



This Week @ First

Sunday, December 24

Lord's Day worship with communion at 11:00 AM
Service of Lessons and Carols, with candles, at 5 PM
No late evening service

First Sunday Food Collection

Remember that our next collection date will be Sunday, January 7, 2024! Your food donations are brought alternately to Second Harvest and to Elder Care Services (ECS), and have provided hundreds of meals for our hungry and food insecure neighbors. A list of the most needed items includes cereal; peanut butter; canned fruits, vegetables, and meats; and hearty soup or stew.

Poinsettias



Sanctuary poinsettias were given this year in memory or in honor of the following members and friends. If you donated a poinsettia, we invite you to take it home after the Christmas Eve service or the following Sunday.

- Donna Barber in memory of her parents
- Janet Bowman in memory of Dorothy George Bowman and Christine George
- Dan and Emily Bruno in memory of Diana Bruno
- Jan Bush in memory of Al Malefatto
- Rochelle Davis in memory of Jim Davis
- Anna and Bill Jordan in memory of Anna's parents, Betty & Peter Wright, and Anna's aunt, Juliana Wright Weeks; and in honor of Louise and Tyree Jordan
- David, Meredith and Darsey Strange in memory of Marilyn Strange
- Peggy West in memory of her parents, Margaret & Erdman West, and her brother, Skip West
- Ann and Rod Westall in memory of their parents, Lat & Jewell Westall and Edwin and Natalie Dalstrom, and Ann's brother Peter Dalstrom
- Don and Kathee Winstead in memory of their beloved parents Don & Mary, and Elmer & Helyn

Poinsettias were also dedicated to beautify the sanctuary, in remembrance of loved ones, and in honor of our church family by Barbara Busharis, Joe and Janet Fixel, Gail Hankinson, Mary and Glenn Hodges, Glenn and Kerry Laird, Duane and Marge Meeter, Marian and Walter Moore, Aide Whitaker, and Peggy Wright-Cleveland.

Worship & Music

To watch our Sunday worship at 11 AM, connect with us on [YouTube](#) (find the bulletin [here](#))! Our service of Lessons and Carols on Christmas Eve at 5 PM will be streamed on [YouTube](#) as well (bulletin available [here](#)).

Spiritual Formation

Church School: There will be no formal class for children or adults this week or next Sunday, December 31st. Please join us for coffee, cocoa and cookies in the Westminister Room before worship.

The combined adult class will resume on Sunday, January 7, and will hear from Kevin Nye, author of *Grace Can Lead Us Home: A Christian Call to End Homelessness*, who will appear via Zoom.

The children's and confirmation classes will also resume on Sunday, January 7.

Compassion & Social Justice

Thank you for your donations for Capital City Youth Services! We will accept donations on Sunday, December 24 if you still have items to donate. In the New Year we will be collaborating with First Baptist and Trinity United Methodist to provide daily snack packs for the unhoused in downtown Tallahassee. Beginning on Wednesday, January 3, 2024, at noon, we will be distributing snack packs weekly at First Pres. Contact Carol Weissert for more information.

Worship Ministry Team

The next communion "training" session will be on Sunday, January 7 at 10 AM. Please email Carolyn Bradley to volunteer for ushering (carolynbradley@gmail.com), or Martha Kutter (mkutter@maclay.org) for serving or setting up communion.

To submit an announcement for an upcoming issue of *This Week @ First*, please use [this link](#).

First Presbyterian Church

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Abundant Life Event: Singalong at Amicus Brewing

Come to Amicus Brewing, 717 S Gadsden Street, this Saturday at 3 PM for a family-friendly holly jolly sing-a-long! Rev. Dr. Sheldon Steen, Head Brewer, will be playing guitar and Beza Alford will lead the vocals. Spread some holiday cheer!



Songbooks will be provided and the Lugo's Burrito food truck will be present. Look for Emily Bruno and Barbara Busharis.

January Birthdays

Please wish a happy birthday to Laura Brock, Harriet Chase, Kay Crowell, Theresa Heiker, Linda Smith, Rod Westall, and Chris Willis!



The church office will be closed from Monday, December 25, through Monday, January 1, 2024. The next issue of This Week @ First will be published on Friday, January 5, 2024.

Pastor's Note



As Christmas Eve approaches, the word I am carrying is gratitude. Gratitude for Christ's love, justice, joy, and mercy. Gratitude for the church staff. Gratitude for this congregation and her members. Gratitude for our witness, from packing backpacks at Trinity Methodist this week to visiting with a member, delivering communion, and holding prayers of joy for all of God's wondrous deeds. God's blessings of peace, hope, joy, and love for you as we come to celebrate Christmas and move into the new year. As a reminder, the church office will be closed the week following Christmas. Glenn Hodges will lead worship and preach on Sunday, December 31st.

December Session Report

At the Session meeting, each outgoing Elder (Emily Bruno, Carol Grondzik, Theresa Heiker, Robyn Stevenson, Tip Tomberlin, Carol Weissert, and Carol Wynn) gave a statement about how their faith had been shaped in their three years of service with the church and each was presented with their very own John the Baptist tree topper for the ways that their service has "prepared a way" for Christ.

The deep joy of this meeting, and for this congregation, was the reception of Emily Bruno as an Inquirer for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament by the Session. Emily will be under the care of the First Presbyterian Church Session with Peggy Wright-Cleveland serving as her session liaison.

Other actions taken, or reported, at the December Session meeting:

- Received the final report of the Stewardship Campaign, which resulted in 92 pledges for a total of \$454,830.
- Received the Monthly financial report.
- Heard a report from Treasurer Don Winstead. Don's report is available [here](#).
- Approved the Endowment Management Committee Recommendation regarding the last disbursement from the Stevens estate.
- Heard a report from UKirk Board member Peggy Wright Cleveland.
- Approved a new application form for the Vaughan Loan Fund.
- Approved the use of the Christmas Eve offering for the Ministry of Snack Packs and feeding the homeless lunch on Wednesdays as part of the downtown churches' collaboration.

God's peace,
God's presence.
Anne

Health Precautions

If you are wondering what our Covid-19 protocols are, we recommend following the CDC guidelines for when to isolate and take other precautions. You can find them [here](#).