibility will diminish over time.
- **Facility Enhancement Opportunities:** These updates are needed to create a wider welcome for the congregation and mission partners in critical spaces for generations to come.
 - Improving the Narthex, & creating a Commons area adjacent to the sanctuary
 - Refurbishing the Fellowship Hall
 - Refurbishing the Chapel
 - Improving wayfinding into and throughout the facility
- **Deferred Maintenance Needs:** Pressing needs should be addressed to ensure the essential functions of our facility remain efficient and effective for ministry, such as window replacement, a new elevator, HVAC additions and repairs.
- **Financial strength:** Our church's current strong financial position makes this the ideal time to invest in our future. Giving has been strong, expenses have been met, and our overall financial position is stronger than ever.
- **Building on momentum:** With our congregation energized and growing, now is the perfect time to launch forward into the next phase of our ministry.



PRIORITY I

Sustainable Parking for Ministry Growth – \$3M

Vision Connection

Making space to park is about making space for people. Every Sunday, and often during the week, parking is a scramble. Every week, young families circle the block, elderly members struggle to find a spot, and first-time visitors leave before they arrive.

Acquiring sustainable parking is about more than logistics; it's about our values of radical hospitality and sharing the welcome of Christ. We never want something as simple as a parking space to keep anyone from experiencing the boundary-breaking love of Christ in this place. Adding parking is about making room, literally and spiritually, for the wider welcome God is calling us to extend.

Details

After a great deal of research and discernment, it was determined that the parking structure that FPCA had envisioned for our Lexington Avenue-side parking lot since the 1960s was not physically possible. The session began exploring other options.

On January 4, 2026, the congregation voted unanimously to purchase 46 Aston Street, a .64-acre property just a 2-3 minute walk to the front doors of the sanctuary with 61 parking spaces and a 4,000-square-foot building. We closed on this property in February 17, 2026, for \$2.85M. Gifts already pledged to the campaign and financing with no pre-payment penalty made this possible.

This site more than doubles the current Sunday parking and offers weekday use for staff and families.

PRIORITY 2

Welcome & Hospitality Improvements - \$1.25 M

Vision Connection

The moments before and after worship are when strangers become friends and friends become family. By creating spaces for connection—a Commons area, refreshed Fellowship Hall and Chapel, and improved signage and safety—we're building the infrastructure of belonging. These updates are investments in radical hospitality and deeper relationships that reveal the boundary-breaking love of Christ.



Rooted in the boundary-breaking love of Jesus, we welcome boldly, grow deeply, and serve joyfully.

Details

A new Commons area and Narthex will transform the library and atrium into a vibrant hub for gathering and information-sharing, fulfilling a long-held vision from the church's master plan. Improvements to way finding, landscaping, and lighting will enhance safety and accessibility. The Gardner Fellowship Hall will be renewed with updated bathrooms, flooring, furnishings, and A/V systems.

The Education Building will gain improved restroom access for children and youth groups. Campbell Chapel will be refreshed with better lighting, music capacity, and flexibility while preserving its warmth and character. The total estimated cost is \$1.25 million, with phased construction beginning as soon as possible to ensure uninterrupted worship and ministry.





PRIORITY 3

Essential Facility Improvements – \$750K

Vision Connection

Faithful stewardship means caring for what's been entrusted to us. Those before us built generously; now it's our turn to ensure this facility is ready for future ministry. These essential improvements will keep our historic building reliable, efficient, and welcoming for worship and mission for generations to come.

Details

To ensure our historic campus remains efficient and effective for ministry, FPCA will invest in key building system upgrades. Projects include installing an energy-efficient HVAC system to replace aging window units, replacing the 25-year-old elevator, and installing new windows in the choir and Marguerite Morgan rooms. Updates to music ministry spaces, including the choir and storage rooms, will better serve our growing program, while reconnecting heat and replacing outdated thermostats will improve comfort and efficiency throughout the facility.

With an estimated cost of \$750,000, several bids are already in hand. Work is scheduled to begin as soon as funds are available, and most improvements will be completed within a year.

We build and
renew our spaces
so future
generations can
worship, grow, and
serve in the love of
Christ.



HOW TO GIVE

- Commitments may be paid over a three-year period.
- Gifts by check, card, or bank transfer are welcome on the schedule that you outline in the Letter of Intent.
- If you are over 70 ½, Qualified Charitable Distributions from IRAs can count toward required minimum distributions without increasing taxable income under current rules.
- Gifts of appreciated securities may have additional strong tax savings while skipping capital gains tax on appreciation. Please contact your financial advisor to discuss. If you intend to make a stock transfer gift, contact Liz Thurston, Church Administrator, at (828) 253-1431.
- All gifts can be sent to:

First Presbyterian Church Asheville
Attn: Liz Thurston
Church Administrator
40 Church Street
Asheville, NC 28801



We want to hear from you!

Ask questions and share your ideas to widerwelcome@fpcasheville.org.



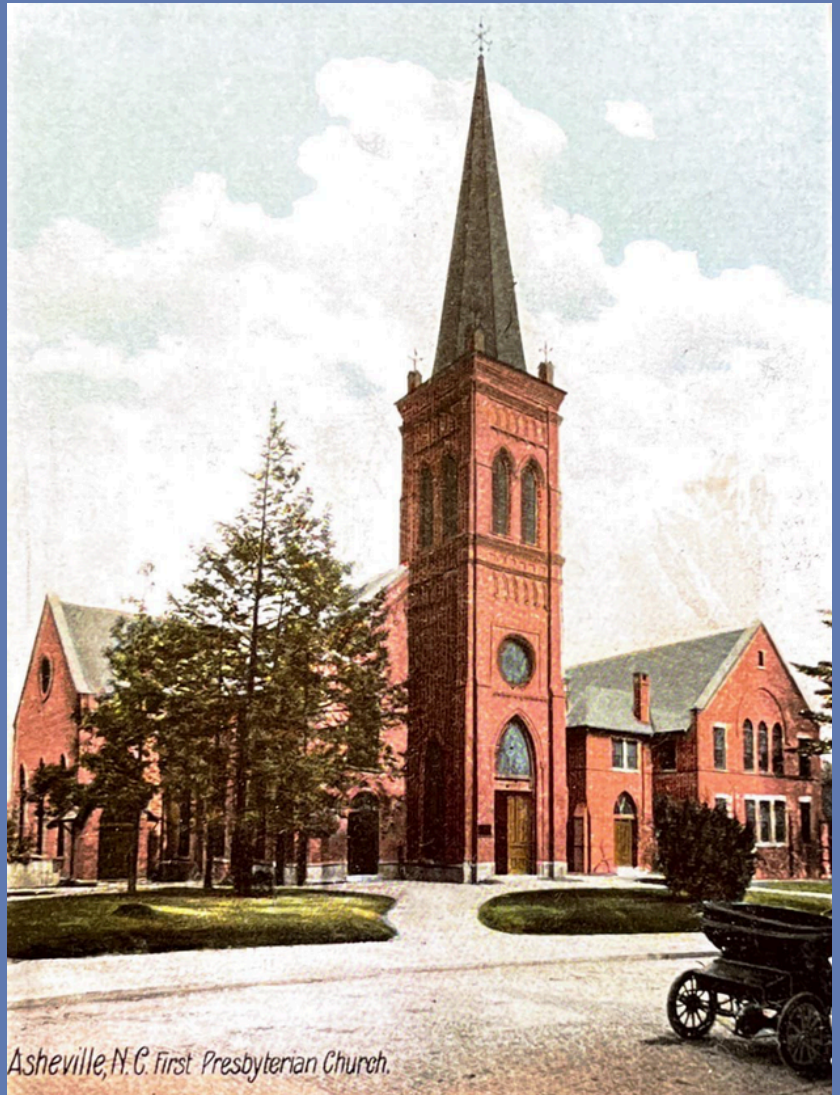
Building on a Legacy of Generosity & Welcome

First Presbyterian has a rich history of faithful capital stewardship spanning nearly 200 years:

- 1841: Sanctuary construction
- 1870s: Sanctuary renovation and construction of a pastoral study
- 1911: First education building addition (now the library and youth rooms)
- 1940s: Sanctuary renovation to the Gothic style
- 1969: Large education building and chapel construction
- 1999-2000: Education building, staff offices, welcoming entrance, initial parking structure, and fellowship hall renovation
- 2014: Sanctuary renovation, new pipe organ, and kitchen upgrades for expanded mission use

Today, we benefit from this solid foundation of faith and forward thinking. Our beautiful, centrally located facility provides an ideal space for worship and daily mission in the heart of Asheville.

Now is the time to build on this legacy—to dig the well deeper and plant one more tree for future generations to experience the boundary-breaking love of Christ in this place.



Asheville, N.C. First Presbyterian Church.

We sit under the shade
of trees we did not plant
and drink from wells we
did not dig.
