



FIRST PRESS

The newsletter of First Presbyterian Church

FEBRUARY 7, 2022

First Presbyterian Church
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website: www.oldfirstchurch.org

www.facebook.com/oldfirstchurch

Sunday Schedule

**9:15 a.m. Adult Church School
Meet and Greet on Zoom & In
Person in the Westminster Room
Program starts at 9:30 a.m.**

**9:15 a.m. Nursery open for
infants - two year olds.**

**9:30 a.m. Children's classes
gather for music in room 307.**

**9:45 a.m. Preschool and
Elementary School classes begin
in their respective rooms**

**11:00 a.m. LORD'S DAY WORSHIP
SERVICE**

**Children and vaccinated adults
with masks are welcome in the
Sanctuary. Childcare is available
for children younger than
kindergarten.**

5:00 p.m. Youth Group

In Person and Live-Stream Worship

Visit www.oldfirstchurch.org to
download Sunday's bulletin and
view the service. Services are
recorded and available for later
viewing on YouTube
@FPCTallahassee.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Monday-Friday



Lawn Visits for FPC Families!

During the week of February 14-17, families at FPC can sign up for an afternoon or early evening time to get a fun campfire lawn visit. We will make s'mores, sing a campfire song and tell a story. We will bring the campfire with us (it is small and portable), as well as everything necessary to make a s'more and have some fun right on your front lawn. All you need to do is have a chair or blanket to sit on. Sign ups have been emailed to families on our list. IF you don't receive the email and would like to have a lawn visit, please email: christy@oldfirstchurch.org.

See you on the lawn!!

Nothing could be S'more fun!



Presbyterian Women Winter Gathering
on Zoom February 20
after church and after lunch 2pm - 3:30
Special Speaker Rev. Susan Gage
Music by Carla and Tim Connor



Pastor's Column

By Rev. Margaret Fox

I've come to learn that one of the features of Tallahassee life is the occasional long layover in the Atlanta airport. On Saturday, with about two hours to kill on my return from a Board of Pensions meeting, I camped out at a table in a remote corner of the terminal and plowed my way through this week's reading for the Bible Survey, the prophet Isaiah.

After a while, I realized that an elderly couple sitting near me were observing me with interest. Eventually, the woman patted my arm, leaned over, and said, "That's my favorite book!"


"The prophet Isaiah?" I asked. "Me, too!"

"No," she said, "I mean the Bible. All of it. It's my favorite book." They were getting up from their table and preparing to leave. The man said, "Blessed travels to you."

I thanked them and wished them the same. But I wish I'd had time to engage them in conversation. When she said that the Bible was her favorite book, what did the woman mean? My assumption was that she was saying it as short-hand—that they were finding ways to signal to me, "Hey, we're Christians, too!" the way that Christians in the Roman empire used the ichthys symbol—a representation of a fish.

But what I really wanted to say to them was, "I love the Bible, too—I find it fascinating and compelling and expansive and strange. But what do you do with the hard stuff? What do you do with the passages about slavery? The rape scene in the book of Judges? The expulsion of the Canaanites? The violence and brutality of life?"

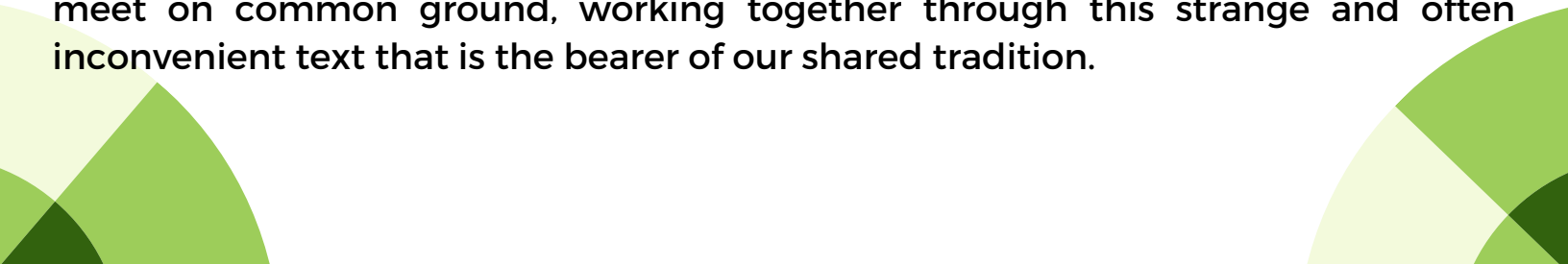
It's not enough to simply assign these parts to the Old Testament and say that Christ abrogated all of that. As Stan Williams pointed out in our Wednesday night Bible survey, the New Testament is full of that stuff, too (he made this comment as an invitation to our Sunday morning Inquirers' class on "The Difficult Sayings of Jesus.")



Between these programs and the PW study on Matthew's Genealogy, this congregation has been immersed, this year, in exploring some of the tougher passages of scripture. One of the biggest costs of such a project is a loss of innocence about what the Bible actually contains. If we never read the Bible, it's easy for us to assume that we've got the Bible on our side—that its content will support our point of view. We tend to pin this kind of uninformed proof-texting on conservative “Bible thumpers,” but progressives can be guilty of this, too—picking and choosing passages to support our points of view. The other day at the dog park, a man remarked, referring to those who oppose LGBT inclusion in the church, “I don't know where in the Bible it says to love some people but not others!” Having just finished the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, I could have pointed to the passages where foreign-born wives and children were expelled from the community.

It's frustrating, disheartening, disenchanting to open our sacred text and find in it things we don't want to hear—not just things that are uncomfortable, but things that cause harm. And yet as Christians we're called to study scripture—to immerse ourselves in the Bible. Why?

In scripture we receive what we've been given. This may sound strange, but in culture where we're getting increasingly polarized, scripture gives us the perspectives from a number of different news feeds, rather than a single, biased source. By reading scripture in our own communities, we can work together through the texts that are difficult; we can seek the Spirit's guidance to aid our understanding; we can live out the word in the community of Christ. For example, as Presbyterians we're called to read scripture through the “rule of faith and love,” which means we give less credence to passages like the expulsion of foreign wives from Ezra and Nehemiah than we do to Micah's command to “do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.” And by reading scripture with other communities—with people who don't think or act or vote like us—we can at least meet on common ground, working together through this strange and often inconvenient text that is the bearer of our shared tradition.



LENTEN OPPORTUNITIES



"Bless This Mess"

The last three years have taught us more about finding hope and being resilient in the face of the chaos of the world. This coming season of Lent, we invite you to join us in finding ways to be still, to search for hope and to renew faith.

Even in the mess of this world, we recognize God with us.

Blessings in the midst of mess.



**Mark your calendar for our
3:00 p.m. March 6
Lenten Wilderness Hike with
Allie Snyder and Lucas Heiker.
Location TBD.**

Lenten Volunteer Opportunity at Second Harvest's Warehouse:

Thursdays from 9-Noon
March 3, 17, 31 and April 7.
Older children and youth are
welcome during the week of
Spring Break.

We need 4-8 volunteers each
time. Volunteer by emailing
christy@oldfirstchurch.org.

Midday Moments of Grace & Peace

in the sanctuary of FPC on
Tuesdays at 12:15 p.m.

Tuesday March 8, 15, 22, 29 and
April 5.

All are welcome to join us for
prayer, reflection, song and
stillness. We will provide space
for a brown bag lunch in the
courtyard (weather permitting)
or the Westminster Room
following the service.

"Hearts Together" Underwear Drive

February 13th

at church if you come for the in-person service or our fabulous Youth Group will host a "drive by/ drop off" collection between 4-5 pm



February is fast approaching as the Care Team is planning our annual Agape Love Fest (*formerly, pre-COVID, a potluck Feast!*) Our theme this year is once again "Hearts Together" and will involve reaching out to our beloved children and our members at Westminster Oaks and other homes with Agape bags and love tokens of our appreciation and care.

For our community, we reached out to Grace Mission who requested men's underwear which is in short supply! More information will be coming, but you can begin shopping for these sizes of Men's Underwear in order of lowest to highest need:

34 waist or Medium

XXL

40 waist or XL

36, 38 waist or Large

2 Bonus items requested:

New/Used Men's jeans same sizes as above

Powdered Gatorade packets or Gatorade or electrolyte/hydration type drinks.

This request was related to many who have been recovering in place from illness recently. (*Water bottles are already available to those who are homeless.*)

Lastly, checks to Grace Mission are always welcome!

The collection will happen on February 13 either at church if you come for the in-person service or our fabulous Youth Group will host a "drive by/ drop off" collection between 4-5 p.m.



Nursery and Preschool Childcare

Sitters from Twinkle Toes

Childcare agency are staffing our nursery. These sitters are all: background checked, CPR/First Aid trained and vaccinated. Two additional sitters from Twinkle Toes staff the Preschool class. When we are in-person for church school, 9:15 - Noon, Twinkle Toes sitters will be in the building ready to care for infants through two-years-old in the church nursery. Children aged three - pre-K will be in the preschool class and will be greeted by additional Twinkle Toes sitters.



Did you know...We have two separate prayer ministries, and invite you to participate in either, or both. You are not limited to asking for prayers for yourself, but when the prayer requests involves another individual, please get permission from the person concerned before submitting his or her name.

To have a prayer concern read aloud during worship, please call the office during the week (850-222-4504), and Lori will ensure that your request is relayed to both Margaret and the Care and Outreach Team. You can also email

Margaret directly at Margaret@oldfirstchurch.org. You may also indicate whether the request should be repeated from week to week.

In addition to prayers read during worship, you can contact Debbie Gibson (gibsond1207@gmail.com) to be placed on a list shared with a group that has covenanted to pray for specific requests. Once Debbie knows of a need, it will be relayed to the prayer chain for the volunteers in that ministry to hold up the specific concerns or celebrations in prayer for as long as is needed. Prayers requested through Debbie will not be read during worship unless you ask for that to happen as well.



**Dogwood Acres Conference Center
and Summer Camp is conducting a
search for a Program Director.**

This is a year-round, salaried position.

For more information, contact

Brant Copeland

Search Committee Chair

brantscopeland@outlook.com

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of
First Presbyterian
Church

**The newsletter is prepared on Mondays,
including those Mondays that fall on
federal holidays.**

**Please submit items for publication to:
newsletter@oldfirstchurch.org
no later than noon on the Monday of
publication.**



Healing Racism Task Force

This group of First Presbyterians
meets monthly to work on
policies/statements, plan events
and classes and explore ways to
assist our congregation in
promoting racial justice in our
church, community and
country. We suggest books for
the monthly Book Group, we
also work on liturgy to be used
in special services or meetings.

If you would like to be part of
our task force, please contact
Deborah Whisnant
or Christy Williams:
christy@oldfirstchurch.org.

Next meeting is 10:00 a.m. on
Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2022 on
ZOOM.



ADULT CHURCH SCHOOL CLASS WESTMINSTER ROOM AND ON ZOOM FEBRUARY 13, 2022



Meet and greet: Sunday at 9:15 AM

Program starts: Sunday at 9:30 AM

Everyone is welcome to the Westminster Room OR
you can connect to the “hybrid” class on ZOOM.

This week we continue our DVD study series with Professor Amy-Jill Levine titled, “The Difficult Words of Jesus.” ([trailer](#)). Erin Rosica will lead the fourth of six sessions, “Nowhere among the Gentiles.”

- What do we make of Jesus’s encounter with a Gentile woman who was desperate for a miracle ([Matthew 15:21-28](#))?
- Why did Jesus command his disciples to restrict their evangelism to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”
- Whom do we regard as worthy of our time, attention and care?
- What are the benefits and problems of universalism? What are the benefits and problems of particularity?

All are welcome! Each Zoom meeting opens new opportunities to learn and share — whether you've attended previously or not.

As in worship, for your safety and as a courtesy to others, we ask all who attend in person to wear masks, respect social distance and, if eligible, be fully vaccinated.

Our program begins promptly at 9:30 AM and ends by 10:30 AM.

After class, those who meet in person can enjoy coffee and fellowship in the courtyard before worship at 11:00 AM.

Be on the lookout for John's Thursday afternoon email with the week's topic, background reading, and Zoom link for connecting online. If you have not been getting the Thursday emails, please contact office@oldfirstchurch.org so we can get you on the list.



**AT FPC
FEBRUARY 13, 2022
4-6 P.M**

****Note the time change!**

From 4-5 we will be participating in the donation drive of underwear for Grace Mission.

From 5-6 we will be enjoying snacks and some Valentine fun.

Mental Health Book Group: Books were distributed last night – let me know if you need one.

Our youth group has been asked to participate in a Youth Mental Health book group on zoom on Weds, March 23 at 7 p.m. Copies of the book have been ordered for each person in our youth group. The book deals with LGBTQIA+ issues and suicide. It is called *The Visitors: A heartwarming tale of friendship, hard-won truths, and the healing power of forgiveness* by Greg Howard. This will be for PCUSA youth in the southeast.

Old First Church Book Group

FEBRUARY



On February 24 at 7 p.m.
we will discuss

Anxious People

by Fredrik Bachman

**Peggy Wright Cleveland will
be our guest facilitator!!**

There is one more book for February's book group in the office for loan, but books can be purchased at Midtown Reader (remember to mention you are part of FPC's book group and get a 10% discount) as well as online. Prior to the book group gathering, questions for reflection will be emailed out to the group. If you are interested in participating, email: christy@oldfirstchurch.org.org



Sunday Festival Readings

FEBRUARY 13, 2022
SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

JEREMIAH 17:5-10
PSALM 1
I CORINTHIANS 15:12-20
LUKE 6:17-26



Holy scripture teaches us that God created humankind in god's own image. Christ calls us to love God, with all our mind, soul, and heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. With this comes the sacred responsibility to treat each human being with the love and respect due to a child of God.

We acknowledge the long history of systemic racism that, through violence, laws, policies, and their implementation, was intended to exclude persons who are not Caucasian from benefits and opportunities - from the first European settlers who considered themselves entitled to land and violently displaced indigenous people from their homes, to the equally long history of slavery which built the wealth of this country, to Jim Crow laws to current instances of police brutality and the overwhelming mass incarceration of people of color.

We declare ourselves utterly opposed to all forms of systemic racism. We are committed to standing with those who find themselves on the receiving end of any form of racism. We will seek out opportunities to oppose all forms of systematic racism and to ensure that black lives matter, as do those of indigenous, Asian, and Latinx people and persons of all colors or countries of origin.

Our faith tells us that we can do no less, if we truly affirm that all human beings are made in god's image.

We dream of a day in which all persons are treated as bearers of that image.





Annual Ceremony to Remember
Pierce Taylor, Mick Morris, Ernest Ponder,
and Richard Hawkins

Saturday, February 12, 2022
2:00 p.m.

Cascades Park at the corner of S. Meridian Street
and E. Gaines Street, Tallahassee, Florida

Welcome

Blan Teagle, Co-Convener, Tallahassee Community Remembrance Project

Opening Prayer

Rev. Margaret Fox, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Tallahassee, FL

Remembering Pierce Taylor, Mick Morris, Ernest Ponder, and Richard Hawkins

Maxine Jones, Professor of History and Director of Women Studies Program,
Florida State University

"I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"

Danté S. J. Webb, Music Director, First United Methodist Church, Monticello, FL

Closing Remarks

Dr. Dan Leshem, Executive Director, FSU Hillel

Please join us for "They were all from Leon County: The 1911 Lynching in Lake City" a presentation by Professor Jennifer Koslow at 3:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall of St. John's Episcopal Church, 211 N. Monroe Street, Tallahassee. Please enter the hall from Calhoun Street, across from Capital City Bank's drive-thru location. Parking is available in the bank lots or in St. John's lot between the former Bookstore and the Marshall House, off Call Street. Please do not park in the bank's drive-thru lanes.

Dear Friends,

On February 24, 2022, Greenfaith is inviting people of faith around the world to learn more about how financial industries have authorized and supported the climate's destruction by investing in the fossil fuel industry, and how to hold asset managers and banks accountable.

The event will be entirely on Zoom at a time yet to be determined.

To participate or to learn more about Greenfaith and this campaign, please click here:

<https://actionnetwork.org/forms/multi-faith-climate-finance-campaign-launch?source=email&>

Thanks.

Pam McVety





DAILY LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY 1-15, 2022

Tuesday, February 1

Morning: Pss. 12; 146
Evening: Pss. 36; 7
Gen. 21:1–21
Heb. 11:13–22
John 6:41–51

Wednesday, February 2

Morning: Pss. 96; 147:1–11
Evening: Pss. 132; 134
Gen. 22:1–18
Heb. 11:23–31
John 6:52–59

Thursday, February 3

Morning: Pss. 116;
147:12–20
Evening: Pss. 26; 130
Gen. 23:1–20
Heb. 11:32–12:2
John 6:60–71

Friday, February 4

Morning: Pss. 84; 148
Evening: Pss. 25; 40
Gen. 24:1–27
Heb. 12:3–11
John 7:1–13

Saturday, February 5

Morning: Pss. 63; 149
Evening: Pss. 125; 90
Gen. 24:28–38, 49–51
Heb. 12:12–29
John 7:14–36

Sunday, February 6

Morning: Pss. 103; 150
Evening: Pss. 117; 139
Gen. 24:50–67
2 Tim. 2:14–21
Mark 10:13–22

Monday, February 7

Morning: Pss. 5; 145
Evening: Pss. 82; 29
Gen. 25:19–34
Heb. 13:1–16
John 7:37–52

Tuesday, February 8

Morning: Pss. 42; 146
Evening: Pss. 102; 133
Gen. 26:1–6, 12–33
Heb. 13:17–25
John 7:53–8:11

Wednesday, February 9

Morning: Pss. 89:1–18;
147:1–11
Evening: Pss. 1; 33
Gen. 27:1–29
Rom. 12:1–8
John 8:12–20

Thursday, February 10

Morning: Pss. 97; 147:12–20
Evening: Pss. 16; 62
Gen. 27:30–45
Rom. 12:9–21
John 8:21–32

Friday, February 11

Morning: Pss. 51; 148
Evening: Pss. 142; 65
Gen. 27:46–28:4, 10–22
Rom. 13:1–14
John 8:33–47

Saturday, February 12

Morning: Pss. 104; 149
Evening: Pss. 138; 98
Gen. 29:1–20
Rom. 14:1–23
John 8:47–59

Sunday, February 13

Morning: Pss. 19; 150
Evening: Pss. 81; 113
Gen. 29:20–35
1 Tim. 3:14–4:10
Mark 10:23–31

Monday, February 14

Morning: Pss. 135; 145
Evening: Pss. 97; 112
Gen. 30:1–24
1 John 1:1–10
John 9:1–17

Tuesday, February 15

Morning: Pss. 123; 146
Evening: Pss. 30; 86
Gen. 31:1–24
1 John 2:1–11
John 9:18–41



DAILY LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY 16-28, 2022

Wednesday, February 16

Morning: Pss. 15; 147:1–11
Evening: Pss. 48; 4
Gen. 31:25–50
1 John 2:12–17
John 10:1–18

Thursday, February 17

Morning: Pss. 36; 147:12–20
Evening: Pss. 80; 27
Gen. 32:3–21
1 John 2:18–29
John 10:19–30

Friday, February 18

Morning: Pss. 130; 148
Evening: Pss. 32; 149
Gen. 32:22–33:17
1 John 3:1–10
John 10:31–42

Saturday, February 19

Morning: Pss. 56; 149
Evening: Pss. 118; 111
Gen. 35:1–20
1 John 3:11–18
John 11:1–16

Sunday, February 20

Morning: Pss. 67; 150
Evening: Pss. 46; 93
Prov. 1:20–33
2 Cor. 5:11–21
Mark 10:35–45

Monday, February 21

Morning: Pss. 57; 145
Evening: Pss. 85; 47
Prov. 3:11–20
1 John 3:18–4:6
John 11:17–29

Tuesday, February 22

Morning: Pss. 54; 146
Evening: Pss. 28; 99
Prov. 4:1–27
1 John 4:7–21
John 11:30–44

Wednesday, February 23

Morning: Pss. 65; 147:1–11
Evening: Pss. 125; 91
Prov. 6:1–19
1 John 5:1–12
John 11:45–54

Thursday, February 24

Morning: Pss. 143;
147:12–20
Evening: Pss. 81; 116
Prov. 7:1–27
1 John 5:13–21
John 11:55–12:8

Friday, February 25

Morning: Pss. 88; 148
Evening: Pss. 6; 20
Prov. 8:1–21
Phlm. 1–25
John 12:9–19

Saturday, February 26

Morning: Pss. 122; 149
Evening: Pss. 100; 63
Prov. 8:22–36
2 Tim. 1:1–14
John 12:20–26

Sunday, February 27**Transfiguration of the Lord**

Morning: Pss. 103; 150
Evening: Pss. 117; 139
Mal. 4:1–6
2 Cor. 3:7–18
Luke 9:18–27

Monday, February 28

Morning: Pss. 5; 145
Evening: Pss. 82; 29
Prov. 27:1–6, 10–12
Phil. 2:1–13
John 18:15–18, 25–27