

The Spire

First Methodist Church of Lake City
To make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.



Celebrating 185 Years !

Volume 51, Issue 117



Looking Forward As We Grow Our Church

During the month of November our church family gathered for three meetings to discuss our church and what the future looks like. We used a program called **Innovation In A Box** as we explored where we are as a church present day and where we envision our church going in the future.

We worked through the 5 “I’s” (Identify, Investigate, Ideation, Impact and Implementation) using exercises like “How Might We...”, the “Reframing Matrix” where we looked at strengths Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, We did a lot of work in “Good, Better, Best” to draw out with “Dotmocracy our top ideas, and we did all this with “Brainstorming” as we encouraged wild ideas went for quantity and built on each other’s ideas.

At the end, we came up with a working vision for our church to move forward. Here is a recap:

We felt to grow our church we need to focus on younger families with youth and children, hiring a younger pastor with children and being able to use our music ministry to blend a little to attract these people.

We talked about being a more welcoming church, expanding our mission and outreach and adding new programs to attract a variety of people.

Thanks to the great response of people at these meetings, we have gathered the voices of our members, voted on ideas and have a good foundation to move forward as we hire a new pastor, church staff and add new programs. We did this as a congregation with everyone having a voice and a vote to have our wants rise to the top.

As we move forward, we will continue to work together to grow our church, our footprint and our faith.



NEWS FROM THE TRUSTEES AND FINANCE

Hurricane Damage Repair

We are writing this on December 18, 2024.

Our more observant and astute members have been reading the bulletin inserts and know that First Church is almost \$20,000 behind our budget going into December.

Finances were difficult everywhere in 2024. The economy was one of the top concerns for the 2024 elections. We all know what the struggle is, and we all know how our individual finances were impacted. The church is no different.

With that in mind we offer this report.

In addressing the property damage the church sustained during the hurricane, the amount of our deductible, meant our insurance was really of no help. (We Thank God the damage was that minimal.) To the best of our ability, the repair and cleanup expenses were kept at a minimum, but even so, they put stress on an already ailing budget.

The debris cleanup from damaged trees (etc) was \$7,050. This was a really special price.

The playground fence repair bill is \$1500. This does not include replacing playground equipment that was destroyed. (We will address that sometime in the future.)

With the wind-splattered debris from the storm adding to the mold and mildew we contracted to have the buildings soft-washed with pressure cleaning. That cost \$5,175. [BTW—this really made the property look great!]

These bills total \$13,725, which is in addition to the \$20,000 we are needing to meet our budget.

All money needed to pay these bills, will come from our meager church reserves—unless individuals would care to donate specifically to underwrite some of these costs, sparing us from having to use reserves.

To date we have received two (2) contributions, that help with roughly 1/3 of the hurricane expenses. If anyone would care to add an extra donation to these two, please mark it “hurricane.”

We greatly appreciate the support and commitment of all our members.



Thank you,

The Trustees and Finance Committees



January Birthdays

- 3 Ginger Haggerty
- 5 Kristin Yancey
- 9 Glenn Wilhite
- 11 Aiden Bailey
- 15 Bill Poplin
- 16 Wyatt Willis
- 17 Elaine Stafford
- 20 Blade Crawford



- 23 Troy Register
- 26 Macy Foreman
- 28 Chris Costello
- 30 Emma Foreman
- Owen Lee



February Birthdays

- 3 Don Hembree
- 7 Staci Johnson
- 9 Helena Powers
- 10 Milly Beggs
- 11 BJ Wheeler
- Beth Willis
- 12 A.H. Stevens



- 15 Sallie Rae Williams
- 16 Justin Johnson
- 17 Norman McRae
- 18 Cooper Willis
- 21 Rusty Bailey
- 23 Brielle Bailey
- 25 Buie Summerlin
- 26 Eva Kirby
- Carson Powers



SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE

If you're looking for a cause that helps children, then this is the one for you. Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a ministry that gives children a safe and comfortable place to lay their heads at night and is for children living in our community.

The beds are delivered complete with a mattress and bedding. If you would like to donate new twin sheets (twin only not twin XL), twin comforters or thick quilts and shams (matching sets would be great) please drop them off in the narthex on Sundays or drop by the office during the week. The office is open Monday-Thursday 10 a.m – 3:00 p.m.

Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated. Please make your checks out to Sleep in Heavenly Peace and add FL-Lake City to the check notes to make it specific for our Lake City Chapter. Checks can be dropped off at our church office or donated on-line at shpbed.org.

The past few months have been busy. We continue to deliver beds and we have been able to hold two sponsored builds!!! On October 26th we built 20 beds thanks to a sponsorship from the Law Office of Chris Costello. Chris was able to bring several members of his office and clients to help us. It was a successful day and our first sponsored bed build. Several weeks later, on November 16th we held Bed Build #14 with Lake City Lowes. We were able to build another 20 beds and we were joined by several of the Lake City Lowes team members!! This brings our beds built in 2024 to 157!!

We continue to get donations, and we were blessed with \$2,500 from the Buck Rogers Foundation. Additional Quilts came in from Lady of the Lake Quilt Guild and other Bed Linen donations!! Thank you!!

We had several memorable deliveries too. We delivered 3 beds to a family who had lost their home from Hurricane Helene. Rick & Ann Fortney and Dave & Kathy Smith delivered the beds and got help from the kids and hugs all around after.

Another delivery, the day before Thanksgiving was to a family with 4 kids who had fled a domestic violence situation. Mom had also recently lost her job. Thanks to the generosity of Steve & Elaine Stafford the family was also given a complete Thanksgiving Day dinner. Contacts were also made with the Christian Service Center and 1st Methodist Xmas Shoe Boxes for some early Christmas presents. Sandra Buck-Camp also donated.

In an upcoming edition of the Lake City Reporter Magazine, The Current, we have been told our SHP Chapter will be featured!!! Look out for it!!!! This is exciting news to get our name out there. Thank you!!

Below is posted a status of beds built, delivered and open applications.

	2023	2024	Total
Beds Built	102	157	259
Beds to be Delivered		4	4
Beds Delivered	58	167	225



We always have a need for more volunteers. We can use help with Media Support, helping to obtain Sponsorship and donations.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to an even greater year of helping our kids!!

Please volunteer and join the team, or join us for a future bed build!!!!







(Pictured left to right: Bob Santos & Sandi Buck-Camp; Norman McRae, Sandi Buck-Camp, Hugh Giebeig, Tim Kirby and home owner Shelly Seymour)



(Pictured left to right: Bob Santos with Lowe's crew at a bed build; Lowe's crew hard at work; Rick Fortney, David and Kathy Smith)



January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1  Happy New Year	2  5:30-7 pm	3	4
5 Communion 11 am worship	6	7	8 First Wednesday Family Meal 5:30 pm	9  5:30-7 pm	10 	11
12 11 am worship	13	14 Men's Fellowship 6 pm	15	16  5:30-7 pm	17	18
19 11 am worship	20 	21 Trustees @ 6pm Finance 7 pm	22	23 Grief Share 5:30-7 pm Crafting group 5:30 pm	24	25
26 11 am worship	27	28 Administrative Board 6 pm	29	30	31 	

THANK YOU!!

The FMC staff would like to say THANK YOU for the generous Christmas bonuses that we received from our congregation. We certainly do appreciate you and we will continue to work hard at keeping things running smoothly around the church.



Thank you

We wish you all peace, health and happiness in 2025!

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2024

November	3	72	December 1	52
November	10	62	December 8	51
November	17	69	December 15	59
November	24	78	December 22	58
			December 24	178

ARE YOU A CRAFTY PERSON?

We do not have to wait for a new pastor or staff to start implementing some of our new ideas. We are happy to announce the first of many has already started to take shape. We will hold a planning meeting to start our new Church Crafting group on **Thursday, January 23 @ 5:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.**

Martha Rine and Ann Fortney have agreed to chair this new endeavor. Join them for the organizational meeting and help make plans for what this group will look like and how it will operate. All ideas are welcome and needed. ANYONE who has an interest in any kind of crafts are welcome to attend.

We are so excited to take your ideas and help make it a reality to grow our church. Be looking for other "New ideas" to take place in the coming months...

**BABY BOTTLE BOOMERANG**

The Pregnancy Care Center will kick off it's Baby Bottle fundraiser in February.

This organization is designed to assist women in confronting and dealing with the physical, emotional, economic and social problems associated with pregnancy. They provide ultrasounds, resources such as clothes, diapers, baby furniture, etc., as well as counseling.

When the time comes, all you have to do to help with this effort is pick up a baby bottle in the narthex and fill it with loose change.

Watch for more information in your Sunday bulletins.





February



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Madison Youth Ranch 10th Anniversary Celebration
2 Communion Worship 11 am	3	4	5 First Wednesday Family Meal 5:30 pm	6 5:30-7 pm	7	8
9 Worship 11 am	10	11 Men's Fellowship 6 pm	12	13 5:30-7 pm	14 Happy Valentine's Day!	15
16 Worship 11 am	17 HAPPY PRESIDENTS DAY	18 Trustees 6 pm Finance 7 pm	19	20 5:30-7 pm	21	22
23 Worship 11 am	24	25 	26	27 5:30-7 pm	28	

A MESSAGE FROM OUR RESIDING HOPE CHILDREN'S HOME

The following is a highlight of a girl named Lily at Residing Hope: Imagine what it's like for a child to be away from their family, at Christmas? A child who has been removed from an abusive home environment naturally feels very isolated. At this joyous time of year, these children truly miss being able to decorate their tree with family and friends and enjoy all that goes with the holiday season.

Lily is a young teenage girl who had to be removed from her home after experiencing neglect and abuse from her biological family. Her biggest challenge at that time was being able to move away from her self-destructive behavior. She was convinced that her situation was somehow her fault. Her therapist at R.H. created a therapeutic care plan including support of the teaching of her cottage parents and the Legacy Scholars Academy. They helped her understand that she was the victim in all this. With that support she developed positive coping skills. She has made considerable progress. Lily now takes great pride in her ability to care for herself. She is active in the student government at the Academy. She is even mentoring younger girls. Just like Lily, R.H. becomes the loving family these children and youth desperately need.

The children at the Home continue to depend on the generosity of people in general, but mostly churches. Our church is part of the overall support that gives HOPE to the more than 500 children currently in the care of R.H. That support is especially encouraging to the residents during the holiday season. Thank you for making our church one of the bigger givers for its size!! Next year the Special 5th Sunday giving dates are March 30, June 29, August 31 and November 30. On those dates there will be a video story about one of the residents or highlights of the happenings at the Home. Please give as you feel lead. Put R.H. staff and children on your prayer lists.

We are blessed to represent Residing Hope for our church! Thank you for being the givers you are.

Steve and Elaine Stafford

Madison Youth Ranch celebrates their 10th anniversary. Gates open at 10 am, Program and Catered Lunch begins at 11 am and ranch tours are provided until 2 pm.

Please RSVP through the link that will be sent out through email or call the church office for assistance @ 386-752-4488.



GRIEF SHARE

If you are grieving for any reason and need support to help you then please join us for this program led by Pastor Aaron Ankeny. It is open to anyone and everyone in the community.



The program will meet on Thursdays from 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Please call the office if you would like more information @ 386-752-4488.

Thanks to Lorrie Wheeler and Steve Stafford for serving as liturgists in November & December.

Liturgist for January: Chris Costello

Liturgist for February: Gigi Register

**MEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

Gentlemen and male youth of all ages are invited to join us on **Tuesdays, January 10th and February 11th @ 6 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.**

Please watch for more information in your Sunday bulletins or call the church office @ 386-752-4488.

**FIRST WEDNESDAY FAMILY MEAL**

There is a place for you at our table...



January First Wednesday meal will be on **January 8th at 5:30 p.m.**

Dinner will include Fried Chicken, Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Green Beans, Rolls and Dessert.

February First Wednesday meal will be on **February 5th at 5:30 p.m.** Dinner will be a SOUPER BOWL tradition with Soup and Sub Sandwiches.

If you would like to attend, please let us know by filling out the RSVP forms when they appear in the bulletins or call the church office and let us know as this helps with food preparation.

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Aaron Ankeny

Administrative Assistant Lee Gober

Audio Visual: Rusty Bailey, David Smith

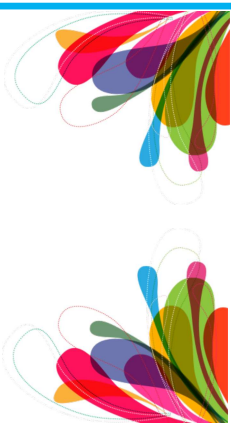
Organist: Position Open

Pianist: Amelia Tompkins

Custodian: Heather Crawford

Grounds Keeper: Austin Reiter

Nursery: Heather Giebeig



Prayer For The New Year

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the year that has passed and the many blessings You have showered us in time.

We beg your pardon in our many failings and trespasses and we pray that the coming year be a more fruitful one.

We earnestly pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit and we call upon our Lord Jesus Christ for His intercessions, His guidance and His light to shine our path.

Read the full prayer @ christianstt.com