

This Week @ First

Worship & Music

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

Compassion and Social Justice

The Compassion and Social Justice's team of volunteers has been providing food, laundry services, and showers to our downtown unsheltered neighbors for several months. We'd also like to be able to offer them small toiletry items that would allow them to maintain their hygiene despite their challenging circumstances.

If you would like to contribute to our efforts, you can bring the small samples you collect while traveling or specific items that are available at a Dollar Store or drug store. We could use: toothbrushes and small toothpastes; disposable razors; travel-sized shampoos, hand lotions, and deodorants; small combs; etc. There will be a box on the table outside the office for you to leave your donations. Thank you for your compassion for those who are unsheltered in our community.

Second Harvest Bread Boxing will take place on Friday, October 4. If you would like to volunteer, please sign up [here](#).

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.

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.

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.

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!

Heritage Committee



The Heritage Committee is looking for helping hands with:

- Repair of Church model (artistic or architectural skills)
- Restoration of wooden chair with needlepoint seat
- Grant writing assistance

Contact Kay Crowell, crowellk@yahoo.com, if you can help with any of the above.

Free Lecture Series



The Montreat Conference Center will be hosting a free lecture series which features Dr. William Yoo, the Associate Professor of American Religious and Cultural History at Columbia Theological Seminary. The discussions will explore the intersection of politics and faith. Dr. William Yoo will be presenting to our Inquirer's Class on October 16. More information on these free lecture series can be found [here](#).

Congregational Meeting

There will be a congregational meeting immediately following worship on September 29, 2024. The purpose of the meeting is to elect a committee to nominate new ruling elders for the class of 2027.

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. You can access the form directly through Breeze, as well.
Thank you!

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Personnel 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 Personnel Ministry Team.



Donna Barber, Chair

The Session has given the Personnel Ministry Team the responsibility of managing the Church's human resources in a manner that furthers the work and mission of the church. It is responsible for all matters pertaining to church employees and for giving support to the Pastor, who serves as head of staff, in the administering of personnel policies and practices as set forth by the Session. The Personnel Ministry Team makes recommendations to the Session regarding all staff positions needed, job functions and duties, and terms of employment, including compensation and benefits, as allowed by the budget.

Donna Barber is the chair of the Personnel Ministry Team. She is a long-term member of our congregation and has served on various committees and teams. She is a current Session member, serving her second term as a Session member. Donna predicts this team will continue to be busy as the personnel needs continue to change during these times of transition.

The Personnel Ministry Teams meets on the first Thursday of each month, or as needed. Please contact Donna for more information: donnambarber@icloud.com or 850-212-8353.

Spiritual Formation

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.

Adult Inquirer’s Class

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

This Sunday, the Inquirers Class will begin a study, supported by the Healing Racism Task Force, into the history of our community and its association with slavery. For the next two weeks, we will watch and discuss the FSU Film School's documentary, *Invisible History: Middle Florida's Hidden Roots*. We will welcome Dr. William Yoo, professor at Columbia Seminary, the following Sunday to help us explore how we can atone for our sin of racism. Join us in the Westminster Room at 9:30 or by Zoom.

Youth

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 Pierce 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

Inquirer’s Class Volunteers

The Inquirers Class needs help with managing the meetings on Sunday mornings. The schedule of activities is ready. The next three sessions are exploring aspect of racism in Florida, from “Invisible History” to “Mint Julep History Books.” We will be viewing and discussing the “Invisible History” documentary over the next two weeks, led by Dr. Yoo of the Columbia Seminary on October 6 and Pierce Withers on Oct 13.

We need volunteers to help with the delivery of these important sessions by introducing the speakers (with their help) and helping to moderate the discussion. No previous experience or preparation is needed.

If you love the Inquirers Class and want to help make it a success this fall, please contact Greg Riccardi (riccardigreg@gmail.com) or Pierce Withers (Pierce@oldfirstchurch.org).



Pastoral Note

On the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. (PCUSA) calendar, September is Suicide Prevention Month. This is a time to raise awareness about a tragic problem affecting millions. Suicide is death by self-harm. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the eleventh cause of death in the United States. Over 49 thousand Americans died from suicide in 2022, and 1.6 million Americans attempted suicide. A suicide attempt is self-harm that does not result in death. Men die by suicide about four times more than women. White males accounted for 68.4% of suicide deaths. Firearms accounted for 54.64% of all suicide deaths.

Despite these dire statistics, more than 90% of adults surveyed think suicide is preventable. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention provides the following information:

1. Limiting access to lethal methods can dramatically decrease suicide rates in communities.
2. Ninety percent of people who die by suicide have an underlying and potentially treatable mental health condition.
3. No one takes their life for any single reason. Life stresses combined with known risk factors, such as childhood trauma, substance abuse, or even chronic physical pain, can contribute to suicide.
4. Asking someone directly if they are thinking about suicide will not give them the idea. Starting a conversation may be a relief.
5. If someone can get through the intense, short moments of an active suicidal crisis, chances are they will not die by suicide. Most people who survive a suicide attempt go on to engage positively in life.

Each year, an estimated 8 million people have suicidal thoughts. That means that there are people in church congregations who are thinking about or will think about suicide. Although historically, the subject has been taboo, the church can provide a great deal of support against suicide. The PCUSA encourages congregations to take action to prevent suicide. Please go to this [link](#) to learn more. Also, note that the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline number is 988. The Lifeline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for confidential and compassionate emotional support. Here is the [link](#).

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God.

–2 Corinthians 1:3–4”