



The Covenanter

November 2026



Winter Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Worship Services: 8:15 & 10:30 AM | Sunday School: 9:15 AM

Newsletter Submissions: cindym@winppc.org

Watch us online at <https://www.youtube.com/@audio-visualministryatwppc5595/streams>

400 S. Lakemont Avenue | Winter Park, FL 32792 | 407-647-1467 | www.winppc.org



SUNDAY 1	MONDAY 2	TUESDAY 3	WEDNESDAY 4	THURSDAY 5	FRIDAY 6	SATURDAY 7
COMMUNION Worship Services 8:15am-Chapel 10:30am-Sanctuary Sunday School 9:15-10:15am Children's Church 10:30am CLOC Mtg 11:45am	Tai Chi 11:30am, FH	Scout Troops Mtg 7pm, Rms 202/204 Pack 246 Mtg 7pm, FH	WPPC Handbells 6pm, Rm 102 Chancel Choir 7:15pm, Sanctuary	N&F Restaurant Outing 11:30am at Friendly Confines	Tai Chi 11:30am, FH	
SUNDAY 8	MONDAY 9	TUESDAY 10	WEDNESDAY 11	THURSDAY 12	FRIDAY 13	SATURDAY 14
Worship Services 8:15am-Chapel 10:30am-Sanctuary Sunday School 9:15-10:15am Children's Church 10:30am CE Mtg 11:45am, Rm 303 Personnel Mtg 11:45am, Rm 315 Line Dancing 1:30pm Lee Corbett Memorial Service 1:30 PM, Sanctuary	Tai Chi 11:30am, FH Hannah Circle 6pm, Rm 301	Scout Troops Mtg 7pm, Rms 202/204 Pack 246 Mtg 7pm, FH	PS Board Mtg 10am, Rm 301 WPPC Handbells 6pm, Rm 102 Chancel Choir 7:15pm, Sanctuary 	Budget/Fin Mtg 4pm, Rm 303 Worship Mtg 6pm, Library Compassion Mtg. 7pm, ZOOM	Tai Chi 11:30am, FH KNO 5pm, FH	
SUNDAY 15	MONDAY 16	TUESDAY 17	WEDNESDAY 18	THURSDAY 19	FRIDAY 20	SATURDAY 21
FALL FESTIVAL Worship Services 8:15am-Chapel 10:30am-Sanctuary Sunday School 9:15-10:15am Children's Church 10:30am		Scout Troops Mtg 7pm, Rms 202/204 Pack 246 Mtg 7pm, FH	WPPC Handbells 6pm, Rm 102 Chancel Choir 7:15pm, Sanctuary	N&F Lunch 11:30am, FH Joint Deacon & Session Mtg. 7pm		
SUNDAY 22	MONDAY 23	TUESDAY 24	WEDNESDAY 25	THURSDAY 26	FRIDAY 27	SATURDAY 28
Worship Services 8:15am-Chapel 10:30am-Sanctuary Sunday School 9:15-10:15am Children's Church 10:30am Line Dancing 1:30pm	Tai Chi 11:30am, FH	Scout Troops Mtg 7pm, Rms 202/204 Pack 246 Mtg 7pm, FH	OFFICE CLOSING AT NOON WPPC Handbells 6pm, Rm 102 Chancel Choir 7:15pm, Sanctuary		OFFICE CLOSED	
SUNDAY 29	MONDAY 30					
Worship Services 8:15am-Chapel 10:30am-Sanctuary Sunday School 9:15-10:15am Children's Church 10:30am	Tai Chi 11:30am, FH					

WPPC NEWS

LIVING NATIVITY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

It's that time of year again to begin preparing for The Living Nativity, December 18th. A sign-up poster has been placed in the Narthex. We need many volunteers in lots of ways. What way can you help this year - from cookie baking, guiding people to park, setting up chairs, helping with costumes, to acting out the Christmas story? (There are no speaking parts!!) It's a fun way to work together and it is our gift to the community. If you were an actor last year, please consider filling the same role this year – experience helps, and you can assist with new volunteers. Thank you!!

THANKFUL NOVEMBER

We are blessed by the many volunteers who have served faithfully this year (and in some cases for many years) in giving of their time and talents to the church.

Throughout the month of November we will recognize those who have served in leadership positions or as committee members, those who support the music and worship program of the church, those who support our caring and sharing ministries, and those who volunteer around the church and as part of our outreach to the community.

We will continue the theme of thankfulness in our Wednesday Night study in November and with the special Neighbors & Friends Thanksgiving luncheon on November 19.

We give thanks to those who have made a financial commitment to the church for 2027. Session is extending the Stewardship Campaign into November to give everyone in the family of faith an opportunity to add their pledge to those already received. It is critical this year to have sufficient commitments to fund the budget for the coming year as we search for the next installed pastor.

*Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
(1 Thessalonians 5:18)*

PASTORAL SURVEY RESULTS

The top leadership traits the PNC should be looking for in the next pastor are:

1. Self-motivation
2. Inter-personal engagement
3. Administrative agility
4. Making wise and discerning observations and recommendations

Somewhat less important to the congregation are the ability to lead teams; engage groups; and set ministry goals.

Of least importance are:

Embracing the values, stories and objectives of our Reformed tradition; and creating learning opportunities.

The top areas of responsibility the congregation desires to see in the next pastor are:

1. Preparing and preaching inspirational sermons/planning and leading worship (tie)
3. Administrative leadership
4. Participating in fellowship of the church

There was lesser but roughly equal emphasis put on the new pastor: supporting children and youth ministries; nurturing members spiritual development; and recruiting new members

It is less important to the congregation to have a pastor who: visits the sick and homebound; leads adult education programs; participates in denominational activities; or holds social justice issues before the congregation.

Thank You!

On October 3rd 80 volunteers showed up to pack 10,000 meals for hungry kids. Thank you to No child Hungry, who partnered with WPPC to provide the ingredients and organizational support, and thank you to all the volunteers who showed up to make this a success!



WEDNESDAY STUDY

Join us as we wrap up Wednesday Nights Together for 2026 with a short two-week conversation on Biblical Hospitality.

Nov 4:
What scripture teaches about biblical hospitality.

Nov 11:
Strategic planning session on re-opening the old CE building.

NOV. 4 & 11
5:45 PM

WINTER PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

400 S. Lakemont Ave., Winter Park, FL 32792



Fall

FESTIVAL

MUSIC-FOOD-FUN

SUNDAY, NOV. 15, 2026

10:30 AM - 1:30 PM

WINTER PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH & PRESCHOOL

JOIN US FOR OUR SUNDAY SERVICE, WHERE WE WILL ASK OUR STUDENTS TO SING SONGS THEY HAVE LEARNED IN CHAPEL, AFTERWARDS THERE WILL BE FOOD, LIVE MUSIC, BOUNCE HOUSE, & MORE!



Winter Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IF NOT WANTING TO ATTEND SUNDAY SERVICE-- FOOD, MUSIC, & FUN STARTS AT 11:30 AM



Winter Park
Presbyterian Pre-School
Learning & Growing Together

NEIGHBORS
& FRIENDS

*"Come Ye Thankful People, Come" and join Neighbors and Friends
as we gather to celebrate Thanksgiving!*

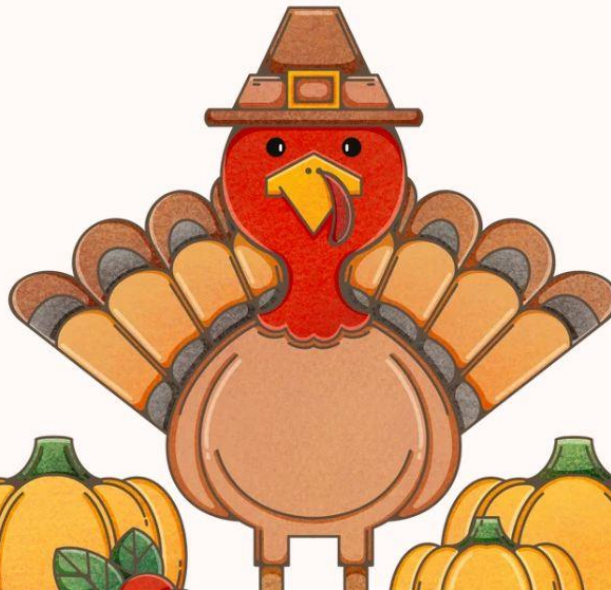
Let's celebrate the blessings we share.

NOVEMBER 19, 2026 | 11:30 AM

We will gather in Fellowship Hall for a holiday feast followed by a time of interactive fellowship. All of us will be enriched by a program of song, table activities and the group game, Left, Right, and Center! Our very own musicians, Sevilla Morse and Lynne McKnight, accompanied by Dave Rae, will lead us in singing Thanksgiving songs. We ask that you bring a small gift in a gift bag for the group game. Gifts must be under \$5 and can be as simple as a candy bar; just use your imagination as the bags will be passed around!

Meals are \$15 and reservations are due by Monday, November 16. Please note that RSVPs are a commitment to pay. If your plans change, let us know by November 16 by calling the church office or texting Paula at 407-782-5621 so we don't have to use church ministry funds to cover empty seats. You are welcome to bring your own meal.

Thanksgiving is a time when we celebrate our many blessings. Plan to come and share in the joy of fellowship that comes from being a part of the Community of Christ! And don't forget to bring a neighbor or friend!





ADVENT BOOKLET

"Home, Love and Joy"

For our Advent booklet this year, we felt it would be fun and inspiring to have as many people as possible participate by writing about things they love about our Church. Our theme is "Home, Love and Joy."

Please write a paragraph, no longer than a half page, about what you have found joyful and rewarding about being part of our Church. We will provide a picture to go with each submission.

Here are a few suggestions to write about:

Sunday services and worshiping in our beautiful sanctuary.
Being a member of our choir/being involved with music in any way.

Serving on a committee.

Helping with Vacation Bible School.

Going on a mission trip.

Teaching Sunday School.

Helping with the Living Nativity.

Helping with the Toy Drive.

Being part of Neighbors and Friends.

Dancing with the line-dancing group.

Baking for special events.

Praying and caring for others.

We would love hearing about both the small things and larger projects you are part of, but please focus on one area in particular that you find especially meaningful. We're looking forward to receiving your contributions and interested in reading about the ways you find joy and meaning in serving our Church.

Please have your submissions in no later than November 20th (the sooner, the better) and send by email to Phyllis Woods at phylliscw@cfl.rr.com.

Thank you!





Hope Community Center TOY DRIVE

Toy Collection: December 6th



HOW TO HELP

No time to shop?
Browse the Amazon wish list by
scanning the QR code.
<https://a.co/jh6ilVv>
Send your order to:
Hope Comm. Center, Christmas Toy Sale
1016 N Park Ave., Apopka, FL 32712



GIFT IDEAS

BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS, HELMETS, TRICYCLES;
DOLLS OF ALL ETHNICITIES; ARTS & CRAFTS KITS; PLAY PRETEND
KITS (MAKEUP, JEWELRY, TOY CONSTRUCTION KITS & MORE);
SPORTS BALLS OF ALL KINDS; TOY CARS/TRUCKS (ESPECIALLY
MEDIUM/LARGE SIZES); EDUCATIONAL GAMES (STEM SCIENCE &
MATH KITS); BOARD GAMES FOR ALL AGES; CHILDREN'S BOOKS
(FICTION, ADVENTURE OR PICTURE BOOKS); HOUSEHOLD ITEMS
(KITCHEN TOWELS, UTENSIL SETS, ETC.); SOCKS, PAJAMAS, &
UNDERWEAR FOR BOYS/GIRLS; INFANT/TODDLER TOYS,
CLOTHING & BLANKETS; BABY DIAPERS (SIZES 1-6)

PLEASE BRING NEW TOYS ONLY.





Blue CHRISTMAS

a service of remembrance and hope

Sunday, December 6

4:00 p.m.

WPPC Chapel

Community Welcome



Winter Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

400 S. Lakemont Avenue, Winter Park, FL 32792 | 407-647-1467



Living Nativity

Friday, December 18

Two Performances

6:30 & 7:15 PM

Live Animals

Refreshments in Fellowship Hall

Candlelit Sanctuary



Winter Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

400 S. LAKEMONT AVENUE, WINTER PARK, FL 32792 | 407-647-1467 | WWW.WINPPC.ORG

Deacons' Den

Debbie Pauzar

1 John 4:8 God is Love. Yet so many people do not understand His Love for mankind.

Understanding the Truth of GRACE is the key to understanding how God defines Love.



John 3:16-17 **"For God so loved the World..."** God demonstrated His amazing love by sending His Son *to save us from our sins.*

In John 8:1-11, Jesus stopped the religious authorities and the angry crowd from stoning an adulterous woman:

"Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."

When **there was no one without sin** to condemn her, He told her to **GO AND SIN NO MORE.**

Psalms 14:3 ... ***there is no one who does good, not even one.***

In other words, *"Perfect, Holy," without sin, like God.*

Luke 24:46-48 Jesus told them, ***"This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."***

Acts 16:31 ***"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."***

MANY verses throughout the Bible reveal how our Holy God feels about sin and Grace. Therefore, since every human being sins, we are all equally in desperate need of God's loving Gift of Grace.

The Gift of Grace was born out of love.

Because of God's infinite love for us, He devised the only plan that would pay the sin debt we owe. *He willingly endured excruciating pain as He watched His Beloved Son fulfill the plan offering redemption through faith and repentance of sin. Jesus willingly, obediently, endured the horrific pain of the cross to pay for our sins because of His immense, infinite love for His Father and for us.*

Yet it's so heartbreaking! Though many people know *about* God, *they do not know Him.*

There are those who completely reject him.

Then there are those, who may even be neighbors or a family member, who are caring, thoughtful and kind, *yet believe they are "good enough" to get into heaven and don't need Christ to pay for their sins.*

And then there are those who *choose to base their beliefs on their own worldly reasoning and understanding. They do not comprehend God's definition of love and the seriousness of sin, so they often distort, change or redefine God's Word. The "god" they believe in is one of their own creation who always agrees with them. And when their beliefs are in conflict with His Word, they rationalize, defend and try to justify their worldly interpretations, while reassuring themselves that they still have grace and eternal life.*

For all who have rejected God's Authority and replaced it with their own reveal a *grievous* misunderstanding of God's Truth, Love and Grace.

Like our Lord and Savior, we care deeply about those who are lost souls. *We do not want them to be eternally separated from the Lord, and from us, if they do not accept the True Gift of Grace for the sin debt they owe.*

So, in LOVE for others, we witness the Truth of God's Love by sharing the Truth of God's Grace.

For God's Authoritative Word is Truth!

What Wonderful Love is this!

MAHJONG TO BOOST MOOD AND BRAIN HEALTH

-Article submitted by Wendy Stafford

An ancient Chinese tile game is making a modern comeback — and it may offer more than entertainment.

Experts say mahjong can help combat loneliness, encourage social connections and keep the brain engaged, while emerging research suggests it may also benefit mood and cognitive health. Mahjong clubs are springing up across the country, with specialty shops selling colorful tiles and offering lessons to newcomers. The game gained renewed attention after appearing in the 2018 film *Crazy Rich Asians*, while its rich cultural history and social appeal continue to attract players.

A 2024 review of 53 studies published in *The Journal of Prevention of Alzheimer's Disease* found that playing mahjong was associated with better cognitive functioning, psychological well-being and fewer depressive symptoms among older adults. Psychologists say much of mahjong's appeal lies in its ability to combine social interaction, mental stimulation and fun. "What makes mahjong powerful is that it doesn't feel like 'mental health care,'" clinical psychologist Jenny Yip told HuffPost. "Mental health isn't just about reducing distress. It's about building connection, structure and engagement into everyday life. People may not seek therapy. However, they'll show up to play." Here are seven ways mahjong may support emotional and cognitive well-being:

- 1. Builds social connections.** Traditionally played by four people, mahjong encourages face-to-face interaction and a sense of community. Regular games provide opportunities to form friendships and maintain social ties, which are important for emotional and physical health, said Dr. Sue Varma, a professor of psychiatry at New York University Grossman School of Medicine.
- 2. Helps combat loneliness.** Weekly games offer a dependable reason to get together, particularly for older adults or people adjusting to retirement and other life changes. Having a regular social activity can help reduce isolation.
- 3. Keeps the brain active.** Remembering tiles, recognizing patterns, planning moves and adjusting strategies challenge attention, memory and problem-solving skills. "Mahjong is a great workout for the brain," Varma said. "It sharpens working memory. You're tracking which tiles have been discarded, what your opponents might be collecting based on what they're picking up and throwing out, and your own evolving hand — all simultaneously. That's working memory in action." These mental challenges may help support cognitive engagement, although more research is needed to determine whether regular play produces lasting improvements in brain function.
- 4. May improve mood.** Observational studies involving middle-aged and older adults have linked playing mahjong and participating in other social activities with fewer depressive symptoms.
- 5. Encourages mindfulness.** Concentrating on the tiles and developing strategies can provide a welcome distraction from everyday worries. "Mahjong is one of the rare activities where people genuinely put their phones down," Varma said. "In an era when our attention is constantly hijacked, that alone has measurable benefits for mood, sleep and focus." Varma says the game may also encourage a state of *flow*, in which players become absorbed in an enjoyable activity and temporarily set aside other concerns.
- 6. Provides routine and confidence.** Lessons and weekly games create structure and give players something to anticipate. Mastering the rules and improving skills can also foster confidence and a sense of accomplishment.
- 7. Offers stress relief through play.** Friendly competition, laughter and shared enjoyment can provide a refreshing break from daily responsibilities. "Mahjong offers a healthy dopamine hit," Varma said. "You get the satisfaction of small wins — i.e., drawing the tile you needed — without the comedown of doomscrolling on your phone for example." There is also preliminary evidence that mahjong may benefit cognitive function in older adults. In one small randomized study, people with mild cognitive impairment who played three times weekly for 12 weeks showed improvements in executive function, which includes planning, attention and decision-making. For people looking for an enjoyable way to stay socially connected and mentally active, mahjong may be worth a try. Its greatest appeal may be that the potential health benefits come from something that doesn't feel like work: having fun with friends



Below Audrey Santiago shares her newsletter from Transitions Orphan Assistance Foundation in Odesa, Ukraine.

November 1, 2026

Dear Friends,

I am often asked how it is in Odesa, and how our folks are holding up. That is a hard question to answer. I always say that it is difficult, and that our folks are doing their best to live and not just survive through this terrible time. That's true, but in reality, that only scratches the surface. I think a better answer to those questions can be found in the words from one of our teammates who lives in the historic center of Odesa with her husband and five children. Mariana heads up our Food Bag Project, and her husband, Maxim, is part of our Pishana Team that goes regularly to the orphanage and to visit vulnerable families in the surrounding villages. Mariana wrote these words last July. Attacks have only become fiercer and more frequent since then.

The last two or three weeks have been extremely difficult. Almost every night there are alarms, rockets, explosions. There are strikes on the city, port, water supply, power grids, and residential buildings.

Yesterday night was very loud again. Very scary. Probably thousands of people were praying. You go out in the morning and see people. In their eyes is fatigue; on their faces, anxiety. Conversations are about only one thing: what will happen in the fall, what will the winter be like, how will we survive the new challenges?

Right now we especially need each other. If you have something to share, share it. Food. Clothes. Care. A kind word. A smile. Because sometimes the smallest expression of love becomes a great support for someone. And sometimes a person doesn't need advice, but instead, the feeling that they are not alone. That someone remembers them. That someone's pain is not indifferent.

Mariana and all of our teammates, orphans, and families already know that we care and that we share. They are so very grateful for everything that we do. I am on a mission this fall and winter to make sure they never have even one moment when they feel alone. And you can help.

Our Christmas Project 2026 is kicking off today, and you are invited to participate in it. You can find all the particulars below:



Ukraine Christmas Project 2026: Warm Hugs to Ukraine

Vulnerable Families in the Odesa Region

(\$55 families; 114 children)

A warm sweatsuit for each child

A food package (groceries, special holiday foods) for each family

Christmas Mini-Camps in the villages (12 camps)

The Pishana Orphanage

Gas to power the generator

Odesa Teammates

Firewood to heat our foster homes and cottages for the winter

Foster Families

(2 families)

Family Holiday Celebration Package (Christmas tree, decorations, gifts, holiday dinner/outing, etc.)

Older Orphans Currently Serving in the Army

Care Packages consisting of socks, gloves, treats, toiletries, etc.

Christmas Card Shower:

You may send Christmas cards with a personal message to each of our soldiers:

Pash, Maxim, Alosha, Danya, Vlad, and Sergie to *Michelle Cossee, 8205 Grand Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64114.*

Michelle will photograph each card and forward it directly to each soldier's cellphone.

**Donations of any amount are gratefully accepted. All donations collected through November and December will go towards this project. If you have questions about specific items, please feel free to contact me for more information.*



I am also pleased to announce that my church, Winter Park Presbyterian Church, in Winter Park, FL, is facilitating a **Celebration of Ukraine** on November 15, 2026. I will be presenting a Minute for Mission at both services, and I will be speaking at the Relationships in Action Sunday School that morning. In addition, please visit my table which will be in the Fellowship Hall after services. We will offer information about Transitions Orphan Assistance Foundation, as well as a mini-market which will feature some special gifts which were handmade by our own Ukrainian families and children. All donations and proceeds from this market will go directly to our programs in Odesa. If you are local, or able to make the trip, I will be happy to see you there.

Thank you for remembering our folks in your prayers, for caring and sharing and letting them know that you understand their pain, and that they are not alone in this struggle. Thank you for helping our folks to meet the challenges that another winter will surely bring.

With gratitude and love,

Audrey

Donation Information

Checks may be written to:

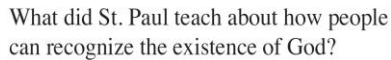
Transitions Orphan Assistance Foundation, Inc.

541 Evening Sky Drive, Oviedo, FL 32765 OR 3530 Diamond Leaf Lane, Oviedo, FL 32765

Online options to donate can be found on our website: www.transitionsoaf.org



Bible Quiz



- Answer: B (Romans 1:19-21)

A small, arched wooden door with a yellow handle and a small window. The door is slightly ajar, revealing a yellow interior. It has a small, arched window with a yellow frame and a yellow handle. The door is set into a grey stone wall.

Thanksgiving is a great opportunity to “count our blessings.” God blesses each of us daily in so many ways. Solve the following math problems. Then write the words on the numbered lines below to complete Ephesians 1:3, NIV.

1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	10	11	12	
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22		
23	24	25	26		

Answer: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."

Matthew 14:15–21 & John 6:1–14
is a Bible story about a special dinner.
Below is a poem about that story.

then / men	rest / quest
true / you	began / ran
late / ate	faces / spaces
lunch / bunch	done / ton

Answers: rest, quest, began, ran, taces, spaces, late, ate, true, you, done, ton, lunch, bunch, then, men

NOVEMBER
Birthdays

11/5
Martha Heine
Edmond Short

11/6
Debbie Pauzar

11/7
Wendy Stafford

11/10
Becky Manuel

11/11
Gay Jung

11/12
Elaine Ellman
Christine Rich

11/13
George Sumrall

11/14
Helen Ammerman

11/20
Martha Campbell
Reta Peterson
Sevilla Morse

11/21
Dail Pribil

DECEMBER
Birthdays

12/3
Sara Woodward

12/5
Beverly Tavel

12/8
Sylvia Reaves
Dawn Sumrall

12/10
Reta Jackson
Robert Walker

12/13
Berta Hall

12/15
Linda Beaty

12/17
Ann McDonald

12/18
Betty Gale Case

12/19
Julie Kent
Holly Small

12/23
Cynthia Nants

12/25
William Darcy
Tasha Lampe

12/26
Julie Rankin

12/27
Judy Mitchell
Clark Ranson

12/28
Howard Evans

12/29
Lil Rea
Ellen Skelton

12/31
Patrick LaRue
Glenn Riccio



Winter Park

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

STAFF

Rev. Melanie Ruta, Interim Pastor
Justin Chase, Director of Music
Penny Walsh, Organist
Sandra Shafer, Pianist
Scott Beck, Director of Handbells
Cindy Mitchum, Executive Assistant
Pattie Lavelle, Bookkeeper
Mark Greenleaf, Property Manager
Jessica Grablewski, Children's Ministry Coordinator
Nicole Fye, Director of Preschool Programs
Rosaura Velazques, Assistant Director of Preschool Programs
Katie Daniels, Preschool Administrative Assistant

SESSION

2026

Syd Davis
Betty Johnson
Shaheed Mohammed
Nelson Roe

2027

Maria Garton
Lil Rea
Phyllis Woods

2028

Rusty Baldwin
Steve House
Jayne Leach
Ron Thompson

DIACONATE

2026

Meg Baldwin
Ernestine Beattie
Debby Roberts
Jeanne Vinci

2027

Marilyn Bryant
Cynthia Nants
Robert Nevill
Paula Smathers

2028

Sue Howard
Lynne McKnight
Debbie Pauzar
Frances Swope

MISSIONARIES

Mark Hare & Jenny Bent, Costa Rico
Dr. Dan & Elizabeth Turk, Madagascar