

**Fifth Sunday of Lent
March 18, 2018**

We welcome you to worship.

Meditation in Preparation for Worship
“Christianity calls for the death of selfishness.”
(Stephen T. Um & Justin Buzzard)

Prelude “Londonderry Air” arr., J. Stuart Archer

Introit “Heartscape” Derek Hakes
Westminster Ringers

Welcome

Ringling of the Bell

Call to Worship (Psalm 100) Responsively

Leader: “Shout triumphantly to the Lord, all the earth!

Congregation: **Serve the Lord with celebration! Come before him with shouts of joy!**

Leader: Know that the Lord is God – he made us; we belong to him.

Congregation: **We are his people, the sheep of his own pasture.”**

***Hymn of Praise No. 172** Resignation
“My Shepherd Will Supply My Need”

***Opening Prayer**

First Scripture Reading (p. 226) Deuteronomy 6:20-25

Time with the Children (11 a.m.)

Gathering Song: “This Is the Day That the Lord Has Made”

“This is the day, this is the day,
That the Lord has made, that the Lord has made.
I will rejoice, I will rejoice
And be glad in it, and be glad in it.
This is the day that the Lord has made,
I will rejoice and be glad in it.
This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.”

Going Song: “Jesus Loves Me”

“Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to him belong; they are weak but he is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.”

*Children 3-years-old through Kindergarten are excused for Bible Bunch (Bible Bunch Room)
Children in grades 1 through 5 are excused for Sunday School (11 a.m.)(Sunday School Room)*

The Service of Ordination and Installation of Deacons

Introduction of Those to be Ordained and Installed (9 a.m.)

Deacons: Courtenay Szakats*, Courtland Weisleder*

** Being ordained and installed during the worship service.*

Constitutional Questions

Prayer of Ordination and Installation

Minute for One Great Hour of Sharing

Rev. Juanita Goode

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen."

The Ministry of The Church

(Please sign and pass the red friendship book.)

Offering . . . *"Freely we have received, freely let us give."*

Offertory Anthem

"Inflammatum" from Stabat Mater
Robyn Lamp, soprano solo

Gioachino Rossini

"Inflammatum et accensus,
Per te, Virgo, sum defensus
In die judicii.

"Lest I burn in the flames of hell,
let me be defended by you, O God
on the day of judgement.

Fac me cruce custodiri,
Morte Christi praemuniri,
Confoveri gratia."

Let me be guarded by the cross,
that I may be strengthened by Christ's death,
and cherished by his grace."

*Doxology and Prayer of Dedication

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost! Amen."

*Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.

Special Music

"Laudate Dominum"
Kasia Boroweic, soprano solo

Wolfgang Mozart

Translation of Latin text:

"Praise the Lord, all you gentiles. Laud him, all you people.

For his merciful kindness is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost:
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen."

Message

“Useful Enemies”

Dr. Hood

*Hymn of Dedication No. 388

“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

Angel’s Story

*Benediction

*Postlude

“Recessional”

Swan

*The congregation is invited to stand, if you are able.

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The Church Bell is rung in loving memory of Earl (1914 – 2011) and Joan (1921 – 2016) Teske. Prior to Sunday morning worship, the bell from our original Sanctuary is rung in memory of those interred in our Memorial Garden. Let us pause to give thanks for all who have gone before us, who rest in the peace of God, thanking God for the Christian witness of their lives.

The **flowers** that beautify the Chancel this morning are given by Bob and Natalie VanBrott, in loving memory of their daughter, Sanderson Anne VanBrott, and brother, George VanBrott.

Notes About Today’s Music

For a week or two around Christmas we sing about the Virgin Mary. Rarely mentioned during Lent and Easter, one can only imagine the suffering Mary endured seeing her son tortured as he hung from the cross at Calvary. The text of today’s Offertory Anthem, “inflammatus et accensus” comes from the ancient Latin hymn, which begins: “Stabat mater dolorosa, juxta crucem lacrymosa, dum pendebat Filius,” “The grieving mother stood by the cross, where hung her son.” Rossini, and many other composers, set the hymn to music. The anthem we sing today, scored for solo soprano and chorus, is part of Rossini’s larger work, and portrays the triumph of the cross over death and judgment.

Our second anthem, again in Latin, is a beautiful declaration for all nations to praise the Lord. Any time you hear Mozart’s music, you may be hearing music written by God. While changing the world with his scientific theories, the great Albert Einstein, who believed his theories of relativity were always present and just waiting for a “sympathetic ear,” wrote these profound words: “Mozart’s music was so pure that it seemed to have been ever-present in the universe, waiting to be discovered by the master.”

Greeting You

9 a.m.: East Door – Joan Chalkley. West Door – Joanne Hayes.

11 a.m.: East Door – Henry Blackiston. West Door – Ann Blackiston.

Holy Week Worship Services and Fellowship Opportunities

On **Palm Sunday, March 25th**, our children will delight us by participating in the **11 a.m.** worship service.

On **Palm Sunday, March 25th** following the **11 a.m.** service, join us for **Walk with Jesus ... An Easter Event for Families**. Come to **Fellowship Hall** as a family with your children for a fun filled afternoon. We will have pizza, then we will trace the last week of Jesus' life followed by an egg hunt. The youth will be helping to lead this event. Be sure to bring your own basket to hunt eggs!! There is no cost to attend the event, however, reservations are desired for planning purposes. You may make your reservation in the Narthex, on the church website under Upcoming Events, or by calling the church office (561-276-6338).

The **Maundy Thursday and Tenebrae Communion Service** is at **7 p.m.** next **Thursday, March 29th** in the **Sanctuary**.

The **Good Friday Music and Meditation Service** is from **noon to 1 p.m.** next **Friday, March 30th** in the **Sanctuary**.

Our **Easter Worship Services** will be on **Sunday, April 1st** in the **Sanctuary** at **9 a.m.** and **11 a.m.** Reservations for sitting in the **Choir Loft** may be made in the **Narthex** following the worship service or by calling the church office (561-276-6338). Seating is limited so reserve your seats early.

Take Note

Capital Campaign: Our thanks to members and friends of our congregation who have made their Capital Campaign commitment. Funds now committed to the project total \$3,408,175, or about 97% of our \$3.5 million goal. Capital Campaign commitment cards are available in the pews. You may place these in the offering plate, mail them to the church office, or call Christine Davis in the financial office (561-276-6338, ext. 16) to make a verbal commitment by phone.

If you have already pledged to the Capital Campaign we say "thank you." As we are trying to complete the campaign and get commitments for the last 3%, please consider increasing your pledge slightly if you are able. If your pledge was made on the basis of a 3-year payment plan, please consider fulfilling your pledge sooner. This will help lower our interest expense for our temporary construction loan.

The Deacons are hosting their annual **"Meet Your Deacon Sunday"** today, **Sunday, March 18th** in **Fellowship Hall** after the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship services. This is a great way for you to meet your Deacon and for your Deacon to meet you.

Calling all kids! The children of our Church will again help participate in our celebration of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem with a great song and waiving of palm branches in our 11 a.m. worship on Palm Sunday, March 25th. The last rehearsal will be held in the **Sanctuary today, Sunday, March 18th, from 10:30 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.** Children age three and older and youth are invited. Please address any questions to Jim Poch, (jimpoch@firstdelray.com or 561-276-6338, ext. 24). Add your voice and spirit to this festive occasion.

Come and enjoy a fun-filled and informative workshop series led by the **Employment Connections Ministry** that will add tremendous value to your understanding of you. Our second of a two-session series will be held **this Thursday, March 22nd at 7 p.m.** in the **Conference Room**. Please RSVP at www.employmentconnectionsministry.com by entering your name and email address. RSVP today. Space is limited! Feel free to contact Dick Story (561-276-6338) with questions.

Next Sunday, March 25th, we will be collecting the **"Pennies from Heaven" Offering**. Don't forget to bring your 5 cents per meal per person in your household to church so that we can help feed deserving hungry people.

This year's **One Great Hour of Sharing Offering** on **Palm Sunday, March 25th**, is dedicated to the Caring Kitchen, a hot meal program offered by CROS Ministries, serving lunch at local churches in Delray Beach. It is transitioning from its location on N.W. 8th Avenue to serving lunch five days a week at local churches as well as providing weekend bag lunches as well as dinner on Sunday evenings. They currently feed 80-100 individuals each day through this program. The planned move to Ascension Catholic Church in Boca Raton has fallen through so a new location is being sought for food preparation. The needs for a new location will be for kitchen equipment, with refrigeration being at the top of the list. Help support the Caring Kitchen by contributing to the One Great Hour Sharing Offering by marking OGHS on your check, using the OGHS envelope in your envelope box, or putting the OGHS envelope found in the pews on March 25th in the offering plate.

All Aboard! The **Mission Outreach Agency Tour** is departing on **Wednesday, April 18th** at **1:30 p.m.** from the church parking lot. We will be visiting several agencies supported by our Mission Outreach budget. The excursion should end at 4:30 p.m. There is no cost to participate and seating is limited. Make your reservation in the Narthex, on our website, or contact Nancy Fine (561-276-6338, ext. 10 or nancyfine@firstdelray.com).

Construction Update ... We are pleased to announce that the project is 98% complete. The entire parking lot is now striped, providing adequate parking for our church needs and the new paver walkway takes you from the east door of the Center for Christian Studies to the church office on the west side of the campus. We thank you for your patience as the final items are finished over the next few weeks.

For Our Younger Worshippers

Children's Worship Activities and Bibles are at the **Children's Table** in the **Covered Patio** for use during worship. Please return the bags and Bibles to the table after the service.

Our Ministry Develops Through



Connect with First Presbyterian Church

Please join us in the **Fellowship Hall** following the worship services for **Meet Your Deacon Sunday**.

Read **Doug Hood's weekly meditation** through our church website (www.firstdelray.com) under Resources. Don't forget to subscribe to his meditation so that you do not miss any of the postings.

Following the worship service, feel free to pick up a copy of **Doug Hood's Heart and Soul, volume 2** in the Narthex.

For those interested in taking notes during the worship service, a **Sermon Notes Page** is available in the Narthex.

Follow us on **Twitter** at @FPCDelrayBeach or **tweet** #FPCDBWORSHIP.

If you are a member of the church and need a **blue** First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach **parking sticker**, please contact Nancy Fine (nancyfine@firstdelray.com or 561-276-6338, ext. 10) or stop by the church office during the week.

Members who would like to receive **email notification of members' deaths and memorial services** should contact Nancy Fine (nancyfine@firstdelray.com). You will only be informed if the family has approved public notification.

If you would like to receive your **Spire Newsletter electronically**, please email Nancy Fine (nancyfine@firstdelray.com), text FPCDELRAYBEACH to 22828 (message and data rates may apply), or complete the online form on our website (www.firstdelray.com) under Resources.

Church Membership Directory

The **Pictorial Church Membership Directory** is available online for members of the church. There are two ways to access the directory. You may visit our website (www.firstdelray.com) under Connect to request a password to access the membership directory to print or save to your computer. Or, you may view the directory by visiting www.instantchurchdirectory.com or downloading the free Instant Church Directory Member's App from the Apple Store, Google Play, or Amazon App Store. In order to gain access to the online directory through Instant Church Directory, you must register your account using the email address on file with the church. For issues with registering through Instant Church Directory, contact Nancy Fine (561-276-6338, ext. 10 or nancyfine@firstdelray.com).

Sunday Mornings

Please turn off your **cell phones and electronic devices** during the worship service.

Closed Circuit TV is available for viewing the worship service in the **Quiet Room**.

Children's Worship Activities and Bibles are at the **Children's Table** in the **Covered Patio** for use during worship. Please return the bags and Bibles to the table after the service.

Large Print Bulletins and Hearing Devices are available from the Deacons.

Nursery Care for children from birth through Kindergarten is available from **8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** in the **Nursery**.

Please join us in the **Fellowship Hall** following the worship services for **Meet Your Deacon Sunday**.

Partners in Prayer

You are invited to participate in a six-week ministry of prayer called **Partners in Prayer for First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach Leaders**. This six-week ministry does *not* require attendance at any meetings. Participants receive a resource packet with the names of six church leaders. Simply, the ministry is a commitment to pray each day for one week for the same person. Each week for six weeks you will pray for a different church leader. At the beginning of each week you will write an encouraging note to that leader indicating that you are praying for him or her. Contact Nancy Fine (nancyfine@firstdelray.com or 561-276-6338, ext. 10) for a resource packet with all the details including sample notes, messages and prayers.

Free New Testament Bibles

First Presbyterian Church is a point of distribution of God's word in the **New Testament** at *no cost* to anyone who would like a copy. If you have not previously picked up a copy in the Narthex, you may do so this morning. If you know of people who would appreciate receiving a copy, please take copies to them. Join with your church in distributing God's word throughout our communities in Palm Beach County.

Easter Memorials

Members and friends of our church wishing to make a memorial gift on Easter Sunday, April 1st, may designate their contribution for Easter lilies to beautify the Sanctuary and/or for the purchase of food for needy people in the community.

This alternative giving opportunity is suggested due to the continuing need of people in our area for food. By being modest and reasonable in our Easter decorations and by feeding hungry people in our own community, we will be responding to the needs our Lord had in mind when He said:

“I was hungry and you gave me food ...

As you did it unto one of the least of these, you did it unto me.”

The names of those in whose memory or honor gifts are made will be printed in our Easter bulletin. Please use the form below to provide the necessary information. The form must be received in the church office no later than **next Monday, March 26th**, the deadline for including names in the Easter bulletin. Donors of lilies (\$8) may pick them up after the 11 a.m. Easter worship service or leave them to be distributed to members who are ill or confined to their homes.

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(Please **PRINT** the information, as you want it to appear in the bulletin)

My/Our Easter Memorial of \$\_\_\_\_\_ is given:

In loving memory of: \_\_\_\_\_ or

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_ Env. # \_\_\_\_\_

My/Our contribution is to be used for:

\_\_\_\_\_ Easter Lilies

\_\_\_\_\_ Please deliver my plant(s) to  
the homebound

\_\_\_\_\_ Food for the Needy

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pick up my plant(s)

Please make out your check to **First Presbyterian Church** and indicate on the lower corner “Food for the Needy” or “Lilies”.

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## Sunday Children's Programs

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**Bible Bunch Sunday School** meets after the Children's Time during the **11 a.m. worship service**. Children 3 years old through Kindergarten should follow the class leaders to the **Bible Bunch Room**.

**Sunday School for Children** in 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, meets after the Children's Time during the **11 a.m. worship service**. They are using the *Growing in Grace and Gratitude* curriculum. They have access to activities to do at home via online resources with a downloadable e-book for iBooks and Kindle. The class is led by Grace Hood in the **Sunday School Room**.

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## Youth Fellowship

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**Youth Fellowship**, for students in 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, is **Sunday evenings** from **6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.** in the **Youth Room**. For more information, contact Grace Hood (561-276-6338, ext. 17 or [gracehood@firstdelray.com](mailto:gracehood@firstdelray.com)).

**The Youth Mission Trip** will be from **June 23<sup>rd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>**. They will be going to Mobile, Alabama and working with the Government Street Presbyterian Church in some community outreach programs. This is for completed 6<sup>th</sup> graders through graduating seniors. There is limited space. For more information, Grace Hood ([gracehood@firstdelray.com](mailto:gracehood@firstdelray.com) or 561-276-6338, ext. 17).

**The Montreat Youth** conference is **July 21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>** for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders through graduating seniors in high school. The cost is \$400 per person. The registration deadline is April 30<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested contact, Grace Hood ([gracehood@firstdelray.com](mailto:gracehood@firstdelray.com) or 561-276-6338, ext. 17). Scholarships are available.

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## Sunday Adult Program

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Join us for the **Sunday Adult Education Class** led by Rev. Kostrub at **10 a.m.** in the **Meeting Room**. The focus of the class is the best-selling book, What On Earth Am I Here For: The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren.

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## Weekly Education Program

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If you are just starting to think about who you are in relationship with God or you want to enrich your spiritual journey, join the **Monday Morning Bible Study** at **10 a.m.** in the **Youth Room** for discussion and fellowship. They are using the video study, "The Story of God", by Morgan Freeman, which aired on the National Geographic Channel in 2016 and 2017. For better or worse, the power of religion touches all of our lives, no matter what our faith is. On his journey to discover how our beliefs connect us all, Mr. Freeman visits about 20 cities in seven countries in nine episodes to see some of the world's greatest religious sites (such as Jerusalem's Wailing Wall, India's Bodhi Tree, Mayan temples in Guatemala, and the pyramids of Egypt) and he immerses himself in religious experiences and rituals. All women are welcome. For more information, contact Linda Prior (561-276-6338).

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## Men's Fellowship

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**Men's Fellowship** meets on **Thursday** mornings at **8:30 a.m.** in the **Coastal Room**. Bring a friend and enjoy the camaraderie. They are discussing the devotional book Uncommon Life by Tony Dungy. For more information, contact Bruce Gimmy (561-276-6338).



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## Monthly Educational Program

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The **Monday Women's Book Group** meets on **Monday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>**, at **12:30 p.m.** in the **Meeting Room**. All women are invited to attend the discussion on The Zookeeper's Wife by Diane Ackerman. Contact Linda Prior (561-276-6338) for more information.

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## Music

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The **Chancel Choir** rehearses in the **Choir Room** on **Thursday** evenings at **7:30 p.m.** and on **Sunday** mornings at **10:15 a.m.** to prepare for the worship service. If you would like to sing in the choir but can't come to the Thursday evening rehearsal, you are invited to come on Sunday mornings at 10:15 a.m. and add your voice to our choir.

**Westminster Ringers** (for adults and high school youth) is on **Thursdays** in the **Bell Room** from **6:30 p.m. to 7:20 p.m.** Contact Jim Poch (jimpoch@firstdelray.com or 561-276-6338, ext. 24) for more information.

**Calling all kids!** The children of our Church will again help participate in our celebration of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem with a great song and waiving of palm branches in our 11 a.m. worship on Palm Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup>. The last rehearsal will be held in the **Sanctuary today, Sunday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, from 10:30 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.** Children age three and older and youth are invited. Please address any questions to Jim Poch, (jimpoch@firstdelray.com or 561-276-6338, ext. 24). Add your voice and spirit to this festive occasion.

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## Holly House

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The 2018 Holly House season is about to begin and **this Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.** will be the official start date with the annual "Show and Tell" that morning. Come and bring new ideas, suggestions, and samples or photos for projects to make. They begin their regular schedule of workshops **next Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** in the **Holly House**. For more information, contact Cindy Pemberton (561-276-6338) or Marilyn Zechman (561-276-6338).

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## Employment Connections Ministry – Career Shepherds

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The **Employment Connections Ministry** is here to help and support unemployed persons and those whose career paths no longer seem fulfilling to find a more rewarding career or employment. Seeking employment can be lonely and sometimes overwhelming. Where to start? What goals to pursue? How to navigate? Career Shepherds are here to work with you on an individual basis to help you identify your strengths and talents, provide useful tools, and assist in guiding you throughout the process. We invite church members to join this exciting ministry by lending their expertise and availability to mentor or help for whatever time possible. Contact Dick Story (561-276-6338) or Nancy Fine (nancyfine@firstdelray.com or 561-276-6338, ext. 10) for more information.

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## Membership

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Are you interested in **joining our church**? If so, we would love to see you on **Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup>** in the **Covered Patio immediately following the 9 a.m. or 11 a.m. worship service**. In order to join, no reservations or classes are required for those who have been previously baptized.

**Invite** a family member, friend, neighbor, co-worker, or business associate to worship with us. Share your faith and love for Christ's Church with others.

If you are a **guest visiting us**, we invite you to participate in all of our worship services and activities.

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## Financial Considerations

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There is a very convenient way to **donate online** to First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach through the Presbyterian Mission Exchange which is part of the 200+ year old Presbyterian Foundation and transfers your donation promptly. Visit the church website ([www.firstdelray.com](http://www.firstdelray.com)) under Give for more information and a link to our giving page.

**Remember the Church When Estate Planning.** Our Endowment and Remembrance Funds are two excellent opportunities for your giving consideration, be it your will, stocks, or as a named beneficiary to an insurance policy. This financially wise method of stewardship helps ensure the long-term financial stability of the church and provides a planned means for the church to continue its role in the lives of our members and those to whom we reach out, in our community and beyond. For more information on long-term giving, call the church office (561-276-6338).

On December 18, 2015, the President signed legislation indefinitely extending the **charitable IRA rollover provision** enabling IRA owners ages 70½ 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 please consult your tax adviser.

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## Prayer Ministry Team

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The **Prayer Ministry Team** meets on **Wednesdays at 3 p.m.** in the **Meeting Room** 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 simply by calling Sharon Koch (561-276-6338). She will be happy to provide additional information about this ministry and welcome you to participate.

**Prayer Concern Cards** are in the pews. If you have a specific prayer concern, please complete a card and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the church office. Concerns are forwarded to members of the Prayer Ministry Team and pastoral staff.

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## Pennies from Heaven

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Help First Presbyterian Church support the battle against hunger and poverty at home and away. **Pennies from Heaven** is a simple act of thanksgiving for what we have received and a commitment to share with others. Collect 5 cents per family member per meal each day. At the end of each month, bring your money to church and we will collect your “Pennies from Heaven” during the worship service. All monies collected are donated on a quarterly basis to local food programs as well as to regional and national hunger programs. We collected \$708.93 from the **February Offering**. Since September 2012, we have collected \$32,117.37. Our next collection is **next Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup>**.

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## Special Prayer List as of March 13<sup>th</sup>

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Please keep our members and friends in your thoughts and prayers this week.

## All of Me

**READ:** Matthew 11:28 (Common English Bible)

*“Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest.”*

### REFLECT:

*All On Me*, a song with a catchy melody and recorded by country music artist, Devin Dawson, is an invitation by the narrator to someone who is deeply loved and is experiencing a heavy load: “You got my number you can call on me. If you’re in trouble put the fall on me. When you’re mad you can take it out on me.” And a few stanzas later, “When it gets heavy put the weight on me. Baby put it all on me. Put it all on me.” Dawson said in an interview with Taste of Country that he has a personal connection with this track because he’ll do anything to take some of the heavy load from his girlfriend. Crafting the lyrics with Austin Smith, bandmate, and Jacob Durrett, Dawson was looking to articulate something he could get behind fully, something that expresses the depth of the commitment he was prepared to make to another.

In this single sentence spoken by Jesus Christ, and captured by the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus is making the same commitment, “Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads.” Often Jesus is understood as someone who teaches wisdom for our daily living, providing wise counsel for the multiple decisions that press against each one of us. But the language here is something richer and more gracious than simply offering direction along our daily journey of life. There will be moments in life when direction isn’t what we most urgently need. I speak of those moments, common to everyone, when the journey becomes hard and the load we bear is heavy. In those moments, Jesus reminds us that he is very present with us and invites us to shift some of the burden we carry to his shoulders; “and I will give you rest.”

Jesus becomes more than someone who gives wise and intelligent guidance for the living of each day. The good news that is offered here is that life isn’t simply a matter of human effort. Certainly, Jesus provides insight, but Jesus does more. Jesus is a constant companion who is always available to share our burdens and give us rest. The “rest” Jesus promises is love, healing and peace with God. When the weight of the world causes us to stumble, Jesus is present to catch us, stand us back on our feet, and give encouragement to take the next steps forward. Life has now become a holy partnership that mingles human striving with the strength of God. No longer is the struggle of life a solo act. Jesus asks, “Come to me.” Jesus desires to share company with us.

Dawson loves the line in this track, “When it don’t add up, you can count on me.” It is a simple but clever turn of phrase that invites another way of looking at life – an uncommon approach that realizes that when life fails to work one way, another direction is available. Jesus’ life and ministry was a continuous invitation to see the wondrous possibilities available to anyone who trusts in God. Yes, failure is part of life. But defeat does not have to be our story. Jesus is present to God’s people and that changes the mathematical equation of life. Near the end of this song, the narrator sings, “C’mon relax your mind on me. When you need a shoulder, you can cry on me. Baby you can bet your life on me.” In this season of Lent, we hear Jesus saying the same thing to us, “bet your life on me.” Then Jesus turns once again, and climbs-up on a cross.

*Gratitude is expressed to Pamela Kent-Balasco for bringing this song to my attention.*

**RESPOND:**

1. How has this scripture or meditation spoken to you?
2. What insight can you apply to your life this week?
3. What one specific act do you intend to take, an attitude to change, a person to see, or prayers to pray?

**PRAY:**

*God, how marvelous it is to place my heavy loads upon your son, Jesus Christ, and to know that I can find rest in him. Amen.*

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## Hospitalization

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If you or a family member are **hospitalized**, please notify the church office (561-276-6338). Even if you give the name of the church upon admission, the hospital will not notify us.

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This Week: March 18th through March 22nd

Sunday, March 18th

8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Nursery Care – Nursery
9 a.m.	Worship Service – Sanctuary
10 a.m.	Meet Your Deacon Sunday – Fellowship Hall
10 a.m.	Sunday Adult Education Class – Meeting Room
10:15 a.m.	Chancel Choir – Choir Room
10:30 a.m.	Palm Sunday Children's Rehearsal – Sanctuary
11 a.m.	Worship Service – Sanctuary
11 a.m.	Bible Bunch Sunday School – Bible Bunch Room
11 a.m.	Sunday School for Children – Sunday School Room
12 p.m.	Meet Your Deacon Sunday – Fellowship Hall
6 p.m.	Youth Fellowship – Youth Room

Monday, March 19th

10 a.m.	Monday Morning Women's Bible Study – Youth Room
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Tuesday, March 20th

9:30 a.m.	Holly House Workshop – Holly House
10:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting – Dr. Hood's Study
6 p.m.	Trustee Meeting – Meeting Room
7 p.m.	Session Meeting – Conference Room

Wednesday, March 21st

3 p.m.	Prayer Ministry Team – Meeting Room
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Thursday, March 22nd

8:30 a.m.	Men's Fellowship – Coastal Room
10 a.m.	Thursday Morning Discipleship Group – Meeting Room
6:30 p.m.	Westminster Ringers – Bell Room
7 p.m.	Employment Connections Ministry Workshop – Conference Room
7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir – Choir Room

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