



FPC Ocala

THE SPIRE

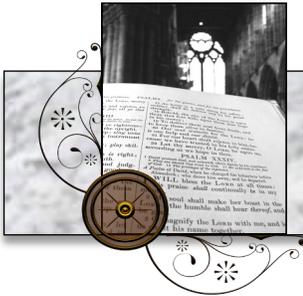
January 2021

Member of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Volume 64 Number 1

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,

We are all excited about the prospect of having a vaccine. Now comes the difficult time of more waiting. It will take months and months for the vaccine to have widespread availability. This means that we will be wearing masks and socially distancing for some time to come. But the message is one of Hope.

I think this year's New year's celebration will be one not of great revelry but one of great relief to see 2020 behind us.

Let us pray for the families of those who have lost loved ones to the virus. Let us give thanks to God for bringing us through so far. Let us pray for the safety of those who have yet to be vaccinated.

Let it indeed be a happy new year!
Ron

2021
Happy New Year

Interim Associate Pastor

Rev. Walk Jones



Rev. Walk Jones, our interim associate pastor, convenes the grief group for discussion and lessons beginning Friday, January 8, 2021.

Participants may join any week by showing up or registering at www.griefshare.org/groups Please wear a mask if you come in person.

Call the church office (629-7561) or email wjones@fpcocala.org for information about the meetings.

Session News

Session Brief – December 6, 2020

- We mourned the death of Young Joe Simmons on 11/11/2020.
- Approved Wally and Barbara Savage be removed from our membership at their request.
- Approved the request for up to \$8,000 from the endowment from the Church Support Fund to pay for the December 2020 tent events, including tent rental, sound system, advertising, and any other related expenses.
- Approved the 2021 Proposed Budget for First Presbyterian Church, Ocala, FL.
- Approved Cathy Hancock and Jacqueline Sexton as Elders of the Class of 2023.
- Approved Jackie Albright, Sue Gordon, and Leslie Wiechens as Deacons of the Class of 2023



Congratulations to our incoming elders and deacons who were either ordained or installed on December 20, 2020 during the tent service. Thank you for your service to our church family! New or returning Elders: Cathy Hancock, Jacquelyn Sexton, John Heinbockel, Rusty Juergens, and Caroline Schlenker. New or returning Deacons: Jackie Albright, Sue Gordon, Kim Vollmer-Smith, Leslie Wiechens, Julia Wirono, Sue Brawner, Trish Mosby, and Barb Tomyn.

Thank You

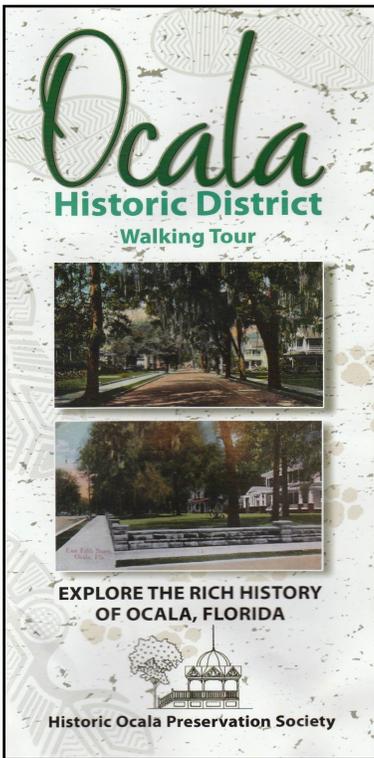
Dear Dr. Watson and the First Presbyterian Church family:

On behalf of the Project Hope Board of Directors and the women and children we serve, we want to say "Thank You" for your generous donation for Christmas bags filled with hygiene items for each of the mothers in our program, the large supply of books for the children, and the two gift cards.

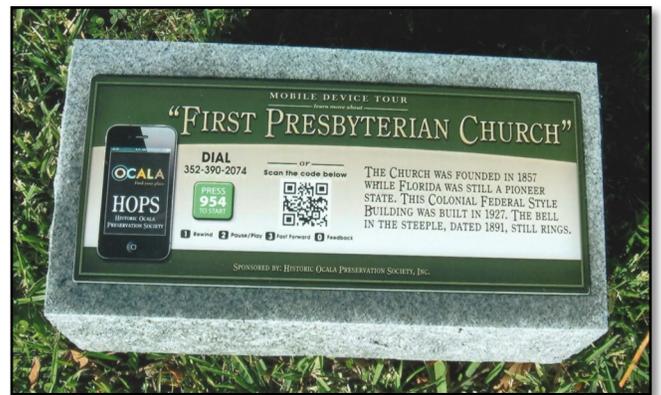
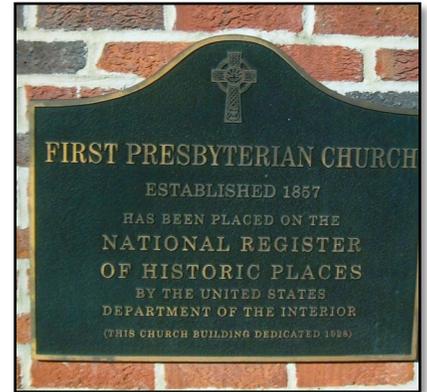
Sincerely, April McDonald, Executive Director

Building and Grounds

Historic Markers of FPC By Don McCormick



Our church has long been on the “National Register of Historic Places”. We have recently added another marker to enable our church to become part of Historic Ocala’s Walking Tour. Well over 30 tour stops with granite markers have been placed within Ocala’s historic district. They are located near the public sidewalk entrances. A smart phone camera can scan the QR code to learn additional history about our church. Much credit should be given to Brian Stoothoff, from the Historic Ocala Preservation Society for working with our Building and Grounds Committee to accomplish this recognition.



Pilgrimage News

Florida Presbyterian Pilgrimage 2021

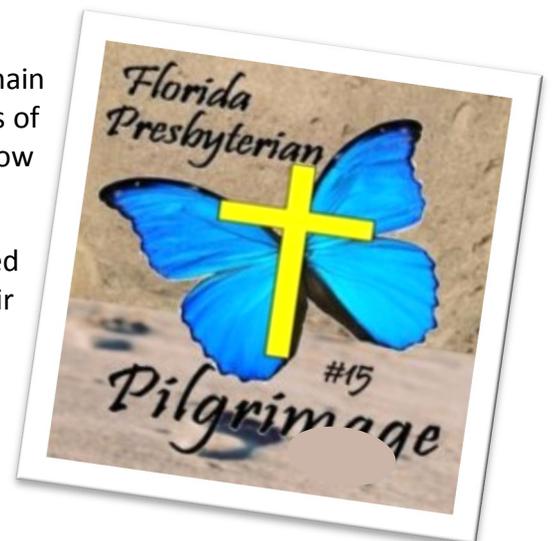
By Ann VanDenburgh

Pilgrimage is a lay-led, three-day spiritual weekend in which the main goal is learning about God’s love for you. Through many expressions of listening, learning, singing, laughter and surprises you learn to know His Will for your life.

Experience has shown that attendees return home with a renewed commitment to serve in the work of the church as a result of their newly refreshed knowledge of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The next pilgrimage weekend will be held October 29-31, 2021, at the Retreat at Silver Springs. This is not an evangelical experience but for committed Christians who desire a closer relationship with God. Dress is casual. Co-ed. Married couples may attend together. Scholarships are available. For more information, contact Rev. Walk Jones at the church

(629-7561) or Ann Vandenberg (352)615-2262. You also can visit www.FloridaPresbyterianPilgrimage.org.



Presbyterian Women, Pat Greaves, Moderator

To ALL women of First Presbyterian Church of Ocala



As we leave December 2020 and start thinking about approaching January 2021, we all want to put the past behind us and start the New Year off on better standing and focus on getting our lives back to normal. Unfortunately, it doesn't look like it will be that easy. I don't know how you feel, but I find myself being a little frustrated that I can't get on with life the way I want to live it. I'm sure the Lord our God has lessons for us all to learn so I need to be more dependent on His message for me. So it is for all of us, we continue to wait this pandemic out and prayerfully with His help we will become stronger and persevere until that day when we can put this all behind us.

So let us all be diligent with our Bible Study and dependence on the Lord's guidance and strength for this new year 2021. Lesson Five suggests we look to the words of the hymn entitled "Precious Lord." I remember singing this song at the graveside of my dear Aunt who passed away some 25 years ago. I thought I was strong enough to do it, but I found myself getting so teary eyed that I could hardly finish it. The words certainly remind me of the days we are in right now.

"Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, help me stand; I am tired, I am weak, I am worn; Through the storm, through the night, Lead me on to the light; Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

When my way grows drear, Precious Lord, linger near; When my life is almost gone, Hear my cry, hear my call, Hold my hand lest I fall; Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home."

Thomas A Dorsey, 1938

The hymn writer, Thomas Dorsey, was successful in Chicago nightclubs, but as a Christian he was urged to use his musical talent for the Lord. In 1932 he was invited to go to St. Louis and lead the music for a large revival meeting. He hesitated to agree because his wife was pregnant. He didn't want to leave her with the time for delivery so close, but he made the trip. The second day of the revival meetings, he got a telegram. The baby had been born, but his wife had died in childbirth. He rushed back to Chicago and held the baby in his arms. Only a few hours later, his infant son died too. Both mother and baby were buried in the same casket.

Dorsey was devastated. He was trying to serve God, and this is what happened. In anger, he told the Lord, "God, you aren't worth a dime to me right now." A few weeks later, still depressed, he sat down at the piano and the words and music simply came to him. With tears streaming down his face, he sang, "Precious Lord, Take My Hand." (taken from "The Complete Book of Hymns" by William J. Petersen and Ardythe Petersen)

So let us remain diligent in study and prayer as we continue through this pandemic. May God bless each one of us as we journey through this New Year 2021. May God give us direction for Presbyterian Women and its leadership.

2021 Interfaith Dinner Sign Ups

"Thank you for the enthusiastic participation of so many in 2020! Thanks to Mary Moore and the Fellowship Committee, Mary Dingman and Faith Friends, Outreach Committee, Alice Russell and the Deacons, and many individual families and/or friends: Lee Anne Drake, Margaret and Jeff Baker, Ann Richardson, John and Suzy Heinbockel, JoAnn and Roger Brandt, Van and Fran Akin and Walk Jones. Many dates are still open. In fact only January and July are taken in 2021. So please text or email Jarl Hagood to sign up - second Thursday of any month. jarlhagood@aol.com or text to 352-867-9372. Thank you!"

News from Ministries



Giving Tree 2020

God is good and 2020 continues to surprise us! Holding Zoom meetings as a committee starting in September, we did not know what to expect this year with no Giving Trees filled with ornaments and gift requests and no visual reminders each Sunday at church services (except on YouTube - thank you Ron & Katie White!).... but FPC members and friends really showed up with their generosity making the 2020 Giving Tree one of the most successful ever! We were able to beautifully gift Project Hope, Domestic Violence Center, and Sozo Kids along with also providing unexpected donations to Hands of Mercy and Interfaith. As we are all aware 2020 has been a difficult year for lots of people, and the organizations striving to help them have been unable to hold a lot of their previously successful fundraisers. So as we head into 2021 let us all continue to support them with our prayers and donations.



Thank you to all the FPC members and the Giving Tree Committee members: **Margaret Baker, Sue Brawner, Carol Carpenter, Cathy Edwards, Cheryl Fante, Jarl Hagood, Cathy Hancock, Lannie Mercer, Vicky Roberts, Becky Schatt, Ann Vandenburg, and Katie White** and Honorary members **Andrea Jacque and Helen Quinlan.**



January Birthdays

2 Joyce Heenie	11 Rhonda Kirk	16 Sandra Dailey	20 Grietje Lewis	27 Sid Varner
3 Gwen Peterson	Molly Jank	Brooke Langley	Austin Dailey	Elle Barrineau
Dirk Lewis	12 Leslie Wiechens	17 Judy Judy	21 Erin Hutchins	Kathy Hart
5 Steve Koch	13 Glen Switzer	Claudia Markham-Ahl	Gray Barrineau	Graham Moore
Lauren Hart	15 Luella Nazaruk	18 Sue Brawner	23 Randy Briggs	Steve Taylor
7 Dorothy Behrens	Lilli MacKay	Trish Mosby	24 Chris Bissett	28 Mary Moore
Lyn Rainbow		Lora Barrett	William Cone	Shelby Welch
8 Jerry Rost		19 Ramona Gant	Linda Butscher	29 Lamar Knepp
9 Benjamin Manthe		Connor Patrick	25 Gene Wiechens	Russel Dingman
10 Adam Schuler			26 Mina DiGeronimo	30 Roger Mason
Howell Winfree, II			Laura Moore	Bill Futch
				31 Paulette Johnson



PRAYER LIST

Claudia Markham-Ahl
Wilma Andrews (at home)
Adam Black (son of Anna McCurry)
Bill Bowen
Bill Canganelli (grandson of Pat Bishop)
Andy Carlisle
Shirley Cochran
Maranell and Hank Fleming
Ruth Fraser (recovering from shoulder surgery)
Bill Green (friend of Richard Grosso)
Barbara Gowie
Sharon Grier (mother of Lee Anne Drake)
Dick Hancock
Brenda Jones and family

Jolene Kai (Ginny Miller's daughter-in-law)
Scott Kinnaugh (Dorothy Siemons' son)
Kathy Lance (daughter-in-law of Lois Lance)
Lois Lance
Grietje Lewis
Renate Lipp (friend of Nita William)
Sandra M (friend of Mary Beth Olsen)
Celine Mack
Eric Masterson (brother-in-law of Deb Cone)
Skip McDonald
Jessie Moseley
Christian Myers (friend of Julia Wirono)
Michael Rou (cousin of Dr. David Albright)
Ann VanDenburgh
Joyce Williamson



First Presbyterian Church Ocala gives thanks for the Life of **Marsha Knepp** who joined the saints of light on December 6, 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.

Announcements

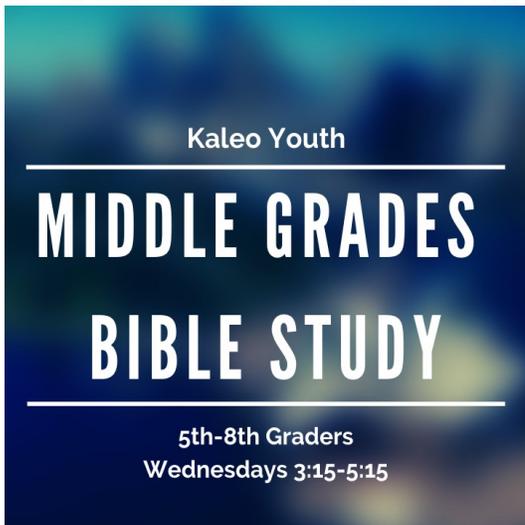
It's a new year and Kaleo Youth is back!

Starting **January 6, 2021**, we are inviting all **5th through 8th** graders to join us on **Wednesdays** to gather as friends and grow deeper in their walk of faith! At **3:15 p.m.** we will meet in on the sports fields to play and grow as a community as everyone is brought from their respective schools. Then at **4:00 p.m.** we will gather together for Bible Study, and pick up is at 5:15 p.m.

Students who attend the small group are asked to bring: a Bible, mask (required), water bottle, and blanket/towel to sit on.

If you have any questions, concerns, or are interested in volunteering please email Casey at caseydiuguid@gmail.com

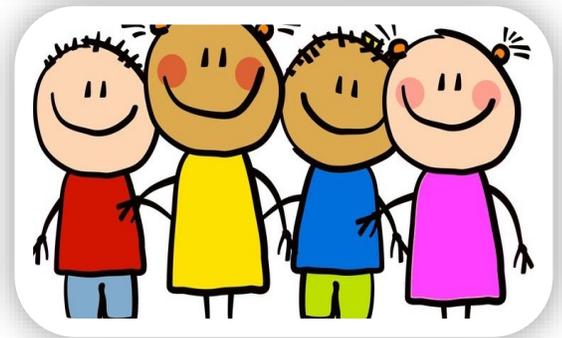
We are looking forward to seeing you there to explore God's word



Registration for Happy Hearts

2021-2022 School Year will begin on January 28th and 29th for First Presbyterian Church Members at 8:30 am outside the Happy Hearts office. Registration will open to the public on February 1st.

For more information please call our office at (352) 622-7636 or visit our website at www.happyheartsocala.org



A Little History

First wedding in the 3rd Street sanctuary

Our church building was dedicated on June 10, 1928. Miss Annie MacKay was the first bride married in its sanctuary. She and Trusten Polk Drake, Jr. became husband and wife on October 27, 1928. Their sons, Trusten and George ("K") were long-time members and Elders until moving from the area. Bob (grandson of Annie and Trusten) and Lee Anne Drake are current members of First Presbyterian Church of Ocala, and Trusty and Charlene Drake are members of the church again.



Our Bell

Mr. and Mrs. John Dunn ---for whom the City of Dunnellon was named --- presented the bell in the tower as a gift on December 24, 1891. In their 1966 book *Ocala Country*, Eloise Robinson Ott and Louis Hickman Chazal state that the bell was "the largest bell in Ocala...often mistaken for the deep sound of the fire bell." In 1928 the bell was moved to the new church building on Third Street, where it remains and is fully functional.





First Presbyterian Church
511 SE Third Street
Ocala, FL 34471-2284

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Sent with a prayer to:



Hear ye! Hear ye! **First Presbyterian Church** **Has a Phone Prayer Chain!! Again!**

Anyone who has a need for prayers can call the Church Office, (352) 629-7561, and ask to be placed on the list of the Phone Prayer Chain. Our newly revived Prayer Chain is made up of a faithful and prayerful group of First Presbyterian members who deeply believe in the power of prayer and are ready to compassionately and discreetly pray for you and/or your loved ones. Please don't hesitate to call on them to pray on your behalf.

Moderated by the First Presbyterian Diaconate

Questions? Call 352-843-0262

THE SPIRE is a monthly publication of
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