

This Week @ First

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

February is Black History Month. The Healing Racism Task Force recommends the following websites to learn more about the origins of Black History Month, the focus of this year's celebration, and how our denomination is acknowledging Black History Month.

- [Association for the Study of African American Life and History](#).
- [Presbyterian Mission: Celebrating Black History Month](#)

In addition, the Healing Racism Task Force suggests the following activities:

- READ *This Here Flesh* by Cole Arthur Riley, *Master Slave Husband Wife* by Ilyon Woo, or *Small Great Things* by Jodi Picoult.
- VISIT the John G. Riley Center, the Grove Museum, or the newly opened Union Bank Museum.

First Sunday Food Collection

This week we received a letter from Elder Care Services, which is one organization First Presbyterian supports with food collections on our First Sundays. For over 50 years, Elder Care services has worked to assist seniors in the Big Bend. In 2023, they were able to provide 2,281 seniors with services, including distributing 97,283 meals. They also provided 2,888 items of material aid, including fans and heaters. You can check out the ElderCare services on social media at ElderCareBB to see pictures of their work for the health of the community. Thank you, First Presbyterian, for the ways you help to meet the needs of Seniors in the Big Bend! Our next collection date will be Sunday, March 3.

Nominating Committee

The 2024 congregational Nominating Committee has begun working to present a slate of nominees for the following positions: Elder Class of 2026 (5 slots); Board of Trustees (2 slots); Endowment Management Committee (2 slots); and Pastor Nominating Committee (5 slots plus 1 alternate). You are invited to submit nominations by filling out a form that will be available in the Narthex, or by emailing nominations@oldfirstchurch.org. You can nominate a person for more than one category and self-nominations are welcome. If you have questions, please contact Nominating Committee chair Carol Grondzik.

First Presbyterian Church

110 North Adams Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Phone: (850) 222-4504/Fax: (850) 222-2215

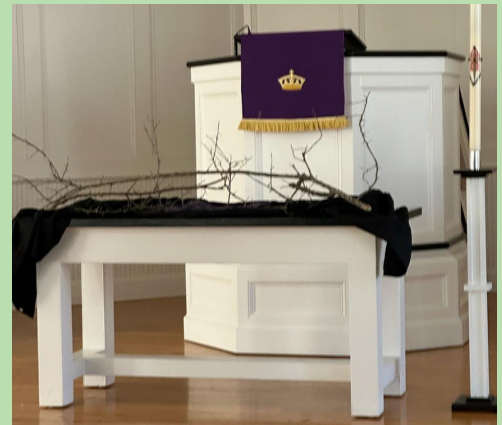
Email: office@oldfirstchurch.org
Website: www.oldfirstchurch.org
www.facebook.com/oldfirstchurch

Published on February 16, 2024

Worship & Music

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

Invitation to Repair: As you journey through Lent, we invite you to pay attention to the lost, the discarded, the dispossessed. At the beginning of worship each Sunday there will be an opportunity to bring an item from your journey forward to Christ's table. More information is in the Pastor's Note.



Spiritual Formation

Church School: the combined adult class will meet in the Westminster Room, with a [Zoom](#) option, to begin a Lenten series on "Disposability." The children's class will meet in Room 306. Classes begin at 9:30 AM.

Our Lenten brown bag lunch series, "Love One Another," will begin on Thursday, February 22 at noon in the Westminster Room.

Compassion & Social Justice

We will begin a weekly prayer vigil for justice for Tallahassee's unhoused on Wednesday, February 21, at noon.

The CAJM Housing and Gun Violence Action Committees will meet on Monday, February 19, at 6:30 PM, at the Old W. Florida Enrichment Center.

Worship Ministry Team

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

Pastor's Note



This week Lent began with the Ash Wednesday worship service. We sang the hymn, *Lord, Who throughout These Forty Days*. The first stanza begins by asking Christ to “Teach us” to remember and mourn the ways we contribute to the brokenness of the world, and the last stanza seeks Christ’s presence, asking, “Abide with us.” Each year we return to the season of Lent and remember. We do so as we are marked with ashes in the sign of the cross. The ashes we used this year were burned palm fronds from last year’s Palm Sunday, and a bit of cedar from a tree that was felled in Hurricane Idalia when it devastated parts of Perry, Florida.

God’s presence teaches and God’s peace abides. Christ teaches us whether we parade with palm branches shouting hallelujah, or picking up felled parts of creation after a storm. God’s peace abides through it all.

Each Sunday in Lent, we will have an Invitation to Repair at the beginning of the worship. We invite you to be curious, to see the world around you in new ways each week in Lent. Allow the Spirit to draw your eyes to see the overlooked, the discarded and forgotten objects and people in your path. As you are able, return or bring these, or an object that represents these things, to worship.

Throughout Lent, at the beginning of worship, you will be invited to bring these items forward to create a visual cairn on Christ’s Table. If you worship online, type about your contribution into the chat. These items will become part of a permanent piece of artwork to be shared with the community in Eastertide.

In addition, there are a plethora of ways to participate in the Lenten journey. Each day, there is a Facebook prompt for reflection through scripture. Each week on Wednesday, we will pray for our neighbors who are unhoused at noon. Each week on Thursday, Linda Smith and I will host a Bible study as we seek to understand what it means to love one another in this season of penitence.

We are also building towards our hosting of the concluding event of the Black History Festival celebration. We received a letter this week from Michelle B. Jones, who saw the work of the Healing Racism Task Force. In her writing, she returned to scripture, saying, “Psalm 133:1 reminds us of how good it is when God’s people dwell together in unity.” She encouraged us “to continue in God’s Word, that we might continue to pray for humility, praying against anything that is stopping us from loving others as we should, and pray against that spirit that only wants to connect and make friendships with those that look like us or fit in our circles of comfort.”

Here is to the work of God among us this Lenten season in some new ways that grows us outside of our circles of comfort.

God’s Peace.
God’s Presence.
Anne

The church office will be closed Monday, February 19 for President’s Day. Pastor Apple will be attending a Presbyterian Outlook Board Meeting at Austin Seminary Sunday evening through Tuesday evening. If you have a pastoral emergency, Monday or Tuesday, please email Greta Reed (gretareed@comcast.net) or Glenn Hodges (GHodges37@comcast.net).



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