

# This Week @ First

## Interfaith Gathering



*Pastor Anne hosted the monthly gathering of Tallahassee Interfaith Clergy on January 25th, with over 40 attendees. Also present were representatives from several local organizations serving families and children in crisis.*

## Program on Housing Inequality

Davidson Generations for Action, a nonpartisan group of Davidson College alumni and friends, is offering a three-part Zoom series on The Impact of Inequality in the US. The first of the series was “Inequalities in Health Care”; the next, to be held Wednesday, February 28, from 7–8 PM, will focus on housing/income inequalities. You can register [here](#). The speakers, Paul Leonard and Boris Henderson, will share their experiences in developing affordable housing and community support. Paul Leonard served as a Presbyterian minister before becoming involved in non-profit housing; he has been the interim CEO of Habitat for Humanity. Boris Henderson is a past Board Chair of Habitat for Humanity Charlotte Region, currently serves as a Board Director for Habitat for Humanity International, and is the Chief Strategy Officer for Aldersgate Life Plan Services, a non-profit continuing care facility.

### First Presbyterian Church

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## Worship & Music

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

## Interfaith Prayer Vigil

The Florida Council of Churches will host a prayer vigil in our sanctuary this Monday evening, January 29, from 6:00–7:00. The vigil occurs between the week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the International Week for Interfaith Harmony. Come celebrate the unity and harmony that can come from people of faith committed to the golden rule in the gospel of Matthew 7:12, “In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.”

## Spiritual Formation

**Church School:** the combined adult class will meet in the Westminster Room, with a [Zoom](#) option. The children’s class will meet in Room 306. Classes begin at 9:30 AM.

## Worship Ministry Team

Please email Carolyn Bradley to set up or serve communion ([carolynbradley@gmail.com](mailto:carolynbradley@gmail.com)), or Martha Kutter ([mkutter@macclay.org](mailto:mkutter@macclay.org)) to volunteer for ushering.

## Compassion & Social Justice

**Second Harvest Bread Boxing** will take place next Friday morning, February 2, from 9:45 to 11:00 AM. We need at least six volunteers, but more are welcome! Sign up [here](#) or contact Debbie Gibson for more information.

## Care & Outreach

Please join us after worship this Sunday to celebrate the baptism of Theia and Ollie Groll! Cake and lemonade will be served in the Westminster Room.

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

# Pastor's Note and Session Report

The pastor's note comes forward with deep gratitude for the work of the church and a look into how we are moving forward towards new pastoral leadership following the interim season. An important action taken at the most recent Session meeting was that the Session approved an operating budget of \$481,670 for 2024.

Colossians 3:16 says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God." One of the tag lines from the mission statement brought forth at the Session retreat was, "We sing compassion." I hear the songs of compassion, and I am grateful. Marcel Proust, the French novelist, penned, "Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom." I am grateful to those 'charming gardeners' at First Presbyterian, Tallahassee.

At the Session meeting the Rev. Lisa Martin, pastor at Lynn Haven Presbyterian Church, who serves on the Pastoral Transition Team (PTT) of Florida Presbytery, and elder Linda Shelley, who serves as our liaison to Florida Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM), were present and were introduced. Rev. Martin, Ms. Shelley, and the moderator gave a presentation overviewing the current process of forming a pastoral nomination committee, finding candidates, and extending a call to a called and installed pastor.

It is the Session's intention to seek a called and installed pastor to serve following the departure of interim pastor Anne Apple on June 2, 2024.

The Session had previously requested that outgoing members of the class of 2023 consider serving as the church nominating committee with the responsibility of creating three slates of nominees: (a) additional elders to complete Session roles; (b) members of the trustees and Endowment Management Committee; and (c) members of a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). The following members agreed to serve: Emily Bruno, Carol Grondzik, Teresa Heiker, and Carol Weissert. A formal action by the congregation is

required to elect them. A motion was approved without objection that a congregational meeting be called for Sunday, Feb 4, 2024 for the purpose of electing a church nominating committee.

Rev. Martin explained changes in the applicant process to be used by a PNC. The Church Leadership Connection involves the use of Ministry Description Positions (MDP) and Pastoral Description Positions (PDP) to match applicants with church PNCs.

Mrs. Shelley explained the separate roles of both the Session and the PNC. The Session's role is limited to determining minimum and maximum (within presbytery guidelines) pastoral salary and to hearing periodic reports from the PNC on progress.

In addition to approving the budget, the Session took several other actions and heard additional reports. The Clerk provided an update on the ongoing adoption of "Breeze," a new church management system called Breeze. A motion to make a request to the EMC for \$8,650 from the outreach fund of the endowment to support donations requested by the Compassion and Social Justice Ministry Team to local non-profit entities was approved without objection. A potential overture to the General Assembly regarding divesting from fossil fuels was included in the Session packet and will be considered at the February Session meeting.

God's peace,  
God's presence.  
Anne

Mark your calendars:  
**Congregational Meeting**  
**Sunday, February 4, 2024**

## Volunteer Opportunity

The new Presbytery office at Dogwood Acres, in Vernon, is ready for move-in, and help is needed on Tuesday, January 30, starting at 9 AM CST/10 AM EST, weather permitting. Please contact the Presbytery, [Office@PresbyteryofFlorida.com](mailto:Office@PresbyteryofFlorida.com), if you are available to help. Lunch will be served.

## February Birthdays

Please wish a happy birthday to Marge Meeter, Margaret Stakenas, Toni Urquhart, Lillian Cleveland Beychok, Larry Stevenson, Pete Crowell, and Sue Safford. If you would like to include your birthday, contact Sue Safford at [ssue1995@gmail.com](mailto:ssue1995@gmail.com).