



Faith and Fun for Families and Children

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

Putt'n Into Fall

Come join your church family as we putt into Fall!! You are invited to a church family event on Sunday, November 5th from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Putt'n Around Delray Beach, located at 350 NE 5th Avenue in Delray Beach. This fun church event is for anyone who enjoys pizza, mini golf and being with friends and family. There is no cost to attend but there is a limit of 50 people and registration is required. Everyone who registers will receive one game of 18 holes, one slice of pizza, and a soft drink. Additional games, slices of pizza, and soft drinks are available at cost. To register, go to firstdelray.com and click on Upcoming Events, or stop by the Courtyard following Sunday's worship service. This is a first come first served event, so do not miss out on this fun afternoon!



Sunday School for Children

Sunday School is in full swing! Bible Bunch is led by Alice Barrett and Iva Branscombe. This is for children ages 3 through Kindergarten. Children's Sunday School is for children from first grade through fifth grade and is led by Grace Hood. They are using the Growing in Grace and Gratitude Curriculum.

A New Bible for Children

I am always looking for fun and accessible ways to excite our children to the Word of God. A new story Bible has been written by Jeff White and illustrated by David Harrington. Friends with God Story Bible, Why God Loves People Like Me tells the wonderful stories of the Bible from the first person approach. The story of Hannah is retold as if she is sitting beside you and chatting with you. Do you want to hear the story of Nicodemus as told from his point of view? This engagingly illustrated story Bible draws the reader in to why God loves people like us.

There is an app available to Android and IOS devices which engages the young listener even more. By collecting Bible hero cards and playing fun games, the young are encouraged to read more and to learn more of who God is and why God loves us.

If I can stop collecting hero cards and playing the engaging games on my iPhone, the Bible will be on the Bible table for you to peruse. What a wonderful Bible to have in your home or car for children to enjoy! ❖

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From My Heart to Yours

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

Senior Pastor



DON'T COMPLAIN!

“The whole Israelite community complained against Moses and Aaron in the desert. ‘Who are we? Your complaints aren’t against us but against the Lord.’”

Exodus 16:2, 8b (Common English Bible)

Lowell Russell, formerly Executive Secretary and Director of the National Presbyterian Church and Center, Washington, D.C., once shared a lesson he learned from an attorney – a series of propositions that the attorney had written down on paper and kept with him at all times. There were three: “Never tell anyone how much you have to do. Never speak of your problems, your difficulties. Never talk about your disappointments.” In other words, he was saying to himself, “Don’t complain!”¹

My friend and mentor, Arthur Caliandro, who followed Norman Vincent Peale as the senior pastor of Marble Collegiate Church in New York City, once shared with me his conviction that every pastor would be wise to preach on forgiveness at least three times a year. Caliandro believed that the single greatest obstacle to obtaining full Christian maturity was our difficulty with forgiveness. Any failure to forgive results in a weight that must be carried – by both the injured and the one who caused the injury. For Caliandro, the greatest burden was carried by the one who failed to forgive. Over time, the accumulation of “transgressions” that remain unforgiven results in stagnation of our spiritual growth. Christian growth isn’t possible without the extravagant practice of forgiveness as Christ forgives us.

Perhaps my friend is correct. Yet, I contend that another hindrance to our growth as Christians is our propensity to complain. Here, in the Book of Exodus, the whole Israelite community complained against Moses and Aaron in the desert. Food was scarce, the days in the desert were hot and the journey through the desert seemed as though it would never end. Life back in Egypt as slaves seemed to present a better quality of life than a trek through the desert! So, the whole Israelite community complained.

Moses and Aaron’s response seems to suggest the uselessness of negative thinking and speaking. Yes, the days in the desert were difficult. Discouragement is to be expected. But time and energy “moaning and groaning” provided no relief. So Moses and Aaron deflected the complaints; redirected the complaints made against them to God. It was the exercise of extraordinary leadership. That is because it forced upon the Israelite people the absolute necessity to pay attention to God, to “make their complaint” before God and then “to listen” for how God would respond. It is then that Moses and Aaron fulfilled their primary call to spiritual leadership – beginning the conversation between God’s people and God. That is where spiritual growth occurs. ❖

¹Lowell Russell, “The Hard Rut of Complaining,” **Best Sermons, Volume X.** (New York: Trident Press, 1968), 79.

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

Nancy Fine, CA
Church Administrator

Christine Davis
Accountant

Mindi Cole
Secretary

Aaron Strippel
Head Custodian

Rita Avery
Custodian

First Presbyterian Church

33 Gleason Street
Delray Beach, FL 33483
phone: 561-276-6338
fax: 561-272-8505
e-mail:
administrator@firstdelray.com
web page: www.firstdelray.com

The Spire

EDITOR:
Tim Knapp

LAYOUT:
Char Conklin

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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.

Questions of Faith



by Dr. W. Douglas Hood, Jr.

Senior Pastor

Dear Pastor,

I'm so tired of being scared. The world feels like it's spinning faster and faster. It feels like things are getting worse in the world and there is nothing I can do to stop it. Why does God allow his children to live in such fear? Why does he allow us to teeter on the edge of nuclear annihilation?

The consuming fear you are experiencing was also the experience of Jesus in the garden on the night of his arrest. His prayer began, "Abba, Father" which is literally translated, "Daddy". If you pay attention to his prayer it literally begins, "Daddy, please don't let this happen to me (his arrest, mock trial, torture and being nailed to a cross to die)". If anyone ever questions the full humanity of Jesus, this one prayer answers the question - Jesus was scared for his own well-being. As scared as any human can become for their own well-being. As scared as you are now.

But then something quite dramatic occurs. Jesus' focus changes. Jesus directs his attention from himself and returns it to God's will. "But only if it be your will". Jesus' entire ministry has had one single focus, pursuing God's will. In a dramatic slip into his full humanity, Jesus focused on himself, became overwhelmingly frightened, and pled for his well-being. But then something happened. He permitted the faith that he had nurtured all his life to strengthen him and direct his focus again to pursuing God's will. It was then that the soldiers burst into the garden - burst into the garden with their torches, their swords and their hatred.

Things suddenly got very bad, very quickly.

One of the disciples, seeing what was happening, "struck the high priest' servant, cutting off his right ear (Luke 22:50)". Simply, the disciple tried to stop the injustice. Jesus responded, "Stop! No more of this!" Then Jesus touched the slave's ear and healed him. Jesus' focus was no longer on himself. Jesus' focus was on others. Jesus' focus was on the well-being of others, on their wholeness. It was that single-minded, steady focus on others that gave him the spiritual and emotional strength to accept and endure what would happen in the next twelve hours. And it would be awful.

Jesus would die, in considerable humiliation and pain. Even his last breath, his last words on the cross, were spoken to ease the pain of others, "My God, My God, why have you left me all alone?" These were not words spoken in fear and a sense of abandonment, though at first glance, that is what they seem. Rather, hanging from the cross, Jesus saw fear and a sense of abandonment in the eyes of his mother, his disciples, and others he loved. It was then, with his last breath, he knew his work was not yet finished. Jesus needed to preach one last sermon - a sermon of hope. But he could not do it alone. He only had a little breath left in him. So, he gave to the people gathered at the base of the cross a prompt: "My God, my God, why have you left me all alone." These are the first words of Psalm 22. Those gathered that day at the foot of the cross would recognize these words of King David.

And, then, they would begin reciting the entire Psalm to themselves. That Psalm, Psalm 22, has three movements. First is David's cry of anguish: "My God, my God, why have you left me all alone". The second

continued on page 9



A Word from Kernie Kostrub, Associate for Pastoral Care

*by Rev. Kernie Kostrub,
Associate for Pastoral Care*

In our Presbyterian Book of Order, we read about the ministry of compassion, “God sends the church in the power of the Holy Spirit to exercise compassion in the world.” We have seen the tremendous compassion expressed after Hurricane Harvey by people in Houston, and around the country.

The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program at our PCUSA Headquarters in Louisville is always ready to express compassion now and in the future. They have been active sending volunteers and other forms of disaster relief to situations such as Hurricane Harvey, tornadoes in the Southern states, Tennessee wildfires, as well as international sites like the Sierra Leone mudslides and the Malawi food crisis.

As I write this, we are preparing to live through Hurricane Irma and will be in need of others showing us compassion. In 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, we read, “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.”

May God use each of us and our church to express God’s compassion to those in need around us. And may we be ready to receive God’s compassion to us in our own time of need.

For more information on the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program and how to volunteer or donate, visit www.pda.pcusa.org or call 1-800-728-7228, ext. 5839.



Instruction in Personal Discipleship

Beginning Sunday evenings, October 22nd from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Doug Hood will again offer an eight-week small group experience, *Essential Guide to Becoming a Disciple*. Using the Great Commission of Jesus Christ, together we will explore the core characteristics that identify us as Jesus’ followers. This experience will lay the foundation for personal spiritual growth. Classes will be ninety minutes in length and will require the purchase of a study guide from the church office. The cost of the guide is \$10. Couples taking the class together will need their own, individual copy. Meetings each week will be in the Conference Room on the second floor of the Center for Christian Studies.



Save the Date: Annual End Hunger Walk

by Jeanne Heavilin,

Chair, Mission Outreach Committee



Walk...

Pledge...

Pray...

You are invited to join walkers on Flagler Drive in West Palm Beach for a 3.1 mile / 5K intracoastal walk. This is great for families and fellowship. Wagons and strollers are welcome. Walk, run, or jog on Saturday, October 7th at 8 a.m. (rain or shine). The meeting location is Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 211 Trinity Place, West Palm Beach (Exit Okeechobee East, to Chase, turn left). Watch for more details in the Sunday Bulletin and church website.



As of 9/18/2017



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF DELRAY BEACH

Your Home by the Sea

Capital Campaign Goal: \$3,500,000

Amount Pledged: \$3,341,834

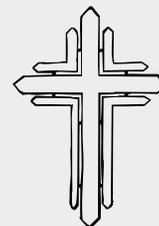
Amount Received: \$2,496,469

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:**

– Robert Dodson –
July 24, 2017

– Mary Ann Kolpien –
August 24, 2017



Session Report

Due to Hurricane Irma, the September regular meeting of Session was canceled.





THE DARK TOWER

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



"The man in black fled across the desert, and the gunslinger followed." So begins *The Gunslinger*, the first novel in Stephen King's magnum opus *The Dark Tower*, a series of eight books and numerous short stories that've served as the fulcrum of his entire career. There's a simplicity to the wording here—a severity of prose stripped of all pretense and poetry until nothing's left but an river of words as pure and searing as a sun-bleached cow skull. In it we see the whole cosmology of the series—indeed, of most of Stephen King's work—condensed into a singular worldview: righteous good versus unspeakable evil. As the series churns along, we follow Roland Deschain, the last of a line of Old West-inspired knights known as the Gunslingers. They are—or were—sworn to protect the eponymous Dark Tower, the linchpin of all existence residing at the center of the universe. Within its domain are all the worlds, all the dimensions that have been, will be, and are. And the Tower is under attack. By whom? By a wicked, immortal, all-knowing sorcerer of many names. Some call him The Dark Man, others the Walkin' Dude. But in the world of Roland, he's simply known as the Man in Black. And he must be stopped, or it will be the end of all things.

The *Dark Tower* series inspires a rabid loyalty among King fans, but not only for its fascinating characters, chilling imagery, and truly captivating mythology. The series is the key to understanding

the entirety of King's output as a writer. Much like the Tower itself, the series stands at the epicenter of King's literary canon: characters, places, and terms from the series pop up throughout the rest of King's work. For instance, sometimes characters will cross-fertilize between his properties, such as Father Callahan, originally a major supporting character in *Salem's Lot* who eventually joins Roland in his travels. In this age of cinematic extended universes, the temptation of a movie that potentially ties into dozens of classic King adaptations like Brian De Palma's *Carrie* (1976), Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* (1980), and Frank Darabont's *The Mist* (2007) was too much for Hollywood producers to ignore.

So we have Nikolaj Arcel's *The Dark Tower*, an utterly disappointing film that isn't so much an adaptation of King's novels as a slapdash condensation of the series' characters, plot points, and themes into an easily digestible 95 minute paste. The film is told from the point of view of Jake Chambers (Tom Taylor), a young boy living in our world who dreams every night of the Tower, a Man in Black (Matthew McConaughey) trying to destroy it, and a tall man with twin pistols trying to save it. After a series of eyebrow-raising misadventures, Jake travels through a portal to Mid-World where he meets Roland (Idris Elba), the tall man of his dreams Roland. Sensing that the boy has psychic powers—or a "shine" as they call it in an obvious reference to *The Shining*—Roland

realizes that he may be the key to stopping the Man in Black once and for all, saving the Tower and all of existence.

Several parts of the film work, none more than the casting of McConaughey and Elba. McConaughey exudes the insouciant, blue-collar ease and menace that made the Man in Black so charismatic and frightening in the novels, and Elba embodies the exhausted loneliness and desperation of a man whose wasted too many years fighting a losing battle. However, Arcel misdirects them, turning the Man in Black into nothing more than a purveyor of deadly parlor tricks and Roland as a stone-faced stalwart. In them we fail to see the summation of the opposing forces of goodness and wickedness—they're stock heroes and villains in a stock fairy tale overburdened with King references.

Combine all this with bumpy pacing, uninspired action sequences, and some truly unfortunate special effects—Elba and Taylor spend a good chunk of the movie dodging CGI vomit manifesting as a particularly nasty wooden floor and under-lit demons clawing their way into our dimension—and you have a totally unsatisfying adaptation. Even people unfamiliar with King's work will find it rushed, spotty, and confusing. It would seem the only movie version of *The Dark Tower* to do justice to King's master-work is the one projected in your own mind as you read it. Go then, there are better movies than this. ❖

FILL A BAG . . . FEED A FAMILY

There are many people in our local community who go hungry each and every day. This October, we are once again asking for your help in meeting the very real, very basic needs of those who are hungriest in our community. You can do this by picking up a simple brown bag with a “shopping list” on it in the Courtyard following the Sunday worship service. You can shop for any of the listed items, but any canned products or boxes of non-perishable, unopened, unexpired products would be greatly appreciated.

Food may be left in the Narthex during the week or on Sunday mornings throughout the month of October. 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.



Holly House Gift Shoppe

Shop at the Holiday Gift Shoppe at Holly House on Tuesday and Thursday mornings between 10 a.m. and noon, and on Sunday mornings following the worship service. Due to the construction, the traditional Holiday Bazaar won't be held this year. Since the Holiday Gift Shoppe opened in September, there is an opportunity to purchase a broader array of items, including coastal, fall, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and of course, Christmas items and jewelry. Make sure to visit often as new items are constantly added.

Visitors to the Holiday Gift Shoppe will see new beautiful items being created by women of the church and friends on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. All are invited to join the team at the Holly House Workshops. For more information, contact Cindy Pemberton (251-4334) or Marilyn Zechman (954-554-4338). ❖

Women's Monday Book Group

by Linda Prior

The Women's Monday Book Group will resume on November 6th. They meet in the Meeting Room on the first Monday of the month at 12:30 p.m. from November through April.

All women are invited to join the discussion and are encouraged to note the dates and titles of this year's selections. For more information, contact Linda Prior at 330-0245.

November 6, 2017

A Gentleman in Moscow

By Amor Towles

December 4, 2017

Commonwealth

By Ann Patchett

January 8, 2018

Hillbilly Elegy

By J.D. Vance

February 5, 2018

Hissing Cousins

By Marc Peyser
and Timothy Dwyer

March 5, 2018

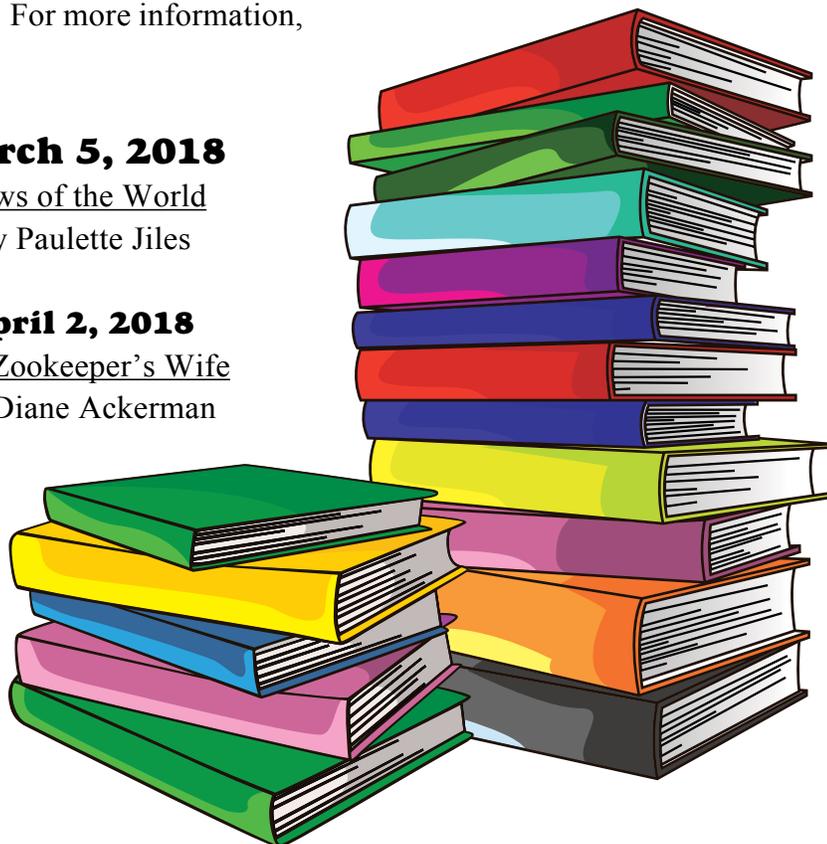
News of the World

By Paulette Jiles

April 2, 2018

The Zookeeper's Wife

By Diane Ackerman



Questions of Faith

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movement is David's insistence that, in spite of God leaving him all alone, David will not let go of hope in almighty God - because David remembers God's faithfulness in the past. The third movement comes with a sense of David's embarrassment:

"Now I see, now I know, you never abandoned me, you were always there, even in the darkest moment. Therefore, God, I will praise you for the rest of my life". And when Jesus saw in their eyes that they had finished reciting Psalm 22, saw hope restored in their eyes and heart, Jesus then knew his work was done. Jesus said, "It is finished" and dropped his head and died. With his last breath, Jesus did not focus on what was happening to him. Jesus sought to restore hope for others.

All I can say is that the fear you feel right now is natural. It is felt by many. Jesus felt it. As followers of Jesus, what we have is Jesus' example: Be honest to God with your fear, as Jesus was in the garden, then turn your focus from your own survival and well-being and ask, "How, O God, might I do your will and help others with their fears and insecurities"?

It is a joy to be your pastor,
Doug

*If you would like to submit a question to this column,
email your question to doughood@firstdelray.com.*

Prayer Ministry Team

The Prayer Ministry Team meets on Wednesdays at 4 p.m. in the Meeting Room on the second floor of the Center for Christian Studies to pray together for all those who request prayers. This includes concerns, thanksgiving, and praise. Each request is treated with respect, confidentiality, and caring. If a request includes a name and address, a card will be sent to confirm the group is praying for those concerns. You are invited to join this prayer ministry team.



Did You Know?

In December 2015, legislation was signed that indefinitely extended the charitable IRA rollover provision. This enables IRA owners ages 70 ½ or older to make a direct, tax-free transfer to First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach or the charity of their choice. Certain limitations apply so consult your tax advisor.



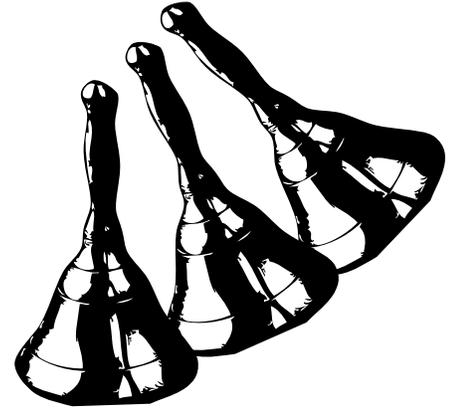
Don't miss out on a New Season of Children's and Handbell Choirs!

By Jim Poch, Associate Director of Music

Westminster Ringers (handbells for high school youth and adults) will continue to meet Thursdays from 6:30 p.m. to 7:20 p.m. starting October 19th. We appear to have a full contingent of people for our Westminster Ringers, but would love to start a group for beginning ringers. Anyone who is interested is encouraged to contact Jim Poch.

Take advantage of these opportunities for fun, fellowship, and good music. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Poch (276-6338, ext. 24 or jimpoch@firstdelray.com).

Children's Music Watch next month's Spire for information about a Christmas Pageant for children and youth. ❖



Fellowship Team

By Pat Breman

Have you ever investigated what the Bible says about Christian fellowship? Luke says of fellowship in the early Christian Church: “*They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*” (Acts 2:42)

We have a strong tradition of fellowship and community at First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach; and we are blessed. The Fellowship Team has been busy providing additional opportunities for this wonderful fellowship. We hope that this summer you’ve been one of the many members who have experienced the warmth and community of one or all of the events that we’ve hosted. Our Fourth of July picnic was truly a multi-generational event that celebrated our church community as well as the birthday of our nation. It was the perfect “kick-off” for other Fourth of July festivities. In August, our church family was treated to a delicious array of salads...and desserts...at our Summer Salad Spectacular. What creative and tasty treats Presbyterians can make! Once again, Fellowship Hall was filled with appreciative “salad samplers”.

At this writing another taste-tempting event had been planned, the Super Sandwich Celebration, but has been postponed because of the threat of Hurricane Irma.

Please also mark your calendars for another opportunity to meet and greet your fellow First Presbyterian members and taste their culinary creations. A Pot Luck Mixer will be held in Fellowship Hall on Wednesday evening, October 18th, at 6 p.m. There is no cost to attend, however, please bring a dish to share with others. Reservations are requested so we know how many to plan for. Sign up on the church website under Upcoming Events or in the Courtyard after Sunday worship. Dr. Hood will be the speaker.

Finally, don’t miss Punch on the Patio every Sunday after worship. This is a weekly opportunity to meet and visit with our church’s members and guests alike. It always provides a very pleasant conclusion to the morning’s worship experience. ***Please join us!*** ❖

Deacons' Corner

by Michaela Logue, Deacon

The Power of Contribution

*“Carry each other’s burdens,
and in this way you will
fulfill the law of Christ.”*

Galatians 6:2

As Christians, our call to action is to walk Christ’s walk and give to others. This act of contribution is energizing and healing, not only for the receiver but also for the person giving. As a newly appointed Deacon at First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach, I feel this is my true calling. As I walk through my life, with Christ Jesus by my side, I am being given many opportunities to support and encourage others.

At our church, every Deacon is assigned a “Flock”, which is a group of families which we have the privilege to give to, whether it’s through an act of kindness or donated time. As a Deacon, it is our commitment to serve -- serve the community and serve our congregation. As a woman of God, this has always been what drives me. Growing up in the Presbyterian Church my entire life, this message has shaped me and has shaped those in my family. Giving to others doesn’t always come in the form of a monetary donation. Giving to others can be as simple as lending a kind ear to listen to a problem or spending time with someone during an illness.

I remember growing up, my mother, who was an Elder at our church, would take me with her to visit ailing church members. On occasion we would go to their homes and clean up, cook, fold laundry, and feed their pets. We would also stand vigil and pray by their hospital beds. We would host soup kitchens for the community and fold clothes for the homeless. At times during my life when I have felt disconnected from God, my mother would always say, “Go donate your time to others, and you will feel closer to Jesus.” It took me until I reached adulthood to understand the message she had gifted me with. Give to others and fill your soul with God’s light. This message is an important one that I would like to share with each of you.

Contribution is healing. **Contribution** is empowering. **Contribution** fills up your cup. In the New Testament, in the book of John 15:12, the Lord says, “My command is this: Love others as I have loved you.” This passage is our edict as Christians. Our job is to love one another and give of our minds, our hearts, and our spirits. When was the last time you gave of yourself and your time to a person in need? This question is a question that contains an inherent call to action. The command to give of yourself to a person in need is an uplifting and

empowering call to action that will bring healing to your life. If you ever find yourself feeling alone or empty inside: Give time and effort to another person. If you ever find yourself upset or angry: Give of yourself to a person in need. If you ever feel like you have lost your purpose: Regain it by loving others as the Lord has loved you.

As a Deacon at our church, it is my joy to serve. In my work life, I am a nutritionist who helps clients with autoimmune disorders. My job and my life is centered around giving to others. Facilitating healing in others is the call to action that the Lord has given me. What is your call to action? What can **Contribution** bring to your life?

When you ask the Lord to help you find your way, ask yourself the following powerful question, “**WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME I GAVE OF MYSELF TO ANOTHER IN NEED?**” When you ask yourself that question, Jesus will answer you. When you open your heart to **Contribution**, you open your life to so many gifts and possibilities. The sky isn’t the limit. There is no limit to God’s love for you and love for his people. Remember, with love anything is possible. With **Contribution**, your cup runneth over.



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

10 a.m.

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

Church School

Sunday School for Children 10 a.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 is taking a summer break. However, prayer requests that come through our worship services or through the church office are still distributed by the church office to the prayer ministry team for individual prayer.

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.