



SEPTEMBER 2019

ISSUE 19-9

The Diligent

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ARP LAKE WALES, FL

“...a Christ-centered fellowship of believers devoted to glorifying God through true worship, personal evangelism, discipleship, and servanthood.”

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Church Officers

Leadership

5 WAYS TO JUMP-START YOUR WALK WITH CHRIST

From Pastor Chad

As Christians, we have a very practical faith and who we are in Christ can and must be lived out in authentic and tangible ways. What I mean is that the Lord most often works His supernatural power in our lives through some otherwise ordinary means or habits. Below are several practical disciplines that can help us grow in the grace of Christ and walk in humble reliance upon Him. While this is not an exhaustive list, it is hopefully big enough to challenge you to grow in faithfulness and righteousness and also brief enough to take on with hope. I pray these reminders will serve to help jump-start areas of your life in Christ that may have grown stagnant or dormant.

1. **Cherish the Word of God.** It seems basic, like the pat Sunday School answer, but that doesn't make it any less true. God has revealed himself to us in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. There is no better way to increase in the knowledge of Christ, to grow in grace, or to walk more faithfully than to read the Word of God daily, to memorize it, and to ponder it deeply that you, by the Spirit's leading, may apply it to your life (see Psalm 119:9-16). *Tabletalk*, a devotional series published by Ligonier Ministries, is available at the Book Nook in the FPC parlor. It is a great resource to help you begin a habit of spending time daily with the Lord in his Word.

2. **Confess your sin.** Upon being confronted by Nathan of his sin with Bathsheba, David cried out, "For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me" (Psalm 51:3). To confess our sin before God (and before others, when necessary) is an uncomfortable but essential aspect of our walk with Christ. Of course, I mean a sincere confession, which leads to repentance, not just a perfunctory listing of our sins. To sincerely know our transgressions leaves us humble before Christ, not that we would wallow in guilt and shame but that we might run to him with hope and assurance knowing that his blood has atoned for all our sins (Romans 3:25) and he is faithful to forgive us and cleanse us (1 John 1:9).
3. **Pray for one lost soul.** Every one of us knows one person who does not know Jesus as Savior and Lord. Whether it is a family member, a friend, a neighbor, or a co-worker, we all know someone who desperately needs to be redeemed by His grace, as we have been. Pray for that person daily, specifically, and sincerely. Pray for his or her physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual needs. As you pray, be open to the Spirit's leading to share the Gospel with him or her in a clear, gentle, and respectful manner (1 Peter 3:15).
4. **Pray for one need in your community.** There are many needs right here in our own backyard. Racial reconciliation, teen pregnancies, fatherless children, and unemployment are some of the many social concerns in our city and surrounding community. How does the Gospel affect the way we think about and seek to change these societal ills? The needs are too great for any one of us to work on them all, but you can pray about one of these needs and then act as prompted by the Word and Spirit. Pray for the kingdom of God to come in our community as it is in heaven, affecting change through his people to the glory of Christ Jesus (Matthew 6:10).
5. **When it comes to entertainment, take every thought captive.** Every movie we watch, song we listen to or website we

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visit is promoting certain beliefs and philosophies. There is no such thing as neutral entertainment. As Christians, we must be alert and aware when we watch and listen. Too many times we turn our brains off when we are watching television shows or movies, when we listen to music, when we surf the web or social media, when we play video games or apps, or when we read books. Entertainment can be a good thing, but not if we check out mentally or spiritually and allow the medium to flood our minds and hearts. If we are undiscerning as we consume media, we will not be able to keep the messages from affecting our spirits in unhealthy, un-gospel ways. So, pay attention to the themes, both subtle and overt, when you watch, listen, and play games, and be sure to take every thought captive that is against the knowledge of God (2 Corinthians 10:5). ■



SOUND BOARD HELP NEEDED!

We need a few volunteers who can volunteer to run our sound board during Sunday morning worship (once a month). Sound volunteers need to be available about thirty minutes before the service begins, but no other experience is needed; you will be trained how to run the board. If interested, please call Kelly Harrington in the church office at 676-0711.

PRAYER FOCUS

SEPTEMBER 1 - The MOPS Ministry at FPC (Mothers of Preschoolers)

SEPTEMBER 8 - First Responders and Emergency Services Providers

SEPTEMBER 15 - FPC Ministry Lay Leaders and Volunteers

SEPTEMBER 22 - Children and Youth of FPC and Lake Wales Community

SEPTEMBER 29 - The Persecuted Church Throughout the World

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

August 2019 Session Highlights

The elders of First Presbyterian Church meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month. The following notes are highlights from the August 27th meeting.

- The Session continued its study of the Westminster Confession of Faith, taking a thoughtful look at the teaching from chapter three, "Of Creation."
- Stewardship and Finance reported that as of the end of July tithes and offering toward the church's general budget are at 49.4% of the annual budget. This is below the average of 52.6% (2014-18) our church has historically received by the end of July. Praise was given to God for His financial blessing and prayer for provision in the months to come to meet our ministry needs. We encourage you, the members of FPC, to prayerfully seek the Lord's will for you in giving; asking him to grow within you a generous heart and a love for the work he is doing in and through FPC.
- The Session approved a pool of candidates to potentially serve as deacons and elders in the coming years. These candidates will be contacted and invited to go through the training portion of our nominations process. Please pray for them.
- The chairmen of the committees of the Session reported on the work and ministry they are overseeing; please see the ministry sections of this issue of *The Diligent* for more information on these ministries. Prayer was offered after each report, asking for the Lord's guidance and blessing.
- A season of prayer was held for various needs within our congregation and community.

Discipleship

CENTERED ON CHRIST: DESIRING THE WORLD

From Pastor Mackay

“...for we walk by faith, not by sight.” - 2 Cor. 5:7

Our discipleship theme for 2019-2020 is
“Centered on Christ.”

“So, you’ve only got one day tomorrow. Well, then, here’s what you must do...” That is how the owner of the bed and breakfast began soon after we met last week. She knew that my parents, Rachel, and I were there as tourists and so, she recommended an itinerary booked with touring. According to her plan, we were to set off the second breakfast was over and not return until late in the evening.

As it was, our one day to see the sights was Sunday. We knew that a sister congregation in the ARP met for worship about half an hour from our B&B, and a church service beginning at 10:30 a.m. does not lend itself to a day chockablock full of touring. There were a few discussions that sprang from the realization that worship would mean missing our hostess’ proposed activities. Would it be that horrible to miss one Sunday? We had traveled many miles to see what there was to see!

By God’s grace, we went to church. The service lasted until about ten minutes after noon. This is the part where I’m supposed to tell you that because we chose to go to church we were blessed by the mightiest sermon since Charles Spurgeon, or that the sinus infection that had ruined my whole vacation miraculously disappeared in church, or that on our way to the service we saved a busload of orphans from a flaming meteor. The truth is, the church service was (from one perspective, keep reading) very normal. We sang, we prayed, we heard a sermon, and we celebrated the Lord’s Supper.

Our faith is tested when our feelings, emotions, and worldly wisdom draw us to value the world over centering on Christ. Inner arguments go along the lines of, “But, this is my chance,” and, “It’s not such a big deal,” and, “Won’t X think I’m some weird, super-Christian?” These arguments strengthen when there are good and godly

qualities in what we are doing — being with family, good; seeing beautiful sights, good; rest, good! These arguments further strengthen when it seems our other option (in our case, sight-seeing), seems so much flashier and stimulating than a typical morning in church.

Consider what has happened here. For God, in His grace, overrode our selfishness. We chose what we know by faith is not only good, but best. God is pleased by what we did, and I have a clean conscience. We did not neglect the assembly (Heb. 10:25). God used his Word to purify and mature my family and me. His Word, as He has promised, does not return empty (Isa. 55:11). God used that morning to make Jesus more beautiful to us, if in no other way than to remind us that all the scenic seashores in all the world pale in comparison to Him.

What arguments are you making to yourself on a weekly or even daily basis? What are the worldly things that keep you from the Word of God and the people of God? What bores you about the “normality” of church and makes you think you are entitled to treat it lightly? Would you instead, this week, this day, this hour, walk in Him? Would you test the blessings of holiness and the blessings of knowing God by choosing what is best? Will you be immediately thankful that you chose to go to church? Perhaps, though you very well may face pushback for your decision. Yet, we walk by faith, and by faith we know that a day is coming when every knee will bow to Jesus, and every tongue will confess that He is Lord. And on that day, when you are enraptured into perfect love, peace, and satisfaction at the sight of Him, it will not be an entirely unfamiliar experience. For, when we center on Christ, our entire lives may be lived, by faith, beholding His glory. ■

SMALL GROUPS
TEACHING - FELLOWSHIP - OUTREACH - SERVICE

Now is the time! Start this school year engaged and growing with other believers.

For all Small Group members - look to those around you in your neighborhood, workplace, and even in the pew on Sunday. Pray for the strength to say, “Come and see!”

For all interested in exploring a group - Mackay would love to find a place for you.

EKKLESIA

Our weekly Wednesday discipleship program starts Sept 4th.

Schedule

6:00 - Supper Begins

6:30 - Ekklesia Kidz

6:45 - Adult Singing and Prayer

7:00 - Adult Bible Study

Supper

We share a meal in the fellowship hall before our discipleship programs begin. A hot meal selection, salad bar, and pizza are available weekly. The menu for our hot meal selection is posted weekly in the Sunday bulletin and on our website at www.fpclw.org. Reservations are requested, and set prices are a suggested donation. Please join us.

Fall Adult Study

Our Wednesday night Bible study will read through *The Walk* by Stephen Smallman together - pick up your copy in the Book Nook in the church parlor now.

TUESDAY MORNING MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

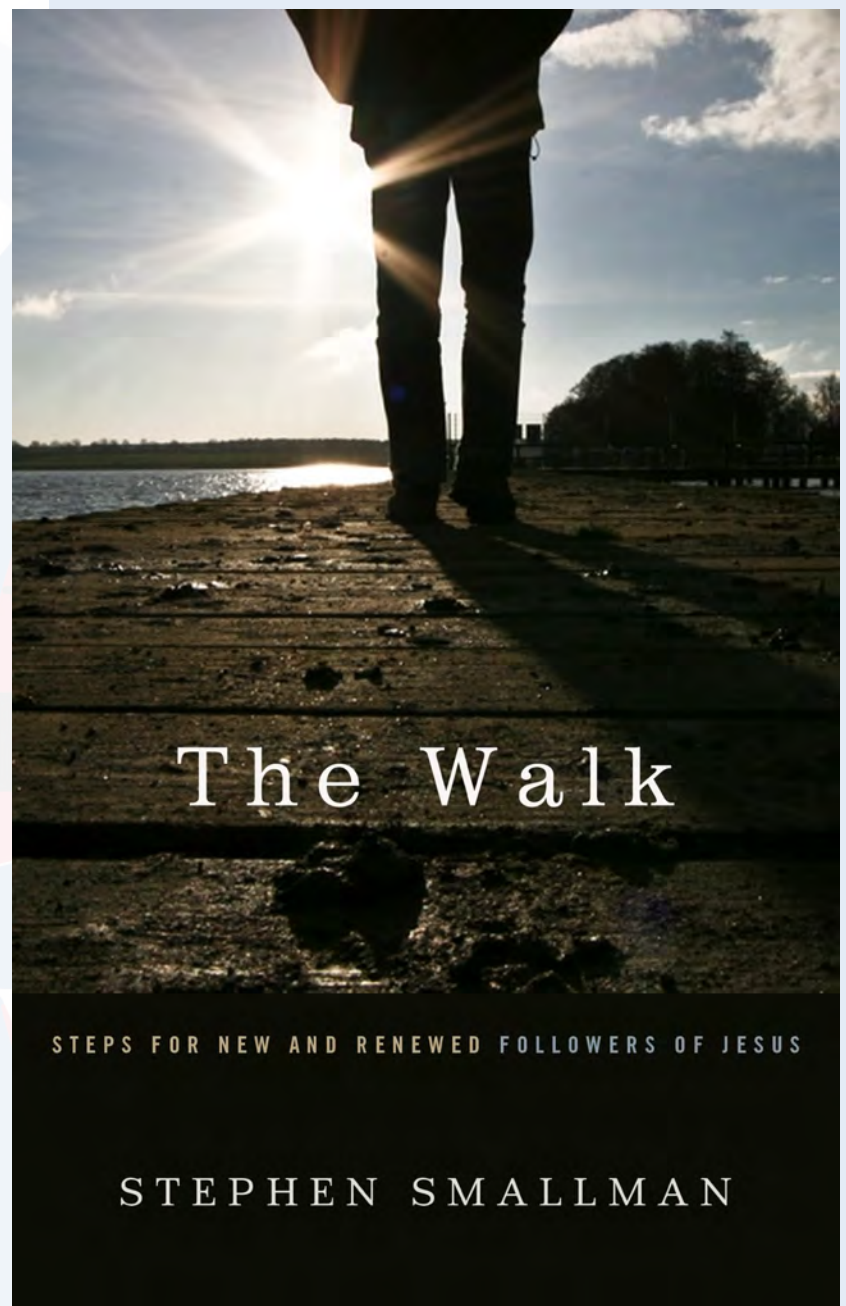
Resumes Tuesday September 10th at 7:00 AM

Men of all ages are welcome to join us! Breakfast includes fruit, bagels with cream cheese, pastries, assorted granola bars, and occasionally hot breakfast items. We first have a time of food and fellowship, followed by a brief devotional and a season of prayer; everything concludes by 8:00 am. A donation of \$3.00 is recommended to help cover the costs of the breakfast. Feel free to join us as often as you can—all are welcome!

COMMUNICANTS CLASS AND INQUIRERS CLASS

Sundays, Sept 22 - Oct 13, 2019

We invite all who are interested in joining the church to attend one of our four-week class series that explores church membership. Communicants Class is for youth who are in middle school or high school and led by Pastor Mackay. Inquirers Class is for adults and led by Pastor Chad. Please contact Pastor Mackay if you have questions or are interested in attending one of these classes this fall.



Music Ministry

WOMEN HYMN WRITERS

From Vince Treadway

Many women have contributed to the vast library of hymnody that we enjoy today, and I have selected a few of my favorite women authors from the *Trinity Hymnal* to highlight. While this brief article is not meant to be exhaustive, I hope it inspires you to investigate the back of the hymnal in the Authors of Hymns section to discover more. I would also encourage you to look up these wonderful texts and enjoy the depth of beauty and the spiritual value they offer.

I begin with Anne Steele (1716-1778) who was the daughter of a Baptist preacher and authored 144 hymns, 34 metrical Psalms, and 50 poems. Her primary publication was *Poems on Subjects Chiefly Devotional* (1760) which she published under the pseudonym, Theodosia. She was to be married, but on the day of her wedding, her husband-to-be drowned bathing in a river. She fell and injured her hip at age 19 and remained an invalid for the remainder of her life. She penned *Father of Mercies, in Your Word*; there are five of her hymns in the *Trinity Hymnal*.

Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871) was the daughter of a silk merchant and an invalid all her life. She suffered greatly, and at her conversion to Christ she wrote the hymn *Just As I Am*. She authored 150 hymns and many poems. Julia Bulkley Cady Cory (1882-1963) was the daughter of an architect, Cleveland Cady, and was married to Robert Cory. She lived in New York and attended the Brick Presbyterian Church. She wrote the well-known Thanksgiving hymn, *We Praise You, O God, Our Redeemer, Creator*. Anne Laetitia Waring (1820-1910) was first a Quaker and later was baptized into the Church of England. She authored several collections of hymns and poems; her most famous collection was *Hymns and Meditations* (1850). One of her hymns is entitled *Father, I Know That All My Life*.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895) was an Irish poet and hymn writer and was married to William Alexander, an Anglican clergyman. She wrote many hymns and

was a great advocate for the poor. Many of her hymns were intended for children and were by no means dumbed down, but intentionally written for raising children's understanding. Among her most famous hymns were *All Things Bright and Beautiful*, *Once in Royal David's City*, *There Is a Green Hill Far Away*, and *Jesus Calls Us*.

One of my favorite hymns, *Children of the Heavenly Father*, was written by Carolina V. Sandell Berg (1832-1903), one of Sweden's most celebrated hymn writers. She wrote more than 650 hymns, including *Day by Day* and *with Each Passing Moment*.

One rather humorous story accompanies the British hymn writer Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879) who was reputed to be a strong evangelist. A commentary written about her life describes her as overwhelming and delightful, "as long as one keeps a comfortable distance." She wrote *Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak* and *Take My Life, and Let It Be*. She also wrote hymn tunes, works for children and religious pamphlets.

Finally, I would like to mention Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894), considered by many to be one of the most influential female poets of the 19th century. Her most famous collection is *Goblin Market and Other Poems*. However, she also wrote the texts for the carols, *In the Bleak Midwinter* and *Love Came Down at Christmas*. One of my favorite hymns of hers is *None Other Lamb*. I hope this brief introduction to women hymn authors has sparked some interest to investigate their hymns on your own. You will not be disappointed! ■

CHANCEL CHOIR NEEDS YOU!

We are seeking folks to join us this fall! The Chancel Choir helps lead Sunday morning worship September through May and rehearses on Wednesdays from 7:30-9:00 pm (after Ekklesia). The Chancel Choir also functions as a small group with fellowship, fun, and sharing prayer requests, while learning many styles of music for worship. If you are interested in joining Chancel Choir, contact Vince Treadway at vince@fpclw.org or on his cell phone 863-978-7071. If you are available only part of the season, that is fine—you are welcome!



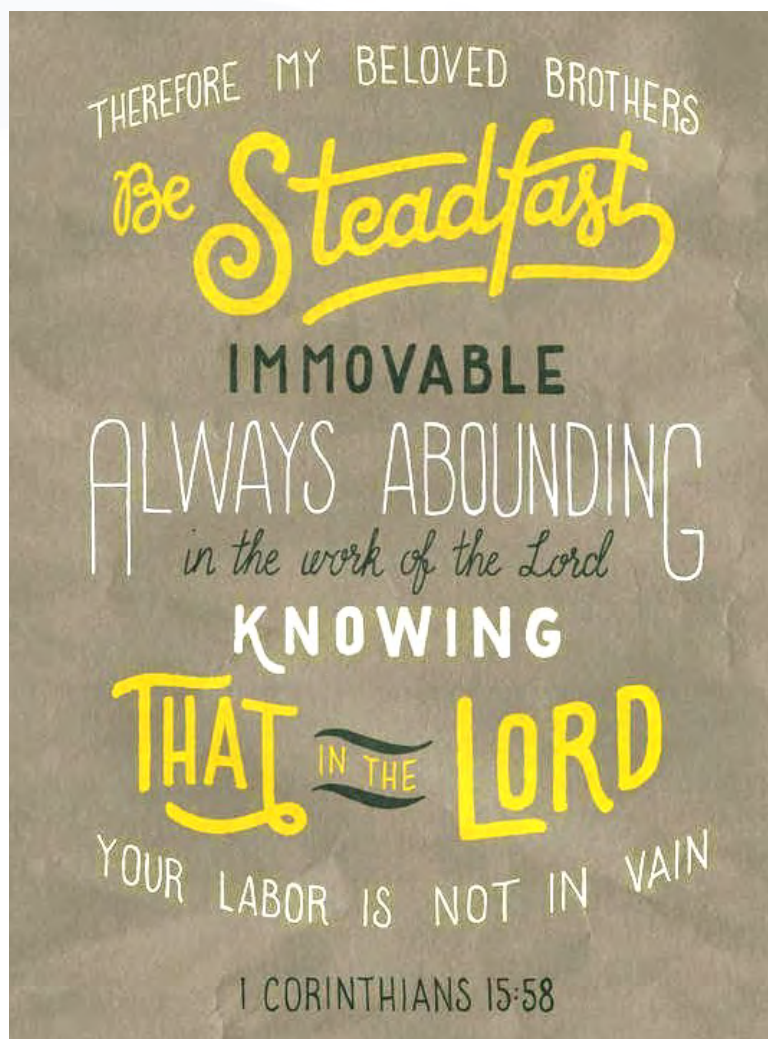
FINISHING SUMMER, GETTING READY FOR FALL

From Shane Miller

Summer is officially over, and what an incredible summer it was. Below are highlights from the past summer and some of the new things happening with the First Pres Youth Ministry at present.

Amazing discipleship opportunities that happened over the summer: Can I just say again how amazing this summer was?

- Summer began with an opening to be a counselor for Bok South's 8th Grade Bash. I got to spend a lot of time with the new Lake Wales high schoolers.
- Afterward, I was a part of a team that went to France to minister to the children of the parents who are leading the Bridge Europe mission in France and Germany. Monty Harrington encapsulated what happened there when he said that from day one it was as if they had always been our youth group. God blessed our relationships with these students, and I think our team was a great source of encouragement and blessing to our young people overseas.
- Horizon and Quest camps followed my trip to France. I cannot summarize in this short article all of the incredible things that Jesus did in and through our students and volunteers in this time. It was an incredible thing to witness God work powerfully through His Gospel on those weeks. If you weren't there and you're curious about some of the things that happened, please ask me or someone who went. You'll be encouraged by some of the stories you hear.



- The last retreat of the summer was Stay-At-Home Work Camp. It was interesting to me to see tons of the young people of Lake Wales who craved and thrived upon simple discipleship rooted in the truth of the Gospel. The students also were disciplined in what it means to have an outward focus of service, as they met various needs within the community.

Things to look forward to in this upcoming school year:

- We have new volunteers coming on board this semester. I am excited to see how God will integrate them into our team and see the ways they will advance the Gospel in the hearts of our students. Please pray that God will bless the relationship between our students and the new volunteers.

• Wednesday night youth ministry started on August 28th, including middle school pick-up. Last year we went through Ecclesiastes and a study of basic theology. This year we will be going through Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. First Corinthians is about a church dealing with a lot of the same issues that our young people are facing. I am praying that our students will be able to identify with Paul's words to the

Corinthians and see the relevancy of the Gospel to their lives.

As we go into this next school year, please pray that the Holy Spirit will deepen our relationships with Himself and one another, that He would continue to open the eyes of our students to who Jesus is and what He's done, and that many more young people, who have not heard the Gospel or are unchurched, could benefit from the ministry that is happening here at First Pres. Also, please prayerfully consider how you might be able to take part in discipling our young people at First Pres. ■

Children's Ministry

Proverbs 3:5-6 comes to my mind, for confession of sin and repentance, I think of 1 John 1:9 and Romans 6:8, and my need for perseverance always brings to mind Philippians 4:13.

THE REWARD OF MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE

From Kelly Harrington

Would it surprise you to know that I memorized more verses from the Bible when I was a kid than at any other time in my life? While I have studied and learned much scripture as an adult, I have not explicitly memorized verses like I did when I was a kid. It would not surprise me if you told me something similar. For some reason, scripture memorization seems to be a childhood practice that falls away later in life for many people.

I did a lot Bible memory work to earn stickers from my very ready-to-listen Sunday school teachers, but the majority of my Bible memorization came from participating in Bible Bowl, a Bible-knowledge quiz competition my church participated in when I was in youth group. There were no stickers given in Bible Bowl, but being on the team was similar to being on a travel-ball team with regular trips around the state for round-robin competitions with other churches; these were well worth all of the effort to memorize scripture. While my motivations for stickers and travel may have been a little selfish, God was working through people and His ministries to plant His Word in my heart.

I have two thoughts on this. First, if this is true for more than just me, then our job is obvious! We must gather up all the stickers we have and head downstairs to firmly plant the Word of God in our children's hearts today! And secondly, I do not believe this should remain true for our adult devotional lives. I am determined to make this no longer true of my adult-devotional life! If we ask our children to memorize God's Word as a part of their discipleship, then why would we not continue to memorize verses for ourselves? God's Word is abundantly clear on its use for instruction, guidance, power, grace, knowledge, and wisdom in our lives (2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12). The Holy Spirit is our ever-present teacher who is ready to help us recall that which we have studied and planted in our minds and hearts through memorization (John 14:26). One day there comes the point when there is no longer a need for stickers because of the great reward of experiencing God's Word at work in our thoughts, words, and actions! When trouble comes,

After giving awards on Discipleship Sunday for Triple Play (our children's ministry Bible memorization program), several of our kids have a new sense of motivation for participating in the program. Maybe it is for the stickers or the certificates, but I cannot discount the work of the Holy Spirit in each of their lives as they plant His Word into their hearts. Stickers may motivate now, but the Holy Spirit will be growing His Word in their hearts long after the stickers are gone. Whatever we can do to help, we should. For me, it is to renew my habit of memorizing scripture to learn and re-learn Bible verses right along with the kids, and to have pockets full of stickers to give them for their work! Please join me! ■



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL:

Pre-K through 5th grade students are invited to check in downstairs in the children's chapel after morning worship for a new Bible adventure each week! After check-in, we will sing, pray, and explore Triple Play, then take off for our adventure destination in the classroom!

JOIN US IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Volunteers are needed in our children's ministry weekly! Please consider volunteering to listen to students recite Triple Play work, assist a Sunday school class, lead a small group for Ekklesia Kidz on Wednesday evening, or volunteer for Faith Finders at Polk Avenue on Monday afternoons. All it takes is a willing heart which is centered on Christ!

Church Family

MILESTONE CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

September 1, Elaine Rawlings
September 2, Susan Stiles
September 2, David Caldwell
September 3, Maggie Hunt
September 5, Patty McKeeman
September 7, Rachel Miller
September 8, Emma Harrington
September 8, Ger Lippert
September 8, Kay Klinefelter
September 9, Golda Carson
September 9, Kathleen Violette
September 10, Donald Krpata
September 10, Jaden Youmans
September 11, Babe Warren
September 11, Jan Lewis
September 13, Maija Baynes
September 13, Debbie Pace
September 14, Cecilia Smith
September 14, Tim Abele
September 16, Laura Lynn Berkau
September 16, Dionne Kohl
September 18, Samuel Rode
September 18, Asher Michalkiewicz
September 18, Suzie Hershberger
September 20, Jill Smith
September 21, Kerry Klinefelter
September 22, Ed Lamb
September 24, Colton Bass
September 25, Alice Campbell
September 25, Hailey Hunt
September 25, Ron Campbell
September 25, Ella Harrington
September 27, Todd Sebring
September 27, Lorin Bice
September 28, Von Wilson
September 29, Isaac Miller
September 30, Donna Carter

ANNIVERSARIES

September 1, Dale & Carol Bourdette
September 6, Steve & Georgianna Sorensen
September 12, Edward & Kathy Enz
September 13, Roger & Alice Campbell
September 18, David & Cindy Caldwell
September 20, Loren & Nancy Furland
September 22, Jimmy & Jan Kahler
September 23, Charlie & Cindy Henry
September 23, Tom & Trish Kohl

Sanctuary Flowers

Fresh flowers in the sanctuary display the glory of God in His creation and add beauty to our worship each week. Families are invited to contribute arrangements in the memory or honor of loved ones or for special occasions. If you would like to do so, please contact Kelly Harrington at the church office (676-0711 or kelly@fpclw.org) to choose an available date on the calendar (most dates September through October are available at this time).



*Dear First Presbyterian Church,
Thank you for the amazing Back to School Breakfast! You have blessed our school in many ways and we are very grateful. We look forward to continuing to partner with you.*

Sincerely,

Gail Quam

Principal of Polk Avenue Elementary

Adult Small Groups, Youth Small Groups, and Children's Sunday

School Classes: There is a group or class for everyone! We invite you to join a small group after morning worship so that you might grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ together with other Christians. Not sure where to go? A list of our adult small groups is available in the narthex or give us a call at the church office.



First Presbyterian Church of Lake Wales
 16 N 3rd St, Lake Wales, FL 33853
 Phone: 863.676.0711
[www. fpclw.org](http://www.fpclw.org)

CHURCH OFFICERS

ELDERS

2019

Andy Hunt
 Daniel Hunt
 David Nelson
 Jimmy Seay

2020

John Dubois
 Stewart Hurst
 Ed Lamb
 Fox Rawlings

2021

Mike Berkau
 Paul Benner

2022

Frank Hunt III
 John Matteson
 Vince Treadway

DEACONS

2019

Jake Cockrell
 Troy Hershberger
 Kevin Kohl
 Michael Matteson
 Wendy Moore

2020

David Bass
 Lynne Hulen
 Rob McCollum
 David Kennedy Nelson

2021

David Caldwell
 Michael Kahler
 Carl McCollum
 Tony Thomas

Moderator: Rev. Chad Reynolds

Vice Moderator: Rev. Mackay Smith

Clerk of Session: David Nelson

Chairman of Deacons: Jake Cockrell

Deacon Secretary: David Kennedy Nelson

Chm. of the Congregation: Monty Harrington

Treasurer: Michelle Hurst (2018-2019)

Asst. Treasurer: Daniel Hunt (2018-2019)