

# This Week @ First

Friday, May 16, 2025

## Worship & Music

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

## Spiritual Formation

**Sunday School – Youth:** *Classes will resume in the fall.*

**Adult classes:** *Classes will meet for the final time on May 18 and then resume in the fall.*

### “Feasting on the Word” Lectionary-Based Bible Study

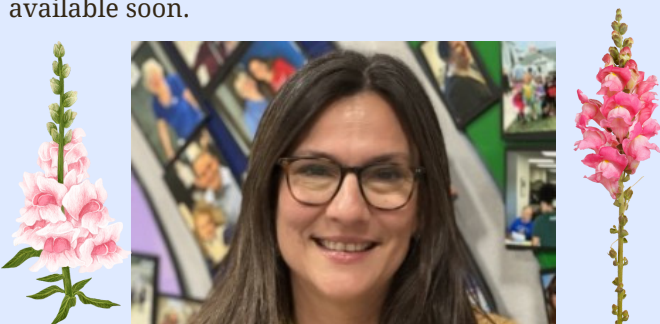
Calvin Room and via [Zoom](#), 9:30 – 10:30 AM. This class meets weekly to engage and discuss selected texts from our Lectionary readings.

The **Inquirer’s class** meets in the Westminster Room and via [Zoom](#). 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.

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

## Announcement

It is with joy, thanksgiving, and sadness that the Personnel and the Worship and Music Teams announce the resignation of Elizabeth LaJeunesse, effective June 15, 2025. Elizabeth has been a vital and joyful leader of worship at First Presbyterian since January 2023. Before that, she was a longtime friend of this congregation. Now Elizabeth has been called to serve as the Music Director and Organist at First Presbyterian Church, Asheville, NC. This is an exciting opportunity for Elizabeth to lead and grow in full-time ministry. Please pray for Elizabeth in this move and be sure to let her know what her ministry has meant to you. Details about a church-wide celebration will be available soon.



## 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](#).



## First Pres: Worship and Bell Ringing

On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing enslaved people in the rebellious Southern states. However, it was not until two years later, on May 20, 1865, that Union Brigadier General Edward M. McCook acquired official control of the Florida region and declared the Emancipation Proclamation in effect. That same day, an announcement arrived in Tallahassee from Union Headquarters in Jacksonville, noting that “the people of the black race are free citizens of the United States.” Newly freed slaves celebrated at what is today called Lake Ella. You can read more about the history [here](#).

Events have been happening throughout the month of May to honor our history. A complete list of events is available [here](#). On Tuesday, May 20, many signature events will be held downtown that are free and open to the public.

**First Pres is honored to be celebrating Emancipation Day this year in multiple ways:**



This Sunday, May 18, guests from the Florida History Conference: Journey to Emancipation 2025 will join us in worship at 11 AM. Join us for fellowship, lemonade, and cookies after the service.



On Tuesday, May 20, First Pres will be joining with all of the downtown churches to ring our bells at 11 AM. *If you’d like to help us ring our bell, please [email the office](#).*

**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. Submissions are due by Thursday at noon for each week. Thank you!**

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*Click here for the*

**[Weekly Schedule](#)**

**[Monthly Calendar](#)**

***More info available on [Breeze](#)***



# Pastoral Note

This Easter season, the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America recognizes Nakba Remembrance Day, which is observed on Thursday, May 15th. It commemorates the mass dispossession of Palestinians during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Nakba means “catastrophe” in Arabic and is the term used by Palestinians and others to refer to the destruction of the Palestinian homeland and the mass displacement of the majority of the Palestinian population. Nakba Day serves as a day of mourning and remembrance for the forced displacement and its lasting impact on Palestinian lives. The Nakba symbolizes Palestinian resistance and advocates for the right of return for refugees and their descendants.

In May 1948, 700,000 Palestinians were forced from their homes. Seventy-eight percent of historic Palestinian territory was captured, and the remaining land was divided into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. The descendants of many Palestinians who fled in 1948 remain displaced to this day, both within Palestine and around the world. There are now approximately 6 million Palestinian refugees.

“Again I saw all the oppressions that are practiced under the sun. Look, the tears of the oppressed—with no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power—with no one to comfort them.” (Ecclesiastes 4:1)

As a result of the October 7, 2023, attack, during which many Israelis were killed and taken hostage, Nakba holds additional relevance this year amid the displacement and blockade of Palestinians in Gaza. We pray for peace and reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis to end the trauma and dispossession experienced by the Palestinian people. Those committed to human rights and justice among Palestinians and Israelis must work together to end this human tragedy.

Rev. Glenn Hodges

Bashir, Bashir, Goldberg, Amos. *The Holocaust and the Nakba: A New Grammar of Trauma and History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2019.

**UKIRK**  
TALLAHASSEE

*Open House*  
**2025**

All are invited and welcome to come see and hear all about what UKirk Tallahassee / Presbyterian University Center has been up to this past year.

**20 | May | 2025**  
**6:00 - 7:30 pm**

**548 W. Park Ave. Tallahassee, FL 32301**

**HORS D'OEUVRES & DESSERTS WILL BE SERVED**

Please RSVP by scanning the QR Code, Calling the UKirk Office at 850-222-6320 or through the website - [www.ukirkallahassee.com](http://www.ukirkallahassee.com)



## 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).



African American workers and tenants celebrating Emancipation Day (May 20th) at Horseshoe Plantation, ca. 1930. Image Courtesy of State Library and Archives of Florida





# DOGWOOD ACRES

Retreat Center and Summer Camp  
Vernon, FL

## SUMMER CAMP 2025



Join us for a week of  
Faith, Friends, and  
Fun this summer.



Register Online  
Now!



### High School Week

Rising 9th-12th

High schoolers at Dogwood Acres are encouraged to deepen their faith, build friendships, and develop leadership skills while engaging in outdoor activities. In addition to traditional camp experiences, they will participate in exclusive off-site excursions, including a kayak trip.

June 22nd-27th

### Adventure

Rising 6th-8th

In addition to typical camp activities, Adventure campers participate in some more exciting camp offerings, including hikes, canoeing, and some later nights. These middle schoolers are able to learn more about their faith and the journey we are all on as they are immersed in the fun of Dogwood Acres.

July 6th-11th  
July 13th-18th

### Discovery

Rising 3rd-5th

Discovery Camp allows young campers to experience Dogwood Acres adventures, traditions, and Bible studies while making new friends. Activities include teamwork challenges, archery, swimming, campfires, and more.

July 6th-11th  
July 13th-18th

### Intro Camp

Rising 2nd-3rd

The First-Timers' program introduces new campers to Dogwood Acres through games, swimming, arts and crafts, and outdoor adventures. This 4-day/3-night experience provides a fun and supportive introduction to camp life and traditions.

July 6th-9th  
July 13th-16th

## Why Send Your Child to DWA Camp?

*Because Dogwood Acres ...*

### Fosters Faith:

- Campers explore and express the Christian faith through worship, Bible study, conversation, and small-group learning.

### Nurtures Friendships:

- Campers bond while having fun and sharing adventures.

### Shapes Skills for Life:

- Campers learn how to work cooperatively, solve problems together, and communicate effectively.

### Promotes Resiliency:

- Campers gain self-confidence as they rise to challenges in a safe environment.

### Builds Community:

- Campers live together in an environment that encourages mutual respect, values differences, and expresses God's love and grace toward all.

### Connects with Creation:

- Campers enjoy full days of active engagement with the natural world—swimming, hiking, playing, and exploring—away from screens and technology.

Don't wait to register—most of the weeks are almost full already!

Scholarships can be requested by contacting [eric@dogwoodacres.org](mailto:eric@dogwoodacres.org).