

First Church Women

July 13, 2026, Minutes

Attendees: Mary Anne Arico, Rose Adams, Shirley Burtnett, Donna Caruso, Carol Gavaletz, Denise Gilman, Libby Goens, Lisa Hightower, Sheryl Muchison, Karen O'Reilly, Linda Wilson. Lisa Vahey, Keriann Vahey Kuzmin, Mackensie (Kenzie) Vahey Dipietrantonio.

The meeting was called to order at 6:29 pm.

Opening prayer by our leader Mary Anne Arico.

Thank you to Denise Gilman and Donna Caruso for providing refreshments.

As refreshments were enjoyed, we went around the room introducing ourselves and welcoming new members: Lisa Vahey and her two daughters Keri and Kensie. The entire Vahey family have been attending First Church since October and did the New Member's class a while ago. They are still working on officially joining FCD with the whole family (children and grandchildren) but with first responders weekends shifts are having coordination difficulties finding a date...

Mary Anne led the group in reciting the FCW mission statement:

"Our Women's ministry exists to promote spiritual growth! We seek to serve the church, our community, and support women and children locally and internationally, as God leads us in love and grace."

Business:

- Sign in sheet passed around.
- FCD Women directory copies distributed to all.
Mary Anne will update and make noted corrections and have available next meeting.
- Last month's minutes were available for anyone who did not receive them by text/email

Financial report:

- June 2026 balance was \$1,046.91
- July 13, 2026, balance was \$1,292.84
 - We have collected \$245.93 in donations
 - To make donations to First Church Deland Women's group
 - Can make donations either in the collection plate or on-line
 - reference financial code 166 for Women group

Communication:

- Mary Anne will send minutes and information by text and email,
 - There are 2 separate text groups (due to chat number limits)
- Rose shares daily devotional and prayers on one group. If you would like to be included in these daily devotional/prayers, please advise Mary Anne. (2nd group)
- Thank you to Donna Caruso for volunteering to be group secretary

Volunteer Opportunities/Upcoming events. Note: Robed in Love will occur BEFORE next meeting!



7th Annual Robed In Love
Friday, August 7, 2026

8:00 - 9:30am

Wear your cozy robe (over your casual business attire) and join us as we recognize and celebrate those who support us in our mission to Feed the Hungry, House the Homeless, and Prevent Homelessness in our community.



Hollie Hasting would appreciate volunteers to help with doing food preparation on Thursday, August 6th, time to be determined. She also needs volunteers on Friday morning to help prepared for this event around 7:00am



8th Annual Empty Bowls
Wednesday, November 4, 2026

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

DeLand High School Cafeteria
800 N. Hill Ave. DeLand

Points of Discussion of Empty Bowls:

- Help fight hunger and join us for family friendly event
- Enjoy delicious soups generously donated by local restaurants and gather with friends and family for a great cause.
- Each ticket (*price last year was \$35.00?*) includes:
 - A handcrafted souvenir bowl
 - Soup, bread and water/tea
 - A raffle ticket for exciting prizes
 - *Bring non-perishable food donations and get extra raffle ticket.
- All proceeds support mission to Feed the Hungry, House the Homeless and Prevent Homelessness in our community

September Lunch Bunch

- 9-3-26 (first Thursday of the month)
- Speaker will be Lisa Hightower's daughter topic: How Seniors can use AI (artificial intelligence)
- 15-20 minutes question and answer
- Must sign up online, write-in on Connect card or call Church Office (donation:)

Fall Festival

- Date: 10/24/2026
- Volunteers will be greatly needed and appreciated
- Donations
- Bake Goods

Freedom Elementary School on Blue Lake

- First Church Women supports this supplemental student weekend food program
 - Last year we provided food for 53 students
 - Food is collected, sorted in bags and delivered to school where teachers discreetly distribute to the students in need.
 - Each food bag contains approx. 17 items. i.e. protein, snacks, breakfast and dinner items



Hungry Children's Shopping List

(Need individually packaged items, plastic or small flip top cans. Things that a small child can open by themselves)

BREAKFAST

Cereal variety pack
Instant Oatmeal in plastic bowls
Pop Tarts
Nutri grain bars
Granola bars
Pre-made Carnation instant Breakfast (liquid)

LUNCH

Applesauce individual size cups
Snack size raisin boxes
Snack size raisin boxes
Peanut butter crackers
Cheese crackers with cheese filling
Peanut Butter in small size
Fruit cups individual size cups
Cup of Soup, individual size packets

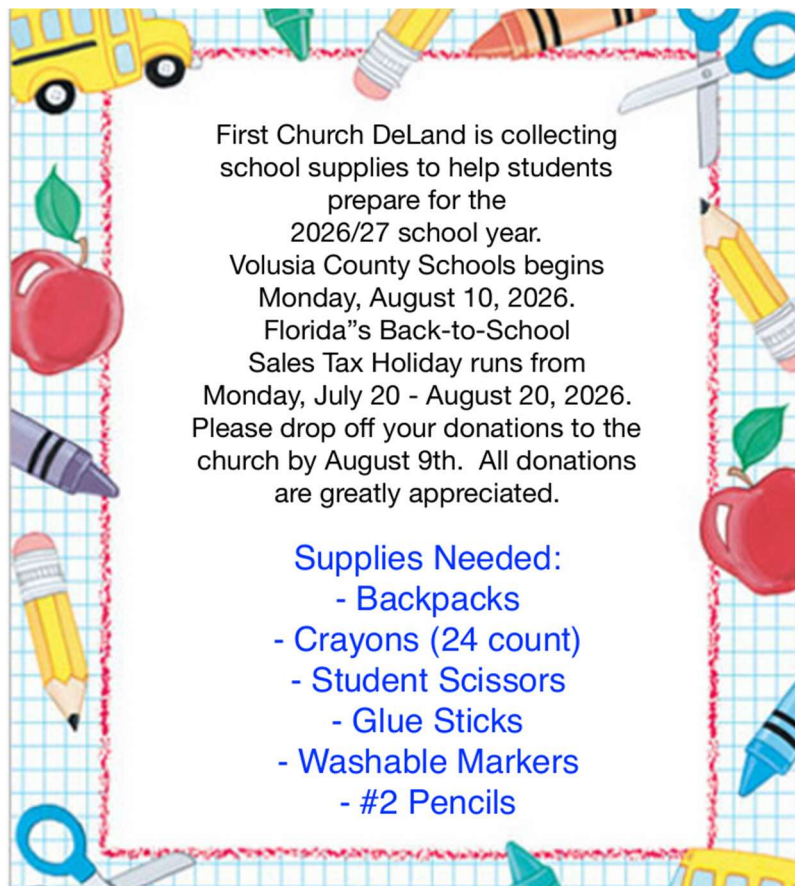
DINNER

Chef Boyardee Variety Cups (Plastic)
Bumblebee chicken salad with crackers
Individual size tuna in pouch or can
Individual size chicken pouch/small can
Chicken salad with crackers
Macaroni and Cheese cups

SNACKS

Microwave popcorn
Goldfish individual packs
Snacks in individual size packages - potato chips, rice krispie squares, fruit packs
Long shelf-life milk in pint size boxes - chocolate or white
100% Juice drinks in small boxes

FCD is collecting items for Backpack Drive



Special topic: Lisa Hightower

FCD Costa Rica Mission Trip

- Lisa shared her experience with the recent Mission team trip to Costa Rica.
 - It is a beautiful place
 - The 'oneness with God and community' was awesome
 - The team experienced a crazy long traveling day upon arrival with heavy rain and traffic delays. Thankfully they were able to regroup for some exploring and R&R at the beach before jumping into 'work'
- The mission work: to help renovate a 3-story building/parsonage that badly needed repairs.
 - They painted, put down new flooring, renovating anything they could.
 - Lisa stressed that anyone who is interested in participating in future missions, but hesitant, advanced skills are not needed. There is always a "job" for you to do. The willingness to help is what is needed most. The experience of community and doing God's work was so worth the effort!
 - The pastor was looking forward to moving into the parsonage and not having to sleep on the floor.

Mercy Hour: 1st and 3rd Saturday each month

- Lisa reported that we have some new Volunteers expressing interest, there is always room for more volunteers.
- We provide services for many homeless and 'in-need' guests who just appreciate having a place to get out of the heat and have a friendly group of people to listen to them.
- We offer showers, haircuts, and a friendly safe place where for sense of community time to relax.

Mid-Summer Church Dinner:

- Shared info for July 22 Wednesday family dinner at 5:30 in LEC; followed by Hymn sing in sanctuary.

Next meeting: Monday, August 10, 2026, at 6:30 pm in LEC parlor

- Hostesses: Hollie Hastings, Kelly Huddleston and Jessica Smotherman

Prayer Concerns and closing prayers:

Teeter Mauldin, passing of Jackie Huston and Sue Watson's husband John, Lois; daughter Jaclyn in California 3 of 15 cysts removed from head and pain from tooth implant, Mary Anne Arico parotid gland infection pain and swelling, prayers for all the teachers and families preparing for back to school. Open prayer petition sharing.

Respectfully submitted: Donna Caruso