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The CHIMES Newsletter

Welcome
2026

January, 2026

Pastor's Thoughts



2026: A Year to Come and See!

As I worked on articles for this edition of the newsletter, I kept

thinking about what kind of tone I wanted to set for the year, and praying about what message we might need to hear as individuals and congregation.

I was pretty excited to be starting on a series of advertisements for the church to help make the work that we do known to the community around us (there's one example on this very page!). Members of session had this idea as they were brainstorming things we needed to do in response to the congregational assessment data, and one idea was doing more to announce the good works being done here. We settled on the theme of announcing FPC Palm Bay as "A small church that does big things".

I love this idea. I think it captures the spirit of the people here so well—we may be small, but that doesn't stop us from loving God, each other, and our neighbors with

all that we have. And there is plenty of light and hope that we bring into this world that we shouldn't be hiding or keeping to ourselves.

But I felt there was something missing at the same time—announcing what we have done doesn't in itself invite involvement with ongoing and future action. I was looking for a way to see these moments as snapshots of a journey that is continuing to move forward, one that more people can become a part of.

Then I came across John 1:38-39, when Jesus starts being followed by disciples, and he asks, "What are you looking for?" When they ask where he is staying, Jesus tells them, "Come and see."

I think a lot of people are looking for something, both in the world and in the church. Whether someone has never heard of Jesus or have strived to serve him from the first days they remember, we are seekers—of wisdom, grace, forgiveness, belonging. And when we

bring that longing to Jesus, he smiles, gestures for us to follow long, and invites us to "Come and see," confident that we will find what we are looking for as we follow him.

As a church, we're going to be sharing more about what we do here, but it's going to be accompanied by invitation—Come and See. Jump in, get involved, and experience for yourself what it means to learn, to grow, to serve, to share. Come and See how it is we can be a Small Church that Does Great Things, and how each of us can be a vital part of those acts of love and light in this world.



**First Presbyterian Church
of Palm Bay**

A small church that does big things!

Did You Know...

Every year, we partner with the South Brevard Sharing Center to provide baskets of food to families in need for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We make it a point to provide staple items to stock the household pantry in addition to the ingredients for a holiday meal. Because hunger isn't only a problem on holidays.

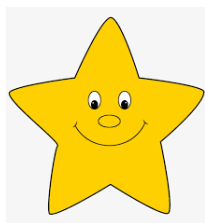
Come and See!

Per Capita 2026

The per capita rate for 2026 will be \$28.26 per active member, divided between General Assembly, Synod, and Central Florida Presbytery. The church pays this apportionment amount out of our general fund, but members may choose to offset their per capita amount if they so desire. If you wish to make a contribution to Per Capita, you can use the designated envelope or indicate your wish in a check's memo line.

Star Words

The past few years, we have participated in a practice called "star words" connected to the celebration of



Epiphany, which marks the visit of the magi to Jesus after his birth in Bethlehem. It commemorates both the star which guided them to find Jesus as well as the gifts they gave of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Participants select a word to be both a gift and a guide for a year – a way to look for God's presence and activity in our lives and a way for us to respond in gratitude and faith. Star Words will be available in worship on Sunday, January 4th, and we will have them in the office afterwards if anyone would like to get one!

**The Church office will
be closed Thursday,
January 1st in
observance of New
Year's Day.**

On behalf of the Session and Staff of First Presbyterian, Church of Palm Bay

An Enormous "Thank You" to All Our Volunteers!

It takes a lot of people in many different areas of the church to make sure everything (and truthfully, anything) happens! On Sundays, we are used to seeing ushers and A/V volunteers at work, and enjoying coffee and snacks laid out after worship. But that is just the tip of the ice burg. There are volunteers at work most days of the week – in the office they come to count offerings, note attendance, and make repairs around the property. Last year, the office staff had a pleasant surprise when lights in the office were changed out and it was suddenly brighter! At home, members make calls and send cards to keep people connected and check on them – receiving birthday and anniversary cards has prompted more than one homebound person to reach out to update us on how they are doing, or to express thanks that they are still remembered. Many people pitch in to help make fellowship events happen by moving chairs and tables, washing dishes in the kitchen, or taking responsibility for leftovers to deliver them to someone in need. We also are blessed with those who are organized and good with details, planning Senior Luncheons, reviewing Chimes newsletters before they go out for errors, and ensuring deliveries of mission items to our partner organizations.

To all those who give their time leading and volunteering in the church, we are grateful for all you have done in 2025! We are only able to accomplish so much because of your efforts. Thank you!

Annual Congregation and Corporation Meeting

On January 25th, we will hold our annual meeting of the congregation and corporation after the worship service. This is an important meeting where the work of the church in the last year is reviewed, the new year's budget is shared, the pastor's terms of call are updated, and the goals and plans for the congregation can be discussed as a community. Please plan on attending if you are able.

Lenten Studies are coming in February!

This year, Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of the Lenten Season, will fall on February 18th. Easter is Sunday, April 5th. This means that Lenten Studies are on their way sooner than you might think! The class will be meeting in the sanctuary again this year and signups in the sanctuary will be available starting January 18th. You can sign up to attend our noon or 6pm class, to provide soup or bread for participants to enjoy, or to help with setup and cleanup for one of the weeks.

Serving in the Church in 2026

The Nominating Committee is still at work, looking for one more Elder to serve a 3-year term and also Nominating Committee members for 2026. If you would be interested in serving the church in one of these roles, please talk with Jack Dayton or Anna Wood.

Christmas Ministry Thank Yous

Thank you to all who helped make our distribution of Christmas baskets happen! Your contributions of food, money, and time made it possible for these families to have Christmas dinner and staple items for their pantries. About \$2000 worth of groceries, plus additional gift cards were purchased, packaged, and made it to the homes of five families totaling nearly 30 people in order to provide nutrition and encouragement for them in the holiday season.



Shoe Mission:

Dear First Presbyterian Church,

Thank you so much for your generous donation of gift cards to our school.

Your kindness has allowed our families to purchase much-needed shoes for the children and we are truly grateful for your support. Your generosity makes a meaningful difference in our community and we appreciate your continued partnership in helping our students and families. One student said, "look at my new shoes, never taking them off!"

Thank you again, Columbia Comets



From Children's Hunger Project:

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your October donation of \$653 to the Children's Hunger Project. Your gift brings us closer to our goal to provide essential weekend nutrition to every at-risk Brevard County student ... Thank you for joining us as we provide every child with the right to healthy and nutritious food, giving them the opportunity to reach their full potential. So many of the kids we serve do not have the ability to provide for themselves and we willingly take on the task to support their basic need ... you are a blessing to our children! Cheryl Cominsky, Executive Director

From Colombia Kids

We are pleased to report that, thanks to your support, the Colombia Kids programs in Armenia, Cali, and Cartagena continue to thrive!

This spring we had the long-anticipated opportunity to lead a group of 15 supporters on a 10-day learning journey to the Colombia Kids programs and see the work first-hand. Participants experienced the culture and beauty of Colombia ... and met the volunteer leaders who share God's love through their service. Best of all, we had the opportunity to interact with the kids we serve! Our first Eunice Caicedo Meneses Scholarship recipients are in their third semester of studies at Intitucion Universitaria Antonio Jose Camacho. We hope to open more scholarship opportunities and take additional trips to Colombia in the future.

Thank you for being part of our mission to help children learn, grow, and love in the light of God's love. Your support makes a lasting impact, and we look forward to continuing this journey together.

Last Call: Information Updates for Directory

Have you had any of your contact information change in 2025? Did you get rid of a phone line? Switch to a new email address? Please let the church office know before January 10th so that we can include your changes in the new directory, which will be available at the Annual Meeting. Forms are available in the office and the sanctuary.

Poinsettia Memoriam and Honors

Anna Wood—in memory of Adrian/Betty Oskam and John Wood.

Brian & Sue Clark—in memory of Spencer Rowan & Jack Clark

Brian Young & Caroline Teal—In memory of Walter Young

Cindi & Frank Cundari—in memory of their mothers.

Inez Rose—in honor of family and friends.

Jack & Ronnie Dayton—in memory of loved ones that have passed

Judy Irvine—in honor of her family and friends.

Judy Rutter—in memory of loved ones lost and to the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Lorraine & Blair Burns—in memory of Stan Pollay, Lorraine's Dad

Ric & Heidi Edwards—in memory of Joyce Steward and F. P. "Tim" Hattfield, Jr.

Sue D'Imperio—in memory of Mary D'Imperio and Joann Warwick

Vicki & Mark Cather—in memory of Pat & Bob Cather and Laura & Calvin Bell

Tom Glew—in memory of loved ones and to the Glory of God.

Sunday School Class

A New Year, a New Study!

The Sunday School Class has selected a new Bible Study to begin in January of 2026! If you have a resolution to draw closer to God or understand the Bible in a new way for the coming year, here is a prime opportunity to follow through on that resolution! The class meets most Sundays at 8:45 a.m. in the CE building library. Talk to Chris Cox about exact days and to get a copy of the new study book.

The class will be learning about the books of 1 and 2 Kings, which cover the transition of reign between King David and King Solomon and subsequent rulers as the nation divides. Some kings keep covenant with God and lead their people with righteousness, and other lead the people astray. Throughout it all, God offers blessings and holds his people accountable for their disobedience.

Wednesday Bible Study

Our Wednesday Bible Study will meet all weeks in January except 1/28. We will be reading and discussing highlights from the OT book of Ezekiel! All are welcome!

Flower Chart Signups

Do you enjoy the flowers we have in the sanctuary each Sunday? Are there special

people or occasions in your life you wish to honor with flowers? We are now taking names for our 2026

Sunday flower ministry. Please sign up on the new chart in the sanctuary or call the office at (321) 725-8484 to reserve your desired spot(s).



Kent & Layda Duda

January 9

Ken & Phyllis Knapp

January 27

Senior Luncheon



Senior Luncheon for January will be held Thursday, January 29th at 11:30 a.m. at Olive Garden, 2508 W. New Haven Ave., West Melbourne. Please contact Marsha Corton at macarter1950@yahoo.com for more information. Last day to sign up will be January 25th.

Thank You to Those Who Blessed Us in Worship in December

Elder of Month: **Clyde Yust, Sue D'Imperio**

Ushers: **Marylynn Yust, Penny Slechta, Mike Nardelli, Karola DeLuca, John & Monia Yust, Mike & Sue Allison, Marsha & Jim Corton, Evelyn & Chris Cox, Anna Wood, Inez Rose**

Flowers Donated By: **Clyde Yust, Brian Young/Carolyn Teal, Mike Nardelli & Karola DeLuca**



Evelyn Cox

January 1

Mike Allison

January 2

Richard Edwards

January 8

Alexis Dunne

January 13

Brian Clark

January 16

Frank Cundari

January 16

Marylynn Yust

January 16

Angela Singh

January 21

Barbara Musgrave

January 26



Session Summary

The session met on December 16th. Matters discussed included the following:

- Session voted on several leave requests from Pastor Debra during the first part of the year, including approving a week working from home at the end of January, sabbatical travel February 2-8, study leave to attend a conference in Orlando February 9-11, and vacation leave May 11-17.
- Session was informed of dates Pastor Debra will be unavailable or traveling due to responsibilities associated with being a commissioner to General Assembly, including online committee meeting June 22-24 and plenary sessions June 27-July 2.
- Session approved a motion from the Admin committee to have the bookkeeper transfer any surplus as of 12/31, less \$1000 to the Capital Reserve fund.
- Session approved a motion from the Admin committee to increase the Pastor's compensation 2.5% in 2026. All other staff already had an increase to their salaries in the submitted budget.
- Session approved a motion from the Mission committee to send \$500 in support to Dan and Elizabeth Turk, missionaries in Madagascar.
- Session approved Preliminary Guidelines for potentially disruptive interactions. These will continue to be examined, reviewed, and revised in the months to come.
- Disruptions to worship are not permitted and persons being disruptive may be asked to leave.
- Recording of church events by persons other than church personnel requires prior approval by Session, customarily requested when seeking approval for building usage (i.e. memorial services, weddings, etc.) or for sacraments (i.e. baptism).
- Official comments from the church may only come from Session. Any individual, including staff and Session members, cannot speak on behalf of the church unless they are sharing a message approved by Session.
- Session approved motions from the Worship committee related to communion:
- Session approved communion to be held the first Sunday of the month through January, 2027, as well as Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve.
- Session approved Deacons to assist Elders as needed in distributing elements for worship services and home communion.
- Session approved the 2026 budget as amended
- Session approved applying for a renewal of the Palmdale Legacy Grant, which would help offset costs related to the Medical Plan for the pastor.
- Treasurer's Report: Contributions remain strong and expenses under control. The bookkeeper will soon be moving the \$8,500 insurance payment to capital reserves in accordance with a Session decision at the November meeting.
 - Average Monthly Expenses: \$20,553.64
 - Actual Expenses in November: \$16,442.54
 - Contributions in November: \$19,370.16
 - Income year-to-date: \$191,996.22
 - Expenses year-to-date: \$174,725.02
 - Surplus year-to-date: \$17,271.20



January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 HAPPY NEW YEAR	2	3
4 10:00 am WORSHIP COMMUNION SERVICE	5 12:00 noon AA 6:00 pm AA—LADIES ONLY	6 6:00 pm CUB SCOUTS 7:00 pm BOY SCOUTS	7 12:00 noon BIBLE STUDY	8 5:30 pm PLATINUM SHOW CHORUS 6:15 pm NA	9	10
11 10:00 am WORSHIP WORSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING	12 12:00 noon AA 6:00 pm AA—LADIES ONLY	13 6:00 pm CUB SCOUTS 7:00 pm BOY SCOUTS	14 12:00 noon BIBLE STUDY 5:00 pm ADMIN MEETING	15 5:30 pm PLATINUM SHOW CHORUS 6:15 pm NA	16	17
18 10:00 am WORSHIP DEACON'S MEETING	19 CHIMES DEADLINE 12:00 noon AA 6:00 pm AA—LADIES ONLY	20 6:00 pm CUB SCOUTS 7:00 pm BOY SCOUTS 7:00 pm SESSION MEETING	21 12:00 noon BIBLE STUDY	22 5:30 pm PLATINUM SHOW CHORUS 6:15 pm NA	23	24
25 10:00 am WORSHIP 5 CENTS A MEAL	26 12:00 noon AA 6:00 pm AA—LADIES ONLY	27 6:00 pm CUB SCOUTS 7:00 pm BOY SCOUTS	28 NO BIBLE STUDY THIS WEEK	29 5:30 pm PLATINUM SHOW CHORUS 6:15 pm NA	30	31

IN THE WORD

Daily Devotion

We're trying something new this month—please give feedback as to whether you prefer the weekly format or you'd like us to go back to daily devotions! Thank you :)

December 28th through January 3rd:

Read Matthew 2:13-23 & Isaiah 63:7-9

The story of the magi's visit to Jesus is not all frankincense and myrrh. It also includes a terrible story known as the "slaughter of the innocents," a desperate act of Herod to eliminate the threat of a rightful king. While Jesus is protected by his family being sent away with a warning, and returning once it is safe, this story is one that connects the grief of the people of Jesus' time with the experience of the descendants of Israel in Egypt, where they were enslaved and their children similarly sentenced to death out of fear. This week, consider that the power of the message of hope and restoration is connected to the depth of hurt and grief experienced.

- While we all may share experience with grief, each loss is different and personal to the person experiencing it. How do we connect and offer comfort and hope when we never fully understand another's particular pain?
- Isaiah talks about how the rescue of God's people was not accomplished through messenger, but by his presence—how does the personal action of God in rescue and restoration make his action more powerful?
- How do we share in the relief at one person's healing, or joy another person's miracle, along with the pain of disappointed hopes of someone who feels their prayer wasn't answered? How can we be present for them?
- **January 1:** Consider the gifts brought by the Magi to Jesus—Gold was the appropriate gift for a king. What gifts has God given you that reveal your value?
- **January 2:** Frankincense was a fragrant perfume commonly used in Temple worship as incense. What gifts or insights do you have that help you worship the Lord?
- **January 3:** Myrrh was used for embalming the dead, and was a foreshadowing of Jesus' death and resurrection. What gifts, practices, or beliefs do you have that prepare you for the eternal life before you?

January 4th through January 10th

Read Genesis 1:1-5 and John 1:1-9

Since it is the beginning of a new year, let's read some of the first verses in Old Testament and verses from John's gospel that cover the time before creation itself. Before all things, there was God, yet God was not alone—Jesus, the Word, was there, and the Spirit was active in creation as well. The divine dance of creating, redeeming, and sustaining has been the character and work of God since before there was time, before there were stars and planets, and will continue until the end of all things. God is the steadying force of the universe, who brings order to chaos and light to darkness.

- **January 4:** What do you think it means that Jesus is called the Word of God in John 1? What is the relationship between a spoken word and its speaker?
- **January 5:** John teaches that the Jesus was part of every act of creation. Jesus knows how to redeem us completely because he knows exactly how we are made.
- **January 6:** In Genesis, God's Spirit is active in the midst of chaos and darkness. Why do you think light is the first act of creation?
- **January 7:** John specifically points out that the darkness was not able to overcome the light that Jesus brought. What kinds of darkness have you needed to struggle against, and how can this statement bring you hope?
- **January 8:** Genesis says that after creating it, "God saw the light was good." Why is light important in our life? How is Jesus like light in our lives?
- **January 9:** In Jewish tradition, sundown is the start of a new day, because in creation there was darkness before light. Have there been any times when a day is ending, and you are ready to put it behind you and start again? You don't need to wait for the dawn for that to happen!
- **January 10:** In preparation for Jesus' arrival, God sent John to testify to the light. How can you carry forward the work of being a witness to the light of Christ?

First Presbyterian Church of Palm Bay Daily Devotion

January 11th through the 17th: Read Acts 10:34-43

This sermon of Peter's is an incredible summary of the foundational beliefs of the church, from its inception to this very day. It covers major moments: Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, as well as the ministry given to all who follow him and the promise of grace given to us. This week, consider why each detail was considered important enough to include in this summary, and what the purpose was in sharing it with this group of people at this time. What can we still learn as believers and disciples of Christ?

- **January 11:** Notice the audience Peter is speaking to—Gentiles. This is why Peter emphasizes that God shows no partiality!
- **January 12:** Why is someone you might need to reassure that they are deserving of God's love?
- **January 13:** Jesus' ministry may have started in Judea, but was now spreading throughout the world. Where can you take it?
- **January 14:** Peter mentions "we are witnesses" - why is it important for a listener to hear a story from someone personally involved?
- **January 15:** Who is it that Peter says Jesus appeared to? Why not to all people?
- **January 16:** It is significant that Jesus ate and drank with those he appeared to—it proved he was real (not a ghost), but also sharing table with someone was significant in that time—why?
- **January 17:** The last two verses contain both the summary of what we are all to proclaim and the assurance of "experts" (prophets) that what is promised is true. Why was it important to include both?

January 18th through 24th: Read John 1:29-42

This passage is John the Baptist's testimony about the appearance of the Holy Spirit at Jesus' baptism and an account of the first disciples of Jesus, one of whom had been a follower of John the Baptist. As his role comes to an end, consider the ways in which John the Baptist continues to be the one who continues to point others to Jesus and prepares the way for him. How did John's work help to shape the ministry around Jesus, and how did his attitude become an example for others?

- **January 18:** Any time John sees Jesus, his message is all about him. What does it mean that Jesus is called the Lamb of God by John?
- **January 19:** John credits Jesus for being the reason he started baptizing in the first place, not claiming any credit for himself for the ministry he has built up.
- **January 20:** John continues to tell the story of the Spirit descending on Jesus—what is a story about you and God that you continue to tell?
- **January 21:** How important do you think it was that John the Baptist continually vouched for Jesus at the beginning of his ministry?
- **January 22:** Jesus' first disciples were originally followers of John the Baptist. How do you think he felt about their transfer of loyalty?
- **January 23:** How did Jesus react to the disciples starting to follow him? He makes to promises, just offers an invitation to observe and decide if they want to follow.
- **January 24:** What do you think Andrew saw that made him fetch his brother to follow Jesus also?

January 25th through 31st: Read 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

As Paul begins the substance of his letter to the church of Corinth, he doesn't lead off with exhortation or instruction. Rather, he jumps right to the elephant in the room—there are divisions within the church and jockeying for status. Paul seems to imply that if these problems are not addressed, there is no value in offering any other teaching. This week consider how handling conflict is one of the most difficult things to do, as individuals, families, and churches, yet it is essential to our life together to address.

- **January 25:** Paul's first step in addressing the problem of division is by reminding everyone they are connected in Jesus Christ.
- **January 26:** Paul uses the phrase "knit together" - a process where different strands are knotted together to form a greater whole.
- **January 27:** How are Paul's opening statements helpful for thinking about conflict resolution today?
- **January 28:** As Paul names the ways people are dividing himself, he points out the implications of each statement—Christ divided, Paul as savior—and points out the way such statements are a false teaching.
- **January 29:** As Paul acknowledges who in the church he baptized, he is owning up to where he may have contributed to the possibility of this conflict, while still condemning it.
- **January 30:** Paul gets back on track to point out his main purpose is not to baptize or bring attention to himself, but to point to Christ.
- **January 31:** What inspiration can you take from Paul's addressing of divisions in Corinth to navigate areas of conflict in your own life?