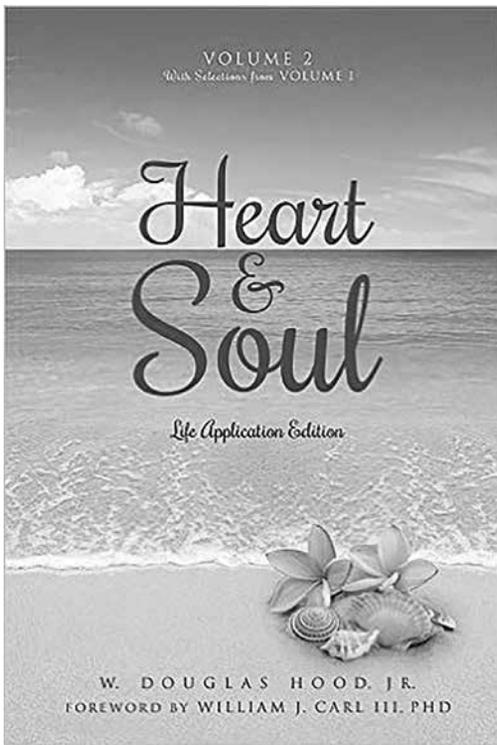




**JUST
RELEASED!
Heart & Soul,
Volume 2**

Stop by the church office during the week or visit one of the tables on Sunday morning to pick up your complimentary copy of Doug Hood's Heart & Soul, Volume 2.



Meet Our Associate for Pastoral Care

We are pleased to announce that we have hired Rev. Kerner Kostrub as our part-time Associate for Pastoral Care. Kerner is a graduate of Stetson University and Fuller Theological Seminary. He has served as a pastor in New York City, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, Fairbanks, Alaska, Gainesville, Florida, and Boca Raton, Florida. Most recently, he was the Pastor to the Pastors with the Presbytery of Tropical Florida. Married to wife, Darlene, he is the father of two children and three grandchildren. ❖



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From My Heart to Yours

by **Dr. W. Douglas Hood, Jr.**

Senior Pastor



“But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength; they will fly up on wings like eagles; they will run and not be tired; they will walk and not be weary.”

Isaiah 40:31 (Common English Bible)

These words from Isaiah provide the source of spiritual strength. Every day we need spiritual power to do the will of God and to do it well and with joy. In full view of the challenges that press overseas and here at home, the people of God require all the encouragement, and strength, that genuine faith in God can offer. Today, as in every era since these words were spoken by the prophet Isaiah, these words have brought the people of God both challenge and direction, as well as guidance and strength. And, as each day seemingly becomes more demanding, this source of strength remains equal to the need.

The conviction here is that God’s work demands God’s power. Just as our physical bodies weaken without sufficient food and rest each day, so do our spiritual energies fail unless they are daily replenished from God. Yet, when Isaiah speaks of, “*hope in the Lord*”, Isaiah is not suggesting that we passively engage in wishful thinking; an optimistic mindset that God will come through for us when the day grows difficult. Rather, Isaiah’s use of the word, “hope” is a call to cling our souls to God. “Hope” in the Old Testament is always active, not the passive use that is commonly understood today. It is an expectant dependence on God, a certain confidence that God will renew our strength equal to what we seek.

It takes time to be holy. Yes, we are called to “do good things”, as the apostle Paul writes in Ephesians, but always we do so together with God. In our daily time with God, reading the Bible and devotional literature, time in prayer and quiet reflection, our souls receive the inflow of God’s power. What a tragic experience it is to witness someone who seeks to do God’s will and please God but does not spend the time “clinging to God” in such manner that they receive God’s power. In time, their spiritual energies fail and discouragement overtakes them.

These words close with the promise of unwearied strength. This is not to say that we will never experience physical exhaustion. In the early pages of Genesis, God taught the importance of rest and renewal. God’s grand design for our life is a rhythm of work and rest, of producing and being replenished. The promise here is that when our lives are fixed in devotion to God, we may experience physical exhaustion from time to time but always with the exhilaration that God enables us, by faith, to plod forward because we are undergirded by God’s grace and enfolded by God’s love. ❖

From Doug Hood’s Heart & Soul, Volume 2, now available on Amazon and in the church.

Church Staff

W. Douglas Hood, Jr., D.Min.
Senior Pastor

Kernie Kostrub, M.Div.
Associate for Pastoral Care

Donald J. Cannarozzi, M.M., J.D.
Organist / Director of Music

James K. Poch, S.M.M.
Associate Director of Music

Grace Cameron Hood, B.C.E.
Director of Children and Family Ministry

Ben Sorensen, D. Min.
Director of Youth, College and Young Adult Ministry

Nancy Fine, CA
Church Administrator

Christine Davis Mindi Cole
Accountant Secretary

Aaron Strippel Rita Avery
Head Custodian Custodian

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The Spire

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Printers Choice

If you or a family member are hospitalized, please notify the church office. Even if you give the name of the church upon admission, the hospital will NOT notify us.

NURTURE FAITH

with
Dr. W. Douglas Hood, Jr.

“We discover what’s involved in our Christian commitment not by reading books about it but by the daily effort to live in a way that allows Jesus Christ to come through in our lives.”

(Rowan Williams)

A Basic Approach to Spiritual Growth



Formative Practices

Worship Regularly
Pray Daily
Learn & Apply God’s Word
Participate in a Ministry
Give Financially



Time in Solitude with God

Identify a regular time each day to be alone with God for a minimum of twenty minutes reading the Bible and prayer. Also helpful is the use of a devotional guide such as Dr. Hood’s *Heart & Soul* available from the church.



Time in Community with Others

One hour each week, spend time with one or more people reading the Bible and discussing the application to life today. Also share how your faith is growing or faith challenges you are facing. This may be done with a spouse, children, or friends. Make it enjoyable with a beverage and snacks.



Time Sharing Your Faith with Another

Our faith expands richly by sharing with another person how we are personally experiencing God or what we are discovering by our personal reading of the Bible. Be intentional and do this once or twice each year with different people like colleagues at work or friends in social circles.

© W. Douglas Hood, Jr.



Faith and Fun for Families and Children

*by Grace Cameron Hood,
Director of Children and Family Ministry*

The Year Ahead

Thinking about what is going to happen this year for children and families at First Presbyterian Church? As the Children and Family Ministry Team looks forward to a new year, there are a number of great events to tentatively put on your calendars!

- ❖ Sunday School will continue using the curriculum *Growing in Grace and Gratitude*. The children will be looking at Jesus' life and how his life changed the world.
- ❖ The annual Easter Eggstravaganza will be April 9th.
- ❖ VBS usually falls on the week after schools in the area are over. This year we will be pushing VBS back a week to include children who attend private schools in the area. So VBS will be June 12th – 16th.
- ❖ Summer Spectacular Sunday School will go into effect over the summer with different special events each week.
- ❖ Welcome to the Lord's House, a workshop for children to learn how to be part of the worship of our church will be several dates during the summer.
- ❖ Regular Sunday School will resume after Labor Day on September 10th.
- ❖ The Fall Festival, Putt'n Into Fall, will be November 5th.
- ❖ Hanging of the Greens will be November 26th.
- ❖ Children will be invited to be readers again in the worship services.

***2017 looks to be a wonderful year!
There will be wonderful events for everyone!***



Treat Yourself and Help a Student

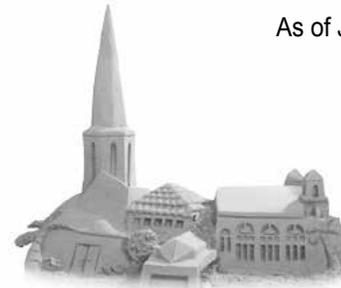
The Deacons are hosting The Club Singers on Sunday, February 19th at 3 p.m. in the Sanctuary. This outstanding choral ensemble is an all-volunteer group, non-profit organization that gives back to the community. They provide scholarships to worthy music students and to organizations that promote the arts and charities to help their neighbors.

The repertoire for this year contains some wonderful songs familiar to many, including Broadway hits “Gonna Build A Mountain”, “Les Miserable”, “My Fair Lady”, “Look to the Rainbow”; Folk favorites “Cindy” and “All the Pretty Little Horses”; Gospel tunes “Little David, Play on Your Harp”, “How Can I Keep from Singing”, and “Rhythm of Life”; as well as current POP selections “You Raise Me Up”, “You Make Me Feel So Young”, “Hallelujah”, and “May You Always Have a Song”.

A free-will offering will be collected to benefit the Deacons’ Scholarship Fund. Mark this date on your calendar now and make sure to invite a friend or two to join you for what will be an enjoyable afternoon. ❖



As of January 10, 2017



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF DELRAY BEACH

Your Home by the Sea

Capital Campaign Goal: \$3,500,000

Amount Pledged: \$3,039,366

Amount Received: \$1,388,283

Celebration of Eternal Life...

Our Deepest Sympathies as a congregation is extended to the families of the following members upon the death of their loved one:

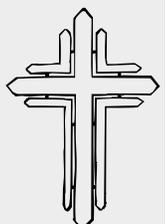
– Martha Grabner –
March 23, 2016

– Ed Cole –
December 29, 2016

– Esther “Peggy” Stranahan –
January 1, 2017

– George Grabner –
January 2, 2017

– Page Hammett –
January 12, 2017



Deacons' Corner

by Mary Martinéz

“Inside-Out”: The Deacons’ Mission

If you have read some of my previous columns, or if you heard Dr. Hood explain the origin of our role when the Deacons were recognized in December of last year, then you have a general idea of our calling: To serve by caring for God’s people in both physical and emotional ways. This role makes it possible for others (Elders, Pastors) to continue with their *spiritual* work in support of the *growth* of the church, while ensuring that the ongoing needs of members and those outside our walls are met.

A phrase that summarizes our focus could be “inside out.” In this case, “inside” refers to the service we do for those who are part of our congregation, and “out” to the needs that we help meet in the larger community of Delray Beach and beyond.

Inside ...

Having a flock (about 25 families) to look after is one of the key responsibilities of each Deacon. We try to stay in touch throughout the year with our flocks. Ideally, you should get a phone call from your Deacon at least once, and if possible, twice, per year. This is in addition to receiving Christmas and Easter

cards, and, if your Deacon has time, a birthday greeting.

Of course, each Deacon has different personal/work responsibilities and a “shepherding” style of his/her own, so we may not all stay in touch in the same way. I try to stress to my flock that they should call on me if they need a little extra help – whether that is someone to run an errand or just someone to talk to. I’m not sure my flock members think of me, which probably means that I need to get to know them all better... *I encourage everyone to know who your Deacon is and to reach out if there is anything that person can do to support you (contact Nancy Fine or Mindi Cole in the church office to find out who your Deacon is!)*

Some of the things the Deacons do “inside,” we do as a group. One of these projects is the Deacons’ Scholarship Fund. This fund enables us to provide financial support to young people who have been members of the congregation and have actively participated in its youth activities. We have done many events to raise money for this fund, including summer get-togethers, a talent show, and the Blessing of the Pets, which is an annual service. You have been reading about **the upcoming concert here at our church by The Club**

Singers on February 19th at 3 p.m. (see more information in this issue of *The Spire*), which will also support this fund.

As you may remember, the Deacons’ budget is separate from that of the rest of the church: we depend on the contributions that you make five times per year via the envelopes marked “Deacons’ Fund” and the money we raise from our projects. Contributions via the envelopes are used to meet our small operating needs (like purchasing cards for our flocks), and to provide temporary assistance to individuals/families in the congregation and beyond.

Outside ...

You couldn’t have missed our most recent “outside” project: the Deacons’ Christmas Tree, a wonderful opportunity for the whole congregation to bring joy to children in the community. The Blessing of the Pets is also open to the public, as is, of course, our upcoming concert by The Club Singers.

While several of these events raise money for the Deacons’ Scholarship Fund, *they also serve another purpose*: They provide an opportunity to draw people to our beautiful church, meet some of our

DISTINGUISHED PREACHER SERIES



We We are pleased to announce that Dr. Sally Brown has accepted our invitation to preach on Sunday, March 19th as part of our Distinguished Preacher Series.

Dr. Brown, a Presbyterian pastor, is the Elizabeth M. Engle Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship at Princeton Seminary in New Jersey. Among her interests is the way that preaching can strategically shape a congregation's practice of worship and witness. ❖



members, and perhaps become interested in worshiping with us. **We hope that you will come to the February concert, and bring a friend!**

In addition, we also provide one-time assistance to those who are not part of our congregation, but come to the church for help. This support comes from monies in the "Transient Fund" line in our budget. It might be simply a small bag of necessities for a person who is homeless or a gift card with which to obtain food.

Inside-Out ...

In our role as ushers, we *bridge* inside and out. We are here to welcome back, encourage, and check in with church members as they arrive on Sunday mornings, but we are also on the frontline in greeting visitors. Our goal is to convey the caring spirit that makes First Presbyterian Church the warm and welcoming place it is. We hope that as we encounter each of you, we are always mindful of these words from Paul:

"This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God." 2nd Corinthians 9:12 (NIV)

We are blessed to serve such a loving congregation!



Church Improvement

by Eileen Robinson

The Step-Above Rummage Sale

February 9, 10 and 11, 2017

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. – Thursday, Friday, and Saturday

*B*e sure to attend the great Step-Above Rummage Sale. We have some fantastic items and great finds. Tell all your friends not to miss this outstanding event too!

*W*e still need helpers and volunteers for sorting our items and on the days of the sale. Would you like to help by working at the Step-Above Rummage Sale? Come by Holly House to sign up or you can contact Cindy (374-8707) or Marilyn (274-0778) today for more information about The Step-Above Rummage Sale.

*V*olunteering for the Step Above Rummage Sale is a wonderful way to help our church. Please volunteer today – *we need you!* ❖❖❖



FILL A BAG, FEED A FAMILY

February is one of two months a year that our church family collects food for those in our community who don't have enough to eat. We are asking once again for your help in meeting the very real, very basic needs of those who are the hungriest in our larger community. You can do this by picking up a simple brown bag with a "shopping list" stapled to it in the Courtyard following the Sunday worship service. You may choose to "shop for" the listed items, however any canned products or boxes of non-perishable, unopened products you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

Food may be left in the Narthex during the week or on Sunday mornings throughout the month of February. Not a shopper? Donations are also appreciated, with your check made payable to "CROS Ministries" and placed in the collection plate on Sunday mornings throughout the month.



Haiti Relief Update

by Jeanne Heavilin, Mission Outreach Co-Chair

Hurricane Matthew seems like it happened a long time ago – to us. To those who were in its path and lost everything, it is still a part of each day’s reality.

To the residents of Les Cayes, Haiti, where Hurricane Matthew made landfall, your donations have made a difference. First Presbyterian of Delray Beach donated \$5,251 and a water purification unit (\$2,299) to the Gaskov Clerge Foundation (GCF) in Les Cayes. This organization was designated by the Mayor of Les Cayes to coordinate all relief efforts for the first 90 days and has been issuing regular updates of its work and finances. This is the most recent (more can be found at www.gaskov.org) from GCF’s President:

Relief Effort Update

The week of 11/28 was our last week of food and water distribution. We made that decision along with La Mairie Des Cayes to start focusing on restoring additional school roof tops so more children from the rural communities can return to school. We also received several requests from both La Mairie and the citizens of Les Cayes to empower the city by providing them with the equipment needed for debris removal from the hurricane and for continued waste management. The funds we have left will be spent on those two priorities because these areas of interventions will have a lasting and substantial impact on the town. As always, We thank YOU, for the continued support and trust in our team.

Thank you again for showing your caring and support to our brothers and sisters in Les Cayes.



One of the schools identified for rehabilitation.

CHRISTIAN PARENTING FOR GOD'S PURPOSE



Dr. Steve Anderson is teaching Christian Parenting for God's Purpose on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. in the Coastal Room. This class explores concepts aligned with the Bible to help parents develop talents for God's gift to their children. This group helps and supports one another to suggest options and brainstorm alternatives to increase their probability of success as parents. Join them for fellowship, videos, books, and coffee. Dr. Anderson is a retired principal, counselor, and recipient of a Kellogg Foundation grant to study parent involvement research. Nursery care will be provided. ❖

Blood Drive

You have a great opportunity to support your local community and save a life. We are having a blood drive on Sunday March 12th from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Why be a blood donor? Every 2 seconds someone receives a blood donation. 60% of Americans are eligible to donate yet only 5% do.

What do you receive? You will receive a mini physical that includes a blood pressure check and blood analysis based on twelve tests including hepatitis B and C, iron level and cholesterol. But best of all, you will know you have saved a life. To get started, call Nancy Fine at 276-6338, ext. 10 or email her at nancyfine@firstdelray.com to set up an appointment time.

*Share your power
and start saving lives today!*



The Community Church by the Sea
33 Gleason Street, Delray Beach, Florida 33483

This newsletter is available online at www.firstdelray.com. If you are interested in receiving an electronic copy of this newsletter, please email Nancy Fine at nancyfine@firstdelray.com

Sunday Morning Worship Service

9 a.m. & 11 a.m.

Please join us on Sunday mornings as we worship the Living God together.

Church School

Adult Sunday School 10 a.m.
Sunday School for Children 11 a.m.

Youth Fellowship

Sundays, 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Prayer Ministry Team

Oswald Chambers said, "Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work." Here at First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach we believe this is true. We intend every ministry of the church to flourish in the rich soil of prayer. And since a praying church is made up of praying people, we want to encourage and equip our membership in the vital ministry of prayer.

The Prayer Ministry Team meets once a week, on Wednesdays, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the meeting room. These meetings are for the purpose of honoring prayer requests that come through our worship services or through the church office. Each request is handled with respect, confidentiality, and care. If a request includes a name and address, a card will be sent to confirm that prayer was offered during the week the request was received. You are invited to join this prayer ministry team simply by calling Sharon Koch (414-9165). Sharon will be happy to provide additional information about this ministry and welcome you to participate.