

This Week @ First

Friday, May 9, 2025

Spiritual Formation

Sunday School—Youth

Classes will resume in the fall.

“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.

This class will end on May 18 and resume in the fall.

The **Inquirer’s class** meets in the Westminster Room and via [Zoom](#), and will continue through May 18. This week the class will continue discussing video clips from noted YouTube personality and renowned biblical scholar Dan McClellan. Dan specializes in the debunking of claims made about the Bible online and on social media. He focuses on exposing social and political agendas in many popular misreadings of scripture.

This class will end on May 18 and resume in the Fall.

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

Death Penalty in Florida

On May 15 and 16, we will gather to mourn the execution of Glen Rogers and pray for him and his victim Tina Marie Cribbs. This is the fifth execution ordered by Ron DeSantis in 2025.

Join us to say: **Not in My Name.**

Death Penalty Vigil

Thursday, May 15, 6 PM

In front of Governor’s Mansion

Death Penalty Service of Remembrance

Friday, May 16, 12 noon

Capitol Rotunda around the Great Seal

Click here for the

[Weekly Schedule](#)

[Monthly Calendar](#)

More info available on [Breeze](#)

Worship & Music

To watch our worship services, connect with us on [YouTube](#) and find the weekly bulletin [here](#)!

Compassion and Social Justice

Snack Pack and Laundry Love volunteers are invited from 10 AM to noon on Wednesdays.

For information on volunteering, contact [Debbie Gibson](#).

Photo below: First Pres volunteers at Second Harvest last week, May 2, packed over 500 Disaster Relief boxes for distribution in Madison, Monticello, Greenville, and the surrounding areas.



Do you know students graduating this year from high school, college, and more? **Let us know:** [email the office](#) with their names and details! We will be celebrating them in the newsletter and in church on May 18.

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!

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Pastoral Note

This week, Tuesday, May 6, 2025, was Holocaust Remembrance Day. There are two days each year when we pay homage to the victims of the Holocaust. The first is Monday, January 27, 2025, which is International Holocaust Remembrance Day, commemorating the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camps and the end of the Holocaust. We remember that from 1933 to 1945, Nazi Germany exterminated 6 million Jews and 5 million people from various minority groups.

The second day is the Jewish observance of the Holocaust, Yom HaShoah, a solemn day of remembrance to honor the victims of the Holocaust. It is observed on the 27th day of Nisan in the Hebrew calendar, corresponding to Tuesday, May 6, 2025, on the Gregorian calendar. This year, Yom HaShoah will be commemorated on Thursday, April 24th. This is a time to remember those who died and to honor survivors.

Faith communities around the world stand in solidarity with the Jewish people and pay tribute to the memory of the Holocaust victims. We honor the victims with awareness and hope that the act of remembrance commits us to ensuring that such inhumane atrocities never happen again.

We must not forget the atrocity of the Holocaust as we all await the kingdom the prophets foretold, where there will be a consummation and redemption of all things in God.

Rev. Glenn Hodges

“*Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff – they comfort me.*” (Psalm 23:4)

OG Book Club: New Book

Have you thought about joining the weekly OG Book Club at First Pres? Now's the time!

The OG Book Club is preparing to start their new book, *American Covenant*, by Yuval Levin. They will meet weekly from 5/21 to 7/2 to discuss this book, so you have time to acquire the book and read the introduction and first chapter.

The OG Book Club meets every Wednesday at noon in the Calvin Room. The group has been meeting weekly for over two years, and the reading list has explored topics like building bridges across divides, understanding human behavior, and making sense of today's polarized world.

If you have more questions or want to join the mailing list, please email [Leon Kung](mailto:Leon.Kung@firstpres.org).

CAJM Justice Ministry Celebration

The Capital Area Justice Ministry (CAJM) is excited to celebrate this year of doing justice work together at **6pm this Tuesday, May 13th, at the Jacob Chapel Baptist Church**. This is a moment to reflect on our accomplishments while looking forward to the next steps.

First Pres is a proud member of this organization, listening, researching, and then holding our officials accountable.

You can sign up for the celebration [here](#) and read the April newsletter [here](#).

Healing Racism Task Force: Reminder to join the next meeting!

In January of 2024, we placed a plaque on the outside of the sanctuary acknowledging 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." The Task Force on Healing Racism is regularly sharing resources to deepen our understanding of the costs of that sin and to inspire us to act.

We are honored and encouraged that Ted Ellis—painter, activist, Director of the FSU Civil Rights Institute, and speaker for our Black History Month luncheon—maintains an enthusiastic interest in our work. He recently wrote, "I believe that ongoing engagement, collaboration, and intentional partnerships can create lasting change, and I am happy to explore ideas with your group on how to move forward effectively."

Ted Ellis will be joining us again for the next regular Task Force meeting: please join us online on Zoom on THIS TUESDAY, May 13, at 7:00 p.m. to discuss with Ted ways that the church can take action to repair historic harms caused by racism.

If you have questions or suggestions, please contact any of the Task Force members: Sue Hightower, Mary Hodges, Pam McVety, Marian Moore, Walter Moore, Sue Safford, Deborah Whisnant, Debbie Gibson, Aide Whitaker, and Ann Westall, Chair.



Image above: "My Old Quilt," by Ted Ellis