

VISION 60

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NORTH PALM BEACH
REFLECTING ON GOD'S FAITHFULNESS FROM 1963-2023



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FPC IMPACT

A WORD FROM *REVEREND JARED AYERS*

FPC 2028

Note – The following is a reflection written from the perspective of someone who’s part of FPC currently, but then, after moving away for work, finds themselves back in Palm Beach and visits the church in 2028, five years into the future. What would someone experience who visited in five years, if God graces us to be faithful and fruitful in our mission during that intervening half decade? This is how I imagine it...

-Jared Ayers



I had to park at the baseball fields, as the other lots were full. Funny how much changes, and yet stays the same, in five years. Since learning that work was relocating me back to Palm Beach, there’s been a hundred unknown things to figure out- at least where I was going to find a church community didn’t need to be one.

As I walked into the central courtyard, you could just hear the whole campus buzzing in every direction with conversation and connection. Some faces in the crowd looked familiar, of course, but so many more were new to me.

When I walked by the children’s ministry kiosk, I caught a bit of the conversation, as a volunteer was getting ready to show a new family around the recently-renovated kids’ ministry building. At the same time, another volunteer was checking a family in on an iPad while they asked about yesterday’s soccer game and printed the kids’ security name tag.

Making my way through the palms and around clusters of congregants, I’m struck by all the generations swirling around me: children and parents. Young families and retirees. Single and married folks. Twenty-something and eighty-somethings. In the years that I’ve been here, this crowd has gotten noticeably more diverse, too.

It’s the coffee hour between worship services, and I can smell the coffee as someone finishes serving a pour-over at the coffee bar, while next to them someone else is serving snacks to members and new guests. There are a couple people still wearing half-zipped choir robes, talking about the

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new arrangement of “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” they’d just done.

When I walk into the lobby, my attention is arrested immediately by the art installation hanging on the surrounding walls, showcasing the work of a local artist. To my left, there’s somebody at the welcome kiosk helping a whole circle of people who came together to find a small group. When I take a second to look at the group map on one of the welcome iPads, I realize that there are FPC small groups now scattered all around the city and county, meeting night and day throughout the week.

Upon entering the sanctuary, I’m greeted by a guy who hands me a bulletin- I remember him from when I started coming; he’s now a deacon. We catch up for a minute, and I realize that a lot of the people who were new when I was here five years ago have become core leaders in the church.

The person who opens the service mentions she’s a seminary intern, announces an upcoming Saturday discipleship forum, a new church plant that FPC is apparently supporting, and a project to address food insecurity in Riviera Beach that the church was taking on.

The worship band leads an indie rock version of “Come Thou Fount,” and then an original song that they’d just recently written on an artists’ retreat the worship leader mentions they’d just facilitated.

I recognize immediately the tone in the prayers, announcements, sermon- the warmth of a family, but a constant awareness of outsiders; everything was coherent and winsome, the questions of non-Christians addressed along the way.

Following the sermon, I came forward for Holy Communion. As I scanned the line of people in front of me, I saw that whole constellation of ages, ethnicities, and life-stages making their way to the front of the sanctuary. A teenager gave me the bread, while she pronounced: “This is the body of Christ, broken for you...”

After the benediction, I turned and said hello to the neighbor to my left in the pew. When I asked him if he’d been around the church for long, he shook his head. “This is my first time,” he said. “A friend from work has been bugging me to check this place out. Never thought of myself as ‘religious,’ but I think I could see myself here. It seems like they know people like me were gonna be here today.”

The theme of our 60-year celebration is VISION 60. Rev. Ayers casted the vision he would like to see in the next 5 years and our annual stewardship commitment campaigns will be the financial means to fulfill the vision. The following pages provide a history of First Pres, including the history of the preschool, music ministry and global missions. Also included is an article on the impact our internship program has had in God’s Kingdom and the impact First Pres has had on its members. We truly are fulfilling First Pres’ mission to equip people to pursue and share gospel driven lives.

This anniversary celebration coincides with the Local Mission Fair where we will have the opportunity to interact with our mission partners on the 60th Celebration Sunday, which is November 12th. The 2024 Stewardship Commitment Campaign will also take place during this time, so the details and challenge to you are also in this booklet.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF *FIRST PRES IN NPB*

1963-2023

The north county was beginning to grow rapidly as a number of corporations moved into the area. Pratt and Whitney and RCA were two of the most prominent businesses that located here. This meant that young engineers and their families were moving into Lake Park, North Palm, and Palm Beach Gardens. Dr. Ryan Wood and the leaders at Memorial Presbyterian Church in West Palm Beach moved to start a new Presbyterian Church to create a “home” for the people moving into the area. Dr. Wood and Memorial had a huge impact in South Florida as they started a number of churches. In addition to First Pres in North Palm Beach, they also started Everglades Presbyterian Church in Belle Glade, Lake Osborne Presbyterian Church in Lake Worth, Seacrest Presbyterian Church in Delray Beach, and Indian River Presbyterian Church in Fort Pierce! What an amazing legacy!

Early in 1962 people from Memorial began to gather with a small group hosted by a family in North Palm Beach. Eventually, they moved their meeting to the Port of Palm Beach. This group grew and First Pres was officially chartered as a church in 1963 with 75 adults being dismissed from Memorial Presbyterian Church to become members of the First Presbyterian Church in North Palm Beach, along with a couple from Calvary Pres in Orlando. Elders from Memorial shared preaching duties. The church grew and began to meet at the Kinder Kollege on Prosperity Farms Road. Almost a year later, six acres of land in our present location were purchased from the Village of North Palm Beach for \$7,000 per acre, with an additional acre purchased in 1965.

The first “permanent” minister was Robert Johnson, a student from Columbia Theological Seminary, who came to serve as a summer intern in 1962. He and his family ended up staying a year. The Rev. Jerry Voye (1965-1967) was the first called pastor and he initiated a building initiative that was seen through by Rev. Jim Anderson (1967-1972). Jim was the right man for the job, bringing a business background that proved helpful in the building of the first Sanctuary and a building that would house the offices, nursery, and classrooms. One key event during Jim Anderson’s time as pastor that shaped First Pres was the illness and death of Jay Robinson. Jay was 32 years old with a young wife (Joanna Hogan) and two small boys. Jim spent a great deal of time with Jay during his battle with cancer and this had a huge impact not only on Jay’s faith but the faith of many of our members. First Pres learned to care for each other during this time!

After Jim left, Dr. Bob Kantner led First Pres for a few years. He is remembered as a great preacher and the church grew under his preaching! When he left, the recently retired Dr. Ryan Wood served as interim pastor. In 1974 Dr. Jim Stout was called to be the next pastor of First Pres. Jim had served as associate pastor of the Key Biscayne Presbyterian Church for 5 years and he brought a lot of experience working with youth and families. Jim was the catalyst for rapid growth during his seven years leading First Pres. Jim was an evangelist at heart and had served with Young Life reaching out to teens. He was especially gifted in connecting with teens (and adults) who were not people of faith. Jim applied these talents to reach men in



our community. He also was gifted in encouraging young leaders to serve in ministry. Former pastor Lucky Arnold was one of those men,

as was Steve Gibbons, who served as a youth director for a few years and later returned to lead our visitation ministry. In addition, Jim recruited and mentored Ron Hilliard who served as youth director for six years and then after seminary returned as an associate pastor. Under Jim’s encouragement, the intern program in our youth department began, our music ministry grew, and young families found a place in the ministry of First Pres! Family night dinners, family retreats at Camp Everglades, skit nights, the Thursday men’s prayer breakfast, a men’s softball team, and 10-point sermons are just some of the things that Jim is remembered for! Jim’s legacy was the young men and women who were called into ministry under his leadership.

In addition, Jim Stout is also remembered for hiring Dr. Bill Duke to be the minister of visitation. Dr. Bill had retired from ministry in Indianapolis and moved to Palm Beach County to enjoy his retirement years. After a few months of golf and fishing, Dr. Bill had too much passion for the gospel to just play! He began serving at First Pres and for the next twenty years he preached, led Bible studies, and visited people who were new to the church, ill, or wanted a visit from a pastor. He also discipled businessmen who were a part of our church and community. And as if that was not enough, Dr. Bill also helped First Pres

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get involved with global missions, which through the years had been an important ministry of First Pres. Dr. Bill also became a mentor to many of the young leaders who got involved in ministry under Jim Stout's leadership. One of the things that was important was the ministry partnership that Jim Stout and Dr. Duke modeled for our congregation!

In 1981, Jim was called to another church in Beaumont, Texas. Lucky Arnold had been serving as an associate pastor for a short time. He was asked to serve as the interim pastor while the Pastor Nominating Committee searched for a new head of staff. Lucky and Dr. Duke led the church together during this interim time and through a series of events, Lucky was called in 1983 to be the new senior pastor! Lucky went on to serve as the head of staff from 1983-2020. His long and faithful years of service at First Pres are the stuff of legends! Lucky began as a young leader and matured in his leadership, along with the congregation and staff. Highlights of his tenure include but are not limited to, several building campaigns that made our campus what it is today. If you stand in our courtyard and look in a circle, all that you see has been built or renovated under Lucky's leadership. One of Lucky's spiritual gifts is the gift of teaching. Lucky deeply loves the Bible and has devoted much of his time to studying and teaching through sermons, small groups, classes, and Bible studies. Along with this love of Scripture, Lucky also hosted and participated in many trips to the Holy Land and surrounding areas with Dr. Jim Martin, allowing those who went to see and experience firsthand the place where God worked in the lives of his people. These trips brought to life the stories contained in the Bible. Lucky was very involved in the leadership of the Presbytery of Florida through the years, serving on various committees and in leadership roles. He was well respected by the pastors who served in our Presbytery. In 2012, First Pres left the PCUSA for our new home in the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO). Lucky allowed our elders to explore the

possibility of leaving and then lead our congregation through a series of town hall meetings, congregational meetings, and the eventual vote to make the switch to ECO. Lucky shepherded our church family through the entire process. He served as the first moderator of our new Presbytery of Florida when we entered ECO. Other highlights of Lucky's leadership include his encouraging leaders to go through the Presbyterian ordination process. During Lucky's time at First Pres, many leaders went through the Presbyterian ordination process and served either at First Pres or in other Presbyterian churches. For example, Lucky was very instrumental in Pastor Elizabeth Nielsen, who is currently serving at First Pres. Another important item of note was how during Lucky's serving on staff, First Pres helped start churches in Port Saint Lucie and several in western Palm Beach County. And after entering ECO, First Pres launched Providencia Pres in West Palm Beach. A few other items of note under Lucky's time include his serving on the Board at PBA, the hiring of Kit McLeod as the first Children's ministry director and Cary Koepke as our second Children's ministry director, the starting of our Preschool under the leadership of Diana Wise, and the hiring of current staff Jay Arnn, Gayle Coughanour, Chris Southard, JoAnn Hayes, Elizabeth Nielsen, Kim Sanders, and Ron Hilliard.

When Lucky announced he would retire in October of 2020, First Pres formed a team of people to put together a long-range plan. The strategic team worked with a consultant to formulate a plan, and then the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) was charged with hiring a new head of staff who could lead us into the future and implement the plan put together and agreed upon by the leadership and congregation of First Pres. A lot of hard work, prayer, conversations, meetings, and discernment went into the plan. The PNC did their work of sorting through applicants, and interviewing candidates, and recommended that Rev. Jared Ayers, a former church planter, be our next head of staff. The Session and congregation agreed and Jared, Monica, and their

family arrived during the summer of 2020. This was shortly after the pandemic began! Jared was given the charge of leading First Pres into the future. Our plan called for "relaunching" First Pres with an outward focus into our neighborhoods and community. We are three years into implementing the strategic plan, and under Jared's leadership, are positioned as a church to grow and make a difference in the lives of people who live in the north county. This required a "relaunch" as our culture has changed, and more and more people living here are unchurched. Reaching out to our neighbors, building relationships with those who are not connected to faith, and connecting with younger generations and younger families, are all important aspects of our moving forward as a church. Our values remain the same, but our ministry focus has adapted to stay current with what is happening in our community and world.

We would need a book to contain the many stories and memories of the first 60 years of First Pres. And many people have not been included in this brief history; people like Dan Wiley, Kathy Hebert Estes, David Moores, Brit Foshee, Jeff Conway, Sara McDonnell, Sally Escott, Elton Piersma, Liz Walter, Lynn Grandsire, Josh Bartz, Eddie Nabhan, Steve Gibbons, Tim Gooley, Nori Douglas, Katie Stalcup, Judy Snyder, Shirle Mabie, Hazel Morey, Ken Chappell, Mark Aliapoulos, Maura Taggart, Travis Tudor, John Stepp, Victoria Chaplain, Nell Davis, Ann Pennington, Cindy Coleman, Debbie Tabor, Ken Coleman, Glenn Arfsten, David Block, Denise Clarke, Laura Putman, Tim Cox, Roger Pontbriand, Lisa Hawkins, Kath Doerr, Monica Ayers, Jodi Rykse, Monica Holland Barsalou, Michael Cooper, Fran Bowie, Eddie Cajade, Keith Case, Cindy Medlin, Kara Avila, Cindy Miller, Alma Bonk, and Andrew Wikse.

There have also been countless volunteers who have given of their time and of themselves and who have impacted lives, our students and children, and our community, and helped spread the good news of God's love to the ends of the earth!

CHARTER MEMBERS

The following persons were received as Charter Members into First Presbyterian Church in North Palm Beach, Florida from Memorial Presbyterian Church, West Palm Beach, Florida at organization on July 28, 1963.



1. Bates, Mr. Carl T.
2. Bates, Mrs. Sadie
3. Bates, Carl T. Jr.
4. Bates, David R.
5. Blinston, Mr. Bruce T.
6. Blinston, Mrs. Donna J.
7. Bowie, Mr. Carl M.
8. Bowie, Mrs. Fran
9. Breedlove, Mrs. Donald W.
10. Calhoun, Mr. James W.
11. Calhoun, Mrs. Nancy P.
12. Campbell, Mr. Joseph L. III
13. Campbell, Mrs. Virginia
14. Carver, Mr. John F.
15. Carver, Mrs. Martha M.
16. Carver, Mrs. Wallace G.
17. Chapin, Mr. Samuel D.
18. Chapin, Mrs. Frances R.
19. Cordell, Mr. Ben Jr.
20. Cordell, Mrs. Fanchon
21. David, Mr. William M.
22. Davis, Mrs. Ann
23. Davis, Mr. Tommy
24. Davis, Miss Beverly
25. Duff, Mrs. Frank
26. Duff, Miss Penny
27. Elliott, Mr. Edward L. III
28. Elliott, Mrs. Theresa C.
29. Engelke, Mr. Eugene F.
30. Engelke, Mrs. Eugene F.
31. Evans, Mr. Richard R. Jr.
32. Evans, Mrs. Richard R. Jr.
33. Hammond, Mr. John R.
34. Hammond, Mrs. Rosa L.
35. Hill, Mr. Glenn
36. Hill, Mrs. Anna (Howell)
37. Holmes, Mr. Loring E.
38. Holmes, Mrs. Loring E.
39. Ludwig, Mr. Edwin F.
40. Ludwig, Mrs. Ann
41. Mitchell, Mr. James P.
42. Mitchell, Mrs. Mary C.
43. Moore, Mr. Alvin C.
44. Moore, Mrs. Nancy C.
45. Moore, Mr. Lloyd G. Jr.
46. Moore, Mrs. Patsy (Smarr)
47. Powell, Mr. Harold L.
48. Powell, Mrs. Joey B.
49. Roberts, Mr. William C.
50. Roberts, Mrs. William C.
51. Robinson, Mr. Joseph J.
52. Robinson, Mrs. Joanna R.
53. Sales, Mrs. Ronald (Alice Kay)
54. Spicer, Mr. Walter E.
55. Spicer, Mrs. Elizabeth R.
56. Storey, Mr. M.E.
57. Storey, Mrs. M.E.
58. Storey, Miss Candy
59. Storey, Miss Bonnie
60. Swartout, Mr. Thomas R.
61. Swartout, Mrs. Donna J.
62. Timmons, Miss Linda Ann
63. Timmons, Miss Nancy Joe
64. Timmons, Mr. Robert M.
65. Timmons, Mrs. Merle L.
66. Turney, Mr. Neil M.
67. Turney, Mrs. Margaret C.
68. Wade, Mr. Seaborn H. Jr.
69. Wade, Mrs. Seaborn H. Jr.
70. Wible, Mr. Louis M.
71. Wilcox, Mr. Joel C.
72. Wilcox, Mrs. Joel C.
73. Wilcox, Mr. Joel C. Jr.
74. Wilcox, Miss Judith P.
75. Wilcox, Miss Susan E.

Received by letter from Calvary Presbyterian Church, Orlando, FL:

76. Tilghman, Mr. Raymond L.
77. Tilghman, Mrs. Dorris W.

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HISTORY OF *FIRST* *PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH* *PRESCHOOL*

23 YEARS INTO GOD'S CALLING 1997-2023 AND BEYOND

The preschool started with a calling from God in the summer of 1996. Kit MacLeod (Children's Ministry Director) and Diana Wise (Childcare Coordinator) came to the church one morning with the need to 'discuss something with each other at some point during the work day.' Anxious all day to share, the opportunity came late in the morning. Kit suggested Diana go first and she shared that God had placed on her heart the need to start a preschool at the church. Miss Kit started to laugh and said that God had placed the same need in her heart and that was the topic she had wanted to discuss as well. Both had been called by God at the same time to start a preschool.

And so began the quest for a preschool at First Presbyterian Church in North Palm Beach. Kit and Diana brought 'the calling' to the 1996 Church Session who were fearful that the preschool would not be able to support itself and thus, said "no" to a preschool. Kit and Diana did not want to walk away from the calling and decided to work hard at compiling all the information necessary to help the

Session understand that this was God's work that needed to be done, that there was a need for another Christian preschool in the area, and that it would be self-sufficient and would likely add to the income of the church. In God's infinite wisdom and provision, the church had been involved with a capital campaign to raise funds and was in the process of building the two-story Church Administration Building in which the preschool is currently housed. (We had big plans for the "open" bottom floor of that building!) A Preschool Advisory Board was assembled and the work began! The Preschool Advisory Board got right to work with writing the proposal for Session and working on several financial scenarios and then setting up the proposed financial budget. They also acted as a sounding board for Diana once final decisions needed to be made.

After the realization that with four children in four different schools, with 8 different activities, and an absentee husband who was off working on a yacht for 8 months of the year, Diana worried that time

would be the problem. So, she did the only thing she knew to do and prayed that the Lord would make it all work! And God provided! She visited 40 plus preschools in Palm Beach County to determine what worked and what did not in room design, which curriculums were being used and in what combination, how the class schedules were set up, how the businesses were run (ministries of their churches or separate business entities), the design and wording of all paperwork utilized, the manipulatives and furniture being used, protocols established, etc. At the same time, knowing that eventually our Session would agree to having a preschool on campus (remember this was God's calling) Diana needed to qualify herself for the possibility of assuming the Director's position in accordance with the Palm Beach County Health Dept. regulations. This meant taking and passing the 120-class hour Child Development Associate Degree, or CDA, at night (now known as the Florida Child Care Professional Certification or FCCPC) at Palm Beach Community College (now State College), attending

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twenty hours of DCF training, passing exams for the Health Dept. and doing a weekend long First Aid and CPR training with the Red Cross for certification. It was a non-stop whirlwind of activity for several months, but always God worked it all out!

The new Church Session members of 1997 were presented with all 'the facts' and they gave us the green light to develop a preschool at the church. We had the 'Go-Ahead'! The first order of business was designing the preschool floor of the new building. After hours of prayer so that she would see and could correct anything 'wrong', followed by hours of research of the P.B.C. Health Dept. regulations regarding buildings (and immense thanks for God's timing of the church building program perfectly so that we could put the doors and windows, bathrooms and kitchen in the right places) Diana could design the facility to suit all the requirements of the Palm Beach County Health Dept. and also our "best possible use" options. Once the design was complete and drawn up by the architect, Diana had to submit the plans to the P.B.C. Health Dept. for approval. This process normally takes MONTHS with several revised sets of plans and numerous scheduled planning meetings with the Palm Beach County Health Dept Planning and Zoning Board. God saw to it that we were approved after our first meeting!!!!!! As one of the board members stated at the end of the meeting, "This is unheard of! Congratulations, you have been very thorough!" Diana was hired as the Director and work began. The design was put into motion, with

many decisions made with regards to materials, surfaces and colors and built-ins, etc.

Diana and the Preschool Committee had decided to start the preschool program off slowly and to add a class each year. So initially for our first year, we focused on building out one classroom which would house a Pre-K 4 class on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and a Threes class on Tuesday and Thursday. It was decided that Diana would teach the Fours and be the Director, and Gena Clough was hired to assist in the Fours and teach the Threes. Our doors were opened in the Fall of 1997 for the 1997-1998 school year! Amazing, as only God can do! Each year after, we built out a classroom and added additional classes and teachers until we reached our goal of 2 Twos classes, 2 Threes classes and 2 Pre-K 4 classes in four classrooms.

We have had an incredibly dedicated group of teachers throughout our 23 years; many staying with us for long periods of time. We are currently a family of 7.... Diana Wise, Deborah Bierman, Camille Marro, Fatima Wilkes, Lauriana Schilling (who was one of our preschool students) Chae MacLea and Emily Steffen-Finch. We have been blessed with numerous other wonderful teachers (most whose children attended our preschool: Krissy Kairalla and Carole Atwater, Marci Dubler, Sue Staley and Holly Davis, Kim Cassino, Sarah Herritt, Carol Griffith, Ginger Stump, Becky Isiminger, Cindy Medlin, Tracy Meinke, Peggy Pearson, M.C. Dees, Kristen Coleman, Julie Anderson, Barbara Armstrong, Shirley Balsley, Lisa Finnegan, Gena Clough, and Joy

Adamson. Our Very Special Person, Miss Kitty Horne, served faithfully as our Story-Teller Extraordinaire for many years! Cary Koepke was originally hired as a Twos teacher in 1998. She remained with the preschool for several years, finishing up as a Pre-K 4's teacher until called to take over Kit MacLeod's job as Children's Ministry Director. She has been extremely supportive of the program and has continued as our Chapel Leader.

Over the past twenty years we have established a well-respected program in this area. We have followed our guiding verse, Proverbs 22:6, and have lovingly trained up approximately 1,900 preschool aged children. This preschool program has brought many young families into the church fold and has encouraged many others to enroll their children in our Children's Ministry activities and programming. What an incredible mode of evangelism! It is wonderful that God's Preschool continues to be one of the best in the area, touching and encouraging the hearts of the families that join us and planting the seeds of God's love in the hearts of the children we teach. It is our prayer that they will develop strong, deep and very personal relationships with God...and that one day they will all listen to and complete God's calling in their lives.

Diana Wise



HISTORY OF *THE MUSIC* *DEPARTMENT*

AS REMEMBERED BY DENISE CLARKE, JOANNA HOGAN, NANCY
DESANTIS, KEN CHAPPELL, AND JAMES ARNN

The first official Choir Director was Richard Thornton, who was hired in the early to mid-1960's. The original choir consisted of:

- Sopranos: Joanna Robinson Hogan, Liz Anderson
- Altos: Nancy Calhoun, Mary Mitchell
- Tenor: Denise Clarke
- Bass: John Anderson

The original organ and choir robes were given to First Pres by our "mother church," Memorial Presbyterian Church in West Palm Beach.

As we moved into our new Sanctuary in 1969 (current chapel and choir room), our Choir Director was Eugene Knotts (Mr. Knotts to us). Kathryn Conover Strathdee was Organist. The choir grew slowly over several years. Mr. Knotts was a quiet and gentle man. Mr. Knotts retired and moved away in the fall of 1975 and Hazel Morey was hired as both Choir Director and Organist. From 1975 to 1977, David Moores acted as Assistant Pastor and organist and we put him to good use as he was an excellent organist. However, his tenure was short-lived as he left the Presbyterian denomination to become an Episcopal priest.

In 1978 we hired Ken Chappell as Organist and Choir Director. The committee that hired Ken

consisted of Joanna Hogan, Alice Swartout, Jim Calhoun, Ed Elliott and Denise Clarke. Ken did more than just play hymns and direct the choir on Sunday. He promoted and developed several of the music programs that are still in place today. One of these traditions is the annual Christmas and Palm Sunday Cantatas (Musical Services). He was able to have the choir present a cantata on Palm Sunday each year. The pastors were a bit reluctant to give up this day of preaching, but the musical presentation of the resurrection soon became well accepted.

During Ken Chappel's tenure, a new "Rodgers" organ was purchased with the help from Jim and Sundae Frevert. Denise Clarke joined Ken to search for the new instrument. Denise wrote, "We went to Miami to look at them. I was never crazy about organ music at that time - but Ken asked and I went. When we walked into the showroom someone was playing the Widor Organ Toccata - Oh my! - I had never heard anything like that. I was hooked." The church purchased a beautiful instrument, and the dedication concert was played by Diane Bish from Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church.

In 2001, Mark Aliapoulios was hired as the Director of Music with Ken

Chappel serving as the organist. In 2003, Joanne Gelwick replaced Ken on the bench and Joanne and Mark were vital in setting the parameters for the current "Allen" hybrid pipe/digital organ. To fund the purchase, a chart was set up and we sold "keys" for the organ at \$500 each. We were able to fund most of the organ with this project. Hal Pysher from Bethesda By-The-Sea in Palm Beach performed the dedication concert.

In 2006, openings for both the Director of Music and Organist became available. In October of that year, James Arnn was hired as Director of Music and Dr. Glen Arfsten as organist. During this time, the choir became more outward focused in addition to their weekly Sunday morning worship leadership. In 2008, the choir partnered with the Chorale from Palm Beach Atlantic University to present Felix Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. In 2011, the choir did a Music Mission Trip to Cuba. Our current organist, David Block, was hired in 2014, upon the retirement of Dr. Arfsten. Since 2014, the choir has continued to do unique performances including 3 major works in Carnegie Hall, a sacred opera (*The Three Hermits*) both in 2018 and Franz Joseph Haydn's *Creation* in 2019. An annual Christmas Pops Concert

became a long-standing service at our church for many years, where we would have a guest soloist along with our choir and orchestra (and of course, Santa).

2020 brought COVID19 to our world and shut down many music programs in churches, schools and communities. Even during this time, we continued to find new ways to keep singing. At first, it was 5-6 singers recording 2-3 weeks of music at a time, but we found ways to continue, even doing a Christmas Cantata in 2020. Once the veil started to lift, First Pres partnered with Palm Beach Atlantic and the choir director, Sonia Santiago, to start a Collegiate Music partnership which continues today.

Handbell Choirs

During the 1980's, Alice Schulmerich became a member of FPC. Her family owned the Schulmerich Bell Company, the oldest and largest manufacturer of handbells in the United States. She was impressed with Ken Chappel and influenced by Dr. Duke to donate a three-octave set of handbells. The problem was that no one really knew much about them. Alice Bachman decided to take on the challenge. She went to a seminar, came back and found several people willing to join her in the effort. More recent Handbell Directors include Katey Thompson and James Arnn. During the latter part of the 2010's, the church had two handbell choirs and the bells grew to 5 octaves with chimes. Jubellaté, our newest choir, performed at 3 Florida State Handbell Festivals from 2016-2018, which included the 2018 festival, where we hosted the event and performed a full concert for the other attending choirs.

Music Camp, Instrumental Music, and Children's Musicals

In the early 2000's, the church decided to start a Summer Music Camp for children as an additional summer ministry to VBS. The first of these camps brought the elementary-aged children together to learn and perform a musical. The camp lasted one week with a performance on Friday. Directors during this time were Chris Murray, Katey Thompson, Mark Aliapoulios, and Kristina Arnn. In 2008, an adjustment was made to the camp, to include Middle and High School students and adjust the format to include 2 choirs plus instrumental offerings. The high-profile choir, band and orchestra directors that have graced this camp over the years are too numerous to name, but this program has continued to grow to over 200 students annually. Students who have attended this program are now in many walks of life, including Church Music Directors and Music Educators. Coming from this camp have been the numerous Children's Musicals that have been done over the years. With the adjustments to the Music Camp, we didn't want to stop doing the musicals for children. From 2014 - 2022, Cary Koepke, Kath Doerr, Kristina Arnn, Piper Crisafi, and James Arnn directed hundreds of children through Biblical Musicals featuring the stories of Esther, Daniel, Moses, etc. The Music Camp has also allowed us to grow our many talented students, especially our instrumentalists. We have had concert bands, orchestras, and instrumental ensembles, made up of students and adults throughout the years.

Praise and Worship Music

As Praise and Worship began to thrive in the 1980's and 1990's, First Pres began to offer opportunities for this style of worship. The first director was Fred Girard, but his tenure was short lived. John Stepp was then hired and was well received. In 2006, Tim Cox was hired, but only stayed one year. Roger Pontbriand came after Tim, also staying one year, who added jazz to the Contemporary Service. A decision was made to forego this service for a few years, but it was reintroduced as an evening service, called 6:03, in The Way building. It was later moved to an 11 am service in The Way building. Worship leaders for this service have included Travis Tudor (Aug. 2011 - Sept. 2012), Brit Foshee (Oct. 2012 - Oct. 2015), and Victoria Chaplain (April 2016 - Jan. 2021.) In January 2021, Eric Blythe became the Director of Modern Worship. In May 2021, the contemporary service was moved into the sanctuary, replacing the traditional 11 am worship service. Eric left in January 2022 and was replaced by our current director, Danny Brunjes.

Note - This is a small sample size of the many people who have played a major role in our Music Ministry over the last 60 years. Admittedly, names and dates have been forgotten or "mis-remembered" over the six decades, but all of you have laid the groundwork for our current programs!

-James Arnn



THE STORY OF *GLOBAL MISSIONS AT FIRST PRES*

— “GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS...” - MATTHEW 28:19 —

When First Pres began to meet in the early 1960's there was a focus on connecting with the people who were living in northern Palm Beach County. This outward focus featured inviting friends and neighbors to join the new church that was starting. This focus on those living in the north county resulted in many young families becoming a part of the First Pres family. Acts 1:8 was being fulfilled as people in North Palm Beach and the surrounding county were being reached. What was still to be fulfilled was the reach of First Pres to the world (or the ends of the earth).

God provided this next step when he sent a retired pastor to serve at First Pres. Dr. Bill Duke had retired and moved to Palm Beach County. After a brief period of retirement, this passionate man of God was led to First Pres and joined our staff as a minister of visitation. Among Dr. Bill's many gifts was his connection to missionaries serving around the world. With his strong encouragement, First Pres began to financially support several of the missionaries that he was connected with. Dr. Bill also loved the country of Guatemala and had been a part of the start of a church that was

launched after an earthquake hit that country. In these early years of our global engagement, our support was mostly financial. During this chapter of global missions at First Pres, a remarkable missionary, Hunter Norwood, began teaching in the Agape Sunday morning class. Hunter had served with South America Mission and had lived with the Shipibo Indians in Peru. First Pres was beginning to get more engaged with those who served around the world.

The next chapter in global missions occurred as Dr. Duke was getting older and could no longer travel. Rev. Arnold and several congregation members decided to visit some of the missionaries we supported, especially in Guatemala and Ecuador, to develop relationships with them. This chapter in global missions was the start of First Pres not only developing relationships but also beginning to send people on short-term trips to serve. One of our first trips was to work with HCJB radio in Quito, Ecuador. The group did construction work helping to build platforms for transmission towers. One person even decided to stay longer and journey into the jungle with a doctor who worked with those who were suffering from

river blindness. Eventually, Ron and students involved in our youth programs traveled to Haiti on trips with Young Life. After returning from seminary in 1988, Ron led a group of 35 men to the Dominican Republic to work on a school. As these trips were happening, the missions committee was guiding the congregation in connecting with new missionaries and raising money to support their work.

An important step took place when a group from First Pres traveled to Guatemala to build houses and caught the vision of starting a school in the town of Chichicastenango. As money was raised to build the school, many construction trips took place. These trips helped church members gain a global perspective and many were impacted as they served. When the school was completed, trips continued to encourage staff and teachers and to help with the build-out of the property. During our Guatemala mission focus, Dr. Duke's granddaughter and her husband moved to Chichi and were involved in much of the work taking place there. They played a key role in keeping First Pres connected with the work in Guatemala and in assisting with the handoff of the

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school to Guatemalan leadership. Matt and Leslie Capehart are still serving in Guatemala City and continue to be supported by First Pres.

Around this time, God led our mission committee to make several key decisions. First, with the expansion of Christianity around the world, we began to invite global pastors and church leaders to speak during Global Missions Month. Pastors and leaders from Peru, South Africa, Uzbekistan, and Germany, to name a few, came to preach to our church family. These pastors were the message as we experienced Global church leaders and their passion for the gospel and reaching their people. Global missions was no longer an American/Western endeavor because as the gospel spread, Christians from around the world were taking up the Great Commission. As this happened, the church in the West began to empower the global church, and First Pres began supporting and encouraging the global church and global leaders as they lived out the Great Commission. This was an important change in focus for the global work that First Pres was involved in around the world.

The next chapter in our global work took place when God opened doors in 2008 to connect with the church in Cuba, a neighboring country that was closed to Americans. Rev. Ron was invited to travel to Cuba with Peachtree Presbyterian Church and to see firsthand what God was doing there. This trip led to partnering with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the Matanzas Presbytery and also to connect with a small

rural church in San Jose de los Ramos. After obtaining a travel permit from the U.S. Department of the Treasury, First Pres began to take groups to encourage and support the Cuban Church.

When First Pres joined ECO, we desired to live into the ECO's focus on church planting. In addition to helping launch Providencia church in West Palm Beach, First Pres also began to support global church planting through City to City and their church planting network. As a church, we connected with global church planters which, during the early years of ECO, resulted in us helping launch new churches in Berlin, Germany, Athens, Greece, Lima, Peru, and several new churches in Cuba. In the last 12 years, we have assisted in the launch of 7 churches. Due to the pandemic, two of those churches were closed, but the others are growing and impacting their neighborhoods and cities.

In recent years, God has been at work in the Persian-speaking world and First Pres has had the privilege to connect with several people and organizations that are training Iranian leaders. The fastest-growing church in the world is the Persian-speaking church, and First Pres has been a part of training the leaders who serve in that group of churches!

Lastly, First Pres has recently been sending college students to serve in Athens, Greece, with our global partner, Alex Pipilios. These interns have assisted the church in Athens, ministering to children and young people, and they have been a

part of the work that is taking place with refugees in Athens and the surrounding area.

Funding for Global missions comes from contributions to the Global Mission Fund. This is separate from the general offerings that support the ministries of First Pres. First Pres' Global Mission work is led by the Global Mission Team and Rev. Ron Hilliard. Currently, the areas of focus in our work are global church planting, the 10-40 window (mostly the Middle East and North Africa), support of global pastors and leaders, and evangelism, discipleship, and justice. To give you an idea of our priority of being outward-facing, First Pres has contributed over \$1,000,000 in the past two years to our global work, local missions, and local church planting. Every February, First Pres celebrates Global Mission Month, inviting our church family to learn about our global partners and contribute to the work taking place around the world.

First Pres has been greatly impacted by our global engagement and connecting with God's global church. We look forward with great anticipation to see what the next chapter in global missions at First Pres might be as we participate in advancing God's Kingdom.

By Rev. Dr. Ron Hilliard



LOCAL MISSION FAIR

As part of the 60th anniversary celebration, we have included our Local Mission partners who are very important to us as co-laborers in Christ. Be sure to stop in the courtyard and meet them and learn not only about their ministries but also how you could possibly serve. Here are the names of our local missions.



MINISTRIES TO THE HUNGRY

- Christians Reaching Out to Society (CROS)
- St. George's Table
- True Fast Ministries

PRISON AND FORMERLY INCARCERATED MINISTRIES

- Crossroad Prison Ministry
- Dunklin Memorial Camp
- Kairos Prison Ministry
- Refuge Ranch
- Restoration Destination
- True Fast Re-entry Program

MINISTRIES TO THE UNBORN & BABIES

- Basics for Babies
- First Care
- Hannah's Home

MINISTRIES TO CHILDREN & YOUTH

- First Priority
- Gator Fellowship
- Lake Park Reading Program
- Real Life Children's Ranch
- Urban Youth Impact
- Young Life - PBC
- Youth for Christ

INTERN AND STAFF *UPDATES*

One of the values of First Pres through our first 60 years has been **developing younger leaders**. One of our former pastors, Dr. Jim Stout, wrote a doctoral dissertation on mentoring interns. With Dr. Stout's encouragement, we began having interns serve in the youth department during summers. This soon developed into having three-year interns in student ministries, and this eventually changed into having student interns from PBA serve during the school year. Seminary interns also became a focus as First Pres began to help prepare leaders for ministry as they studied in grad school. We are now having college students participate in our music ministry and send interns to work with our global mission partners. Through the years, the internship design and focus have varied, but the commitment to developing leaders for ministry has remained as a priority for First Pres. As a church, we have impacted hundreds of ministry leaders and walked with them as they pursued their calling. Here are a few updates on some of our former interns/staff.



Elizabeth Gibbs Zehnder

Elizabeth served as a Young Life Church Partner from 1991-1994 at First Pres. Here is an update that she wrote: You won me to Presbyterianism – Your love for Christ, your compassion for the world and the hospitality of Diane and Shannon Ginn formed me. You faithfully and generously supported me when I came under care of Session and then continued my preparations for ordained ministry at Fuller Theological Seminary in California. After graduation in 1997, I began serving as Director of Community Ministry at Immanuel Presbyterian Church (a city center congregation in the heart of Los Angeles, CA). I continued in ministry with the multicultural bilingual congregation there, ordained as Associate Pastor in 2003 and eventually serving as Head of Staff. In 2015, I accepted a position as Presbyterian Staff Chaplain at Los Angeles County

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Medical Center. The whole human family seeks medical care at that Level 1 trauma center - people who were gravely injured from car accidents, gun violence, poverty or irreversible disease. It was my privilege to accompany them and remind them of God's love in those challenging moments. This summer I began a new role as Palliative Care Chaplain at the West Los Angeles VA Medical System. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve those who served our country, particularly as they enter the final chapter of their life.



Jill Tutan Cataldo, Interned Summers of 1980, 1981, 1982
and Luis Cataldo,
Interned Summers of 1981, 1982

Luis Cataldo from Elmhurst, IL met Jesus at Young Life's Windy Gap in July of 1977. In July of 1978, Jill Tutan from Coral Gables, FL met Jesus at Windy Gap. In July 1979, Luis and Jill were on "work staff" at Windy Gap and became great friends. They were married in January 1985.

In 1980, Ron Hilliard invited Jill to intern at First Presbyterian, NPB. Her grandparents had a condo on Singer Island, so she and Angela Camilleri (also from Coral Gables) moved in and interned for the next three summers at the church before graduating from FSU. Luis planned to go into youth ministry with Young Life, after graduating from the U. of Illinois. So, he joined Angela and Jill for the 2nd and 3rd summers.

Luis and Jill have served together in ministry throughout their 38 years of marriage. For twenty years, they were on staff with Young Life in Chicago, Ohio and Virginia. They planted a church in Virginia where Luis was Sr. Pastor. Jill and Luis have been in the prayer movement working with Passion, The International House of Prayer in Kansas City, The Call, The Cedars/National Prayer Breakfast and American Renewal Project. They have been involved with Missions to the Middle East and N Africa through Strategic Resource Group. Luis directed The Response, a call to prayer for a nation in crisis, with Governor Perry of Texas, followed by other states. Jill and Luis helped start Zoe House Adoptions as board members, were on the board for Crisis Response International and also served on the Young Life Committee. The Cataldos have been intercessors for various governmental leaders in the

United States. Jill is currently Chief Researcher for Intercessors for America. The Cataldos now reside in Atlanta. They have two married daughters and one grandchild.



Dave Sellers

After graduation from Fuller Seminary in 1993, I served as an associate pastor at Church of the Valley in Apple Valley, California, for 7 years. My wife, Carrie, and I moved to Seattle to plant a church with Tommy Allen, another former intern at First Presbyterian Church in NPB. In 2004, Carrie and I moved to Bainbridge Island, where I'm the lead pastor at Cross Sound Church.

Here's our church's vision: "Astonished by grace, Cross Sound Church seeks unity in God, to bring hope and healing to the world." Given that the Northwest is the most unchurched region of our country, we're intentionally not a congregation for ourselves but for others. In other words, God has put us in this place at this time with the confidence

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(and humility) that the gospel can change anyone at any time, and that it's the kindness of God that leads to repentance (Romans 2:4).

We have 4 children: Emma, who recently graduated from Biola and is doing her student teaching in South Africa and then planning to spend time in Uganda; Eli is a senior at the University of Washington studying statistics; Grace is a freshman at Biola and Isaac is a junior at Bainbridge High School.

I'm deeply grateful for FPC in NPB where I met Jesus and was discipled by Ron Hilliard, Lucky Arnold, Steve Gibbons, Steve Haynes and Dr. Duke. It took that many men and an entire congregation to deal with a needy, broken, special case like me! Thanks be to God!



Hayne Steen

After graduation from Flagler College in the spring of 1995, Hayne Steen immediately joined the youth staff of First

Presbyterian in North Palm Beach and served through August of 1998. Hayne replaced Mac Schaefer as an intern and served under the leadership of Tim Gooley alongside other amazing interns like Shiela Fife, Melody Dunn, Ruth Ann Beasley, Crista Renauro, and Niel Guyante. While Hayne was an intern in North Palm Beach he lived with Shannon and Diane Ginn in Steeple Chase for his first intern summer and the next year with Bob and Sharon Kotecki (with sons Michael and Matthew) on the Loxahatchee River in Jupiter. The internship in North Palm Beach was incredibly formational as Hayne launched into youth ministry in a number of settings with Young Life and the local church. Hayne then joined the Young Life staff in Jacksonville Beach, Florida, leading the high school ministry at his alma mater, Duncan U. Fletcher High School. In 2000, Hayne moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where he served as a Young Life church partner in Gwinnett County. In 2004, Hayne was invited to join the youth staff at Signal Mountain Presbyterian Church where he served as the Director of Youth of Family Ministry. Hayne began work on a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy and upon completion, co-founded a thriving and highly sought after local counseling practice in Chattanooga, TN called Elbow Tree Christian Counseling. In 2017, Hayne relocated to St.

Augustine, Florida, where he launched a brand-new site for Elbow Tree. Today, Elbow Tree in St. Augustine has grown to a team of 30 counseling professionals serving four locations all over the north Florida coast in St. Augustine, Jacksonville Beach, Mandarin, and most recently on Fleming Island. Hayne has three adult children and 1 grandson: Vanessa (22), Sam (20), and Sadie (18) and grandson Kingston (3).



Maura Taggart

My time at First Pres started in the fall of 2000. I was a sophomore at Palm Beach Gardens High School and was invited by friends to check out a Younglife Club night. At first I declined the invite, although several weeks of being asked every single Wednesday, I finally caved. And I sure am glad I did. I loved it! Months of attending club, hearing the gospel in such a beautiful and simple way, I was hooked. That summer I went on my first of what would come to be 5 mission trips to the Dominican Republic. Post graduation I became a summer intern with

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the Junior high students. I loved ministry so much I decided to stay close to home, attend PBAU and eventually became a full-time staff member overseeing the junior high and high school ministries from 2006-2010. Following my time at First Pres, I joined Trustbridge Hospice overseeing their volunteer department. I truly loved being a part of an organization that is so vital to so many in our community but this summer I was given an opportunity to join Habitat for Humanity of Greater Palm Beach County as Director of Volunteer Services. My time at First Pres is something I look back on with fondness. And I am truly grateful for it.



Brandon Brewer

Brandon Brewer served as the seminary intern at First Pres in the summer of 2004. He now possesses two decades of diverse professional experience in pastoral care & counseling, spiritual care, and support for families experiencing grief and loss. He is a Certified End-of-

Life Specialist and a Fellow in Thanatology: Death, Dying and Bereavement through the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC). Brandon joined the staff of CaringMatters in Gaithersburg, Maryland, as the Director of Adult Bereavement Services in early 2023 and is currently enrolled in a doctoral program in Pastoral Care & Counseling at Gardner-Webb University. Brandon resides in Annapolis, Maryland, with his wife, Camille-Kay, and their son, Aydein.



Lynn Keel

Lynn Keel served as a seminary intern during the summer in 2005. She graduated from Columbia Theological Seminary in 2007 and completed a year-long Clinical Pastoral Education residency working as a Hospice Chaplain. From there, she served two churches, South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian of Concord NC, over the course of 13 years before accepting a call to serve as Director for Programs at Montreat

Conference Center. She is responsible for conference and content planning for the Montreat Youth Conferences, the Women's Connection Conference, and the Montreat Institute for Church Leadership.



Todd Reinschmidt

Todd Reinschmidt served as a summer intern with First Pres after his first year at Columbia Seminary. He is currently serving as the Area Director of Fellowship of Christian Athletes in Sarasota County. He and his family live in Venice, Florida. Todd's wife, Tricia, is working with me as one of my Assistants with FCA. Katelyn (22) graduated with AA degree after doing a 6-month gap serving with YWAM. She is now living in Washington State and working at a Pregnancy Center. Alyssa is 16, and a Jr. at State College of Florida Collegiate School, fully dual enrolled.

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THE FIRST PRES *IMPACT*

Bob, our three young children, and I began attending First Presbyterian in 1991. Within a few years Kit MacLeod, the children's director at the time, pulled me into children's ministry, where Bob and I taught Sunday school to 5th and 6th grade boys. It was there that I realized my love of teaching God's Word to children. Later, we started our Wednesday night Kingdom Kids program. Kit and I would brainstorm lesson ideas for each semester. Through her encouragement, I began writing down these lesson plans. At the same time the internet was in its infancy, and I learned to build a website, SundaySchoolNetwork.com. I wanted to make the lessons available to other teachers. Most recently, lessons were sent to China and Malaysia. I could never have imagined or planned this. I am grateful for First Pres. God is good!

-Sarah Keith

I found First Pres in early 2019 after not attending Church regularly for over a decade. I had a three-year-old and one-year-old at the time and knew I needed to find a church 'family' for the girls to be raised in. My girls had never stayed with anyone other than family, so acclimating my three-year-old to the preschool childcare took several weeks, but soon enough she enjoyed attending the Sunday School. Over the subsequent years, my girls and I became regular attendees of First Pres in both the Sunday School and Sanctuary. In 2020 I went through a very difficult time and was uplifted by Pastor Lucky's many sermons, and I walked with the First Pres 'family' through Lucky's retirement and welcoming of Pastor Jared to lead our congregation. All the Sunday School teachers and staff are so dedicated, loving, and invested in bringing the children of First Pres closer to God, it was very evident from our first visit. In 2021, I became a member and my girls and I were all baptized by Pastor Jared in front of the congregation at the Easter vigil service the evening before Easter Sunday.

I developed a very special relationship with Mrs. Cary Koepke, the Children's Ministry Director, over the years and it brought me to feel compelled to serve in the Sunday School as first a preschool teacher, and now with the Elementary school children. First Pres Children's Ministry staff put so much effort into the Sunday School weekly lessons, Wednesday evening Kids Club, holiday events, grade-level milestone classes, and so much more. My family couldn't be happier to have First Pres be our guiding 'light' in our continual journey to grow in faith and service to our Lord and Savior.

-Lindsay, Elise & Audrey Gabler

My husband, Lew, and I came to First Pres as a young, newly wedded couple. We raised our family in this church, Lew served as a deacon, and we both served as board and committee members in various ways throughout our 50-plus years as members of First Pres. But, until Lew and I were asked to serve on the Senior Advisory Board (almost 14 years ago), did I feel that I was playing a meaningful role in the life of our church. When my husband and I were first asked to join the Senior Advisory Board, I was very hesitant to agree. I was in my late-50's, still working and could not see how I could offer anything to a group that were mostly the age of my parents and with probably nothing in common other than we attended the same church! Lew encouraged me to give it a try for a year and then if it wasn't for us, we would resign at the end of that year. Here I am almost 14 years later and still serving on the Senior Advisory Board! How God puts us where He wants us!

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With age comes perspective and wisdom. We just need to take time to listen and learn – I did! I have learned patience, tolerance, compassion, empathy, understanding, foresight and humor! I have learned more from the Seniors than I feel I have given to them. Although I hope I have given something to them in return. A 1960's song comes to mind: "Turn, Turn, Turn," recorded by a rock group called the Byrds. The lyrics are specifically from Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, one of the "wisdom books" of the Old Testament, collections of truths and sayings. The words attributed "a season" to a series of opposing actions: "A time to be born, a time to die; a time to plant, a time to reap; a time to kill, a time to heal; a time to mourn and a time to dance," etc. I learned in my wisdom that you are not always put in the position of the one serving; but you may be in the position of the one being served. That door swings both ways! I have reflected on the seasons of my life, and I have come to understand that I have been served by the Seniors through the seasons of my life. They have supported me, encouraged me, comforted me! I have also walked through the seasons of life with many of our Seniors. I feel blessed that I could be there for each of them. But the greater blessing is that the Seniors have served me through my seasons (although, I might not have recognized it at the time), and I have benefitted from the wisdom of the aged through their support of me and their service to First Presbyterian. Fourteen years ago, I would not have thought that serving on the Senior Advisory Board would have benefitted or blessed me; but it has - immeasurably!! God is good!

-Sharon Hayward

Of the many blessings I have experienced here at First Pres over the years is to be a part of a "Triad." Pastor "Suds" Southard initiated this effort where Triads, small groups of 3-4 men, covenant with one another to meet regularly. It's just not about building Christian friendships. We encourage and challenge one another to become more passionate and fully-devoted followers of Christ.

Since joining First Pres, I was actively involved in the church and in large groups, but I prayed for some type of closer "friendship" relationship with other men. God used joining the Triad to answer this prayer and so much more. Over the past few years our small group has met over breakfast every other week. We have openly discussed our highs and lows, bounced thoughts off one another, challenged one another, and grew in our friendship and in the Lord. This is just one of the many ways God has used First Pres to bless, use, and grow me in my Christian walk.

-John Carey

When I think of senior activities at First Presbyterian Church in North Palm Beach, my mind immediately goes back to 1990 when my mother, Priscilla Van Looy, was attending church services and becoming interested in the activities provided by the church. Almost immediately after she moved into the Prosperity Oaks senior living apartment, she started attending and was telling me about the wonderful programs the church had for people her age. She was in her early 80s. I heard about "Brown Bag Bible Study" held at noon on Mondays led by Dr. Duke, and about the "Keenagers" dinner on the fourth Friday night of the month. She attended both. When I visited, I attended with her. What a wonderful, dedicated group of people they were. Since I was a widow and retired, I fit into the group. For a visitor to be welcomed made me feel truly a part of God's family here in North Palm Beach.

Eventually, when my mother was told she couldn't live alone, I became her caregiver and companion. Because of that, she was able to continue her attendance at the activities she enjoyed. A group called "Silver Saints" held a luncheon one Friday a month, in addition to "Brown Bag" and "Keenagers." I saw how much the caring of people like Margita Mullender, Mary Ellen Miller, Dr. and Pat Duke, and others whose names I cannot recall immediately – and eventually the Piersmas illustrated the love of God in North Palm Beach.

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After my mother's death in 2004, I was overwhelmed by the outpouring of sympathy and empathy which came my way from the seniors at First Pres. Sally Escott, who was the leader of the Seniors/Keenagers at the time, became my friend, and she helped me to more fully integrate myself into the senior activities. With each activity, I became involved in at the church, I became more fully aware of how God was working in my life. When Katie Gardner (now Stalcup) became leader of the seniors, she asked me to be on the Senior Advisory Board. I had just recently learned that her first cousin was a college classmate and friend of mine – certainly a “God thing” – and that she herself had attended my alma mater. The God connection continued when Nori Douglas became Senior Coordinator. Her husband, Gordon, had lived in the town where my sister and brother-in-law lived in New Jersey. We knew the same places. These kinds of things are not coincidences. They are evidence of God's hand in our lives – and especially in my life.

Through the senior activities at First Pres, I have met friends who are people I can rely on for help through any event or disaster. To name them all would take too many pages, but the greatest influence in my increasing faith has been the Rev. Steve Gibbons and his wife, Margie. And I continue to serve with the Senior Activities Advisory Board and participate in the “Out to Lunch Bunch” as well as other senior activities. I find myself thanking God more every day for this church and all the blessings I have experienced since I came to Palm Beach County, and especially First Presbyterian Church in North Palm Beach.

-Ellen Reed

When I joined First Pres in the 1980s, I enjoyed Dr. Bill Duke's sermons. They were always interesting, Biblical, thought-provoking, and I didn't want them to end. He was compassionate, humble and caring. I miss him.

-Diane Blackmon

I have been an active member of the First Pres NPB Music Department for as long as I can remember. I started in childrens' choir sometime in the early 2000's and have been performing and participating since. The journey from choir and musicals to handbells and quarterly church band, as well as performing as a horn soloist with the church choir and orchestra has helped shape both my musical journey and my career as a whole. While my participation in the Music Department is only a part of my experience as a youth at First Pres, the quality, strength, and opportunities it provided helped me get where I am today. As a music teacher for grades 6-12, I draw from my experience in the Music Department's youth programs for use in my teaching and have a lot of gratitude and appreciation for the love and hard work that Jay has put into the department over the years. I look forward to returning home each December to perform in the First Pres Christmas Eve services to spread joy and the love of music to the congregation.

-Shaun Murray

We came to First Presbyterian about 15 years ago. We remember our first Sunday and how happy we were to hear the choir under the direction of Jay Arnn and the organ played by Glen Arfsten. We knew then that we had found our new church home. We joined the choir immediately and became members of First Presbyterian in May of 2009. The choir became our small group of caring friends. We enjoy being a part of the brass and the concert band. Where else can you hear a concert band on Easter Sunday morning? Then, there's Music Camp. It's been a joy to mentor young musicians. We love our church.

-Dick & Marcie Dupere

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“Sons of Barbeque” (SOB) was created to provide light-hearted fellowship with spiritual interaction in an open and safe environment. We are dedicated to introducing men, in a passionate, nonthreatening manner, to God’s word.” Founded around 2005 by co-creators, Ken Coleman and the late Reverend Tim Gooley, the SOB’s vision was set in motion. What better way to bring men together and spread the gospel by feeding them delicious homemade BBQ and entertaining and ministering to them with prominent, Christian men within the community. Early guests of the BBQ included Jack Nicklaus, Gary Carter, Mike Schmidt and Jack Welch. With Ken’s culinary skills and Tim’s connections in the community, the SOB’s were destined to be successful ministry.

In the early years, we would borrow a small smoker from Jay Outreach Ministries in Riviera Beach to cook on. It was only a short time before the need to have an even bigger smoker as the ministry grew in popularity and the Lord provided our first grill/smoker. That grill lasted a few years before the need for a much larger capacity smoker was needed as we began to expand our outlook for the ministry into the community. Once again, the Lord provided. A trailer was donated to corral our cooking equipment, too. We collectively decided to take “the show on the road” and began cooking for venues such as the

annual Young Life banquet, North Palm Beach Heritage Festival, The Creators Game Lacrosse Ministry, North Palm Beach’s Chili Cookoff and fishing tournament, and the annual Boy Scout auction. The whole idea was to be “out in the community with fellowship and sharing the Word of God.”

After a pause during the pandemic, SOB, as well as many church activities, came to a halt. We are now back on track and excited to serve the Church and community with our love for fellowship and barbeque.

-Bill Inman

In 2010 I joined FPC because I knew that this was a great place for fellowship with others that are like-minded Christians. I was attending services weekly but not really plugging in anywhere. I heard about this group of men called SOBs that served BBQ at some of the events at the church. I approached Reverend Tim Gooley who was the leader at that time and asked him about the group. He told me to come help at the next cookout, which I did, and have been doing so ever since. At the beginning we only had the small grill which we now call the “Lil Tim” named after him but not long afterwards when I joined the group the church purchased the Big Smoker. I remember how exciting it was the day the new smoker arrived from Texas. It came on a

flatbed which we had to offload at Anchorage Park on a little hill because of the weight and how low it sat to the ground. The whole group of us were all learning how to keep the temperature at the right degrees as it was the largest smoker any of us had ever cooked on.

Bill Inman took over leadership along with Will Wallace and Brad Finch at that time. The comradery and time together built relationships that will last forever. It has been an awesome experience. One day soon we will all be joined with our Lord and Savior along with other fellow believers to serve our Father God in heaven.

The church is the body of Christ, and the SOB’s are the armpits. We love to get stinky and sweaty over a hot smoker or grill. We always enjoy planning and executing the next event. We love to serve others and share our experiences that brought us together. We are a group of men that do not hold judgement but seek to encourage each other in our walks of faith. I am grateful to the leadership at the church for supporting this ministry. If you’re seeking to hang out with a group of like-minded believers that love to serve others, consider signing up for the next event and contact Reverend Suds. We always have room for more SOB’s and need as much help as possible because many hands make the load light. God bless our church and the SOB ministry.

-Jack Baldwin

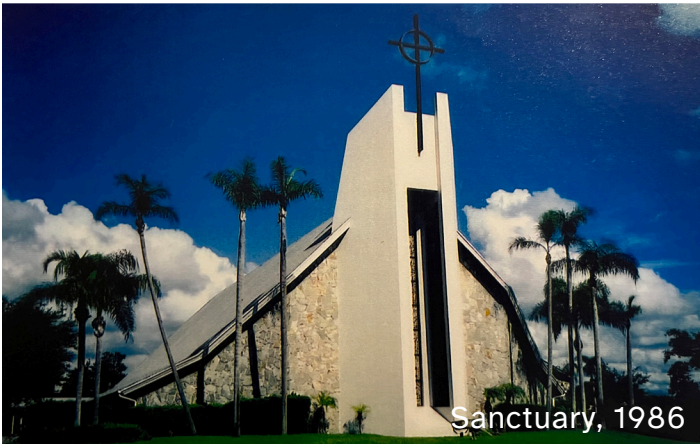
VISION 60



Sanctuary, 1977



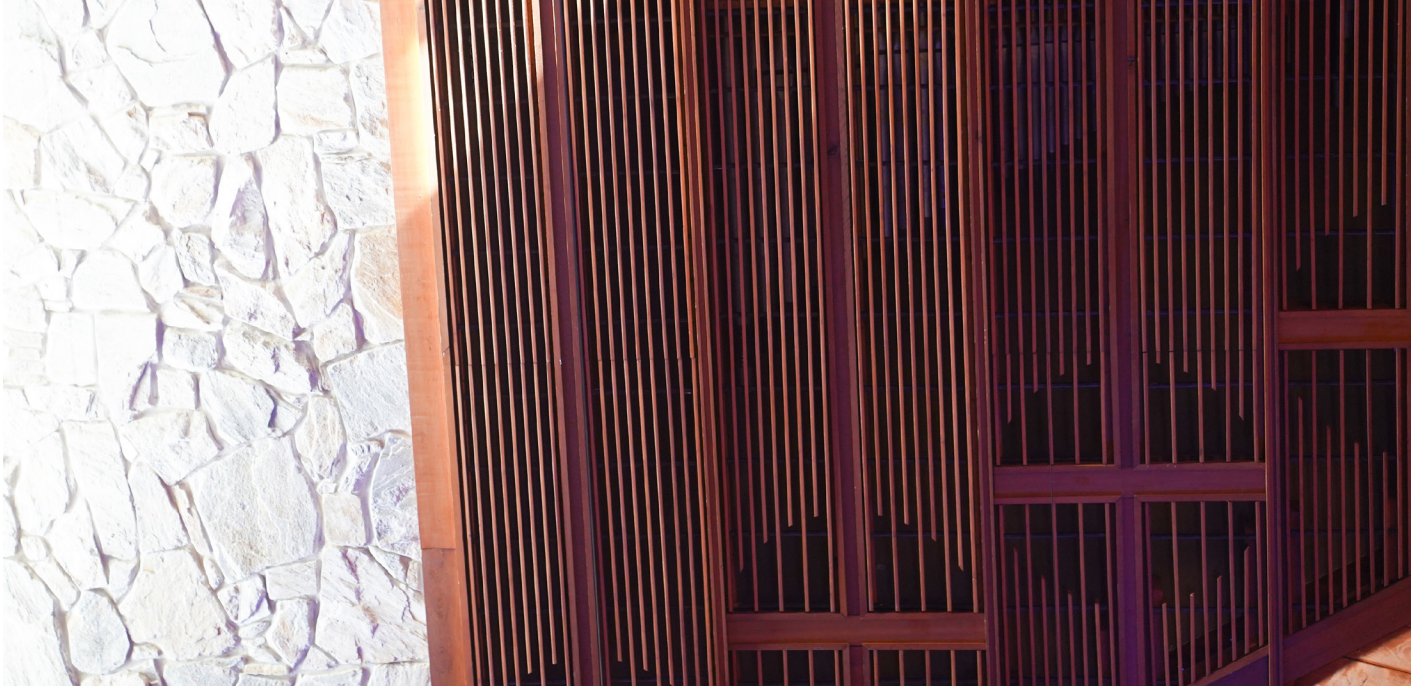
Lucky and Dr. Duke, after new Sanctuary built



Sanctuary, 1986



Lucky and Jared



Our church campus is a special place where we, as the body of Christ, meet to worship, pray, learn, serve, seek refuge, find community, and experience Jesus' peace and saving grace through the Holy Spirit. Spanning 7 acres and 7 buildings, it takes financial resources not only to replace older equipment and pay for extensive building repairs that are not within the scope of the general fund budget, but to modernize the campus so we can continue to attract people to First Pres. That is the purpose of the Capital Improvement Fund.

The goal for the year ahead is to receive sufficient funds to:

- Replace the flooring in The Way building
- Build our air conditioner reserve so when one of our 25 units fail, we have the resources to replace it
- Add more lighting and security cameras throughout the campus
- Modernize our children ministry area
- Upgrade some computers and AV equipment

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

LOCAL CHURCH PLANTING FUND

While it is somewhat counterintuitive, when a mature congregation like First Pres plants a new faith community, its involvement in planting contributes to the ongoing renewal process for the parent congregation. This occurs because laypersons in the parent congregation begin to see the critical role that God wants them to play as new faith life is established. Our goal for planting a series of new churches in South Florida is really about spreading the gospel beyond our church campus to communities where people do not make God part of their daily lives. New churches are an effective means of evangelism as they become self-sufficient and reproduce by planting additional new congregations.

Increasingly, congregations that are involved in planting new churches are focusing on identifying new leaders from within and then providing internal pathways for their training. Our denomination, ECO, expressly provides for commissioning lay pastors to play key roles in establishing new faith communities and also helping bring new energy to established congregations.

As a congregation, we are missionally focused and believe God has called us to plant churches to expand the Kingdom of God beyond our campus. It is our desire to not only see new churches established, but for it to happen with leaders that are identified and trained right here at First Pres. Through the Local Church Planting fund, we have successfully planted Providencia Church in West Palm Beach and have provided assistance in the development of several other churches in South Florida, including in Palm City and Riviera Beach. We have now identified Ryan Fink, and his wife, Lilly, to become our next church planters in Jupiter.



GLOBAL MISSIONS FUND

As members of the global Church, Christians have the privilege and ability to be the only

representation of Jesus that some people will ever experience. In partnership with 13 global mission ministries and six church planters in key global cities, along with the donations made to the Global Missions Fund, First Pres is reaching far beyond Florida and into the depths of some of the darkest places and most populated cities. Through evangelism and justice ministries, our global footprint has been made in the Muslim world and the 10/40 window where oppression and violence reign. Our partnerships allow us to support national leaders in Mexico, Cuba, and Peru, and American missionaries focused through local leadership in Croatia, Hungary and Guatemala.

With First Pres' continued support and prayers, our mission partners are enabled to care for the poor and provide discipleship opportunities as they evangelize people in parts of the world most of us will never see.

As we build relationships with missionaries and church planters around the world, through support ministries and our mission partners' efforts, we are fulfilling our role as God's chosen people by clothing ourselves in compassion and kindness. God calls us to share the truth of our inheritance in Christ and, through the Global Missions Fund, we are fulfilling that call as we bring the truth of God's love to people all over the world.

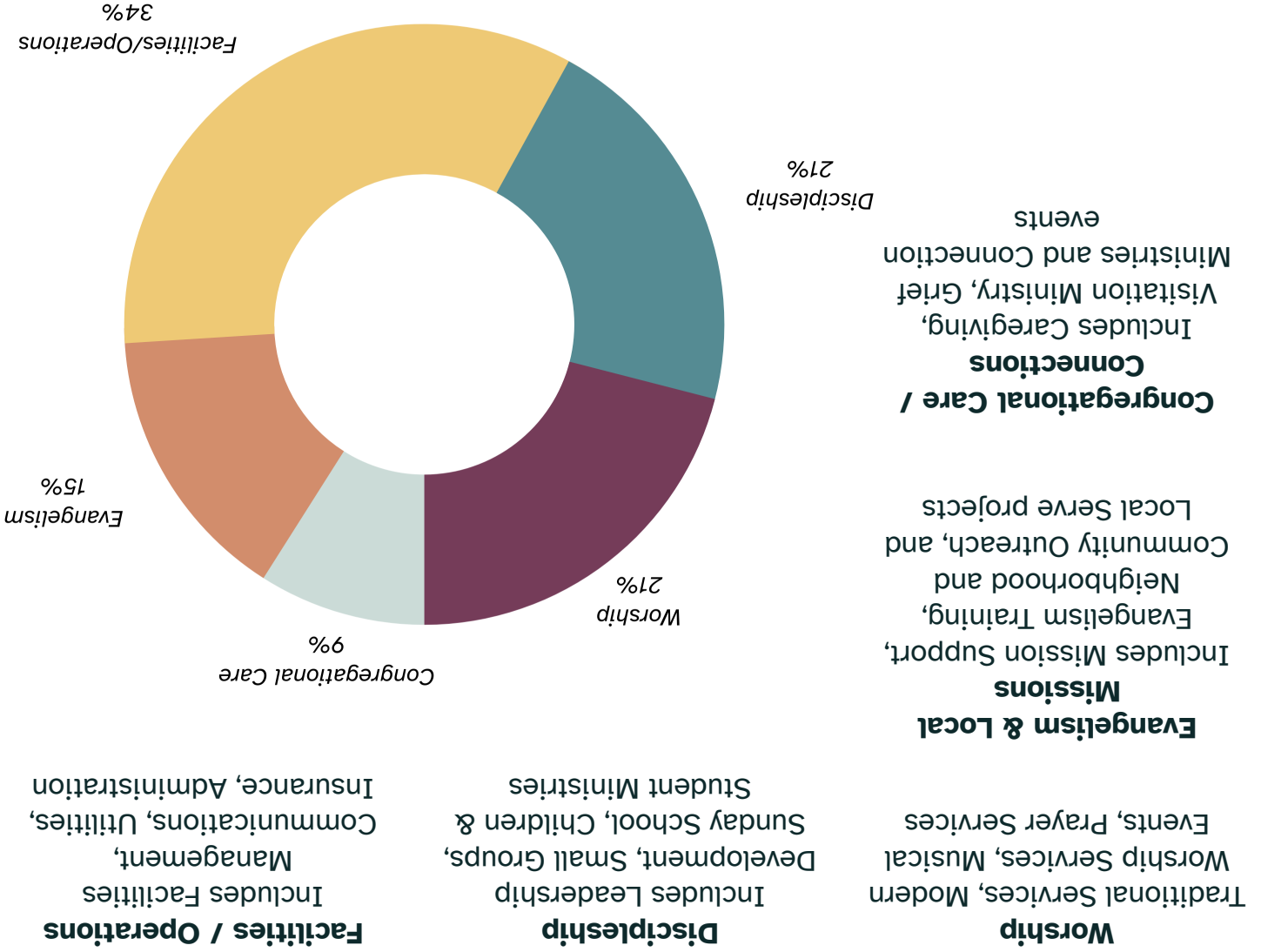
To the left: Flags of Cuba, Peru, Greece, Germany, which represent the countries where First Pres supports church planters.



GENERAL FUND

Striving to fulfill our mission of “equipping people to pursue and share gospel driven lives,” is an ever-present goal as we engage in ministry both within our community and in South Florida. The General Fund budget is the largest of the four funds because it encompasses not only the cost of running First Pres, but also for providing meaningful worship services that glorify God, maintaining an excellent music ministry, caring for our congregation, discipling our flock – including specific programs for all ages and through small groups, evangelizing South Florida and supporting local mission partners and projects.

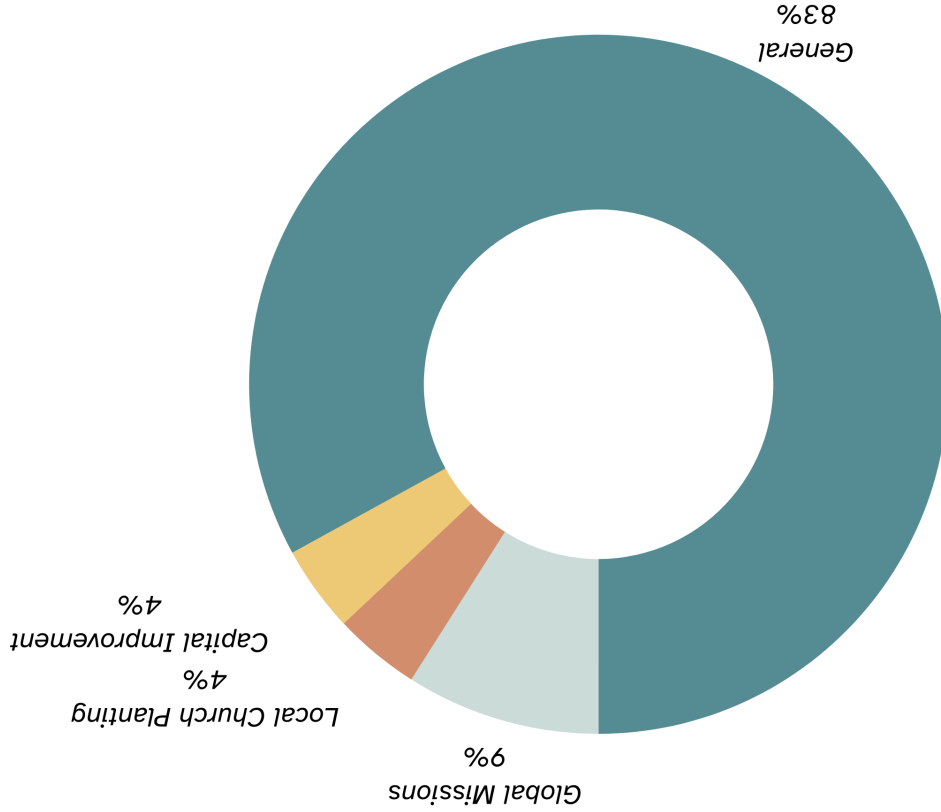
GENERAL FUND BREAKDOWN



THE FOUR FUNDS

The funds that make up our overall budget are utilized for specific purposes, When a donor specifies a particular fund to give to, we strictly honor those desires. The four funds and their budget for 2024 are as follows: Details of each fund are on the following pages.

	TOTAL
GENERAL FUND	\$2,250,000
GLOBAL MISSIONS FUND	\$250,000
LOCAL CHURCH PLANTING FUND	\$100,000
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	\$100,000
	\$2,700,000



HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR TIME AND TALENTS?

There are a multitude of ways that you can serve at First Pres. Here are some:

- Volunteer to serve on projects with our local mission partners, such as cleaning or serving at Hannah's Home or become a liaison to one of our partners
- Become a leader for student ministries either weekly or as a summer camp volunteer
- Lead a small group
- Make a difference in the life of a child as a Sunday school teacher, Wednesday night helper or volunteering at events, like the Easter egg hunt
- Become a watchman 6 times a year on Sunday mornings
- Use your vocal talents by joining the choir or becoming part of the worship team.
- If you play an instrument, participate in special musical events
- Serve on the hospitality team as a greeter or during the coffee hour
- Join the men on the Sons of BBQ team to provide food for church events and the community



THE 2023 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

STEWARDSHIP '24

personally chose how you will commit, not just your treasures, but your time and talents in serving the Church.

This year's Stewardship Campaign begins today and will conclude on Sunday, November 19, 2023, whereby if you have not already pledged online or submitted your written pledge card, you can offer it up before you take communion that day.

You may pledge in the following ways:

- Complete the enclosed pledge card. Place it in the offering plate on Sundays, mail it, or drop it off at the church office.
- On our Church Center app, click on "Pledge"
- Pledge online by scanning the QR code here:



Annually, we challenge all our members and regular attendees to participate in some form of ministry at First Pres and to commit to giving financial support to the work of God through First Pres. We request that each of our families complete a pledge card, which is an estimate of our giving for the year ahead. Annual pledges are the financial foundation of our church, providing the most important source of funding for our ministries and mission. Historically, they represent over two-thirds of the church's annual income. Based on the income from pledges and other revenue sources, the finance committee is able to create a solid annual budget and make plans for future ministry opportunities. A pledge is our personal commitment to God and to the Church to make financial gifts that support the ministries for the upcoming year. Annual pledging is a statement of thanksgiving to God and is a visible sign of our commitment to follow in the way of Jesus, by giving as God gives to us.

We ask that you prayerfully consider how you plan to join your brothers and sisters here at First Pres in committing your time, talents and treasure in 2024 and specifically:

- If you have not pledged in the past, commit in this way to God's Kingdom work
- If you do pledge or tithe, seek the Lord's guidance on increasing your giving
- To view all that God has given you and

FULFILLING THE MISSION OF FIRST PRES

to worry but seek the Kingdom of God and He will give us everything we need. 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 promises that when we give cheerfully and generously, that God, in turn, will generously provide everything we need and have plenty left over to share with others.

Here is the bottom line – we claim we have faith in God, but true faith requires that we completely trust Him. We trust Him for our salvation and yet many of us don't trust that He will provide for us if we follow His command to give generously, whether it be a tithe or even more sacrificial gifts. There is only one place in the Bible where God tells us to test Him, and that is found in Malachi 3:10: "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and thus put Me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing." Giving is a form of worship and a test of our hearts – is our heart in money/stuff or is it for God?

There are so many wonderful opportunities to give to parachurch organizations, overseas missions and humanitarian development, but it is the local church that is the critical foundation for all Kingdom work because it is the God-ordained institution where believers accomplish everything God has called them to. It is the vehicle through which we care for the poor, feed the hungry, equip people to minister in the community, and send people out to the nations. First Pres has been accomplishing the mission of God for 60 years and with the financial support from each of us and giving of our time and talents, we will continue to do so, and even to a greater degree as giving and volunteering increases, until the Lord returns.

Three of the four Gospels present the story of Jesus' anointing at Bethany. Simon the leper, whom Jesus previously healed, was hosting a party. Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead, and his sisters, Mary and Martha, were there, along with the disciples. Mary came to Jesus with an alabaster flask of costly fragrant oil and poured in on Jesus. Mary took her hair, the most honored part of her body, and used it to clean Jesus' feet, the dirtiest part of his body as a generous and loving act of worship and sacrificial devotion to her Savior. As the fragrant oil was worth a year's wages, a few of the disciples complained that it was a waste to anoint Jesus with it because the oil could have been sold to help the poor. Jesus reprimanded them because He knew she had kept the perfume in preparation for His coming sacrifice. He also commented that the poor would always be with them, but He would not be.

Like Mary, we don't have to fear giving generously because Jesus gives extravagantly for us. By dying on the cross for our sins, Jesus has already blessed us beyond all we could have asked for or imagined. The world may think we are crazy when we take God at His word and give Him our first and best gifts, but the question we all have to answer is whose voice will we listen to. Do we follow the ways of the world, accumulating more and bigger and better things or are we willing to follow the Bible's commands and prompting of the Holy Spirit and trust God's promises that He will provide for all our needs when we give generously. Here are just a few of the promises on this subject in the Bible: Proverbs 3:9-10 states if we honor the Lord with our wealth and with the best part of everything we produce, that He will fill our barns with grain and our vats will overflow with good wine. Matthew 6:26-34 tells us not

2

FULFILLING THE
MISSION OF
FIRST PRES

4

HOW WILL YOU
USE YOUR TIME
AND TALENTS?

5

PLEDGING: THE FOUR
FUNDS



A 2023 COMMITMENT CAMPAIGN FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

STEWARDSHIP, 24