

FIRST NEWS



Your Weekly News from
First Presbyterian Church
St. Petersburg

December 11, 2020

WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY

Join us for our 10 AM Worship Service
In-Person and Online
this Sunday, December 13
Third Sunday of Advent

This Sunday's Sermon: "Following God's Dream"
Pastor Dawn Conti

Scripture: [John 1:6-8, 19-28](#), [Psalm 126](#), [Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11](#)

As a reminder, we will begin the organ prelude just before 10 AM, so whether you plan to attend in person or online, please join us a few minutes early! When the organ music starts, please observe respectful quiet as those around you use the time for prayer and preparation for worship.

Watch The Service Online - [HERE](#) -
or Attend In-Person Worship In The Sanctuary

Detailed instructions for watching and attending in-person worship are included below in *First News*.

Please remember in prayer: Carol Abernathy, Ron & Millie Bradley, Bob Burkhardt, Carol Daniel, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Sandra Fay, Teresa Gasper, Ron Hall, John & Dorothy Harte, Larry & Diane Heath, Jim & Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss,



Glenice Kelley, Alisa Keys, Margie Laughlin, Dave & Pam Malone, Nancy McLaughlin, Howard Moser, Eleanor Nicholas, Peter Pav, Richard Pfleider, Janet Poling, Jane Pruitt, Jean Schultz, Judy Smith, Hildegard & Will Sondermann.

Please keep in prayer all those who have been physically, emotionally, and financially affected by the coronavirus, and join us in praying for an end to this situation.

Please pray for our family and friends serving in the military: Marc-Antoni Julia', USN LT; CPT. Taina Specie, USA; 1st LT. Liam Shelton, USA; 1st LT. Mallory Wasik, USMC; CPT. Robert Wilson, USAF. *Please provide us with mailing addresses for our card ministry.*

Thank you for choosing to use your time to give this important gift of prayer to our church family. *The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.* - James 5:16

If you have any additions, deletions, or updates to the weekly prayer concerns, please contact Amy Grossenbacher at amyg@fpc-stpete.org.

Called Congregational (Special) Meeting Sunday, December 13

There will be a called congregational meeting this coming Sunday, December 13, 2020 at 12:30 PM by Zoom conference call. The purpose of the meeting is to elect a Nominating Committee for 2021 and approve a change in Pastor Dawn's terms of call.

Proposed Nominating Committee Members to begin serving upon approval through 12/31/21:

- *Co-moderators:* Rhonda Holifield and Lynn Kiehne
- *PW representative:* Sally Lyle
- *Congregational Representatives:* Sarah Fechter, Marilyn Mulcahy, and Taina (Thai) Specie

Changes in Terms of Call for Pastor Dawn:

This is a reallocation of funds; the cost of the total package remains the same. The recently adopted Presbytery Form F-1 (Compensation and Call Form) now includes the new option to carry vacation and personal time over to the following year. If approved, Pastor Dawn will be able to carry one week of vacation and one week of study leave from the current year to the new year.

All active and affiliate members of the church are requested to register in advance for this meeting [HERE](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting including the link for the Zoom meeting.

All others are welcome to watch the meeting on our YouTube link [HERE](#).

The Many Moods of Christmas Concert To Be Presented Virtually

The Many Moods of Christmas will be a virtual concert this year this Sunday, December 13 at 4:00 PM. As in years past, students from the Pinellas County Center for the Arts will join musicians from First Presbyterian Church to benefit the St. Petersburg Free Clinic. The concert will be posted on the church's [YouTube channel](#).





Drive-Through Live Nativity at FPC

Join us for a FREE event that brings the Christmas story to life. On **Friday, December 18, from 6 - 8 PM**, by driving through the church's front circle driveway, you can journey with Mary and Joseph as they travel to Bethlehem and await the arrival of their son, Jesus.

Bring the entire family and invite your friends to see and understand the true meaning of Christmas at FPC's Drive-Through Live Nativity. A recorded narrative is provided, as well as delicious refreshments.

We need your help! Volunteer to pose as a Biblical character, help with refreshments, build, paint, set up and tear down sets. There is something for everyone in our church to do. Sign up to help by emailing [David Aumack](mailto:David.Aumack@fpc.org) or by calling the Church Office.



Pastor's Christmas Tree Fund Another Way To Help Those In Need

Each year at Christmas, the Mission Committee has collected donations for the *Pastor's Christmas Tree Fund*. Usually lots of cards are hanging from a beautifully decorated tree in the back of the sanctuary with donations included. All the monies collected are used at the pastor's discretion to help those in need, mostly from our congregation. Sometime the need is to pay an electric bill, or groceries, or other expenses that help people survive unexpected hard times.

This year we are asking that you make your donation to the Pastor's Christmas Tree Fund by:

- Mailing a card to the Church
- Dropping it off in the Church Office during regular office hours (or after hours through the front door mail slot)
- Giving online (click [HERE](#)); select Pastor's Assistance Fund
- If you worship in person, you may also leave your donation on the Welcome counter in the back of the sanctuary.

Please be sure to write "Pastor's Christmas Tree Fund" on the memo line to ensure your donation is recorded properly. Thank you.



Support Daystar Life Center Shop For A Child

First Presbyterian Day School is supporting Daystar Life Center and the people they serve through a Christmas Angel Tree. The Angel Tree is near the Fellowship Hall entrance (outside) Mon-Fri, and will be by the front doors of the Sanctuary this Sunday (Dec. 13). Please stop by the tree this week to pick out an angel. This is a wonderful way for our FPC family to contribute to those in need during this holiday season.

Angel Tree Instructions

- Choose an angel with a child's Christmas wish on the back.
- Shop for the child.
- Wrap the gift and place the ID number and child's name on the package for ease in distribution of the gift. If you are going to bless the child with more than one gift, please be sure each gift has the ID number and the child's name for ease in distribution.

- Bring your gift to the Church Office during business hours before Friday, December 18 at noon. Daystar will pick up and distribute the gifts to the families.

For more info about Daystar, click www.facebook.com/daystarlifecenter



Sonshine City Podcast

Take a listen to this week's Sonshine City Podcast [HERE](#) as Pastor Dawn and Pastor Megan introduce and chat about the scripture on which Sunday's sermon is based.

Sonshine City Podcast will appear weekly in *First News* to shine the light of Christ's love into your day.

White Christmases In Maine

To most Floridians, a white Christmas is a beautiful scene on a Christmas card, but to Ken and Dottie Young it is a special and treasured time of the year. Ken and Dottie now live in Florida, but at Christmas time, their thoughts and memories go back to their time in Maine sharing Christmas with their children and their church.



"The Christmas season began in our home with the making of the Advent wreath and family devotions," said Ken. "It was a time for the whole family to gather together and prepare our home for the birth of Christ. The manger would be set up and over the next few weeks our children would slowly place Mary, Joseph, the baby, the animals, and finally the Wise Men, who would arrive at Epiphany."

"On Christmas Eve, we would bundle everyone up in warm clothes and head over to our church chapel for the Christmas Eve Service. I had the honor of serving in that chapel for over 10 years. One of the highlights of the service was the celebration of Jesus' birth by having an ice cream birthday cake for the children to share. Singing carols to the tune of the pump organ and listening to the age-old Christmas story is a wonderful memory for me."

"After the service, friends and family would finish that last sip of hot chocolate, button up their coats, say their farewells and venture out into a true winter wonderland....a white Christmas that only God can make...and if I close my eyes and listen carefully...I can still hear the faint sound of 'Merry Christmas' echoing through the woods."

Submitted by Diane Zuercher



Youth Lock-Out Friday, December 18 from 5 to 11 PM

Youth will be setting up and running our Drive-Through Live Nativity, then we'll have food and games after. Bring your running shoes and a friend!

If you are interested in participating, or know a youth who might be, email [David Aumack](mailto:David.Aumack@fpcstpet.org) or call the Church Office.

Do you have any large print books?

FPC member, John Harte, is in need of some large print books. While the Hartes' dear friend and caregiver, Elaine, knows that

the library offers these, because of COVID restrictions, they would have no way to access and return them. If you have any, or know of a good source, please call Pastor Ruth at 352-278-0757. She will arrange for them to get to John via Elaine.

Thank you and bless you for all the love and care you give to each other through these pandemic days.



Instructions For Watching Our Online Sunday Worship Service

Persons who are at high risk and feel uncomfortable coming back to worship in person are encouraged to take their own risk assessment and stay home if they feel uncomfortable. Those individuals can continue to enjoy our vibrant online worship service.

Click [HERE](#) to watch the service online. This link may also be found on the home page of the church's website (www.fpcstpete.com - "Click Here to Watch Sunday Services") as well as on the church's Facebook page.

Instructions For Attending Our In-Person Worship Service In The Sanctuary

If you attend in person, please remember:

You will need to reserve a spot to attend. There are two ways to register:

(1) **Go online!** An email will be sent to you each Monday morning with a link to click to RSVP for the upcoming Sunday. You will also find a RSVP button on the main page of our website, or you can go directly to fpcstpete.com/rsvpforsunday. Please complete ALL boxes, then click "Submit to RSVP" **OR**

(2) **Call the Church Office** (727-822-2031) Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and noon. You will be asked a series of questions; some will be health-related. All information collected will be kept confidential. No reservations will be accepted after Friday at noon, and voicemail messages are not RSVPs. If you aren't able to RSVP, we are accepting walk-ins on Sunday morning as space is available.

- **Remember: You will be required to wear a mask.** If you forget one, we will have extras available.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in several easy-to-access spots for your safety.
- Please note that the elevator will **NOT** be accessible.
- The sanctuary will have **one entrance and one exit only**. Signs will point you in the right direction.
- For your safety, prior to service, you will check in at the front doors, and be seated by ushers at a safe social distance.
- We ask that you do not congregate in the sanctuary at all after the service. If you wish to stop and visit with friends, make your way out of the sanctuary first and visit outside. We want you to spend as little time inside the sanctuary as possible.

Thank you in advance for your patience with these new procedures. We are excited to meet for in-person worship while maintaining the safest environment possible!

All of us at First Presbyterian are working to stay as connected as possible during this time of social distancing.



- If you need anything – a phone call, a prayer, a friendly conversation, or a few errands run – PLEASE call the Church Office at 727-822-2031! Our staff and volunteers are happy to help during this time.

- Help us stay connected by sending us your pictures and prayer requests!

Pastor Dawn invites you to join us for a time of devotion, discussion, and prayer where we connect online with God and each other as we read and discuss the sermon text that will be preached the following Sunday. All are welcome!



For sign-in information to the Zoom call, please contact the Church Office at 727-822-2031 or click [HERE](#) to join. **PLEASE NOTE:** Zoom is now requiring a password for all meetings. If Zoom prompts you to enter a password, the password for Monday devotionals moving forward will be "prayer."



During this season when we are physically apart, we are especially thankful for the generosity of all of the people who continue to financially contribute to the church.

For your convenience, there are several ways which you can give:

- (1) Give online using a credit card or bank transfer ([click here](#) for the link). For assistance using the online system, please call the Church Office or
- (2) Send a check through the U.S. mail or
- (3) Drop by the Church Office and slip an envelope through the mail slot in the front door.

Thank you for the many ways you support the work of God's church at FPC – St. Petersburg!

FPC Calendar At A Glance

- [Click here](#) to view the full church calendar online. *Groups may not appear on the online church calendar. Please contact the Church Office if you would like to update our online calendar with your meeting.*
- [Click HERE for December Birthdays](#)

Most groups are continuing to meet virtually (online). If you need help navigating the Zoom conference call technology, we will be happy to help you with it so that you can join meetings and/or stay better connected. Please contact the Church Office (727-822-2031) for more information.

- **Sundays, 9 AM,** Faith Journey Sunday School Class. For Zoom sign-in information, contact the Church Office.
- **Sundays, 10 AM,** Worship Service [Online](#) and **In-Person** in the Sanctuary.
- **Sundays, 11:15 AM,** Contemporary Faith Sunday School Class. For Zoom sign-in information, email Lynn Kiehne (lkiehne@gmail.com).
- **Mondays, 10 AM,** Online Devotional with Pastor Dawn. Click [HERE](#) to join. If you are prompted, use "prayer" as a password.
- **Tuesdays, 7 PM,** Weekly Meditation, virtual. For more information, contact Carlen Maddux (cmaddux@maddux.com).
- **Fridays, 7:30 AM,** Men's Bible Study, meeting **in person** in Room S-100.
- **Sunday, December 13 -** Westminster Bible study will not be meeting
- **Sunday, December 13, 12:30 PM,** Called Congregational Meeting via Zoom. See above for registration and sign-in information.
- **Sunday, December 13, 2:00 - 3:30 PM** (new time, today only), GriefShare Support Group. For Zoom sign-in information, contact Petra Garnett

(petra.garnett@gmail.com).

- **Sunday, December 13, 4 PM, Many Moods of Christmas Virtual Concert.** Posted on the church's YouTube channel.
- **Friday, December 18, from 6 - 8 PM, Drive-Through Nativity** in the front circle drive, presented by FPC Youth.
- **Friday, December 18, from 5 - 11 PM, Youth Lock-Out.**
- **Thursday, December 24, two Christmas Eve Worship Services.** The first is online only at 4 PM, and will be geared toward families and children. The second will be a 7 PM candlelight worship service both in person (positivity rate permitting) and online.
- **Thursday, December 24 and Friday, December 25, Church Office Closed.**

Deadline For "First News"

Items for "First News" should be submitted as early as possible with a cut-off for any Friday's "First News" being end of day the Tuesday before publication. Please submit copy which is as concise as possible. Send copy to [Mary Johnson](#) and [Amy Grossenbacher](#).

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A Stephen Ministry Congregation of the PC (USA) - Christ empowering people to care for people.

