

This Week @ First

Worship & Music

To watch our Sunday worship at 11 AM, connect with us on [YouTube](#) (find the bulletin [here](#))!

Compassion and Social Justice

We will help with serving dinner at Grace Mission at 4 PM on Sunday, January 12. To volunteer, contact Carol Weissert or sign up [here](#).

Snack pack and Laundry Love volunteers are invited from 10:00 to noon on Wednesdays. For information on volunteering, speak to Debbie Gibson.

The **2025 Point in Time Count** of those who are unhoused in Leon County will take place January 28–30. The effort is organized by the Big Bend Continuum of Care and is part of a national count that occurs across the country. Volunteers are needed to go out in teams to visit areas of the city where those who lack housing might be staying or where they might be during the day. You can sign up [here](#) for two-hour shifts over the time period. Contact [Carol Weissert](#) with questions.

Second Sunday Fellowship

Care and Outreach will host our second Sunday fellowship after worship this Sunday, either in the courtyard or, depending on temperature, just inside the Westminster Room. Please join us after worship!

In Memoriam

Buddy McKay, former state representative, state senator, congressman, and lieutenant governor, and the 42nd governor of Florida, died at home on December 31, 2024 at the age of 91. He is survived by his wife Anne and their four sons, as well as numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. A celebration of his life will be held at 1 PM on January 15 at Fort King Presbyterian Church in Ocala.

First Presbyterian Church

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Spiritual Formation

Sunday School—Youth

All youth are invited at 9:30 AM each week! Grades K–5 in room 306. Middle and High School Students in room 301. A nursery will be available starting at 9:15 AM. **Please note the Elementary/Youth classes will resume on January 12.**

“Feasting on the Word” Lectionary-Based Bible Study

Calvin Room and via [Zoom](#), 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM.

This class meets weekly to engage and discuss selected texts from our Lectionary readings.

The **Inquirer’s class** will resume this Sunday, January 12. This week and next we will be watching and discussing a documentary that reflects on opposition to authoritarian regimes, *Night is Not Eternal*.

Guided Meditation continues on Sunday mornings at 10:30 in the Calvin Room.

The Spiritual Formation Team is in need of volunteers to assist our teachers in the Elementary and Middle/High School classes, and to assist in our nursery. You can volunteer to help weekly, monthly or occasionally. Please contact Mary Kutter at mykutter@gmail.com to find out more.

Please Share! VISTA Grant to Work with Collaboration of Downtown Churches

First Presbyterian and Trinity United Methodist recently received a VISTA grant to develop a collaboration of Tallahassee churches to educate, provide services, and coordinate with providers to meet the needs of our unhoused neighbors. The grant will enable us to hire a community coordinator for outreach to the unhoused.

The coordinator will research activities and successes of other church-led efforts throughout Florida and the nation; contact other Tallahassee churches to join the effort; develop a list of services that the collaboration might be able to provide; and help educate our church members and the community on the realities of living without housing and organizing volunteers to help.

There is a stipend for the position of \$24,962, which will begin Feb. 1, 2025.

If you know of someone who might be interested, or are interested yourself, please contact Debbie Gibson or Carol Weissert.

To submit information to be included in the newsletter and/or the Sunday bulletin (as space permits), please use [this link](#), which will take you to an online form. Thank you!

Thank You

Our project to support our homeless neighbors at Grace Mission this Christmas was a huge success thanks to your compassion and generosity!

There was a jolly crew the Monday before Christmas ready to stuff bags with goodies. They were helped by Matteo, Celeste, Corrine and Ilsa creating art on the bags we were using to hold cookies. Several congregants dropped off things we didn't ask for that were wonderful additions. It took lots of hands and lots of work to make it all happen but we were able to provide a protein shake, candy canes and chocolate, nuts and chips, Christmas cookies, a set of hand warmers, and a handwritten Christmas card with a message of love from FPC, as well as a \$10 gift certificate to McDonalds so that people could have a hot meal on Christmas. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

We sent 115 bags of goodies to Grace the morning of Christmas Eve. Rachel had a crew that had made peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to add to the bags. She was so excited because she had also received forty \$15 gift cards for McDonald's, 100 blankets, 100 winter caps, and 100 pairs of gloves. All of it was spread out for congregants to pick up as they left the Christmas Eve service as they sat down for the Christmas Eve dinner.

We don't know the names of all who contributed to this effort but know that you blessed our neighbors on this special day. May you be blessed as well.

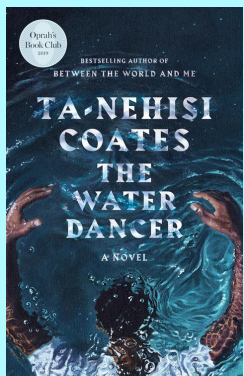
The Compassion and Social Justice Team



Moving Beyond Confession of the Sin of Racism to Repair of the Breach



A year ago, the church placed a plaque on the outside of the building so that all who entered could see it. This was a public acknowledgment that our history included the sin of racism. We promised to “commit ourselves to repairing racism’s breach, that God’s beloved community might take form to and around us.” It is now time, with God’s guidance, for us to discern what form or forms this repair will take. We ask everyone in the congregation to utilize the resources that we will provide each week to deepen our understanding of the costs of that sin and to inspire us to act.



The Task Force on Healing Racism recommends the movie *Harriet* both because it illustrates the life of an incredibly brave and creative woman and because the Brickler family, including the late Dr. A.D. Brickler and his son, Dr. A.J. Brickler, who both served Tallahassee for many years, are direct descendants. When the movie came out, the family held a screening in a local theater. It is now available on several streaming channels. The book *The Water Dancer* by Ta-Nehisi Coates is a fictional and magical story, but it portrays the grim realities of the slaves’ lives. Some have related it to Harriet Tubman as it seems incredible that she managed to get safely through bodies of water on her rescue missions. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact any member of the Healing Racism Task Force: Debbie Gibson, Sue Hightower, Ann Hingst, Mary Hodges, Pam McVety, Marian Moore, Walter Moore, Sue Safford, Linda Smith, Deborah Whisnant, Aide Whitaker, and Ann Westall, Chair.



Pastoral Note

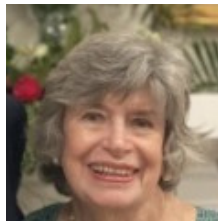
During worship on Sunday, January 12, 2025, an ordination and installation service for the ruling elder class of 2027 will occur. Let us welcome Eleanor Cleveland, Jon Dodrill, and Caitlin James as new elders, along with returning elders Kay Crowell, Mary Kutter, and Deborah Whisnant, to the session.

According to the Book of Order, ruling elders are named not to “lord it over” the congregation but because they are selected by the congregation to discern and evaluate its fidelity to the Word of God and to nurture and strengthen its faith and life. Together with ministers of the Word and Sacrament, ruling elders offer leadership, governance, spiritual discernment, and discipline, sharing responsibilities for both the life of the congregation and the wider church, including ecumenical relationships (G-2.0201). The Holy Spirit distributes gifts among the faithful for the benefit of the church (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). As we, the members of the congregation, allow the Holy Spirit to guide and transform us, let us take responsibility for our own order and discipline as circumstances demand.

The ruling elders class of 2027 will attend their first session meeting on Sunday, January 19, 2025.

Rev. Glenn Hodges

“*But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant.”* Matthew 20:25-26”



Eleanor Cleveland, Kay Crowell, Jon Dodrill, Caitlin James, Mary Kutter, and Deb Whisnant

Office Volunteers

We are still in need of office volunteers to check mail, relay messages, and assist with other routine office tasks. If you can help for two to four hours on a weekday, fill out this [form](#) or email Glenn Hodges, glenn@oldfirstchurch.org, and indicate what day(s) you would like to volunteer.