

FIRST NEWS



Your Weekly News from
First Presbyterian Church
St. Petersburg

October 30, 2020

**Online Worship
This Sunday**

Join us for our 10 AM Online Worship Service
this Sunday, November 1
All Saint's Day / Lord's Supper

This Sunday's Sermon: "Living Legacies"
Pastor Dawn Conti
Scripture: [Isaiah 25:6-9](#), [Revelation 21:1-6a](#)

Click [HERE](#) to watch the service online.

This link may also be found on the home page of the church's website (www.fpcstpete.com) - "Click Here to Watch Sunday Services") as well as on the church's Facebook page.

COMMUNION SUNDAY: We will be celebrating the Lord's Supper this Sunday during our virtual worship. Please gather bread, crackers, or rolls and something to drink (juice, wine, milk, water) ahead of time for all in your home who will be participating.

If the 10:00 hour on Sundays does not fit your schedule, the service is available for viewing on our YouTube channel throughout the week. Feel free to share the link with family and friends!



Please remember in prayer: Carol Abernathy, Ron & Millie Bradley, Bob Burkhardt, Carol Daniel, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Sandra Fay, Teresa Gasper, Ron Hall, John & Dorothy Harte, Larry & Diane Heath, Jim & Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, Glenice Kelley, Margie Laughlin, Dave & Pam Malone, Nancy McLaughlin, Howard Moser, Peter Pav, Alan Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Janet Poling, Jane Pruitt, Jean Schultz, Judy Smith, Hildegard & Will Sondermann.

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.



Please join us online Monday, November 2nd as we come together (virtually) to pray and ask God to lead us in making wise decisions in the upcoming elections. The service will go "live" on the First Presbyterian Church YouTube Channel (found [HERE](#)) at 7:00 PM. For more information call, First Presbyterian Church – St. Petersburg, FL (727) 822-2031.

Financial Snapshot September 2020

	Month	YTD
Gifts	\$ 51,777	\$ 491,827
Other Income	6,115	56,830
Total Income	57,892	548,657
Expenses	78,473	703,463
Income (Loss)	\$ (20,581)	\$ (154,806)

Operating deficit of \$154,800 YTD as income remains under budget.
Expenses under budget \$34,800.

THANK YOU for your gifts online, by mail, or dropping at office!



REOPENING UPDATE

As we move closer to opening our doors for in-person worship again, the Return to Church Team wants to let you know we are working to have all COVID-19 precautions in place to keep you as safe as possible. With that said, we also want to remind people that the decision whether to attend in person is each individual's call, based on their own risk factors and comfort level.

We encourage people who are the least bit concerned about their health to continue worshipping via our vibrant online service, which as we begin streaming the service live will have even more great features, such as the virtual "Passing of the Peace" recordings by church members.

We are considering our first day of in-person services as our "soft opening," and want to make sure everyone knows it is okay to "attend" worship at FPC in the way that works best for you.

The Return to Church Team meets again on Nov. 4, just 11 days from our target opening date of Nov. 15. At our meeting last week, we were discouraged by the upward trend of the local coronavirus spread and we want to let you know we will decide at the next meeting whether the statistics are still in favor of a Nov. 15 opening. If it looks like the numbers are too high, one idea being considered is outdoor worship. We will keep you informed, and we thank you for your patience as we strive, with God's guidance, to make the safest decision about worshipping together again in person.

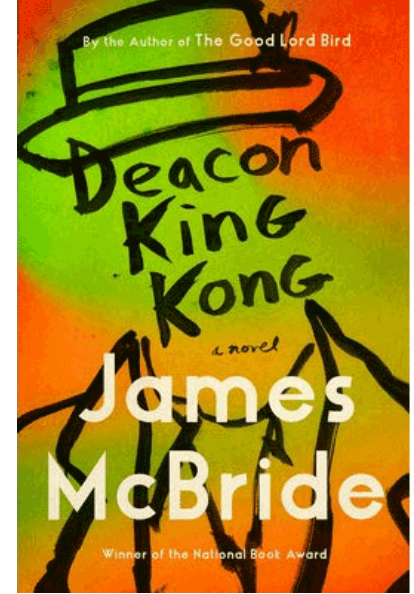
With prayer and gratitude,
The FPC Return to Church Team

Faith & Fiction

Faith & Fiction will move for the month of November to Tuesday, November 10th at 7:30 PM via Zoom. Al May will lead our discussion of:

Deacon King Kong by James McBride

Please call or contact Linda Santoro if you wish to join this meeting, and she will send the link to you that evening. Linda's number is 727-897-9543, email is lindajsantoro@gmail.com.



GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays

When you are grieving a loved one's death, the holiday season can be especially painful.

Our Surviving the Holidays seminar helps participants discover:

- How to deal with emotions
- Helpful tips for surviving social events
- What to do about traditions
- How to find hope for the future

The Seminar will be offered via Zoom on **Saturday, Nov. 21 at 10 AM**. Please email Petra Garnett (petra.garnett@gmail.com) if you have any questions or if you would like the Zoom log-in information.



Note to readers: For many years, our church has given scholarships to students to enable them to attend Cedarkirk and to be part of the Honduras Team. In the next few weeks, several students share their experiences and how camp and Honduras have touched their lives.



Featuring Emma Zuercher

Emma is a Senior at Osceola Fundamental High School. She is currently taking, AP Macro Economics, AP Research, College Experience, Introduction to Humanities, Anatomy, AP Statistics, and Studies Applied Ethics. In her spare time she participates in Cross Country and Orange Theory.

Prior to her Senior year, Emma was a dancer at the Academy of Ballet Arts for twelve years. Last November she had the unique experience of sharing the stage with her brother, father, and grandmother in *The Nutcracker*.

Over the years, Emma has been involved with Youth Parking Events, Trunk or Treat, Beth El Mission, and has done several Minutes for Youth and Missions.

She has traveled to Honduras three times over the last few years and Honduras Week is her favorite week of the year! "Because of the Fellowship of the Mission Team, going to Honduras puts my life into a different perspective and shows me how blessed I am. I enjoy giving back to the people and seeing their smiles. I loved working with Mrs. Brownlee when we worked together teaching the little children."

Going to Cedarkirk 8 times (wow!) is a highlight of Emma's time here at FPC. "I like that Camp is a community in which we can teach each other about the Holy Spirit and still have fun at the same time. I am sad that I was not able to attend this year, but I will always cherish the memories."

"I am proud to have been born and raised in FPC. It has taught me so many lessons that will carry me through life."

Emma, FPC is proud of you and grateful to God for the life that is ahead of you!

Submitted by Diane Zuercher



We Need YOU to Pass the Peace, VIRTUALLY!

As we return to worship in person soon, our service will be different from before, in many ways, to keep everyone as safe as possible.

One way is that we will not have the Passing of the Peace, the time where we used to stand and greet each other in the name of Christ.

Instead, we are asking individuals, families, or friends who live in the same building or are otherwise comfortable with each other to record a short Pass the Peace video greeting to be played during Sunday worship for those in the Sanctuary and those still watching from the couch at home. You can include your pets (our cats watch every Sunday)!

The Return to Church Team has provided this sample script, which you can adapt to your own liking, as long as it is short and sweet and passes the peace. You may split the speaking up among you, though you may want to say the last phrase in unison:

Good Morning, First Presbyterian Church! We are the XXXXXXX family (or say individual names in a group such as from Westminster Palms) and we have been members for XX years. We want to say we are glad you are here worshipping together, whether you are in the Sanctuary, your own home or even another part of the world!

We also want to warmly extend to you the Peace of Christ that passes all understanding: 'May the Peace of Christ be with you!'

If you are unable to record your own video on your phone (indoors or out, hold the phone horizontally, please), you can ask our online worship expert David Aumack to record you. He will set up a time convenient to both of you.

We already have commitments from a handful of hams, er, willing people, to record Pass the Peace greetings, but we need many more. After all, there are 52 Sundays a year!

We think this is a great way to help members get to know each other as well as to stay safe. You can record one even if you plan to return to the Sanctuary for worship. These greetings will be broadcast on our new video screen wall in the Sanctuary as well as the online service.

Please contact the Church Office (727-822-2031) as soon as possible to let us know you can participate, and then send your videos to daumack@fpc-stpete.org. You can also contact him with any technical questions you may have.

Thank you in advance for virtually Passing the Peace!

Peace and blessings to you,

Gretchen Letterman, for the Return to Church Team

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Are you able to knit or crochet? Do you need a project to help fill your time while you are staying safe at home?

The deacons and other members of this church have begun a new ministry – the crafting of beautiful, hand-made shawls that will be given to anyone who might need the reassurance of a gentle touch of warmth, and the knowledge that someone from God's congregation crafted a lovely shawl for them with love and prayers. If you need ideas for a pattern, there are many at www.shawlministry.com. You will find heartwarming prayers there too, prayers you might say as you begin your work, and as you complete a shawl.

We understand that yarn and supplies can be expensive. If you need help with purchasing materials, just save your receipts, and you can be reimbursed by the church. Once you have completed a shawl, you can drop it off at the church office, or call the office (727-822-2031) and we can arrange for someone to pick it up.

Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. James 5:13

Pictured above is a prayer shawl crafted by Lon Summers.



Dark Nights: A Lament

Oh God, My God,
tonight I cannot sleep
their crying keeps me awake.

Cries of little boys
made fatherless
because their skin is dark.

Moans of the elderly
struggling to breathe
because of a pandemic.

Wails of homeless throngs
driven into shelters
by fire and water and wind.

Deliver us, Oh Lord, from despair
as you did the children
in the wilderness.

We turn to you, trusting
and waiting for this dark night
to turn to morning brightness.

Sarah Fechter August 2020

Gifted poet Sarah Fechter is a member of our church and Presbyterian Women, a group studying "Into the Light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament." This study spurred Sarah to write her own Lament during this time of Pandemic.



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

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 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: Zoom is now requiring a password for all meetings. 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.

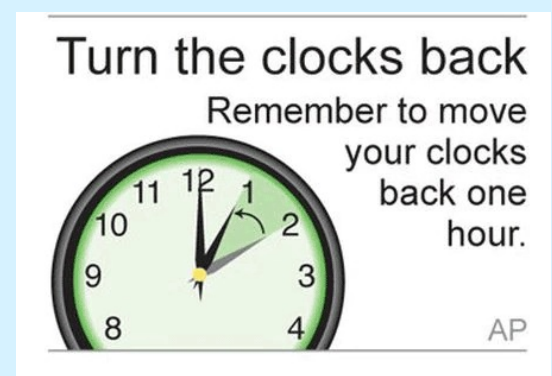
For your convenience, there are several ways which you can give:

- (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 November 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.

- Sunday, Nov. 1, Daylight Savings Time ends
- Sundays, 9 AM, Faith Journey Sunday School Class. For Zoom sign-in information, contact the Church Office.
- Sundays, 10 AM, [Online Worship Service](#).
- Sundays, 11:15 AM, Contemporary Faith Sunday School Class. For Zoom sign-in information, email Lynn Kiehne (lkiehne@gmail.com).
- Sundays, 11:15 AM, Westminster Sunday School Class. For Zoom sign-in information, email Jim Garnett (jim.garnett237@gmail.com).
- Sundays, 4 - 5:30 PM, GriefShare Support Group. For Zoom sign-in information,

contact Petra Garnett (petra.garnett@gmail.com).

- Mondays, 10 AM, Online Devotional with Pastor Dawn. Click [HERE](#) to join. If you are prompted, use "prayer" as a password.
- Tuesdays, 7 PM, Weekly Virtual Meditation, online. For more information, contact Carlen Maddux (cmaddux@maddux.com).
- Fridays, 7:30 AM, Men's Bible Study, meeting in person in Room S-100.
- Monday, Nov 2, 7 PM, Election Eve Virtual Prayer Service (online [HERE](#))
- Tuesday, Nov. 10, 7:30 PM, Faith & Fiction
- Sunday, Nov. 15, Tentative date set for **In-Person** Worship Service at 10 AM (worship services will continue to be shown online as well)
- Saturday, Nov 21, 10 AM, GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays

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 [Mary Johnson](#) and [Amy Grossenbacher](#).

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

