



## First Presbyterian Church's RENEWAL IS ONLY BEGINNING!!

*by Rob Tanner,*

*Capital Campaign, Co-Chair*

**O**ur dreams and plans are beginning to take shape. With the removal of the five buildings from the property, we can already appreciate a different view of our church campus. Driving north on Gleason Street, for the first time in many decades, you can see the front of the Sanctuary and the beauty of Fellowship Hall. The dirt left behind isn't pretty, but it makes us anxious to see what the project will look like when it is finished.

**T**he renovated and newly dedicated Center for Christian Studies is the first step allowing the church to centralize all education space, multi-purpose meeting rooms and church staff offices under one roof. The renovation allows for a much modernized and improved activity center for all ages for Christian studies and fellowship. This reallocation of space has allowed the church to remove the other five buildings, which is now completed.

**T**he final phase of our \$3.5 million project is planned to start soon, with expected completion in the late fall of this year. Construction of the parking lots

over the summer will enable us to keep disruption to the church and its weekly operations at a minimum. There will be access to the church buildings and parking throughout this phase, but you may find that there are different traffic patterns as the work progresses.

**I**mportantly, we have more fundraising to do before all the planned improvements can be completed. \$3,040,766 is our current pledged total. The project is estimated to have a total cost of \$3,500,000.

**T**his final, most expensive phase of the project, will begin -- and be completed, before we have all pledges totally paid. This creates the need for bridge construction financing, which we are obtaining with low interest rates from the Presbyterian Foundation. The Trustees and a subcommittee are working with the foundation on a financial package that will be presented to the congregation within a few weeks for review and discussion.

**T**he capital campaign is set up with a three-year payment structure for current pledged commitments.

We are hopeful that as people see the changes taking place to our campus and our vision becoming a reality that the congregation will step forward to make increased or new pledges that will bring us to the \$3.5 million goal for funding through donations.

**W**e remain enthusiastic about the importance of this campaign to the ongoing mission of First Presbyterian. There is a firm commitment to completing the project by yearend to help sustain our visible momentum in church growth and Christian ministries. Please pray for this effort as we move forward -- proceeding with confidence that our community of faith be there to make the project a full success.



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# From My Heart to Yours

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

Senior Pastor



**“Just like a deer that craves streams of water,  
my whole being craves you, God.”**

Psalm 42:1 (Common English Bible)

Country music artist, Seth Ennis, recently released what has been portrayed as a vulnerable love song, *I Woke Up in Nashville*. This piano-driven song builds a compelling story of a man, who leaves someone he loves for the promise of something more, presumably the bright lights of New York City. Convinced that everything he wanted was, “in this town,” a pervasive emptiness overcomes him. There is a hole in his heart that the promises of the city cannot fill; a hole that will only be filled by the love he left in Nashville. The lights of New York, and the promises within them for a complete and joy filled life, fail him: “Cause those Broadway lights don’t shine the way that your eyes did.” The hollowness of life apart from Nashville drives him back to his first love and the longing for forgiveness; forgiveness that he ever left. Fugitively and literally, he wakes up back where he always belonged, in Nashville.

Here, the author of this Psalm is on the same journey. With the urgency of a deer, parched with thirst and seeking cool streams of water, the one who speaks in this Psalm craves God. It is a journey that we are familiar with. It is a timeless journey driven by an urge – the urge for God – that takes possession of the human heart. It is a journey that leaps across borders of races and nations and shows no regard for the boundaries of generations. Men and women chase after dreams, chase after the lights of Broadway, to discover that any dream that leaves God behind results in emptiness. In that moment when the Broadway lights dim before the remembrance of God’s love, we rush back to Nashville; back to the embrace of God.

Although church membership and worship attendance is trending downward throughout the United States and Europe, considerable research reveals that there remains a deep and increasing desire to know God. Everywhere there is a sense of confusion and strain and struggle. Increasingly, people long for something which satisfies but seem unable to find it. Many have pursued pleasure and personal enrichment, but few have arrived at contentment. As the early church leader, St. Augustine once observed, there is a God-shaped hole inside each of us and, therefore, only God can fill that hole.

The radiant life that so many seek will not be found in the “Broadway lights” that are chased if God is left behind in Nashville. Naturally, God is not limited in location, not geographical location, anyway. God is present in both Nashville and New York. The great question for every person is whether God is welcomed in the human heart. What the songwriter discovers is, “I was wrong for thinking you were something I could ever do without.” And at the end of the journey which pursues the radiant life, the song writer finally discovers what we all must discover, “You (God) were all that I needed all along.” It is there, at the end, we realize that, just like a deer that craves streams of water, the life we crave is found in God. ❖

## 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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**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.**

# N U R T U R E F A I T H

with  
Dr. W. Douglas Hood, Jr.

***“Being where Jesus is means being in the company of the people whose company Jesus seeks and keeps. Jesus chooses the company of the excluded, the disreputable, the wretched, the self-hating, the poor, the diseased; so that is where you are going to find yourself.”***

(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.



# Youth Fellowship Happenings

*by Dr. Ben Sorensen,*

*Director of Youth, College and Young Adult Ministry*

**T**he First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach Youth Group is at work in the world! We welcome all middle school and high school students. We meet at church every Sunday from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Please invite and encourage any middle school or high school students to join us.

**M**ost recently we have been ministering to the homeless through Family Promise. Our youth and young adults have been spending several Sunday afternoons painting and cleaning the Family Promise House in Boca Raton. In addition to physically improving the house where families experiencing homelessness stay, we have been spending time with the families themselves. The sight of our youth playing in the yard with these families and then having dinner together was an incredible sight.

Please put these upcoming dates on your calendar:

4/9 - Easter Egg Hunt! It will be from 12:30 pm to 2 pm. The youth will be helping hide the eggs and then help during the hunt!

4/23 - Youth Sunday! We will be leading the entire worship service!

6/19-6/23 - Key West Mission Trip! This is for middle school and high school students. We will be driving down to Key West and help paint and fix a Presbyterian church in Key West. We will also have other mission components and well as enjoying the town together.

7/23-7/29 - Montreat! This is for incoming 9th graders through graduating seniors in high school. We will be flying to Montreat on 7/23 and flying back on 7/29. This will be an awesome, faith-building time! The cost is only \$400 per person! If you need financial assistance please let me or Nancy Fine know. The Montreat website is [www.montreat.org](http://www.montreat.org). ❖

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## Calling All Kids!

*By Jim Poch, Associate Director of Music*

**T**he children of our church will again help participate in our celebration of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem with a bit of drama, a great song, and waiving of palm branches in our morning worship on Palm Sunday, April 9th. Rehearsals will be held in the Meeting Room on the second floor of the Center for Christian Studies, Sundays, March 12th, 19th, and 26th, from 10:30 to 10:50, and in the Sanctuary on Sunday, April 2nd, from 10:10 to 10:40. Children age three and older and youth are invited. Please address any questions to Jim Poch, 276-6338, ext. 24, or [jimpoch@firstdelray.com](mailto:jimpoch@firstdelray.com). Add your voice and spirit to this festive occasion. ❖

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## Usher Ministry

*by Doug Hood, Senior Pastor*

**T**he Ushers of our church are integral to advancing the purpose of our church, *Building Disciples, Transforming Lives*. They greet people on Sunday morning and communicate to each person that they are welcomed. In a very real sense, the ushers create a positive worship environment so that all the other ministries of our church may have an optimal impact upon people's lives. Beginning the month of May, we are expanding this ministry beyond the Deacons and invite you to prayerfully consider your participation. Watch for more information in the April edition of *The Spire*. ❖

# Blood Drive

**Y**ou 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.

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

**W**hat 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](mailto:nancyfine@firstdelray.com) to set up an appointment time.



*Share your power  
and start  
saving lives today!*

As of February 21, 2017



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF DELRAY BEACH

*Your Home by the Sea*

**Capital Campaign Goal: \$3,500,000**

**Amount Pledged: \$3,044,166**

**Amount Received: \$1,581,628**

## We Welcome to Our Membership

*Eva Alaby*

*Joe Alaby*

*Len Battifarano*

*Ann Blackiston*

*Henry Blackiston*

*Mindi Cole*

*Amy Jo Gorsline*

*John Gorsline*

*Justice Reeves*

*Serenity Reeves*

*Shelley Scarfone*

*Mary Smith*

*Jan Van Horne*



*Welcome*

# Deacons' Corner

by Mary Martinéz

## “D” is for “Deacon,” and March is Our Special Month

**M**arch is a very special month for the Deacons: New Deacons join, some existing ones “roll off” and take a break, AND we get to spend time with all of you at the MEET YOUR DEACON SUNDAY event!

**If you haven't done so already, mark your calendar for March 26th. You can “meet, greet and eat” in Fellowship Hall after both the 9 and 11 am services. We'll have a list of our flocks posted, and Deacons will be stationed throughout the room so you can easily introduce yourself.**

**M**eeT Your Deacon Sunday is an important day for everyone because:

- Members will find out who their Deacon is for the coming year. (Assignments do change as our membership rolls are revised, so your current Deacon may not be your Deacon for the coming year – this is really a plus, since we all get to know more people).
- Deacons and members get to

meet in person and begin to get acquainted if they do not know each other.

- Everyone gets to meet and welcome the new Deacons that are coming onto our team.
- It's a lively and fun gathering for all church members, with delicious food prepared by the Deacons and time to catch up with old friends and make new ones.

*It's great fellowship!*

**T**his is how we begin our service to the congregation, by reaching out to all of you and encouraging you to think of us throughout the year when you need a helping hand or a sympathetic ear.

**I**n the next couple of articles in the Deacons' Corner, we'll be introducing you to each of the new Deacons, but in the meantime, remember this about our Deacon team:

**D** = We are DEDICATED to serving.

**E** = We are ENERGIZED by helping others.

**A** = We are ACTION-ORIENTED.

We love doing things!  
Ask us, and we'll be there.

**C** = We CARE about each person in our flocks and others who may need help from First Presbyterian.

**O** = We are there when you are OVERWHELMED and ready to support you in whatever way we can.

**N** = We are NEVER idle, because there is always work to be done in Christ's name.

**S** = We are always SMILING because we want to be good ambassadors for the joy that comes with serving God's household of faith.

**W**hile these gifts enable us to do much to fulfil our calling, we look to you for your support through prayer and your special giving, for both our projects and through the quarterly Deacons' Offering. Thank you for helping us to serve God's people.

*We can't wait to see you on  
March 26th!*



# ASH Wednesday

**A**sh Wednesday, March 1st, is the beginning of Lent when we ready ourselves for Easter. At 6 p.m., we will have our Pancake Supper in Fellowship Hall. The cost is \$5 for children, \$7 per adults, and \$20 maximum per family. Reservations for dinner are requested so that the cooks know how much food to prepare. They may be made on Sunday mornings in the Courtyard, on the church website under Upcoming Events, or by calling the church office (276-6338).

**T**hen join us at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary for our Ash Wednesday Worship Service. We will read scripture, raise our voices in song, and consider the gift of God's grace.

**Y**ou do not have to attend the dinner to attend the worship service and no reservations are required to worship.



## DISTINGUISHED PREACHER SERIES



**W**e 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.

**D**r. 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. ❖



# Church Improvement

*by Eileen Robinson*

## Wonderful Treasures Overflowed at the February Step-Above Rummage Sale

Logistic changes proved to be beneficial for buyers and volunteers. People were lined up waiting at both the main entrance to our church and the Holly House doors, well before the first day of the Step-Above Rummage Sale opening at 9 a.m. on February 9th.

Participants once again complimented the arrangement of the items, how easy it was to see everything and the great work our volunteers, did not only organizing items for easy access but the thousands of items were priced to sell.

An exciting and adventurous bargain hunting was had during those three busy, wonderful days. The items graciously donated this year were unusual and sought after by buyers, delighting them with the great bargains.

Holly House had a first-time successful silent auction that included a stunning quilt, Wedgwood china, antique clock and items from Tiffany's.

Electronics and the limited furniture offerings sold almost every item, the garage proved to be a great venue for these items. Jewelry, artwork and housewares as well as clothing, linens, and children's items, once again, were very popular this year – some of these areas were down to the bare bones inventory by Saturday

**A BIG** thank you to all who donated to the sale and the helpers. It is a lot of work; and many dedicated people working together continues to make this sale a wonderful success. ❖





# Faith and Fun for Families and Children

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

## The Great Surprise Easter Celebration

Put April 9th, 12 p.m. on your calendar for The Great Surprise Easter Celebration. Come as a family with your children and youth for a fun filled afternoon of surprising activities, pizza and an egg hunt. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall immediately after church to get things rolling! **Be sure to bring your own basket to hunt eggs!!**

## Easter Sunday News

We invite all school age children to remain with parents and guardians during this special Easter Service. There will be no Sunday School on Easter Sunday, April 16th. The Nursery will be open for the 9 a.m. service and Bible Bunch and Nursery will be provided for children kindergarten and under at the 11 a.m. service.

## Vacation Bible School

Put VBS on your calendars now! We are planning to have it from June 12th to 16th, from 9 a.m. to Noon. We will be visiting Hero Central to see how we can be a hero for God!!! If you would like to participate in the planning of this great week, email [gracehood@firstdelray.com](mailto:gracehood@firstdelray.com).

## Scripture Readers for Church

Your young person is invited to be a reader for the first scripture on Sundays during the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship services. Any child or youth who is comfortable reading is invited to participate. Please contact Grace Hood at [gracehood@firstdelray.com](mailto:gracehood@firstdelray.com).

## Interesting Note:

“Many significant social problems that plague children and families cannot be turned around by a single program. The causes of these problems are complex and multidimensional. They call for an ‘all hands on deck’ response that includes participation from multiple sectors of a community.” Childtrends.org.

Let Sunday worship, Sunday School and other church activities be one of the sectors of the community to shape the future of our children and influence families today. Is there a better place for all of us to be exposed to a loving and powerful God than at church? Come!!

## Christian Parenting Class

This parenting class explores concepts aligned with the Bible to help us as parents develop our talents for God’s gift to us - our children. This group of parents help and support one another to suggest options and brainstorm alternatives to increase our probability of success for our challenges as parents.

Come and join us on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. in the Coastal Room for fellowship, videos, books, and coffee. Nursery care is provided.

The group is led by Dr. Anderson, a retired principal, counselor, and recipient of a Kellogg Foundation grant to study parent involvement research.





# WORTH WATCHING

## Finding Solace in Grief in "Jackie"



A Movie Review by Nathanael Hood, MA,  
New York University

Pablo Larraín's *Jackie* is one of the most astonishing portraits of loss and grief in recent cinema, no mean feat considering how many 2016 movies explicitly dealt with these subjects like Kenneth Lonergan's *Manchester by the Sea* and Denis Villeneuve's *Arrival*. Told largely in flashback, the film recreates First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy's famous Life magazine interview with Theodore H. White at her home in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts shortly after her husband's assassination. The film uses the interview as a framing device for extended flashbacks to said assassination and the days immediately afterwards. Shell-shocked and horrified, Jackie (Natalie Portman) does her best to put on a brave face for the American people, even stoically insisting on wearing the pink Chanel suit spattered with her husband's blood during Lyndon B. Johnson's swearing-in. She goes about arranging her husband's funeral and procession with a steely determination, deliberately modeling it on the one given to Abraham Lincoln. Only in private moments with her family and her priest Father Richard McSorley (John Hurt) does she reveal her true thoughts: she's drowning in despair and grief.

None of us can truly understand how Jackie felt in the days after her husband's murder. All of us have lost relatives and loved ones—many under tragic, unforeseen circumstances. But how many of us had our tragedies make the front pages of newspapers? How many will be studied and remembered as cultural/historical milestones centuries after the fact? How many of us will be scrutinized and judged for our reactions to such tragedies by literal millions, if not billions? The world turned to Jackie for guidance in its grief. But where was Jackie to turn for guidance in the face of the unthinkable?

Late in the film there's a magnificent scene with Father McSorley where she asks him point blank why God allowed her husband to be murdered. As a president, there was still so much to do. As a father, there were still children to raise. And as a husband, there was still so, so much love left to give. He pauses a moment, then responds by telling her the story of Jesus healing the blind man from the ninth chapter of the Gospel of John: "*As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who was blind from birth. Jesus' disciples asked, 'Rabbi, who sinned so that he was born blind, this man or his parents?' Jesus answered, 'Neither he nor his parents. This happened so that God's mighty works might be displayed in him.'*" — John 9:1-3 (CEB)

God was no more responsible for the man's blindness as he was for the bullets that killed Kennedy. The key is what we do with our grief. Do we let it destroy us? Silence us? Or do we rise from it, demonstrating to a hurting world that grief and tragedy isn't the end, that life can and must go on?

*Jackie*, much like Mrs. Kennedy herself, chooses the latter. As she draws up plans for her husband's procession and funeral, her life falls more and more into focus. Much of the film's power comes from Portman's lead performance. It seems her Academy Award for Best Actress for Darren Aronofsky's *Black Swan* (2010) was premature: here is Portman at the height of her powers. At times, we forget that we're even watching an actress and not the real living Mrs. Kennedy. A fitting tribute to the woman who helped America mourn and move on during one of its darkest hours.



# Fellowship Team Is At It Again

*by Pat Breman*

Over a decade ago my husband, Sid, and I came to First Presbyterian Church and were welcomed by a warm and caring community. We valued, and continue to value, the very special fellowship that we've found in our church home. It's not surprising then that we were pleased to join Gail and Ed Jessell and a wonderful group of our fellow congregants on the Fellowship Team. We intentionally work together to create a supportive, friendly atmosphere for current and potential members of our church.

How do we do this? In the next few months there will be numerous opportunities to enjoy the blessing of fellowship here at First Presbyterian. Please join us.

## **March 1st**

6 p.m. Pancake Dinner, Fellowship Hall  
7 p.m. Ash Wednesday Worship Service,  
Sanctuary

## **March 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, April 5th**

6 p.m. Dinner and Lenten Bible Study,  
Fellowship Hall  
(Cost: \$7 per Adult, \$5 per Child,  
\$20 maximum per Family)  
6:45 p.m.-7:30 p.m.  
Lent Bible Study by Dr. Hood

## **March 12th, 19th** *(between services)*

Church directory pictures or updated  
pictures photographer will be in the  
Youth Room, second floor of the  
Center for Christian Studies

Every Sunday after the 11 a.m. worship  
service, we look forward to greeting you at Punch  
on the Patio for "First Presbyterian Fellowship".  
*We are blessed!* ❖

# *Session Report*

As part of its meeting on  
January 17th, the Session:

1. Approved the 2017 operating budget.
2. Developed a plan to contact potential pledgers to finalize the 2017 Stewardship Campaign.
3. Reported that the renovation site plan is being reviewed by the City of Delray Beach on January 25th.
4. Asked if deceased members could be reflected in the online directory for thirty days after their death.

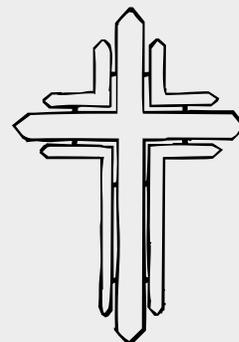
## *Celebration of Eternal Life...*

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

– Mary Jane Grant –  
December 31, 2016

– Phyllis (Phinny) McSparran –  
February 1, 2017

– Hugh McCormick –  
February 14, 2017



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

This newsletter is available online at [www.firstdelray.com](http://www.firstdelray.com). If you are interested in receiving an electronic copy of this newsletter, please email Nancy Fine at [nancyfine@firstdelray.com](mailto: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.*