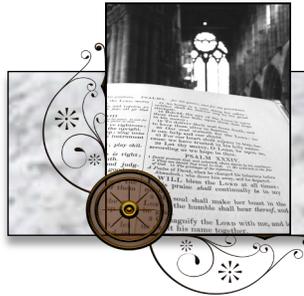




Our Vision - Our Mission

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.



THE REV. DR. D. RONALD WATSON, JR.
PASTOR

Dear Friends,

A summer like no other draws to a close, and this would normally be the spot where I announce to you all that is planned for us as a congregation for the fall. This was no ordinary summer. I really don't know where to begin or what to announce. Here is what I can tell you as of this writing. We will continue, for now, our online worship services including virtual communion, and we will also continue our in person worship services at 9 a.m. on Sundays. Attendance in most in person church meetings is down by about 90%, a number which corresponds to our situation.

I can tell you that we had two very successful food/goods drives in which we collected over two tons of food, goods, and money. Our current plan is to do this again on the first Sunday in October. Let me extend my thanks to all of you who volunteered and all of you who came to make donations. We will also have a stewardship campaign, but the details will be included in next month's newsletter as we look to October for those conversations.

I hope that you have used this time for spiritual reflection and growth in your relationship with God. If not, I encourage you to do so. I have found "Wednesdays with Walk" very helpful myself. I am grateful to Walk and thankful to be able to share the ministry of this congregation with him. I am grateful to all of the staff, the session, and the diaconate, who have all adapted to this new way of life: zoom meetings, email chains, and social distancing. Who knows what will become of the church? Jesus did. If you missed my last sermon, I talked about the words Jesus said to Peter: "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." This tells me the church is unstoppable. No pandemic, no war, no rumors of war, no regime, no law, nothing will stop the church. I find this to be very comforting. I hope you will reflect on the meaning of this passage in your own prayer life.

Pray for one another. Pray for the sick. Pray for a vaccine and effective treatment therapies for the virus. Pray for those who have lost someone they love.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Ron

Interim Associate Pastor

Rev. Walk Jones

Sharing Christian Spirituality Online ***More Disaster Preparation***

While our area was not heavily affected by Tropical Storm Isaias, this hurricane season is predicted to be busy and commuter volunteers will be critical to the disaster recovery efforts. More details are available in the flyer that appears later in this newsletter.

If you are able to help in any way, please register as a volunteer like I did so the presbytery can begin to build a database of people able to drive one or two hours, work in disaster recovery, and drive home. Our presbytery's Volunteer Liability Waiver Form will be available on the volunteer registration website within a few days. Registering does not commit you to work, or to go on a certain day but it will help the presbytery's Disaster Response Commission, of which church member Nita Williams and I are both members, know who is available and where they live.

To register, go to: <https://www.flapdan.org/commuter-volunteers>

Jim Pellot, Ruling Elder at Hodges Boulevard Presbyterian Church (Jacksonville), is our presbytery's contact for Commuter Volunteers. If you have any questions, please contact Jim at: pellot1@bellsouth.net
(904) 992-8711

If you need help locally in time of disaster or want to volunteer and don't know where to start, please call your shepherd Deacon at church, Nita Williams, home 352-237-6789 & cell 352-484-7540 or me (Rev. Jones) at 407-212-5173 and wjones@fpcocala.org.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

First Presbyterian Church has supported the work of Habitat for Humanity for many years through both hands-on and monetary donations. Presently, due to the corona virus, work has slowed to the construction of three homes; one within weeks of completion, and another soon to begin.



Volunteers are always welcome, either as an individual or as a group. If you are interested in serving in this way, contact the Coordinator of Volunteers, Tyler Starr, at (352)351-4663.

Session News

Session Brief – August 2, 2020

We mourned the deaths of Sally Williams on 4/29/2020, Janice Schafer on 5/24/2020, Jim Giles on 6/15/2020 and Christopher Storey on 7/12/2020.

Approved removal of Zachariah Pagels from our membership rolls at his request.

Approved a Contemporary Worship Music Director Search Committee for a part-time Contemporary worship/music director coordinating with our soon to be installed choir director.

2020-21 Nominating Committee Members

- Mary Carstenn
- Bill Dolin
- Jean Morse
- Becky Schatt
- Peggy Wiechmann, Chair

The Nominating Committee invites you to recommend members to serve as elders and deacons for the Class of 2023. If you are going to put a member's name up for nomination, please make sure you have spoken to that person first. Elders should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel, both within the church and in the world. The office of Deacon is one of sympathy, witness, and service after the example of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, of exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, warm sympathies, and sound judgment should be chosen for this office. Please send your suggestions by email or call Peggy Wiechmann, bpwiech@gmail.com, 231-881-3435.

PRAYER LIST

Claudia Markham-Ahl (recovering from surgery)
Jim Bennett (brother of John Bennett)
Pam Butcher
Andy Carlisle
Ralon Carson (grandson of Jessie and Joe Moseley)
Jimmy Cazin (starting at a new church)
Donna Claus (recovering from surgery)
Shirley Cochran
Stewart and Diane Edwards
Bill English (nephew of Pat Bishop)
Maranell and Hank Fleming
Ruth Fraser (recovering from shoulder surgery)
Bill Green (friend of Richard Grosso)
Barbara Gowie
Dick Hancock
Johnie Johnson (son of Tommy Johnson)
Betty-Ann Jones (sister of Margaret Trump)
Brenda Jones and family
Marsha Knepp

Ken Kramer (brother-in-law of Evelyn Longo)
Kathy Lance (daughter-in-law of Lois Lance)
Lois Lance
Grietje Lewis
Renate Lipp (friend of Nita William)
Kevin Lloyd (cousin of Lee Ann Drake)
Celine Mack
Eric Masterson (brother-in-law of Deb Cone)
Skip McDonald
Jessie Moseley
Christian Myers (friend of Julia Wirono)
Raul Nieves (brother of Mina DiGeronimo)
Michael Rou (cousin of Dr. David Albright)
The family of John (Jack) Shepherd
The family of Jane Smith
Baldwin Switzer
(on deployment with the Navy)
Nancy Wells (daughter of Shirley Wells)
Nancy Wollett



First Presbyterian Church Ocala gives thanks for the lives of **John (Jack) Shepherd** who joined the saints of light on Aug. 11, 2020 and Jane Smith who joined the saints of light on Aug. 12, 2020.

With believers of every time and every place, we rejoice that nothing in life or death can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Presbyterian Women, Pat Greaves, Moderator

As we look to September, the Coordinating Team and I will continue to work together with our Circle Leaders as we move forward with our individual study at home until the time it is safe to be together in our respective Circles.



I continue to pray and hope that we will be able to get back together with our Circle meetings in the months ahead and to get back to some normalcy in the life of our congregation. I continue to pray everyone is staying healthy and I miss not being able to meet together. I pray that we can all encourage one another during these trying times. Give your Circle members a call as we grow stronger in our faith by being encouraged by one another. I solicit your prayers for wisdom in leading Presbyterian Women as we look towards the coming months of planning to get back together in our Circles.

OUR NEW STUDY BOOKS HAVE ARRIVED....entitled, *Into The Light, Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament.* Liz Diener-Dickmann, Vice Moderator, and I have put together the study books and new PW Directory to be distributed to our Circle Leaders at our Coordinating Team meeting on September 1st for distribution to each member early in September.

A big "Thank You" to Tom Weaver who is putting together our handout for September and is working on the months ahead. Thanks also goes to his lovely wife, Evelyn, who will be emailing the handout to each of you individually and mailed to a few who do not have email. Thanks to all of our dedicated Circle Leaders and members of the Coordinating Team who play vital roles in keeping Presbyterian Women strong in our church. God bless each one and thanks for your commitment.

When the CT meets on September 1st we will decide how to conduct our pledge cards and payment for our study books.

As always, newcomers are welcomed to join with any Circle. If you're interested in joining a Circle please feel free to contact Pat Greaves, Moderator, at 362-0013.

THE COORDINATING TEAM will meet on Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at 7 p.m. at the Church. Social distancing and wearing masks will be mandatory as we gather.

THE PW FALL GATHERING has been **CANCELLED**. We will conduct any business and take up any offerings (Birthday, Least Coin and Thank Offerings) when we meet in the future.

2020-2021 Officers and Program Coordinators: Moderator, Pat Greaves; Vice-Moderator, Elizabeth Diener-Dickmann; Treasurer, Kristen Crawford; Secretary, Sharon Shirley; Church Women United, Gera Fleming; Together in Service-Missions, Lois Clardy; Bereavement and Hospitality, Debbie Koch.

Circle Leaders: Circle 1, Esther-Arango-Palencia; Circle 3, Elizabeth Diener-Dickmann; Circle 4, Joyce Williamson; Circle 7, Susie Marta; and Circle 8, Lois Clardy (We give thanks to MaryBeth Rivers, who was the leader of Circle 4 and has now moved to Texas. Thanks to Joyce Williamson for taking on the role of Leader.)

ALL gathered Circle meetings, WeCare Sewing Ministry and Prayer Shawl Ministry meetings and gatherings are cancelled until we can safely gather.

September Birthdays

- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1 Tommy Johnson Mary McMillin | 7 Edna Oplinger Tom Weaver | 15 Sue Murphy Evelyn Longo | 20 Debbie Atchison John Arline | 25 Rose Wilke Kim Vollmer Smith |
| 2 Garris Graham Karly Westfall | Janice Kelly Brent Stabler | Denise Byrd Jeff Dauner | Jo Ann Brandt Denise Caskey | Sadie Fitzpatrick Benjamin Wollett |
| 3 Kim McElhaney Peggy Wiechmann | 9 Ruth Fraser Chris Richardson | Cale Russell | 21 David Demarest Sandy Owens | James Blair |
| E.B. Gee Charline Drake | 11 Lannie Mercer Rachael Sharpe | 16 Lauren Meyer | William Bald Douglas Cone | 26 Ian Morin |
| Katy Cortes | Alex Lehrer-Morin | 17 Kathryn McCormick | 22 Katie Kimball | 27 Wilma Andrews Sharla McElhaney |
| 4 Carolee Grodi Dana Rodgers | 12 Martha Petrey | 18 Kathy Cooley Brian Fitzpatrick | 23 Jamie Schatt Sharon Wiechens | 28 Joey Fante Katie Schlenker |
| 5 George Smith D.J. Gilman | 13 Larry Waldren C.J. Bissett | 19 Bo Williams Jan Jo Merians | 24 Ray Ruark | 29 Yancey Guest Alice Smith |
| | | | | 30 Chris Bald Baldwin Switzer |

Happy September Birthdays !!

| Attendance | |
|------------|-----------------|
| Worship | Fellowship Hall |
| 8/2 | 28 |
| 8/9 | 28 |
| 8/16 | 27 |
| 8/23 | 26 |

Thank You

To the Scholarship Committee of FPC,
 Thank you so much for the very generous scholarship to aid me in the upcoming school year. The Scholarship I received will be great help.
 Thank you, Juliana Albright



GRIEF SHARE is held on Friday mornings from 10:30 to noon in Room 1 of our Educational building and online through Zoom. Participants may join any week by showing up or registering at www.griefshare.org/groups

Please wear a mask if you come in person.

Christian Outreach News

Interfaith Dinners

FPC continues to provide dinner on the second Thursday of each month. Due to COVID precautions those who supply the dinners are invited to stay and serve as usual or bring the dinner and leave. But as always the need is great and all that we and other churches, organizations, and individuals do are a big help! We need to cover the November 12 and December 10 dinners. If you or your group would like to take this opportunity please let me know at 352-867-9372 or jarlhagood@aol.com. Thank you and many blessings!

Jarl Hagood, Christian Outreach Committee

Skill Day Center

This is a wonderful effort by Catherine and Calvin Jones and their supporters to provide after school care and instruction for needy children. FPC has generously helped support their efforts through your tithes and offerings. While they are not able to provide this loving care to the children right now due to their health concerns and COVID precautions, they are giving out gently used clothing and school supplies to the children of the neighborhood. So if you have anything you would like to send their way, please text/ email /or call me and we'll see that Skill Day Center gets the supplies.

Another need of the center is to finish fencing the property, If anyone has access to a fencing company that could help, please let me know. Thank you! Jarl Hagood, 352-867-9372 or jarlhagood@aol.com



Presbytery Disaster Assistance announces revised model for COVID-19 volunteers

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has a long and robust history of supporting volunteers engaged in long-term recovery. Most recently, PDA has collaborated with response volunteer teams, some coming from neighboring states, to address basic needs immediately after a disaster.



On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization characterized the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic. Overnight, COVID-19 changed the world fundamentally and universally, including how disaster preparedness, response, and recovery is carried out. That is why PDA and Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN) are testing a model for disaster volunteers for COVID-19 that may also be adapted for future pandemics.

Stay at home orders, social distancing protocols, personal protective equipment (PPE), prohibitions to interstate travel, and other mandates require disaster response and recovery organizations to adapt. Until a vaccine is discovered and administered, it is no longer possible to send deployed personnel into a disaster area because they will need overnight lodging and meals.

One adaptation organizations are implementing is using "commuter volunteers". These volunteers would travel by car/van and bring all they need for a day's work (food, water, PPE, tools) without the need for lodging.

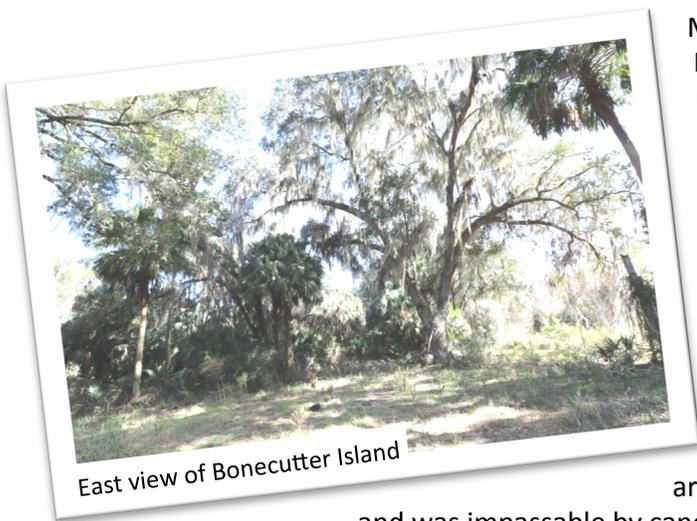
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PDA and FLAPDAN are working with Presbyteries to develop a Commuter Volunteer model in states with a history of high disaster incidences. Because Florida is such a state, and because PDA and FLAPDAN have a long history of partnership, the model is proposed to be developed and tested with the six Presbyteries in Florida, FLAPDAN and PDA.

After a disaster, a team of Presbytery commuter volunteers will provide their own transportation to the work site and return home the same day. Overnight lodging will not be provided. The typical work includes muck/gut, debris removal, and temporary repairs into stop additional home damage. If you are interested in more information or would like to register as a presbytery volunteer, please contact: Jim Pellot, pellot1@bellsouth.net (904) 992-8711. www.flapdan.org/commuter-volunteers



Bonecutter Island—A quick history and Thank You!



East view of Bonecutter Island

Margaret Bonecutter deeded the Island to the church in November of 1993 as it had a title issue. First Presbyterian Church decided to accept the Quit Claim deed and use the island and access to Lake Bryant as a recreational tract.

In December of 1994 Young Joe Simmons obtained a Final Judgement quieting the title. The main defendant was the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund of the State of Florida.

During this time the Boy Scout Troop 72, Scout Master Sandy Clardy, and youth of the church, used the Island for camp outs. They also maintained the road and the cleared area to the boat ramp. Eventually the canal became over grown and was impassable by canoe to the lake which stopped the use of the Island.

First Presbyterian Church, with the lack of use of the Island decided to sell the property in May 2011. A new title commitment showed 3 lot owners that claimed to have access to the boat ramp, and that Buyer rescinded the Contract.

Shep Dozier and myself, after years of frequent investigation and discussion, decided the expense and time required to quiet the title again was not feasible.

Due to the lack of use by the church, in 2016, the Marion County Tax Assessor began to assess an Ad Valorem tax on the island, which was before a tax exempt. First Presbyterian Church did not object.

In 2018, the Building and Grounds Committee, Chairman George Tomy, established a Bonecutter Island subcommittee. Members were myself, Bob Drake, Bill Futch and Ken MacKay. The subcommittee recommended to Building and Grounds and to the Session to sell the Island, as is, at a marketable sales price.

The Island was sold this month to a Buyer who intends on building a home on the property.

This property has enabled me to establish wonderful relationships and enjoy fellowship with dear friends. I thank the LORD, my church, and all those involved. I will miss the Island.

Thank you, Van H. Akin, Elder - Building & Grounds Committee



First Presbyterian Church

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Ocala, FL 34471-2284

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INTERFAITH THANKS YOU

Thank you to all our friends who donated to the Interfaith food drive: 1,703 pounds of food, plus checks for \$455 were received! The food came at a time when Interfaith really needed it.

Some of the members who participated by receiving and loading the food and gifts and by promoting the event were:

Cindy Andrews, Elaine Cox, Cheryl Fante, David Guest, Heather Guest, Kaylyn Guest, Yancey Guest, Jarl Hagood, Walk Jones, Mary Moore, Jim Yancey and Kay Yancey.

High school students also helped with loading gifts: Brooke Lynn Gilkes, James Gilkes, Robyn Guest, Maren Kimball, and Caroline Schlenker.

We also thank friends from Grace Episcopal Church for joining us with a large amount of food items.

Again, friends at Interfaith were very appreciative! Our next food drive will be on Sunday, October 11th from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.



THE SPIRE is a monthly publication of
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