



Our Vision - Our Mission

To spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to our community and the world.
To be an inclusive downtown community of faith that seeks
to embrace everyone in growing spirituality.

Way Forward Committee Plans
For the New Year

Happy New Year from Way Forward Committee

The purpose of this month’s article is to give you all an idea of what our committee has planned for the first part of the new year.

In November, our committee went back over the Holy Cow survey results and the summaries of our listening sessions. From this information, we came up with 12 areas of focus that you, the congregation, thought were crucial to our church moving forward. Here are those 12 areas of focus:

1. Make changes to attract families with young children.
2. Adapt necessary strategies to reach new people.
3. Provide new opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation.
4. Continue to grow outreach in mission with special attention to hands-on ministry and special awareness of the needs of our neighbors.
5. Earn the right to be heard by our presence and our witness.
6. Provide greater support to help folks both discover and use their gifts.
7. Offer ongoing training for Christian leadership.
8. Review and upgrade church technology to prepare us for more effective ministry and outreach.
9. Do a full facility analysis to determine highest and best use of our property.
10. Review our music ministry with an eye to growing effectiveness.

11. Determine leadership needs and staffing pattern going forward. Consider both paid and volunteer leadership.
12. Work to grow trust among church leaders with recognition of different leadership and conflict resolution styles.

OK, so what are we going to do with these areas of focus? On January 29, after church, we are going to hold what we are calling a “Help Us Find Our Way Forward” meeting in Fellowship Hall. At this meeting we will break into groups of 4-6 people and we want to hear from you. (A Way Forward Committee member will moderate each group, asking questions that lead a discussion. A session member also will be part of each group.)

This is what we would like to hear from you that day: which four or five areas of focus do YOU think should be prioritized? We will be taking notes and will meet with our consultant about the results of these discussions. These results will be used to direct the agenda for our next session retreat in February.

We are providing these 12 areas of focus to you now so you will be able to prayerfully think about them and can help us decide what our next steps should be. This is most definitely a group effort and with God’s guidance, we will continue to move in the right direction.

Session News

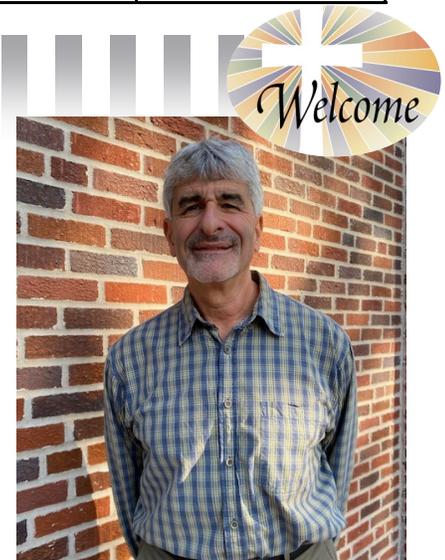
Session Brief – December 4, 2022

- Received Mike Vurnakes into membership by reaffirmation of faith.
- Approved removal of Darrel Hudson, Carolyn Murray and Richard Kirk from our membership rolls at their request.
- Approved the contract of The Rev. Dr. Walk Jones as Transitional Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Ocala, Florida.
- Approved a gift of \$3,000 to Ryleigh Gladdin for her work with Young Life.

Session	Diaconate		
	Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
Class of 2023: Van Akin, Cathy Hancock, Jacquelyn Sexton Class of 2024: Todd Carstenn, Pat Greaves, Amy Johnson, George Tomy, Tom Weaver, Peggy Wiechmann, Jim Yancey Class of 2025: Jo Ann Brandt, Denise Caskey, Todd Dailey, Mary Dingman, Bill Dolin, Bill Tucker, Steve Vincent, Katherine White	Jackie Albright Pat Bishop Sharon Shirley Ann VanDenburgh Julia Wirono	Evelyn Longo Martha Petry Raul Roman Alice Russell Terri Tucker Barbara Whitt	Sue Brawner Lannie Mercer Amy Schlenker

Membership News

We want to extend a warm welcome to Mike Vurnakes who joined our church by Reaffirmation of Faith on December 4, 2022. Mike is from Durham, North Carolina and he and his wife, Barb, moved to Ocala in 1988. They have two children, Emily and Jeff. Barb passed away in May, 2022, and Mike was led to our church through the Grief Share program. He has worked in the pharmacy at Ocala Regional Medical Center for thirty four years. His hobbies are swimming, playing the guitar, and gardening. He has already gotten very involved in our church – practicing with the handbell choir, attending Men’s Breakfasts, and helping in the kitchen for Fellowship dinners! We are so happy that he has decided to become a part of our church family!



Deacons’ Corner



As 2022 draws to a close, your Deacons ask you to join us in finding a few minutes of quiet contemplation and prayer as we look ahead to our future. May God continue to bless you and your loved ones in 2023!

Speak, Lord, for your servant hears. 1 Samuel 3:9

Almighty God, we dedicate this year, 2023, to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with You. The Hebrew meaning is “to walk attentively.” So, we commit our minds and hearts to listen attentively to You. Speak to us so that what we speak may be an echo of your voice. Help us to seek to know and do your will for what is best for those around us.

You are my rock and my fortress; therefore, for your name’s sake, lead me and guide me. Psalm 31:3

Lord, we pray for a fresh flow of strength to think clearly, serve creatively, and endure consistently.

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and He will say, “Here I am.” Isaiah 58:9

Almighty God, You have assured us through the prophet Isaiah that while we are speaking You hear us and that You will answer. May each day be one continuous conversation with you. We ask this not just for our own peace and security, but for our responsibility to loved ones and friends around us.

We commit this year to seeking that which makes You, our Heavenly Father, happy while giving You the glory for all we have and are, for the opportunities to serve You by being a servant to others and caring for what You have entrusted to us. To You be the glory! Amen.

Presbyterian Women, Pat Greaves, Moderator



To ALL women of First Presbyterian Church of Ocala

As we begin 2023, this would be a great time for anyone who would like to join a Circle. Look at the listings below and come and enjoy the fellowship of other Christian women. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 352-362-0013. I wish each one of you a very Happy and Healthy 2023.

As we enter the New Year 2023 we will study lesson five, titled "Sabbath and Servitude" in the 2022-2023 study books, *Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight*. The lesson centers on keeping the Sabbath meaning we 'stop working'. I think we all struggle how we observe the Sabbath and keeping it holy. I look forward to the study.

As in the past, Tom Weaver has prepared his portion of the lesson and he and Evelyn will send it out to us via e-mail or snail mail as we get closer to our meeting dates. Thanks to both of them for their faithfulness to PW over these many years. If you didn't get the handout, please give Evelyn a phone call and make sure she has your correct email address.

THE COORDINATING TEAM will meet on Tuesday, January 3, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room.

THE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY will meet on January, 26th, at 1:30 p.m. in the Conference Room. The group includes both knitters and crocheters and welcomes anyone who is interested in this ministry. If you have any questions, please contact Coordinator, Liz Diener-Dickmann.

*"Merciful God, thank you for hearing the cries of our hearts, Forgive us if we have allowed ourselves to slip back into slavery – and for being complicit in systems that enslave others. Free us and all those who long for good work and Sabbath rest. Give us wisdom and courage as we seek to accept your gracious invitation." Amen.
(Taken from the 2022-2023 study book)*

Presbyterian Women Circle Meetings for January 2023					
Bible Study and Fellowship, and ways to serve with your Sisters in Christ					
	Date	Time	Meeting Place	Contact	Phone
Coordinating Team Mtg.	Tuesday, January 3 rd	6:00 p.m.	Conference Room	Pat Greaves	352-236-0716 or 352-362-0013 cell
Circle 3	Monday, January 16 th	10:00 a.m.	Home of Pat Greaves 5623 NW 25 th Loop 352-362-0013	Liz Diener-Dickmann	
Circle 4	Tuesday, January 10 th	6:30 p.m.	Conference Room	Debbie Koch	352-873-7459 630-254-8844 cell
Circle 8	Tuesday, January 10 th	2:00 p.m.	Room 1	Lois Clardy	352-622-3053
PRAYER SHAWL	Thursday January 26 th	1:30 p.m.	Conference Room	Liz Diener-Dickmann	

Thank You

Pat Greaves and her family wish to thank everyone for their support in her husband, Bob's passing in late October. Special thanks to Pastor Walk and the church staff, and to the many hands that carried out a beautiful reception following the service. God could not have planted Bob and me in a more loving Christian fellowship following his retirement from the ministry. May God bless each one!

News from Christian Outreach Committee

Interfaith: It's that time again! We are signing up participants for dinners in 2023. First Presbyterian does this on the second Thursday of the month.

Those who have done it say it's always a blessing and we know it's a blessing to those we serve. Thank you to all members who participated in 2022!

Call or text Jarl Hagood at 867-9372 or email Jarlhagood@aol.com if you or your group would like to sign up.



THE GIVING TREE PROJECT



A BIG "Thank You" to the committee and also the congregation for making our Giving Tree Project so successful. We were able to gift all of the items that were on the tree and then some extra to SoZo Kids and Project Hope. They were all very pleased and most appreciative of all of our efforts. Thank you, Katherine White



Picking up the donations from FPC Giving Tree Project, the representatives were so appreciative. They look towards the community for donations. FPC came through once again to help make Christmas the best it can be.

THANK YOU for YOUR GENEROSITY & CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS TO ALL!

RING THOSE BELLS . . .



Many thanks and much appreciation to the 24 enthusiastic volunteers from First Presbyterian that summoned the crowds to the bright red Salvation Army kettles prior to Christmas. We were assigned three days to ring at the Publix at Park View Commons. Volunteers



were: Trish and Ron Mosby, Ann VanDenburgh, Shirley Ausley, Ann Richardson, Ronnie Carter, Donna Claus, Skye and Declan Caskey, Mary Dingman, Debbie



Koch, Nadene Howard, Janet Trexler, Kay and Jim Yancey, Sue and John Brawner, Julie Weiss, Judy Harriss, Bill and Terri Tucker, Gera Fleming, Lannie Mercer and Cindy MacKay. It was a blessing to be a blessing.

Men's Breakfast

Wonderful fellowship and prayer time happens each month. Here is the December group of men.

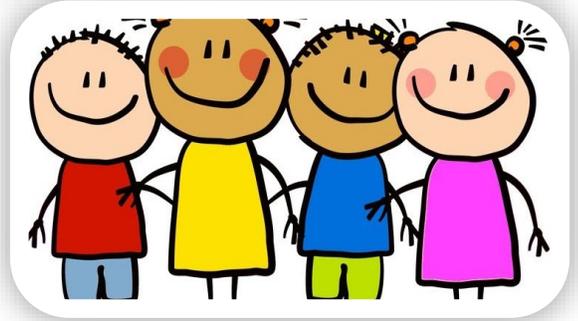
Please join us for the next breakfast on January 11th.



Announcements

Registration for Happy Hearts

Happy Hearts registration for the 2023-2024 School Year is coming up! First Presbyterian Church members do get priority Registration on January 26th before it opens to the public on January 30th. Happy Hearts offers 1/2 day programs for ages two thru Advanced K4. Call our office to schedule a tour at (352)622-7636.



Do You Like to Read?



Let's restart the Book club!

If interested please call Evelyn Longo at 352-509-5179

ATTENTION:



Please wear your name badge to church. This will help our pastor tremendously.

The church office will be closed Monday, January 2nd. It will also be closed on January 16th in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

Contributions as at Nov. 30, 2022	
Actual	399,274
Budget	423,814

Attendance	11/27	12/4	12/11	12/18
10:00 a.m.	109	121	145	91
Online	92	61	111	59

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN PHONE PRAYER CHAIN

This ministry is a vital part of First Presbyterian Church. It is greatly appreciated by those it serves. Prayers are being heard and answered daily! Anyone who would like to join is welcome. It's a wonderful way to feel more connected and to serve your church and the Lord. All you need is a phone.

Come join us!

FPC Deacons 352-843-0262 abrdvm@yahoo.com

"There is a power in persistent prayer."

Micah 7:7



January Birthdays

3

Gwen Peterson
Dirk Lewis

5

Steve Koch
Lauren Hart

7

Dorothy Behrens
Lyn Rainbow

10

Adam Schuler

11

Rhonda Kirk

12

Leslie Wiechens

13

Glen Switzer

15

Luella Nazaruk

Lilli MacKay

16

Sandra Dailey

18

Sue Brawner

Trish Mosby

Lora Barrett

19

Connor Patrick

20

Austin Dailey

21

Erin McClary

Gray Barrineau

23

Randy Briggs

24

William Cone

25

Gene Wiechens

26

Mina DiGeronimo

Laura Moore

27

Sid Varner

Kathy Hart

Graham Moore

Elle Barrineau

28

Mary Moore

Shelby Welch

29

Lamar Knepp

Russel Dingman

30

Bill Futch



Prayer List

Edie Alderton (friend of Dale & Tari Ambler)

Pat Bishop

Cede Blackwell (great-niece of Mary Kauffman)

Andy Carlisle

Ella Charnley

Shirley Cochran

Eileen Demarest (on the death of her sister Linda)

Mina DiGeronimo

Beth and Sharon Follmer (daughter and
granddaughter of Dorothy Siemons)

Ruth Fraser

Joe Glenn (friend of Mary Kauffman)

Barbara Harrel

John Hagood

Alan and Ginnie Hisey (friends of Heather Guest)

Hope Hill (friend of Richard Grosso)

Mark and Melanie Heuer (son-in-law and
daughter of Julia Wirono)

Victoria Johnson (great-granddaughter of
Christine Johnson)

Jolene Kai (daughter-in-law of Ginny Miller)

Jimmy Kelly (son of Janice)

Scott Kinnaugh (son of Dorothy Siemons)

Lanier Lance (sister of Bill Tucker)

Celine Mack

Skip McDonald

Chris and Peyton McLoney Brown

Ron McMillin

Gloria Miller

Albert Peek

John Peterson

Annette and Joseph Pickard

Fritz Rain (friend of Marybeth Olson)

Erik Reiss

Bobbie Ripple (sister of Mike Poteet)

Frank Roberts

Michael Rou (cousin of Dr. David Albright)

Janie Scott

Renee Timmer

Debbie Tompkins (sister of Rusty Juergens)

Richard and Sandy Valvo

Bo Williams

William Wright

Jeffrey Yawn (grandson of Betty Williams)



First Presbyterian Church

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Ocala, FL 34471-2284

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Sent with a prayer to:



*Join Us for Holy Time
Sunday, January 8th*

After worship join
the Fellowship Committee
for fellowship,
coffee
& snacks
in the
Courtyard.



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