

# FIRST NEWS



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

**January 7, 2022**

## **WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY**

Join us for our 10 AM ONLINE Worship Service  
this Sunday, January 9, 2022!  
*Baptism of the Lord*

Sunday's Sermon: "Where Do We See and Hear God?"  
Rev. Ginny Ellis

Scriptures: [Exodus 3:1-4](#), [Luke 5:1-11](#)

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

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

This link may also be found on the home page of the church's website  
([www.fpcstpete.com](http://www.fpcstpete.com) - click the "Watch Here" button)  
as well as on the church's Facebook page.

If the 10:00 hour on Sundays does not fit your schedule, the service is available  
for viewing on our YouTube channel throughout the week. Feel free to share  
the link with family and friends!

Please remember in prayer: Millie Bradley, Bob Burkhardt,  
Kevin Clark, Carol Daniel, Peter Eckert, Joan Evans, Julie  
Evans, Sandra Fay, Teresa Gasper, John & Dorothy Harte,



Larry & Diane Heath, Agnes Ingles, Russ Johnson, Iberia Johnston, Kathy Jose, Anne Justiss, Alisa Keys, Jean Kohler, Margie Laughlin, Taffey Lichter, Dave & Pam Malone, Nancy McLaughlin, the Pav family, Alan Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Janet Poling, Jane Pruitt, Ken Robinson, Henry Shaw, Judy Smith, Jane Snoke

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 Juliá, USN LT; CPT Taina Specie, USA; CPT 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 McCutcheon at [amym@fpc-stpete.org](mailto:amym@fpc-stpete.org).



## Congregational Meeting This Sunday, January 9

The Session has called a congregational meeting for the election of Deacons to be held at 1 PM on January 9, 2022 via Zoom. Being nominated for the class of 2024 are the following: Chris Agee, Debbie Factor, and Diane Zuercher.

If you have not already done so, all active and affiliate members of the church are requested to register in advance for this meeting.

**STEP 1:** Register for the meeting by clicking [HERE](#).

**STEP 2:** After you register, please look for a confirmation email (it will come from "FPC Office"). This email will contain information about joining the meeting, including the link to use on Sunday, January 9.

Those who will not be voting but would like to watch the meeting will be able to via YouTube [HERE](#).

## From the Desk of Pastor Ginny

**DISAPPOINTMENTS** – So many of us are disappointed about where we are with COVID-19 as the year 2022 begins. We had come to enjoy being together, worshiping together, singing together, smiling at one another. Even when wearing masks, being together was a deep relief and joy. But as you know, at the end of December, the Session made the tough and prayerful decision to go back to online worship only.



We did this after Christmas Eve because there were some reported positive cases among our own congregation, positive cases that meant a number of church folk may have been exposed. Fortunately, of those tested, most came back negative. But as we have seen, the recent rise in COVID case numbers in Florida has been alarming. This is heartbreaking -- heartbreaking for the church, for the community, and for the world. Those who have been vaccinated and have had boosters are faring well; that is the very good news. The Session and the church staff are hopeful that this Omicron COVID wave will pass by quickly and we will be able to return to in-person worship soon. Meanwhile, I join everyone in expressing my own frustration and disappointment. While the comfort and joy of being together is agonizingly missing, it is critical that we take care of our worshiping and vulnerable congregation.

**EXTRAORDINARY TIME** – My friends, I have been planning a special time of worship and related activity for January and February. I have been calling this “extraordinary time,” a time based on consideration of the Biblical story of Moses and the Burning Bush. I am disappointed that we will not start this time together in the Sanctuary. Nonetheless, please join me in reading and thinking about the story of Moses found in Exodus, especially Exodus 3:1-15.



The Burning Bush dominates our Sanctuary, with the immense and beautiful stained-glass sculpture and the colorful glass beading that runs through the Sanctuary. I want us to think together in the coming weeks about how that story represents our own call to discipleship and our church’s call to mission. Please join me in this Biblical adventure!

For this week, we will be thinking about where we see God, how we recognize the extraordinary in our life, and what might be the burning bush for us, for me, for you, for this church.

ALSO: Pastor Megan and I will begin discussion and meditation time at 10:00 each Monday, called "Lectio Extraordinary," when we can further consider the text and theme of Sunday’s Burning Bush sermon. To join us via Zoom Monday mornings at 10 AM, click [HERE](#). We hope you will join us!

**MISSION** - Now that we have the Church Session back up to strength, we will re-organize ministries, including Mission, which has lacked a chair. In the meantime, for the month of January, I am asking that we support our presbytery’s Beth-El Farmworker Mission in Wimauma, by gathering items that



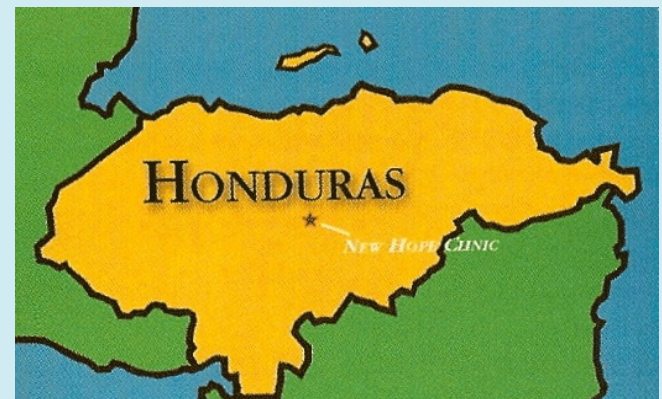
will HELP THEM STAY WARM.

Items they have requested are:

- Headgear (baseball caps, bandanas, straw hats)
- Hooded sweaters (Adults S/M/L, or children's sizes)
- Gently-used or new long-sleeve button shirts for men (S/M/L)
- Gently-used or new pants for men (S/M/L)
- Socks (adult or child)
- Blankets and towels
- Bed sheets (twin/full)

These items can be brought any time during the week to the Church Office, or there will be a labeled box outside the Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary. Let's see what sort of help we can be!

**From Dr. Cesar Davila,  
New Hope Clinic, Honduras  
Monday, December 20, 2021**



Greetings and Blessings,

Hello, brothers and sisters. The pandemic statistics are the following: positive cases, 378,735 and deaths, 10,428 patients. As to the pandemic panorama, it is much better now than it was a year ago. Even as we are alert to the new variant Omicron, we hope that it won't result in a new rise of cases. Actually, there is a confirmed case of the variant Omicron in Costa Rica. I believe that it is a matter of days until we have our first cases in Honduras.

For our part, we are taking all manner of biosecurity measures in the clinic, for whatever rise in pandemic cases. What concerns the staff is the relaxing of health concerns in the population. For example, in the rural areas and in some cities, the people are not utilizing masks and do not wish to get vaccinated. This could result in a new outbreak of this Coronavirus variant.

We are coming to the end of this year 2021 with much sadness for the loss of our friends and family. May the Lord keep them and continue to protect us with His holy cloak.

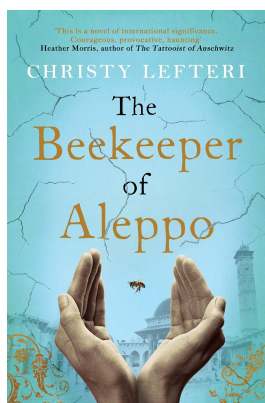
The transition of the new government in Honduras will happen on January 27. The people of Honduras hope that this government will do things differently that will result in the change that returns the hope that builds a new country.

Every day we continue to take care of our patients in the three areas of service we offer to the communities that we service: Medicine, Dental, Laboratory. We are also helping with the campaigns of vaccinations against Covid and organizing clean-up operations in the communities because of the increase in cases of Dengue that is showing up on a national level. In Orca, the number of dengue cases is few, but we are taking measures to avoid an outbreak.

This week we will be in the clinic taking care of patients through December 23



and then begin vacation until January 3, 2022.



## Faith & Fiction

Our next book is *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* by Christy Lefteri. The discussion will be on February 7, 2022, -- hopefully in person, but if not, then via Zoom. Come join us either way!

## The Frog-Naming Contest Continues!

We need to name our frog! The frog comes to worship with us especially during the Moment for All Ages. Everyone can suggest a name! Use your creativity! We have had nine names suggested so far...give us your favorite this week and we'll vote next week!

Meanwhile, keep an eye out for the frog, who turns up all over the place! This week it's in our Kids Korner, looking forward to when our young (and young at heart!) friends can return to the Sanctuary. See where this character turns up next!



**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!

## Pastoral Emergency Number

If you have a pastoral emergency, please call (561) 805-1514.



Online Giving



During this season, 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 January Birthdays



Groups are 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.

- Sundays, 8:30 AM, Faith Journey Sunday School Class, Zoom
- Sundays, 9 AM, Power Hour Sunday School Class, Zoom
- Sundays, 10 AM, [Online](#) Worship Service
- Sundays, 4 PM, GriefShare, Zoom
- Tuesdays, 7 PM, Christian Meditation, meeting virtually. For more information, contact Carlen Maddux ([cmaddux@maddux.com](mailto:cmaddux@maddux.com))
- Fridays, 12 PM, Men's Lunch Bible Study, via Zoom. For more information, contact John Underwood ([pjfwon@gmail.com](mailto:pjfwon@gmail.com))
- Sunday, January 9, 1 PM, Called Congregational Meeting via Zoom

## 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](mailto:amym@fpc-stpete.org).

First Presbyterian Church  
701 Beach Drive NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
(727) 822-2031

[Contact Us](#) | [Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)





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*St. Petersburg, Florida*

