



*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.

**Dr. D. Ronald Watson, Jr., Pastor**

I can hear the strains of Handel’s masterwork each time I see those words. “For unto us a child is born.” Those words bring comfort, and all that truly is the Advent season, or at least, all that perhaps it should be, comes to mind. I will readily admit that I have to guard myself well this time of year. I have to guard myself from becoming too busy with giving meaning to the season in church that it loses all personal meaning for me. For ministers of the word and sacrament, the “business” of Christmas is always the greatest danger. But nearly equal to it is letting our home celebrations and parties and the Nutcracker and other ceremonies become more “busyness” than celebration. A third type of guarding is my feelings, about who is supposed to be around the Christmas tree, who can’t come, and who is no longer with us. Feelings run away from us so quickly this time of year.

But frankly, no amount of guarding our feelings at all will change this Christmas season from what it is going to be. It will have highs and lows. I must...we must...remember that, “unto us, a child is born.” And that miracle is what the season is about: all the hope, peace, joy, and love that the Christ child brings.

*I want you to know how we will celebrate:*

**Nov 28-Dec 19** We will offer two Advent studies. Each study will meet once a week for four weeks. A Wednesday evening study will be led by Ron at 5 pm, and Natasha will lead a study Thursday mornings at 10 am.

**December 2** Advent I-three Sunday services

**December 9** Advent II-three Sunday services

**December 12** Christmas Dinner 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall

**December 12** Blue Christmas 7:15 pm in Sanctuary

**December 16** Advent III-Christmas Cantata one service 11 am

**December 23** Advent IV-three Sunday services

**December 24** Christmas Eve Worship Services  
5:00 pm Contemporary Worship in fellowship hall  
7:00 pm Traditional Worship in Sanctuary with Communion

Whether you will be in Ocala for Christmas or off visiting family or friends, I hope this Advent Season brings the Christ child into your heart.

Christmas Peace, Ron

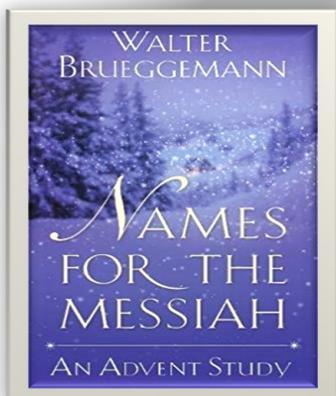


*For Unto Us a Child is Born*



## *Advent Study*

We will be offering this Advent Study different meeting times. Wednesdays at 5 pm and Thursdays at 10 am. Books for the study will be provided.



Ron Watson will facilitate a Wednesday evening study at 5 pm in the conference room starting November 28th.

Natasha Sudderth will facilitate a Thursday morning study at 10 am starting Thursday November 29th.

## *Blue Christmas- The Longest Night*



The holiday season is a time of celebration and joy, friends, and family, but for many it is the most difficult season the bear. There are those whose feelings of loneliness, grief, and alienation increase. They do not share the excitement and joy of those around them but often wish the season to be over. Yet too often they hide how they truly feel. This year we our church will be hosting a Blue Christmas service called *The Longest Night* on December 12<sup>th</sup> from 7:15-8 pm in the sanctuary. We, body of Christ, will gather together to acknowledge feelings of sadness and depression, and make a safe Space where feelings of sorrow and pain can be freely expressed among a loving caring Christian community. The service will be one of prayer, brief scripture readings, and music. We invite you to come join us for our service, *The Longest Night*.





**“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”  
Luke 1:78-79**



The Advent season is just around the corner and we would like to make the season particularly meaningful to our church family as we continue to grow as disciples serving in ministry together. Therefore, we would like to include your meaningful stories, reflections, and meditations in publications during that special season.

Take some time to reflect on the ways God has worked in your life particularly during the season of Advent and Christmas. We hope that many of you will feel the Spirit and be willing to share your meditations with your church family. We are hoping to receive submissions of your poetry, reflections on scripture, art work, personal stories, and memories. We invite you to share anything that illumines God’s love for others.

Please bring submissions to the church office or email them to Natasha Sudderth at [nsudderth@fpcocala.org](mailto:nsudderth@fpcocala.org).

**1st Sunday of** Isa. 2:1–5 Isa. 64:1–9 Jer. 33:14–16  
**Advent Ps.** 122, Ps. 80:1–7, 17–19 Ps. 25:1–10, Rom. 13:11–14, 1 Cor. 1:3–9, 1 Thess. 3:9–13  
 Matt. 24:36–44, Mark 13:24–37, Luke 21:25–36  
**2nd Sunday of** Isa. 11:1–10 Isa. 40:1–11 Mal. 3:1–4  
**Advent Ps.** 72:1–7, 18–19 Ps. 85:1–2, 8–13 Luke 1:68–79, Rom. 15:4–13, 2 Peter 3:8–15a, Phil. 1:3–11, Matt. 3:1–12, Mark 1:1–8, Luke 3:1–6  
**3rd Sunday of** Isa. 35:1–10 Isa. 61:1–4, 8–11 Zeph. 3:14–20  
**Advent Ps.** 146:5–10 Ps. 126 Isa. 12:2–6, or Luke 1:47–55 or Luke 1:47–55, James 5:7–10 1 Thess. 5:16–24 Phil. 4:4–7, Matt. 11:2–11 John 1:6–8, 19–28 Luke 3:7–18  
**4th Sunday of** Isa. 7:10–16 2 Sam. 7:1–11, 16 Micah 5:2–5a  
**Advent Ps.** 80:1–7, 17–19 Luke 1:47–55 or Ps. 89:1–4, 19–26 or Ps. 80:1–7, Rom. 1:1–7, Rom. 16:25–27, Heb. 10:5–10, Matt. 1:18–25, Luke 1:26–38, Luke 1:39–45 (46–55)  
**Christmas Eve** Isa. 9:2–7 Isa. 9:2–7 Isa. 9:2–7, (Dec. 24) Ps. 96, Titus 2:11–14, Luke 2:1–14

# GRINCHMAS

**Youth and Children’s Christmas Celebration at Universal’s Islands of Adventure!**

**When** – Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup>

**Where** – Islands of Adventure

**Who** – All youth are invited and encouraged to join us, as well as any children who will be accompanied by a parent!

**How much** – \$75 per person, \$65 for children (under 10 yrs.)

Please contact Hannah Batten at [hbatten@fpcocala.org](mailto:hbatten@fpcocala.org) to RSVP by December 16<sup>th</sup>, or for more information!



## David Bedenbaugh, Music Ministries

### Christmas Cantata

Our Cantata this Christmas will feature a beautiful piece called "One Small Child". As we read these words, I pray our hearts will prepare to receive the Christ Child again this season.

One small child in a land of a thousand  
One small dream of a savior tonight  
One small hand reaching out to the starlight  
One small savior of life.  
One king bringing his gold and riches  
One king ruling and army of might  
One king kneeling with incense and candlelight  
One king bringing us life.

Thanks for Giving Concert  
November 18, 2018  
Thank You  
David and Kosumo  
for a  
Wonderful Concert!



See Him lying, a cradle beneath Him,  
See Him smiling in the stall  
See His mother praising the Father,  
See His tiny eyelids fall  
See the shepherds kneeling before Him,  
See the kings on bended knee  
See the mother praising the Father,  
See the blessed infant sleep

One small child in a land of a thousand  
One small dream of a savior tonight  
One small hand reaching out to the starlight  
One small savior of life



## Rev. Ruth Elswood, Parish Associate

### Surviving the Holidays

The holidays are a time of peace, joy, love and happiness. This is what all the messages we see around us tell us. And, indeed, the message of Christmas is most certainly a message of hope, the hope that the Christ child brings to us that one day God's kingdom will be established on earth. This message is a message that offers us profound joy. For some, though, the holidays can be very painful. It appears that the whole world is happily celebrating with family and friends, and yet all you can think about is that missing person. Those of us who experienced the Griefshare **Surviving the Holidays** program learned some coping tips:

- Plan ahead for the season and don't try to do too much.
- It's ok to skip holiday traditions such as decorating the house if these are too painful.
- Talk to hosts ahead of time if you accept invitations. Warn them that you might need to leave after just a short time.
- Drive yourself to holiday events so you can easily escape if you need to.
- Give people permission to talk about your loved one. You can say something very simple such as, "Mother would have loved to see this tree!"
- Have a plan to change the subject if someone's questions are too difficult.
- Remember to set aside time for prayer and Bible study.
- Remember, that Jesus knows and understands your grief. "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more." We will offer the Griefshare program **Surviving the Holidays**

Friday, December 14, 10 am – noon Conference Room

*Please bring holiday treats to share. All who feel the need for such a program are welcome!*

FPC OCALA PRESENTS  
2018-2019 CONCERT SERIES

ALL CONCERTS HELD IN THE SANCTUARY

JOIN US FOR ANOTHER SEASON  
OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL TALENT!

NOV 18  
3 PM



ring! NEW PIANO  
DEDICATION!

UGH  
POSSIBLE ON

NDI

DEC 9 *Marion Civic Choral*  
3 PM

OCALA'S PREEMINENT CHOIR WONS  
US WITH SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

DEC 16 *Christmas Cantata*  
11 AM

COME HEAR ALL FPC MUSICIANS JOIN  
TOGETHER IN SONGS OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

JAN 16 *The King's Brass*  
6:30 PM

WORLD CLASS BRASS PLAYERS WILL  
BLOW YOU AWAY WITH THEIR DIVERSE  
STYLINGS OF INSPIRED MUSIC & MESSAGE

FEB 10 *Duo Decca*  
3 PM

PIANISTS KOSUMO MORISHITA AND ARIADNE ANTIPA  
BRING A COLORFUL ARRAY OF REPERTOIRE TO  
A WIDE-RANGING AUDIENCE, PERFORMING CLASSICS  
AND MUSIC FROM LIVING COMPOSERS.

MAR 24 *The Amazing  
Steel Drum Ensemble*  
3 PM

HEAR THE ISLANDS IN YOUR OWN  
BACKYARD. A GOOD SPIRIT FLOWS  
THROUGH THIS TALENTED ORCHESTRA

APR 14 *Palm Sunday Cantata*  
11 AM

JOIN US AGAIN AS ALL FPC MUSICIANS  
COMBINE TO TELL THE EASTER STORY

APR 28 *Marion Civic Choral*  
3 PM

MCC RETURNS FOR THEIR  
~ SPRING ~ CONCERT

MAY 20 *Spring String Fling*  
3 PM

THIS ANNUAL TRADITION FEATURES  
FPC'S STRING ORCHESTRA

# FPC Announcements

## 2018 Christmas Giving Tree!

Our 2018 Christmas Giving Tree Project is again an ambitious one! There are so many needs in so many parts of our community and indeed the world, but we have decided to donate to: Skill Day Center, Project Hope, Marion County Senior Services, and Sozo Kids, which helps children living in abject poverty in the Ocala National Forest.



As always, there will be two Christmas trees, one in Fellowship Hall and one in the Narthex, full of beautiful ornaments made by our children and youth and several volunteers. As always, you keep the ornament(s) and fulfill the gift request on each ornament. Please take as many as you wish. **Deadline, Monday December 10th.**

**Each gift item should be UNWRAPPED and each check made out to First Presbyterian Church earmarked "2018 Giving Tree".**

*Thank you! We look forward to working together to help make this year's Giving Tree as generous as those in the past. Please let us know if you have any questions: Sue Brawner, Carol Carpenter, Margaret Baker, Cheryl Fante, Cathy Edwards, Lannie Mercer, Becky Schatt, Ann VanDenburgh, Jarl Hagood.*

**Mission Fair & SERRV Sale:** Thank you for your support! The SERRV Sale was very successful once again and with your generosity we sold all the items for a total of over **\$1,600.00** It is important to note that ALL the money raised goes directly back to the artisans involved. The community agencies you also so generously support throughout the year enjoyed the Mission Fair and getting to meet FPC members. Thank you **Vicki Hutto, Presbyterian Women** and **Christian Outreach Committee** for the delicious refreshments. THANK YOU all for stopping by the Mission Fair/SERRV Sale!

**Interfaith Dinners:** Please let Jarl Hagood (867-9372) know if you or you and your Circle, Bible Study Group, Neighbors, etc., would like to be involved with providing a dinner for Interfaith residents in 2019. It is always the second Thursday of each month. Still plenty of dates left!

**Giving Tree:** By the time you receive this edition of the *Spire*, we will have officially kicked off the 2018 Christmas Giving Tree Project. We are supporting and gifting Project Hope (Bibles and devotional books, donations), Skill Day Center (backpacks for young children) Marion County Senior Services (small gift bags for homebound Meals on Wheels recipients) and SoZo Kids. The first 3 recipients most of you are familiar with but SoZo Kids is new to the Giving Tree—SoZo Kids was developed by Help Agency in an attempt to help families and children living in abject rural poverty in the Ocala National Forest. The following explanation is taken directly from their website: "The word SoZo is a Greek word that means to rescue; to save; to heal, to make whole. With many of these families living without electricity and running water, that has become SoZo's aim... to rescue as many lives as possible through programs, events, education, love, compassion and whatever means necessary." For more information go to their website: [sozokids.org](http://sozokids.org)



## Presbyterian Women, Pat Greaves, Moderator

To all the women of First Presbyterian Church of Ocala

**THE FALL GATHERING** was a great time for fellowship. Thanks to all who made the delicious soups and gelatin salad. But the best of all was to hear the testimony of our very own Associate Pastor, Rev. Natasha Sudderth. Her life's journey that led her to First Presbyterian Church. May God continue to bless her ministry among all of us at FPC. She is a blessing to all.



Two members were remembered for joining the church triumphant during the past year: Rennie Clark and Rosemary Gee.

**Ella Charnley was awarded the 2018 Honorary Life Membership Award** at PW Fall Gathering, presented by Elizabeth Diener-Dickmann, our 2017 Recipient.

Taken from the Proverbs woman passage, "A gracious woman will blow you away with kindness, warmth, and femininity. She is always respected and this rare trait sets her apart from all others."

*James 3:13 (NIV) "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom."*

These two passages well describe Ella. Some examples mentioned to back up what is mentioned in these two passages are:

She is a devoted and consistent member of her Circle, joyfully helping where needed.

- She is known to be humble and never makes it about herself, always about others.
- She has served on FPC's Fellowship Committee.
- She serves as a current Deacon.
- As a registered nurse, she volunteered at a local hospital after her retirement.

We have all enjoyed eating her wonderful home cooked miniature ham biscuits she lovingly prepared for countless receptions and special gatherings as well as her popular Brown Sugar Squares she lovingly provides through her graciousness.

**Well Deserved, Ella!!!!**

**THE COMBINED CIRCLES' CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON** will be held on Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, in the Fellowship Hall from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Our speaker will be Tom Weaver, who does an excellent job each month mentoring our Bible Moderators with the lesson in our Study Book. The topic will be in Lesson Four of our Study Book, "God with Us When We Seek God." We will be singing some Christmas Carols as part of the lesson. The entre will be chicken pot pie from Lee's Chicken plus extras. Plan now to attend this wonderful time of fellowship. Sign-ups are being taken by your Circle Leaders or you can contact Pat Greaves, Moderator, at 236-0716. The cost will be \$6.00. **DEADLINE FOR SIGN-UP IS WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28<sup>th</sup>**, as we have to guarantee the order to Lee's.

**STRESS FREE BOOK CLUB and WeCARE SEWING MINISTRY** will NOT meet on assigned dates in December but are having a combined lunch on THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30 a.m. at the Yummy House, 3500 SW College Road (off Hwy. 200 near Lowe's). Any questions contact Evelyn Weaver at 622-6028 or Nita Williams at 237-6789.

**PRAYER SHAWL** will NOT meet in December but will be busy clicking their needles whenever possible.

**On behalf of PW, we wish you a very blessed Christ's Birthday celebration!**

# CHILDREN AND YOUTH: CALLING ALL ARTISTS!

Advent is just around the corner and FPC needs your help. We are asking the young artists in our congregation who are interested to share their personal artwork with us. We are looking for artwork relating to the Christmas/Advent season that will be used in our church publications and in our bulletins. If you are interested, please bring art submissions to Natasha Sudderth or Hannah Batten in the church office

Submitted Artwork should...

- ✍ have your name on it and your age!
- † be in some way about of the story of Jesus' birth. Pictures of the manger, Mary, Joseph, shepherds, wise men, a star, etc. Have fun! We can't wait to see what you come up with.



Attendance				
Worship services	10/28	11/4	11/11	11/18
8:15 a.m.	38	43	49	39
9:30 a.m.	72	76	69	76
11:00 a.m.	96	110	109	121
Total	206	229	227	234

**Greet 'n' Eat Time!**  
Out to Dinner Fellowship

*There will be no  
Out To Dinner in  
December  
due to Christmas.*

## Trunk or Treat Thank You

Our first ever Trunk or Treat was a success! We are thrilled to have had over 100 children and their families stop by and trunk or treat with us. Thank you so much to everyone who contributed their time, donated their cars, and also to those who came out to have fun with us and make it such an exciting time celebrating with our community. Let's make next year bigger and better!

## Session Briefs, Elaine Cox

### SESSION BRIEFS – OCTOBER 28, 2018

1. Received new member, Fran Belisle, by Letter of Transfer from Druid Hills Methodist Church.
2. Learned that the 2019 Per Capita amount is \$5,942.80 based on 664 members at the end of 2017. The Per Capita has increased \$1.22 per member to \$8.95.
3. Approved the motion to transfer the membership of Ellen Laseter to Weirsdale Presbyterian Church.
4. Approved the motion to remove from the roll at their request Mike Kaufman, Kathy Kaufman, and Jordan Kaufman.
5. Mourned the deaths of Bob Wilton on September 29, 2018 and Linda Schultz on October 13, 2018.
6. Approved the motion from the Finance Committee as follows: “The Finance Committee will provide **monthly** meeting minutes to the Session and **quarterly** detailed finance presentations. The Finance Committee will continue to meet on a monthly basis to review the financial position of the church.”
7. Recommended that it is time for a financial review.
8. Received information on the tentative security plan. The final plan will need session approval.
9. Received initial estimated cost of the emergency/handicap ramp.
10. Approved the request for the Boy Scouts to sell barbeque tickets at the November 4, 2018 Mission Fair and SERVV sale.
11. Received an updated copy of the Policies and Procedures Manual. Each committee is to review its section, submit any further changes, and be ready to vote on final approval at the December 16, 2018 session meeting.
12. Learned that the new pianos will be dedicated on November 11, 2018 and a concert is scheduled for November 18, 2018.
13. Learned that the session retreat will be January 4-6, 2018 at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simon’s Island, Georgia.
14. Learned that Camp Montgomery is doing well as a result of the Presbytery voting to give it five more years to pay off the loan.

### SESSION BRIEF – NOVEMBER 4, 2018

Received new members, Joe and Jessie Moseley, by Letter of Transfer from Crawfordville Methodist Church.



### **Disciples XIV class contributes to PCUSA Disaster Assistance Fund**

Responding to the destruction and devastation of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, members of FPC’s Disciples XIV class, donated \$380 to PC(USA)’s Disaster Assistance fund as their fall mission project.

## Membership News

First Presbyterian Church of Ocala is happy to welcome three new members. Please greet and extend the right hand of fellowship to Fran Belisle and to Joe and Jessie Moseley.



Fran (Left) is a retired widow who recently joined the church by profession of faith. She discovered FPCO a few months ago when she drove by in her search for a home church after Druid Hills Methodist closed its doors. After only a few visits she said she felt instantly at home here at First Pres and was ready to become a member! Fran has enjoyed attending the Wednesday Night Dinners where she met a lot of people. Please welcome Fran as she becomes involved in the life of our church.

are interested in becoming involved in church activities. Jessie is retired from the Florida Department of Corrections and is currently employed by the City of Gainesville. Joe teaches science at The Cornerstone School and is well known for his work with robotics. Back in the 70's Joe attended First Presbyterian Church of Ocala, so he has returned to us. The Moseleys both expressed an interest in youth work and worship. Welcome, Jessie and Joe!

The Moseleys (Right) are transferring their membership from Crawfordville United Methodist Church in Crawfordville, Fl. Both Jessie and Joe are elders of PC(USA) and



## *Christmas Dinner—Wednesday, December 12, 2018*



Come join us for an evening of FREE food, music, fellowship and Christmas cheer!

Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m.

Menu: Ham and all the trimmings!

Program: We will be singing Christmas carols!

For reservations, put this form in an offering plate, call the church office (629-7561)

or on-line at [fpcocala.org](http://fpcocala.org)

no later than Tuesday noon, December 10.

# December Birthdays



1 Ernest Griggs	8 Michael McCurry	16 Stacey Batten	20 Milissa Gillum	26 Renee Timmer
2 Mary Ellen MacKenzie	Lois Lance	18 Eleanor Willis	Belicia Schoonover	Ann McCoy
Christina Diuguid	10 Evelyn Weaver	James Youngman	21 Krist Gillum	27 Alice Cannon
3 Marion Thomas	Vicky Stephens	Paula Brown	Emma Andrews	28 Thomas Michael
4 Anne Wilton	Tammy Langley	Teresa Lewis	22 William Futch	29 Colleen Anderson
5 Van Akin	11 Nancy Dozier	Paul Militello	23 Cindy Andrews	John Cooley
6 Nancy Graham	12 Shirley Cochran	19 Frank Fraunfelter	25 Mary Moore	30 Randy Freise
7 Wendie Moore	Ellen Laseter	Jennifer Fraunfelter		31 John Bennett
	Kyle Rodgers			



## PRAYER LIST

**Ruth Albright** (*Brentwood at Fore Ranch, please call before visiting*)  
**Kayla Ali** (*granddaughter of Yvonne Simms*)  
*The family of Diane Andrews*  
**Pat Bald**  
**Brian Baker**  
**Brent Barber** (*Gera Fleming's son-in-law*)  
**Andy Boyer** (*Fran Gilchrist's son-in-law*)  
**Randall & Linda Deyton** (*Pickard family prayer concerns*)  
**Kathy and Terry Donovan** (*Nita Williams' friends*)  
**Ellen Drummond** (*Brookdale*)  
**Jamii Fuseler** (*the Pickards' niece*)  
**David Guest** (*on the death of his mother*)  
**Gary Harward**  
**Maxine Heinbockel** (*John Heinbockel's mother*)  
**Betty Ann Jones** (*Margaret Trump's sister*)  
**Gisela Lehner**  
**Anna Marie Miller** (*Hawthorne*)

**Gloria Miller**  
**Ginnie Miller**  
**Maria Myers** (*Hampton Manor*)  
**Ray Newhouse** (*Pat Bishop's brother*)  
**Brenda O'Quinn** (*Elaine Cox's sister*)  
**Charlene Preston**  
**Dave Proctor** (*Sue Straub's son-in-law*)  
**John Reynolds** (*Suzy Heinbockel's brother*)  
**Janice Schafer** (*Palm Garden*)  
**Wes Schultz**  
**Bill Shirley**  
**Tom Shurlknight** (*Ellen Matthews' cousin*)  
**Betty Jeanne Spencer** (*Lady Lake Specialty Care*)  
**Charlotte Symonds** (*Ruth Elswood's daughter serving in Iraq*)  
**VonHayes Switzer**  
**Rich Valvo** (*Rusty Juergens' friend*)  
**Jeannie Vincent**  
**Sally Williams**



First Presbyterian Church Ocala gives thanks for the life of **Diane Andrews**, a longtime member who joined the saints of light on November 4.

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.



First Presbyterian Church  
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Ocala, FL 34471-2284

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Sent with a prayer to:



## Part of the FPC Ocala 2018-2019 Concert Series



The King's Brass have performed over one hundred concerts each season with three trumpets, three trombones, a tuba, keyboards, and percussion.

THE SPIRE IS A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
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