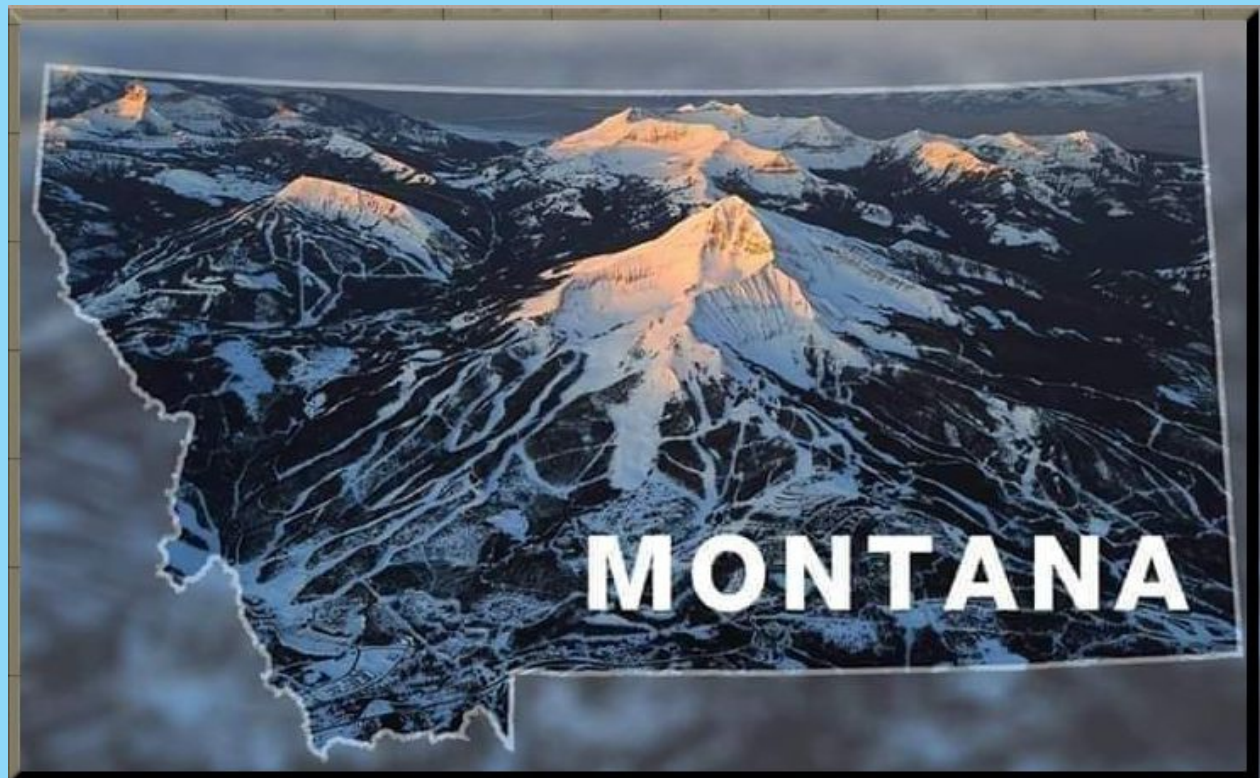




Great Falls



About Us

THANK YOU for taking the time to learn about our church family!

We appreciate your looking at First Presbyterian Church of Great Falls (FPCGF), and the Lord's work that we have been faithfully carrying out for 140 years! Yes, we are looking for a new pastor! For the past three years we have been blessed with the steady leadership of our interim pastor, Reverend Risa Paul. She is now ready to retire for the second time, so our search has begun.

We hope that you will enjoy hearing our story, who we are and what we've accomplished over the years. We pray that you will feel the calling to apply for the full time position of Lead Pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Great Falls, Montana.

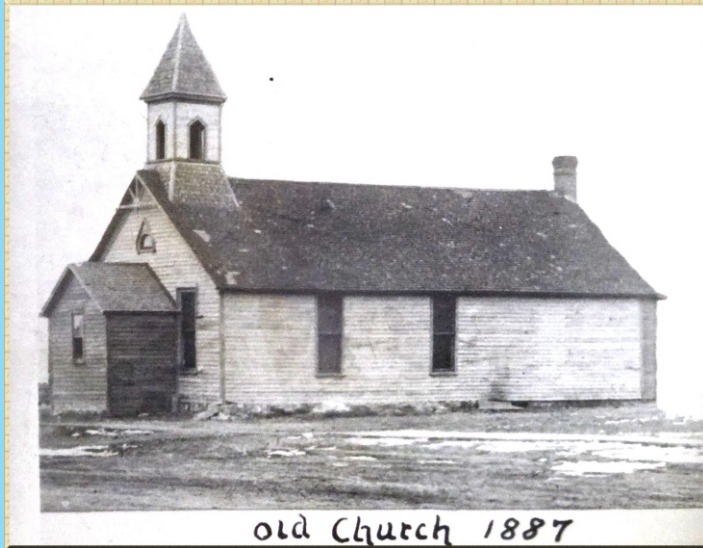
FPCGF seeks a pastor who will walk along with us, to help us grow, and to challenge us to live more completely into a biblical life within the Reformed worldview. We're praying for a leader who will connect us as a community and partner with us in ministry to fully engage our hearts and minds as committed Christians.



FPCGF welcomes all to worship with us, believers and skeptics alike. We want all to hear the good news of the gospel, the redemption of all things through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Please watch a short video of our church by clicking the link below.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aj-4-Ga2vA4

Our History



A church has been well defined as “A Group of People Worshipping”. It was such a group, 12 members strong, who on a Sunday in June of 1886 organized the First Presbyterian Church of Great Falls. It was the first church to be established in the city of Great Falls, and was to become the largest Presbyterian Church in the state of Montana.

The first service was held in the school house with 12 members present. In 1887 church members purchased

land and built their first church, it was a “school house” type structure with a belfry. As the congregation grew, so did the church, with a sunday school wing being added in 1892. In 1903 the wooden structure was replaced by a stone building. That survived until 1929 when water



damage forced its condemnation. A new plot was purchased, and they completed the construction of our present building in 1931. Many of the stained glass windows you will see in the present chapel were removed from the old stone church building and reinstalled in the present building.

Over the years this building too was expanded to include the Cowan wing with classrooms, and the office wing. The construction was done in a manner to create a beautiful garth (courtyard) which is where we now hold many community functions such as our Ice Cream Social and the Blessing of the Animals.

In 1977 a mortgage burning ceremony was held and the church was debt free!



Sanctuary Viewed
From Balcony

Outreach

At FPCGF we are very proud of our many outreach programs. We have an annual Blessing of the Animals that is open and available to both church members and the community, as is our annual Ice Cream Social. We hold two Mid-week ministries, "Dinner and a Movie" focused on adults. A pot luck dinner is served and followed up with a movie, currently we're showing "The Chosen". Our second Mid-week ministry is geared toward the children, and features snacks and Bible study. We have members that help serve in our local rescue mission, and members that volunteer at a local elementary school to assist students in their reading skills. On a rotating basis between a dozen other churches, we staff a program called FISH which is a Christian based outreach program that works out of our local food bank. We man the facility for a full week once every quarter. Those in need of food go through Opportunity Inc. where they are screened and approved, then sent to us where we provide them with much needed groceries.



One of our most successful programs is the founding of Peace Place. It is dedicated to providing accessible, high-quality, and completely free respite care for families raising children with special needs. We are very proud that it was one of our members, actually the wife of a previous pastor, that wrote the government grant and got it approved. That grant provided the funds to start Peace Place in Great Falls. Started in 2011 Peace Place began by offering just one respite session per week. Over time, community need and program success led to significant growth. Peace Place now serves 30+ children each week, offering two respite programs (morning and after-school) five days a week. Since its inception, Peace Place has provided over 10,000 individual respite sessions to dozens of families throughout our community. Since its beginning Peace Place operated out of our church. Due to its success and growth, Peace Place was able to attain 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. It is now an independent organization enabling it to better serve our rapidly growing number of families in need of respite care. Today, Peace Place operates as a fully independent organization in it's own location.



Blessing of the Animals

One of our longest running outreach programs is Souler Energy. Our Sunday Service is recorded and rebroadcast on a local TV station. It now reaches over 3400 people over an area of several hundred miles in all directions. Thanks to the generous donations made by our "TV Congregation" the program funds itself. Our Sunday service is also available live streamed on Youtube, and garners hundreds of views by itself.

Our Goals

We believe that Christ has called us to move forward, to be a renewed church in His image. He is calling a new pastor to us to help us transform into being that new church. Our new pastor will lead us into being a church sensitive to tomorrow's spiritual needs. A church that nurtures growth and deepens our faith and trust in God.

“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly, as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom”
(2 Corinthians 5:20)

We envision moving even closer to a Christ-centered united and welcoming church that honors each person's journey of faith, rooted deeply in the timeless teachings of Scripture and the richness of our traditions. We seek to grow as an inter-generational community where love is lived out authentically, where energy is grounded in purpose rather than hype, and where members joyfully invite others to come and belong. Trusting God through every valley we remain committed to persevering together, growing spiritually, serving faithfully and building a future that reaches the next generation.

We envision a Christ-centered, united church rooted in the traditional teachings of Scripture, where every faith journey is honored and nurtured with grace. We long to grow into a vibrant, inter-generational congregation welcoming young families and individuals who desire to build God-centered life

“We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.” 2 Corinthians 5:20



Ordination Ceremony



Sanctuary Viewed From Choir Loft

strengthening participation in worship and service, and cultivating a spirit of authentic joy grounded in the assurance that Christ holds us in His hands. We are committed to perseverance through every season and seek pastoral leadership that desires to build, invest and grow alongside us; trusting that God is not finished with our story, and that our community holds rich opportunity for faithful ministry.

Our Staff

Reverend Risa Paul; *Interim Pastor*

She began preaching in 1974 including eleven years in Guatemala. The last four years have been at First Presbyterian Church. She has three living children and six grandchildren. She is looking forward to retiring in Great Falls, planning travel trips, growing her faith in contemplative practices and spending time with her rescue boxer Tender.



Jane Surmi; *Outreach Moderator*

Jane is a graduate of CM Russell High School in Great Falls. She is a graduate of MSU Havre with degrees in Agra-Business, a BS in Marketing and an MS in Accounting. Jane also served 12 and a half years in the Navy as Navy Journalist. She's been a member of FPCGF since the 1980's. She is in the Lay Pastor program and has filled in for our pastor many times. She also moderates our Spiritual Life and Christian Education programs.

Judy Mortensen; *Fellowship Committee*

Judy has been a member for sixty plus years. She promotes First Presbyterian as a major component in the community and history of Great Falls. She is a retired insurance agent. She has three girls, one boy and ten grandchildren along with dog Molly. She is grateful that she is able to serve the Lord at this time.



Alex Rosenleaf; *Choir Director*

Alex has been on staff for seventeen years as the choir director. He has a wonderful tenor voice and has contributed to many musical productions in the church. He is a Social Studies teacher at CM Russell High School. He and his wife Kari have two children. His daughter is a big fan of Dad's chili.

Melinda Dawson; *Missions Committee Moderator*

Melinda has been attending First Presbyterian for the past five years after moving to Great Falls from San Antonio, TX. She has one daughter and three grandchildren. She attends gym and enjoys walking regularly. Home time is spent with her rescue cat Lovey.



Our Staff



Joseph "Joey" Dresen; Praise Band Director
Since November 2022, Joey has led the Praise Band, playing his guitar and singing. He has a Music Education degree from Montana State University. He writes music, plays at the Farmers Market, and trains church worship teams. He and his wife Amber enjoy life with their dog Lucy.

Dean Schamp; Fellowship Committee

Dean has attended this church since 1970. He is a retired commercial roofer. He is married to Lisa and they have 2 children and three grandchildren. He feels blessed that he was able to accompany the 2013 Congo mission as a sewing machine technician. He enjoys hunting, fishing, golf, snow skiing and being a rock hound.



Gene Thayer; Nominations Committee Moderator

Gene has been a member for fifty plus years and is very active in the church and community. He is the founder of a family business, a former mayor of Great Falls, and a former state senator. He is an avid golfer. He and his second wife Jane (his first wife Penny is deceased) share two sons and two daughters and their home with two cats.



Tom Hazen; Deacons Moderator

Tom came to Great Falls about 25 years ago when his father Jerry Hazen became minister at First Presbyterian, so he is a "PK". He grew up in the Chicago area and now thoroughly enjoys the Montana lifestyle of downhill skiing, biking, kayaking and other outdoor activities. He shares his life with two dogs Sully and Lindty.



Joan Schmidt; Music Director and Organist

She is a member of Our Savior's Lutheran Church but has been on staff since 2007. She has a degree from St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN. She has two sons, and one daughter who adopted a girl from Ethiopia. She is a strong advocate for having children participate in music education.

Our Staff

Randy Gray; *Finance Committee Moderator*

He has attended First Presbyterian for about thirty years. He is retired from being a lawyer for thirty years. He served as mayor of Great Falls for two terms, and was on the City Commission. He and his wife Nora have been married fifty years and have three sons and four grandchildren. He is an environmentalist advocate and enjoys outdoor activities with horses, backpacking, and skiing.

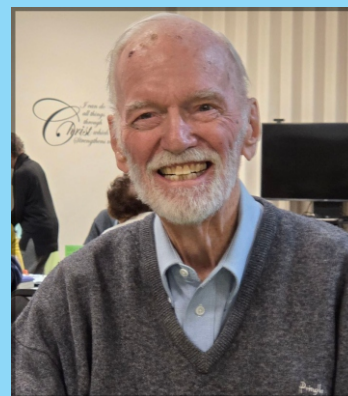


Scott Royce; *Property Committee Moderator*

Scott and his wife Deb have attended First Presbyterian for fifteen years. He grew up on a ranch/farm near Winifred, MT. They have one dog, Princess. He's an avid ice fisherman, hunter, and really enjoys snowmobiling.

Don Hamilton; *Clerk of Session*

Don grew up in Great Falls and joined First Presbyterian in 1954. He is married to Susan and they have three children and three grandchildren. He enjoys reading and doing a bit of woodworking.



Dave Herman; *Greeter and unofficial photographer*

Dave and his wife Kathy came here in 2011 from a Chicago suburb. He has been faithful to greet attendees at many church events. He and Kathy have been married 61 years. He enjoys photography and building his library on automobile books. They have a cat named Kitty.

Ann Marie Miller; *Fellowship Committee Moderator*

Ann Marie is a transplant from New Jersey where she grew up. She has run the kitchen areas for the past four years, organizing and making everything more efficient. She has two children, and five grandchildren. She is retired from working in medical administration. She lives with her son, daughter-in-law, two grandchildren and dog Cooper.



Pastoral Duties



Moving to Great Falls means watching for pedestrians.

The church is a congregation of individuals of diverse ages and backgrounds. The pastor will be working with all, and should be outgoing, sincere and interested in each member.

Strong Work Ethic: Have the “built-in” passion to get the job done.

Leadership Skills: The ability to direct others in a way that they become more self motivated to accomplish the tasks at hand.

Self Starting/Motivated: Know what needs to be done, and do it.

Compassion & Empathy: Understand the personal and spiritual needs of those around you and can give them understanding of their individual needs, and the spiritual guidance they seek.

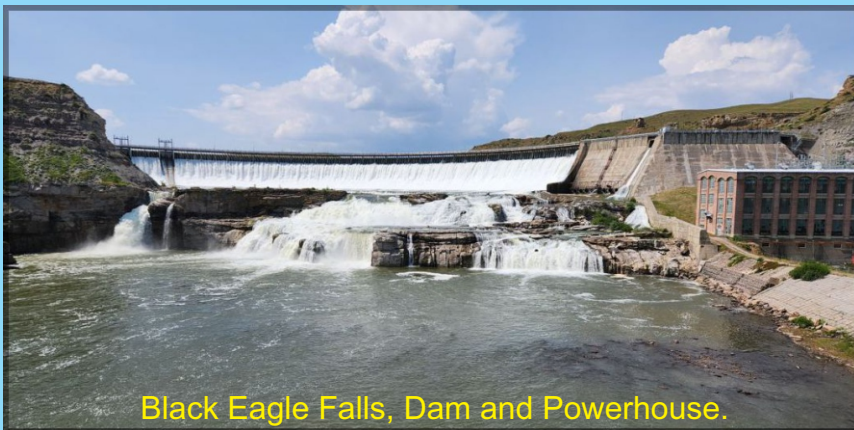
Ability to Deliver Topical & Relevant Messages from the Bible: Make God's word meaningful in today's world.

Ability to Direct/Motivate/Supervise & Guide Staff & Volunteers: Our missions and outreach programs will become even stronger, more meaningful and reach a greater number of people with your inspiration and vision.

Ability to Focus and Multitask Simultaneously: God always has more than one project going at once, so you must be able to see the priorities and keep them moving forward without losing sight of the overall needs of the church and congregation.

Have the desire and willingness to reach out to shut-ins who cannot attend services: Those who cannot attend services due to health or other issues can often be the ones in the most need of hearing God's word.

Have the ability to listen and take recommendations: You can often find the best road forward by hearing what those around you have to offer. You will work closely with Session's vision and strategy in doing God's work for Great Falls First Presbyterian Church. Your primary responsibilities will be teaching, evangelism and prayer ministry, in addition you will be overseeing and directing all church activities and needs. You will be our ambassador to our local community as well as the Presbytery.



Black Eagle Falls, Dam and Powerhouse.

Starting with a good Pastoral heart, our pastor should be a Christ-centered theologically traditional reformed Bible based leader. You will be a team builder, motivator, mentor and a good communicator. You will lead by example by personally reflecting what is preached from the pulpit, and being personable and approachable. You should set the tone of the church to be welcoming and vibrant. You should expect to be available to perform your duties

around the clock, as needed, to perform such things as weddings, funerals and calling on the elderly and the home-bound. You will guide all committees, oversee communications and provide leadership to our youth and our mission outreach programs.

You will encourage individuals to seek their God-given talents and resources, and encourage members to use them in service to the church and our missions in a true team fashion.

Welcome To Great Falls

Great Falls is located, and encompasses several of the five “great waterfalls” of the Missouri River. It lies near the center of Montana on the northern Great Plains, just off the eastern front of the Rocky Mountains. It is approximately 100 miles south of the US - Canada border and has a total area of 22.26 square miles. The city boasts 57 neighborhood parks, a water park, and the River's Edge Trail that covers almost 60 miles along both sides of the Missouri River. The Great Falls Public Library has served the city for over 140 years and partners with the Little Free Library program.



Sluice Boxes State Park
Just outside of Great Falls



Farmers' Market

There are 20 schools within the Great Falls school system, including two high schools, an alternative high school, two middle schools, and 15 elementary schools. Great Falls is also the home to the state-operated Montana School for the Deaf & Blind.

We are also home to three institutions of higher education; Great Falls College Montana State University, a two-year school which has been a part of the Montana University System since

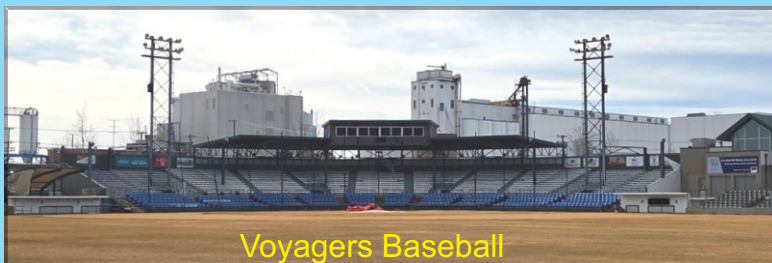
1994; The University of Providence, a private four-year Catholic university, and since August of 2023 Great Falls has been home to the Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine. It is part of the New York-based Touro University System and is the first Medical School in Montana.

Besides all the educational opportunities, Great Falls offers a lot of family entertainment. The Great Falls Symphony performs a full season and the Great Falls Municipal Band performs a free



Great Falls Symphony

Concerts-in-the-Park series during the summer. Summers also bring a weekly Farmers' Market, auto racing at the Electric City Speedway, and we are home to a professional baseball team, the Voyagers. The Voyagers play in the independent Pioneer league, which is a major league baseball partner league.



Voyagers Baseball

Moving to Great Falls you will find many restaurants including find dining, great local cafes, famous chain restaurants, a great assortment of delicious burger joints and a lot of family owned cafes that serve up wonderful meals. We also feature plenty of shopping including an indoor mall and a wonderful old “downtown” shopping district with many locally owned shops and boutiques. We are also home to the Montana State Fair, 10 days of exhibits, food, rides, you name it, and it's all great family fun.

Tidbits about Great Falls

Great Falls is a regional medical hub thanks the Great Falls Clinic, and the Benefis Health System. The latter operates facilities such as the Sletten Cancer Institute and a fleet of Mercy Flight aircraft.

<https://www.benefis.org/>

Travel in and out of Great Falls is easy thanks to our International Airport

<https://flygtf.com/>

Money Inc. recently named the 30 most peaceful places to live in the USA.

We were pleased to see that Great Falls came in a number 26.

[\(https://moneyinc.com/the-30-most-peaceful-places-to-live-in-the-united-states/\)](https://moneyinc.com/the-30-most-peaceful-places-to-live-in-the-united-states/)

As well as being peaceful, Great Falls is very affordable! Our cost of living sits at 87.3 % of the national average.

<https://www.city-data.com/city/Great-Falls-Montana.html>

C. M. Russell Museum of Western Art <https://cmrussell.org/>

Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art <https://www.the-square.org/>

Voyagers Baseball team <https://www.gfvoyagers.com/landing/index>

Electric City Speedway <https://www.electriccityspeedway.com/>

Great Falls Symphony <https://www.gfsymphony.org/>

Great Falls College, MSU <https://www.gfcmsu.edu/>

Established in 1894 the Great Falls Municipal Band is celebrating 133 consecutive years of performing. This is the longest streak of any municipal band in the United States!

<https://greatfallsmunicipalband.org/>

Do you like to explore where you live? Here's 20 of some of the best places to visit/explore in Montana.

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/best-places-to-visit-in-montana-11861368>

Economic results for 2025Q3 was published by the national JobsEQ system we utilize to track employment, wages, occupation and industry data. The average annual wage in the Great Falls MSA (Cascade County) grew by 6.3% in the 12 months ending in 2025Q3 reaching \$56,955. That was higher growth than the Montana state average at 5.5% or the national average at 4.1%. In 12 months, the local average annual wage increased by \$3,381. In the same 12 month period, total annual wages earned in the Great Falls MSA increased by \$124 million.



You're being Called to Great Falls, Montana!

Welcome to Montana



For thousands of years indigenous peoples inhabited what would be Montana. The Louisiana Purchase in 1803 included this land, and it was explored during the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806). The first permanent settlement by Euro-Americans was St. Mary's, established in 1841 near present-day Stevensville.

The Montana Territory was established in 1864 and Montana officially became the 41st state on November 8, 1889.

1. Quality of Life in Montana

Montana is the fourth largest state and is where community comes first. While you will find larger cities throughout the state, the majority of towns are small, charming and



family-friendly. Billings, the largest city in Montana, has a population of approximately 120,000, with Great Falls coming in third with a population right at 61,000. However, most communities throughout the Treasure State have fewer than 20,000 residents, with many in the 1000 to 5000 range. Throughout Montana, you'll typically find low crime rates, family-friendly festivals, many mom-and-pop shops, exceptional city parks, and a neighborly

atmosphere where life seems to go just a little bit slower—connections between family and friends are a priority.

2. Education and Family-Friendly Amenities

If you're in that stage of life that you have young kids, then education is probably at the top of your list of priorities when it comes to considering the best place to answer your calling. And to help strengthen the decision to move to the Treasure State even more,



Montana is ranked as one of the top 20 most educated states in America. What's more is that Montana out ranks all of the surrounding states; Idaho, Wyoming, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Montana also ranked third in the country for the highest percentage of school diploma holders. We are proud of our two universities, the University of Montana in Missoula (the Grizzlies), and the Montana State University (the Bobcats) located in Bozeman.



Yellowstone National Park



Great Falls Farmers' Market

3. *Natural Beauty and Outdoor Activities*

Montana is a wonderland if you and your family love outdoor activities such as camping, hiking, fishing, boating and floating our rivers; with winters of skiing, snowmobiling and ice fishing.

Great Falls sits just between two of our nations most beautiful national

parks; Glacier just to the north, and Yellowstone just a short drive south. Most children love growing up with memories of family outings in the outdoors, and their weekends are rarely spent indoors; instead, you'll find them mountain biking, playing sports, or camping. They live for lake days filled with



View of Great Falls from Great Falls International Airport



Giant Springs State Park located in Great Falls

swimming, kayaking, and fishing. This lifestyle is easy to find in Montana. With 55 state parks and nine National Park Service sites—including our two national parks—there's no shortage of places to explore. And when you add in the state's jaw-dropping scenery, it's easy to see why so many people fall in love with Montana's great outdoors. There are so many reasons to live in Montana, but if you have a young family, the list can be even more extensive.



Application Process

Questionnaire:

Please help us get to know you, and about your life with Christ. A brief response of just a few paragraphs to the following questions is appreciated.

1/ Describe your spiritual journey.

2/ Tell us about a disappointment in your spiritual growth and how that helped you.

3/ What tasks in serving the church energizes you?

4/ What tasks in serving the church drain you?

5/ How would you go about growing our church? (You can use a few more paragraphs if you wish.)

6/ As a pastor of a PCUSA church, how do you see yourself fitting?

7/ If you have a “social media” presence, how do you conduct yourself on it?



Follow Your Calling

Once you've determined that your calling is to FPCGF,
please send the following to:

bjmassey2@gmail.com

(Please feel free to direct any questions you may have to this email.)

- Your resume accompanied with a cover letter.
- Your completed and typed out responses to our questionnaire.
- Please use the following .pdf format to label all attachments:
 - JohnSmith_CoverLetter.pdf
 - JohnSmith_Resume.pdf
 - JohnSmith_Questionnaire.pdf

Please watch a short video of our church
by clicking the link below.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aj-4-Ga2vA4

We are the body of Christ, Joyfully worshipping God,
Compassionately caring for one another, Humbly serving others,
Continually growing together in God's Word
And actively sharing the *Good News of Christ*.



Your pot o' gold awaits at FPCGF