



FIRST PRESS

The newsletter of First Presbyterian Church

APRIL 18, 2022

First Presbyterian Church
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Phone (850) 222-4504

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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



WEBSITE UPDATE

[About Us](#) ▾ [Worship](#) ▾

The church directory and current prayer concerns are now available on our website on a password-protected page for members of the congregation.

You do not have to set an individual password. If you would like to be able to access this information as it is updated, please call Lori Touchton in the church office for the password. We ask that you do not circulate the password outside the congregation.

The majority of our website pages are accessible without a password - in other words, you do not need a password to continue viewing information on the website. The only pages that will require a password, for now, are the church directory and the prayer concerns.

YOU'RE INVITED



Here is what we are hoping to start accomplishing.

- Yard work: weeding, planting, mulching, picking up trash and limbs
- Pressure washing
- cleaning and organizing the Library & Calvin's kitchen,
- possibly some indoor painting of the Great room (patches) and Calvin's.

There is something for everyone to help with. Many hands make light work.



Pastor's Column

By Rev. Margaret Fox

First: Thank you. Thank you for the ministry of Holy Week, the Church's collective witness to the great drama at the center of our faith: Christ's death and resurrection. Together we encountered this story—from the procession of Palm Sunday, the meal of Maundy Thursday, the trial and the cross of Good Friday, the return of the light and the rolling of the stone on Easter Vigil, the brightness and joy of Easter morning. There is a great arc to this story, and we follow it through: downwards, and then up. Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

In addition to living this story liturgically during Holy Week, we've also lived it pastorally in three memorial services—three Services of Witness to the Resurrection—in thanksgiving for the lives of Mary Charlotte McCall, Sara Lamar, and Leo Sandon, three saints of this church.

Thank you for all you've done to help. Thank you for ushering, for preparing and serving communion, for singing in the choir, for arranging flowers, for baking cookies and making sandwiches, for writing cards, for planning receptions, and for countless other untold, unseen acts of service. This is true of the staff as well. They have been working at Holy-Week pace for a month: planning music, printing and posting bulletins, organizing congregational activities, livestreaming six extra services with complex choreography, cleaning and maintaining the facilities, and keeping the finances in order. Please extend your thanks to them.

And because we have been focused (appropriately, I believe) on honoring our dead and observing Holy Week, we haven't yet addressed with you the congregation the elephant in the room. Perhaps you've heard rumors. Perhaps you haven't, and this will come as a surprise. At our March meeting, I informed the Session that I'm searching for another call.

It's painful to tell you this, because I love this congregation and feel a genuine connection. It's a joy to share in the worship, the learning, and the life of this place—and that's come through even during Covid. You are smart, committed, loving, faithful, and weird in the best ways. I appreciate you, and have felt appreciated by you. We've been aligned in important ways, and we've embraced differences as potential areas for growth. My thanks, above, are genuine.

So what happened?

I've struggled mightily with this decision and given it a good deal of thought and prayer, and here's how I've come to understand it: we're a good fit, but we weren't ready for each other.

It's common, in pastoral transitions, that the first installed pastor to follow a long pastorate will be an "unintentional interim." This is true even where a traditional interim process is followed. In our case, we took a big risk—we didn't have an interim period. And while you did important, deliberate work on congregational self-study, some key transitional issues have gone unaddressed, in part because there was no other leader, between installed pastors, to identify them and equip the Session to address them.

This big risk, combined with pastoral circumstances that required and continue to require great sensitivity, met the immense relational strains of the pandemic and created a perfect storm. Meanwhile, I arrived without a local network of support, and the pandemic and transitional strains made it very difficult to build one. I believe that healthy leadership requires differentiation—a life and identity outside of the organization you're leading—and that's been a real challenge here. And so, with great sadness, but also with an eye to the congregation's health and my own, I've discerned that I need to lay the foundations for departure.

So what's ahead?

Session will work closely with the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery to be prepared to find a skilled interim pastor when the time comes. Although some Session members have been aware of transition-related issues for some time, others are just now catching up. The Session will need time for discernment.

This is going to be difficult. People may feel sadness, disappointment, regret, confusion, perhaps some conflict and anger. All of these things are normal; none of them feels good. And because church is for many of us the institutional locus of our faith—the place where we know God through worship and community—a crisis in the church can feel like a crisis of faith as well.

But as we just witnessed during Holy Week, the church is nothing if not a comeback story. Maundy Thursday, Palm Sunday—they felt good, they felt like experiences of community and connection—but they weren't the whole picture. The crowds and the disciples scattered—Good Friday was a time of disconnection, dissolution, grief. It's only on the other side of the cross that resurrection can emerge. We often try to take a shortcut, from one good thing to the next—but the story of our faith reminds us that suffering too is a part of life. And our faith is forward-looking, because God has the power to turn death into new life, to work radical transformation. We do not grieve as those who have no hope, Paul says.

And in the meantime, we have ministry to do. We have worship, we have service, we have social justice witness, we have study. We have children to teach and youth to develop. We have church members to care for, and visitors to welcome. We have a music director to honor and celebrate as he prepares for retirement. We have newly baptized Christians, whom we have vowed to guide and nurture by word and deed, with love and prayer.

Many of you have expressed concern that perhaps I'm leaving because you haven't shown sufficient appreciation for my ministry with you. Please be assured that is not the case—you have been welcoming to new relationship and receptive to new leadership. Which is to say: you have what it takes to welcome your next installed pastor when the time comes to do so.

I'm grateful for this congregation.

Grace and peace,
Margaret



from Janet Bowman, Clerk of Session

As you have read in the Pastor's column, Margaret told the Session that she is seeking a new call and will be leaving our congregation. Until she accepts a new call she will continue as our Pastor.

For many of you, Margaret's decision to seek a new call is a surprise and unsettling as we have grown to love and respect Margaret's ministry to our congregation. We need everyone's prayers, grace, and support in caring for one another and our Pastor as we move forward as a congregation. Starting a new ministry during the COVID-19 pandemic was complicated by unforeseen circumstances that occurred shortly after Margaret's arrival. This created substantial challenges for the transition.

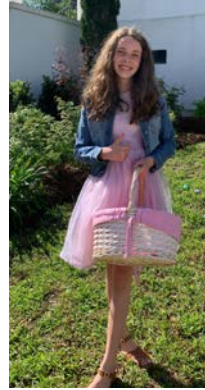
In the Presbytery of Florida, the typical practice when a pastor retires or accepts another call is for the congregation to hire an interim pastor to help the congregation discern its needs and to assist with the process of identifying and calling a new minister. In 2020 when we were embarking on such a search, we sought the Presbytery's permission to forgo the interim process and instead to seek a permanent pastor right away. Margaret was placed in the position of addressing problems and issues that an interim pastor typically would have resolved prior to seeking a permanent pastor.

Margaret and the Session are working with the Presbytery of Florida to address these lingering transition challenges so the congregation will be well situated when the time arrives to find an interim pastor. Joan Wooten, the chairperson of the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry will be meeting with the Session on May 15th.

To respond to questions and promote discussion about our next steps, the Session will meet informally with the congregation on April 24th in the front of the Sanctuary shortly after the end of the service. I hope you can join us then.

In the meantime, feel free to contact me by phone or email.

Easter Joy



a joyful noise:

**celebrating the ministry and
retirement of Michael Corzine**



Saturday, May 14, 2022

5 pm Hymn Festival at First Presbyterian

6:15 pm Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres at St. John's Episcopal

7 pm Dinner and program at St. John's Episcopal

The hymn festival is free of charge.

Dinner tickets are \$25 per person and may be purchased:

- By cash or check at the church
- By mailing a check to the church
- Online through Eventbrite* [Link to Eventbrite](#)

*Eventbrite tickets carry a third party processing fee and cost \$26.95

Children 10 and under are free, and we will provide a meal for them. The dinner will be gluten-free friendly. Vegetarian/vegan options are available upon advance request. Tickets to the cocktail hour-only are available for \$10 and must be purchased in-person or by mail.

Please email Christy (christy@oldfirstchurch.org) or Emily (bruno.emilyann@gmail.com) for more information, to RSVP for kids-meals, or request a vegetarian meal.

Please purchase tickets and RSVP by May 9.



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.



**The Village Square to host
"Intellectual Humility in a Polarized World"
on May 10 with Kurt Gray**

On Tuesday, May 10, The Village Square will host a discussion titled "Intellectual Humility in a Polarized World." Join us at St. John's Episcopal Church for Dinner at the Square at 6:30 pm to imagine what we might achieve together if we remember and restore intellectual humility to our politics, planet, and lives. We're delighted to host professor and author Kurt Gray. Early-bird ticket prices are available through May 4. For more info, a menu, and purchase tickets, go online to tlh.villagesquare.us, email eliza@villagesquare.us or call 281-1223.



Telling the Story of Trinity United Presbyterian Church

You are cordially invited to attend an event that Faith Presbyterian in Tallahassee, is hosting on Friday, April 29, from 5:30 - 8:00 pm in Faith Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall. Telling the Story of Trinity United Presbyterian Church was first scheduled for late January and then had to be postponed, due to the rise in COVID cases and the spread of the Omicron variant. This special evening is undertaken as part of Faith's Session approved Antiracism Initiative and a yearlong partnership between the Black Dog Sunday School Class at Faith and the Trinity United Presbyterian Bible Study Class. This is a story for all Tallahassee Presbyterians, and we are extending the invitation to all the Presbyterian congregations and clergy in Tallahassee. As fellow Tallahassee Presbyterians, I thought it would be of special interest to you and your congregation. Please see the article below from our newsletter with a registration link to the event. There is no cost for registration or the spaghetti dinner. The meal will be catered by Fran Doxsee. Please note: Deadline for the sign-up for the Spaghetti Dinner is Wednesday, April 20. If anyone has difficulty using the [Sign-Up Genius](#) they can contact Renee at the church office, 850-385-6151, or me, Ruth Reynolds, at 850-567-9555 for help with registration. We look forward to welcoming our fellow Tallahassee Presbyterian siblings who can join in.



This is a family-friendly event. All are welcome.

Paul Demer is a gifted musician and storyteller with a wise soul. His faith and his compassion pour through his music where he turns the ordinary into the extraordinary. Paul currently serves as the Music Minister for St. Matthew Episcopal Cathedral in Dallas, Texas. He has previously served as a musician at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church in Dallas and has served as the music leader for many conferences and retreats, including the 2021 Montreat Youth Conference. He wrote the theme song for the 2022 Lenten liturgy, Full to the Brim, produced by Sanctified Art. He is touring several Presbyterian churches in Florida this April and is making a stop at UKirk, Tallahassee. Check out his music at <https://www.pauldemer.com/>



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.

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The newsletter
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.**

Presbytery of Florida

**produces a monthly electronic newsletter
that you may access using this link:**

[Panhandle Presbyterian](#)





ADULT CHURCH SCHOOL



Adult Church School in Room 206 and on Zoom!
Meet and greet: Sunday at 9:15 AM
Program starts: Sunday at 9:30 AM

While the Westminster Room is under construction (through the end of May), we will meet next door in Room 206.

Everyone is welcome to join us there OR you can connect to the “hybrid” class on Zoom.

This week and next, Jane Atkinson will lead a series on Restorative Practices. She will help us explore what restoration might look like in our own community as we work toward healing the conflict and the harm we discussed during our five-week program titled, “Repentance & Reconciliation: A path to healing justice.” See First Press, February 28, 2022, page 14 for more information about the Lenten series Christy Williams and the Healing Racism Task Force led.

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.





APRIL 24

5-6:30 P.M.

We will be baking items for our “picnic in the park” at Lake Ella the next week. This will be a way for us to invite those struggling with poverty or neighbors enjoying the park to sit and share a meal with us.

MAY 1

(LOTS GOING ON!!)

10:15 a.m. – arrive at church to make bag lunches for our "picnic in the park"

11:00 – worship together

As part of worship, ALL seniors in HS will be honored

Noon – following worship, we will head to Lake Ella

1:30 – finished and home. No youth in the evening.

MAY 8

Mother's Day...treat your mamas well.

MAY 15

Arrive at Grace Mission at 3:45 p.m. to serve dinner. I think we will be done before 6. More details to come.

MAY 22

Celebrating our Seniors Night.



Healing Racism Task Force

Our next meeting will be on
Tuesday, May 10 at 10:00 a.m.
on Zoom. If you would like to
join our work, contact Deborah
Whisnant.



Gifts can be made [online](#), by
calling (800) 872-3283, by texting
PDAUKR to 41444, or by check
made payable to Presbyterian
Church U.S.A. with "DR000156-
Ukraine" on the memo line. Mail to:
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
P.O. Box 643700
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Old First Church Book Group



APRIL 28, 2022
7:00 P.M.

we will have author, David Powell, with us
to talk about his recent book,
*Ninety Miles and A Lifetime Away:
Memories of Early Cuban Exiles.*

Bringing together an unprecedented
number of extensive personal stories, this
book shares the triumphs and
heartbreaking moments experienced by
some of the first Cubans to come to the
United States after Fidel Castro took power
in 1959. It is a moving look inside fifteen
years of migration that changed the two
countries and transformed the lives of the
people who found themselves separated
from their homeland.

There are copies of both books at the
church for borrowing – just email
Christy@oldfirstchurch.org for a time to
pick one up. These books are also available
at Midtown Reader with a 10% discount if
you tell them you are a member of our
Book Group. Midtown Reader has book
group books in a special area of the store.
Ask a clerk if you can't find them.



Sunday Festival Readings

APRIL 24, 2022
SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

ACTS 25:21-32 AND
PSALM 118:14-29 OR
PSALM 150 OR
II KINGS 7:1-16 AND
PSALM 2
REVELATIONS 1:4-8
JOHN 20:19-31



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.





DAILY LECTIONARY FOR APRIL 15-30, 2022

Friday, April 15**Good Friday**

Morning: Pss. 22; 148
Evening: Pss. 105; 130
Lam. 3:1-9, 19-33
1 Pet. 1:10-20
John 13:36-38
or John 19:38-42

Saturday, April 16**Holy Saturday/Great Vigil of Easter**

Morning: Pss. 43; 149
Evening: Pss. 31; 143
Lam. 3:37-58
Heb. 4:1-16
Rom. 8:1-11

Sunday, April 17**Resurrection of the Lord/Easter**

Morning: Pss. 93; 150
Evening: Pss. 136; 117
Exod. 12:1-14
John 1:1-18 or Isa. 51:9-11
Luke 24:13-35
or John 20:19-23

Monday, April 18

Morning: Pss. 97; 145
Evening: Pss. 124; 115
Exod. 12:14-27
1 Cor. 15:1-11
Mark 16:1-8

Tuesday, April 19

Morning: Pss. 98; 146
Evening: Pss. 66; 116
Exod. 12:28-39
1 Cor. 15:12-28
Mark 16:9-20

Wednesday, April 20

Morning: Pss. 99; 147:1-11
Evening: Pss. 9; 118
Exod. 12:40-51
1 Cor. 15:(29) 30-41
Matt. 28:1-16

Thursday, April 21

Morning: Pss. 47; 147:12-20
Evening: Pss. 68; 113
Exod. 13:3-10
1 Cor. 15:41-50
Matt. 28:16-20

Friday, April 22

Morning: Pss. 96; 148
Evening: Pss. 49; 138
Exod. 13:1-2, 11-16
1 Cor. 15:51-58
Luke 24:1-12

Saturday, April 23

Morning: Pss. 92; 149
Evening: Pss. 23; 114
Exod. 13:17-14:4
2 Cor. 4:16-5:10
Mark 12:18-27

Sunday, April 24**Second Sunday of Easter**

Morning: Pss. 93; 150
Evening: Pss. 136; 117
Exod. 14:5-22
1 John 1:1-7
John 14:1-7

Monday, April 25

Morning: Pss. 97; 145
Evening: Pss. 124; 115
Exod. 14:21-31
1 Pet. 1:1-12
John 14:(1-7) 8-17

Tuesday, April 26

Morning: Pss. 98; 146
Evening: Pss. 66; 116
Exod. 15:1-21
1 Pet. 1:13-25
John 14:18-31

Wednesday, April 27

Morning: Pss. 99; 147:1-11
Evening: Pss. 9; 118
Exod. 15:22-16:10
1 Pet. 2:1-10
John 15:1-11

Thursday, April 28

Morning: Pss. 47; 147:12-20
Evening: Pss. 68; 113
Exod. 16:10-22
1 Pet. 2:11-3:12
John 15:12-27

Friday, April 29

Morning: Pss. 96; 148
Evening: Pss. 49; 138
Exod. 16:23-36
1 Pet. 3:13-4:6
John 16:1-15

Saturday, April 30

Morning: Pss. 92; 149
Evening: Pss. 23; 114
Exod. 17:1-16
1 Pet. 4:7-19
John 16:16-33

If you wish to read these on your computer you will find them on the PCUSA website [here](#).