



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

Second Harvest of the Big Bend will be closed today so, just for the month of January, we will gather at Second Harvest on January 10 at 9:45 (next Friday). You can sign up to join the fun with us [here](#).

Office Volunteers

We are in need of additional office volunteers to check mail, relay messages, and assist with other routine office tasks. If you can help for two to four hours on a weekday, fill out this [form](#) or email Glenn Hodges, glenn@oldfirstchurch.org, and indicate what day(s) you would like to volunteer.

Installation of Elders



Mary Kutter

On January 19, Kay Crowell, Jon Dodrill, Caitlin James, Mary Kutter, and Deb Whisnant will be ordained and/or installed to the elder class of 2027. Eleanor Cleveland will be ordained and installed into the class of 2026.

In memoriam

Carlisle Caughman Harvard, formerly of First Church, died on December 24, 2024; her funeral will take place tomorrow, January 4, at 11 AM, at First Presbyterian Church of Durham, North Carolina. You can read her obituary and find information about viewing the service [here](#). She was the wife of Joseph Harvard, who served as pastor from 1970 to 1974.

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. Thank you!

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Spiritual Formation

Sunday School—Youth

All youth are invited at 9:30 AM each week! Grades K–5 in room 306. Middle and High School Students in room 301. A nursery will be available starting at 9:15 AM. **Please note the Elementary/Youth classes will resume on January 12.**

“Feasting on the Word” Lectionary-Based Bible Study

Calvin Room and via [Zoom](#), 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM. This class resumes on January 5 to engage and discuss selected texts from our Lectionary readings. The Inquirer’s class will resume on January 12.

Guided Meditation continues on Sunday mornings at 10:30 in the Calvin Room.

The Spiritual Formation Team is in need of volunteers to assist our teachers in the Elementary and Middle/High School classes, and to assist in our nursery. You can volunteer to help weekly, monthly or occasionally. Please contact Mary Kutter at mykutter@gmail.com to find out more.

Please Share! Exciting Opportunity to Work With New Collaboration of Downtown Churches

First Presbyterian and Trinity United Methodist recently received a VISTA grant to develop a collaboration of Tallahassee churches to educate, provide services, and coordinate with providers to meet the needs of our unhoused neighbors. The grant will enable us to hire a community coordinator for outreach to the unhoused.

The coordinator will research activities and successes of other church-led efforts throughout Florida and the nation; contact other Tallahassee churches to join the effort; develop a list of services that the collaboration might be able to provide; and help educate our church members and the community on the realities of living without housing and organizing volunteers to help.

There is a stipend for the position of \$24,962, which will begin Feb. 1, 2025.

If you know of someone who might be interested, or are interested yourself, please contact Debbie Gibson or Carol Weissert.

Webinar on Climate Change and Migration

On Wednesday, January 8, from 7:30 to 8:30 PM, Presbyterians for Earth Care will sponsor a webinar on the effects of climate change on different forms of migration. You can register to receive a zoom link for the webinar [here](#).



Pastoral Note

The Christmas season begins on December 25, commemorating the birth of Jesus. It concludes on January 6, the day of the Epiphany. Throughout this period, the new year begins, emphasizing endings and new beginnings. It is also a time for families to celebrate and spend time together, reconnecting with old friends and enjoying the festivities.

When the celebration of Jesus' birth began in the fourth century, it replaced Sol Invictus, the birth of the unconquerable sun, on the calendar, marking the winter solstice (the sun's triumph over darkness). A theological justification for this change was easily found: Christ, not the sun, is our true light. Yet, we are simply told that Mary gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger (Luke 2:7).

The Christmas message for the season centers on God's great love for us and God's promise not to leave us abandoned or in darkness. This message is encapsulated in the announcement by the angel to Joseph in a dream: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." (Matthew 1:23). During our Christmas Eve service, candles were lit at the close of worship, and this act is a charge to let our light shine before others and carry the God news of Christ into the world.

Rev. Glenn Hodges

"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

January Birthdays



A very happy birthday to: Jon Barber, Colin Barber, Emily Bruno, Harriet Chase, Michael Corzine, Kay Crowell, Trish Hanson, Tristan Harrenstein, Lois Hawkes, Theresa Heiker, Jeff Jennings, William Kennedy, John Paschal, Louise Rill, Linda Smith, and Carol Wynn!

Spotlight on the Heritage Committee

In May, Reverend Anne Apple invited us to a meeting to consider "creating a space that bears witness to our history AND creates an intimate space where families can gather before a memorial service and where brides could ready themselves before a wedding." Hence the Heritage Committee was launched with a goal to uncover, document, preserve and celebrate the rich history of First Presbyterian and to foster understanding in the unfolding of God's church. With the bi-centennial celebration of our church coming up in 2032, this seems like the perfect time to undertake such an endeavor.

Since then many artifacts have been unearthed, volumes of documents have been reviewed, and connections have been made with historical and archival sources. In particular, we are pleased to announce that records from the early days in 1832 to the present time will be digitized by late 2025. Much appreciation goes to Columbia Theological Seminary, Presbyterian Historical Society, and FSU Special Collections for their time and assistance.

During this process, we have been delighted to discover many interesting tidbits and facts about our church, such as the use of wallpaper in the sanctuary at one time and the role of our building as a Civil War Hospital. Stay tuned for more surprising information and fun facts as we continue to uncover and celebrate our history.

The Heritage Committee: Ann Westall, Jodee Dorsey, Ann Riccardi, and Kay Crowell