

FIRST NEWS



First News, March 15

March 15, 2024

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

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
this Sunday, March 17, 2024
Fifth Sunday in Lent

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

Rev. Ginny Ellis

Sermon: "Extending the Promise: The New Covenant Emerging"
Scripture: [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#), [John 12:20-28](#)

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,

Last week, I participated in the Leadership in Ministry (LIM) Conference I attend twice each year. As a result of conversations in my LIM coaching group, I am rethinking a key part of my childhood. I have told you that I was the “wild child” in my family, often angry and frustrated. Why was that? It was because I was the second of the five children and I did not get my way as often as I thought appropriate. You might understand how that could be.

The way I have understood those years was that nobody liked me very much (including myself, if I am honest). Nobody, that is, except Grandmother Merrin. My coaching group suggested that there was something in Grandmother and in me that met need each of us had, and that we were good for each other. Infact, the group suggested, Grandmother’s house provided a safe place for me to grow into myself. I always wished she lived nearer; I only got to be with her two or three times each year. I treasured those times.

I tell you this story as a way to say that sometimes we can find ourselves understanding our lives and our faith in new ways, even though nothing about the “facts” has changed. We might see the hopes and needs and even the talents of our lives with new eyes. We might see how God provided resources that we never realized were there for us. In fact, looking back, we might realize that God was actually there all the time, even when we were sad or afraid or lonely.

If that could be true of our past, how much more true it can be of our present and our future, as God shines a light into our hearts, or comes with a new insight or a new gift of love and hope.

This coming Sunday, I will be looking at this idea as we turn to Jeremiah 31:31-34, the New Covenant. We get to look at how God reached out to the people of Israel in new ways, and we can consider how God reaches out to us in new ways too. Loving us, wanting the best for humankind, God has never given up on us, and never will give up on us. That’s the gift of *love*. That’s the gift of *forgiveness*. That’s the gift of *hope*.


We are on this great journey toward Easter, the amazing day of *love, forgiveness, and hope*. The day of *new life*! Watch for it. Be ready for it!

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, Dottie McClure, Nancy McLaughlin, the Moorefield family, Alan Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Jerry Richmond, Robert Safransky, Henry Shaw, Judy Smith, Jane Snoke, JB Starkey



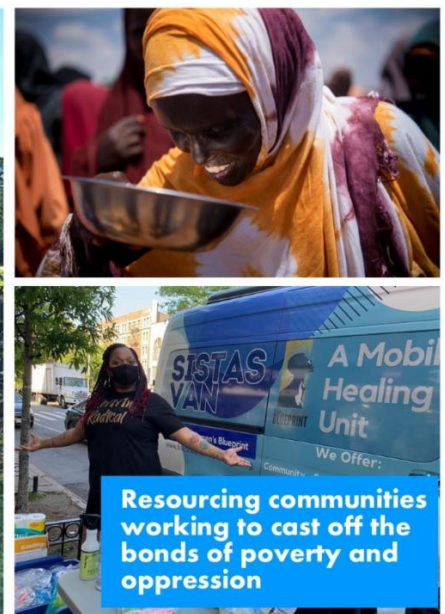
Joined the Church Triumphant
 Edwin B. (Ned) McClure
 March 12, 2024

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.

One Great Hour of Sharing: A great way Presbyterians can share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world!



In a world of disaster, hunger, and oppression, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by **One Great Hour of Sharing** - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope. We will have informational brochures and giving envelopes available in both worship services for the next few weeks, or you can give online anytime [HERE](#).



New Member Inquirer's Class THIS Sunday, March 17, 10 AM, in the Church Office Conference Room

Whether you have been visiting FPC St. Pete for a brief time or for longer, you will want to join us for a new member inquirer's

class. This is your opportunity to learn about what it means to be a Presbyterian, plus hear the answers to all those questions you may have about our church, faith, and what you need to do to become a member. We will meet in the Church Office Conference Room this Sunday, March 17, immediately following the 9 AM worship service, where we will enjoy a great program from Pastor Ginny. Elders will be on-hand should you wish to join the church following the class. This is a great chance to learn about and join downtown's most welcoming church!

Join us this Sunday afternoon!

Join the Explorers of First Presbyterian (Fun, Fellowship, and Friends group) this 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.



TAMPA BAY
AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM

Questions? Want to participate? See Dave Hunt this Sunday morning or contact him any time (513-604-6090, dhunt@fpc-stpete.org).



23rd Annual *Bach Bash*

The Tampa Chapter of the American Guild of Organists (AGO) hosts its 23rd annual Bach Bash in celebration of J. S. Bach's birthday in March.

The concert will take place at 4 PM this Sunday, March 17th, at Hyde Park United Methodist Church (500 W Platt St, Tampa, FL 33606). Six or more AGO members will perform works of J, S. Bach. Our own Jack Rain will perform Bach's "Fantasia and Fugue in A minor." All are welcome to attend this free concert with birthday cake served afterwards.

Easter Egg Collection

This Sunday (March 17) will be the last Sunday we'll have baskets in both worship spaces to collect donations of individually wrapped candy and plastic eggs. The eggs that come already filled are the best (and you can find them at most stores!)



These eggs (and candy!) will be for our Easter Egg Hunt at 10:15 AM on Palm Sunday (March 24) on the front lawn. **All children are invited to participate** in the egg hunt and/or to carry palms into the Sanctuary at the 11:00 service! After the children process, they will sing a song up front and then be taken to the Fellowship Hall for a time of fun and crafts. (Parents can pick up their children in the Fellowship Hall following the service!)

Easter Lilies

Share Easter's beauty by sponsoring a lily to be used as part of our Easter worship service. These traditional symbols of Easter can be given in memory of a loved one or to honor friends and family (\$25 each). To order, contact Amy in the Church Office (727-822-2031 or amym@fpc-stpete.org). You may pick up your lily after the 11 AM Easter Sunday Sanctuary service.



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.



Our next "Beach Drive Forum" will be on Wednesday, March 20!

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 back yard.

Also mark your calendars for:

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 on-going 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.

The Joyful Noise Music Makers will meet for practice Wednesday March 20th at 3:15 PM in the Choir Room. St Pete Primary School children, please notify Vivian as before.

Palm Sunday, March 24: We would like for the children to meet in the front of the Sanctuary steps at 10:00 AM to run through the song!



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE



SUNDAY, MARCH 24
PALM SUNDAY
9 & 11 AM SERVICES
EASTER EGG HUNT
AT 10:15 AM



THURSDAY, MARCH 28
MAUNDY THURSDAY
POTLUCK DINNER AT
5:30, FOLLOWED BY A
WORSHIP SERVICE IN
THE FELLOWSHIP HALL



FRIDAY, MARCH 29
GOOD FRIDAY
SANCTUARY WILL BE
OPEN FOR PRIVATE
MEDITATION 12-3 PM



SUNDAY, MARCH 31
EASTER
7:00, 9:00, & 11:00
AM SERVICES

Maundy Thursday: Commemorating the Last Supper

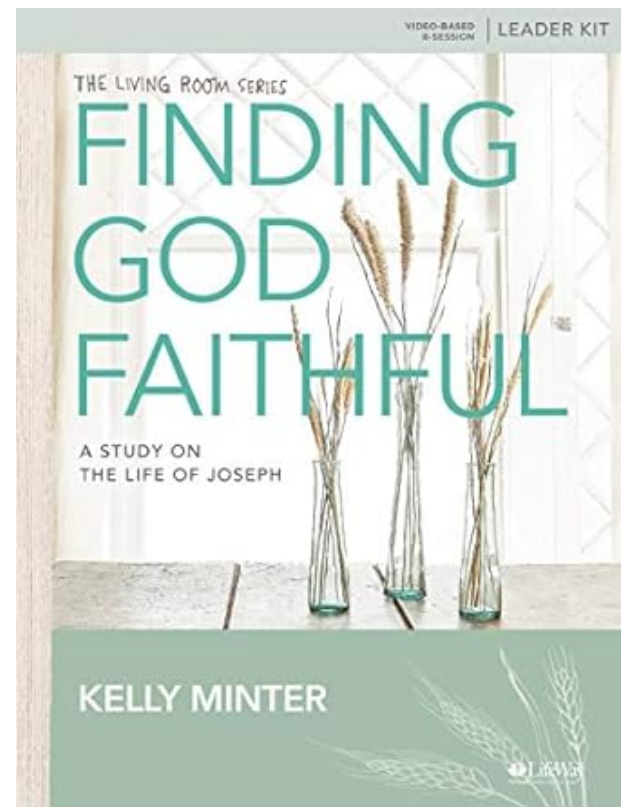
Thursday, March 28, 5:30 PM

We invite you to join together for a simple supper, followed by communion, and ending in the Memorial Garden as the sun sets, to start the Easter weekend as Christ and his disciples did. Please bring a dish to share for this potluck March 28 at 5:30.

Ladies, you are invited to Bible Study: *Finding God Faithful - A Study on the Life of Joseph*

In this 8-session study from Kelly Minter, we will be reminded of God's faithfulness through Joseph's story. No matter what we walk through, God's presence is constant; His provision is enough, and His purposes are unstoppable.

Join us on Tuesday mornings
through April 30, 2024
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. in the FPC Youth Center



Everyone is welcome – no previous Bible study experience is required. Workbooks will be available for \$25 (includes streaming video access for all sessions). Bring a friend! If interested, please contact April Hussung at (727) 420-1758 or stapler39@aol.com. Sorry, at this time there is no childcare available.



College Scholarships - Apply Now!

We are now accepting applications for 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.

The deadline for Theological Study Scholarships is **April 30**.

For further details about these scholarships (including downloadable application forms and deadlines), [CLICK HERE](#).

BUDGET HELP – Your Giving Matters!

It helps us be the church we want, hope, and need to be! One expense in our budget is the Per Capita. This is our contribution to the expenses of the larger church (Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly). We pay \$35.56 per active member. If you are able and willing to pay this amount for yourself and the members of your family, it is appreciated. You would just note the payment as "per Capita."

**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 March 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, Chapel
- Sundays, 10 AM, Power Hour Sunday School Class, Youth Center

- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Young Adults/Parents "Next" Sunday School Class, Room S-100
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Presbyterianism class, Church Office Conference Room
- **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:

- **Sunday, March 17, 10 AM**, New Member Inquirer's Class, Church Office Conference Room
- **Sunday, March 17, 1:30 PM**, Outing to the Tampa Bay Automobile Museum
- **Wednesday, March 20, 5:30 PM**, Beach Drive Forum, Fellowship Hall
- **Sunday, March 24, Palm Sunday**; Easter Egg Hunt at 10:15 AM
- **Thursday, March 28, Maundy Thursday**; potluck dinner at 5:30 PM in Fellowship Hall, followed by a worship service
- **Friday, March 29, Good Friday**; Sanctuary will be open for personal meditation from 12-3 PM
- **Sunday, March 31, Easter Sunday**, 3 worship services (7:00, 9:00, and 11:00 AM)

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.

First Presbyterian Church
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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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