

FIRST NEWS



First News, February 16

February 16, 2024

Your **Weekly News** from
First Presbyterian Church
St. Petersburg

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
this Sunday, February 18, 2024
First Sunday in Lent / Mission Sunday

CONNECT SERVICE at 9 AM (Youth Center)
or
SANCTUARY SERVICE at 11 AM (Sanctuary)

Rev. Ginny Ellis
Sermon: "First Covenant: Blessing for All Creation"
Scripture: [Genesis 9:8-17](#), [Mark 1:9-15](#)

Click [HERE](#) to watch the 9 AM service online.
Click [HERE](#) to watch the 11 AM service online.

This link may also be found on the home page of the church's website (www.fpcstpete.com - click the "Watch Live Streams Here" button) as well as on the church's Facebook page. The service is also available for viewing on [our YouTube channel](#) throughout the week.

Feel free to share these links with family and friends!

Click [HERE](#) for the 9 AM worship service bulletin.

Click [HERE](#) for the 11 AM worship service bulletin.

From the Desk of Pastor Ginny

Dear Friends,

We have entered the season of Lent. More than 80 folks came to the church on Wednesday to receive bread and cup for communion and a mark of ashes on their forehead: *from dust we have come, to dust we will go*. This reminds us of a number of things: our mortality, that we are part of the substance of all things, that we are ourselves created by God as all things have been created by God, destined, in the end, to become once again part of all things, the earth and of God's own spirit. Is that depressing? On the contrary for me that is reassuring. I am part of God's creation, which God said was "good, very good."

For Lenten worship, we will be reading scriptures that describe the covenant God established with creation and with God's people. We will read this week about the rainbow, how it is a sign of God's covenant. We will later read about God's covenant with Abraham, and the later New Covenant in Jeremiah. A covenant is a legal promise, a commitment. We will be learning how it was God who established the promises with us, God who is partner with us in covenant. And we will read about Jesus' journey that takes him to the ultimate gift on the cross in Jerusalem.

Meanwhile you may be receiving the daily Lenten devotional readings. I enjoyed the one this morning by Jackson Ringley (New York, NY) that spoke of stories, particularly in the theater, and said: *Jesus understands the value of a good story. His ministry is one of narrative and nurture, and he reminds us that the stories we tell – and why we tell them – matter deeply....Jesus shows us through parables and speeches that stories have the power to change the world.*

Let's get busy on this journey, doing what we can, with Jesus, to change the world.

Blessings,
Ginny Ellis



Please remember in prayer: Millie Bradley, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Sandra Fay, Teresa Gasper, Jane Harris, Margo Hart, Dorothy Harte, Larry & Diane Heath, Carol Hunt, family & friends of Agnes Ingles, Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, Alisa Keys, Taffey Lichter, Dave & Pam Malone, Ginger McCoy, Nancy McLaughlin, Alan Pfeider, Richard Pfeider, Robert Safransky, Henry Shaw, Judy Smith, Jane Snoke, JB Starkey



Joined the Church Triumphant

Agnes Ingles
February 10, 2024

Please pray for our family and friends serving in the military: LT Marc-Antoni Juliá, USN; CPT Taina Specie, USA; CPT Liam Shelton, USA; 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 McCutcheon at amym@fpc-stpete.org.

Lectio/Visio Divina, Mondays at 10 AM

Try a new way of studying the Bible with Lectio/Visio Divina, a guided practice of reading and discussing four different translations of a passage that will be used in the following Sunday's worship. The hourlong Zoom session meets at 10 a.m. on Mondays and includes discussion of art that corresponds to the scripture. Click [HERE](#) to join.

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SNEAKERS & SOX MISSION SUNDAY This Sunday, February 18, 2024 10:00 - 11:00 AM

Lakewood Elementary School has been telling our Mission Committee for a while now that many of its students have a real need for sneakers. So our committee decided to see if we at First Presbyterian are able to do an all-in, can-do effort and donate 160 pairs. **All kids' sizes are needed, boys and girls, from size 5 to 12.**



We're asking for three things from our generous members:

1. Kids' Sneakers
2. Money for Socks

3. To help us box and pack the sneakers during our next Mission Sunday, February 18. We will do this between the two services, from 10-11 AM.

Let's first discuss the boxing and packing. We need as many hands as possible to help us box and pack during our next **Mission Sunday, February 18. Time 10-11am**, the hour between our two services. Our Fellowship Committee has graciously offered to provide light refreshments.

Where? Fellowship Hall.

(P.S. The Mission Committee has learned its lesson: At the previous Mission Sunday we didn't wait for church members to show up while we did much of the work with little left for others to do. From now on, we'll help organize and assist but let you do the work. Scout's honor.)

Now let's talk socks. Rather than ask members to buy socks individually at a higher price, we're asking you to contribute **\$money\$** so the committee can purchase the socks in bulk.



Finally, the sneakers. To make sure our generous members don't all accidentally contribute one size—say, size 5 boys—a board will be at each service with tabs on it that you can pull off. This tab will designate a shoe size and kind (boy or girl) for you to purchase.

Select whatever color you like. And take as many tabs as you like!

What to do with the sneakers? You can bring your sneakers to church prior to February 18. Bins labeled *Lakewood Sneakers* will be available beneath the Giving Tree at each service for you to place them in. If you would like to contribute money for the socks, please place your check in the offering plate, made out to First Presbyterian; Memo line: *Lakewood socks*. Or, you can deposit cash or check made to FPC in an envelope attached to the tab board.

Thanks to each of you for your generous spirit. Let's see if we can reach our goal of 160 kids' sneakers!



If you have any questions or concerns, contact committee member Melody Proud (865.599.6767; melody@livelovespete.org) or Michelle Heinsimer (727.510.2045; michelle.heinsimer@gmail.com). Or you may contact Mission Committee Chair Sandi Averitt (727.424.9300; saveritt@tampabay.rr.com).



Our next "Beach Drive Forum" is next Wednesday, February 21!

Join us on Wednesday, February 21 for:

Standing on the Promises: The Woodson African-American Museum of Florida on the Historic Gas Plant Site by Terri Lipsey Scott, Executive Director of the Carter G. Woodson African-American Museum. Come learn the history of this cultural asset and the exciting plans for the future of the museum, which is named for the founder of Black History Month, Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Mrs. Lipsey Scott is a retired administrator who served in the Office of the St. Petersburg Mayor and City Council.

Also mark your calendars for:

- **MARCH 20:** *The Dynamic History of St. Petersburg's Marine Science Complex* by Peter R. Betzer, PhD, Founding Dean Emeritus of the College of Marine Science at USF. Dr. Betzer will talk to us about what propelled him to create the marine science program, why it was needed then, and why it is important today to have this academic program in our own backyard.
- **APRIL 17:** *From Folk Medicines to Therapeutic Drugs* by Akiko Tanaka PhD, president, and co-founder of The Tampa Bay Research Institute (TBRI). TBRI has spent over 40 years investigating the relationship between viruses, cancers, and the functioning of the immune system. As a result of our research, TBRI has uncovered the details of the healing properties of an ancient folk medicine – an extract of pinecones. Our ongoing studies have now brought forth new synthetic molecules that are being developed into lifesaving immune-altering therapeutics.

Beach Drive Forums are monthly conversations for the community with intriguing speakers on thought-provoking topics. Wednesdays from 5:30-7:30 PM in Fellowship Hall (doors open at 5:30, presentation at 6:00). Refreshments and Q&A included. Open to the public; best parking is the church lot off N. Shore Drive.

SAVE THESE DATES!

The Explorers of First Presbyterian (Fun, Fellowship, and Friends group) are starting the new year with some events for EVERYONE:

- **This Thursday, February 22**, at 5:01 PM for an evening at the Dalí Museum. Discounted admission for adults after 5 PM is \$14.50/person. Enjoy the current exhibit of *Dali & the Impressionists: Monet, Renior, Degas & more!*
- **Sunday, March 17**, at 1:30 PM at the Tampa Bay Automobile Museum which features a unique collection of vintage cars and vehicles that demonstrate special creativity and imagination in their history and engineering.



More details to come! See Dave Hunt on a Sunday morning or contact him any time (513-604-6090, dhunt@fpc-stpete.org).

The Foundation for International Missions (FFIM), which created and operates the Honduras medical clinic that is supported by FPC, would like to invite you to their annual Health for Honduras Fundraiser.



Health for Honduras Fundraiser

Saturday February 24, 2024

6:00 PM

at St. Thomas Episcopal Church
1200 Snell Isle Blvd, St. Petersburg

Tickets are available online at FFIM.org for a \$52.00 per person donation. (\$50.00 per person by check).

Heavy hors d'oeuvres are generously provided by Red Mesa. Wine and beer included.

We hope you can attend, have fun, and learn more about this special Honduras medical mission program!

**AFRO OPERA LLC
PRESENTS**

**A
MESSAGE
FROM THE
ROOTS**

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 24, 2024
6:00 PM**

**WHERE: CATHEDRAL CHURCH
OF SAINT PETER**

**140 4TH STREET NORTH
ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33701**

[HTTPS://WWW.EVENTBRITE.COM/E/A-MESSAGE-FROM-THE-ROOTS-TICKETS-763702403447](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-message-from-the-roots-tickets-763702403447)



**FEATURING:
MAIYA STEVENSON
(OPERA SINGER)**

**TEIA WATSON
(OPERA SINGER)
&
AUSTIN GASKIN
(ACCOMPANIST)**



Concert coming to FPC on March 1 at 8 PM:
The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay
and Guest Speaker from the Florida Holocaust Museum



In collaboration with The Florida Holocaust Museum, [The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay](#) invites you to explore excerpts of Anne Frank's diary in a performance of James Whitbourn's *Annelies*. The program also features the world premiere of a commissioned work by Nico Gutierrez.

Praised by music critics from local media as "one of the country's finest choirs," "an amazing instrument," and a "cultural treasure," The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay has consistently delivered some of the most profoundly moving music performances in the area.

This is a ticketed event. Please purchase your tickets in advance through the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay (click [HERE](#) or call 813-355-9609).



College Scholarships - It's Time to Apply!

We are now accepting applications for college scholarships! These scholarships include the Ohrns Scholarship for undergraduates and the Osborn Scholarship for Theology students. We only require one application is for both Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 semesters (awards are split); the applicant needs to let us know if they only need it for one semester.

For further details about these scholarships (including downloadable application forms and deadlines), [CLICK HERE](#). Please note to apply for either of these scholarships, you will need to include:

1. a completed application form;
2. a copy of your most recent high school or college transcript;
3. a 500-word essay describing your involvement in church-related activities as well as extra-curricular and community involvement activities, why you want this grant, and what you expect to do following the completion of your education.

The Scholarship Committee will review the applications and the Session will approve the final awards. Successful applicants will be asked to provide proof of enrollment and acceptance by their educational institution. Funds for the scholarship will be sent directly to the institution so be sure to give the proper name and address to which the funds are to be sent. Questions? Please call the Church Office (727-822-2031).

All of us at First Presbyterian are working to stay as connected as possible.

Stay
CONNECTED

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



Have you friended us on Facebook or Instagram?

If you haven't, please do so! Also, be sure to SHARE our Facebook and Instagram posts as much as you can! That can help us increase numbers of followers of the church Facebook and Instagram pages. Thank you for helping us be more visible!



We continue to be thankful for the generosity of all who contribute financially to our church, along with the other contributions they bring to our ministry.

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 February Birthdays



Some groups are still meeting 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.

Regularly Scheduled Events:

- Sundays, 8:30 AM-12:30 PM, childcare is available, Room S-203
- Sundays, 9 AM, Connect Worship Service, Youth Center or [Online](#)
- Sundays, 9:45 AM, Faith Journey Sunday School Class, Room S-202
- Sundays, 10 AM, Power Hour Sunday School Class, Youth Center
- Sundays, 10 AM, Young Adults/Parents "Next" Sunday School Class, Room S-100 (new room!)

- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Teens' Sunday School Class, Room S-205 (meets every other week)
- **Sundays, 11 AM**, Sanctuary Worship Service, Sanctuary or [Online](#)
- **Mondays, 10 AM**, Lectio/Visio Divina, via [Zoom](#)
- **Tuesdays, 9 AM**, Ladies' Bible Study, Youth Center
- **Tuesdays, 7 PM**, Christian Meditation, Chapel (meets in-person the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month)
- **Wednesdays, 7 PM**, Praise Band Rehearsal, Youth Center
- **Thursdays, 6 PM**, Bell Choir Rehearsal, Choir Suite
- **Thursdays, 7 PM**, Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Choir Suite
- **Fridays, 8:00 AM**, Men's Bible Study, Room N-123
- **Fridays, 12 PM**, Men's Lunch Bible Study, via Zoom. For more information, contact John Underwood (pjfwon@gmail.com)

Upcoming Events:

- **This Sunday, February 18**, Mission Sunday! Bring kids' shoes and/or help package them up for Lakewood students, 10 AM
- **Wednesday February 21**, Beach Drive Forum, 5:30 PM
- **Thursday, February 22**, Fun evening at the Dalí Museum, 5:01 PM
- **Friday, March 1**, Concert by The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay, 8 PM in the Sanctuary

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 Amy McCutcheon at amym@fpc-stpete.org.

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Church Office Hours: Mon-Thur. 9 AM - 5 PM; closed Fridays

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