

FIRST NEWS



March 17, 2023

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

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
this Sunday, March 19, 2023
Fourth Sunday in Lent / Stephen Minister Installation

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

Rev. Ginny Ellis
Sermon Series: *Sailboat Church*
Sermon: "Working the Sails"
Scripture: [I Peter 2:4-5, 9-10](#), [Luke 22:24-27](#)

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 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 the link with family and friends!

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

We have a **MASK-OPTIONAL** policy for worship services and on-campus activities.



GUEST MUSICIAN THIS SUNDAY:

Susan Hellman, soprano

Soprano Susan Hellman Spatafora has performed with companies including Palm Beach Opera, Opera Tampa, Sarasota Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, Central City Opera, St. Petersburg Opera, South Florida Lyric Opera and Green Mountain Opera. An avid art song recitalist, Spatafora has performed concerts with IlluminArts at the Bass Museum, Miami Center for Architecture & Design, and in the virtual concert "Unmasked" in collaboration with ICA Miami and Girl Power. Spatafora has won prizes in the Florida Grand Opera Young Patronesses of the Opera competition, the Palm Beach Opera International Vocal Competition, and the National Society of Arts and Letters Voice Competition. A graduate of the master's program in voice at the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati and bachelor's program in voice from Indiana University, Spatafora has been a participant in the EPCASO and Opera Lucca programs in Italy, as well as young artist programs at Central City Opera, Sarasota Opera and the Glimmerglass Festival.



Please remember in prayer: Millie Bradley, Ellen Carnahan, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Sandra Fay, Teresa Gasper, Jane Harris, Margo Hart, Dorothy Harte, Larry & Diane Heath, Agnes Ingles, Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, Susan Key, Alisa Keys, Taffey Lichter, Dave & Pam Malone, Ginger McCoy, Nancy McLaughlin, Diane Nummi, Alan Pfleider, Fred Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Janet Poling, Henry Shaw, Judy Smith, Jane Snoke

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.

From the Desk of Pastor Ginny

Dear Friends,

We're still out on the sailboat, but we're looking toward Holy Week and Easter, only two weeks away, can you believe it? Here is our schedule for Holy Week:

April 2 - Palm Sunday

- 9:00 AM Connect worship with palm crosses
- 10:30 AM Easter Egg Hunt on the Front Lawn
- 11:00 AM Sanctuary service with children from St. Petersburg Primary School singing for us

April 6 - Maundy Thursday

- 6:00 PM - Covered Dish Dinner with Communion around tables in the Fellowship Hall; please RSVP by clicking [HERE](#) and plan to bring a dish to share for the meal
- Ending the service out in the Memorial Garden with prayer and a hymn

April 7 - Good Friday

- The Sanctuary will be open for private meditation from 12:00 to 3:00 PM
- We need 3 teams of people to host in the Sanctuary for an hour at a time

April 9 - Easter Sunday – Joyous Worship!!!

- 9:00 Connect Service in the Youth Center
- 11:00 Sanctuary Service in the main Sanctuary with brass

As we continue with *Sailboat Church*, I can now confirm that author Joan Gray will be with us the weekend of April 28-30. She will meet with church leadership Friday evening (April 28) from 6:00 to 8:00, with supper. On Saturday, Joan will be at Cedarkirk for the church retreat, leading two sessions on *Sailboat Church*. She will also offer a presentation to the church community at the church from 3:00 to 4:30 PM Sunday afternoon (April 30). I hope you will find time to meet with Joan and learn more about the church we feel God calling us to be.

See you soon!

Blessings, Ginny Ellis



This Sunday, March 19, at the Sanctuary service (11 a.m.), we will celebrate the commissioning of two new Stephen Ministers.

This rite of commissioning culminates six months of training and preparation for caring ministry through the Stephen Series, a program for lay caring ministry administered by Stephen Ministries St. Louis.

Uniquely, these candidates, Dave Hunt and Sherry McNeel, have trained with others at First United Methodist Church, St. Petersburg under the direction

of Barb Willey for 6 months. Current Stephen Ministers from FPC attended with Dave and Sherry weekly to provide support and connection with our church. Dave and Sherry have studied and practiced skills in such areas as dealing with feelings, crisis intervention, asserting oneself with gentleness and firmness, and numerous other topics to prepare them to help others going through a difficult time. After the commissioning, these Stephen Ministers will be assigned to minister in our congregation and community. We thank God for their gifts of caring and listening. Their ministries will increase the overall ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ at FPC. Please keep them in your prayers as they carry the love of Christ to their care receivers.

All former Stephen Ministers are encouraged to come, with current ones, to surround the new Stephen Ministers during the installation portion of the worship service on March 19. If you have served in this or any other church in the past, you are also welcome to participate.

Usher Coordinator Needed for 11 AM Sunday Services

If you would like to serve as the Usher Coordinator for the 11:00 worship service, please contact Al May at ATM4983@gmail.com or at 727-867-8285. We have 4 usher teams that serve every 4 months. We could use some additional ushers to fill some openings on several teams. The ushers hand out the bulletins, greet our members and guests, and take up the collection. This is a great way to serve our Church and get to know our members!

Lectio/Visio Divina

Join us in a Zoom devotion time at 10 a.m. on Mondays for the practice of Lectio/Visio Divina, a contemplative study of Scripture (and corresponding art) that will be used in worship the following Sunday. Click on the link [HERE](#) to join or enter meeting code 859 9201 7591 and password *lectio*.

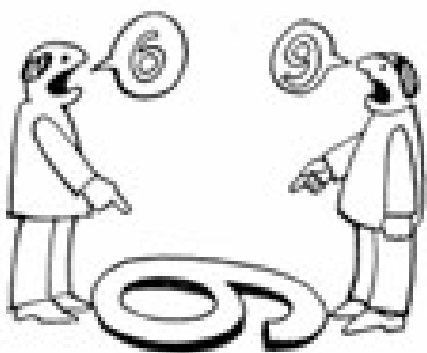
Midweek Family Fun: Italian Dinner and Game Night Wednesday March 22, 2023

Come one, come all to FPC's Italian Night Dinner and Games on Wednesday, March 22 @ 5:30-7:30 PM in Fellowship Hall. Chef Dave will be cooking up a delicious Italian dinner to tickle our fancies and there will be games galore for all who would enjoy more fun post-dessert. There may even be some enticing prizes!



The menu includes hearty beef and chicken meatballs, spaghetti pasta, grated parmesan, marinara with tofu for the vegetarians, a big tossed-salad bar with Italian dressing, hot buttered garlic bread, a luscious baked dessert, and coffee and cold drinks!

Please [CLICK HERE](#) or call the Front Office 727-822-2031 to RSVP.



Workshop: "Moving Out of our Comfort Zone: Making Space for People with Differing Views"

Next Thursday, March 23,
6:00-9:00 PM

Do you ever find yourself thinking or saying, 'I can't believe you think that' or 'You're so wrong!?' This sociodrama workshop will focus on how we can become more comfortable with holding other's views with kindness and open-heartedness while still maintaining our own views without

defensiveness or aggression.

Sociodrama is a group learning process that focuses on providing practice in solving problems of human relationships. It helps people clarify values and offers opportunities to explore new and more satisfying ways of interacting. This evening of reflection is being offered by First Presbyterian Church of St. Petersburg and is open to all.

- **TO REGISTER:** [CLICK HERE](#)
- **WHERE:** FPC - St. Petersburg (701 Beach Drive, NE, St. Petersburg FL), in the Youth Center
- **WHEN:** Thursday, March 23, 6-9 PM
- **COST:** Free! (a free will offering will be collected)
- **FACILITATOR:** Antonina Garcia, LCSW, EdD, TEP, RDT/BCT Nina is an internationally noted trainer and educator in sociodrama and has a private practice in New Jersey. She is co-author of *Sociodrama: Who's in Your Shoes?* 2nd edition with Patricia Sternberg and written many articles and chapters in books. She is on the faculty at New York University's Drama Therapy program. She has served as co-editor of the Journal of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama and was former chairperson of the American Board of Examiners in Psychodrama & Group Psychotherapy. She has received numerous awards and commendations from many professional organizations.

Join Us for a Palm Sunday Easter Egg Hunt on April 2!

Invite your family, neighbors and friends with children to spend Palm Sunday morning at First Pres!

At 10:30 a.m. we will start our annual Easter Egg Hunt. Meet at the Front Circle Patio for instructions. Please bring your own baskets if you can. We will supply a few if need be!



Immediately following the Easter Egg Hunt, all children are invited to wave palms and process into the Sanctuary along with the choir. After a brief welcome the St. Pete Primary School children will sing special songs before all children are excused for Palm Sunday crafts and snacks either in Fellowship Hall (older kids) or Room 203 (infants and young toddlers). Parents are asked to sign in and pick up their children at their designated points after worship. Thanks to Ashley Hardy and Carol Riley for their help with the preschool and older children in Fellowship Hall during church.

Handbell Choir Spectacular Featuring: Ring Sarasota Sunday, April 2, 2023 at 4 PM

[Ring Sarasota](#), the area's premier handbell

ensemble, is making music throughout the Gulf Coast. With a passion for playing, these spirited musicians captivate audiences age seven to seventy-seven with a unique combination of entertainment, education, and community engagement. Offering will be taken for First Presbyterian Church Concert Series.



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Our Next Mission Sunday - April 23 *For the Honduras Clinic*

Thank you, thank you, thank you that our Mission Sundays have been such overwhelming successes! Our members and friends have donated many, many items as well as their time, effort and money.

Our next effort will be sorting and sending health kits to the Honduras Clinic when a group of 15 from FPC and other churches will be traveling there in June. Our next Mission Sunday will be on April 23, the fourth Sunday in April rather than the traditional fifth. That's because April 30 will be our time in Cedarkirk and the annual St. Anthony's run will be circling our church grounds. (There will be ONLY ONE service on April 30 at 11 am).

We will be sending 1,000 adult health kits and 1,000 child kits. Items to buy and bring for these health kits:

- Toothbrushes, adult and children.
- Dental floss.
- Band-Aids.
- Wash cloths.
- 1-Quart Ziplock bags AND 1-Gallon Ziplock bags. **NOTE: Please do NOT fill the Ziplock bags.**

So why do we need as many hands as possible during this Mission Sunday work session? "We'll have three workstations," says Susan Schlecht who's been going to Honduras for years. "We'll be able to sit around our circle tables and talk and catch up with each other while we're doing these tasks."

Workstation #1...We'll make cardboard picture frames for the Honduran children and put them in Ziplock bags. These are made from punchout cardboard sheets that Susan and her crew will provide. No tools are needed other than your fingers and thumb. These children don't have school take-home pictures. These may be the only ones they'll have of themselves. *Psst...* Don't tell anyone, but any of our children helping with this can take some home with them.



Workstation #2...Sheets of stickers, also provided, will need to be cut and put in the bags for the Honduran children. Scissors will be provided. And any of our kids helping can take some of these home as well.

Workstation #3...This will be our deconstruction table. We'll remove toothbrushes, dental floss, Band-Aids, and wash clothes from their packaging before putting into Ziplock bags. "We're doing this so we can recycle the packaging here," says Susan. "If we waited to do this in Honduras, the packaging would just add to the litter that's already there. They don't have recycling facilities."

Now...If you would like to contribute but are unable to attend our packing sessions or to bring any items, please think about contributing money to help purchase 20 soccer balls and 25 jump ropes for kids.



Soccer balls run about \$20 apiece and jump ropes about \$15 each. Just make a check out to First Presbyterian and note that it's for the Honduras Clinic, for soccer balls or for jump ropes.

On April 23, there will be several work shifts to choose from. We will still have our two worship services at 9:00 and 11:00. The work will be in Fellowship Hall.

- If you're going to the 9 AM service, we are open at 8 AM, so you can come before the service OR you can come after the service.
- If you're going to the 11 AM service, you can come at any point up to 11:00.

Please note that someone from the Mission Committee will be available to direct and help from 8-11 AM. Easy-peasy.

ALSO NOTE: If you're unable to bring items on April 23, but can bring them earlier, we'll have Honduras-designated baskets available starting this Sunday, March 19, at both services in which you can drop off your items.

This is a very giving church. Thank you again for your time, effort, prayers, and financial contributions.

If you have any questions re. this Mission Sunday and the Honduras Clinic, please contact Susan Schlecht (727.735-5332; schlecht21975@gmail.com.) Or Mission Committee Moderator Sandi Averitt (727.424.9300;



Introducing Rylee Rose Lyle! Granddaughter of Robin & Sally Lyle

Miss Rylee was born on March 1 at the Baby Place. She weighed 8 pounds, 6 ounces and was 20 inches long.

Congratulations to the whole family!

Get Ready for BEACH DRIVE FORUMS



Your Community Outreach Committee is planning some exciting events at First Presbyterian Church! **Beach Drive Forums** are a series of conversations for congregation and community on thought-provoking topics, a sort of "Chautauqua South." We hope this forum series will get people talking about First Presbyterian Church and its place in St. Petersburg.

The monthly (or so) conversations with intriguing guest speakers and subject matter are open to our members and the public and will take place on Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m. on the church campus, location to be announced. Light supper repast will be available afterward for lingering and more discussion.

Here is the lineup so far, with more engaging speakers and topics in the works:

- **APRIL 26 - *A Tale of Two Cities: St. Petersburg and Tampa, Then and Now.*** Longtime friends and historians Ray Arsenault and Gary Mormino will take us on a "tour" of some of their favorite (or not so favorite) buildings and people, past and present.
- **MAY 17 - *Science, Faith, and Reality: The View from the Cosmos.*** Eckerd College Emeritus Professor of Physics Harry Ellis will explore the difficult relationship religion and science have had throughout history and the question: Are they really natural enemies?
- **JUNE (date TBA) - *Food Is Medicine.*** Dr. Kelli Cross of Complete Wellness Pediatrics has been caring for children for more than 24 years. She is passionate about helping people of all ages embrace the benefits of healthy eating and will share her wisdom on the topic.

Mark your calendars, tell your friends and neighbors, and stay tuned for more information! And send ideas you have for dynamic speakers to Ann Murray at aempuff@aol.com

-- **Community Outreach Committee:** Chair Ann Murray; members Vicki Fox, Sarah Helck, Gretchen Letterman, Lynne Mormino; staff Pastor Ginny Ellis and Parish Associate for Community Life, Jeanie Barnes

Staff Matters

Five Questions for Amy McCutcheon

Educated as a school teacher and psychologist. Licensed real estate and in property/casualty insurance. Service to others. House renovator. World traveler.

These are the many aspects and aspirations of Amy McCutcheon's life, our Church Office Administrator since March 2019. The Personnel and Administrative Committee is profiling Amy because today, March 17, is Amy's birthday. And it's St. Patrick's Day...Top o' the morning to you, Amy!



Amy was born in Houston, Texas, but grew up in rural Virginia along the Chesapeake Bay. "I am an only child...spoiled but not rotten!" She graduated from William and Mary with the double major of Elementary Education and Psychology. "Training in elementary education has been invaluable in the business world and church work. I probably shouldn't explain why."

Following college, she joined the same insurance company where her father worked in Richmond, VA, "but in a different division." Amy moved to St. Petersburg in 2004 "without knowing a soul. I came because of the weather." And weather she got. "That was the year seven hurricanes criss-crossed Florida. I thought 'What have I done?'" She found a job working as an administrator in the marine division of an insurance agency, although "I've got to admit, insurance was never an aspiration of mine."

While she was attending First Baptist Church on Gandy Blvd., one of the pastors needed a full-time assistant. "Hmmm," she thought. "I think I can do that." So she applied and got the job. That was her first foray into staff work with a church. After about seven years there, she left to take a similar position with the Missions Pastor at another Baptist church, South Tampa Fellowship. After two years there, she returned to First Baptist. She was there for another five years, and decided she would try real estate as an administrative assistant, though she only spent about a year in that position. "The woman I worked for was a delightful human being, but the 24/7 aspect of real estate was not for me."

We have some questions for you, Amy:

Q1: Why did you get into church administrative work?

Amy: Serving others is very much at my core. I find this a good way to combine my aspirations and my skills. The dynamic of church work incorporates who I am with being on a mission.

Q2: What brought you to First Presbyterian?

Amy: As I felt that my time in real estate was drawing to a close, I went online

to see what was “out there,” and I saw First Presbyterian’s posting. I noticed on the church website that Linda Champion was the Staff Accountant. Linda and I had worked together for several years at First Baptist, so I called to get her take. After we talked, I sent her my resume, which she passed along to Pastor Conti. So here I am!

Q3. You married not long ago, right?

Amy: Yes, Mead and I married in November 2021. He’s a machinist. At his last job, he actually got to make some of the parts that helped to land the Mars Rover. Guess you could say his fingerprints are on Mars! Thankfully he was able to change jobs this past year so we are able to spend more time together.



Q4: What are your hobbies?

Amy: Well, right now, all of our spare time is spent renovating/updating the house we bought in Largo back in January (our first house together!). However, before husband and house, I loved to travel. I’ve been to 18 countries (so far); mostly in Europe, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. My most memorable and life-changing trip was the 3 months I served as a short-term missionary onboard the Mercy Ship *Anastasis* (Greek for resurrection).

Q5: Do you attend a local church?

Amy: Yes, Radiant Church, which is where I met my husband. It’s non-denominational, with eight campuses around Tampa Bay.

Thanks for sharing a bit about your life with us, Amy. We really appreciate the way you and others on staff keep this church running as well as it does. And Happy Birthday!

College Scholarships - Apply Soon!

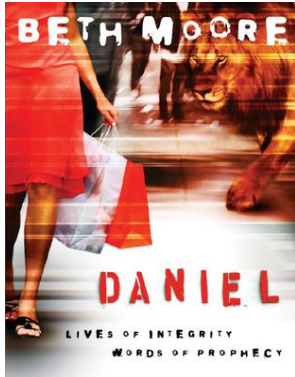
We are now accepting applications for college scholarships! These scholarships include the Ohrns Scholarship for undergraduates and the Osborn Scholarship for Theology students. We only require one application is for both Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters (awards are split); the applicant needs to 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).



Daniel: Lives of Integrity – Words of Prophecy

Tuesdays (through April 18)

9:00 – 11:30 a.m., in the Youth Center

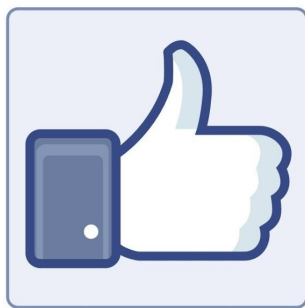
Everyone is welcome – no previous Bible study experience is necessary! We will be exploring the thrilling prophecies from the time of Daniel through the coming of Christ. Workbooks will be available for \$20. Sorry, there is no childcare available at this time.

Questions? Contact April Hussung at (727) 420-1758 or stapler39@aol.com.

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!



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 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, 9 AM**, Connect Worship Service, Youth Center
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Faith Journey Sunday School Class, Room S-202
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Power Hour Sunday School Class, Youth Center
- **Sundays, 11 AM**, Sanctuary Worship Service, Sanctuary or [Online](#)
- **Sundays, 12:15 PM**, *Sailboat Church* study group (through April 2), Chapel

- **Mondays, 10 AM**, Lectio Divina, via [Zoom](#)

- **Tuesdays, 9 AM** - Ladies' Beth Moore Bible Study, Youth Center
- **Tuesdays, 7 PM**, Christian Meditation, Chapel (meets in-person the 2nd and 4th 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, 7:30 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:

- **Thursday, March 23, 6 PM**, SocioDrama Workshop
- **Sunday, April 2**, Palm Sunday (10:30 AM Easter Egg hunt!)
- **Sunday, April 2, 4 PM**, Handbell Choir Concert
- **Thursday, April 6**, Maundy Thursday; dinner at 6 PM, followed by a worship service, Fellowship Hall
- **Friday, April 7, 12 - 3 PM**, Good Friday; Sanctuary will be open for a time for private meditation
- **Sunday, April 9**, Easter Sunday

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.

701 Beach Drive NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701
(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.



First Presbyterian Church
St. Petersburg, Florida



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