

This Week @ First

Worship & Music

To watch our Sunday worship at 11 AM, connect with us on [YouTube](#) (find the bulletin [here](#))! The music this Sunday will speak to our theme of “God’s beloved community.”

Compassion and Social Justice

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

Property Team: Help Needed

Next Saturday, February 22, there will be two more Candlelight series concerts in the sanctuary (Vivaldi at 6 PM; Tribute to Queen at 8:30 PM). **The property team needs a volunteer to help putting up the sanctuary curtains on either Friday, Feb. 21 or Saturday before 2 PM.** Please contact Theresa Heiker.

Celebrate Black History Month

The whole family is invited to a potluck lunch on Sunday, February 23, following worship. Bring something to share (sandwiches or salads are fine; dessert will be provided) and enjoy hearing from our speaker, [Ted Ellis](#), whose topic is “What Would Martin Luther King Say in Today’s Climate?” Please plan to join us; all are welcome!

Ted Ellis holds degrees in chemistry and museum studies, and is a well known artist and art collector. He is the first full-time director of Florida’s Civil Rights Institute, founded by Doby and Fred Flowers in 2018.



First Presbyterian Church

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Published on February 14, 2025

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.

“Feasting on the Word” Lectionary-Based Bible Study

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

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

The **Inquirer’s class** will meet on February 23 to hear from a group at St. John’s that recently returned from Cuba. The following week, March 2, we will begin a six-week Lenten series based on Adam Hamilton’s *The Message of Jesus: Words that Changed the World*.

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

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. Please contact [Mary Kutter](#) to find out more.



The Presbyterian Women’s Winter Gathering on February 9th was well-attended. The Rev. Dr. Latricia Scriven of St. Paul’s UMC spoke about putting a face on environmental justice by sharing specific examples of people we know who are affected by access to clean water, clean air, and a healthy environment – which, in the end, is all of us.

2025 Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Florida

118th Gathering
Saturday, March 8, 2025

Dogwood Acres Summer Camp and Retreat Center
3320 Harmony Rd, Chipley, FL 32428
9:00 am CDT – Registration, Check-In, & Light Morning Refreshments

10:00 am CDT – Worship
Memorial Service
Annual Meeting
Lunch

“Caring for Creation & Others:
Do What is Yours to Do”

Registration Info emailed by Monday, February 3
Share with all PW in your congregation and join us for this historic day!

Questions? Contact: [Sandra Winslett @ 850-516-9875](#)

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!

Supporting Friends in Cuba

Earlier this month the Compassion and Social Justice team approved two gifts to support the Presbyterian Church in Cuba.

A congregation in Saratoga Springs, New York is traveling today to visit the church in Los Palos, where Reverend Izett Sama is pastor. We were able to make a gift to that congregation to enable them to purchase over-the-counter medications that are unavailable to most Cuban residents, and they will deliver the medications to the church in Los Palos.

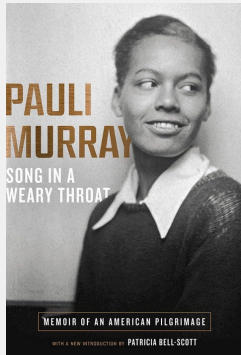
In addition, we were able to make a gift to the Bethlehem Light program at Juan G. Hall in Cardenas, the church led by Reverend Alison Infante and his wife, Sarahi Garcia. Three of Juan G. Hall's partner congregations are traveling there to celebrate Juan G. Hall's 125th anniversary. "Bethlehem Light" feeds about 20 senior citizens three times a week and provides social opportunities at the same time. The partner churches support Juan G. Hall's food ministry through a store called Supermarket 23, which is a large store in Cuba that only accepts payments from credit cards outside Cuba. Our gift will go towards a future food order.

Conditions in Cuba are extremely challenging. Food is difficult to obtain; rolling blackouts are the norm. On February 23 the Inquirer's class will hear from a group at St. John's Episcopal Church that recently returned from a trip to Cuba. Please join us!

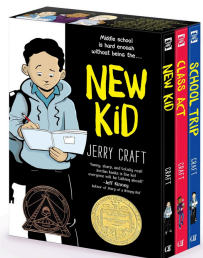


Moving Beyond the Confession of the Sin of Racism to Repair

A year ago, we placed a plaque on the outside of the sanctuary acknowledging that our history included the sin of racism and promised to "commit ourselves to repairing racism's breach, that God's beloved community might take form to and around us." The Task Force on Healing Racism is sharing weekly resources to deepen our understanding of the costs of that sin and to inspire us to act.



This week, the Task Force on Healing Racism recommends two books. *Song in a Weary Throat: Memoir of an American Pilgrimage*, by Pauli Murray, is the autobiography of a lesser-known pioneer in the civil rights struggle. The title is taken from one of her poems and appears on a 2024 quarter. It is a metaphor for her lifelong fight for social justice and for her belief in the power of hope. Orphaned at age four and raised in the segregated south, this amazing woman went on to attend Hunter College and become a poet, memoirist, lawyer, activist, and Episcopal priest. The book is at the public library, and her life was also the subject of a panel discussion sponsored by the Barnard Center for Research on Women, available on [YouTube](#).



New Kid by Jerry Craft is a Newberry Award-winning graphic novel for middle school readers. The book tells the story of seventh grader Jordan Banks, who loves drawing cartoons. But instead of art school, he is sent to a prestigious private school that focuses on academics and where the students are mostly white. He faces culture shock and must learn how to fit in, while not forgetting his neighborhood friends and still staying true to himself. The book is available at the public library and will soon be in the Christy Williams library.

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.