

FIRST NEWS



April 21, 2023

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

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
this Sunday, April 23, 2023
Third Sunday of Easter / Mission Sunday

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

Rev. Ginny Ellis
Sermon: "Emmaus Road: Recognizing Jesus"
Scripture: [Luke 24:13-35](#)

Celebrate God's mighty work with us!

Our 9:00 Connect Service is now available Streaming ONLINE on our YouTube channel. If you can't grab coffee with us Sunday morning or if you just want some good praise during the week, check out our Connect Service featuring the FPC Praise Band and their jazz-folk-pop take on modern praise!



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 11 AM worship service bulletin.

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



Please remember in prayer: Millie Bradley, 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, 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,

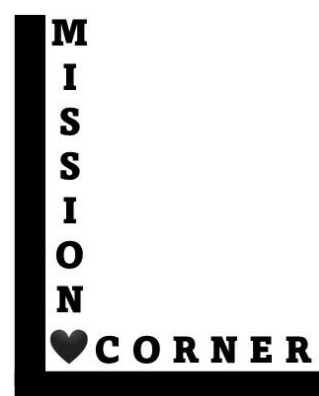
This Sunday at worship, we encounter the story of two Jesus-followers walking from Jerusalem to the town of Emmaus. It's on the very day that Jesus' tomb was found to be empty, the day we call Easter. These two followers are talking about the empty tomb as they walked along, about what it all might mean,

when a stranger begins to walk along with them. This stranger turns out to be Jesus, but they don't recognize him, not until they get to Emmaus. And guess what? Immediately after they recognized him, Jesus vanished. This wonderful story is one of the Resurrection Appearance accounts.

It is always interesting to note the details in the story. Here Luke tells us that it was about seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus. That is especially interesting because, after Jesus vanishes, the disciples immediately turn and hurry back to Jerusalem. They are eager to tell the others they have seen the Lord! Never mind that it was now dark, and there were seven miles to go (again). They wanted to share the news!

One of the group members at Lectio this week said we should each pray for Jesus to meet us on whatever road we are on. Like the disciples going to Emmaus that day, if we invite Jesus into our lives, into our own stories, the Lord will be able to change and heal and feed us so that we will recognize him. Sometimes on Sundays at worship we say, "no matter where you are in your life journey there is a place for you here at First Presbyterian Church." Here it is again: no matter what road we are traveling, whether we are just starting out or nearing the end of the journey, we might well find Jesus on the road with us. If we are alert and prayerful and ready, we may even recognize him. We know that we can be open with Jesus about our joys, our sorrows, and our needs, and let him bring us purpose and peace. May it be so.

Blessings, to each of you,
Ginny



MissionSunday - THIS SUNDAY! April 23

Our Next Mission Sunday - April 23 - will benefit the New Hope Clinic in Honduras. Our mission effort will be sorting and assembling health kits for the New Hope Clinic in Honduras. A group of 15 from FPC and other churches will be traveling there in June.

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 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 about 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; sanaveritt1@gmail.com).



April 23 (in-person) and April 24 (Zoom)

We will have two FPC Concert Series Town Hall Meetings: one in-person meeting on Sunday, April 23 at 12:15 PM in the Choir Room and another online via Zoom Monday, April 24 at 7:00 PM. To join the Zoom meeting Monday night,

[CLICK HERE](#) or enter the meeting code 861 4217 9042 and password *TownHall*.

Lectio/Visio Divina

Lectio/Visio Divina is a contemplative study of Scripture (and corresponding art) that will be used in worship the following Sunday. We will not meet this coming Monday, April 24, but will meet Monday May 1 for the last time until June. If you haven't experienced this devotion practice yet, try it out May 1! We meet at 10 a.m. via Zoom. Click on the link [HERE](#) to join or enter meeting code 859 9201 7591 and password *lectio*.

Join us fo BEACH DRIVE FORUMS



Beach Drive Forums are a series of conversations for congregation and community on thought-provoking topics. 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 about 6-8 p.m. (presentation from 6-7, followed by a time for Q & A and refreshments) in the Youth Center. We will have flyers available on Sunday mornings...feel free to hand them out and invite friends and neighbors!

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 14 - *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 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

Weekend of April 29-30

- Cedarkirk Retreat Saturday and Sunday (April 29 and 30)! For more info, click [HERE](#) or call Kathy Bardin at 727-418-4577.
- One service at 11 AM Sunday, April 30 (no 9 AM Connect Service OR Sunday school classes) due to the St. Pete Triathlon. Allow a little extra time and care for arriving and parking for the 11 a.m. worship service. We will welcome Rev. Bill Wildhack as a guest preacher.
- "Sailboat Church" presentation by author Joan Gray in the Fellowship Hall from 3:00-4:30 PM in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, April 30. Joan will be discussing the book and her ideas about ministry in our time with our congregation and community.

Note from Pastor Ginny:

Joan Gray has asked for prayer support, for us to lift her up in the days before her visit with First Presbyterian Church next weekend (April 28-30). Her requests are these:

- that we pray for the Holy Spirit to be in control of all that happens during the *Sailboat* weekend,
- that Joan will be guided by God to know what to share and how to share it, and
- that the weekend will be protected by God and filled by the Holy Spirit.

"This prayer support makes an amazing difference in me," Joan said. May we all focus in prayer as we prepare for Joan Gray's Sailboat Church visit with us April 28-30.

New Member Inquirer's Class Sunday, May 7 at 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 on May 7, 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!



Music in May

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

Per Capita Apportionment

Every church shares in the administrative costs of the Presbytery, Synod, and

General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) through the annual per capita assessment. FPC's per-capita assessment is \$35.61 per every active member and confirmed youth (communicant member). Please consider paying this administrative cost above and beyond your annual pledge/offering. You can contribute to the per-capita apportionment at any time during the year. To do so, just write "per-capita" on the memo line of your check or mark an envelope accordingly. Thank you for your gift.

Summer at Cedarkirk

Your camp and conference center is offering more than 40 residential camp programs for campers who have completed 1st-12th grades, adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and families. Our summer theme *What's in a Name?* will focus on discovering who we are and how God equips us to care for others.



Register for a summer program at Cedarkirk and discover how a summer can impact a lifetime! For their calendar of events, curriculum, volunteer opportunities, and more, check out their website: www.cedarkirk.org.

College Scholarships - Deadline is April 30!

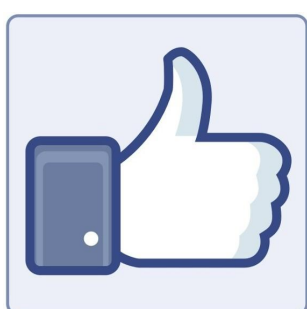
We are now accepting applications for college scholarships! For further details about these scholarships (including downloadable application forms and deadlines), [CLICK HERE](#).

The Scholarship Committee will review the applications and the Session will approve the final awards. Questions? Please call the Church Office (727-822-2031).

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



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, 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](#)
- **Mondays, 10 AM**, Lectio Divina, via [Zoom](#) (not meeting April 24)
- **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, Choir Room (April 26)
- **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:

- **Sunday, April 23**, MissionSunday!
- **Sunday, April 23 (12:15 PM) and Monday, April 24 (7 PM)**, FPC Concert

Series Town Hall Meetings

- Monday, April 24, 1:30 PM, Card Fellowship, Church Office conference room
- Wednesday, April 26, 6 PM, our first Beach Forum: *A Tale of Two Cities: St. Petersburg and Tampa, Then and Now.*
- Saturday, April 29 and Sunday, April 30, Annual Retreat at Cedarkirk
- Sunday, April 30, 3 PM, *Sailboat Church* presentation by author Joan Gray, Fellowship Hall
- Sunday, May 7, 10 AM, New Member Inquirer's class

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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A Stephen Ministry Congregation of the PC (USA) - Christ empowering people to care for people.



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