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**Inside this issue:**

Ministry of Pastoral Transitions	3
Our Stated Clerk/Acting Transitional Presbyter	5
Dogwood Acres	6
Caring for Creation	7
Save the Dates	8

# The Panhandle Presbyterian

*A monthly publication of the Presbytery of Florida*



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## Subcommittee already seeking campers and funds

This summer, the Presbytery's Racial Justice Subcommittee sponsored three campers at Dogwood Acres. This was the second summer members of the committee have recruited both campers and funds to send minority campers who might not otherwise have had the opportunity to go to camp.

This year, one camper was a rising 9th grader who attended during the High School Camp, and the two others were elementary school-age siblings. All were from the Western area of the Presbytery. Special thanks to First Presbyterian of Pensacola and members there who provided the funds for these three girls.

Feedback has been great from the parents of the girls. The mom of the younger girls writes: "The girls absolutely loved camp, they came home with so many stories to tell. Their favorite part was swimming in the lake and the barnyard dance. One of them loved it so much, she didn't want to come home. Everyone was very friendly, and I'm glad they were able to be a part of the great fun opportunity. I thank you so much for allowing them to be part of

this camp, and I'm looking forward to letting them go next year.

The high schooler learned about homesickness, but still made friends and was grateful for the experience.

From her mom: "She's made friends with her cabin mates. They were very sweet and supportive. She will be fine. It's just that it was her first time away from home. She had an awesome time despite the homesickness. It's all she's talked about since getting home. So many stories! Thank you for giving her the opportunity to experience something new!"

The RJC is thrilled the girls had good experiences at camp. We continue to pray that the friendships they made and experiences they had will bear much fruit in their lives – and in the lives of those who got to know them!

Contact me at [susansbyram@gmail.com](mailto:susansbyram@gmail.com) if you'd like to help make this program happen again next year. It's not too soon! Both funds and campers are needed!

*The Racial Justice Subcommittee continues on page 2*

## From the Racial Justice Subcommittee



*By Susan Byram,  
Subcommittee member  
and 1st, Pensacola  
Elder*



*By Rev. Harvey  
Jenkins (Ret.),  
Racial Justice  
Subcommittee member*

## PC(USA) affirms women's capacity and right to decide

For over 50 years, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has held that "the artificial or induced termination of a pregnancy is a matter of careful ethical decision of the patient... and therefore should not be restricted by law." In 2018, commissioners to the General Assembly adopted this additional statement – "Personally choosing not to have an abortion is religious freedom. Making that choice for someone else, based on one's own religious beliefs and principles, is oppression." The 2022 Assembly voted 348-38 to affirm women as full moral agents, created in the image of God, and to support their moral capacity to decide whether to continue or to end a pregnancy.

Attempts to legalize "pro-life" belief is a denial of both religious freedom and reproductive justice. And, because it places an undue burden on low-income, marginalized, and vulnerable communities, it is a racial justice issue.

Recent U. S. Supreme Court and state legislative actions have chosen to follow the "pro-life" approach to this issue. Pro-life doctrine is based on the belief that personhood begins at conception. However, not all people of faith hold that belief. Many Muslims believe that Allah imbues the life forming in the

womb with a soul 120 days into pregnancy. Many Christians concur with our Jewish sisters and brothers, who ground their faith in Genesis 2:7 – "The Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being." (NRSV)

The theological question is "When does the life forming in the womb become a living soul?" Historically, there has never been a consensus among Christians as to when ensoulment occurs. Some believe it occurs at conception; others believe it is when the embryo becomes a fetus. Some

believe it occurs at quickening (when movement is felt in the womb); others believe that personhood begins at birth.

Our denomination does not have a single doctrine of ensoulment, nor does it subscribe to one particular belief. There are Presbyterians holding very different beliefs regarding ensoulment, and that's okay. However, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does affirm a woman's right to decide on issues relating to her physical, emotional, social, and economic health, including the right to continue or to terminate her pregnancy.

This production contains mature themes and content. Parental discretion advised.

**SEPTEMBER 19-29**  
FAITH PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

Arts@Faith Presents:

**PARADE**  
true story. true tragedy. true love.

WWW.FAITHPCUSA.ORG/PARADE

Is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com.

**MPT continues to welcome new clergy into the Presbytery**

The Ministry of Pastoral Transitions (MPT) is delighted to welcome new clergy into the presbytery!

The **Rev. Glenn Hodges** was ordained and installed as pastor of First Church, Tallahassee on July 28.

The **Rev. Stacey Kaye White** was ordained and installed as pastor of Freeport Church on August 25.

On September 1, the **Rev. Kwon Soo Cho** will be installed as the pastor of Pensacola Korean Church.

And on September 22, the **Rev. Dr. Nicole Richardson** will be installed as pastor of the South Walton Presbyterian New Worshipping Community



MPT congratulates the Rev. Stacey Kaye White upon her ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament and installation as Pastor at Freeport Presbyterian Church Sunday, August 25. *(Photo courtesy of Rev. Lisa Martin)*

of Santa Rosa Beach. MPT works diligently to help congregations call pastors. It's not easy work, but it is fulfilling and holy

work. We need your prayers to continue this vital Ministry to which Florida Presbytery has called us!

**From the Ministry of Pastoral Transitions (MPT)**



*By Rev. Lisa Martin, MPT Moderator and 1st, Lynn Haven Pastor*



**SOWING THE SEEDS OF PEACE.**

ZECHARIAH 8:12



**SAVANNAH PRESBYTERY'S**  
J. RICHARD BASS  
**School OF THE Laity**

**October 5-6, 2024**

**Old Testament Survey**  
Looking to dive a little deeper into the Bible? This class is perfect for you!  
Led by **Dr. Brennan Breed**

**History, Mission & Polity**  
This class is a "must" for Ruling Elders and those interested in becoming Commissioned Pastors (CRE, CLP or TRE).  
Led by **Rev. Carson Rhyne**

**A Spoke in the Wheel**  
Dive deeper into the life, thought & relevance of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in this unique elective course.  
Led by **Rev. Tom Buchanan**

**Tuition \$110 (does not include in-person accommodations)**

**School of the Laity is HYBRID!**  
In-person @ Epworth by the Sea  
Or Online via Zoom

**In-person commuters and overnight participants will have additional fees which include four meals and accommodations.**

**REGISTER ONLINE TODAY**  
[www.savannahpresbytery.org/sol](http://www.savannahpresbytery.org/sol)




[www.savannahpresbytery.org/sol](http://www.savannahpresbytery.org/sol)  
[msusiel@savannahpresbytery.org](mailto:msusiel@savannahpresbytery.org)

*Sacred Trails*  
ADULT ADVENTURE WEEKEND

Scared Trails is a retreat designed for adults seeking to deepen their connection with God, others, and the natural world. Participants will have opportunities to worship, reflect, hike, kayak, pray the labyrinth, learn about our unique flora and fauna, do archery and axe throwing, enjoy fellowship, and discover the ways we each walk a sacred trail.

WHO: ADULTS OF ALL AGES

WHEN: OCTOBER 18 - 20, 2024

WHERE: DOGWOOD ACRES

COST: \$250 COVERS EVERYTHING



★ \$50 REGISTRATION DEPOSIT - REGISTER AT [DOGWOODACRES.ORG](http://DOGWOODACRES.ORG) ★

**LAUREL HILL ARTS & HERITAGE Festival**  
ARTS • CRAFTS • MUSIC • FOOD

SAT., OCTOBER 5, 10am - 3pm • FREE!

LAUREL HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH YARD  
8115 FOURTH STREET  
LIVE LOCAL MUSIC • COTTAGE FOODS • CRAFTS  
ARTISTS • HISTORIC AND CULTURAL DISPLAYS

FOOD TRUCK & EXHIBITOR REGISTRATION: \$20  
Stay for the entire festival and receive a \$10 refund!  
Email [brian\\_abroad@yahoo.com](mailto:brian_abroad@yahoo.com) to register

PRESENTED BY THE LAUREL HILL AND CRESTVIEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES AND THE CRESTVIEW ARTISTS COLLECTIVE



**Authorized Ruling Elder Workshop**

Sunday, September 8, 2024

4 PM Central Time

5 PM Eastern Time

Training to equip Ruling Elders to preside over The Lord's Supper in their Churches, with Session Approval.

Book of Order G-3.0301b

This two-hour workshop, brought to you by The Ministry of Leadership Development of The Presbytery of Florida, will be offered two more times this fall, once in the Eastern part of the Presbytery and once in the Western part of the Presbytery. Watch the presbytery calendar for dates & times.

First Presbyterian Church, DeFuniak Springs, 1063 Circle Drive



For more information: Rev. Cathy Mooney  
[reverendmooney@yahoo.com](mailto:reverendmooney@yahoo.com)

## Examples help explain 2025 BOP dues changes

**M**any congregations have been groaning under the weight of medical and pension costs. The Board of Pensions has greatly revised its medical and pension dues structure that will take place in 2025.

The current total amount due to the Board of Pensions is 39% of the Effective Salary (the salary plus the housing allowance). The breakdown is 29% for medical coverage and 10% for Retirement / Disability / Short-term Disability.

An example:

Effective Salary	\$70,000
Board of Pensions Dues	
Medical (29%)	20,300
Pension (10%)	7,000
Total Dues	27,300

In 2025, the dues structure changes. It will look like this for congregations that have called and installed pastors.

### Medical

Pastor (required)	16% of Effective Salary
Pastor Plus Children	16% + \$8,950 (the additional paid for by pastor, or congregation, or both)
Pastor Plus Spouse	16% + \$11,000 (the additional paid for by pastor, or congregation, or both)
Full Family	16% + \$20,600 (the additional paid for by pastor, or congregation, or both)

Pension 10% of Effective Salary for Retirement / Disability / Short-term Disability

An example:

Effective Salary	\$70,000		
Board of Pensions Dues	Medical + Pension (10%)	= Total to Board of Pensions	
Pastor (Required 16%)	11,200	7,000	= 18,200
Pastor Plus Children	20,150	7,000	= 27,150
Pastor Plus Spouse	22,200	7,000	= 29,200
Full Family	31,800	7,000	= 38,000

For further information or with questions, please go online to [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org). There, you will find a great deal of information, as well as calculators to discern your dues for 2025.

**From our  
Stated Clerk/  
Acting  
Transitional  
Presbyter**



*By  
Rev. Mark Broadhead  
(Ret.)*

*Love and Lights*

Join Us Under the Stars  
for a Night of Beauty  
and Fine Dining.

First Presbyterian Church  
Milton, Florida

October 12, 2024  
6 p.m.

2024 Evangelism Conference

**A Lifestyle  
That Exudes Justice**

**October 3-5, 2024**  
Presbyterian Center  
Louisville, KY

*In-person & Virtual Event  
Spanish & Korean interpretation  
available upon request*

[pcusa.org/evangelism](http://pcusa.org/evangelism)

### From Dogwood Acres



By Christy Williams, Director

## PYC spends weekend planning Spiritfest for middle schoolers

I have just come home from spending a wonderful weekend at Dogwood Acres with our 2024 Presbyterian Youth Council (PYC). The PYC is made up of eight high school youth from across the Presbytery. Their responsibility is to plan and help facilitate the upcoming youth retreats and events that happen at Dogwood Acres. All of these high school youth were campers during our "High School Only" week of Summer Camp.

This weekend, these young leaders were enthusiastic about discussing the challenges and needs facing their peers. They were diligent in studying scripture passages and determining a message that would resonate with them, as well as younger youth. And they had a lot of fun deciding on games and activities to lead by playing together. By the end of the weekend, they



had a theme and an outline for the October Spiritfest Retreat at Dogwood – *Woven Together*. Look for more information about this retreat designed for middle schoolers by high schoolers.

Churches and individuals who made gifts to Dogwood Acres this year are supporting the ongoing development

of young leaders in the church. At Dogwood Acres, we get to see transformation in people of all ages. But it is never so exciting as when we see a teenager's heart set on fire for living out their faith in Jesus Christ. Thank you for helping us create a space for that to happen right here in our Presbytery.

Registration  
Now Open

Registration is \$35 to attend virtually. [Click the link and register today!](#)



NOVEMBER

09

### SOAP REGIONAL EVENT

- Educators, Youth Leaders, Paid Staff, Volunteers, & Pastors
- Gather in satellite locations throughout our Region
- Join us for discussions, games, fun, and meaningful time together.



## Scorching summers the new normal?

Growing up in Sarasota, my midwestern mother used to say, “This day is going to be a scorcher.” This expression refers to a day of extreme heat, and its roots can be traced all the way back to the old French word “escorchier,” meaning “to strip off the skin”. Ouch! I do remember a few days that were scorchers, when it was too hot to walk barefoot on the sidewalk, but not many.

Today, “scorchers” are becoming the new summer normal, making life more difficult, expensive and – for some – deadly. A Tallahassee church friend sent me a photo taken August 12 at 7 p.m., when the heat index was 125 degrees, and said that she and her husband, “sit and do nothing”, which is not the norm for this very active couple.

The *Guardian* reported that a record 15 national heat records have been broken since the start of 2024, along with tens of thousands of local highs. A NASA visualization shows monthly global surface temperatures from 1880 to May 2024 hit record highs the last twelve months. <https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/maytemp-line-big.gif>.

This summer, July 21 was the hottest day ever recorded on this planet. It was repeated on July 22.



Experts say this is astonishing and beyond anything ever seen or even thought possible.

It has been [widely reported](#) that August 7, the temperatures were hotter above the Arctic Circle than in Florida. Also, the Arctic is warming twice as fast as the global average due to the ice-albedo feedback loop. Ice has a high albedo, meaning high reflectivity. As the ice declines, there is less reflectivity of heat back into space, resulting in increased warming at the poles and more melting.

We all know this warming is mainly due to manmade global heating caused by the burning of gas, oil, and coal. We also know that the way to stop this is to quickly transition off fossil fuels to renewable energy. We also know that there is a 2030 deadline to cut our emissions 45% by 2030. Yet, our global carbon emissions continue to rise, and institutions like banks, universities and

our own denomination continue to remain invested in this industry.

All this should alarm you – a lot. People around the world are alarmed and demanding action. U.S. [workers](#) are rallying for protection from the heat in the workplace. Youth and seniors are protesting in the streets. Climate victims have even filed a criminal manslaughter case against the oil firm [Total](#), claiming the company’s exploitation of fossil fuel contributed to deaths of victims in extreme weather events.

We are in a world of hurt, which is only going to get worse if we don’t quickly stop using fossil fuels. An urgency here is being ignored. Our world, our only home, is shifting to a new normal, already not livable for some and making the luckiest of us prisoners in our own homes during “scorchers”.

We know how to stop this insanity. Why don’t we?

As always, if you have any comments or questions, please let me know:

[pammcvety@hotmail.com](mailto:pammcvety@hotmail.com).

## Caring for Creation Notes



By  
Pam McVety,  
Presbytery  
Stewardship  
of Creation  
Enabler  
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*“This summer, July 21 was the hottest day ever recorded on this planet.”*

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All views expressed in this publication are not necessarily endorsed by the Presbytery of Florida as a whole, as we remember "God alone is Lord of the conscience." (F-3.0101)

**The Panhandle Presbyterian**

Save the date (or visit <http://www.presbyteryofflorida.net/events-calendars/>)

<b>In September</b>	<b>Looking ahead</b>
<i>Sunday, Sept. 1</i> 4 p.m. CT	Rev. Kwon Soo Cho service of installation @ Pensacola Korean Community Church
<i>Tuesday, Sept. 3</i> 10 a.m. CT/ 11 a.m. ET	Ministry of Pastoral Transitions (MPT)
<i>Tuesday, Sept. 3, 10, 17 and 24</i> 1 p.m. CT/2 p.m. ET	Transitional Presbyter Search Committee
<i>Wednesday, Sept. 4</i> 8 a.m. CT/9 a.m. ET	Strategic Plan Implementation Task Force
<i>Wednesday, Sept. 4</i> 11 a.m. CT/noon ET	Synod of South Atlantic 1st Wednesday <a href="#">Sack Lunch via Zoom</a> Topic: Basic Needs Ministries
<i>Sunday – Saturday, Sept. 8 – 14</i>	<a href="#">Christian Formation Week</a>
<i>Sunday, Sept. 8</i> 4 p.m. CT	Authorized Ruling Elder Workshop @ 1st, DeFuniak Springs
<i>Monday, Sept. 9</i> 1 p.m. CT/2 p.m. ET	Ministry of Leadership Development
<i>Tuesday, Sept. 10 and 24</i>	<a href="#">Board of Pensions online Retirement Conversations</a>
<i>Thursday, Sept. 12</i> 2 p.m. CT/3 p.m. ET	Ministry of Presbytery Operations
<i>Sunday, Sept. 15</i>	<a href="#">Evangelism Sunday</a>
<i>Thursday, Sept. 19 – Sunday, Sept. 29</i>	<a href="#">Arts@Faith, Tallahassee presents Parade</a>
<i>Sunday, Sept. 22</i> 4 p.m. CT	Rev. Dr. Nicole Richardson service of installation for South Walton NWC
<i>Monday – Wednesday, Sept. 23 – 25</i>	<a href="#">Stewardship Kaleidoscope,</a> Portland, OR
<i>Thursday, Sept. 26</i> Noon CT	Central District Clergy Gathering @ Bogey's, DeFuniak Springs
<i>Friday – Sunday, Sept. 27 – 29</i>	<a href="#">Faith, Tallahassee Marriage Retreat @</a> Evermore Resort, Orlando
<i>Sunday, Sept. 29</i> 11 a.m. CT	1st, Chipley 5th Sunday Music Celebration
<i>Thursday – Saturday, Oct. 3 – 5</i>	<a href="#">PC(USA) Evangelism Conference,</a> Louisville, KY
<i>Saturday, Oct. 5</i> 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. CT	Laurel Hill Arts & Heritage Festival @ Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church
<i>Sunday, Oct. 6</i>	<a href="#">World Communion Sunday</a>
<i>Saturday, Oct. 12</i> 6 p.m. CT	1st, Milton Love and Lights
<i>Friday – Sunday, Oct. 18 – 20</i>	<a href="#">Sacred Trails Retreat</a> @ Dogwood Acres
<i>Sunday, Oct. 20</i>	<a href="#">Children's Sabbath</a>
<i>Sunday, Oct. 20</i>	1st, Chipley Bell Tower Dedication
<i>Monday – Wednesday, Oct. 21 – 23</i>	<a href="#">Wee Kirk Conference</a> @ Montreat Conference Center
<i>Friday – Sunday, Oct. 23 – 25</i>	<a href="#">Spiritfest Middle School Youth Retreat</a> @ Dogwood Acres
<i>Sunday, Oct. 20</i>	<a href="#">Children's Sabbath</a>
<i>Sunday, Oct. 20</i>	1st, Chipley Bell Tower Dedication
<i>Tuesday, Oct. 29</i> 9 a.m. CT/10 a.m. ET	<b>Fall Stated Presbytery Meeting @Christ, Tallahassee</b> Registration begins an hour ahead
<i>Sunday, Oct. 31</i>	Reformation Sunday
<i>Sunday, Nov. 3</i>	Daylight saving time ends
<i>Saturday, Nov. 9</i>	<a href="#">Southeast &amp; Puerto Rico Region of Partners in Christian Education (SOAP) Regional Event</a>

**weeKirk**  
CONFERENCE

**October 21-23, 2024**

Visit [montreat.org/wee-kirk](http://montreat.org/wee-kirk)