

Presbytery Staff
and Officers
are here for you:

Rev. Eric Spoon
Stated Clerk
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

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November 2025

Departing stated clerk gives thanks

Dear friends and colleagues,
My tenure as Stated Clerk/Acting General Presbyter came to an end on October 31, 2025. I would like to thank you for the privilege of serving in this capacity and for the trust you placed in me.

What are the next steps? Because the Book of Order requires every presbytery to have a stated clerk, and because the Ministry Coordinating Council (MCC) is still seeking a stated clerk/equipping presbyter to replace me, Rev. Eric Spoon, pastor at Grace in Panama City, has agreed to temporarily fill the position of Stated Clerk. His service begins November 1, while MCC continues its search.

Over the past several weeks, I spent some time reflecting on my tenure as Stated Clerk/Acting General Presbyter. I know my service was not without a few hiccups on my part, and you met those times with gracious patience.

We are a connectional church, striving to help one another as we further the ministries of Jesus Christ.

Because of our connectional way of life, many people helped me along the way.

I express my gratitude to my fellow stated clerks and general presbyters throughout the Synod of South Atlantic who guided and tutored me along the way.

I give my thanks to our synod executive/stated clerk, Valerie Young, for her frequent check-ins to ask if there was any way she could be of help.

I am grateful for our denominational staff in Louisville, who provided excellent counsel when questions arose for which I could not find an answer.

I am thankful to all of you who serve so faithfully on the various ministries of our presbytery. I am appreciative of those who pray for and financially support the Presbytery of Florida as we continue to live into our new structure to equip one another in furthering the ministries of Jesus Christ.

I am especially grateful to Melissa Willis in the Presbytery office. The support, encouragement,

Continues on page 2

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



By
Rev. Mark Broadhead

*“Because of
our connectional
way of life,
many people
helped me
along the way.”*

Continued from front

and faithful reminders of matters to be attended was – and is – invaluable. I once read a poster behind the desk of a church secretary that said, “Do you want to talk to the person in charge or the one who knows what is going on?” Melissa always knows what is going on!

A few people have asked if I enjoyed this kind of work. My response was and will be, “Yes!” For as much of a learning as there

was at the beginning of my tenure, as much as there were several sleepless nights because of stressful matters to be dealt with, as much as there were days of 30-40 emails and countless meetings, as much as there were numerous phone calls with challenging questions or concerns – Yes. Serving in this capacity felt as much of a call as did serving congregations throughout my pastoral career.

My love for this presbytery

runs deep – challenges, warts, celebrations, joys, and all. Although I am “re-retiring,” as God calls and directs, I will be involved in the life and work of the presbytery as long as my energy, intelligence, imagination, and love hold out (although I’ve often wondered if the intelligence portion flew off a long time ago).

Sursum Corda
(Lift up your heart),
Rev. Mark Broadhead (Re-Ret.)

Pinellas County, Florida




HURRICANE RELIEF TEAM HOST SITE

Safe, Comfortable Lodging for Hurricane Relief Workers

Looking for a space to host your relief team?

We offer group lodging for relief teams, with convenient access to local amenities and plenty of room to rest and recharge.



Our space offers:

- ✓ 3 dormitories: 40+ Beds.
- ✓ Stocked Kitchenette Space.
- ✓ On-Site Parking.
- ✓ Conveniently located



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Scan to Learn More!

OUR PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE HOST SITE IS OPEN FOR VOLUNTEERS



DID YOU KNOW? OVER 3500 HOMES IN SARASOTA COUNTY ARE IN NEED OF REPAIRS.

Your Mission & Work

As a volunteer, you will partner with the United Way of Sarasota County and other local organizations to help homeowners directly. Work is focused on rebuilding and may include:

- ✓ **Demolition & Clean-Up:** Clearing damaged materials to create a clean slate for rebuilding.
- ✓ **Reconstruction:** Basic carpentry, drywall installation, outdoor repairs, and other essential rebuilding tasks.
- ✓ **Finishing & Fellowship:** Painting, flooring, and installing fixtures, all while befriending homeowners who need a hand and some hope.

All tools and construction oversight will be provided. No prior experience is necessary, just a willing heart!

Comfortable Accommodations at First Presbyterian

 Dorm-Style Rooms Cots, linens, and towels provided.	 Kitchen Access Kitchenette & commercial kitchen available.	 Showers & Laundry On-site facilities for your convenience.	 Wi-Fi & Lounge Relax in our gathering space with TV & games.
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Ready to Schedule Your Trip?

Contact us to learn more and find a date that works for your team.

David Householder, Site Coordinator
Email: firstpreshost@gmail.com
Phone: 724-462-4235

First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota | 2050 Oak Street, Sarasota, FL 34237
in partnership with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance



THE PERFECT GIFT.

Through the Christmas Joy Offering,
we come together to support past, present and future leaders,
embodying God's perfect gift to us,
Jesus Christ.



NOVEMBER 30 – DECEMBER 21

Many ways to help post-disaster recovery efforts

Earlier this year, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) reported a 60 percent chance of above-normal hurricane activity in the Atlantic basin. As of mid-October, there had been 12 named tropical systems, slightly below the average of 14 storms per season.

This year's activity includes one subtropical system, seven tropical storms, one category one storm, and three major hurricanes. Only one tropical storm, Chantal, made landfall in the US, making for a very soggy 4th of July weekend along the east coast, but causing only minimal damage. Most importantly, there were no deaths in the U. S. directly related to the storm – a much welcome change.

September is typically the most active month for tropical events. For example, the 2020 season set a record with 10 tropical or subtropical systems for the month. October's record was eight storms set in 1950, and November's worst

hurricane seasons were three storms; this has occurred seven different years, most recently in the 2024 season. Even these records show hurricane season is winding down by November.

While tropical weather effects this year have been minimal, long-term recovery work the result of previous years storms remains quite busy. There are currently 44 long-term recovery efforts underway throughout the state, including one at the extreme eastern edge of our own presbytery in Madison County. This means there is still a significant need for help and support as communities continue to rebuild.

If you are considering forming a Volunteer Team or already have one, there are many opportunities to serve, such as Host Sites or providing facilities for relief teams, including lodging and access to tools, equipment, and materials. Currently, two PDA-sponsored host sites are available in Florida:

one at First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota, the second in [Pinellas County at Oakhurst United Methodist Church](#). (Please refer to the flyers on page 2 for contact information and details.)

Financial donations are also crucial for the ongoing recovery efforts and future disaster response. With fewer storm impacts this year, relief agencies have a chance to catch up on current workloads and replenish their supplies from previous years' storms. So now is an ideal time to contribute.

Here are links to two PC(USA)-affiliated groups where you or your congregation can give. All donations to these organizations go directly to support disaster recovery: [FLAPDAN Disaster Relief Fund](#) and [PDA General Disaster Relief](#). There are also numerous other organizations accepting donations for disaster relief, should you prefer.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance's motto is "Out of Chaos, Hope". We can help PDA find Hope through their three courses of actions: "[Give](#)", "[Act](#)", "[Pray](#)".

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact me at tcrawford57@pm.me

Thank you for providing hope to those in need with your giving, your actions, and your prayers!

From the Ministry of Leadership Development (MLD)



*By Tim Crawford,
Florida Presbyterian
Disaster Assistance
Network (FLAPDAN)
Board Member and
1st, Crestview
Ruling Elder*

*"...there is still
a significant need
for help and support
as communities
continue to rebuild."*

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>

From the Ministry of Pastoral Transitions (MPT)



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

*"Across our
presbytery,
faithful servants
are discerning
next steps."*

Each pastoral call a thread in the larger fabric

There's a certain stillness in November that invites reflection. The air cools, the light softens, and the earth itself seems to pause before winter's rest. It is in this season of quiet turning that many of our churches, pastors, and search committees find themselves listening — not for the rustle of leaves, but for the voice of God.

Across our presbytery, faithful servants are discerning next steps. Pastor Nominating Committees meet in fellowship halls late into the evening, hearts open to the Spirit's leading. Ministers pray through transitions of their own —

sensing both the tug of the familiar and the whisper of the new. Congregations wait in hope, trusting that the One who began a good work will be faithful to complete it.

This ministry of pastoral transition is not simply about placement or process; it is about pilgrimage. Every call story is a thread in the larger fabric of God's grace, woven through time and community. Each conversation, interview, and prayer meeting holds the quiet possibility of God's new thing taking shape.

So we invite your prayers — for every ministry member giving

time and heart, for every congregation preparing to welcome a new shepherd, and for every minister seeking clarity in the midst of change. Pray that discernment will be marked not by haste but by holy patience. Pray for courage, compassion, and a sense of joyful expectation.

In this season of gratitude, may we remember: God's call is never delayed. It comes right on time — not ours, but His. And when it does, it will lead us, as it always has, from uncertainty into grace, from waiting into witness, and from transition into new life.

Crafty Angels

Workshops

Tuesday Nights 6-8 PM

DeFuniak Springs
First Presbyterian Church
Education Building Craft Room

November 4 & 11

Adult Education, Nurture & Fellowship Committee is hosting a four-week Arts & Crafts workshop; **Crafty Angels**.

Participants will make three unique angels using pottery, textile art, and China Painting led by skilled instructors.

There is a small fee for supplies.

Please register by calling the church office or signing up on the clip board in the Narthex.

TidePath: Labyrinth by The Sea

Nov 15 @7:15am

**Santa Clara Public Beach Access
South Walton County**



Grateful for birds

November is the time we gather with family and friends to give thanks for all our blessings. I am always grateful for my loving family and dear friends, but this year is different. Each day, I am disturbed by more and more news about the unraveling of the programs that protect our health and creation. It is not hyperbole to say that things are bad, but it forces me to reach deeper than I ever thought possible, to focus on the beauty and goodness of God's creation as a way to cope with what is happening.

Birds are my go-to. I love to see them, hear them, read about them, and to think about them being able to fly, which I have always wanted to do. They bring me great joy and peace. It is a spiritual experience to be around them and here are some special things about birds that I enjoy.

First, Audubon painted some of his most famous bird portraits in Florida. Longtime friend Clay Henderson just published a beautiful book entitled, *Audubon's Birds of Florida*. Clay is an environmental attorney, educator and author. His book is a catalogue of a major exhibit at the Brown Museum of 91 original Audubon prints of Florida birds. Most of the prints are from paintings that he made



Audubon's Florida Scrub Jay

during his 1831-1832 expedition to Florida. It includes his most beloved bird paintings of the American Flamingo, Roseate Spoonbill and Louisiana Heron.

A really special Florida bird is the scrub jay, which is endemic to our state and isn't afraid of people. It is a blue and gray bird, about the size of a blue jay. It lives in a scrub oak, in a sandy and very hot part of Florida in the summer, the Lake Wales Ridge.

My ornithology professor, Glen Woolfenden, who looked more like a large linebacker than a bird watcher, conducted one of the world's most famous longterm bird studies on the scrub jay. I had the great joy of being in the field with him and experiencing the pleasure of having these birds land on my head and knees. Of course, I had might have had a peanut in my hand,

which they very much wanted.

In Wisconsin, where we summer, crows fuss rather loudly when they see a fox. Those poor critters can't get away with anything once a crow has spotted them. Crows are smart, and a group of crows will work together to drive a fox away.

Birds epitomize so much of what is beautiful about God's world – intelligence, astounding navigation and flying skills, vibrant colors, ability to work together to solve a problem, complex nest building, relationships with people and so much more. They give me joy, peace and comfort, and remind me that we live in and are a part of God's kingdom.

For what are you grateful? What about creation makes you happy and makes your days easier?

Caring for Creation



By
Pam McVety,
Presbytery
Stewardship
of Creation
Enabler

"Birds epitomize so much of what is beautiful about God's world..."



DOGWOOD ACRES

Retreat Center and Summer Camp
Chipley, FL

Confirmation Retreat 2026

A supplement to your Confirmation class

Church History

the Bible

Your Faith



Your Church

January 9-11

Worship

Church Polity

For Middle and High School Youth and their Leaders

This weekend retreat is designed to enhance the confirmation experience for any middle or high school student who is currently enrolled in a confirmation class, has recently completed confirmation, or is about to begin the journey — along with their adult mentors, educators, or pastors.

Join us for a time of faith exploration, fellowship, and fun in the beautiful setting of Dogwood Acres!

Registration
opens
November
15th

When: January 9-11

Where: Dogwood Acres

Who: Middle and High
School Youth and
their leaders

Cost: \$180

Dogwood Acres answers questions about 501c3 status

At the October 2024 Presbytery meeting, the recommendations of the Strategic Planning Taskforce were approved. One of those recommendations was that Dogwood Acres become its own 501c3 non-profit organization, separate from the Presbytery. Since that meeting, the Ministry of Dogwood Acres (MDWA) has worked towards that goal.

As our staff and committee encounter members of our churches, we realize there are consistent questions that we answer about who we are and who we will be in the future. Here are some of those:

How will the ministry change when you are a 501c3?

We will still be the Presbytery of Florida's outdoor ministry; we won't separate. We will continue to work so that, when we do become our own non-profit organization, we continue our close partnership with the Presbytery and with our churches. A committee is working on the details of our partnership. The process will be completed in 2026.

Dogwood Acres was founded in 1966 by faithful Presbytery members who had a vision of a rustic retreat space for young people. Through the years, we have transformed into a retreat center and summer

camp where adults, youth and children can enjoy nature and experience God in new ways. Our hope is that we continue to grow our programing, enhance our buildings and grounds, and increase our relationships with churches and other organizations.

Will you still be a PC(USA) camp?

Dogwood Acres will remain a PC(USA)-related retreat center and camp in partnership with the Presbytery of Florida and our churches. We are rooted in our shared faith and history.

We will continue to host these Presbytery-wide, faith-enriching retreats: Spiritfest, Dogwood Youth Conference, Confirmation, and Summer Camp, as well as the adult retreats you have come to enjoy. In all that we do, no matter the group, we strive to plant seeds of faith and show Christ's love to all.

Have you considered having non-PCUSA groups at camp?

Yes! We will do that in the future, and we do that now. Dogwood has always been open to other denominations and secular organizations using our facility. In the past three years, we have welcomed Christian schools, Catholic church groups, Lutherans, Methodists, community health organizations, restorative

justice groups, several non-denominational churches, a women's canoe group, Savannah Presbytery youth, and Florida Diabetes Association. And YES! We hope to continue to broaden the scope of the groups we welcome.

What is your funding plan?

Our programing continues to grow; our donor base and partnerships with outside groups has increased. But we still fall short on our funding needs. We have been working with a camp consulting group to devise a realistic five-year plan.

We have already exceeded many of the plan's initial goals with our 30% increase in summer campers and our increase in groups we host. We must continue to engage more individuals, churches and groups in our ministry, both on-site and through donations.

How can we help?

-Pray for us.

-Share our story and the experiences you have had at Dogwood Acres.

-Host a church retreat here, and send youth, children and adults to retreats we offer.

-Become a donor.

-Include Dogwood Acres in your church's annual budget.

From the Ministry of Dogwood Acres (MDWA)



*By Christy Williams,
DWA Director*

"Dogwood Acres will remain a PC(USA)-related retreat center and camp in partnership with the Presbytery of Florida and our churches. We are rooted in our shared faith and history."

Korean 1st Presbyterian Church of FWB provides warmest welcome



Early in the morning before the Presbytery's October 28 stated meeting got underway, Korean First Presbyterian Church of Fort Walton Beach volunteers, shown above, were preparing to offer the utmost hospitality.



Above, at left, from left, Presbytery Ministry of Leadership Development (MLD) Moderator and 1st, DeFuniak Springs Pastor Rev. Cathy Mooney and 1st, DeFuniak Springs Elder Hilda Jackson display Advent resources at registration in conjunction with the Advent-themed "Equipping Our Congregations" meeting segment. Above, at right, 1st, Pensacola Associate Pastor Rev. Becky Bryan preaches a sermon about casting our anxieties to God, based on 1 Peter 5: 1-11.



At left, from left foreground, Faith, Tallahassee Ruling Elder Linda Lovins and 1st, DeFuniak Springs Pastor Rev. Cathy Mooney are commissioned to serve at the 227th General Assembly (2026) in a service led by Moderator Mary Hodges and Stated Clerk Rev. Mark Broadhead. Dexton Teat, from Grace, Panama City, also is commissioned to serve as the Presbytery's GA Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD).



Above, from left, Presbytery Ministry of Leadership Development (MLD) Moderator Rev. Cathy Mooney leads meeting participants in sharing Advent resources, ideas and experiences during the meeting's time of "Equipping Our Congregations".

Meanwhile, Presbytery Ministry of Leadership Development (MLD) Vice Moderator Rev. Erin Rugh provides information about the Sanctified Arts Advent resources MLD is making available to congregations.

Northminster, Pensacola Commissioned Ruling Elder Dr. Greg Seltzer shares how a \$1500 Presbytery Two Cents a Meal Grant will help his church's Christmas Giving Box ministry provide holiday meals, plus other nutritious food for children during the school holiday, for 30 families in the community.

At left, the host volunteers serve a sumptuous feast, earning a round of applause, during the meeting's lunch break.

**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. Meador
revmeador@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)

JUSTICE

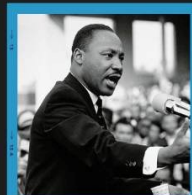
Journey to FREEDOM

Civil Rights & Social Justice in the South

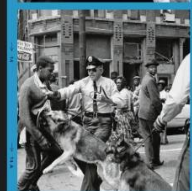
Travel Seminar

December 29, 2025 - January 6, 2026

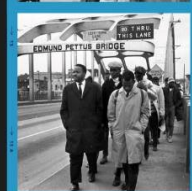
Students, Staff, Spouses, Alumni/ae & Congregations



DECEMBER 29
Atlanta



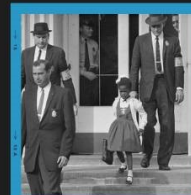
DECEMBER 30
Birmingham



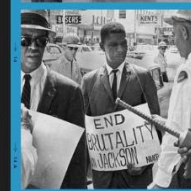
DECEMBER 30
Selma



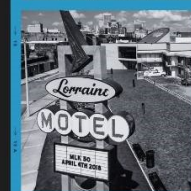
DECEMBER 31
Montgomery



JANUARY 1-2
Louisiana



JANUARY 3
Jackson



JANUARY 4
Memphis



JANUARY 5
Nashville

Registration includes

charter bus - hotels - 2 meals a day -all entry fees

Registration details



bit.ly/4IhkHgW

Led by: Dr. Rebecca Davis & Dr. Rodney Sadler