

FIRST NEWS



September 22, 2023

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

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
this Sunday, September 24, 2023
Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

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

Rev. Ginny Ellis
Sermon Series: Preparing to Sail
Sermon: "Charting Our Course"
Scripture: [Jonah 3:1-10](#), [Matthew 28:16-20](#)

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

SEPTEMBER *Music*

11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Service



Click [HERE](#) to see the exciting music line-up for our 11 AM Sanctuary Service in the month of September!

From the Desk of Pastor Ginny

Dear Friends,

We are PREPARING TO SAIL! That means we are working to imagine what God's vision might be for First Presbyterian St. Petersburg, moving forward, and how we understand and claim God's vision for us as our mission in this community and world.

We started *Preparing to Sail* this past Sunday as I spoke with you about our ship, the church, and what we believe about God. God is always our starting point. After all, the Lord's Prayer begins: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name.

This week we consider our place in the world as we look at the prayer's next words: Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as in heaven. Good words, after our wonderful, powerful visit with musicians of Ukraine, now dear friends.

The *Preparing to Sail* sermon series will take us through October 15. Be sure to come, worship, pray, and journey with us. I hope you will also plan to be part of some important conversations as we look at where God is leading this church. Meetings will be in the Fellowship Hall as follows:

Oct 1: Sunday Oct 1, 4:00 to 5:30 PM

This church past and present: How we know ourselves as God's church

Oct 8: Sunday Oct 8, 4:00 to 5:30 PM

Looking at this Neighborhood: How we fit together

Oct 15: Sunday Oct 15, 4:00 to 5:30 PM

How we feel the Spirit's Wind blowing through us, directing our voyage

These meetings and conversations will be crucial as the church moves toward calling a new pastor. I hope you will participate as much as you are able, and that you will pray that PREPARING TO SAIL will be helpful for us all.

Blessings and love,
Ginny Ellis



Please remember in prayer: Millie Bradley, Will Catul, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Sandra Fay, Teresa Gasper, Jane Harris, Margo Hart, Dorothy Harte, Larry & Diane Heath, Agnes Ingles, Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, the family of Susan Key, Alisa Keys, Taffey Lichter, Dave & Pam Malone, Ginger McCoy, Nancy McLaughlin, Nancy Ogden, Alan Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Henry Shaw, 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.

New Member Inquirer's Class This Sunday, September 24, 10 AM in the Chapel

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 Chapel this Sunday, September 24, 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!

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*.

Your Opinion Matters!

It is hard to believe it has been almost a year since we transitioned back to two Sunday services, Connect and Sanctuary. From online-only worship during the pandemic, to the combined contemporary and traditional service, you have been steadfast in your love for First Presbyterian Church, thank you!

To help assess how worship has been going since last December when we returned to two services, the Worship and Music Committee wants to know what you think. Below please find two links to a brief online survey about what you like about the service you attend and what we could do differently to enhance the spiritual life of FPC. The first link is if you attend in-person; the second is if you view the service online.



[In-Person Worship Service Evaluation 2023](#)

[Online Worship Service Evaluation 2023](#)

If you attend more than one service, please complete a separate survey for each. Paper copies will be available at both worship services the next few Sundays. If you need a paper copy mailed to you, please contact the Church Office (727-822-2031).

The Worship and Music Committee will present the results of the surveys to the Session at its October meeting, so the deadline to complete your survey online or return a paper copy to the office is **Monday, October 2**.

Thank you for participating in the survey and the vibrant life of our church.

Senior Luncheon
Wednesday, October 11, 11:30 AM, Fellowship Hall



The Deacons are giving our annual Seniors Luncheon on Wednesday, October 11 11:30 am in Fellowship Hall. Great food and fellowship for seniors and friends!

LET US KNOW you are coming by October 6. Signup tables will be available after the 9 AM and 11 AM services starting September 24. Please inform us of your transportation needs.

"Hope for Ukraine" at FPC



God's Loving Gift of Community

It may have been historic: 900-1000 people gathered in our Sanctuary for 2 hours, mesmerized by the music of 28 young Ukrainian women and their exuberant conductor. The concert was an expression of their love for their Ukrainian community amid the terrible war with Russia. It was exhilarating and touched the hearts and souls of our faith community, the St. Petersburg community and beyond.

They gave us abundant gifts through music, through smiles, and through the stories they shared.

We gave them the gift of hospitality in so many ways: hosts who have been moved



by the presence and conversations with their Ukrainian guests; food - and plenty of it for lunches, a sit-down, china-plated American style Sunday dinner as well as a good-ole' American bar-b-que dinner - and a new-found favorite for them - mangoes!

Our loving gifts to them were the beginnings of relationships and a financial gift for their humanitarian aid to widows, orphans, and war victims. They will soon be trained to tend not only to the physical and spiritual needs of their country, but also to the PTSD needs of so many people. As of now, over \$48,000 will be given to their mission. Amazing how our loving God has moved us to reach across

the globe to help in this time of need!

Communications throughout the local community brought many inquiries, requests, and donations that were above and beyond our expectations. We at First Presbyterian Church have been and will continue to be blessed because of this.

There is so much to share with you so look forward to more details in future articles. The indelible impact of this loving gift from our God will be felt for a long time to come.



MANY THANKS! (It takes a village!)

To all who helped plan, set up, prepare, serve and clean up from our first Wednesday Night Dinner (Sept. 13), we owe many thanks! Thank you to Kyle Brinkman for the fantastic BBQ meal and fixings and fascinating program on BBQ which followed the abundant meal, serving 80! Thank you to Eva Popovich for volunteering to assist all afternoon and evening in the kitchen; to Greg and Sarah Helck for macaroni madness (creamy-dreamy, gluten-free, spicy, and two kinds of regular) and cornbread muffins; to the Christian Ed/Fellowship Committee for their yummy food contributions, hard work, and support: Kathy Bardin (online), Joan Karins, Fran Sims, Greg Helck, Kyle Brinkman, and Pastor Jeanie. Thank you to those who brought and/or baked fresh sides and desserts to share! (Dave and Brittany Carroll, Linda Champion and anonymous others!) Thank you to Amy McCutcheon for regular office support. Thank you to Johnny Miller for set up. Thank you to Greg Helck and Fernando Gonzalez, Bill Shelton, Dave Aumack (for running the dishwasher) Greg Barnes and Nancy Ogden for all their good work cleaning up afterwards. Sorry if we missed naming someone! Many thanks to you as well! And, of course, to God be the glory!



MORE THANKS!

Many thanks also to Carol Riley and Cathy Swanson and Pastor Jeanie for stepping in while our Kids' Choir Director Barbara Brownlee was out of town by taking 21 children upstairs for Kids' Choir and Crafts. A good time was had by all!

LOOKING AHEAD...

Plan now to attend our Spooktacular Italian
OCTOBER 11th WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER brought

to us by the talented women of "PW Circle 12." It will help in our planning if you [SIGN UP HERE](#) early! Thanks!



Another BIG Thank You!

You probably didn't know that Diane Zuercher has been busy behind the scenes helping prepare spaces for Christian Education opportunities on Sunday mornings. She singlehandedly cleaned out and filled three large trash cans of old, stored items from the Girl Scout room, making it ready to be our Young Adults and Parents Room. She also hung new curtains to hide the Girl Scout storage area on the enclosed porch. We are indebted to you, Diane! God bless you! Thank you!

TAKE the PLUNGE!

Join a Sunday morning 10 AM Christian Education opportunity to grow your faith and our community while having a good time!

AGE LEVEL	CLASS/CURRICULUM	LOCATION	LEADER/CONTACT
Adult	Faith Journey Facilitated discussion and sharing based on books related to faith development	Room S-202	Beth Houghton & Rue Ann Porter
Adult	Power Hour Lively Bible Study on relevant and relatable issues, followed by discussion	Youth Center Lounge	Karen Mossman
Young Adult/ Parents	"Animate" video curriculum, followed by discussion	Room S-206	Becky Higman
Teens	Video Series	Room S-205	Jeanie Barnes & Eric Wilson
Children (infants–age 7)	Bible and Lectionary-based activities	Room S-203	Michelle Crumity & Mandy Dooley

Ladies, You Are Invited to a New Bible Study! *Isaiah: Striving Less & Trusting God More*

This 7-session Bible study by Melissa Spoelstra will encourage us to let go of striving and learn to trust in God's character, His comfort, and even His correction. Isaiah was human like us, and yet he radically trusted God and called anyone who would listen to do the same.

Join us on Tuesday mornings through Oct. 24

9 AM - 11:30 AM in the Youth Center

Workbooks will be available for \$25 (includes streaming video access for all sessions). Bring a friend! No previous Bible study experience is needed. Sorry, at this time there is no childcare available. To register: call or text April Hussung at (727) 420-1758 or email at stapler39@aol.com.



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!

Online Giving



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 September 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, 10 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-206
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Teens' Sunday School Class, Room S-205
- **Sundays, 11 AM**, Sanctuary Worship Service, Sanctuary or [Online](#)

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

- **Tuesdays, 9 AM**, Ladies' 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, 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, September 24, 10 AM**, New Member Inquirer's Class
- **Sunday, October 1, World Communion Sunday**
- **Sunday, October 1, 4:30 PM**, "Preparing to Sail" Visioning Conversation
- **Sunday, October 8, 4:30 PM**, "Preparing to Sail" Visioning Conversation
- **Wednesday, October 11, 11:30 AM**, Senior Luncheon
- **Wednesday, October 11, Wednesday Night Dinner & Kids' Choir**
- **Sunday, October 15, 4:30 PM**, "Preparing to Sail" Visioning Conversation
- **Saturday, October 14, 11:30 AM**, Solar Eclipse Viewing and Picnic
- **Sunday, October 15, 10 AM**, New Member Inquirer's Class
- **Wednesday, October 18, 6 PM**, Beach Drive Forum, *An Untold Story of World War II: Tuskegee Airmen Nurses*
- **Sunday, October 22, Presbyterian Heritage Sunday**
- **Saturday, October 28, 4 PM**, Trunk or Treat

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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