



APRIL 2022

ISSUE 22-4

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.”

AT A GLANCE

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Leadership

A FULL TANK

From Pastor Mackay

Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

-Romans 5:2-5

As the Smith family makes annual trips to the Carolinas, there are geographical and (let's be honest) culinary markers we look for to remind us that distance is truly being covered. For me, the primary driver, a big one is the final fill-up; the fuel stop that sets us up with enough range to reach our destination. At that marvelous moment, hope for the destination truly springs to life. It is a true hope, and not foolish, for we have what we need to complete the trip.

In Romans 5, as Paul discusses the glories of justification, he builds a web among many privileges that God's saving love gives to the Christian by grace through faith. One of these is hope: a "hope of the glory of God," which, we read, "does not put us to shame." In other words, those who hold this hope will not be disappointed. This hope is not a passing whimsy, but an absolute guarantee. Why is it such a sure thing? "Because," Paul continues, "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit..."

What a remarkable thing to consider. God has poured his love into the hearts of those who are in Christ. See first, that Christians have hearts full of love by the action of another. When our minivan

is fueled enough to make it to the destination, it did not achieve this status on its own. Cars do not have the capacity to fuel themselves. Only because it's owner sees the need and fills the tank does a vehicle become full. The same is true for us. It is God who has poured his love into our hearts. Those who are so filled have had divine initiative taken in their lives!

Next, see that this love of God is present and personal. Today, "love" often means little more than a positive feeling towards someone. We may think of God as an uncle who lives far away. On the occasions where you cross his mind (which is not *never*) you are thought of with positive "vibes." But God's love is far more substantive. His love is not only "poured" into our

hearts, but that action is carried out by the Holy Spirit, "who has been given to us." This is to say that God's love is accompanied by God himself! We may love someone who is far away, but can that love ever be truly intimate and full without their presence? Embodied people as we are, love from a distance is always limited. Not so with God. His love is personal, for he is with us.

Finally, while Paul's emphasis here is clearly on God's actions toward us,

notice that God's love in us enables us to do what we were designed to do. The appropriate amount of gas allows a car to get to the destination. God's love in us allows us to rejoice, even in sufferings. It allows us to hope. It enables us to live a holy life responding to God's love.

So, Christian, meditate on the fullness of God's love that has been poured into you. The salvation offered by your creator is nothing less than his very presence with you. Live with hope!

In Christ,
Mackay ■



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The elders of First Presbyterian Church meet monthly on the fourth Tuesday. The following are highlights from the meeting in March.

- Prayer was given for the needs of our congregation and for the ministry of our church.
- The Session will begin a year-long study of the book *The Shepherd Leader* by Timothy Witmer.
- Elders reported on the work of their committees.
- The Session approved the Job Description for the Associate Minister of Family Discipleship, and heard a report on the progress of the Search Committee.
- Stewardship and Finance reported on the current budget situation. Through 17% of the year, income was at 19% of budget, and expenses at 12% of budget. The operating account stood with a balance of \$262,475.
- Pastor Mackay will be out of the office at a leadership conference May 2-6 ■

PRAYER FOCUS

APRIL 3 - AP Search Committee/Families

APRIL 10 - Elders/Deacons

APRIL 17 - Easter

APRIL 24 - Florida Presbytery

Associate Pastor Search

Associate Pastor for Family Discipleship Search Update

With an approved Job Description in hand, the committee is currently advertising the position and discussing with ministers. Please continue to pray that God would lead us to the right man. ■



Discipleship

ROCK ON WEDNESDAYS

Wednesdays in Fellowship Hall

Weekly Schedule

6:00 - Supper in Fellowship Hall
6:30 - Celebration of Community / Dismissal of Students
6:30-7:30 - Children's Program / Youth Program
6:45 - Program (See Below)
7:25 - Conclusion

Program Rotation

1st Wednesday - Potluck and Family Fellowship
2nd Wednesday - Breakout Night
3rd Wednesday - Hymn Sing and Prayer Meeting
4th Wednesday - Bible Study
5th Wednesday - Rock on Wednesday will NOT meet on 5th Wednesdays.

Upcoming Highlights

April 13 - Video update from World Witness missionary Juan Carlos Bonilla

May 4 - Fellowship Night - Movie Night!

Our Final Rock on Wednesday of the 2021-2022 season is May 25.



Spring 2022 Tapestry Tea



Right: Close to 140 gathered in our Fellowship Hall on Saturday, April 2, bringing together many generations of women!



The room was filled with the chatter of new and old friends! We collected 114 stuffed animals to be donated to CHOICES Pregnancy Center. Thank you to all who came and to the many who worked so hard to put on this wonderful event.

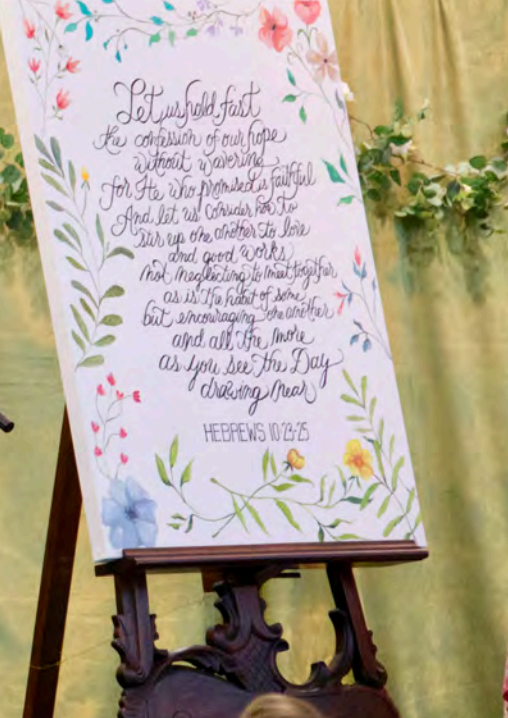
Above: Our theme verse was Hebrew 10:23-25

Below: Our speaker, Miriam Rockness, charged us with the importance of gathering together as Christian women.



Above: Our little ladies (4yrs-K) gathered for a Teddy Tea led by Patti Falk

Below: Our tables were set beautifully thanks to the hard work and generosity of so many!



Women's Discipleship

Tuesday Morning Circle
Meets every second Tuesday at 930am
Lead by Jane Terry

Thursday Evening Circle
Meetings every second Thursday at 630pm
Lead by Lori Woods

Musical Beginnings (Mommy & Me music)
Meets every Wednesday, babies to 3yrs
Lead by Rachel Smith

R.O.W. Women's Bible Study
Meets every second Wednesday
Lead by Rachel Smith



Missions & Outreach

YOUR PRAYERS HEARD!

From Ruth & Juan Carlos Bonilla

We thank our First Presbyterian Church Lake Wales family for this wonderful opportunity to share an update about our church planting ministry in Madrid, Spain.

Our family thanks God for everything we have learned about the people, culture, and ministry throughout the past seven and a half years while living in Spain. The love of God that fills our hearts to serve the people that we are interacting with everyday continues growing with the passing of the years. In ministry we link, or connect, everything we have learned and love about church planting with strategies that are designed to share the good news of Jesus Christ, with the expectation that God will call people to himself so He can establish His church in the postmodern society of Madrid. What is next in the church planting's chain of learning, loving, and linking? **Launching!**

During the past three months of this new year 2022, we have witnessed and experienced how our vision of planting a missional and multicultural church among the professional families in Madrid becomes a reality. A reality that is full of joy and praises to the King of kings. Our family, as pioneer missionaries, thank the Lord for sustaining us during the first seven and a half years of ministry in Madrid and for His guidance in every step of the church planting ministry.

About a year ago, we started our weekly Bible studies first in an area outside and then in our living room and God continues answering yours and our prayers. In February of this year, God opened the door for a **NEW PLACE** outside of our house where we can have our worship services as part of planting a church from scratch here in Madrid.

On February 13th we celebrated our first public worship service in the new building that God provided. This building is located only two blocks from the bullfighting ring, which means that it's a centric location near downtown Madrid. Our family and four other families that God called through our weekly Bible studies are part of our

core group. Currently I'm preaching a series of beginning the Christian life, teaching Sunday school for adults, evangelism ministry, publishing our church's website and social ministry.

We had the blessing of building the website of the church, so people can learn about our new church. Please pray that this website can be used as a point of contact for those that are not Christians, as well as, for Christians who don't have a church, but are looking for one.

Ruth teaches the children, helps with evangelism, and she leads the music and media ministry of our new church. Esther Catherine, our oldest daughter, is also helping with the children. We pray that soon Esther Catherine will help with the music since the Lord has blessed her with a beautiful voice. Sarah Pressly enjoys attending church and her children's class, as well as helping to set up the chairs every Sunday morning. Also, every member of the churches' core team is helping tremendously every Sunday so everything can be done with excellence for our King of kings. The name of our church in Spanish is "Rey de Reyes" which means King of kings. If you speak Spanish, you are most welcome to visit us online at www.ReyDeReyesMadrid.com

Please pray for the following three prayer requests during the coming months:

1. We thank God for answering the need of a new place outside of our house where we can have our worship services as part of planting a church from scratch here in Madrid. Now that we meet to worship in a new place, please pray that the non-Christians and new families that have visited us will come back to worship with us.
2. That all activities and events planned for the coming months for our church will be well attended and blessed by our Heavenly Father.
3. That our church planting core team will be strengthened and renewed through every worship service and Sunday school classes.

Juan Carlos and Ruth Bonilla
Church Planting
World Witness
www.GodLovesSpain.com ■



On February 13th we celebrated our first public worship service in the new building that God provided.



Sunday school class after our worship service.



Meal with our church family after our worship service and Sunday school classes



Ruth teaches the children, helps with evangelism, and she leads the music and media ministry of our new church.

SUFFERING

From Vince Treadway

You might ask why the Director of Music Ministries and Congregational Care is writing an article entitled, *Suffering?* There are several reasons: this is the time of year that we deeply reflect on the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ; many of you are suffering with physical and/or emotional pain, or the pain of loss; and I have recently had to deal with my own suffering following a major surgery.

I don't like suffering; I don't want suffering. Yet God has commanded that I "rejoice in my sufferings" because of the good things that suffering will produce like endurance and character. Our Lord Jesus Christ endured suffering; ridicule, mocking, spitting, physical abuse, and the worst kind of death conceived by man! Yet Christ did it willingly, for you and me! As we think about suffering, our own and the suffering of those we know and love, it is helpful to remember what God says about it—it is not without purpose. I would like to share a few Scripture texts with you on suffering:

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5:3-5

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

James 1:2-3

. . .being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience.

Colossians 1:11

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Romans 12:12

As we consider our Lord's suffering and our own, I would like to leave you with a prayer as well as the above Scripture texts to reflect on.

"Holy and loving Father, I don't like or want to suffer, yet You have commanded that I "rejoice in my suffering" because of the good things it will produce in me. Please show me how and enable me to do this because I am weak, and Your Word says it is by YOUR might, and not by my feeble strength that this is possible. I am trusting in Your Word which says,

All things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28

Fulfill in me Your perfect and holy will, I pray. Strengthen me in my weakness. Forgive me when I begin to complain or resent my circumstances. I humble myself to Your holy will.

For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.

2 Corinthians. 1:5

. . .that I may know Him and the power of the resurrection, and may share His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death.

Philippians 3:10

But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed.

1 Peter 4:13

Thank you, Christ, for suffering on my behalf, and for all those who call on your name. Thank you for being ever present with us all as we suffer, for you have said,

Never will I leave you or forsake you.

Deuteronomy 31:8, Matthew 28:20

Thank you for the hope we have of an eternity with you! May our suffering not be in vain, but accomplish all that you intended!"

Though He slay me, I will hope in Him!

Job 13:15a ■

Family Ministry

Opportunities abound for all ages to learn from God's Word!
Contact a pastor, elder, or a teacher below for more information!

YOUTH MINISTRY (MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL)

Sunday Worship - 9:30am Sunday

Sunday School

Following Morning Worship in the Game Room
Teachers - Mike and Julia Berkau
Study of Philippians will conclude on
May 8th

Sunday Night House Group - 5:00pm

Middle and High School are welcome!

**April 24 - David and Cindy Nelson home May
May 22 - Stewart and Michelle Hurst home**

Wednesday Nights 6:30-7:30pm

*On some Wednesdays, our youth will remain with their church family for the Rock on Wednesday program.
Stay tuned to church announcements*

Children's Ministry

Sunday Worship - 9:30am

Sunday School

Following Morning Worship in the children's department.
4 yrs-Kindergarten teacher - Patti Falk.
1st through 5th grade teachers - Lynne Shear and Katie Lippert

Wednesday Nights - 6:30-7:30pm

R.O.W. Kids! - Study of Psalm 23

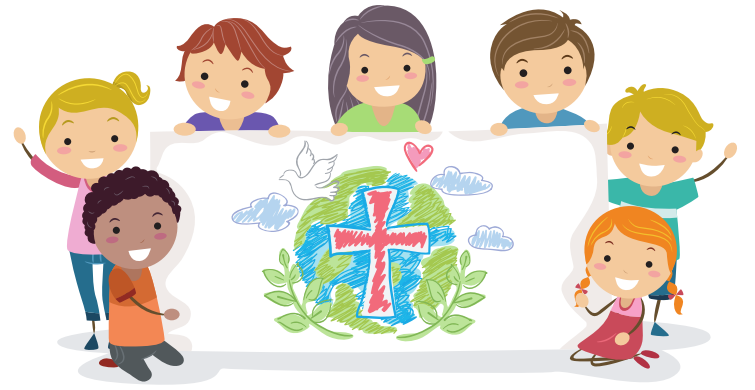
Second Wednesday teachers- Cindy Nelson & Caroline Swanson
Fourth Wednesday teacher- Rachel Smith & Caroline Swanson

*On some Wednesdays, our children will remain with their church family for the Rock on Wednesday program.
Stay tuned to church announcements.*

FPCLW Kids

MONTHLY

ANNOUNCEMENTS



April 2022

Hello dear FPCLW Families!

We are excited about all that God is doing in the Sunday School of First Presbyterian Church of Lake Wales and we want to keep you updated on all that is happening! This month we continue to use Pastor Mackay's sermons as the backbone of our Bible study time, with the exception of Palm Sunday and Easter. On these special days, we will focus specifically on why we celebrate these days. We look forward to a wonderful month together!

Special request - In May, we will be creating a special project for Mother's Day. If you have any empty, washed tuna cans, please bring them to us on or before May 8. Thank you!

Sunday School Activities to look forward to

4/3 - Water lily paintings in the style of Monet to symbolize treating our church family with purity (lilies represent purity)

4/10 - Palm Sunday.. We will role play the Triumphal Entry and finish our water lily paintings. We will also add palm branches to the large wooden cross outside the children's area. Check it out before you leave!

4/17 - Easter. We will bake Resurrection Rolls, add flowers to the wooden cross, and have a small Easter treat along with a special Easter breakfast, focusing on the Resurrection in our Bible study time.

4/24 - Using the art technique of pointillism, we will learn that "even a child is known by his actions, whether his conduct is pure and upright" Proverbs 20:11

MILESTONE CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

April 1, Gail Frankenburger
April 1, Amber Merwitz
April 1, Jimmy Seay
April 2, Nolan Hunt
April 2, Diana Smith
April 4, Bear Brewer
April 4, Bill Johnson
April 4, Mackay Smith
April 6, Debra Mullins
April 7, Carolyn Barnhardt
April 9, Paul Benner,
April 9, Matthew Crews
April 9, Sarah Owens
April 11, Stacey Butcher
April 14, Edward Enz
April 14, Jayne Linton
April 15, Laura Bennett
April 15, Carrie Blackburn
April 15, Scott Blackburn
April 15, Kay Clegg

April 16, Hunter Matteson
April 16, Colby Pike
April 16, Heather Wilson
April 17, Evelyn King
April 18, John Steensma
April 19, Adrijana Hunt
April 19, Reid Pike
April 19, Lori Woods
April 21, Lynne Hulen
April 23, P.J. Lewis
April 24, Joey Swanson
April 25, Emery McCartney
April 26, Kenzie Cockrell
April 26, Blake Wise
April 27, Willa Campbell
April 30, Shelby Loveless-Cushing

ANNIVERSARIES

Sue & Ron Campbell, April 11
Kathe & Tom Galloway, April 24
Cindy & David Nelson, April 20
June & David Ullman, April 28



HE IS RISEN!



First Presbyterian Church of Lake Wales
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 Phone: 863.676.0711
 fpclw.org

CHURCH OFFICERS

ELDERS

2022

Frank Hunt III
 John Matteson
 Vince Treadway

2024

Daniel Hunt
 David Nelson
 Andy Hunt

2023

Scott Crews
 Doug Pace
 David Falk

2025

Tony Woods

DEACONS

2022

Bea Meeker
 Aaron Nelson
 Mary Youmans
 Laura Hunt

2024

Leah Gibson
 Dan Miller
 Randy Shear

2023

Susan Coyne
 Bob Hulen
 Michael Matteson
 Karla Campbell

Moderator: Rev. Mackay Smith

Clerk of Session: Frank Hunt III

Chairman of Deacons: Aaron Nelson

Deacon Secretary: Susan Coyne

Chm. of the Congregation: Jim Weaver

Treasurer: Michelle Hurst

Asst. Treasurer: Daniel Hunt