

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

Snack pack and Laundry Love volunteers are invited from 10 AM to noon on Wednesdays. For information on volunteering, speak to [Debbie Gibson](#).

One Great Hour of Sharing

The One Great Hour of Sharing special offering supports Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. In 2023, here's how your gift was used:

- PDA granted \$6.1 million in 27 U.S. states and 46 countries. Grants supported humanitarian response to the conflicts in Ukraine, Israel/Palestine, Myanmar, Sudan, Ethiopia and more; earthquakes in Haiti, Syria, Afghanistan, Indonesia and Nepal; drought and famine in Angola, India, Malawi and Rwanda; and flooding, hurricanes, and storms in the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Ghana, Malawi and more.
- 131 National Response Team members were deployed to 46 presbyteries.
- 1,837 work team volunteers served in AR, CA, FL, KY, LA, MS, NC, TX and Puerto Rico, donating 127,755 hours, totaling more than \$4 million in volunteer time.

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.

“Feasting on the Word” Lectionary-Based Bible Study

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

This class meets weekly to engage and discuss selected texts from our Lectionary readings.

The **Inquirer’s class** will meet this Sunday in the Westminster Room and by [Zoom](#), 9:30 – 10:30 AM, to continue a six-week Lenten series based on Adam Hamilton’s *The Message of Jesus: Words that Changed the World*.

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

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. Please contact [Mary Kutter](#) to find out more.

Presbyterian Women Mission Workshop

On **April 6**, one activity at the PW Mission Workshop will be stuffing small toys and wrapped candies into plastic eggs for Easter Sunday. The congregation is invited to bring toys or candies to be used at a workshop table on or before the PW Mission Workshop and help fill up the Easter eggs. More information can be found [here](#).



The Rake’s Progress

Remember to get your tickets for the FSU Spring Opera, Igor Stravinsky’s *The Rake’s Progress*, in which our friend Kelby Yoder will have a major role!

You can see Kelby in the performances on Friday, March 28, at 7:30 PM, and Sunday, March 30, at 3 PM. Tickets are available [here](#).



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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We are there

Matthew 25 teaches us that, in every time and season the Church finds itself and its Savior through relationships with those in need.

MARCH 5 - APRIL 20, 2025



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

Moving Beyond the Confession of the Sin of Racism to Repair of the Breach

In January of 2024, we placed a plaque on the outside of the sanctuary acknowledging that our history included the sin of racism: we promised to "commit ourselves to repairing racism's breach, that God's beloved community might take form to and around us." The Task Force on Healing Racism is regularly sharing resources to deepen our understanding of the costs of that sin and to inspire us to act.



One highlight of the celebration of Black History Month was a potluck luncheon on February 23 featuring an inspiring talk and display of his art by Ted Ellis of the FSU Civil Rights Institute. It was encouraging to have over 90 people attend in person or by Zoom and will spur us on in our commitment as a congregation to find ways of repairing the breach caused by the sin of racism.

As we continue our work, we pray that the Holy Spirit will guide us in discerning what is ours to do. As Christians, we are called to reject and oppose policies of oppression. We need to deepen our faith and our courage by prayer, meditation, and any other practices that provide fuel for our continued strength and perseverance. Romans 8:31-39 reminds us that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ.

One of the most offensive policies is the current scrubbing from public records of any information relating to "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI), which has already resulted in, among other things, the removal of the names of our family members and neighbors who are people of color from government websites. This is part of the action plan known as "Project 2025." You can read more about Project 2025 [here](#) and its relationship to DEI [here](#). We displayed a banner affirming our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion during the 2024 Legislature's Session and have done so again for the duration of the 2025 Session.

The Task Force for Healing Racism recommends a virtual trip to our new Florida Civil Rights Museum (FCRM) as one antidote to these hateful and racist policies. Formally incorporated in 2021, FCRM's mission is to display, protect, and preserve the stories and legacies of civil rights and education pioneers in Florida, regardless of race, color, or creed. It is Florida's first fully virtual museum experience and presents online exhibits including a 3-D Wall of Distinction featuring such luminaries as Judge Winston E. Arnow and the Rev. Dr. Mattie Hall Mobley. The Museum also includes a list of the 200 most influential African-Americans in Leon County over the last two centuries. One example is Geraldine Douglass Roberts, one of two members of the first FAMU School of Pharmacy graduating class, a retired FAMU faculty member, and the owner of Economy Drugs.

The Museum is grateful for any suggested additions and for community financial support. You can explore it here: <https://floridacivilrightsmuseum.org/>.

If you have questions or suggestions, please contact any of the Task Force members: Sue Hightower, Mary Hodges, Pam McVety, Marian Moore, Walter Moore, Sue Safford, Deborah Whisnant, Debbie Gibson, Aide Whitaker, and Ann Westall, Chair.



"A new day for advocacy in the church and seminary"

Beth Waltemath, for the Presbyterian News Service, wrote this week about a recent conference, *Call to Justice: Advocacy Training Days*, held at Columbia Theological Seminary:

When other institutions of higher education are backing away from diversity, equity and inclusion policies due to recent proclamations by the U.S. Department of Education and its future withdrawals of government fundings, Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, is lifting up the need to train students in advocacy and has decided to stay committed to the diversity, equity and inclusion policies that have shaped its community of staff, faculty and students and informed its curriculum.

The full article is available on the PCUSA [website](#), along with other articles highlighting different ways the PCUSA is engaging with issues of the day.