

FIRST NEWS



First News, February 23

February 23, 2024

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

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
this Sunday, February 25, 2024
Second Sunday in Lent

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

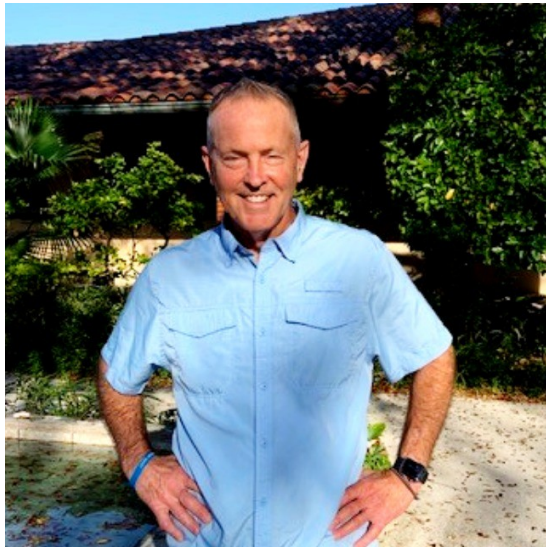
Rev. Ginny Ellis
Sermon: "Call to Adventure: Finding Our Way"
Scripture: [Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16](#), [Mark 8:31-38](#)

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.



We are excited to welcome former Director of Music, **Rick Smith** to the podium this Sunday as he conducts the Chancel Choir in his arrangement of "Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy."

Recently retired from over 45 years of experience as a professional church musician, Rick has experience in large churches with multiple staff positions and small churches with limited resources, as well as churches of differing theological perspectives. He retired as Director of Music at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in St. Petersburg the end of October 2023.

Rick has developed, managed and conducted several community choral organizations throughout his career. Presently, He remains conductor and musical director of Chorus Angelorum of St. Petersburg Florida, Inc., a select community a cappella chamber group.

From the Desk of Pastor Ginny

Dear Friends at FPC,

So many are asking me: how are you feeling? Thank you for showing your care for me! Harry and I are fine, having lived through a week of COVID, then a second week of relapse COVID. We were not very sick, but we stayed clear of people, and now I am thrilled to be back where I can speak with you, attend your meeting, touch your shoulder, or even share a hug. A number of you have told me that you (too) have had a recent case of COVID, or maybe it was a case of flu, or a bad cold. Whatever it is/was, I pray that each of you is well and/or recovering. It is nice to know you are prayed for and loved: and I was, and you are, too.

There is a Facebook group called "Happy to be Presbyterian." I enjoy seeing their posts, the questions they pose, the experiences they share. That might be a name to consider for the new class I am leading on Presbyterianism. I would like you to be able to learn about our style of faith, to be able to ask your questions, for us to have a common language for what we believe and do. The class starts this Sunday. Here is a revised schedule. Feel free to attend topics you want to explore, or come all the time.

- [February 25](#) - What makes us Presbyterian?
- [March 3](#) - A look at the Apostles and Nicene Creeds
- [March 10](#) - How Presbyterian churches function
- [March 17](#) - Inquirer Class for those who want to know more and consider membership

We have several other Sunday morning adult classes:

- Faith Journey discusses books with spiritual/justice perspective. Their new meeting space is the Chapel at 10:00.
- Power Hour meets at 10:00 in the café area in the Youth Center, looking at biblical and life issues.
- NEXT, is specifically for young adults and parents of young children. It meets downstairs in Room S-100.
- And now Presbyterianism, meeting at 10:10 or so in the Conference Room on the upstairs (north) wing.

Come: find your place! You are welcome here, and loved!

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, Ginger McCoy, Nancy McLaughlin, Alan Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Robert Safransky, Henry Shaw, Judy Smith, Jane Snoke, JB Starkey

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.

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.”



**Health for
Honduras
Fundraiser**

The Foundation for International Missions (FFIM), which created and operates the Honduras medical clinic that is supported by FPC, would like to invite you to their annual **Health for Honduras Fundraiser**.

**Tomorrow, February 24, at 6:00 PM
at St. Thomas Episcopal Church
1200 Snell Isle Blvd, St. Petersburg**

Tickets are available online at [FFIM.org](https://www.ffim.org) for a \$52.00 per person donation. (\$50.00 per person by check). Heavy hors d'oeuvres are generously provided by Red Mesa. Wine and beer included. We hope you can attend, have fun, and learn more about this special Honduras medical mission program!



**AFRO OPERA LLC
PRESENTS**

A MESSAGE FROM THE ROOTS

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 24, 2024
6:00 PM**

**WHERE: CATHEDRAL CHURCH
OF SAINT PETER**

140 4TH STREET NORTH
ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33701

[HTTPS://WWW.EVENTBRITE.COM/E/A-MESSAGE
FROM-THE-ROOTS-TICKETS-763702403447](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-message-from-the-roots-tickets-763702403447)

**FEATURING:
MAIYA STEVENSON
(OPERA SINGER)**

**TEIA WATSON
(OPERA SINGER)
&
AUSTIN GASKIN
(ACCOMPANIST)**



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.

Mission Sunday Update



Thanks to our very generous congregation, Mission Sunday was a huge success! Wonderful turnout, lots of socks, contributions, AND we exceeded our goal of 160 with 165 pairs of sneakers!!! FPC truly has a heart for mission!



**Coming to FPC next Friday, March 1, at 8 PM:
The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay Concert
and Guest Speaker from the Florida Holocaust Museum**



In collaboration with The Florida Holocaust Museum, [The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay](#) invites you to explore excerpts of Anne Frank's diary in a performance of James Whitbourn's *Annelies*. The program also features the world premiere of a commissioned work by Nico Gutierrez.

Praised by music critics from local media as "one of the country's finest choirs," "an amazing instrument," and a "cultural treasure," The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay has consistently delivered some of the most profoundly moving music performances in the area.

This is a ticketed event. Please purchase your tickets in advance through the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay (click [HERE](#) or call 813-355-9609).



Faith & Fiction

March 4, 2024, 4 PM, Room N-123

We're reading: *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison

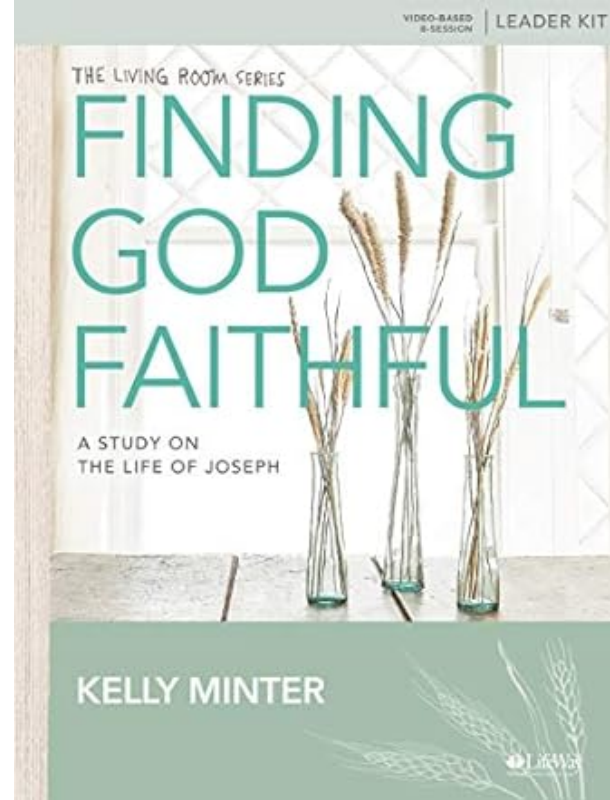
The story of a young black girl who prays for her eyes to turn blue; so that she will be beautiful, so that people will look at her, and so that her world will be different. First published in 1970, recently banned in FL public schools. Susan Luehrs will lead our discussion.

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,
March 12th - 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.

SAVE THE DATE!

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



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



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.



College Scholarships - It's Time to Apply!

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 2024 and Spring 2025 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:

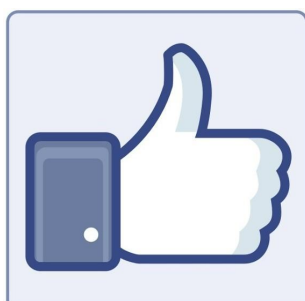
1. a completed application form;
2. a copy of your most recent high school or college transcript;
3. a 500-word essay describing your involvement in church-related activities as well as extra-curricular and community involvement activities, why you want this grant, and what you expect to do following 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).

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!

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 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, Room S-202
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Power Hour Sunday School Class, Youth Center
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Young Adults/Parents "Next" Sunday School Class, Room S-100 (new room!)
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Teens' Sunday School Class, Room S-205 (meets every other week)
- **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 (starts again on March 12)
- **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:

- Monday, February 29, 1:30 PM, Card Fellowship, Church Office Conference Room
- Monday, February 29, 7 PM, stated session meeting
- Friday, March 1, Concert by The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay, 8 PM in the Sanctuary
- Monday, March 4, 4 PM, Faith & Fiction, Room N-123
- Tuesday, March 12, 9 AM, Ladies Bible Study resumes, Youth Center
- Sunday, March 17, 1:30 PM, Outing to the Tampa Bay Automobile Museum
- Wednesday, March 20, 6 PM, Beach Drive Forum
- Sunday, March 24, Palm Sunday
- Thursday, March 28, Maundy Thursday (dinner at 5:30 PM followed by a service)
- Sunday, March 31, 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.

First Presbyterian Church
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 | 701 Beach Drive N.E., St. Petersburg, FL 33701-2618

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