

FIRST NEWS



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

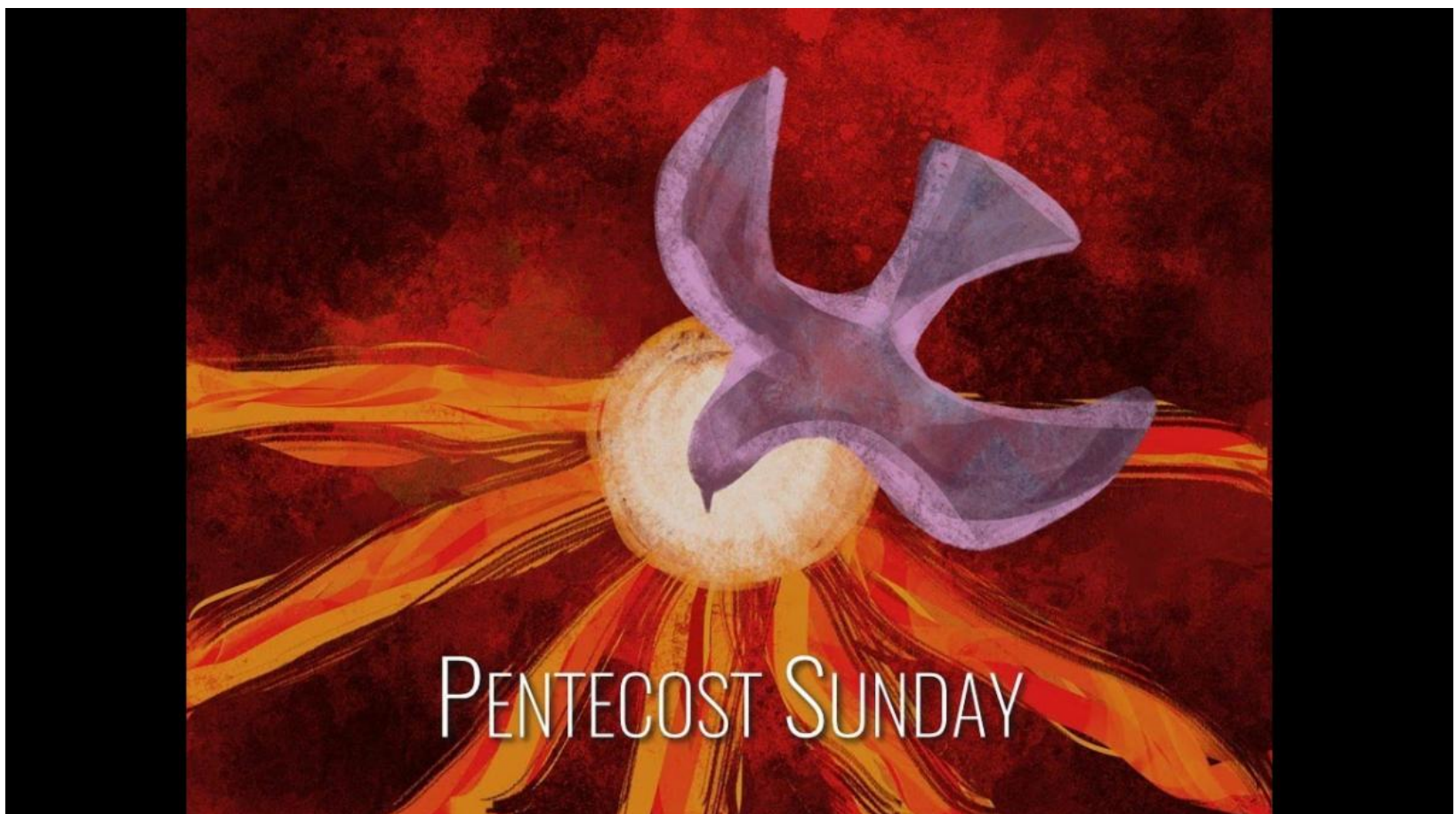
May 21, 2021

WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY

Join us at 10 AM in the Sanctuary
for an In-Person or Online Worship Service
this Sunday, May 23
Day of Pentecost

Pastor Dawn Conti

Scripture: [Ezekiel 37:1-14](#), [Psalm 104:24-34, 35b](#), [Acts 2:1-21](#)



The Day of Pentecost is this Sunday. Pentecost, 50 days after Easter, marks the ending of the season of Easter and celebrates the birthday of the Church when God's Spirit was poured out in Jerusalem. On that day, Acts 2 tells us that there were tongues of fire and loud rushing winds. Language barriers that divided God's people from one other were removed. The disciple, Peter, got up and preached the sermon of his life and 3,000 were baptized that day.

A very unique Pentecost worship service has been planned by your FPC worship team for Pentecost 2021. Although the Good News is traditionally proclaimed through a sermon, other acceptable Presbyterian forms of proclamation include song, drama, dance, and testimony. This Sunday, the Good News of Pentecost will be proclaimed through a reader's theatre interspersed with music, visual art, and dance. Come see the sculpture of flames that has been created just for this day that sits in front of the communion table. Come welcome the Holy Spirit with red streamers. Come bring your children and grandchildren for a very special time with the younger disciples. Come join in prayer for an outpouring of God's Spirit for this time and place! Oh, and by the way, **don't forget to wear RED!**

In the bond of faith and the spirit of Peace,

Pastor Dawn

If you still feel uncomfortable or are unable to worship with us in person, you can click [HERE](#) to watch the service online.

As a reminder, we will begin the organ prelude just before 10 AM, so please plan to arrive a few minutes early!



Please remember in prayer: Ron & Millie Bradley, Bob Burkhardt, Carol Daniel, Pat Eckert, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Sandra Fay, Sarah Fechter, Teresa Gasper, Margo Hart, John & Dorothy Harte, Larry & Diane Heath, Agnes Ingles, Russ Johnson, Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, Alisa Keys, Margie Laughlin, Dave & Pam Malone, Nancy McLaughlin, Peter Pav, Alan Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Janet Poling, Jane Pruitt, Ken Robinson, Judy Smith

Please keep in prayer all those who have been physically, emotionally, and financially affected by the coronavirus, and join us in praying for an end to this situation.

Please pray for our family and friends serving in the military: Marc-Antoni Julia', USN LT; CPT. Taina Specie, USA; 1st LT. Liam Shelton, USA; 1st LT. Mallory Wasik, USMC; 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 Grossenbacher at amyg@fpc-stpete.org.

From the Return to Church Committee

Greetings congregation!

The Return to Church Committee met this week and revisited the church's mask policy in light of the recent changes to the CDC's guidelines.

We rejoice over the CDC's new guidelines and at what they mean for us all — that vaccines work, that vaccinated people are able to do more safely, and that the end of this pandemic is in sight. We thank God for this good news, for the hope and relief that it brings, for the intellectual gifts God gave scientists over the ages to get us to this point, and for the selfless sharing of those gifts with the rest of us! We also note that the CDC still requires masks in hospitals, in care facilities, on public transportation, and for those who are not vaccinated. We're aware that children under 12 years of age still aren't able to be vaccinated, and that some in our community have not yet had a chance to be vaccinated.

Jesus constantly aligned himself with the most vulnerable—widows, women, children, the blind, the sick, the outcast, and the poor. Therefore, **we will follow Jesus' lead by loving all of our neighbors, especially the most vulnerable among us, by wearing masks at church until health officials tell us it is safe for all people to unmask.** May God bless you all and keep you safe and healthy.

No Congregational Meeting This Sunday (May 23)

A congregational meeting was announced last week, originally scheduled for this coming Sunday, May 23. Please note that upon further reflection, the session has rescinded the action taken at the May 6 called session meeting to call a congregational meeting for today immediately following worship. The purpose of this meeting was to hear the report of the Nominating Committee and to approve the election of Paul Culley and Rick Robertson to serve on the session. This meeting has been postponed until after the result of the vote taken at the June 6th congregational meeting (please see below) has been tallied and reported.

Called Congregational Meeting June 6, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

The session has called a congregational meeting for 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 6, 2021, in response to a request from at least one-fourth of the active membership of the congregation for the purpose of deciding whether to dissolve the pastoral relationship between the church and the Rev. Dr. Dawn Conti. This Presbytery has appointed Rev. Dr. John DeBoise to moderate this meeting. The meeting will include both onsite and online opportunities for those on the active members' role to attend and participate. Voting will be limited only to active members who attend the meeting onsite or online, just as it is in any meeting. Additional details about how to attend, participate, and vote will be provided before the meeting.

The FPC Praise Band returned to live and in-person worship last Sunday!



Why I Love Being a Member of FPC St Pete

submitted by Susan Luehrs

As far back as I can remember, I have gone to church. I grew up in a family where we helped others. In 2001, when Dick and I retired to Florida, we joined a group at Eckerd College where we met Ilda Hall and Marge Siebert. They invited us to come to FPC. I was thrilled with the beauty and majesty of the sanctuary, the fantastic music, and the interesting, inspiring, and educational messages of Pastor Larry Duncan. We joined First Presbyterian Church. Shortly thereafter Choir Director, Tom Lippert invited me to sing with the Chancel Choir!

I like all the opportunities available at FPC where I can be helpful and also renew the teachings of our Lord. I enjoy serving FPC by singing in the choir, serving on 2 committees, and volunteering at Lakewood School. I am a member of FPC Presbyterian Women Circle 6 and the Westminster Sunday School Class and enjoy study groups to learn more about the Bible.

All my life I have loved to sing! Currently FPC Chancel Choir is blessed with our director, Matt Clear. Matt is one of the best directors I have ever had the privilege of sing for. Not only is he an extremely talented director, Matt is kind, compassionate, and brings talented new people to our church music from traveling groups, special conductors and his high school magnet school for the arts: Gibbs High in St Petersburg. I believe another musical blessing at FPC is Jack Rain who has thrilled us every Sunday for over 50 years by skillfully making amazing music on our magnificent organ!

Being a participating member of FPC offers so many opportunities to be helpful to others. I have always experienced great joy by helping others and as Jesus taught us, "In as much as you do good to others, you do it unto me"! FPC St Pete offers all kinds of opportunities to learn, volunteer to help others, sing in the choir, and meet others who you can bless and they can enrich your life. That's why I love First Presbyterian Church, St Petersburg, FL!

Look for the Rainbow

There is a rainbow in the sky
bright colors chase away the clouds
signaling the storm is over

Now it is time
to remember those
who cannot yet see the rainbow



God has renewed
His promise
affirmed his presence.

We can smile again
after these many months
of doubt and pain.

far too many of God's children
continue to hurt
remain hungry and lonely
but it will come to them—
in time we pray
everyone can see the bow
believe God's promise
and the need to lament
shall cease.



**Grieving? Know someone who is?
Join our GriefShare group on Sundays at
4 PM (via Zoom)**

Whether your bereavement experience is recent or not so recent, you will find encouragement, comfort and help in grieving the death of a spouse, child, parent, sibling, other family member, or friend.

This program features biblical, Christ-centered teaching that focuses on grief topics associated with the death of a loved one. The 13-week DVD seminar features nationally respected grief experts and real-life stories of people, followed by a small group discussion about what was viewed. This is a great opportunity to be around people who understand what you are feeling. Don't allow fear of what others may think to keep you from what could help you. Confidentiality is very much a part of this program.

Need more information? Want to sign up? Call the Church Office at 727-822-2031.

All of us at First Presbyterian
are working to stay as connected as possible
during this time of social distancing.



- 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 during this time.
- Help us stay connected by sending us your pictures and prayer requests!



Pastor Dawn invites you to join us for a time of devotion, discussion, and prayer where we connect online with God and each other as we read and discuss the sermon text that will be

preached the following Sunday. All are welcome!

For sign-in information to the Zoom call, please contact the Church Office at 727-822-2031 or click [HERE](#) to join. **PLEASE NOTE:** If Zoom prompts you to enter a password, the password for Monday devotionals moving forward will be "prayer."

During this season when we are physically apart, 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 May Birthdays



Most groups are continuing to meet 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.

- **Sundays, 8:30 AM**, Faith Journey Sunday School Class, meeting in-person, Room S-202.
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, In-Person Worship Service, Sanctuary or [Online](#).
- **Sundays, 11:15 AM**, Westminster Sunday School Class. For Zoom sign-in information, email Jim Garnett (jim.garnett237@gmail.com).
- *Sundays, 11:15 AM - Contemporary Faith Sunday School Class will not be meeting again until Fall.*
- **Sundays, 4 PM**, GriefShare. For Zoom sign-in information, email Petra Garnett (petra.garnett@gmail.com).
- **Mondays, 10 AM**, Online Devotional with Pastor Dawn. Click [HERE](#) to join. If you are prompted, use "prayer" a password.
- **Tuesdays, 7 PM**, Weekly Meditation, virtual. For more information, contact Carlen Maddux (cmaddux@maddux.com).
- **Fridays, 7:30 AM**, Men's Bible Study, in-person, Room N-123.
- Today, Friday, May 21, the Church Office is closed.
- **Sunday, May 23**, FPC member Jean McCammon turns 100!
- **Monday, May 31**, Church Office closed for Memorial Day
- **Sunday, June 6, 1 PM**, Called Congregational Meeting, in-person in the Sanctuary and online

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 Grossenbacher](#).

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

