

# Good News

For the People of  
First Presbyterian Church  
Mount Dora, Florida

First Presbyterian Church of Mount Dora  
222 West Sixth Avenue  
Mount Dora, FL 32757

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## February Highlights

Feb 2 The PW Gathering at 2:00

Feb 7 Pastor Tom's last Sermon

Feb 13 Men's Fellowship Breakfast

Sun 14 Pastor Tom's last service. Cynthia deVos preaches,  
together they officiate a Holy Communion service.

Feb 17 Ash Wednesday

Feb 21 CFP Executive Presbyter Dan Williams leads worship

Feb 28 Interim Pastor Mike Andrews leads Worship



*First meeting for 2021 Session, last meeting for Pastor Tom*



*Berry Long & Pastor Tom after being named  
"Pastor Emeritus"*

# February 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jan 31 <b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany</b> 8:45 am Sunday School- MP & Zoom 10:00 am Worship Service-S	1 9:30 am Zoom Prayer Group  7:00 pm AA Mtg	2 8:00 am Men's Bible Study Group- FH 10:00 am Men's Bible Study Zoom 2:00 pm PW Gathering - FH	3 9:50 am Preschool Chapel 11:00 am Staff Mtg-L 3:30 pm Deacons Mtg-FH 4:30-5:30 pm Handbell practice-S 7:00-8:00 pm Choir practice-S	4 9:30 am Zoom Prayer Group 10:00 am Property Cmte-FH  7:00 pm AA Mtg	5	6 Art Festival Parking
7 <b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany</b> 2 ¢ (5¢) a meal offering 8:45 am Sunday School- MP & on Zoom 10:00 am Last Serom for Pastor Tom -S  Art Festival Parking	8 9:30 am Zoom Prayer Group  7:00 pm AA Mtg	9 2:00 pm MOF Mtg – FH 3:00 Stewardship & Finance-MP 5:00 pm Mission Cmte Zoom Mtg.	10 9:50 am Preschool Chapel 11:00 am Staff Mtg-L 4:30-5:30 pm Handbell practice-S 7:00-8:00 pm Choir practice-S	11 9:30 am Zoom Prayer Group  7:00 pm AA Mtg	12	13 8:30 am Men's Fellowship Breakfast- Country Club
14 <b>Valentine's Day</b> 8:45 am Sun. School- MP & on Zoom 10:00 am Communion Worship Service with Cynthia deVos preaching-S  Coffee reception for Pastor Tom in FH (his last Sunday)	15 No School - <b>Presidents' Day</b> Holiday 9:30 am Zoom Prayer Group  7:00 pm AA Mtg	16 8:00 am Men's Bible Study Group- FH 10:00 am Men's Bible Study Zoom  9:30 am PW CT mtg – FH	17 <b>Ash Wednesday</b> 9:50 am Preschool Chapel 11:00 am Staff Mtg-L 4:30-5:30 pm Handbell practice-S  7:00-8:00 pm Choir practice-S	18 9:30 am Zoom Prayer Group  7:00 pm AA Mtg	19	20
21 <b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent</b> 8:45 am Sun. School- MP & on Zoom 10:00 am Worship Service with Dan Williams CFP -S	22 9:30 am Zoom Prayer Group 1:30 School Board Meeting-L  7:00 pm AA Mtg	23 9:30 am Rebecca Circle-FH 9:30 am Naomi Circle-FH 9:30 am Martha Circle- MP 9:30 am Mary Ruth Circle-C 11:30 Worship Cmte	24 9:50 am Preschool Chapel 11:00 am Staff Mtg-L 4:30-5:30 pm Handbell practice-S 7:00-8:00 pm Choir practice-S	25 9:30 am Zoom Prayer Group  7:00 pm AA Mtg	26	27
28 <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b> 8:45 am Sun. School- MP & on Zoom 10:00 am Worship Service with Mike Andrews -S			<b>LEGEND</b> FH—Fellowship Hall S—Sanctuary L – Library C – Chapel MP—Multipurpose room downstairs			

Feb 2021

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## Contact Us

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Church of Mount Dora

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[Facebook](#)



Office Hours

M-F 9:00 – 3:00

### Office Staff & Schedule

Pastor Thomas J. Biery

*Pastor Tom's schedule varies, he is out of the office on Mondays*

Randy Frieling, Director of Music & Worship Arts

*Randy's schedule varies, he is out of the office on Mondays*

## Farewell Pastor Tom

Dear Church Family,

We have had a wonderful, abundantly blessed and historically long time together as Pastor and people! What a run!

It began in the Fall of 1985 when some of the Pastoral Nominating Committee from Mt. Dora came to Daytona where I was serving as Associate Pastor. They came unannounced on a Sunday that I was leading worship and as I greeted "visitors" after church, they introduced themselves and wanted to get acquainted. They invited me to come to Mt. Dora, meet with them and see about my possibly coming to serve as pastor.

Our discussions went well, and one thing led to another and on Pentecost Sunday, the Congregation voted to call me as Pastor. As the Saying goes, "the rest is history."

I began work in August 1986 and was officially installed on Oct. 19.

To this day, I do not know how they got my name, and being a former "northern" church, I did not even know there was a Presbyterian church in Mt. Dora! I do believe it was a definite "God thing" and a "match made in heaven" to be called here.

Quoting from Apostle Paul's Letter to the Romans, I wrote then "For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine." (Romans 1:11-12)

Dear Friends in Christ, that has happened...Big time!! All thanks and praise to God!

Upon my arrival at this church, I wrote:

*Dear Friends:*

*The Church is the body of Christ on earth, confessing Him as the Lord and sharing in His life, His mission and His Grace. As a part of the church universal, we have been called to the particular place that is First Presbyterian Church of Mount Dora.*

*As those who were once strangers to each other we have been called together to be a people, a people of faith-growing together through study of His Word, through love and fellowship and service. Such "growing together" hopefully marks our lives together in the church.*

*At this point in time, as we enjoy a new beginning here as Pastor and People, let it be a new season of growth: growth in spirit, growth in faith and growth in love.*

*Come grow with us and may each of us grow more Christlike so that together we may grow more and more into a church He wills us to be!*

*(Continued on next page)*

Barbara Grace, Administrative Assistant  
*Mon-Fri 9 am – 3 pm*

Sandy Lacher Assistant Secretary  
*Wed & Fri 9-Noon*

Denise Jonnet, Accountant  
*Tue afternoon*

Reception Volunteers  
 Linda Wise  
 Margaret Newlan  
 Ginger Adams



(352) 735-2227

Ages 3-5

Renet McCall

Preschool Director

*Available M-F*

*8:00 am – 3:00 pm*



And this has happened also! Now, I am very confident that “He who has begun a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6).

It has been a real privilege, a high honor and one of the greatest joys of my life for me to have been your Pastor for what is now half my life!

I love you all, I love our church and the many wonderful things God has allowed us to do together,

This is what makes my retirement this month truly bittersweet-happy to be retiring but missing you and our shared faith and life together.

As we go into a new chapter, let us remember that the God who loves us and has been with us in the past will continue to guide and uphold us in the future. The church will do well.

As I have reminded you so many times, “Love God and your neighbor” (the two directions of the cross), “and in all things, glorify the Lord.” (I Corinthians 10:31)

May God Bless you always, Yours in Christ,  
 Pastor Tom





## Prayer Concerns

Gayle Barnes (friend of the Bierys)

Bryan Biery

John Birmingham (Diane Madson's brother)

Lois & Warner Brown (Bridgewater Assisted Living)

Richard Dennis

Betty Greeley

Barbara Higley (Linda Wise's mom)

Phyllis Lay (Osprey Lodge)

Doug Mitchell

Nick Nichols (Edgewater)

Lucille Piper

Harry Phillips

Jack Rhoads

Sue Tuhey

Matt Tuhey (Illinois)

Susan Turner

Joanne & Paul White (friends of Sara Ware)

Phyllis Whitehead

Joy Wilund

Joyce Whitbeck

Diane & Jerry Wood

Melissa Yelvington



Christian sympathy is expressed to Paula McKay and family on the death of Pete McKay (relations of Irène Zweidler).

## When a Pastor and Congregation say Goodbye

Our Presbytery has a "pastoral ethics policy" that includes when a pastor leaves a position. This policy although difficult, is a necessary and important step in the transition to a new minister.

The essence of the policy is that "when you go, you go" so that as of my retirement on February 14<sup>th</sup>, all pastoral and professional relationships with the congregation will end. Neither will I be involved in the future selection of the Pastor Nominating Committee, who will select the next Pastor (that is your responsibility). Similarly, I will not discuss, offer opinions, etc. about the life of the congregation, the church, interim pastor or next installed pastor.

If you should want me to take part in a pastoral function (such as a wedding or funeral) that request should be made to the interim pastor who will, upon his agreement, offer the invitation.

All of this is to ensure that members of the congregation, as well as myself, "move on". It does not mean that friendships and social relationships end. Bryan and I can still "do lunch", go to a (non-church) function or activity with any of you. And we hope to! But the affairs of the church are off limits.

Please know of our continued prayer and love for you all!

Pastor Tom

## Introduction of Our Interim Pastor

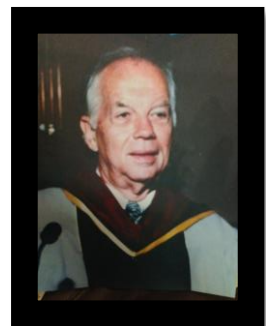
The Rev. Dr. Michael Louis Andrews is a native of Charlotte, NC. He was born into the Presbyterian Church. He graduated from Presbyterian College in South Carolina, received his M. Div. from Columbia Theological Seminary and his D.Min. from Pittsburgh Seminary.

Mike sensed a call to serve the Lord in his early years and, after fighting it realized that indeed, God was calling him to the pastorate.

Upon graduating from seminary, he moved to Sarasota Florida and served the Whitfield Church, the first Drive-in Church in an Associate position. When the Senior Pastor retired, he became the Associate of the First Presbyterian Church of Tampa, Florida, where he served for seven years.

His first solo pastorate was St. Andrews in Apopka, Florida. It was here he met and married his wife Anne; a Surgical Technician and they began their family of three children. Michael junior (Luke) now lives with his wife in Savannah, Ga., Rachael Aldrich who lives with her husband and three children in Longwood, Florida and Stephanie who lives with her husband and stepdaughter in North Augusta, SC.

After serving this church for seven years, the family moved to Merritt Island, Florida where Mike served through a transition of





Christian sympathy to Claudia Caporale and family on the death of Don Caporale on January 2, 2021. His Memorial service was held Friday, Jan 8<sup>th</sup> in Aubrey, Texas.

Dear Church Family,  
Don's eyes filled with emotion when I read him some of your beautiful get-well cards. Tears dripped to the side of his eyes wanting to express his love and gratitude—unable to say much, but please know he was so appreciative of your prayers and cards. But God had other plans for him where he now sits with God in heaven. I try to remind myself that there is a reason for everything that happens, even though I don't understand it. I miss him so. I want all of you to know how much your prayers, cards and calls have comforted me having received dozens of beautiful cards with poignant sentiments on Don's passing. Thank you for honoring Don and comforting me. We love you all and I know Don is smiling down in thanks to all of you. Thank you, friends, from the bottom of my heart.

With deepest appreciation and love,  
Claudia J Caporale



Christian Sympathy is expressed to Carol Hanna on the passing of her sister, Jane Lewandowski on Friday, January 22, 2021

relocating the sanctuary to a larger campus and sanctuary. Following this, the family moved to North Myrtle Beach, SC where Mike served the Ocean Drive Church. This was followed by a pastorate in the Fairview Church in North Augusta, SC where he served as Senior Pastor for 13 years.

Upon retirement Mike returned to Merritt Island, Florida and served as the Interim at his former church. Following this he served as Interim Pastor in the Markham Woods Church in Lake Mary. Then he returned to his former church in Apopka, St. Andrews for another Interim position. His next Interim position was at St. Mark's Church in Altamonte Springs. Following this, Mike served the Palmdale Church as Interim before moving to Apopka to be near their grandchildren. Last year he completed the most recent Interim Pastorate at the Rockledge Presbyterian Church in Rockledge, Florida.

Mike has served as Presbytery Moderator, Chair of the Committee of Ministry, and various other committees of the Presbytery and Synod. He and his wife reside in the Lake McCoy Forest development in Apopka, Florida.

## Stewardship & Finance



Our 2021 stewardship program to date has resulted in 70 pledges representing approximately \$260,000. Unfortunately, this is about 25% less than last year. Our revenues have been supplemented by a large amount of unpledged donations and the PPP program grant has also added funds to our revenues in 2020. We thank all that have given and may God bless you.

This year the financial challenges continue with the ongoing pandemic and we are now in a pastoral transition. We ask all to keep up their generous donations and for those who have not renewed their 2021 pledges, **it is never too late to pledge.**

The Per Capita membership fee for 2021 is \$19.25/member, the same as last year.

### Financial Results for December 2020

	December 2020	Year to Date	2020 vs. 2019
Total Income	\$39,569	\$472,906	118.6%
Total Expense	<u>\$40,486</u>	<u>\$410,578</u>	96.2%
Difference	\$(918)	\$62,328	

Fred Lipp, Stewardship & Finance Committee



Thank you from  
Linda Ash for all the prayers for  
her mother, Nancy Brundage. She  
is doing better.



Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Toddy  
Gorman on January 19<sup>th</sup> she  
celebrated with Family & Friends  
at The Bridgewater.



Dear Church Family,

It is with much thought and  
prayer that Bill and I have  
decided that at this time in our  
life, we must make this change  
and move back to New Jersey to  
be closer to family.

We have enjoyed 20 years of  
great weather, friendships, and  
fellowship with such a wonderful  
church family. We will certainly  
miss all of you.

Our home was sold in one week  
and we will move at the end of  
February.

Sincerely,

Bill and Ellen Thompson



## Music Notes from Randy

I am so happy to be on a journey with First Presbyterian Church. I know it is not really my fault that two office managers, one music director and one organist have left since I have been here. Now our minister is leaving after 35 years! Although I believe that I might tell better jokes/stories than Pastor Tom (i.e., remember his Baskin Robin's story on January 17?), I have had a great time working with him. He has kept all of us on a path to help our congregation worship. We will never forget the wisdom Tom has instilled in us. Let us continue the journey!

Keep a Song in Your Heart!

Randy

Barbara Zander has been on the Worship Committee for 5 years, and what an amazing job she has done! It will be hard to live up to her accomplishments. As a new year begins, I will do my best to follow in her footsteps. I'm looking forward to the challenge, knowing with Randy's help we will get it done. Thank You, Barbara, for all you do and for a job well done!

Molly Romp, Chair, Worship, Music and Media



## Membership, Outreach & Fellowship

This month we have to say goodbye to our beloved Pastor Tom who has led this flock for 35 years. It is with heavy hearts we say goodbye, but we know he so deserves to be retired. He has given so much to all of us. We will be celebrating Tom on his last Sunday with us February 14 at a coffee hour after the service.

We will begin having a coffee hour the 1st Sunday of the month. As people start returning to Church in person, we will increase coffee hours.

Who's ready for a picnic? We could enjoy the sunshine outside by the fountain and have box lunches from Cody's. We will invite our interim Pastor to join us on Thursday, February 25 at noon. If you are interested in joining us for fellowship, please call Ann Prince at 352-978-5450 or Nancy Staffieri at 352-552-4892. You will need a reservation so we can order your lunch. Details later on the lunch choices.

Blessings,

Ann Prince and Nancy Staffieri



## Military & Foreign Service

1LT Adam Albright, Chemical Corp,  
South Korea (Lois & Denton  
Albright's grandson)

1LT Dylan Davis (& Jen),  
Fort Hood, TX  
(Betty Colby's granddaughter)

MAJ Brad Jones and  
MAJ Margaret Jones, Marine Corps  
Recruit Depot, Parris Island, SC  
(Ginger & Joe Adams niece &  
nephew)

LtCol. Sean E. Marshall, US Air  
Force  
Hickam Field, HI and  
SRA. Keven C. Marshall, US Air  
Force  
Robbins AFB, GA (son & grandson  
of  
Karen & Gary Marshall)

SSGT Kellen Riley, US Army  
Recruiter, St. Cloud, MN (Wally  
Green's grandson)

MP SGT Ian Yates, WA Army  
National Guard and  
MAJ Kyle Yates, US Air Force –  
currently deployed (Abby, Ainsley  
and Kaelin), Moody AFB, GA (Ellen  
& Howard Yates' sons & family)

## Missions... Around the Corner... Around the World...



**THANK YOU'S FROM PARTNERS** – We've received many thank yous from the ministries supported by the Alternative Christmas Market. Here are excerpts from a few:

AGAPE: "You made our year end better than ever. All dollars come in at God's timing, so it is never late. Thanks for all you do."

OPEN DOOR: "We want to thank you for being so generous to Open Door. We appreciate your continued support through your monetary and food donations."

GOOD NEWS JAIL & PRISON MINISTRY: "Thank you for standing with us in this special season...We are so grateful for your gift and for your commitment to helping take the Name to those who have never heard!"

LIFEBOAT PROJECT: "On behalf of all of us at The Lifeboat Project, thank you for the generous donation. You have made a real difference in the lives of the survivors we serve. It means the world to us!"

Usually, this time of year we are getting ready for our Chili Fest fundraiser, featuring Doug's Famous Chili. We are sorry that we cannot have it at this time but hope we can make it happen later in the year.

Submitted by Elizabeth Long



## Presbyterian Women

Happy Valentine's Day! This is a fun light-hearted holiday. We all can stand little levity and "love" at this time.

I hope this finds you well. With the distribution of the COVID vaccine, there is a light at the end of the tunnel.  
(continued)



The February gathering is going to be held in the Fellowship Hall on Feb. 2, 2021 At 2:00 PM. Note the time change! This will be a plated dessert and not a luncheon. Em's on Fifth will be sponsoring a style show! Come and see the new spring fashions! (continued)

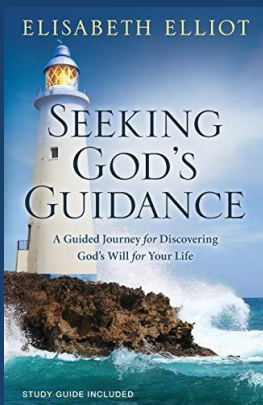




Looking for a donation of an outdoor table and chairs for our courtyard, for small meetings.



The **Men's Fellowship Breakfast** will be held on February 13, 2021 at 8:30 AM at Country Club of Mount Dora Clubhouse. The cost is \$10.00. Please call or email John Sullivan at 352-383-2100 or [Daisydogi@aol.com](mailto:Daisydogi@aol.com)



Ruth House is doing well and appreciates our support. They have a new location. It is at capacity right now. They still are in need of shampoo, tooth paste, and cleaning supplies. If you have things you would like to contribute, please contact Ann Prince.

The Coordinating Team has been discussing when it would be a good time to start Dutch Treat Lunches again. Please think it over. Spring is around the corner. Perhaps we can meet at a restaurant outside in March. Please let your circle leaders or Linda Hezlep know if you are interested.

Many Blessings, Linda Hezlep, CT Moderator



## Discipleship, Education & Nurture

Sunday School is 8:45 am in the Multi-purpose room. Berry Long is presenting two studies by Ray Vander Laan, entitled "With All of Your Heart" and the "Path of the Cross". There will be a video followed by group discussion. Each lesson is independent.

We will see how God would live among his chosen people and how that relationship prepares them to be His faithful witnesses to the entire world. As we better understand God's revealed mission through the Israelites, we will better understand God's purpose for our own lives today. Please join us. (Zoom will be available, too.)

Starting on Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>, Men's Bible Study meets In-person at 8:00 am in the Fellowship Hall, on the first and third Tuesdays. Berry Long coordinates (407- 257-7807). A Zoom session starts at 10:00 am on the same days. The current study is II Corinthians Chapter 9.

The Prayer Group meets via Zoom at 9:30 am Mondays & Thursdays. Contact Alberto Montes ([sunandfun57@gmail.com](mailto:sunandfun57@gmail.com)) to join on Zoom.

Emily Lewis/ Alberto Montes

## Library Corner Book Review

Hello ! It's your Librarian with a review of *Seeking God's Guidance*, by a hero of mine, Elizabeth Elliot. In the chapter titled, "The Conditions", Elliot says: "The first condition (in seeking God's guidance) is the recognition of God Himself. It is not who does He think I am, but who do I think He is. I confess that after many years I am still having to go back often to this, to Lesson 1 in the school of faith... I started out on false premises: who am I, what I need, why my case is special, what I'm hoping for, what I pray for, or something - anything, but the thing that matters most: who is God. (And) To learn who He is, we go to the Bible". ( Continued)



Denny Winship, Our new Handyman



Preschool circle time



Preschool Chapel talk on baptism

Elliot also reminds us that our duty is obedience. However, "obedience may lead me not to the fulfillment of my own ideals of spirituality but to very unexpected situations...meant to teach me to be meek and lowly in heart...And there, to my surprise, I find rest." Not where we think we should be but where God wants us to be, where we really need to be.

## An Old Friend is New Handyman

Denny Winship was born in Kirkwood, MO., but has lived in Central Florida for as long as he can remember! He went to high school at Maynard Evans in Orlando, to college at UCF before attending and graduating from Florida Southern College, just like Pastor Tom! Denny worked for Lockheed Martin and got his Master's from Florida Institute of Technology. After 30 years of dedicated service, he retired early to care for his parents, who are now with the Lord. He wanted to work and was praying about it when suddenly, Pastor Tom reached out and asked him to consider being the church's part-time handyman. He jumped at the chance on Jan 6th and he loves the work and the people of FPCMD! 60 light bulbs have been replaced with LED's. Already things are getting brighter and so much more is getting done! He and his lovely wife, Rosa, live in the Country Club of Mount Dora and are surrounded by members of First Presbyterian! What a life!

## Preschool

This New Year brings our Preschool many blessings. Over the past 2 months we have had 13 new students join our school. Our early Fall registration is going extremely well. We know He has amazing plans for our Preschool Ministry. We currently have 48 students attending and 45 on our list for next school year.

This February our learning themes will be Hibernation & Ground Hog Day; Valentines; Space; and Farm. Our Chapel lessons will focus on The Good Samaritan, Love, Jesus Stops a Storm and Jesus Feeds 5,000. We will be learning about the letters H, V, U and N; numbers 17 through 20; colors red and black; and shapes heart and trapezoid.

February 2<sup>nd</sup> – 100<sup>th</sup> Day School

February 8<sup>th</sup> – Wearing Red for National Congenital Heart Defect Day (for Harper Kempster)

February 12<sup>th</sup> – Valentines Classroom Celebrations

February 22<sup>nd</sup> – School Board Meeting

Blessings, Ms. Renet McCall