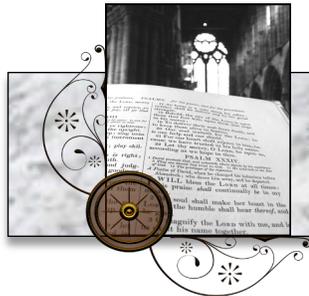




Our Vision - Our Mission
To spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to our community and the world.
To be an inclusive downtown community of faith that seeks to embrace everyone in growing spirituality.



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

Joshua 1:1-9

¹After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying, ²"My servant Moses is dead. Now proceed to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the Israelites. ³Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses. ⁴From the wilderness and the Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the Great Sea in the west shall be your territory. ⁵No one shall be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. ⁶Be strong and courageous; for you shall put this people in possession of the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them. ⁷Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful. ⁹I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

I am starting with old testament scripture in my address for this April newsletter. You may know that 9th verse very well, but we mostly know the quote "Be strong and of good courage..." Notice that the verse starts with the

words, "I hereby command you." That may seem a bit severe at first, commanding Joshua not to be afraid. But Joshua has a big job, the settlement of the people of Israel after 40 years in the wilderness. He has no idea how the logistics are going to work, only that God will be in charge-the command he must follow is to be courageous and not fearful or dismayed.

Isn't that our current plight? We have what seems like an impossible job, battling this virus. But the bigger question for us a nation is, how will we handle the logistics? We have hospitals to deal with illness, but if the hospitals get overwhelmed with patients, then what? What about the logistics? What we learn in Joshua is a very simple but important lesson for us today. If we do our job, God will do God's job. Be faithful; obey God with courage and not fear. Stay the course. And God will be in charge of the rest. Our faith has never been more important to our success than it is today. The more we worry about what **might** happen than what **is** happening, the more fearful we will become. Could our uncertainty be greater than that of Joshua? No. Joshua was moving an entire people into land they didn't even own. Joshua had to create an army and feed them along with the rest of Israel. "They had to be fed, and feeding two to three million people requires a lot of food. The people needed 2,000 tons -- four million pounds -- of food each day. To bring that much food each day, would require three freight trains each a mile long! In the desert they needed firewood to cook and keep warm. Each day this would take 4,000 tons -- eight million pounds -- of wood and a few more freight trains, each a mile long.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

Of course, they needed water. If they only had enough to drink and wash a few dishes, it would take 11 million gallons each day, and a freight train with tank cars 1,800 miles long, just to bring water!"
—various sources.

If we put our trust in a God who could handle logistics like moving the people of Israel to the Promised Land, we can get through this thing. Let us turn to God and leave it up to him. Again. He's done it before.

Now, let's talk about our own personal church logistics. Right now, we don't know when regular services will restart. We may be celebrating Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter with electronic worship this year. We will let you know by email, church website, and YouTube. Keep looking in those places. If you don't have a computer, call the office and listen to our latest update. If you are not feeling well, let the church know so that we can pray for you. If you just want someone to talk to, call me anytime. You have my number.

Peace, Ron (Please also read my message on Page 6)

Peggy Wiechmann, Clerk of Session

Session Brief – March 1, 2020

- Accepted Wally and Barbara Savage into membership.
- Approved a Letter of Transfer for Alyson and Mary Paige Bowen and Henry Bowen as a baptized child to First United Methodist Church, Ocala, FL.
- Approved a Letter of Transfer for David and Cheryl Bedenbaugh to First United Methodist Church, Ocala, FL.
- Approved a Letter of Transfer for Kent Adams to North Lake Presbyterian Church, Lady Lake, FL.
- Approved the baptism of Tooker James Brown in our church on 2/16/2020.
- Approved the removal of the following members from our rolls because of non-attendance, at their request or moving to another place: Lauren Beebe, Victoria Bishop, Christina Snyder Calderon, Nancy Camp, Kathleen Essick, Thomas Essick, Bruce Foster, Michael Griggs, Eric Mosby, Austin Schwaller, Jordan Schwaller, Andrea (Liza) Taylor, Monica Waldren, Scott Waldren, Tammy Wildy, Courtney Yancey, Christopher (Kyle) Yancey.
- Approved The Skye Family, an Irish fiddling and dancing group, to perform a concert on March 11, 2020. A free will offering will be taken.
- Approved The Lyra, a Russian sacred and folk singing group, to perform a concert on April 22, 2020.
- Approved the purchase of 200 armless chairs and 10-15 armed chairs for the Fellowship Hall and a portion of the money for payment will be taken from the Endowment Fund.
- Approved to invite the Rev. Bob Shettler to be a guest minister on Sunday, March 8, 2020.
- Approved the Rev. Jimmy Cazin to preach on March 29, 2020 at all three services and once or twice a month at the 9:30 service thereafter.
- Approved a payment to cover part of the expenses for a Clergy Fitness Evaluation and LeaderWise Counseling Center for the Rev. Jimmy Cazin. Approved those funds to come from the Wood Foundation.
- Approved the baptism of Audrey Williams, daughter of Bridgit and Tyler Williams, great granddaughter of Biddie Kirk and to invite the Rev. Debbie Kirk to officiate.

Membership



Left: Luanne Bainbridge joins us from Druid Hills United Methodist Church. She was a member of that church for 51 years! Luanne's family moved to Ocala from the Tampa Bay area many years ago. She is a retired piano teacher after many years of giving lessons. Luanne loves cats and currently has two adopted feral cats.



Above: Wally and Barbara Savage joined our church by Reaffirmation of Faith. Originally from Michigan, they now live at On Top of the World. Wally has retired as major gift director for the Salvation Army. Barbara has retired from the tax collector's office in Pasco County, Florida. They want to be very active in our congregation, and especially with outreach to the less fortunate. They were impressed with our sponsorship of Interfaith. They visited some other churches, but found First Presbyterian to be very welcoming and friendly. As an example, before they had even attended one service, they stopped into the office to inquire where they could park because there are a lot of No Parking signs. Wally told me that they mentioned to the receptionist that they were interested in joining our church and she got up, came around to them, Ron came out and took them into his office where they talked for forty-five minutes! They were most impressed with that level of openness and friendliness. They love the traditional service, but Wally said that once a month they would attend the contemporary service so they could see the children. Welcome, Wally and Barbara!

Above: Please welcome to our congregation Patty and Doug Holcomb. They were originally from Mississippi but found their way to Ocala two years ago to enjoy retirement. Patty is a retired nurse and Doug retired from the Air Force. They have two grown children and two grandchildren living in Dayton, Ohio. When they first met they were attending different churches, but compromised by becoming Presbyterian, and we are so glad they did! They enjoy the traditional 11:00 service, so look for them there. Once you meet Patty and Doug you will see they enjoy meeting people, so you just might see them as part of our Hospitality Team!

Welcome to our Church

Welcome to FPC



Dr. Walk Jones

Dr. Walk Jones is joining our staff on April 1 as Interim Associate Pastor. Walk will specialize in pastoral care, but he will also assist me in some of his other areas and in general pastoral duties. Walk lives in Orlando with his wife Nancy. They will maintain their residence there, but he will be staying here three to four nights a week when I am present, and every night should I be away. Walk's contract is for one year, but it may be extended if both Walk and the session agree to such an extension. Walk has just completed nearly a decade at Westminster Communities of Florida, first as a chaplain, and most recently as Director of Church Relations. He is a graduate of Louisville Seminary and Columbia Theological Seminary. He has over thirty years of ministry experience, and he is planning to attend all services on March 29 to be introduced to the congregation. Welcome, Walk!



Dr. Jones with his family

Dr. Jones will be staying here three to four nights a week when I am present, and every night should I be away. Walk's contract is for one year, but it may be extended if both Walk and the session agree to such an extension. Walk has just completed nearly a decade at Westminster Communities of Florida, first as a chaplain, and most recently as Director of Church Relations. He is a graduate of Louisville Seminary and Columbia Theological Seminary. He has over thirty years of ministry experience, and he is planning to attend all services on March 29 to be introduced to the congregation. Welcome, Walk!

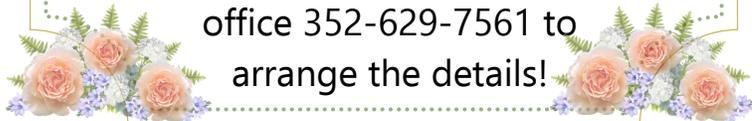
Donate Flowers for a Sunday Service

You can donate a lovely arrangement of flowers for many different occasions:

- ◆ To the glory of God
- ◆ Birthdays
- ◆ Anniversaries
- ◆ Births
- ◆ Special events

There are envelopes on the Ushers' Table in the Narthex, or in Fellowship Hall. Fill out and put in the offering plate or bring to the office. You can

also call the church office 352-629-7561 to arrange the details!



Attendance	3/1	3/8	3/15	3/22
Worship services				
8:15 a.m.	37	24	108 views on Youtube	284 views on Youtube
9:30 a.m.	64	51		
11:00 a.m.	108	107		
Total	209	182		

The Out-to-Dinner Group is on hold for the month of April. If there is any decision to have the dinner, we will be in contact with you.

Thank you for your understanding during this time.



A Note from Jimmy

First I just want to say thank you to everyone for welcoming me to FPC as I jump in to consult and help build the youth ministry and contemporary worship teams. Everyone I have met thus far has been so kind and welcoming, and I am looking forward to spending a lot of time with you this coming year.

With our current situation, transitioning so much of our ministry to digital/virtual, we are all adapting and flexing to do everything we can to keep us connecting with each other and most importantly, worshiping together. Thank you for being open to new and creative ways for us to be the church, to gather online in worship, and love each other and our community.

For now I am spending a lot of my time producing and editing our worship videos so that we can bring this into your home. We are so fortunate to have such a talented staff, including a great preacher with a solid singing voice, to help bring our worship experience into your home. If you have any creative ideas as we move forward, please reach out to me anytime.



Jimmy Cazin



Featured Acolyte of the Month

Lillian

**Daughter of Jeff and Margaret Baker
3 special things Lillian likes to do:**

***Ballet *Science *Playing with her friends**

***Lillian wanted to be an Acolyte because
she wanted to bring the light of Christ to the World!***



An important message from Dr. Watson

Stewardship

Our church runs on your donations. We continue to pay our staff and our mission partners in this strange time of coronavirus. Keeping your pledge up to date is very helpful to our church and keeps us from depleting our reserves. Our offices can receive your check in person or through the mail. After hours or if we have stepped out, you may use the mail slot in the office door to make your offering. Thanks again for your continued support.

Lent and Holy Week

This Lent has been like none other in my 32 years of ministry. My main article this month was about Joshua (of all things) preparing the tribes of Israel to cross over from the wilderness to the promised land. These are strange times indeed. The church had already planned to move from our normal Maundy Thursday service to a Good Friday service, primarily because of the virus and communion. Now we are uncertain when services will resume though we are still scheduled for 3 services on Palm Sunday. I just don't know right now. As I write this, I would say our chances are at best 50-50. So I ask you, "how can we make this a positive thing?" Here are a few ways. First, I think we can spend much more time, with distractions removed, considering what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. Some of the same people who hailed Jesus as king on Palm Sunday,

crying "Alleluia!" were the same ones yelling, "Crucify him!" on Good Friday. What do we know of sacrifice? Second, take the extra time to read chapters 22 & 23 of Luke or chapters 15 through 19 of John's Gospel during Holy Week. We have probably never had a better time to catch up on reading than now. And those chapters are difficult to read. Now is a good time to consider those chilling words. Third, reflect on the ways that we can show the love of God when this is over, and what it means to be in close contact. Consider what it means to be a church and to be together, how precious that is. Perhaps we have forgotten or taken for granted the ability to come together on a Sunday and worship since we have, for now, lost that treasure. Maybe this will help revive the Church in general and our church, First Pres, more specifically.

So, if we have to continue our electronic worship through Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter, we will, and beyond, if we must. We (the program staff) will use our energy, creativity, imagination, and love, to bring you inspiring messages. If you can't be with us electronically, then read this story of what happens before Easter during Holy Week. I find, personally, that when I practice this discipline, painful as it is, it helps me celebrate Easter Sunday all the more. Peace be with you. -Ron



JOIN FPC THIS SUMMER!



We Y Are

Montreat Youth Conference (MYC) is designed for high school students—from entering freshmen through graduated Seniors — and for their group leaders.

July 19-25, 2020

Call the church office for more details and visit www.montreat.org/events/

Thank You's to FPC

- ◆ Thank you to all the PW who donated food for our CWU World Day of Prayer. Everyone commented how nice everything looked and tasted. A special thanks to Esther Arango-Palencia, our Vice Moderator, who worked extra hard to make the food table attractive and stayed to help clean. Also, to Judy Judy for tending the registration table, and Lois Clardy and Sharon Shirley for joining me in a Trio. —Gera Fleming



Great work **Troop 72!**

The scouts put out 20 yards of pine bark mulch around the church and then assembled 168 of the new Fellowship Hall Chairs.

Thank You!



Presbyterian Women, Pat Greaves, Moderator

To ALL the women of First Presbyterian Church of Ocala

As we celebrate the Lenten Season, we are mindful of the wonderful gifts God has given us. Now let us be open to share our talents and gifts and support the mission programs of Presbyterian Women through ministry as well as financial gifts to ensure that PW will continue to make God's world a place of hospitality and abundance for God's people for many years to come.



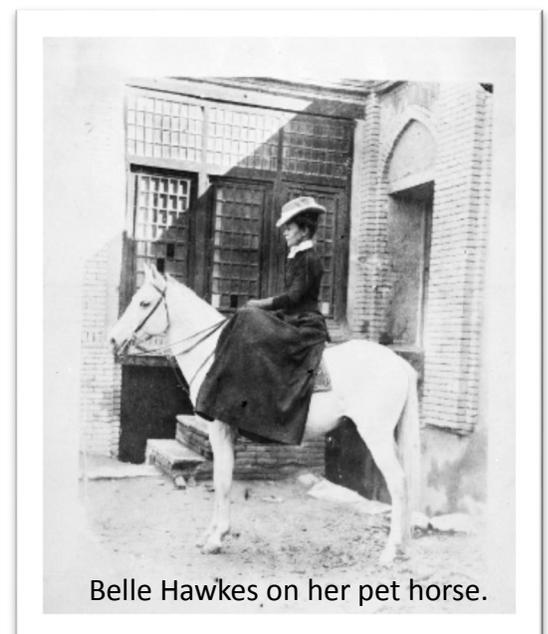
IN OUR APRIL CIRCLE MEETINGS, we will study Lesson Eight, "Words of Love: Speak Truthfully," in the Horizon's Bible Study book, "Love Carved in Stone." by Eugenia Anne Gamble. The lesson is based on Exodus 20:16, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." The study of the Ten Commandments has been very refreshing. It's given us a lot to meditate on. As always, newcomers are welcomed to attend any Circle. If you're interested in joining a Circle please feel free to contact anyone on the following page or Pat Greaves, Moderator, at 362-0013. Come and join in Christian fellowship. Many thanks to Tom Weaver who gives many hours preparing the handout that goes with the lesson and holds the mentoring sessions each month.

THE DATE OF THE PW SPRING GATHERING has been changed and will be held on **Saturday, May 2nd, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and include lunch.** You will be able to sign up through your Circle Leader during April. Cost will be \$6 for Lee's pot pie, salad and Birthday cake. The cost of the meal will be supplemented by funds from our treasury. The theme will center on the Birthday Offering and installation of our Officers. We ask for you to bring a picture of your early years as a young mother and we will try to identify each one as we also celebrate Mother's Day. Don't show your picture to anyone...it will be a game.

THANKS FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BLANKET FUND...last year we collected over \$600.00; and thanks to everyone's generous donations and meeting our challenge we **COLLECTED \$1,186.00** which goes to Church World Service. God Bless each one for your faithfulness to this mission endeavor to help the needy when they need it the most. Thanks to Gera Fleming, PW's Program Coordinator, Church Women United.

Women of the Presbyterian Church

Right: Born as Sarah Belknap Sherwood, **Belle Hawkes** was appointed to the mission in East Persia by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Board of Foreign Missions in 1883. In 1884, she married the Reverend James W. Hawkes, also of the East Persia Mission. Stationed in Hamadān for 36 years, she ministered to the needs of Armenian, Jewish, and Moslem women and children. She acquired an exceptional mastery of Farsi, and her home became a center of missionary service and hospitality to the flow of travelers between Tehran and Baghdad. She died in service in 1919. The collection consists primarily of Belle Hawkes' outgoing correspondence addressed to her family during her years in Hamadān, and her diaries. It also contains photographs of the East Persia missionaries, including Belle herself. View the collection guide at digital.history.pcusa.org to learn more.



Belle Hawkes on her pet horse.

Presbyterian Women Circle Meetings for April 2020
Bible Study and Fellowship with your Sisters in Christ

	Date	Time	Meeting Place	Contact	Phone
Bible Moderator Mentoring	Tuesday, April 7 th	5:30 p.m.	Room 1	Tom Weaver	622-6028
Coordinating Team Mtg.	Tuesday, May 5 th	7:00 p.m.	Room 1	Pat Greaves	236-0716 or 352-362-0013
Circle 1	Tuesday April 14 th	2:00 p.m.	Conference Room	Esther Arango-Palencia	732-6626
Circle 3	Monday, April 20 th	10:00 a.m.	Chris Schuler 9290A SW 89 th Terr. Ocala, 34481 231-620-2488	Liz Diener-Dickmann	732-6368 908-377-8913
Circle 4	Tuesday, April 14 th	6:30 p.m.	Conference Room	Joyce Williamson	629-6373 789-0062 cell
Circle 7	Tuesday April 14 th	11:00 a.m.	Choir Room	Susie Marta	304-5416
Circle 8	Tuesday April 14 th	2:00 p.m.	Room 1	Lois Clardy	622-3053

Presbyterian Women's Program Meetings for April 2020
Ways to Serve with your Sisters in Christ

Program	Date	Time	Location	Contact	Phone
Prayer Shawl Ministry	Thursday, April 23 rd	1:30 p.m.	Conference Room	Liz Diener-Dickmann	908-377-8913
WeCare Sewing Ministry	Monday, April 27 th	9:30 a.m.	Room 1	Evelyn Weaver	622-6028

Attention

Florida Presbyterian Pilgrimage The retreat on April 23 to April 26 at The Retreat at Silver Springs has been cancelled.

Griefshare meetings on Friday at 10:30 am have been suspended until further notice.

The people of Lyra regret the cancellation of their US tour due to the virus. They will let us know when they are planning their next tour.

The April Fellowship Dinner will be cancelled. We look forward to a dinner in May.

April Birthdays

2

David Albright

3

Tola Hass
Garrett Robinson

4

Ali Vorwerk
Robyn Guest

6

Jimmy Butscher
Lannie Vorwerk

7

Frank Misiano
Fran Belisle
Carey Bald
Reinhardt Switzer

8

Nancy Livesay

9

Dave Bice
Michele Brooks

10

Joe Simmons

11

Andy Carlisle

12

Elaine Rost
John Brawner

13

Norma Giles
Emilee Grodi

15

Gera Fleming
Mary Dingman
Lauren Robinson

17

Pat Stephens
Luann Bainbridge

Dana Smith

19

Madelyn Luther

20

Mary Beth Rivers
Chris Schuler
Brad Dozier

21

Steve Von Ebers

22

Susie Marta

23

Suzanne Slaughter
Bryan Runyon
Kyle Yancey
Rachel Heinbockel

24

Valeria Curry
Lewis Heinbockel
Ava Curtis
Emma Curtis

26

Tim Liberatore

27

Lanford Slaughter
Declan Caskey

29

Mayson Sprowles



PRAYER LIST

Thomas and Debbie Ault

Jim and Jane Bennett

(brother and sister-in-law of John Bennett)

Pam Butcher

Andy Carlisle

Sara Chey, Brenda Jones and family

Shirley Cochran

Stewart and Diane Edwards

Hank and Maranell Fleming

The John Gilkes family on his death

Bill Green (Richard Grosso's friend)

Barbara Gowie

Dick Hancock

Jordan Kaufman (applying for medical school)

Ken Kramer (Evelyn Longo's brother-in-law)

Kathy Lance (Lois Lance's daughter-in-law)

Lois Lance

Grietje Lewis

Kevin Lloyd (Lee Ann Drake's cousin)

Celine Mack

Skip McDonald

**Laura Moore and her parents,
Bruce and Wendie**

Jerry Murphy

Raul Nieves (Mina DiGeronimo's brother)

Greg Robinson (Carolyn Varner's brother)

Michael Rou (Dr. David Albright's cousin)

Janice Schafer (Palm Garden)

Deloris, Steve and Keith Shotwell

Baldwin Switzer (on deployment with
the Navy)

Howard Tucker

Nancy Wells (Daughter of Shirley Wells)

Shirley Wells (on the death of her brother,
Fred Austin)

Jill Hester Whitaker



First Presbyterian Church Ocala gives thanks for the life of **John Gilkes**, a former member, who joined the saints of light on March 17, 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.

Holy Week and Easter 2020

The following schedule will be in effect if services resume.
If not, we plan to have electronic offerings for these services:

Palm Sunday - Sunday, April 5

8:15 a.m., 9:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m. – Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday - Thursday, April 9

NO SERVICE THIS YEAR (no communion due to the virus)

Good Friday - Friday, April 10

12:00 noon to 12:30 p.m. – Worship Service in Sanctuary

Easter Sunday - Sunday, April 12

8:15 a.m., 9:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m. – Sanctuary



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.
Envelopes will be distributed and collected on Easter Sunday.



First Presbyterian Church
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*He
Is
Risen!*

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