



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

134 BEAL PKWY SW,  
FORT WALTON BEACH, FL

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

### WORSHIP

The Worship Committee, with the Pastor and Jackie Hails, lead the church in all services of worship.

The Committee meets monthly to plan for areas of our responsibility:

- 1) Worship services each Sunday and special worship services that include the Lord's Supper. Also offering communion to the homebound members.
- 2) Recruiting, training and supervising ushers, liturgist and communion servers.
- 3) Securing pulpit supply if the pastor is unable to lead the service.
- 4) Providing administrative oversight of the Director of Music and the music budget.
- 5) Planning the appropriate celebrations of baptisms, weddings and memorial or funeral services.
- 6) Providing outreach to visitors and prospective members.

During the first part of 2021 our church had to close its doors to in-person worship due to the Covid Virus Pandemic. Worship services continued by way of online "live streaming". "First on Faith" mid-week meditations also continued - recorded programs by Pastor Schuler, Music Director Jackie Hails and others who volunteered to give their testimony.

In-person services resumed February 21, 2021 much to the excitement of all members.

Activities during 2021:

- 1) Officer Ordination and Installation was held in January and November.
- 2) First on Faith programs continued thru September.
- 3) We couldn't gather for Ash Wednesday Service, so a creative "Drive Through" was a good solution.
- 4) Maundy Thursday Service in April.
- 5) Pastor Sharon Schuler retired November 21<sup>st</sup>. The congregation showed their gratitude for her 10 years of service with a Love Offering and a beautiful crystal cross.
- 6) The annual Christmas Music Service & Appreciation Sunday was the 2nd Sunday in December.

We have been blessed with two retired ministers, Rev. John Toth and Rev. Jim Rollins who have "heeded the call" when Pastor Sharon was absent.

Many thanks to ushers, communion servers, liturgist, choir members, and bell ringers. May God Bless you all for stepping up when called to serve.

**Committee Members:** Marlene Naylor, chair, Pat Hansen, Phyllis March, Jackie Hails, Beth Crawley, Barbara Blackburn, Theresa Nicks, Kim Mitchell, and Pastor Schuler

## ADMIN-FINANCE

The Administration & Finance Committee members for 2021 were: Reverend Sharon Schuler, Pastor; Fred Pryor, Treasurer; Pam Haynes, Office Administrator; Beth Crawley, MG Moran, David Noffsinger, George Goodall and Steve Cahoon, Committee Chairman. Meetings were held on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:00 pm in Rigdon Hall. All members of the congregation, and especially representatives from other committees, are invited and encouraged to attend.

2021 continued to be a challenging year for everyone and that held true for the Admin & Finance committee. Most of our focus was on keeping the financial obligations current and continuing to support our pastor and staff.

Projects worked during 2021 included:

**Payroll Protection Plan (PPP)** – We completed the forgiveness process which was applied for and approved in December 2020. We received our written notification from the SBA relieving us of any obligation to repay the payroll loan.

**Church Endowment Fund** – Treasurer Fred Pryor continued providing weekly updates throughout 2021 on the status of our investment account given the impact of COVID-19 on the financial markets. We started the year with \$309,404.86; during the year the fund increased by \$155,000 from the sale of the Sharing & Caring property, and earnings of \$109,255.65 leaving an ending balance of \$418,660.51. These amounts take into account the transfer of \$95,000 to the operating fund. And despite a projected transfer of \$113,827, we transferred only \$95,000 to the General Fund for operating expenses.

**Sale of Sharing & Caring Property** – In early January final approvals were obtained from the PCUSA PILP Loan program and the transaction was closed on January 28, 2021. The proceeds of \$155,000 were deposited with Merrill Lynch to be held for no less than 12 months before the Session

and Congregation will further consider the appropriate use of the funds. In September at a called Congregational Meeting the decision was made to keep the sales proceeds in the Merrill Lynch account and to use only the earnings for mission work of the church. The principal amount is allowed to be used for capital expenses required to operate the church with Session approval.

**Insurance** – In 2021 we saw an increase in insurance premiums of \$6,700 in addition to a \$4,000 increase experienced in 2020, that is a 30% total increase over the past two years. This was a result of rising insurance costs across all markets.

**Independent Financial Audit** – The committee interviewed and selected Mr. Shiraz Hosein, a local attorney with an accounting and finance background, to perform our independent audit. He will perform his independent assessment in 2022.

During 2021 all committees stayed within or below their annual expense budgets. As is the case every year, projected income was a major concern and then placing the impact of COVID-19 on top of that we were really uncertain of where we would be with income. As in past years, we are very fortunate to have the Church Investment Fund to cover shortfalls in pledge receipts. While this was the case again in 2021, the impact to our investment funds was below projection. We budgeted \$113,827 for transfer however due to better than forecasted offering income and reasonable management of expenses we ended the year transferring only \$95,000.

The Administration & Finance committee, working with the Session, continues to look for ways to grow our congregation and to responsibly control expenses. We welcome any suggestions that you as members or friends of the congregation may have.

**Vision: To be the hands, feet, and heart of Jesus in the world.**

**Mission Statement: Guided by the Holy Spirit, to grow as disciples of Jesus and share the love of God with all.**

## PROPERTY

First I would like to thank all the members on the Property Committee and congregation for all the support and contributions they were involved with this past year, taking care of issues and concerns throughout our campus.

A special thank you to Jamie Banks for continuing to keep the Campus clean and addressing and fixing everyone's concerns as Sexton for the church. Committee: MG Moran, Dave Noffsinger, Dick Hansen, Steve Cahoon, Jim March, chairman.

This year has been a busy year for the Property Committee and I would like to inform the congregation of this past year's accomplishments.

Repair our Fellowship HVAC system. Although it took longer than was expected, once the right parts were obtained the HVAC was repaired.

MG replaced 3 thermostats to WIFI in order to better control and regulate temps throughout several areas of the Campus.

Jim replaced the garbage disposal in the Fellowship kitchen sink.

Purchase a new range/stove to replace the antique stove in the Fellowship Hall kitchen.

Purchase and replace several pieces of audio and camera equipment after our church sustained damage from lightning.

Replaced old WIFI system.

Purchase a new sign to replace the brick sign near Sharing and Caring entrance.

Meeting space is provided to non-profit groups as a part of ministry to the community. Property committee evaluates and approves requests for meetings and other events.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

2021 continued to be a challenging year for the family of First Presbyterian Church due to the pandemic. However, new opportunities for study and prayer were offered to help people grow in their faith:

- A daily reading plan for three months was offered – reading one or two books of the Bible each month.
- Two Zoom classes were offered online:  
Summer: “*Dining with Jesus*” – examining the gospel stories where Jesus taught while fellowshiping with others.  
Fall: “*Why Doesn't God Do Something?*” – exploring the love of God and reality of evil.
- Prayer Group on Zoom was available every week for an hour, returning to in-person in December.
- Pastor Sharon and others shared “First on Faith”- a weekly online meditation.
- “*Running the Race*” Bible study the month of June.
- Resumed a long-running 9:00am Sunday Bible study in September.
- Advent devotional from Austin Seminary distributed to the congregation.
- Jim Rollins held a study of the scriptures of the Advent/Christmas selections in Handel's *Messiah* for three weeks in December following the worship service.

While not official CE programs, there is a group that meets each week. This group is open and welcomes all participation.

Men's Breakfast meeting — guys meet faithfully at 7:00 am every Thursday, at the Neighborhood Café, for devotion and fellowship.

2022 offers us new opportunities to grow in our knowledge of the scriptures and our love of God.

## FELLOWSHIP

The meaning of FELLOWSHIP is defined as a gathering of people with common interests to share ideas. We gather in the fellowship hall to share ideas, food and worship.

The fellowship committee prepares food for the congregation for many events. We reopened the kitchen in mid summer. In the remaining months we resumed friendship time after service, had a salad pot luck lunch, a memorial service reception, the harvest home dinner and music appreciation reception. We had to replace the old kitchen stove this fall, the old one simply died.

The kitchen is never quiet but full of laughter and lots of fun. We're thankful for all the people who dropped by with something for friendship time and those who poked their head in the kitchen and we put them to work! We have lost several members of our committee and value all help. If you are interested in helping call Theresa Nicks or Phyllis March. Theresa can make anyone a sous chef!

## WITNESS & OUTREACH

The Witness and Outreach committee is responsible for leading the church in ministry to persons beyond the immediate membership of the church by:

- Evaluating and recommending recipients and levels of benevolent giving appropriate for the church.
- Overseeing Session approved programs such as One Great Hour of Sharing, Joy offering, Centsability (two cents a meal), and mission trips.

The committee was unable to meet in 2021 but did monitor the \$14,900.00 budget items for distribution to selected charities/causes and to review new worthy congregational giving.

Budgeted charitable recipients in 2021 were:

- Presbytery of Florida
- Presbyterian Disaster Relief
- Presbyterian Education Board (schools in Pakistan)
- Habitat for Humanity (Fort Walton Beach)
- Sharing and Caring (Fort Walton Beach)
- Shelter House (Fort Walton Beach)
- Crossroads Medical Clinic (Valparaiso)
- Oasis AIDS Clinic (Fort Walton Beach)
- Presbyterian University Center (Tallahassee)
- Catholic Charities (Fort Walton Beach)
- Porch de Salomon Ministry (Guatemala)

Charitable Collections: Monetary and non-monetary donations were collected for the following:

Centsability (Two Cents-a-Meal) hunger program: collection distributed \$220.00 to Sharing & Caring in Fort Walton Beach.

First Sunday Collection of non-perishable food items and personal care items for Sharing & Caring. Special push in April when we filled the cart every Sunday.

Angel Tree gifts for families at FRESH Start.

Bed 4 Me —Sheet and comforter bed sets.

Rummage sale conducted with the help of volunteers to raise funds for local causes.

Cookie baking – prepare baked goods from donated mixes to add to sack lunches distributed by Trinity Methodist, Opportunity Place, Children in Crisis and One Hopeful Place. To date over 35,000 cookies and brownies have been distributed.

Witness-Outreach committee: Susan Cook (Chair), Nancy Nicks Hillers (Co-Chair), Barbara Blackburn, Krisha Brister, Carol Davis, Yvonne Franklin, Fran Goodall, Joanne Hamilton, Lila Mendel, Bob Englekens

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Presbyterian Women, (PW) is an exciting, church-wide organization composed of all the women of the church who are members of a circle or who attend church regularly. We worship God through Bible study, mission projects, prayer, and fellowship. Women are a vital part of our congregation serving on the Session, on committees, as Ushers, as well as members of circles.

At First Presbyterian Church we have three circles. **Joy circle** is our morning group. They meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 9:45. **Fellowship circle** meets the first Thursday of the month at 2:00 in the afternoon. **Shalom** is our evening group. They meet on the first Monday of the month at 6:00pm. Since they have so many members that still work outside the home, Shalom members also serve dinner at their meetings. Each member takes turns preparing dinner.

On the third Tuesday of each month we gather for lunch at various local restaurants to celebrate the birthdays of that month, get new prayer concerns, and to enjoy each other's fellowship.

The PW officers for 2020-2021 are:

**Barbara Blackburn**, PW Moderator

**Krisha Bristor**, Secretary

**Kim Mitchell**, Together-in-service Coordinator

**Fran Goodall**, Historian

**Rosanna McCurry**, Program Coordinator

**Phyllis March**, Assistant Program Coordinator

**Mayrelizabeth Pryor**, Fellowship Circle Chair

**Carol Davis & Lila Mendel**, Joy Circle co-chairs

**Theresa Nicks**, Shalom Circle Chair

These officers comprise the PW Coordinating Team which directs PW activities. The coordinating committee was unable to meet in 2021 but hopes to resume in early 2022.

Missions our women support are: Least Coin offering, the SERRV Market sponsored by Joy Circle, and church rummage sale that raised \$2173.00 for various local and global charities.

