

This Week @ First

Worship & Music

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

Sunday School

Sunday School students are invited to join us in Sunday School class beginning at 9:30 AM each week. Children (grades K-5) are in room 306 and Middle and High School students will be in room 301. A nursery will be available each Sunday starting at 9:15 AM.

Office Volunteers

We are in need of office volunteers from 12–2 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If interested in volunteering, there are a few ways to sign up: go to the Breeze calendar and sign up to volunteer by clicking on the volunteer tab, fill out this [form](#) or email Kelby, kelby@oldfirstchurch.org.



15 MINUTES OF GUIDED MEDITATION BEFORE WORSHIP

*Explore the Ancient Christian
Spiritual Practice of Meditation*

**Sunday Mornings @ 10:30am
John Calvin Room**

**BEGINNERS WELCOME
NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED!**

Have any pictures from church events that you would like to share with us? Send them in a message on [facebook](#) or you can email them to kelby@oldfirstchurch.org.

Compassion and Social Justice

First Presbyterian has entered into a partnership with Goodwill Industries that will help our church generate vouchers that can be given by our pastor to our neighbors in need. Each of us probably periodically cleans out the closets, the garage, or the bookshelf and donates unwanted things to charity. If you take your items to any Goodwill store and tell them to credit FPC Tallahassee, your donations will generate 15¢/pound. We will receive these credits as vouchers every month and they can then be used to help someone shop for clothes for an interview, get needed household items, etc. at any Goodwill shop. Ask for a receipt and send a picture of the receipt to Debbie Gibson or drop it at the office. (We will do this initially to assure we are getting proper credit.)

One of the services that Goodwill provides is estate packing. If you're moving, downsizing, or if there's been a death in the family, you can call Goodwill after all the treasures and special items have been distributed to family and friends. They will then come to the house and box up what's left, take it to the store and weigh it, and FPC will get credit — and you will have saved a lot of stress and energy.

Let your family, friends, and neighbors know that if they're taking donations to Goodwill, ask for it to be credited to FPC Tallahassee and help us generate vouchers to help our neighbors.

First Presbyterian Church Annual Picnic



September 22, immediately following worship, meet your church family at Maclay Gardens at the large picnic pavilion. Wear your picnic clothes to church and bring a covered side dish. Sign up at the courtyard table or call the church office and pay \$3 per person for chicken (or non meat alternative — let us know your preference). Don't pay the park entry fee but do let them know you're with the First Presbyterian Church Picnic. Care & Outreach will supply fried chicken (or alternative), cake, fun and fellowship. You might want to look into canoe rentals or other activities that are available for a rental fee. Please bring wagons to the church picnic if you have one. We can use them to get food and drink from the car drop off area to the pavilion. Also handy for transporting the heavy bags of chicken! Thanks to anyone with a spare hand wagon. See you there!

P.S. Bring a friend — Visitors and new members are our guests!

To submit information to be included in the newsletter and/or the Sunday bulletin (as space permits), please use [this new link](#), which will take you to an online form. You can access the form directly through Breeze, as well. Thank you!

First Presbyterian Church

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Property Ministry Team

The mission program of our church is carried out by ministry teams. Each ministry team is designated by the session with a particular focus. Teams meet monthly or as needed and report to the session. These teams work together in cooperation with each other to support worship, service and spiritual growth in the church. This week highlights the Property Team.



Theresa Heiker, Chair

The Property Team is charged with managing and maintaining the property and facilities of First Presbyterian Church so they can be used for the glory of God and in service to the larger community. It is charged with identifying routine maintenance and repair needs as well as addressing emergency situations. The Property Team is responsible for developing policies for use of the property and its equipment, and is also responsible for our security systems and custodial supplies. The Property Team administers the Columbarium in accordance with policies adopted by the Session.

The Team meets the first Tuesday evening of each month in person and by Zoom.

Theresa Heiker is the current chair of the Property Team. If you have an interest in joining the Property Team, please contact Theresa at tbheiker@gmail.com or 850-566-0786.

Spiritual Formation

This Sunday, September 15, marks the beginning of our Adult and Youth Spiritual Formation programs for the Fall!

Adults

“Feasting on the Word” Lectionary-Based Bible Study

Calvin Room and via [Zoom](#), 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Each week this class will gather to engage and discuss selected texts from our Lectionary readings. This week's reading is from the Gospel of Mark, chapter 8, when Jesus asks his disciples, "Who do you say I am?"

Adult Inquirer's Class

Westminster Room and via [Zoom](#), 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

We launch the program year of Inquirer's with a social gathering to recall wonderful presentations from the past and to dream about what types of learning opportunities we'd like to explore this Fall.

Youth

This weekend our Youth Group will gather in the Westminster Room after worship for pizza, games and fellowship. Youth grades 6-12 are invited...bring a friend!

Young people from First Church are invited to join youth grades 6-12 from Christ Presbyterian, Faith Presbyterian, Fellowship Presbyterian, and First Presbyterian Quincy for a swim party and cookout at the FSU REZ from 3:00-5:30 on Sunday, September 22. Youth should wear their bathing suits and bring a towel, water bottle, sunscreen and a change of clothes. We are organizing transportation from the church, so please let Piece or Mary Kutter know if you are interested in joining us!

Please contact Pierce Withers, Director of Spiritual Formation, to learn more about upcoming adult and youth spiritual formation programs by emailing pierce@oldfirstchurch.org



Update: Candlelight Concerts

If you happened by First Church on Saturday evening, you would have seen our historic sanctuary transformed into an enchanted and stunning concert venue for the premier performances for the Candlelight Concert Series. Two performances were played to sold-out crowds, and a string quartet played Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" at the early show and "A Tribute to Taylor Swift" at the late show.

Hosting these performances is part of the Session's strategy to increase congregational revenue, make our campus more accessible to organizations in our community that align with the values and mission of First Church (like those in the arts and entertainment community), and invite non-traditional visitors to enter or sacred spaces. Many of Saturday's concert patrons marveled at the beauty of our historic sanctuary and shared that it was their first time visiting.

Recommended by the Presbyterian Foundation, initiatives that generate income through use of our spaces by outside organizations, including ticketed events like the Candlelight Concerts, is considered one of the "best practices" for PCUSA congregations seeking to not just survive — but to thrive — in a constantly changing faith-based landscape. By all accounts, the premier of the Candlelight Concert series was a great success!



Pastoral Note

A 14-year-old allegedly opened fire with an AR15-style weapon at Apalachee High School in Winder, Georgia, last Wednesday, killing two students and two teachers, and nine other people were hospitalized with gunshot wounds. As of September 9, 46 incidents of school shootings have occurred in the United States in 2024. School shootings like the one at Apalachee High School meet the definition of mass shooting incidents in which several people are injured or killed by firearm-related violence.

Recent data suggest an upward trend in school mass shootings and related deaths for the past five years. According to the United States Centers for Disease Control, guns are the leading cause of death among American children and teens. One out of ten gun deaths is someone age 19 or younger. This week, there have been reports of guns in Leon County and surrounding area schools. The emotional toll of school shootings is resulting in stress, anxiety, grief, and aggression in children. While law enforcement and school officials are taking action to increase security and reduce risk, gun violence is a multifaceted problem, and prevention is critical. We must act to do everything in our power to help avert future incidents of gun violence in our schools by implementing meaningful controls. States with solid laws see less gun violence, but stricter gun laws are just part of the battle.

An April 15, 2024, article in the [Tallahassee Democrat](#) highlighted the Tallahassee-Leon County Council on the Status of Men and Boys (TLC SMB). This organization aims to prevent teenage gun violence through the implementation of prevention and intervention programs. The Capital Area Justice Ministry is supporting this effort by asking local public officials to approve funding for the work of the TLC SMB. Another way we can help is to write our commissioners and tell them that prevention through social programming is essential to protect children and teachers from gun violence in schools.

“

If any one of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.

—Matthew 18:6

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