

FIRST NEWS



January 26, 2024

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

**JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
this Sunday, January 28, 2024
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

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

**Rev. Ginny Ellis
Sermon: "New Prophets/New Leaders"
Scripture: [Deuteronomy 18:15-22](#), [Mark 1:21-28](#)**

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!

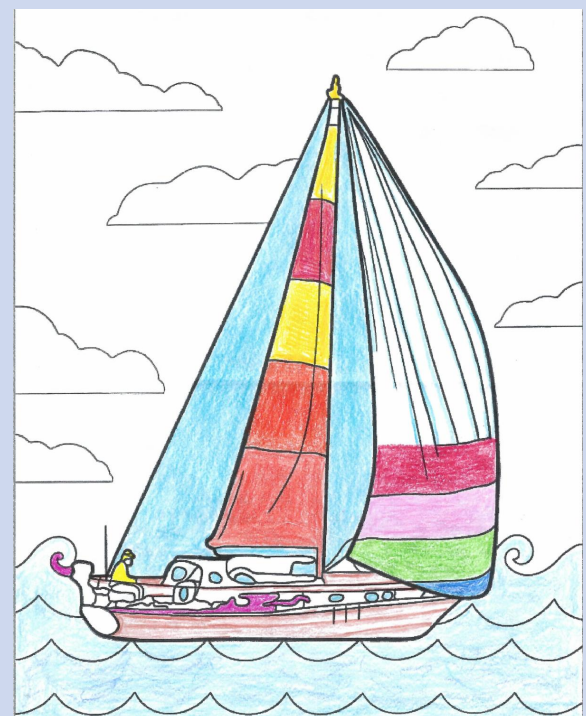
Click [HERE](#) for the 9 AM worship service bulletin.
Click [HERE](#) for the 11 AM worship service bulletin.

From the Desk of Pastor Ginny

Dear Friends,

You might remember that last year we did a study of Joan Gray's book *Sailboat Church*. That book and study have shaped some of our language and understanding of ministry, as we moved away from seeing ministry as the constant work of row-row-rowing a boat. Instead, as Joan Gray suggests, we see ministry as like a sailboat, working in partnership with God, watching for how the Holy Spirit's wind directs and empowers the church's ministry. There is still plenty of work to do (ask any sailor), but it is done in a spirit of prayer. The church is listening for God's directing, knowing the journey may take us someplace new. It may not be what we expected. But it will be the experience of a lifetime!

Last fall, at a visioning event, I handed out some coloring pages that featured sailboats. We posted some of the colored pages in our worship spaces (in the Sanctuary and the Youth Center). Earlier this week, when I took those pictures down, I noticed again that some of these brilliantly colored sailboats had been given names: *Amazing Grace*, *Smooth Sails Ahead*, *On Our Way*, *Homeward Bound*, and *God Speed*. The sailboat names on the sailboat offer some indications of our faith: we hope to be on our way, sailing by grace, with the companionship of God, enjoying both the smooth sails and the challenges of wind and waves. We don't expect ministry to be easy. But we do claim the beauty of the journey, and that, in the end, it brings each of us Home.



That October Sunday afternoon, I had asked the table groups to answer (in about 8 truly short minutes!) this question: WHO ARE WE AS A CHURCH? On the back of one of the pictures I found one group's answer: *seeking to meet needs of church and community by music, by mission, by openness, and prayer*. There were five groups answering that question. They didn't have much time to refine an answer, and only one used the back of a sailboat picture to write out their answer, so this is not an official description of who First Presbyterian Church is. Nevertheless, I like being reminded, as these sailboat pictures and this answer to the question remind me, that First Presbyterian Church knows itself to be people who love both worship and mission, and who lean into openness and prayer. Those are good things, important to a faithful and welcoming church.

I took down the pictures. But I lift up the concept we continue to grow into: **We are a church, sailing in the power of the Holy Spirit, seeking to move in the direction we feel God sending us, knowing that God is traveling with us.**

Thanks be to God! Blessings! And Godspeed.....

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, Agnes Ingles, Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, Alisa Keys, Taffey Lichter, Dave & Pam Malone, Kathie Mayhall, Ginger McCoy, Nancy McLaughlin, Alan Pfeider, Richard Pfeider, family & friends of Helen Rogers, Robert Safransky, Henry Shaw, Jane Snoke, JB Starkey, family & friends of Ken Young

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.



**Join us next Wednesday, January 31, from 5:30-7 PM for
Wednesday Fellowship Dinner & Game Night!**

When: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 5:30 – 7:00PM

Where: Fellowship Hall at Frist Presbyterian Church

What: Potluck Dinner

- Entrée Provided—Bring a Side or Dessert to Share
- Get-to-Know-You Bingo
- Kid's Choir

RSVP: To reserve your spot, click [HERE](#).

**Fun and Fellowship:
Create a beaded bracelet!**
Friday, February 2, 10 to noon
In Room S-100

Come have fun with us! No fee requested!
Limited seating! Reservation **REQUIRED!** Please
call or text Susan Luehrs at 727-866-7965 and
provide name and phone number. 😊



**St. Olaf Choir Concert
at FPC-St. Pete
Saturday, February 3, at 7 PM**

For more than a century, [The St. Olaf Choir](#) has set the gold standard for choral singing, performing for millions

around the world. Composed of 75 mixed voices, the St. Olaf Choir is hailed as one of the nation's premier a cappella ensembles, renowned for its artistry and beauty of sound. The choir, conducted by Anton Armstrong, will perform at First Presbyterian Church in St. Petersburg, Florida on Saturday, February 3 at 7:00 PM during its 2024 National Tour (valet parking will be available).

Tickets are \$40 adults/seniors and \$10 for all students, available online [HERE](#) or by calling 1-800-363-5487. Group discount of 10% available for groups of 10+ available via phone.

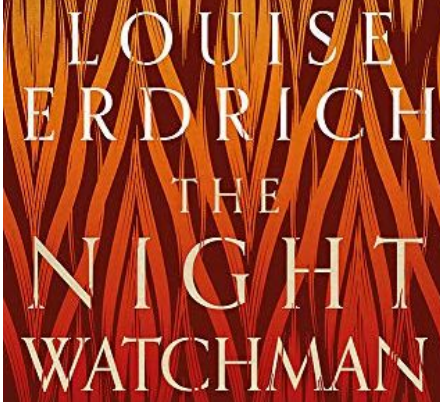
The St. Olaf Choir is internationally renowned for its unique combination of advanced choral singing and the presentation of challenging choral programming with a vast repertoire that includes sacred and secular choral standards, traditional hymns, new compositions, spirituals, and more. To view a quick video about the choir, click the picture above!

**Annual Congregational Meeting
Sunday, February 4**

First Presbyterian Church will hold its ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING ON FEBRUARY 4 at the close of each worship service. Reports from church ministries will be available; the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) will offer its first report. Also the following will be nominated for election:

- To serve on the Pastor Nominating Committee to replace Chris Mossman, who is moving away: Gretchen Letterman.
- To fill Karen Mossman's unexpired term on the Session: Vicki Fox for a two-year term and
- To serve as the 2024 Officer Nominating Committee: Bill Shelton, Joan Karins, Rue Ann Porter, Al May, Kyle Brinkman and Eva Popovich.



The book cover for 'The Night Watchman' by Louise Erdrich features a background of vertical, wavy lines in shades of red, orange, and yellow, resembling a field of tall grass or reeds. The author's name 'LOUISE ERDRICH' is at the top, and the title 'THE NIGHT WATCHMAN' is at the bottom, both in white, all-caps, serif font.

Next Faith & Fiction February 5, 4 PM, Room N-123

Our next read for Faith & Fiction will be *The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich. This award-winning Native American author takes us to North Dakota to tell the tale of the fight against Native dispossession. Joan Karins will lead our discussion.

Ash Wednesday - February 14

Drive-through imposition of ashes and communion in the front circle drive from 1-3 PM.

There will be an Ash Wednesday service in the Chapel at 7 PM.



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).

**Ladies, you are invited to a join us for a Beth Moore Bible Study:
"A Study of Philippians -
The Surpassing Value of Knowing Christ"**

Let's start the new year by doing the Beth Moore &

Melissa Moore 5-week study of Philippians. By the power of the same Holy Spirit who took the gospel to Europe by way of Philippi, let's discover what Paul magnificently called "The Surpassing Value of Knowing Christ."

THE
**SURPASSING
VALUE
OF
KNOWING
CHRIST**

Join us on Tuesday mornings
through February 13
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. in the Youth Center

A STUDY OF PHILIPPIANS

Everyone is welcome – no previous Bible study experience is required. Workbooks will be available for \$15. If interested, please contact April Hussung at (727) 420-1758 or stapler39@aol.com.



Mark your calendars for our "Beach Drive Forum" Spring 2024 line-up!

Beach Drive Forums are monthly conversations for the community with intriguing speakers on thought-provoking topics. On Wednesdays from 6-8 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 parking lot off N. Shore Drive.

- **FEBRUARY 21:** *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.
- **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.
- **APRIL 17:** *From Folk Medicines to Therapeutic Drugs: Research in Progress* by Akiko Tamiko PhD, president, and co-founder of The Tampa Bay Research Institute (TBRI).

SAVE THESE DATES!

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



- Thursday, February 22, at 5:01 PM for an evening at the [Dali Museum](#)
- Sunday, March 17, at 1:30 PM at the [Tampa Bay Automobile Museum](#).

More details to come, or see Dave Hunt (513-604-6090).

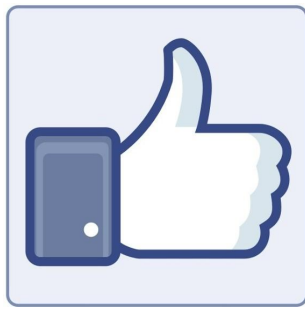
All of us at First Presbyterian are working to stay as connected as possible.



- 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 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:

- **Wednesday, January 31, 5:30 PM, Fellowship Dinner (covered dish), 6:10 PM, Kids' Choir**
- **Friday, February 2, 10 AM, Fun and Fellowship: Create a beaded bracelet! Room S-100**
- **Saturday, February 3, 7 PM, St. Olaf Choir Concert**
- **Sunday, February 4, Congregational Meeting in each worship service**
- **Monday, February 5, 4 PM, Faith & Fiction**
- **Wednesday, February 14, Ash Wednesday**

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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 (727) 822-2031 | www.fpcstpete.com

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

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





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