



# Fairfield Family

## News

October-December 2025

### Next Man Up

*From the Desk of Pastor Ralph*

Most of you probably know about the tragic incident that occurred September 10, 2025, on the Campus of Utah Valley University. Charlie Kirk, a popular voice for conservative principles and for his Christian faith, was assassinated while engaged in peaceful debate with students on campus.

The thing that made Charlie Kirk stand out was how he was able to connect with the younger generation. He did not buy into the lie that says Christians must keep their faith out of the public square. He was very bold to express his Biblical worldview and to allow it to form his opinions on cultural issues. This is what made the left so afraid of this young man. Rather than engage him in dialogue and debate on issues, they would name call and threaten violence. And finally, when they could not silence him by way of argument and conversation, someone decided to silence him by taking his life.

This is not a new tactic of “the enemy,” however. As the first Christian martyr Stephen also experienced when his opponents “were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke,” (Acts 6:10) they killed him also. And before that, they killed our Lord and Savior.

Even though Charlie Kirk was taken at the early age of 31, he joins a group of others whose lives were short but well lived. He joins the company of men such as:

- Patrick Hamilton — 24
- William Borden (“no regrets”) — 25
- David Brainerd — 29
- Robert Murray McCheyne — 29
- Jim Elliot — 29
- Nate Saint (pilot) — 32
- Henry Martyn — 31 Robert Murray McCheyne — 29
- Jim Elliot — 29
- Nate Saint (pilot) — 32
- Henry Martyn — 31

I was deeply saddened when I first heard the tragic news of his death as I know many of you were also. But as I heard one person comment, from the ashes of Stephen, there arose another – the Apostle Paul. May there arise from the ashes of Charlie Kirk many more who will stand up for truth and righteousness in the public square. It was the Apostle Paul who also said: “And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” 2 Timothy 2:2. That’s what the organization Charlie Kirk founded was and is doing.

May many young Christian men and women rise up as faithful witnesses of Christ to speak truth into our culture today. Charlie Kirk has influenced many people in this regard in his short life. His memorial service, where tens of thousands came and millions watched online, was evidence of how God used Charlie Kirk. Never before have so many political leaders so publicly expressed their testimony and faith in Christ. This gives us cause for hope.

May this be the beginning of a genuine revival in our country. And may it begin with us.

# 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

It is hard to believe that Fairfield Presbyterian Church (FPC) celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary this past May. Fairfield also celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in our current building on October 5, 2025.

*Our very own Pastor Ralph shares that "Fairfield is committed to the PCA motto: Faithful to the scripture, true to the Reformed faith, and obedient to the Great Commission."*

*Barbara Hutchins states, "I am now the oldest surviving church member (and age-wise). Ricky Wells is next, who I taught in Sunday School, then Jean Jones."*



## History of Fairfield Presbyterian Church (PCA)

*"...that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, "What do those stones mean to you:" then you shall tell them...so these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever."*

*Joshua 4:6-7.*

The only way to know where you are going is to remember where you have been, the logic behind the statement, seems simple enough, seems agreeable enough. Where is Fairfield Presbyterian Church going? Where has it been? What is its Future? What is its past? The first question is unknowable, but the second question can be answered with diligent thoughtful research into the past. This Author, decided to delve into the world of historical research and like any other 2025 novice author who endeavors to start historical research would do, the research began by asking a popular AI engine a question. The question typed was, "What is the history of Fairfield Presbyterian Church, Pensacola, FL." In short order the AI engine answered:

"Fairfield Presbyterian Church, located at 410 S. Fairfield Drive in Pensacola, Florida, is member congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), a conservative Reformed denomination. Unlike some older Presbyterian churches in the region (such as First Presbyterian Church of Pensacola, established in 1845.) Fairfield's history is relatively modern, reflecting the post-World War II growth of suburban communities in the American South."

The answer came quickly. It was simple enough; it was agreeable enough. Yet like the above incomplete verse in Joshua 4:6-7 it was lacking detail and truth be told the answer was boring. The answer was the electronic version of the stones without the event the stones memorialized mentioned. This article written [to celebrate the](#) Fairfield Presbyterian Church 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary hopes to record its past from the voices who lived it in order to keep the Church's past vibrant and living. The intent: to prevent it from becoming the electronic "stone" it will inevitably become without remembrance.

### The Current Church

Today, Fairfield Presbyterian Church is an active fixture in Pensacola's west side, with Sunday worship services, Bible studies, and community engagement. It positions itself as a "church family" for newcomers, praying specifically for visitors to find a spiritual home. The congregation, numbering in the hundreds, prioritizes grace-filled worship and practical discipleship. The church exemplifies the PCA's commitment to planting enduring gospel-centered communities in everyday neighborhoods and that's where the church started in a growing post-World War II suburban community.

### The Early Years (1955-1999)

**Need identified.** In 1955, the church Extension Committee of the First Presbyterian Church of Pensacola, Presbyterian Church in the United States identified a need to establish a Presbyterian Church in the growing Myrtle Groves area.

**Idea into action.** A church site was donated on Fairfield Drive by Mr. H.P. Ferris, a Deacon in the First Presbyterian Church. The Reverend William Albert Smith, Presbytery's Home Mission Representative, was successful in interesting a sufficient number of people for the formation of a Church, and surveys and visitation of the area continued.

**Church planted.** On May 12, 1955 is marked as the official organization date of Fairfield Presbyterian Church. The church had 36 charter members (our last charter member, Mr. James Ayers, went to be with the Lord in 2014.) This new body of believers met in the Myrtle Grove Elementary School located at 6115 Highway, Pensacola. On January 29, 1956, the Reverend David E. Hamilton was installed as the first Pastor (He served the church until 1960, when God called him to the mission field in Acapulco, Mexico, and later Ecuador.)

**Church established.** On April 22, 1956, a Ground Breaking Ceremony was held for the first building at 4901 Fairfield Drive, and was completed in the fall. A second unit and then a section later joining the two together were complete in 1959. Two houses on Emory Drive were later purchased as additional space as needed. These first years saw the formation of a Session, Diaconate, a Sunday School, and the Women in the Church (WIC) and many firsts – evangelistic meetings, Vacation Bible School, Family Retreat, Mission Conference, cantata, Bible Conference, a Kindergarten, and in later years community outreach through Halloween Evangelism and Caroling.

Putting the First Thing First (1973)

**PCA.** The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) was created by conservative Presbyterians who separated from the more liberal Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUSA) over theological differences, including views on biblical inerrancy, ordination, and social issues.

**Need identified.** On April 10, 1973, due to the identified theological shift in the PCUSA, the Fairfield Presbyterian Church congregation petitioned to be released from the Presbyterian Church USA to independency.

**Idea into action.** Shortly after the church's release from PCUSA, Fairfield Presbyterian Church became a part of the newly formed Gulf Coast Presbytery of the Continuing Church. The Continuing Church became the National Presbyterian Church in December 1973, and then in 1974 this became the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA.)

**Fresh Start, new building.** On August 27, 1997, with the leadership of Pastor Paul Frick, the congregation voted unanimously to proceed with an ambitious building project involving the relocation of the church to a 10-acre site located three miles farther southwest at 410 S. Fairfield drive (the church's current location celebrating 25 years.) By November 1999, the church had a buyer for the original building. After vacating the old church building, the Lord provided the Fairfield Presbyterian Church PCA a meeting location at Myrtle Grove Elementary School (the site where it all began in 1955) during the new church building construction. On October 8, 2000, a Dedication service was held with Fairfield Presbyterian Church's first Pastor, Reverend David Hamilton preaching the sermon.

**Shepherds.** During Fairfield Presbyterian Church's history, the following have served as Pastors: Reverends David Hamilton, Robert G. Balnicky, Taylor m. Hill, Lee Trinkle, Ben Konopa (Assistant), Warren West, George McGuire, Tom Irby, Paul Frick, Revend Dr. Stephen Cloud and finally the current Pastor Ralph LaGuardia.

## The Future

Looking back into our past guides the path to our future, which rests entirely on the recognition that the church belongs to Christ. No matter what the status of the brick-and-mortar building, the vitality of the various ministries, or the number of the congregation/attendees/members.

Maranatha!

When the church body bows a knee to the Lordship of Christ, His will be done.

by Ralph Reedy

*"Several years back (dare I say ten years back) I was teaching the adult's class. Barbara Hutchins was in attendance. After the class she came up to me and remarked that she remembers well when I was much younger, I had sat under her tutelage. Now the teacher had become the student. I relate this with admiration for Barbara's wisdom and teaching ability. She has been a strong influence in my life." Shares Ricky Wells, a loved Elder of Fairfield Presbyterian Church.*



# Ministry Moments

## Catechism

*GROWING IN FAITH WITH OUR CHILDREN* by Robin LaGuardia

Some of my favorite memories are of sitting down each night with Ralph and our 3 children (Kristen, Kari and John) to practice the children's catechism. It wasn't always quiet or perfectly orderly, but it became a joyful rhythm of our home life-one that continues to bear fruit in our children's faith today.

### **CHILDREN'S CATECHISM CLASS IS MORE THAN MEMORIZING ANSWERS**

At Fairfield, we believe that nurturing faith in our children is one of the most important callings we have as a church family. That's why we're excited to invite children to join our Children's Catechism Class-a time set aside each week for learning, growing, experiencing God's Word in a way that is both meaningful and fun.

### **WHAT IS CATECHISM?**

A catechism is a simple way of teaching the foundations of Christian faith through questions and answers. It helps children understand not only what we believe, but why we believe it. From learning about God's love and the story of salvation, to discovering the importance of prayer, worship and the sacraments, catechism offers children a strong foundation for lifelong faith. The children's catechism class is a good way to prepare for the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

### **WHY IT MATTERS FOR CHILDREN**

Children are naturally curious and full of questions. Catechism gives them the language and guidance to explore their faith in age-appropriate ways. It teaches them, truths that will stay with them as they grow- reminding them that they belong to God and are deeply loved by him.

### **WHAT TO EXPECT**

Our children's catechism class combines:

~ **BIBLE STORIES** that connect God's Word to daily life.

~ **SONGS** to help truths sink in deep into their hearts

~**QUESTIONS and ANSWERS** that build a solid understanding of faith

~**ACTIVITIES, CRAFTS AND GAMES** to connect learning with creativity and fun

~**PRAYING AND BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS** helping build relationships, teaching them to share and pray aloud with their peers, is a wonderful way to get to know one another in a deeper meaningful way.

### **BUILDING FAITH TOGETHER**

We invite parents to come into class and see what their children are learning.

Together, let's raise up the next generation to know, love, and serve the Lord with joy and confidence. By learning the catechism, children not only grow in knowledge but also in faith preparing them to live out their beliefs in everyday life.

Ralph and Debbie Reedy have joined as partners with me. It's exciting to see how this class at Fairfield will help teach a new generation who will carry the light of Christ into the world with joy and confidence.

Class meets every Wednesday @ 6:00. Dinner is also provided at 5:15

For more information or questions, please contact Debbie Reedy @ church office. 850-455-7245.

# Welcome

## Fairfield's Newest Members



James (Jay) and Amy Benson are originally from the Memphis area but have lived in many different places over the years. Jay and Amy moved to Pensacola two years ago and have really enjoyed it. They plan on this being their “retirement home.” Jay enjoys hunting and fishing, while Amy enjoys yard work (if it’s not too hot outside). They both enjoy spending time with the kids and grandkids.

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Mr. Charles (Chuck) Donahue returns to us as an *Elder Emeritus*. He and his wife were long-term members, and he faithfully taught as a Sunday School teacher. Mr. Donahue served with honors in the Vietnam War during his time in the Navy. He comes from Pennsylvania and is called “Uncle Chuck” by the Bacchieri Family because he looks so much like Lew’s uncles.

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Mr. John Hull Smith has been attending Fairfield Presbyterian for two years. He is a retired HVAC supervisor at the University of West Florida. He is a radio ham operator, and his call sign is KQ4IDF (Google it and you will certainly find more information). He enjoys gardening tomatoes, beans, collards, and turnips.