



# The Banner

First Presbyterian Church  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

March 2023

## Inside this issue:

- Pastor's note **2**
- Spotlight **3**
- Children & youth **4**
- Second "Roots of America" talk; FPCOR Food Pantry at Roane State **5**
- Slavery and racism in Presbyterian history **6**
- PC(USA) has historically faced divisive issues **7**
- Last but not least **8**
- Calendar **9**

Sharon will lead "Who Are We Presbyterians?", an occasional class on Presbyterians in general and First Presbyterian Church in particular, following worship on Mar. 12 and 19 and Apr. 2. All are invited, especially folks new to FPCOR.

## Office relocation project begins

We recently "broke ground" (figuratively speaking) on the project to relocate the First Presbyterian Church offices from the Activities building to the Sanctuary building. The move will make the offices—and our staff—more visible and accessible to church members and the community.

The main church office will return to its original place when the Sanctuary building was constructed—in the rooms to the right of the organ in the chancel. The area will receive, among other things, a new ceiling, new lighting, new floor covering, new door, updated electrical and HVAC capabilities, and fresh paint. As you'll see in the picture below, an opening between the front and back rooms will allow more natural light to

permeate the area and enhance the office atmosphere in general.

Once this area is completed, work will begin to convert the current music library/storage area (across from the choir room) into the pastor's study. Similar upgrades as those mentioned above will be made to this space.

The next step will involve removing the pews from the right transept (the area of the sanctuary between the new office and room 6) and turning that space into a welcoming/common area for those who visit the office during the week, as well as a gathering place on Sunday mornings. The left transept (between the pastor's study and choir room) will be transformed into a similar configuration.

The plan also calls for room 6 to be freshened up with new paint after it receives its own HVAC system, so that the room can be heated and cooled separately from the entire sanctuary.

The relocation project will not impede or interfere with worship services on Sunday mornings. For now, while the work is underway, everyone is asked to steer clear of the construction area.

Our thanks to Joe Everitt, who is serving as our general contractor for this project. In doing so, Joe has reduced the cost to less than half of the \$200,000 quote we received from a construction group.

The work is expected to be completed this summer.

## World Water Day

Mar. 22 is World Water Day. It's a good time to be reminded of the two billion people worldwide who don't have reliable access to safe, clean water. It's hard to imagine our daily life without access to abundant clean water at the touch of a faucet. But that's reality for far too many of our siblings in the underdeveloped world. We can help. One way is to donate to our special offering on Mar. 19 to support the ongoing efforts of Living Waters for the World. Simply put LWW on the memo line of your donation or use the QR code (see last page) to contribute online. All God's children deserve clean water.

—Roger Ryburn and Sherrie Fairchild-Keyes, co-chairs, Social Concerns Committee



Dan Blandford and Joe Everitt take a pause from renovation work.

# The Banner

## From your pastor



Sharon Youngs, pastor

For the first time in three years, the CREDO program is “full steam ahead” with in-person conferences and faculty development. Because my involvement with CREDO is part of my annual terms of call as pastor of First Presbyterian Church, I like to occasionally share what the program is and why I am involved.

CREDO (“craydo”) is a clergy wellness program of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The program had its inception in the Episcopal Church in the early 2000s. We Presbyterians licensed it from them in 2006.

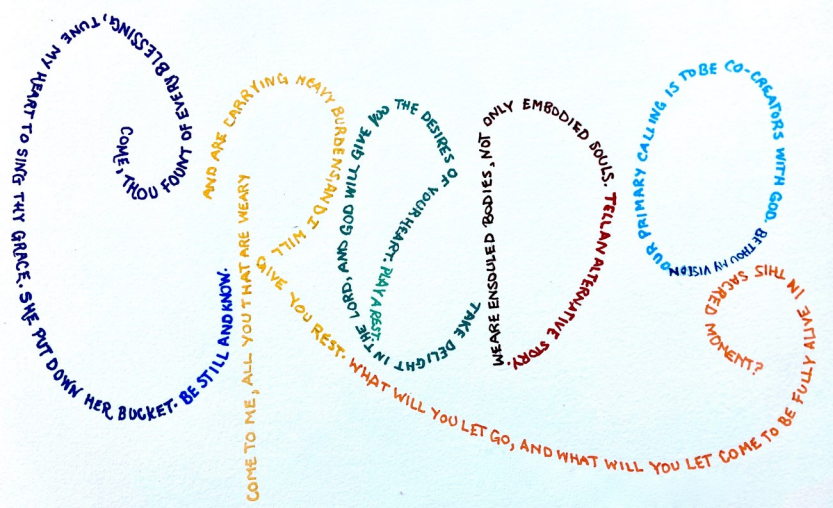
In Latin, CREDO can be translated, “I believe.” Its deeper meaning is “I give my heart.” The program is designed to help PC(USA) pastors plumb the depths of mind, heart, and spirit as they cultivate their spiritual, vocational, health, and financial well-being. By the end of a seven-day conference, the vast majority of participants have rediscovered a sense of the initial passion that led them to ministry.

I was a CREDO participant in 2006 and began serving on one of three PC(USA) CREDO faculty teams in 2007. I became a leader of one of now six faculty teams in 2014. My involvement with CREDO nurtured my own sense of call and readiness to return to parish ministry, even when I wasn’t aware of it. I continue to be involved because I am convinced it is making a difference in the PC(USA) when it comes to clergy wellness and retention.

Team Youngs will lead two CREDO conferences this year: March 20-27 (Little Rock, Ark.) and Oct. 9-16 (Hunt, Tex.). In addition, a conference leader gathering is scheduled for the last part of May, and an all-faculty convocation will be sometime this summer—both in Philadelphia.

I remain deeply grateful for your generosity in allowing me the time away to participate in this program. I learn something new at each conference—about the church, about ministry, and about myself. I also have the opportunity to deepen old friendships and kindle new ones. In the end, I am a better pastor for it. Thanks be to God!

With a grateful heart,  
Sharon



**FPCOR's Welcome Table**  
**Thursday, Mar. 9,**  
**5:00 to 6:00 p.m.**  
 The Welcome Table, our monthly community meal ministry, will be a sit-down meal in the fellowship hall on Mar. 9, 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. All are invited to come and eat. Groceries will also be available.

If you would like to help, tasks include setting up, cooking, serving meals, and cleaning up. Please let Sharon know if you're interested:  
[fpcpastor@live.com](mailto:fpcpastor@live.com) or 771-7178.



## Worship Committee: Bringing worship to you every week

Do you love our weekly worship service? Do you want to help determine what services we offer and when? Do you want to be “in the know” about when we will have special services and why? Are electronics your “thing?”

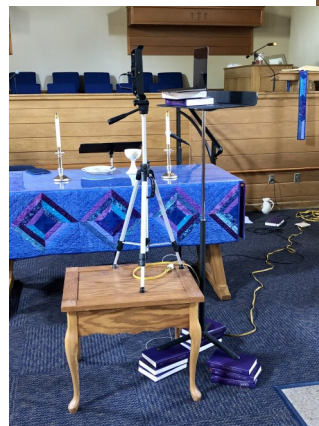
Then membership in the Worship Committee might be a good fit for you!

At our monthly meeting, we schedule any needed sanctuary changes, including removing or changing banners and paraments. Every Sunday, the Worship Committee ensures that the candles have oil, the flowers are fresh, and the hymns are amazing.

We schedule liturgists, music, ushers, and other worship volunteers, including arranging who will help serve Communion. We also manage the weekly A/V team that offers services online, both through the YouTube and Facebook formats.

The committee gathers the first Sunday of every month after the worship service as part of the Church Life and Witness Team meeting in the fellowship hall. During these meetings, our committee interacts with and hears from members of the Christian Education, Congregational Care & Welcome, and Social Concerns committees.

Even if you don't have time to serve on our committee, please consider volunteering for any of our wonderful opportunities to help make our worship services the best they can be. We have a job, and you can do it!— *Elaine Wilson and Camille Graves (co-chairs), Robin Graham, Judy Greeson, Herb Krause, Mary Mullins, Barbara Reeve, and Susan Sharp (Sharon Youngs, Anna Thomas, Devin Earhart—ex officio)*



Remembering our first setup for worship on Mar. 15, 2020. How far we have come from “MacGyver” Presbyterian Church!

## Children and youth events

### Confirmation Class passes halfway mark

This year's Confirmation Class, taught by Sharon and designed for eighth graders and above, has been meeting weekly since early January. The class has delved into the subjects of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, the church, and worship. Yet to come is a look at prayer and the Sacraments. The students also took a leadership role in the Ash Wednesday worship service.

Ann Frome and Mimi Tilley are serving as mentors for the participants. As such, they are walking alongside them, offering support and sharing some of their own faith journey.

On Apr. 5, the class is scheduled to meet with the Session to share their statements of faith and be approved for baptism (where applicable) and church membership, if they feel called to join. Those who become church members will be recognized on Easter Sunday, Apr. 9.



The youth group met the first Sunday of February for service projects. We wrote Valentine messages to homebound church members and decorated heart cookies for the Welcome Table community meal.

### Youth activities this month

**Sunday, Mar. 5:** Board games night in the fellowship hall



Three high school-aged youth attended the Presbytery of East Tennessee high school retreat at Camp Holston. This included a day of snowboarding at Sugar Mountain and a night of "glow trivia" in the main camp lodge.

### Hunger Fund offering

A Hunger Fund offering will be received during worship on Mar. 12. Your gifts allow Aid to Distressed Families of Appalachian Counties (ADFAC) to provide food vouchers for its clients, as well as help support the Second Harvest food distribution center and other local food bank ministries. Your contributions also fund FPCOR's Welcome Table community meal ministry. Please make checks payable to FPCOR with "Hunger Fund" on the memo line or use the QR code (see last page) to contribute online. Thank you!

—Roger Ryburn and Sherrie Fairchild-Keyes, co-chairs, Social Concerns Committee



The guys from the Morgan County Residential Recovery Court enjoyed the Super Bowl feast that FPCOR provided along with Wartburg Union Baptist Church. They began gathering well before the game began (and had a few pre-feast nibbles before the kitchen crew announced the meal was ready). At any time during the game, fans for both teams cheered and celebrated. The guys' faces reflected awe at all the food and joy for an evening of blessings.—Cathy Goodman, MCRRC Ministry Team



## Second “Roots of America” talk on Cherokee names and history

The proposal approved by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Tribal Council to restore the name of Clingmans Dome to the mountain’s original name of KuWoHi (the Cherokee word for “mulberry”) is one of the topics of the second free talk in the “Roots of America” cultural exploration series. The four talks are designed to educate the Oak Ridge area public about the achievements and challenges of various ethnic groups that have made America strong.

Besides the reasons for seeking a name restoration, other topics will include a

narrative on Cherokee history and culture by Lavita Hill and a presentation on modern-day Cherokee life and the work of the tribal government of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) by its leader, Chief Richard Sneed.

Hill, an enrolled member of the EBCI and treasury specialist for its tribal government, will speak on “Cherokee Names in the 21st Century” at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Mar. 9, at the Pollard Technology Conference Center of Oak Ridge Associated Universities, 210 Badger Ave. Her talk will

be preceded at 5:00 p.m. by a reception with food and drinks.

Clingmans Dome, the tallest peak in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, was named in 1859 after North Carolina senator and Confederate brigadier general Thomas Lanier Clingman.

“For well over 99% of the time that human beings have occupied these lands, people have called the mountain KuWoHi, not Clingmans Dome,” Hill said.



Chief Richard Sneed



Lavita Hill

## FPCOR Food Pantry at local Roane State campus: Off to a fast start

Roane State Community College students are lining up in the hallway in unprecedented numbers waiting for the First Presbyterian Church team to unlock the door for them to shop for groceries on the Oak Ridge campus.

Gas and grocery prices are high, making it difficult for community college students who have reduced their working hours to have more time to take classes and study.

“An increasing number of students are always hungry now,” said Sue Byrne, FPC member and pantry volunteer.

The FPC team took decisive action to ensure there would be plenty of food to meet the students’ growing needs. In the past, David Mullins would pick up one truck load of food a month from the Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee, located in Maryville, and drive the truck to the local Roane State food pantry. On Feb. 8, David asked volunteer Roger Ryburn to pick up and drive a second full truckload of Second Harvest food to the pantry. Other FPC volunteers and Roane State staff met the trucks and worked together to unload and shelve 1600 pounds of high-quality food.

Would you like to tour the food pantry and see what’s going on at Roane State? Any of our team members will be pleased to meet with you so you can learn more about this church ministry.

From the entire team, and the students we serve, please accept our heartfelt thanks for your generous support of the First Presbyterian Church Food Pantry at Roane State.—David Mullins (chair), Roger Ryburn, Sally Moyers, Jeri Duke, Linda Driver, Chris Iverson, Peter Bancroft, and Sue Byrne



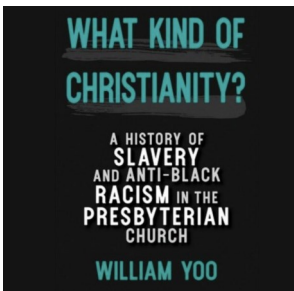
FPCOR volunteers Roger Ryburn and Linda Driver in front of the pantry’s new freezer now packed with high-quality protein sources: beef, chicken, and pork.



Mariella Akers of Roane State and Sue Byrne show off plentiful selections of cheese and milk, as well as fresh produce. Nearby are six eight-foot shelf units loaded with canned goods for the students.



Leslie Scanlon's photo at the end of each of her Presbyterian Outlook articles.



Cover of William Yoo's book

## Slavery and racism in Presbyterian history

In the 19th century, many Presbyterians refused to denounce slavery, were slaveholders, and generally were not abolitionists. Those were major conclusions in a 2021 book by William Yoo, entitled *What Kind of Christianity? A History of Slavery and Anti-Black Racism in the Presbyterian Church*, published by Westminster John Knox Press.” Yoo, a Korean American, is director of the Master of Divinity Program and an assistant professor of American religious and cultural history at Columbia Theological Seminary.

Last year, Yoo made a presentation to the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) Board on this ugly history, and his talk was covered in a Sept. 29, 2022, article by Leslie Scanlon, who was the national reporter for the *Presbyterian Outlook* magazine from 2000 to the end of 2022. In February she chatted over Zoom from her home in Louisville, Ky., with members of FPC’s “Let’s Talk about It” class. Many in the class read her article on “The long history of slavery and racism in the Presbyterian

church” (link below), and a few read the first chapter of Yoo’s book (link to it provided in Leslie’s article). They discussed the article with her.

Leslie wrote: “The history of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is deeply entwined with the violence and inhumanity of slavery – and with a history of anti-Black racism that allowed White Presbyterians to offer a theological rationale for the degradation and abuse they perpetuated.”

Her article and Yoo’s book provide the example of Elizabeth Keckley, a formerly enslaved Black woman with a successful career as an artisan, including a stint working in the White House as a seamstress for First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln. Keckley recounted in writings by Frederick Douglass how she had been whipped, raped, and impregnated by white Presbyterian enslavers.

Leslie concluded the article this way: “Michelle Hwang, who with Shannan Vance-Ocampo serves as co-chair of the PMA board, said ministers today need to stop

being silent about racism in their communities and congregations. ‘So many of my colleagues in parish ministry are afraid to speak the truth,’ afraid of losing their jobs, Hwang said. When she has done so, ‘I have had so much pushback’ from congregants who aren’t comfortable taking a stand for social justice. ‘Are we going to live the gospel,’ Hwang asked – or stay with what’s ‘comfortable and safe?’

“But silence brings its own cost, said Shavon Starling-Louis, co-moderator with Ruth Santana-Grace of the 2022 General Assembly. ‘Our children are watching us. What we’re not saying is as important as what we are saying.’”

Leslie told the class that a new initiative of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to repair the damage done by structural racism and white supremacy within the church has been the establishment of PMA’s Center for Repair of Historical Harms.

—Carolyn Krause



Leslie Scanlon's screenshot of William Yoo making a presentation on his book to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

Read “The long history of slavery and racism in the Presbyterian church,” Presbyterian Outlook, Sept. 22, 2022, article by Leslie Scanlon: <https://pres-outlook.org/2022/09/the-long-history-of-slavery-and-racism-in-the-presbyterian-church/>

## PC(USA) has historically faced divisive issues

Over the centuries, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has grappled with many controversial, divisive issues. FPCOR's "Let's Talk about It" class learned more about four issues by reading the articles of and engaging in a virtual discussion with Leslie Scanlon, former national reporter for the *Presbyterian Outlook*.

In her Sept. 22, 2022, article about William Yoo's new book, *What Kind of Christianity? A History of Slavery and Anti-Black Racism in the Presbyterian Church*, Leslie presented this summary: "Division of the Presbyterian church over slavery was what people should be most sad about — that it was the greatest price paid. Too often, White Presbyterians grieve the ways that slavery split the church—'the broken bonds of fellowship and denominational divisions,' Yoo wrote—more so than the agony that Black people endured, at the time and in the bodies and memories of Black people today. In reality, the greatest tragedy from this period of history was not church schism but 'the perpetration of atrocities ... upon millions

and millions of Black Americans,' Yoo told the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board."

Leslie told the class about the overture approved by the 225th General Assembly (2022) of the PC(USA) "declaring that the PC(USA) recognizes that the laws, policies, and practices of the Israeli government regarding the Palestinian people 'fulfill the international legal definition of apartheid.'"

"The relationship between the Presbyterian Church and the Jewish community has been troubled for quite some time," she said. "This past Assembly meeting did not make it any better. Some have criticized the Presbyterian stance toward Israel as being anti-Semitic, saying that to use the language of apartheid hurts interfaith relations. But others say that the Assembly spoke honestly and courageously in supporting human rights for Palestinians."

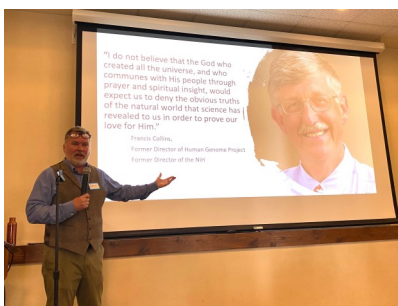
The GA decision in 2022 to divest from five fossil fuel companies judged by the Mission Responsibility through Investment Committee to not be doing enough to slow the pace of

global warming was considered divisive. According to Leslie, "The assembly made a point to explicitly state that working in the fossil fuel industry is a necessity for many people and to ensure Presbyterians that divestment is not a condemnation or judgment of their choice of employment."

The 226th General Assembly (2024) will likely be presented with a recommendation to discontinue investing in companies that make or sell guns and ammunition, such as Walmart, Dick's Sporting Goods, and Kroger. A total ban on investing in gun manufacturers could be controversial because so many Presbyterians use guns for hunting, Leslie wrote in an Oct. 21, 2022, article. Mass shootings are drawing the attention of faith-based groups, and PC(USA) has the nation's first gun violence prevention minister (Deanna Hollas), who told Leslie that "the places where we see the most gun deaths are in the home."

—Carolyn Krause

"The PC(USA)'s socially responsible investing policy already prohibits the denomination from investing in 'assault-type' automatic and semi-automatic weapons."—Leslie Scanlon, "Should the Presbyterian Church invest in companies that make or sell guns?" *Presbyterian Outlook*, Oct. 21, 2022. <https://pres-outlook.org/2022/10/should-the-presbyterian-church-invest-in-companies-that-make-or-sell-guns/>



Drew Crain, professor of biology at Maryville College, presented "Science and Christianity: Past, Present, and Future" at FPCOR on Feb. 19 as part of the Science and Theology lecture series—a joint effort of FPCOR and First United Methodist Church. Thanks to Carolyn Krause's leadership and others who pitched in, the lecture was a huge success.



Last but not least...



### Weekly gatherings

**Sundays:**

9:00 a.m. Early Birds;  
Rise 'n' Shine;  
Let's Talk About It

**Mondays:**

Noon Men's Zoom lunch

**Wednesdays:**

5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class  
6:30 p.m. Choir rehearsal



### Monthly gatherings

- **Piece for Peace Sisters**, first Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m., room 102, Activities building
- **Brewing Questions**, first Thursdays, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom
- **Conversation on Loss**, fourth Sundays, 1:00 p.m., parlor, Sanctuary building
- **Coffee Chat**, fourth Mondays, 9:30 a.m., room 6 and via Zoom
- **Uncensored**, last Saturdays, 9:00 a.m., room 102 kitchen, Activities building

*(See weekly emails or call the church office for Zoom links and details.)*

### Session notes

At its February 16 meeting, the Session:

- heard a report from Patty Barlow and Dan Terpstra, FPCOR's commissioners to the quarterly meeting of the Presbytery of East Tennessee on Feb. 11.
- authorized the Property & Maintenance Committee to spend up to \$12,000 + 10% contingency from the Major Maintenance Fund to replace the HVAC unit for the choir room.
- received committee reports, which included the Social Concerns Committee's local benevolence budget for 2023.
- set a called meeting for Apr. 5 to meet with members of the Confirmation Class.
- expressed appreciation to Matt Lindsey for serving as Session clerk pro-tem.

### March birthdays

- 3/3 Ben Terpstra
- 3/10 Herb Krause
- 3/12 Jack Cantrell
- 3/14 Donald Spong
- 3/15 Rosalyn McKeown-Ice
- 3/17 Carolyn Krause
- 3/21 Nanette King
- 3/22 Avery Myers
- 3/22 River Tilley
- 3/22 Hannah Tippet
- 3/25 Gail King
- 3/28 Anna Robinson
- 3/30 Olivia Davis

**Happy birthday!**

### March Anniversaries

- 3/14 Matthew & Jenny Lindsey
- 3/19 Mary & Carl Lyster

**Congratulations!**

### SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

**Let's Talk About It**

- Mar 5: Discussion of Academy award best picture nominee: Elvis
- Mar 12: Jim Antal, author of *Climate Church, Climate Change*
- Mar 19: TBA
- Mar 26: Gary Payton (tentative): Ukraine, One Year Later

**Early Birds**

Beginning a study on women in the Bible on March 12 (in person, parlor, and via zoom)

**Rise 'n' Shine**

Studying 1 Samuel, with coffee and refreshments (in person, room 6). They welcome all who would like to get to know other members of the church, while enjoying discussion and study of the Bible.



# March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1 March</b> 11:30 a.m. Al Anon 5:30 p.m. Confirmation class 6:30 p.m. Choir rehearsal	<b>2</b> 7:00 p.m. Brewing Questions	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 2:00 p.m. Sara Benson Memorial Service
<b>5</b> 9:00 a.m. Sun. school 9:45 a.m. Choir 10:30 a.m. Worship 11:30 a.m. Fellowship 11:30 a.m. Church Life and Witness 5:30 p.m. Youth Group	<b>6</b> 12:00 p.m. Men's Zoom lunch	<b>7</b> 9:30 a.m. Piece for Peace Sisters	<b>8</b> 11:30 a.m. Al Anon 5:30 p.m. Confirmation class 6:30 p.m. Choir rehearsal	<b>9</b> 5:00 p.m. Welcome Table	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 11:00 a.m. Richard Alexander Memorial Service
<b>12</b> 9:00 a.m. Sun. school 9:45 a.m. Choir 10:30 a.m. Worship 11:30 a.m. Fellowship	<b>13</b> 12:00 p.m. Men's Zoom lunch	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 11:30 a.m. Al Anon 6:30 p.m. Choir rehearsal	<b>16</b> 6:30 p.m. Session Meeting	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 9:00 a.m. Community Garden Work Day
<b>19</b> 9:00 a.m. Sun. school 9:45 a.m. Choir 10:30 a.m. Worship 11:30 a.m. Fellowship	<b>20</b> 12:00 p.m. Men's Zoom lunch	<b>21</b> 10:00 a.m. Anna's Book Group	<b>22</b> 11:30 a.m. Al Anon 6:30 p.m. Choir rehearsal	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 9:00 a.m. Uncensored
<b>26</b> 9:00 a.m. Sun. school 9:45 a.m. Choir 10:30 a.m. Worship 11:30 a.m. Fellowship 11:50 a.m. Conversation on Loss	<b>27</b> 9:30 a.m. Coffee Chat 12:00 p.m. Men's Zoom lunch	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 11:30 a.m. Al Anon 6:30 p.m. Choir rehearsal	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	

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# *The Banner*

First Presbyterian Church  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

**March 2023**

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Madison Hinkle & Sharon Youngs



**FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

***Embodying Christ's inclusive love through heart, mind, and service***



give  
today