

FIRST NEWS



First News, March 22

March 22, 2024

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

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
this Sunday, March 24, 2024
Palm Sunday

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

Rev. Ginny Ellis
Sermon: "Martha's Story"
Scripture: [Mark 11:1-11](#)

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,

As we come to Holy Week and Easter, we find ourselves impatient for the joy of Easter, as we ponder the difficult path Jesus had to walk that week: facing opposition, betrayal, arrest, and trial. He was whipped and mocked, and made to carry his own cross up the hill, where, as a common criminal, he was nailed to this Roman cross and hung to die in the hot sun. Good Friday never seems so "good," does it? with Jesus hanging three hours on a cross, his dead body placed in a borrowed tomb. We are eager to move past all this sorrow. Ready to move on to Easter, to have the joy of Easter baskets and Easter eggs, of bright new clothes, and wonderful upbeat hymns and anthems. But we can't get to Easter without first getting through Good Friday. Jesus had to die in order to be resurrected. He had to pay for our sins in order to save us from the powers of evil and death. It is his death that leads to new life, his and ours.

There's a story that fits this journey of death leading to life. A church had an oak tree that was planted in memory of a dearly loved member, but the tree lost all its leaves and died. Members of the family could not bear that the tree planted in memory of their loved one had died, so they bought another tree to plant in its place. They decided to do the removal and replanting at night, so the rest of the church would never know the first tree had died. All their plans went well until the family arrived in the church yard that evening with the new tree. Bringing out their shovels to remove the dead tree, they saw clusters of new green leaves on the "dead" tree. The tree was not dead. It was waiting...waiting for the proper time to blossom with new growth.

I told this story once at a Moment for All Ages. Then I asked "What do you think of that?" I was shocked and thrilled when one of the children simply said: "It's resurrection." A seven-year-old boy - he got it! He knew about Jesus and the empty tomb, about new life, about resurrection. The church had done its job, sharing the truth of the gospel with that child.

We should all know about new life, about resurrection, about how in God's grace death can lead to new life, despair can lead to hope, sorrow can give way to joy. That's resurrection. That's Holy Week and Easter. That's faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord. Thanks be to God!

See you at church these coming days as we journey through Holy Week to the cross and the empty tomb.

Blessings, my friends. 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, Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, Alisa Keys, Taffey Lichter, Dave & Pam Malone, Dottie McClure, Nancy McLaughlin, the Moorefield family, Alan Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Margie Richmond, Robert Safransky, Henry Shaw, Judy Smith, Jane Snoke, JB Starkey



Joined the Church Triumphant

Jerry Richmond
March 18, 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.

Easter Egg Hunt This Sunday!



We hope you join us for an **Easter Egg Hunt at 10:15 AM** this Sunday, 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!)

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.



**Good Friday March 29,
12 - 3 PM**

The Sanctuary will be open for private meditation from 12:00 to 3:00 PM.

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.



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](#).

Our Little Free Library Is Two Years Old!

#2 Is Great. Our Little Free Library (LFL) is celebrating being two years old this month. What a trip it has been!

Please help us continue this fabulous mission by using the LFL and bringing in extra books to share with the community. Books are always needed and

all types are wanted, especially children's books, Bibles, and current fiction and nonfiction.

Here's to being #3!
Ronn Johnson, Steward



Lectio/Visio Divina will take a short break
(not meeting on Monday, March 25 or April 1).
It will resume on Monday, April 8 at 10 AM.

The FPC Explorers had a GREAT experience at the
Tampa Bay Car Museum this past Sunday!



Mark your calendars for upcoming fun events!

Sunday, April 7th at 1 PM, we'll be going to [The Fine Arts Museum](#) for ART IN BLOOM! Flowers overflowing in the museum! Florists, artists, and The Stuart Society showing St. Petersburg's Spring! All kinds of blooming art and artworks.... plus the café will be open that afternoon!

Sunday May 19th, 2024 at 1 PM at [The Fairgrounds of St. Pete](#), we will be visiting an immersive art experience. We will literally "get-into" the artworks at the Fairground!

Questions? Want to participate? Contact Dave Hunt (513-604-6090 or dhunt@fpc-stpete.org).



Italian Night!
Wednesday April 10, at 5:30 PM

BUON APPETITO! Our Second Annual Italian Night will be Wednesday April 10 starting at 5:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall. The marinara sauce will be simmering and ready, with beef or chicken

meatballs, and - of course! - garlic bread and a salad bar. Bring your Italian hunger and spin the spaghetti! To reserve your place at the table, please [CLICK HERE](#) or call the Church Office (727-822-2031)!



PARABLE QUEST: Transforming Stories Jesus Told

The everyday objects and real-life situations that Jesus described in His parables help children understand biblical principles.

All children Pre-K through 5th grade are welcome!
Class starts Sunday, April 14, and runs through May 19
in Room S-202

For more information, please contact Carol Riley
at 727-822-2031, ext. 104 or criley@fpc-stpete.org.

Our next "Beach Drive Forum"
will be Wednesday, April 17!

The logo for Beach Drive Forums is contained within a black speech bubble. The words "Beach Drive" are written in a green, cursive-style font, and "FORUMS" is written in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font below it.

Beach Drive
FORUMS

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.

Also mark your calendars for:

MAY 22

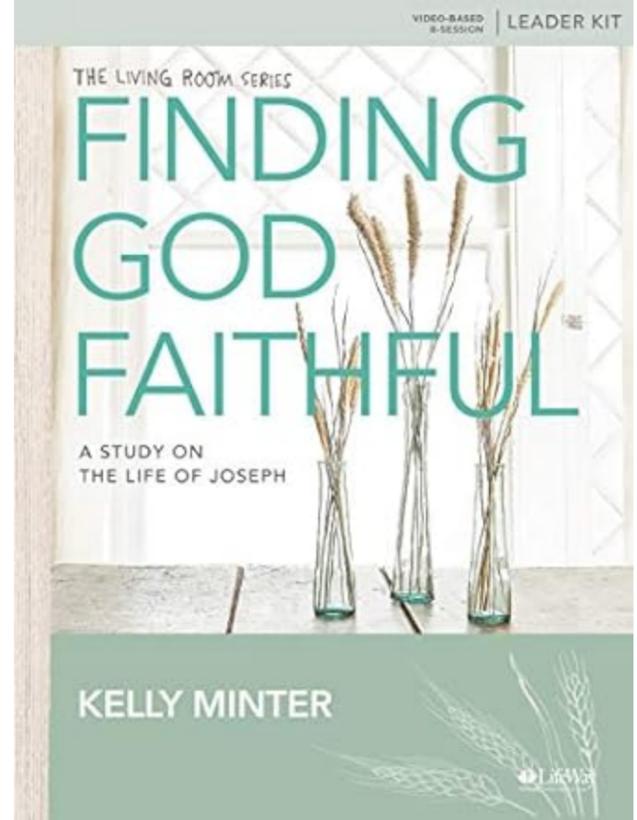
State of the Arts in Tampa Bay by Paul Wilborn, award-winning journalist, author, playwright, pianist, singer and executive director of the Palladium Theater at St. Petersburg College, who knows a thing or two about the arts! He'll share his wisdom about what's influencing the flourishing local arts scene, including whether artificial intelligence is a good or bad creative force. Learn more about our speaker [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

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.

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](#).



The Pastor Nominating Committee has a new page on our website:
www.fpcstpete.com/pnc-updates.

You can visit it any time for the latest information
on our Pastor Search!

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 April 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 (taking a break on March 24 and 31; resumes April 7)
- **Sundays, 11 AM**, Sanctuary Worship Service, Sanctuary or **Online**
- **Mondays, 10 AM**, Lectio/Visio Divina, (taking a break on March 25 and April 1; resumes April 8)
- **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 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; 12-3 PM, Sanctuary will be open for personal meditation
- **Sunday, March 31**, Easter Sunday, 3 worship services (7:00, 9:00, and 11:00 AM)
- **Sunday, April 7**, 1 PM, FPC Explorers will be going to the Fine Arts Museum for "Art in Bloom"
- **Sunday, April 14**, Parable Quest kids' class begins
- **Wednesday, April 10**, 5:30 PM, Italian Dinner Night, Fellowship Hall
- **Wednesday, April 17**, 5:30 PM, Beach Drive Forum

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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