Good News



Our theme for the Lenten season this year will be Wandering Heart: Figuring out faith with Peter. We will be using the creative resources from A Sanctified Art. This is what the creators of this series have to say:

"This Lent, we are focusing on the life and faith of one of Jesus' most famous disciples. In Peter, we see a person who is both steadfast and unsteady, a dear friend and a betrayer, a follower and a wanderer. In Peter, we often see ourselves. By following Peter's journey, we watch the story of Jesus unfold through the eyes of a very normal human trying to figure it all out-just like us.

As we were studying Peter's faith journey, the lyrics of "Come Thou Fount" came to mind. It's as if Peter himself wrote this song. And so, for each step in Peter's journey, we have selected a phrase from this hymn. As we follow Peter's story, we will sing our way through Lent, binding our wandering hearts to God.

In this series, we want to affirm that faith is a constant journey of steadfast pursuit, one that ebbs and flows, seeks and wanders. We want to affirm that wandering is exploration, not necessarily distance from God. We want to affirm the ways Peter keeps going: he drops his nets, he walks on water, he runs to the empty tomb, he swims to the shore to meet the risen Christ. Peter keeps searching and yearning and loving even after missteps or mistakes. Ultimately, in Peter's story, we are reminded that God loves imperfect people-in fact, time and again, that's precisely who God claims and calls.

This Lent, we will look for ourselves in the stepping stones of Peter's story. We will reflect on the stages of our own faith journeys as well as who and what has shaped us along the way. As we wander, let us tune our hearts to sing God's grace. May we rest in streams of mercy, never ceasing!"





It's a boy! Beau Oliver, on January 1, 2024, and he was the first baby born in their hospital! He weighed 9lbs 8 oz at birth and measured 21 3/4" long and is doing great.

Congratulations to the whole family: parents, Sarah and Ben; siblings, Ellie, Miles, and Palmer; and grandparents, Pam and Steve

A note from Kathie

Thank you all so much for my thoughtful reception. I can't believe that I have been a part of this wonderful church for 25 years!

Taking care of all of the kiddos is truly a joy, and knowing each and every one of you is an absolute blessing.

Farewell and thank you to Paula!

On January 21, the church threw a farewell party for Paula.







Confirmation 2.0: What Does It Mean?

What is the church all about? Why are we Presbyterian? Is there a reason we have communion and baptism? For those who would like to delve into these questions and others, the Worship and Christian Education Committee will be offering a class; similar to a confirmation class, but for adults. Anyone who would like to learn more about God, the church, worship, the sacraments, the Book of Confessions, church government and much more would be welcome in the class. The class will begin February 4th after the potluck.

Please let Margot, Mary Lee or Mary Jane know if you are interested.

Welcome

Jennifer is our new secretary. We are thrilled to have her join our team. She will usually be working at the church on Wednesdays and Fridays, 8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. When you see her please give her a warm welcome!

Warming Center Update

During the nine days of incredibly awful weather January 12th through January 20th we opened our church to shelter people from the temperatures.

Our sign up sheet records show that we served 192 people overnight which averages to 22 people per night. Many of these people stayed multiple nights. The most people who stayed per night was 30 and the least was 12. We remained open during the day on Monday and Tuesday as well as at night because there was no else for them to go. 22 meals were served and we provided them with clothing, blankets, and hygiene products.

It was a huge undertaking that was supported by the whole community of Jacksonville with food, supplies, and volunteers. Our church received many thanks from many people and they were surprised at how a small church could accomplish what we did. Although we were a huge part of the success, the community was wonderful and, of course, God was always there to make sure it happened. He wanted us to succeed and so we did. God is great!

Upcoming Events!

The Ash Wednesday service is February 14 at 6:30 p.m.

The Book Study Group meets on Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. The book we are currently discussing is Original Blessing: Putting Sin in Its Rightful Place. Everyone is welcome. You can still join in the discussion even if you don't have the book.

The Presbyterian Women's Spring Gathering will be Friday, April 12-Saturday, April 13. This year it will be held at Ferncliff. The cost is \$95 if you stay overnight, \$40 for 3 meals with no overnight stay, or \$25 for 2 meals on Saturday only. The registration deadline is April 1. An application is on the bulletin board if you are interested.

Our Classes for our youth and children will be offered for 8 weeks beginning February 4. We will use the curriculum from A Sanctified Art that goes along with our Lenten series. Amie and Michael will teach the youth class and Katie will teach the children's class. These classes will be after the potluck meal on potluck days and after ukulele band practice the other days. Thank you to Amie, Michael, and Katie!

Wanted!

Somehow several of the church's card tables have disappeared. If one of them happened to wander into your house, kindly send it back to church. Or if you have a card table that you are tired of and would like to part with, it would be put to good use at church. Thanks!

Keeping God's House Clean

Please consider signing up on the tablet in the west lobby to help clean the church one weekend this month.

We can do it if we all pitch in!

Ministers for February

February 4	Mary Jane		Psalm 147:1-11,200	Mark 1:29-39
February 11	Rev. Michael	Communion	Psalm 50:1-6	Mark 9:2-9
February 14	Ash Wednesday service		Psalm 51:1-17	
	Wandering Heart: "Tune our hearts"			
February 18	Rev. Michael	Communion	Psalm 25:1-10	Luke 5:1-11
	Wandering Heart: "Jesus sought me"			
February 25	Karen	Communion	Psalm 22:23-31	Matthew 14:22-33
	Wandering Heart: "Rescue me from danger"			

Ash Wednesday is February 14

Why do we have an Ash Wednesday service and why do we receive ashes on our forehead? Lent is a time for us to return to our Creator who formed us from the dust of the earth. Our lives are finite, so we want to spend every precious moment in tune with God, living whole, abundant lives—the kind of lives we were created to lead. And so in recognition of our origins in the earth, in acknowledgment of our finite days, we come to receive ashes and remember: dust we are, and to dust we shall return.

Pictures from the January Community Lunch and Congregational Potluck











Our next monthly Community Lunch/churchwide potluck will be on February 4 from 11:30-12:30. We will be serving a hot meal and friendship in a welcoming environment.

Want to Be Involved?

Bring a potluck dish to share. Plan to stay and break bread together with our neighbors so that they can feel the love of community as we have been blessed to know



it. You can also sign up to help with set up, clean up or serving by using the sign-up sheet near the offering plate at church.

Covering Our Church Ministries With Prayer

Please pray for:

- cooperation among churches and the government in Jacksonville to address the burgeoning needs of our people;
- families in need in our community and for the donors who have supplied food, water, toiletries, clothing, and bedding for those families;
- our Community Lunch Program, its volunteers, and the people it serves;
- the leaders of our city, church, and communities;
- teachers, bus drivers, students, and school employees, especially those in our city;
- our church family;
- youth of our church, city, and state
- Our Ukulele Band and all our musicians, worship leaders, and speakers

Attendance for January

Jan 7: 39 Jan 14: 17 Jan 21: 25 Jan 28: 27

Report of Session meeting

The Session met on January 27th. Officer Training was completed in the morning. During the stated session meeting the Annual Statistical Report was reviewed and approved. The special offerings this year will be One Great Hour of Sharing in March, Pentecost in April, Peace and Global Witness in October, and The Christmas Joy Gift in December. Mary Jane gave information to the Session about the adult confirmation classes and accompanying youth classes. Work was begun on updating the church Manual of Operations. It has not been done in several years and will take a while to complete.

Prayer Requests From January

Ainsley C. Alton J. Amy and Michael M. Becky M. Beth B. Billie Ann M. Buck B. Catherine N. Chris, Ella, and Isabella S. Dale S. Elizabeth P. Haley S. Jay H. Jeff and Pam S. Jim S. Joe and Pat P. Katrina H. Kaye B. Kevin Y. Leanna M. Paul and Barbara J. Ron Q. Ruthie and Brad P. Scottie R. and family Sydney C. Tom H.

The family of Marjorie Ellen H.

Thanksgiving for Leanna M. and
newborn baby, Molly Ruth
Leaders of our city, state, and nation
People affected by natural disasters
Peace for those affected by war



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May the Christ who walks on wounded feet walk with you. May the Christ who serves with wounded hands stretch out your hands to serve.

May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart open your heart to love.

And as you leave this place, may you see the face of Christ on everyone you meet, and may everyone you meet see the face of Christ on you.

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PLACE STAMP HERE

If you are receiving this newsletter by mistake or would rather get one at the church in person, please let us know. If you know of someone who would like to receive this newsletter in the mail, please call us at 501-982-2876. God Bless You!