

Presbytery Staff  
and Officers  
are here for you:

**Rev. Mark Broadhead**  
Stated Clerk/  
Acting General Presbyter  
Statedclerk  
@presbyteryofflorida.com

**Mary Hodges**  
Moderator  
mary37@comcast.net

**Christy Williams**  
Dogwood Acres Director  
christy@dogwoodacres.org

**Michael Martin**  
Accountant-Treasurer  
treasurer  
@presbyteryofflorida.com

**Melissa Willis**  
Administrator  
Mwillis  
@presbyteryofflorida.com

#### Inside this issue:

Ministry of  
Leadership  
Development  
(MLD) 2

Ministry of  
Representation  
(MR) 3

Ministry of  
Pastoral  
Transitions  
(MPT) 3

Our Stated  
Clerk/  
Acting General  
Presbyter 4

Ministry of  
Dogwood Acres  
(MDWA) 5

Ministry of New  
Congregational  
Development  
(MCND) 6

Ministry of  
Congregational  
and Pastoral  
Care (MCPC) 7

# The Panhandle Presbyterian

*A monthly publication of the Presbytery of Florida*



Volume 8, Issue 10

October 2025

## What if we get it right?

I recently listened to a podcast from the book *What if We Get It Right?* by Dr Ayana Johnson, a marine biologist and the Roux Distinguished Scholar at Bowdoin College. Her book of essays by some of the most brilliant minds of our day is about the possibilities of a better climate future.

The podcast was a reading from the last chapter of the book entitled "Away from the Brink". It provides a comforting and sustainable vision for our future that is possible.

It begins with the statement, "If we got it right, what would our world look and feel like?" It would be green and full of life. Insects rebuild their numbers and do their jobs for us. (She is referring to bees and other pollinators.) Our soils are healthy, and our forests are intact. Half of nature is protected from development. Pollution and extinctions have ended. Organic farms are thriving. Government subsidies for megafarms are done.

The combustion phase of humanity is over. The air is cleaner. Asthma and cancer are rare. Communities of color are no longer overburdened with pollution.



Renewable energy replaced fossil fuels. Wind farms and solar farms are aesthetically pleasing. We have figured out fusion. Batteries and solar panels are recycled. Green roofs keep our buildings cool. We use induction stoves and solar panels in our homes.

We eat well and local. Our food is fresh and flavorful. We repair and reuse things. We compost. We need a lot less space for landfills. We found a substitute for concrete. We no longer demolish structures but recycle all the parts. Our energy bills are lower, and energy conservation is important to everybody.

There is no traffic congestion because we now have convenient free public

**Continues on page 2**

## Caring for Creation



By  
**Pam McVety,**  
*Presbytery  
Stewardship  
of Creation  
Enabler*

*"If you want  
to understand  
how we can have  
this world and  
be inspired,  
I recommend  
this book."*

## From the Ministry of Leadership Development (MLD)



**By Erin Rugh, MLD  
Vice Moderator and  
Faith, Tallahassee  
Associate Pastor**

*“Sanctified Art  
is known for its  
beautiful artwork,  
thoughtful liturgy  
and creative tools  
for congregational  
engagement.”*

## MLD offers congregations advent worship resource

**A**s we look ahead to the Advent season, the presbytery will be offering a worship resource to all congregations: access to the *Sanctified Art* Advent words for worship and sermon planning guide. This intentionally-crafted resource is designed to support pastors, musicians, educators, and worship planners in preparing meaningful, theologically rich services throughout the season of advent.

Sanctified Art is known for its beautiful artwork, thoughtful liturgy, and creative tools for congregational engagement. Whether your church is large or small, your worship traditional or contemporary, this



resource is adaptable to your context and can inspire fresh expressions of the advent story.

To support the sharing of this resource, the education hour at the presbytery meeting on October 28 will be dedicated to advent worship planning. This session will include a breakout group for churches using Sanctified Art for the first time to offer guidance on how to incorporate the resource

into your church's worship and faith formation programs.

Whether your congregation has been using *Sanctified Art* for years or are exploring it for the first time, this presbytery-wide initiative is an opportunity to engage in collaborative worship planning and deepen our collective preparation for the coming of Christ. For more information, or to confirm your congregation's interest in using the resource, please contact me at [erin@faithpcusa.org](mailto:erin@faithpcusa.org).

Let us journey through advent together with beauty, creativity, and shared hope.

### **Continued from front**

transportation. Parking lots are removed and replaced by community gardens. We have high speed trains. Air travel is pollution free.

Coastlines are greener. Mangroves, sea grasses and dune grasses flourish. Billions of oysters thrive and filter our coastal waters and protect our shorelines. We help coastal communities to move out of harm's way. We have stopped trying to hold back the sea. No new buildings are built in flood zones and, after

storms, we do not rebuild in dangerous areas. Our coasts are filled with parks.

Climate concerns are everybody's concerns. Deniers are scoffed at. Subsidies for the fossil fuel industry are gone. Refugees from places made inhospitable because of climate change are welcomed. Food, housing, education, and child and elder care are available to all.

We have figured out how to live with nature, not subdue it. We feel good about how we live. We help our neighbors.

We make room for other species. Our surroundings are verdant. Spring is loud with the songs of birds. We embrace possibilities, and we continue to move away from the brink.

If you want to understand how we can have this world and be inspired, I recommend this book. The possibility that we could have a world that benefits all of humanity and is protective of God's creation would seem to be miraculous, but is a real possibility—“if we get it right”.

## Presbytery needs volunteers to “make things happen”

**T**he Presbytery needs your help. If you feel called to serve, we have many avenues for service. You can become a member of one of Presbytery’s seven established ministries, or serve in a Synod position. We have commitments in newly-developing areas that might be of interest, like serving on needed committees, service

**VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED!**

projects, or in new positions—all for people who want to make things happen.

Without you, old and new initiatives drop by the

wayside and fade away. Remember, just as your Church needs volunteers, the Presbytery, too, needs people to step up and serve. Just being involved has its own rewards.

People wishing to make things happen, contact me at kangas265@gmail.com or phone 850-832-6577. I look forward to hearing from you.

### From the Ministry of Representation (MR)



*By Rich Kangas,  
MR Moderator  
and 1st, Lynn Haven  
Ruling Elder*

## Presbytery in season of movement, joy and gratitude

**O**n Sunday, September 7, Teaching Elder **Becky Bryan** was ordained and installed as Associate Pastor at **First Presbyterian Church, Pensacola**. Joy rose in the room like a hymn. With prayer and thanksgiving, we welcomed Becky into this call, trusting that her gifts will deepen our life together and widen the witness of Christ—here and beyond.

Yet, joy often walks beside farewell. With full hearts, we give thanks for **Rev. Lisa Martin** and her husband, **Roy**, as they return to Virginia. Lisa’s preaching, leadership, and care have left an imprint that will not fade. Roy’s leadership and friendship has been no less a blessing. Their departure is a loss felt in every corner of our presbytery, yet their legacy of faithfulness remains woven into who we are.



The Presbytery joyfully celebrates Rev. Becky Bryan’s installation as First, Pensacola’s Associate Pastor.

We also note a change in leadership. **Rev. Stacey Kaye-White** now serves as Moderator of the Ministry for Pastoral Transitions Team, guiding congregations and pastors in holy seasons of discernment. Her wisdom and steady hand will bless those who are listening for God’s next call and direction.

This is a season of movement—some arriving, some departing, some discerning the road ahead. We ask every church to pray for our **inquirers and candidates**, and for our congregations in transition. Discernment is slow, sacred work. When one part of the body leans into God’s leading, the whole body leans with it.

This is who we are: a presbytery that welcomes with joy, honors with gratitude, and prays with hope. Every installation, farewell, and leadership change testifies that the Spirit is not still but alive—guiding, stirring, and sending.

So let us step forward together. Not anxious. Not afraid. But with open hearts and steadfast trust in Christ, who remains our constant.

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



*By Rev. Blair Beaver,  
MPT Vice Moderator  
and 1st, Marianna  
Pastor*

*“This is who we are:  
A presbytery that  
welcomes with joy,  
honors with  
gratitude and prays  
with hope.”*



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



*By Rev. Mark  
Broadhead (Ret.)*

*“Pay close  
attention to  
what is being said  
and done and  
weigh it all against  
the Word of God.”*

## Weigh Christ's teachings against words of false prophets

I recently read a quote attributed to Rev. Benjamin Cremer: “Beware of any Christian movement that acts as though the world is full of enemies to be destroyed rather than full of neighbors to be loved. Beware of any Christian movement that demands the government be an instrument of God’s wrath but never a source of God’s mercy, generosity, or compassion.”

This statement is very much in line with the teachings of Jesus Christ. Love God, love your neighbor, care for the hungry, the dispossessed, the hurting, the lonely, the sick.

Jesus said the two greatest commandments are: “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Mt 22:37-39).

And yet, so many in our society, including within some Christian circles, have turned their backs on these teachings. Instead, people are focusing on what is coming out of Washington, various news outlets, and television networks that purport to be sources of news, but only project politically-slanted opinions.

So many of our national leaders declare to be Christians. I am not one to judge. Only God knows the secrets of the heart. However, observing the behavior and listening to the words they put forth, I have to question what scriptures they are reading, because they do not seem to be living or espousing the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Jesus knew what he was saying when he warned, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves” (Mt: 7:15).

This verse comes to mind as I continue to hear what various national leaders and certain circles of Christianity are espousing.

As a result, it seems people are reacting to everything with emotions first. Thinking first, weighing the pros and cons of a statement or position, determining if a statement or action is in line with the scriptures is

merely an afterthought – if it is thought about at all.

No matter which side of the aisle on which you sit, I beg you to stop reacting emotionally and think logically. Pay close attention to what is being said and done and weigh it all against the Word of God. Is what our political leaders are telling us and doing among us in accordance with the Bible? Is hateful language, the taking of human life, the prejudicial actions being acted out in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ calls for tolerance, understanding, compassion. He calls for us to love our neighbors. And if we cannot seem to get along with our neighbors, we are to pray for them – and ourselves. Let us all strive to demonstrate in all times and places the gospel of Jesus Christ and the message he came to deliver.

## SMALL AND MIGHTY



**A Time to Connect and  
Equip Leaders in Small  
Membership Churches**

**Join Us for a Monthly  
Conversation on Zoom**

**First Tuesday  
7-8 pm EDT / 6-7 pm CDT**

Register here:

<https://form.jotform.com/251396018295159>

## RESET Retreat provides change of direction, attitude, heart



The fall season at Dogwood Acres has begun with a RESET, or, to be more accurate, a RESET retreat! The weekend of September 12-14, adults from Pensacola to Tallahassee gathered for fellowship, rest, and an immersion in God's good creation. We hiked, practiced yoga, kayaked to Cypress Spring, learned about forest bathing, stargazed, and reflected on our own needs for a reset.

Sheldon Steen, pastor at Christ Presbyterian, Tallahassee, was our worship leader. He taught us centering prayer and breath techniques that we practiced throughout the weekend.

During our closing



celebration, he reminded all of us that we often come on a retreat because we are feeling depleted and we need to be refilled. Then we go home, and our tank quickly starts draining and we need something to refill ourselves again.

But a reset is a change of direction, of attitude, of heart. With a reset, we can be more open to life's experiences without

feeling the need to control them. We can be more accepting of our family and our neighbors and even ourselves.

A hymn that we sang several times summed up much of what we were trying to do during our RESET retreat:

Spirit, Open My Heart  
(pg 692 GTG)

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.

As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving.

Spirit open my heart.

v 2. Write your love upon my heart as my law, my goal, my story.

In each thought, word, and deed, may my living bring you glory.

## From the Ministry of Dogwood Acres (MDWA)



By Christy Williams,  
DWA Director

*"With a reset, we can be more open to life's experiences without feeling the need to control them."*





**From the  
Ministry of  
New  
Congregation  
Formation  
(MNCF)**



*By Rev. Dr.  
Nicole Richardson,  
Tide and Table  
New Presbyterian  
Worshipping  
Community Pastor*

*"...each  
gathering, each  
conversation,  
and each act of  
service feels like  
a seed  
planted ..."*

**God moving in small but significant ways through new ministry**

**A**s September comes to a close, I am grateful for the many ways God continues to move in small but significant ways through the ministry of *Tide & Table*. While much of this work is still in its early days, each gathering, each conversation, and each act of service feels like a seed planted — one that I trust the Spirit is nurturing into something larger than I can see.

On **September 13**, we held our second *TidePath: Labyrinth by the Sea*. Like the first gathering in August, it was a small turnout, but for those who came, it was a deeply moving experience. The practice of walking the labyrinth against the backdrop of the Gulf reminded us that even the simplest steps — prayerful and intentional — can open us to God's presence in powerful ways.

Just a few days later, on **September 15**, we launched the second iteration of *The Wisdom Lab*. This 7-week online conversation series, *The Art of Deep Listening*, has already been rich with honest and vulnerable sharing. Together, we're engaging the book of Job alongside Kate Murphy's *You're Not Listening*, reflecting on how deep listening can transform our relationships and our faith. Even in the digital



**tide & table**

GRACE FLOWS RESTORATION AWAITS

space of Zoom, these conversations have been holy ground, and I am humbled by the trust and openness of those who participate.

On **September 28**, I preached at **First Presbyterian Church of Lynn Haven**. It was humbling to stand in the pulpit on the first Sunday after Rev. Lisa Wilson's move to Virginia. Moments like this remind me of the continuity of God's care for congregations in seasons of transition, and it was an honor to walk with Lynn Haven in worship during this moment of change.

With the new school year underway, I've also resumed volunteering with **Emerald and Forgotten Coast Adventures**. This ministry, which connects youth in the Panhandle with experiences of creation, has been a gift. It allows me to share my passion for earth stewardship while building meaningful relationships with other adult volunteers. These shared experiences of teaching, guiding, and caring for the environment are not only fun but also deeply formative. They remind me that creation itself is

one of God's greatest sanctuaries.

On a personal note, I spent time in Kansas City, Missouri, this month to help my 86-year-old father with the initial stages of recovery from hip replacement surgery and to provide home care for my mother, who is living with Alzheimer's. This time with my parents was both challenging and tender, and I remain grateful for your prayers for them — and for me — as I walk alongside them in this season.

As we move into October, I look forward to our next *TidePath* gathering and the continuation of *Wisdom Lab*. I also invite you to visit the *Tide & Table* website, [www.tideandtable.org](http://www.tideandtable.org), or follow my weekly Substack reflections at [@nicoleattandt](http://substack.com/@nicoleattandt) if you'd like to engage more deeply with this work. Thank you, as always, for your encouragement, prayers, and companionship in this unfolding journey.

## MCPC shares advisory materials for congregational leaders

The Ministry of Congregational and Pastoral Care (MCPC) is adding two sets of advisory materials to the Presbyterian website Resource page ([www.presbyteryofflorida.net/resources/](http://www.presbyteryofflorida.net/resources/)) for prayerful consideration by congregational leadership, particularly sessions, pastors, and those involved with music, worship, and personnel. These materials address:

- salaries and benefits as surveyed in recent years by the Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM) and
- concerns about the use of music penned by David Haas in our worship services and other local and Presbytery events.

### Salary Survey Results from PAM

In 2022-23 and again in 2025, the Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM) launched a survey on salary and related details for informational purposes. With a second survey completed, PAM has begun to look at changes over time and to draw some *early* conclusions about music employment and more.

This information may provide guidance to congregational leadership, particularly musicians, personnel committees, and pastors. You can view the survey outcomes and an Executive Summary for each of the completed surveys on the Presbytery

website at [www.presbyteryofflorida.net/resources/for-church-leaders/](http://www.presbyteryofflorida.net/resources/for-church-leaders/)

### Advisory on the Music of Composer/Lyricist David Haas

At the August Presbytery meeting, the MCPC asked that Presbytery commend to all Presbytery of Florida worship planners—for their prayerful consideration—the Presbyterian Association of Musicians' (PAM) statement regarding its decision not to use *Glory to God* hymn numbers 148, 172, 177, and 749 or any other music penned by composer-lyricist David Haas in worship services and events.

MCPC further asked the Presbytery to recommend to worship planners across the Presbytery that use of those hymns be carefully considered out of respect and compassion for victims of sexual abuse to avoid triggering traumatic memories for them; and that the PAM statement, auxiliary links, and a caution to worship leaders/planners also be placed on the Presbytery website.

**Background:** Between 1975 and 2021, more than 50 women and girls (ages 12-63) reported lyricist and composer David Haas for acts of predatory grooming, rape, and other forms of sexual abuse. Because of the known proclivities of Haas, using his hymns could trigger horrifying responses in congregants

who are victims of sexual abuse. The hymns attributed to Haas in the *Glory to God* hymnal are: 148 – *Mary and Joseph Came to the Temple* 172 – *Blest are They* (also arranged as a choir anthem) 177 – *I Will Come to You (You are Mine)* (also arranged as a choir anthem) 749 – *Come! Live in the Light! (We are Called)*

There are no hymns attributed to Haas in the 1990 *Presbyterian Hymnal*. There are also many readily available anthems arranged for choir, though several publishers no longer carry/sell his music.

### Links for further information:

[www.awakecommunity.org/search?q=Haas](http://www.awakecommunity.org/search?q=Haas)

Victims' Reports - <https://intoaccount.org/davidhaas/> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_Haas#cite\\_note-auto-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Haas#cite_note-auto-1) (includes lists of music publishers, educational institutions, and religious organizations that have taken a stand in support of abuse victims, as well as organizations that have rescinded awards and honors)

Haas Apology (2020) - [www.documentcloud.org/documents/20604577-haasapologystatement7\\_9\\_20/](http://www.documentcloud.org/documents/20604577-haasapologystatement7_9_20/)

The Presbytery has no policy regarding use of these materials. Decisions about choice of music used in PCUSA worship services and events remains in the hands of pastors, sessions,

## From the Ministry of Congregational and Pastoral Care (MCPC)



By Linda Lovins,  
MCPC Moderator  
and Faith, Tallahassee  
Ruling Elder

*"This information may provide guidance to congregational leadership, particularly musicians, personnel committees, and pastors."*



**PRESBYTERY  
OF FLORIDA**

Mailing address:  
P. O. Box 7  
Chipley, FL 32428

Physical address:  
3368 Harmony Rd

Phone: 850-535-2335  
or 850-535-2440

E-mail:  
office@presbyteryofflorida.com  
Website:  
www.presbyteryofflorida.net

**Ministry Coordinating Council**  
Elder Don Mowat  
dmowat@bellsouth.net

**Ministry of Congregational  
and Pastoral Care**  
Elder Linda Lovins  
jartsedlin@gmail.com

**Ministry of Dogwood Acres**  
Rev. William "Bill" Lamont  
gbpcpastorbill@gmail.com

**Ministry of Leadership  
Development**  
Rev. Cathy Mooney  
cathymooney@yahoo.com

**Ministry of New Congregation  
Formation**  
Rev. A. J. Mealor  
revmealor@gmail.com

**Ministry of Pastoral Transitions**  
Rev. Stacey Kaye White  
staceywhite37@outlook.com

**Ministry of Presbytery Operations**  
Rev. Eric Spoon  
gracepcpastor@gmail.com

**Ministry of Representation**  
Elder Rich Kangas  
kangas265@gmail.com

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)

# UKIRK'S 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION DINNER

JOIN US FOR DINNER AND PROGRAMMING ON  
OCTOBER 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2025, FROM 6-8 PM AT UKIRK TALLAHASSEE  
CATERED DINNER MENU BY "BLACKBERRY MIMOSA"

YOUR CHOICE OF:  
SMOKED SALMON, MARDI GRAS SEARED CHICKEN BREAST W/GARLIC CREAM  
SAUCE, OR VEGAN STUFFED PORTABELLO MUSHROOMS  
SIDES: HOMESTYLE MASHED POTATOES, YELLOW RICE, SOUTHERN STYLE GREEN  
BEANS, GARDEN HARVEST SALAD

## A Seat For All



## SpiritFest 2025

**Who:**  
Middle School Youth  
**Where:**  
Dogwood Acres  
**When:**  
October 3-5  
**Cost:**  
\$175 per participant



Register Now at [dogwoodacres.org](https://dogwoodacres.org)