



The Presby Press

May 2026

A Publication of First Presbyterian Church, ARP, Sebring, Florida

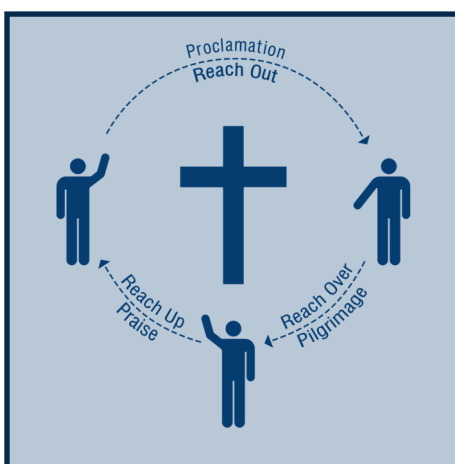
Pastor's News and Notes

Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:31

FPCS 2026 Renewal Theme Proclamation, Pilgrimage, Praise

Walking in the Footsteps of Abraham

As we journey together through our sermon series in Genesis, and especially Abraham, from God's call in Genesis 12 to the unfolding promises through chapter 19, we've been reminded again and again that faith is not merely belief; it is a lived trust in the God who keeps His word. Abraham's story is full of moments where God quietly, steadily, and sometimes surprisingly shows that He is at work even when His people cannot yet see the full picture. That same pattern is unfolding in our congregation today. Just as Abraham discovered that God's promises move forward step by step, we too are witnessing encouraging signs of God's faithfulness in our life together.



Jesus Christ. Like Abraham hosting guests under the oaks of Mamre, Jeanette Stypa invited her friends and neighbors to this three-week class which offered hospitality and spiritual nourishment. Our expected hope and prayers are that God is even now using it for His glory. Seeds have been planted, and we trust Him for the growth. Where might we go next?

A Worshiping Community

Our average worship attendance of 40 this year is another sign of steady, faithful participation. In a world full of distractions and shifting priorities, gathering weekly to worship the Lord is a countercultural act of devotion. Abraham built altars wherever he went; we gather in worship to declare that God is the center of our lives.

New Faces, New Opportunities

This year, we have welcomed 27 first-time worshippers into our Sunday services. Each new face is a reminder that God continues to draw people toward Himself and that our church remains a place where visitors feel the warmth of Christian fellowship. Abraham opened his tent to strangers; we open our doors to neighbors, and new friends who may be taking their first steps toward faith.

Hope Explored: A Seed Planted

Our recent Hope Explored course at Sebring Village saw 10 participants each week, engaging in honest conversations about life, hope, and the person of Je-

Encouragement from the Wider Church

We are also grateful that the Florida Presbytery, at its recent Spring meeting, approved to continue its financial support of \$1,000 per month for the coming year. This partnership is a tangible expression of the wider church walking with us, just as Abraham was strengthened by God's covenant community, we too are supported by brothers and sisters beyond our local fellowship. In addition, our sister church (First Presbyterian Church of Lake Placid) has recently pledged a monthly support through the rest of the year. God continues to raise His church through different and often unexpected ways.

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Pastor's News and Notes

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Looking Ahead with Faith

Abraham's journey was marked by trust in the God who calls, provides, and fulfills His promises. As we reflect on the blessings unfolding in our congregation, we are reminded that God is still writing His story among us. These encouraging developments are not isolated successes; they are signposts of His ongoing work. Let us continue to walk forward in faith, with open hearts, open hands, and open doors, confident that the same God who guided Abraham guides us today.



<u>Date</u>	<u>Sermon</u>
May 3 Communion	Genesis 19
May 10	Genesis 20
May 17 Fellowship Lunch	Genesis 21
May 24	Genesis 23
May 31 Mission Moment	Genesis 24

Member Anniversary



We want to wish a happy anniversary for the following brothers and sisters who joined our church in the month of May:

Cheryl Cooke 8 years
 Cheryl Green 25 years
 Joanne Harderwijk 18 years
 Bob Harderwijk 18 years
 Bonnie Smart 15 years
 Fay Wood 10 Years
 Nelson Wood 10 years

May another year bring you joy in our Savior Jesus Christ and love for one another in our church family.



The Caring Christian Women have decided to change the card sending for birthdays and anniversaries. Instead of cards being sent, we will celebrate each month with a cake or pie or some type of special dessert for the birthdays and anniversaries for that particular month. We are hoping to fill up our fellowship hall with more celebrations.

Benediction+

NOW TO HIM WHO IS ABLE TO DO FAR MORE ABUNDANTLY THAN ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, ACCORDING TO THE POWER AT WORK WITHIN US, TO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH AND IN CHRIST JESUS THROUGHOUT ALL GENERATIONS, FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN

EPHESIANS 3:20-21

Pastor Karl



POTLUCK LUNCH

The fellowship lunch on May 17 will be potluck. Everyone is invited to bring a dish to share. Please try to drop off your dish by 10:45 so that the ladies in the kitchen can get upstairs in time for worship. We look forward to seeing all of you and a several guests. Since the "great migration" has happened, it is up to the year round residents to create a crowd.



Caffeine & Calvin

Hope for Real Life

Monthly Devotional — M. Allen Ridgdill, Ministry Intern



Grace Is God Dwelling in Us

Most of us think of Christmas and Easter as the great moments of the Christian faith — and they are. But Pentecost is the moment the work of the Son becomes the dwelling of the Spirit, and the Gospel moves from history into the heart.

God came to dwell in His people.

Not just with them.

Not just for them.

But in them.

Acts 2:1–4 (ESV) tells us that the disciples were “all filled with the Holy Spirit.” That is the heart of Pentecost. The wind and fire were signs—but the reality was this: the risen Christ poured out His Spirit so that God would no longer dwell in a place, but in a people.

And that is pure grace.

First, we must be clear: God does not need to dwell in us. He is not lacking anything. Scripture reminds us that He is not served “as though he needed anything” (Acts 17:25, ESV). Pentecost is not about God filling a deficiency in Himself. It is about God, in His mercy, drawing near to us.

That is what makes it grace.

Because we were not worthy of His presence. Sin did not simply make us weak—it made us unclean and separated from God. In the Old Testament, His presence was guarded, even dangerous to approach. Yet now, through Christ, the holy God comes to dwell within His people.

The prophet **Ezekiel 36:27 (ESV)** promised this long before Pentecost:

“I will put my Spirit within you...”

Notice the language—I will. God initiates. God gives.

God comes near.

This is not earned. It is given.

And what God gives is not merely help, but Himself. Jesus promised, “He will give you another Helper... to be with you forever” (John 14:16, ESV). The Spirit is not simply strength or guidance—He is the very presence of God. In grace, God gives God.

This is also a permanent gift. Under the old covenant, the Spirit would come upon individuals for a time. But at Pentecost, the Spirit comes to dwell—to remain. God does not visit His people; He abides with them.

And this changes everything.

It means you are not alone.

It means you are not living the Christian life in your own strength.

It means God Himself is at work within you.

This gift comes only through Jesus Christ. At the cross, sin is dealt with. In His righteousness, we are made clean. And because of that, God makes His home in us. As Jesus said, “If I go, I will send him to you” (John 16:7, ESV). Pentecost flows from Calvary.

This means that your ordinary Monday morning — with its anxieties, its failures, its quiet discouragements — is not lived outside the presence of God. The same Spirit who fell at Pentecost dwells in every believer who has trusted Christ. You do not have to summon Him. You do not have to earn His nearness. He is already there. The Christian life is not a striving upward toward a distant God — it is learning, day by day, to live in the presence of the One who has already made His home in you.

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Remembering Joan Scarpati

By Janine Hart

Many of you began attending FPCS after Joan Scarpati moved away, but I think you would have liked her. She's the reason you're reading the *Presby Press* right now. She approached me in 2013 with the idea that our church needed a newsletter. I couldn't imagine what we would come up with for content each month, but I agreed to do the "computer stuff" if she could help with articles since I was still working at the time. Before we could publish our first issue, we had to name our publication.

Earleen (Alvarez) Jumont won the naming contest and the *Presby Press* was born.

I would ride my bike to her house and we would sit at her table overlooking the lake and plan content for a few months at a time, bouncing ideas off each other. She created the Mission Statement that is still on the back page. She was a very gracious lady and a wonderful writer. It was a joy to work with her. She left behind a lasting gift to our church with the *Presby Press*.

Caffeine & Calvin

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So when we say, "God dwells in you," we are saying something profound:

God has not treated you as your sins deserve.

God has drawn near instead of remaining distant.

God has made His home where He once would have judged.

That is grace.

Grace is this: not just God helping His people, but God giving Himself to them—and making His home within them.

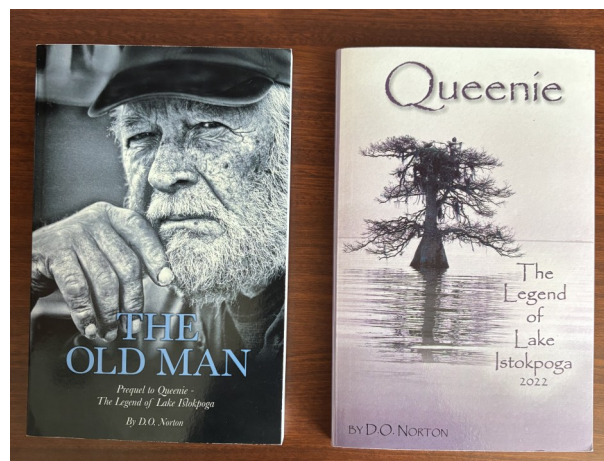
Because of Pentecost, the Christian life is not you reaching up to God—but God dwelling in you.

Aging Gracefully

On Monday, May 18th at 2:00pm at the Sebring Village community clubhouse, there will be a seminar on Aging Gracefully. It is being sponsored by the HOA, and you are invited to come. The seminar covers Alzheimer's, dementia, falling and other aging things we are going through. Sebring Village is off Schumacher Rd. Come into the park and the clubhouse is on your right.

Don Norton

Fisherman and Author



Don and his wife Lext have been attending with us for a few months and we're gradually learning more about him. First it was the YouTube video in which he encouraged people to reconnect with church and mentioned FPCS specifically. Now we learn that he's the author of many books with another on the way. They are available locally at Lake Placid Western Wear and Beach House Books in Sebring. They are also available online. He would probably be willing to sign them for you. We have copies of the two pictured above in the church office.



MAY

2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Sunday School 9:30 Worship with Communion 11:00 	4	5	6 Bible Study 4:00	7	8	9
10	11	12 Deacons 1:00 Session 2:00	13 Bible Study 4:00	14 Outreach Committee 10:00	15	16
17 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 11:00 Fellowship Lunch 	18 Aging Gracefully class @ Sebring Village 2:00	19	20 Bible Study 4:00	21 Men's Fellowship Breakfast 8:30 	22	23
24 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 11:00	25	26	27 Bible Study 4:00	28	29	30
31 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 11:00						



MAY

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

- 1 Cecil Hess
7 Nancy Ratzlaff
11 Barney Hart

Anniversaries

- 14 Jim & Diane Graves
15 Roger & Cindy Warrick
15 Bob & JoAnn Harderwijk



JUNE

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

- 7 Pat Rhodes
12 Nancy Davis
16 Sherida Ridgill
20 Phil White
22 Earleen Jumont
23 Rev. Karl Davis
24 Fay Wood
25 Lee Hughes

Anniversaries

- 17 Rev. Ray & Clanell Cameron
26 Lee & Leslie Hughes
30 Bob & Pat Rhodes

Note: We do this for people who are organized and like to plan ahead. Next month we will publish June dates again along with July.

Church Staff and Officers



The Session

Jack Breed, Jim Underwood,
Roger Warrick

The Diaconate

Dennis Green, Robert Harderwijk, Janine Hart,
Pat Villere

Trustees

Barney Hart, Calvin Lomelino, Patricia Villere



Our Staff

Staff and Congregational Officers

Karl Davis – Pastor
Janine Hart – Church Administrator
Dan Parsons – Sexton
Barney Hart – Congregation Chairman
Pat Villere – Treasurer
Robert Harderwijk – Assistant Treasurer



The Presby Press is always looking for submissions, either on a one-time or ongoing basis. If you have a content idea or would like to provide content, please talk to Janine Hart or send submissions directly to the church email account.

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The Mission of our Newsletter is . . .

- **to inform**
- **to enrich**
- **to recognize service**
- **to build fellowship**

