



BACK TO SCHOOL 2025

ISSUE 25-AUG/SEPT

The Diligent

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ARP LAKE WALES, FL

“...a Christ-centered
fellowship of believers
devoted to glorifying God
through true worship, personal
evangelism, discipleship, and
servanthood.”

AT A GLANCE

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Leadership

GOD, OUR FRIEND

From Pastor Mackay

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. - Proverbs 17:17

I asked my friends for ideas on a newsletter article. One suggested friendship! Seems appropriate doesn't it? That led me to search the Scriptures, particularly the book of Proverbs, to meditate on the idea of being a friend.

Many point out that in our culture friendship is eroding. Our hyper-sexualized world forgets that God has created us to enjoy vibrant friendships with our fellow man. We pretend that digital connection is a substitute for the long-term, intimate devotion that it takes to be a friend. We are horribly impatient, expecting immediate blossoms of deep friendship, when seeds take time to grow.

As God's wisdom (let's call it, "the art of godly living") instructs us, it becomes apparent that our calling as friends parallels what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. "Godly living," means being like God, right? Look at how closely connected God's care for His people intersects with our calling to care for one another.

Consider **what God has done**. God's nearness to us is the result of *His* movement *towards us*. God has loved us, and shown that love in giving His Son (John 3:16, 2 Cor 5:21). God's movement is one of sacrifice, giving out of His riches for the benefit of we sinners.

It is godly, then, to reflect this giving attitude toward others. Job muses that, "He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty." (6:14) True, we cannot bridge the chasm of sin and death as God has in the work of Jesus. However, we can move towards others. We can knock on the door, send a text, take the time to write a letter; and in doing so echo God's love to us.

One of Proverbs' most famous statements about friendship is 18:24, "there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." Notice **where God is**. We live and move and have our being in God every day (Acts 17:28). He is never far from us, but dwells in us in the person of the Holy Spirit.

To be a godly friend is to be near. Solomon observes that when family is far away (a far distance, or perhaps is "far away" emotionally or relationally), a friend who is close is better (Prov. 27:10)! God is always ready to listen to us and to speak to us in His Word. Do we offer the "ministry of presence" to our friends?

In particular, one of the Christian's great comforts is that even in the worst moments of our lives, God is with us (Ps. 23:4). Look at the heading verse above. Never is a friendship more godly than when love and companionship is shown in hard times. Perhaps we should, at times, rethink the concept of "giving space." When a friend is hurting, we may be tempted to say, "I'm giving space." Sadly, I've used this line to cover up, "I don't want to say. I'm a little scared of what he is going through. I don't want to make a mistake that will reflect poorly on me." God knows our weakness, and is drawn near.

We do want to say the right thing, though, don't we? That's not a bad desire. After all, the Bible tells us **what God says** about us. One of my favorite hymns says that Jesus, "pleads the merits of his blood." In other words, as Jesus sits on the throne at God's right hand, he intercedes on our behalf (Heb. 7:25). Jesus has walked on this earth and faced our temptations. Yet, knowing, our weakness, he speaks to God about His saving work and how much God loves us.

What are our words like when we talk *about* our friends? Often, friendships struggle because we prefer to focus on faults and failures rather than (like Jesus), thinking and speaking with God's grace at the front and center. "Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close friends." (Prov. 17:9) Similarly, "...a whisperer separates close friends." (Prov. 16:28) To be godly is to see and think of our Christian friends in Jesus! If our friends do not yet know the Lord, let us be every mindful of God's grace to us.

God doesn't just speak about us, He speaks *to us*. In His Word, He tells us of His grace, and He guides us to follow Him each day. Like Him, we can speak regularly to our friends about Jesus. And, we can lovingly correct and guide one another. Many treasure the image of iron Prov. 17:17). God gives us one another to hone our

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our love for Him and for others. So critical is this accountability, that Proverbs speaks of “profuse kisses” as the gift not of a friend, but of an

enemy! Friends love like God loves: enough even to faithfully “wound” when we go astray (27:6).

What a friend we have in Jesus, indeed! Let us love one another as God in Christ has loved us. ■



Pray for Walker Kirkpatrick as he begins his seminary training at **Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando!** This fall, Walker will be going to Orlando once a week for classes.

PRAYER FOCUS

- AUGUST 3-** Elders/Deacons Church Leadership
- AUGUST 10-** School Start
- AUGUST 17-** Evangelism
- AUGUST 24-** Adult Small Groups, Children’s Sunday School
- AUGUST 31** - Dr. Teresa Irwin, Vince Treadway, FPC Music Ministry
- SEPTEMBER 7-** 10 for 10 Florida Presbytery Church Planting
- SEPTEMBER 14-** Congregational leaders and volunteers
- SEPTEMBER 21-** Children and Youth [worldly pressure]
- SEPTEMBER 28** - Persecuted Church

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- The elders of First Presbyterian Church meet monthly on the fourth Tuesday. The following are highlights from the meeting on July 2, 2025.
- Prayers were made on behalf of the congregation. The Session will review Shepherd Lists in August.
 - The Missions & Evangelism Committee reported about our efforts to support Students in Transition at Lake Wales High School. A collection of supplies has been made and dropped off.
 - **The Stewardship and Finance Committee reported:**

	As of 7/31/25	Budget YTD	Difference
Operating Income: Member Contributions	547680	551720	-4040
Operating Income: Reserve Dispersement	184750	125854	58896
Reserve Income	24905	22867	2038
TOTAL Income	757335	700441	56894
TOTAL Expense	636873	677575	-40702

OPERATING BALANCE 7/31/25: \$170434

TOTAL CASH 7/31/25: \$968946

- The 2026 budgeting process begins in August.
- The Trustees have met and determined the dispersement for 2026.
- Reports were made from the 2025 meeting of General Synod. ■



What is the Circle of Love?

FPCLW VOLUNTEERS OFFER A HELPING HAND TO BEREAVED FAMILIES ON THE DAY OF THEIR LOVED ONES FUNERAL

How?

HOSTING A RECEPTION OR LUNCHEON FOR THE FAMILY AND CLOSE FRIENDS. CHURCH MEMBERS PROVIDE REFRESHMENTS FOR RECEPTIONS OR COVERED DISHES FOR LUNCHEONS.

Who?

INTERESTED FAMILIES RECEIVE A DETAILED PAMPHLET OUTLINING WHAT TO EXPECT AND HOW TO CONTACT A CIRCLE OF LOVE MEMBER TO FINALIZE ARRANGEMENTS.

How to help?

CONTACT JANE TERRY, MJ O'REILLY, ANN CONE OR PENNY WRIGHT IF YOU'D LIKE TO HELP IN THIS WAY

1 Peter 4:8-10

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

Discipleship

DISCIPLESHIP SUNDAY PREVIEW

From Pastor Myers

Mark your calendars also for Sunday August 24th for Discipleship Sunday. We will meet together in the Fellowship Hall at 11am for refreshments and a full overview of all of the family discipleship ministries for the 2025-2026 year. We will preview what the year holds for our Children’s discipleship, our Student discipleship and our Adult Discipleship. Here is a sneak preview.

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Our Adult Discipleship schedule is in full swing. The following is each of our Adult Small Groups which meet after worship every Sunday.

The Men’s 8am Group

Facilitated by Frank & Andy Hunt, meets in the conference room (in the Administrative office) at 8am and uses the Standard Lesson Quarterly Bible Study Curriculum

Eagles’ Wings

(directed towards young adults)
Facilitated by Fox Rawlings, meets in Vintage Building Room 296 from 11am to noon and will be studying the book of Philippians

The Seekers

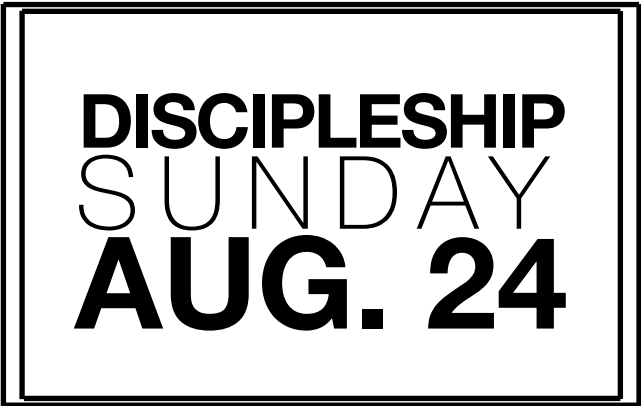
Facilitated by Laura Hunt and Tony Woods, meets in Vintage Building Lecture Hall A from 11am to noon and will be studying the book of Jonah

The Upper Room

Facilitated by John Dubois and taught by John Steensma, meets in the Family Life Center Classroom A from 11am to noon and will be studying the Foundations of Reformed Theology as well as the book of Romans

The Faith Works

Facilitated by Doug Pace, meets in the Family Life Center Classroom C from 11am to noon and will concentrate on sermon review and application.



The Hub

Facilitated by David Nelson, Vince Treadway, and Pastor Mackay and Pastor Myers, meets in the Family Life Center Fellowship Hall from 11am to noon and will be reading and applying Knowing God by J.I. Packer.

WOMEN’S DISCIPLESHIP

The Mary & Martha Circle

Facilitated by Lori Woods and ministers to women every 3rd Thursday evening (6pm) at the Weaver’s home in Lake Ashton. They plan to study The Full Armour of God by Iain Duguid and Saved by Nancy Guthrie

The Tuesday Morning Circle

Facilitated by Laura Hunt and Jane Terry. They plan to meet every second Tuesday morning at 9:30 in the Game Room. They will be going through a study on the Psalms by Hope Blanton and Christine Gordon called At His Feet

Children’s Discipleship:

Mother’s Bible Study

Facilitated by Rachel Smith. They meet weekly on Wednesdays at 5:00-6:00pm before ROW supper. Nursery care for babies to 1st grade is provided. Older children (2nd-8th grade) can attend King’s Singers during that time. They are using “Grace In Chaos: Biblical Hope for the Hard Days of Motherhood” to guide their discussions.

CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES

Children’s Sunday School

Every Sunday from 11am to noon that goes through a very faithful curriculum from Great Commission Publishing. There is an approved teacher, an assistant and a small breakfast provided for our children every week.

ROW Kids

Children will be taught about Jesus from Kevin DeYoung’s great book The Greatest Story every 2nd and 4th Wednesday after ROW supper until 7:30pm ■

ROCK ON WEDNESDAYS

Wednesdays in Fellowship Hall

Join us for our weekly mid-week Discipleship Program

Weekly Rotation

1st Wednesdays - **Potluck and Fellowship** (Bring a side to share!)

2nd Wednesdays - **Bible Study & ROW Kids**

3rd Wednesdays - **Prayer Meeting and Hymn Sing**

4th Wednesdays - **Bible Study & ROW Kids**

Rock on Wednesday does not meet on 5th Wednesdays.

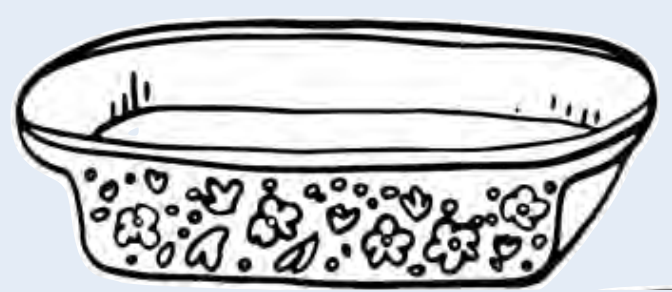
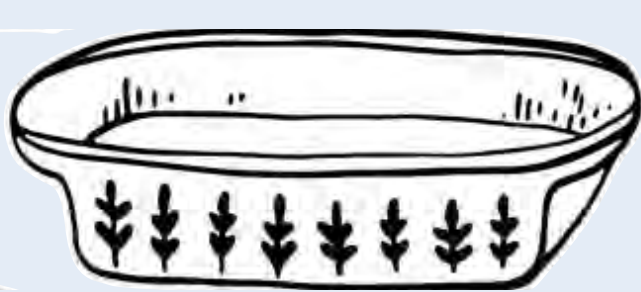
Want to help?

Contact Pastor Myers

if you'd like to help with...

- Kitchen crew/clean-up
- Children's programming
- Fellowship Night programs

ROW starts **SEPTEMBER 10**. It's a Potluck!



ROW Adult Bible Study

The Names of Jesus: How the Old Testament Enriches Our Faith in Christ.

Oh to be a fly on the proverbial wall as Jesus talks with the disciples on the road to Emmaus! Join us this academic year in the Rock on Wednesday Adult Breakout series (on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 6:40 to 7:15pm) as we learn to read the Old Testament with a Christo-centric lens, seeing how all the sufferings of Christ and the glories that follow are the culmination and main driving force of all the Bible and especially the Old Testament.

Sept 10- Luke 24:13-32 - Introduction

Creation:

Sept 24-Christ the Word (Gen 1, John 1,)

Covenant of Works:

Oct 8- The First Great Commission (Covenant of Works) (Gen 1:26-28, 2:15-17)

Covenant of Grace:

Oct 22-Christ the Seed of the Woman (Gen 3)

Noahic Covenant:

Nov 12-Christ the Re-creator (Gen 6)

Abrahamic Covenant:

Dec 10-Christ Our Temple, God with Us (Gen 17:1-14)

Mosaic Covenant:

Jan 14- Christ Our Guide (Exodus 27.20-21) (Deut 31:14-22)

Jan 28-Christ Our Sacrifice (Lev 16) and Lawkeeper (Deut 31:14-22)

Davidic Covenant Kingdom:

Feb 11:Christ our King (2 Sam 7)

Feb 25:Christ our Shepherd Servant (Isaiah)

Davidic Covenant Exile:

Mar 11:Christ our Only Wisdom (Eccl 12)

April 8: Christ our Restoration (Ezek 36, Dan 7, Zech 14)

April 22: Christ our Fulfillment (Acts 2, Acts 13, Rev 5:9-14)



BIBLE TEACHING SEMINAR

Attention Bible lovers! Are you interested in learning how to teach the Bible in a small group or lecture setting with depth, clarity and Christ-centered love? Are you interested in being enriched as a teacher?

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4TH, 9AM-11:30AM
LED BY: PASTOR MYERS

Why have a Saturday seminar on Bible teaching? Paul instructs Timothy to "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth." (2 Tim 2:15) We want to heed God's call to equip our people with the tools they need to be faithful stewards of God's word, whether in the classroom or in a group discussion. A seminar on teaching the Bible can use to help us obey this calling.

FOUR 30 MINUTE SEGMENTS & DISCUSSION

- 1. Fallen Condition Context of a Bible Passage**
- 2. Christ Center Focus of a Bible Passage**
- 3. Original Authorial Intent of a Passage**
- 4. Applicational Focus of a Passage**



Music Ministry

A NEW SEASON OF WORSHIP

From Dr. Teresa Irwin

*“But the hour is coming, and is now here,
when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth,
for the Father is seeking such people to worship Him.”*
John 4:23

In this new season of worship, we look forward to celebrating **Reformation Sunday on Oct. 26th**,
when our brass ensemble will be playing during our morning worship service
in addition to the Scottish Pipe & Drum!

Advent Worship Services come early this year and begin on **Nov. 30th**.

Our **Christmas Festival of Lessons & Carols** will be presented
on **Sunday Evening at 6pm on Dec. 14th**
as a wonderful outreach to our Lake Wales community!

This special evening of worship will include our Chancel, Children, and Handbell Choirs,
as well as a beautiful string ensemble, and our amazing pipe organ.

Weekly Opportunities to Minister Through Music! (Beginning Wed. Sep. 10th)

Musical Beginnings Ages 0-3 (with moms)	Wed. 4:00pm	Garden Room 299
Covenant Kid’s Choir Ages 4-6	Wed. 4:00pm	Handbell Room
King’s Singers Choir Ages 7-14	Wed. 5:00pm	Choir Room
Chancel Choir Middle School to Adult	Wed. 7:30pm	Choir Room
Handbell Choir Middle School to Adult	Tues. 2:00pm	Handbell Room



Family Ministry

WORDS FROM WALKER

Wow! What a blur the summer has been. There have been countless fun events and camps, and I'm sure there are many crazy stories from what all transpired this past summer.

But as we jump back into school and our focus shifts from vacations and fun, to work and school, I want to remind us all of one very important thing. We all have a community, a church, and a family that is eager to be with us more regularly again.

I personally am excited to be able to get back to weekly ROW's, Youth Groups, and Sunday School. It truly is a blessing to be reminded of the people we have around us that are supporting, loving, and encouraging us!

With that being said...

Student Ministries are about to take back off. After my Greek 1 class ends, we start off strong. Sunday School has already started back up, studying the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Then we will resume Youth Group with our annual "Milk and Cookies" event on August 31,, and ROW Youth Bible Study on September 10.

There will be loads of other fun events for the youth of course but keep an ear out for details of Family Fun Day events to come in the near future!

God Bless Y'all! ■



QUEST 2025



WORK CAMP 2025





HORIZON 2025



CARDBOARD REGATTA 2025



MILESTONE CELEBRATIONS

Church Family

BIRTHDAYS

September 1, Elaine Rawlings
September 2, David Caldwell
September 3, Maggie Hunt
September 3, Jean Ingram
September 5, Patty Mckeeman
September 8, Gerald Lippert
September 8, Ger Lippert
September 9, Kathleen Violette
September 10, Donald Krpata
September 10, Jaden Youmans
September 11, Jan Lewis
September 12, Samuel Wunker
September 13, Debbie Pace
September 14, Maija Baynes
September 14, Karla Campbell
September 14, Cecilia Smith
September 16, Laura Lynn Berkau
September 16, Dionne Kohl
September 17, Joe Swanson
September 20, Jill Smith
September 21, Kerry Klinefelter
September 22, Ed Lamb
September 22, Kalaya Hernandez

September 22, Rosalee Knepper
September 25, Alice Campbell
September 25, Ron Campbell
September 25, Hailey Hunt
September 26, Jonaven Knepper
September 26, Lydia Hilberling
September 27, Lorin Bice
September 27, Vicki Flint
September 28, Von Wilson
September 30, Donna Carter

ANNIVERSARIES

Georgianna & Steve Sorensen, September 6
Cindy & David Caldwell, September 18
Nancy & Loren Furland, September 20
Jan & Jimmy Kahler, September 22
Cindy & Charlie Henry, September 23
Trish & Tom Kohl, September 23



BACK TO SCHOOL

Supper Club

ANOTHER SEMESTER OF OUR SUPPER CLUB IS ABOUT TO BEGIN! ENJOYING A MEAL TOGETHER IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO MEET OTHERS AND DEEPEN RELATIONSHIPS.

— Visit our website today to sign up! —

WWW.FPCLW.ORG

*Families, singles, young, old, guest or host!
All are welcome!*





First Presbyterian Church of Lake Wales
16 N 3rd St, Lake Wales, FL 33853
Phone: 863.676.0711
fpclw.org

CHURCH OFFICERS

ELDERS

2025 Tony Woods Jim Underwood	2027 Chuck Loveless Willard Pearce Fox Rawlings
2026 Stewart Hurst Ed Lamb Jimmy Seay	2028 Frank Hunt Scott Crews

DEACONS

2025 June Ullman Cindy Turner	2027 Bob Hulen John Dubois Karen Steverson
2026 Aaron Nelson	

Moderator: Rev. Mackay Smith
Clerk of Session: Tony Woods
Chairman of Deacons: Aaron Nelson
Deacon Secretary: June Ullman
Chm. of the Congregation: Jim Weaver
Treasurer: Daniel Hunt
Asst. Treasurer: Michelle Hurst