



• ***Right on Target***

Have you ever sung that song or listened to that story or heard that sermon and thought, “Yes! That’s it!”?

Sometimes I wake up in the morning with one of the praise tunes from our New Song worship service running through my head. It is a great way to begin the day.

Yesterday evening in our church parlor at the beginning of a planning meeting I was sitting by Margaret Towner, the first woman ordained in our Presbyterian Church USA (back in 1956). We were selecting a hymn for The Glenridge vespers service. (Marg is the informal chaplain at The Glenridge, and I am speaking in a couple of weeks.) We came to “Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above” (645 in our *Glory to God* Hymnal). In an unanticipated moment of joy, several of us broke into song.

What a wonderful hymn – theologically grounded and sensitive to our needs! The words are a wonderful summation of our faith in Christ.

Here are the first, third and final verses:

*Sing praise to God who reigns above, the God of all creation,
The God of power, the God of love, the God of our salvation,
With healing balm my soul is filled and every faithless murmur stilled:
To God all praise and glory!*

*The Lord is never far away, but through all grief distressing,
An ever-present help and stay, our peace and joy and blessing,
As with a mother’s tender hand, God gently leads the chosen band:
To God all praise and glory!*

*Thus all my toilsome way along, I sing aloud thy praises,
That all may hear the grateful song my voice unwearied raises.
Be joyful in the Lord, my heart; both soul and body, take your part:
To God all praise and glory!*

I hope this great hymn will be a blessing to you as we prepare to begin our journey together through Lent to Easter.

Peace,

• **Love Notes**



A big thank-you goes to all who participated in our Thoughtful Giving project during the Christmas holidays! Over \$5,000 was raised for these missions that FPC supports: All Faiths Food Bank, Beth-El Farmworker Ministry, Caritas, Coalition of Immokalee Workers, CROP Hunger Walk, Dial Hope, Educate for Change, Family Promise, Fuller Center of Housing Sarasota, Mision Peniel, Nicaragua Mission Partnership, Plant with Purpose, Resurrection House, youth mission trips and our missionary partners. These gifts will help share the hope, love, joy, and peace of Christ to people in need.

Dear Members of First Presbyterian Church,

Your continued support of our Brentwood Elementary School students continues to amaze me.

Last spring, a small steering committee from FPC contacted me because they wanted to adopt a Title I school; Brentwood was their chosen school. I responded that our biggest need was extra hands in classrooms. Fast forward to present day, we now have 28 active volunteers in classrooms working with students. Their assistance with small groups or 1-1 with students has been a huge gift, but you all wanted to do more!

Recently, the members of your congregation offered to host a Blessing Tree for some of our families in need for the holidays. Not only did your members collect gifts for the children, they invited us all (families, teachers, administration) to a wonderful dinner where the gifts would be given to the care giver of each family to distribute on Christmas day. The dinner concluded with FPC members handing Mr. Weida and myself a check to contribute to furniture for a reading area in our soon-to-be newly constructed media center.

The partnership you have created with our school is extraordinary and I will never be able to thank you enough!

Dr. Patricia Brustad Folino
Assistant Principal
Brentwood Elementary School

Jazz + Pancakes

PREPARE FOR THE SEASON OF LENT

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2018



Lent is coming! Let's prepare using old traditions to help prepare our hearts and minds. The English tradition of eating pancakes came about as a way to use as much milk, fats, and eggs before Ash Wednesday began. A pancake breakfast will be served by the youth, children and their families at 10:00 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Donations will be collected to support our summer mission trips and adventures!

There will be special jazz music during 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. worship.

• **Ash Wednesday, February 14**

On this day, we begin the spiritual journey of Lent that will span forty days, from Ash Wednesday until Easter. Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

The Season of Lent reminds us of the presence of the divine even during life's seasons of solemnity, struggle, and shadow. With ashes on our foreheads, the words of our mortality whispered in our ears, and the taste of bread and wine in our mouths, we enter the season of Lent.

Bring a crock pot of soup or chili to share a pot luck meal together before the service at 5:45 p.m. Bread and beverages will be provided. The Ash Wednesday service will follow at **6:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall.**

• **Capital Campaign Update**
February 2018



Fellowship Hall - the new exterior doors have been installed and the foyer has new furnishings.

Administration and Education Building - the open house for the reception area and second floor classrooms was a success.





• **What Do Your Blood Pressure Numbers Mean?**

*submitted by Cheryl Track,
RN-BC, Faith Community Nurse*

The only way to know if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure tested. Understanding your blood pressure numbers is key to controlling high blood pressure. A diagnosis of high blood pressure must be confirmed with a medical professional. A doctor should also evaluate any unusually low blood pressure readings.

On **Sunday, February 18**, in between services, come to the courtyard for a blood pressure screening and information provided by your health and wholeness ministry.

Your blood pressure is recorded as two numbers:

- **Systolic blood pressure** (the upper number) indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls when the heart beats.
- **Diastolic blood pressure** (the lower number) indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls while the heart is resting between beats.

Which number is more important?

Typically, more attention is given to systolic blood pressure as a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease for people over 50. In most people, systolic blood pressure rises steadily with age due to the increasing stiffness of large arteries, long-term build-up of plaque and an increased incidence of cardiac and vascular disease.

However, elevated systolic or diastolic blood pressure alone may be used to make a diagnosis of high blood pressure. According to recent studies, the risk of death from ischemic heart disease and stroke doubles with every 20 mm Hg systolic or 10 mm Hg diastolic increase among people from age 40 to 89.

Blood Pressure Categories

These are the five blood pressure ranges recognized by the American Heart Association:

- **Normal blood pressure** numbers that are within the normal (optimal) range of less than 120/80 mm Hg.

- **Elevated** readings consistently range from 120-129 systolic and less than 80 mm Hg diastolic. People with elevated blood pressure are likely to develop high blood pressure unless steps are taken to control it.

- **Hypertension Stage 1** blood pressure is consistently ranging from 130-139 systolic or 80-89 mm Hg diastolic. Doctors are likely to prescribe lifestyle changes and may consider adding blood pressure medication based on your risk of heart attack or stroke.

- **Hypertension Stage 2** blood pressure is consistently ranging at levels of 140/90 mm Hg or higher. Doctors are likely to prescribe a combination of blood pressure medications along with lifestyle changes.

- **Hypertensive Crisis**

If your blood pressure reading suddenly exceeds 180/120 mm Hg, wait five minutes and test again. If your reading is still unusually high, contact your doctor immediately. If you are experiencing chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, numbness/weakness, change in vision, difficulty speaking, do not wait to see if your pressure comes down. Call 9-1-1.

Hypertension guidelines were updated in 2017 due to the real threats of high blood pressure. Studies concluded that antihypertension treatment reduced cardiovascular disease morbidity and mortality, calling for a more intensive blood-pressure goal. Specific lifestyle changes include advice to lose weight, follow a DASH-pattern diet, reduce sodium to less than 1500mg/day and increase potassium intake to 3500mg/day through dietary intake, increase physical exercise to a minimum of 30 minutes three times per week, and limit alcohol intake to two drinks or less per day for men and one or less for women.

New ACC/AHA Hypertension Guidelines Makes 130 the New 140-Medscape-Nov 13, 2017
www.heart.org/bloodpressureguidelines

- **First Presbyterian Church and iTNSunCoast Renew Contract for 2018**

For many, getting a ride to church and around town is a challenge! That is why First Presbyterian has renewed its partnership with iTNSunCoast to help you get to church and the other important places you need to go.

iTNSunCoast is a dependable, local non-profit that provides rides using volunteer and paid drivers who use their own cars. They have been providing rides since 2010 and will provide over 18,000 rides this year. All drivers are screened and trained.

When Rides Are Available:

- Any time of the day or night for any reason
- Any day of the week including weekends
- Anywhere within Sarasota & Manatee counties
- Rides must be requested by noon the previous day.

Cost: *If coming to church, you pay just one way! First Presbyterian will pay the other way and the \$50 annual membership fee for First Presbyterian Church members for 2018.*

Charges:

Pick-up charge: \$3

Mileage charge: \$1.75 per mile

Each additional person: \$2.50

** If using iTN for non-church related rides, you will be responsible to pay the cost both ways. Eye appointments are complimentary at this time. Check with iTNSunCoast when booking.

Service: iTNSunCoast is happy to help people with canes or walkers - whatever support you need to get from your residence to the car and from the car to your destination.

For more information or to become a member, call iTN at (941) 364-7530 and tell them you are a member of First Presbyterian Church. More questions? Contact Cheryl Track, 941-320-3828



- **GriefShare**

GriefShare resumes **Friday, February 2**, 10:00-11:30 a.m. for 13 weeks. You can register online at griefshare.org or call the church office at (941) 955-8119. For more information, contact Cheryl Track, faith community nurse (941) 320-3828.

- **Mark Your Calendar:**

The *Scams, Fraud and Identity Theft* program will be on **Thursday, March 8**, at 10:00-11:00 a.m. in the fellowship hall.

- **Join the Mission and Justice Team**

by Sue Hargis Spigel, member

If you have a heart for serving God and people in your community and the world, the mission and justice team is looking for you! Be a part of the exciting things happening at home and around the world.

In Sarasota, we support Caritas, Resurrection House, All Faiths Food Bank, SURE, and others, as well as Beth-El, Coalition of Immokalee Workers, and Misión Peniel farmworker ministries in Florida. Member Jay Swick visits Nicaragua frequently for his work on clean water and agriforestry. We are thrilled to be able to help fund the building of a school for young children in Pantasma, Nicaragua. Internationally, we contribute to Presbyterian Mission Agency and individual missionaries. While we provide financial donations, members are also volunteering at various organizations. The Presbyterian Women and the youth do service projects at the farmworker ministries, too.

In October 2017, we held a mission fair to showcase the many programs the church supports. In November, we hosted a tea for Rev. Rebecca Barnes, author of *50 Ways to Save the Earth* and member of the PC(USA) mission board. This year we plan to hold a discussion group about a book that covers a current issue of concern.

Want to learn more? We meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the church. With so many ministry choices, there is a place for you. If you are already active in a mission, please join us and share what you're doing!

• **New Member Bios**

submitted by Mary Elle Hunter, membership committee



A twenty-year resident of Sarasota, **Sandra (Sandy) Callahan** joined First Presbyterian Church in November 2017. Previously she had lived in Minneapolis, and also on Merritt Island, Florida where she grew up.

During the time she was on Merritt Island, she worked for NASA, keeping a history of the space shuttle missions. Her present position is as an executive assistant to two elderly women, however, her passion is for the time she spends as an artist – painting “en plein air” and capturing the Florida landscape.

Sandy recently adopted a dog from the Humane Society which she has named Buddy. He has taken his place in her house along with her two cats, Tula and Picasso.

She attended the Episcopal Church for the better part of her life, working with the youth, and going on five mission trips to the Dominican Republic, an experience she would be interested in repeating. She also was a choir member at that time.

Sandy believes she is blessed to have found First Presbyterian Church. During the time when she was without a church connection, she had a feeling of emptiness, as if a part of her were missing. Her church family is very important to her and she looks forward to meeting other members of First Presbyterian Church.



Jim Leslie, who joined First Presbyterian Church late last year, spent the first ten years of his life on the Seneca Indian Reservation in upstate New York. He was the second of four sons born to parents of Irish, Scottish and Seneca descent.

The family then moved to a rural Pennsylvania town where their home was without electricity or running water for the first two years, and where Jim and his brothers rode their horse, Prince, for about two miles to a one-room

school house. Once in high school, he was on the baseball, basketball and football teams, and when not playing sports, he worked on a dairy farm.

When Jim was fifteen, his baseball coach invited him to visit his church – the Ivywood Baptist Church, and ultimately he became a born-again Christian. He credits that decision as a focal point, because his Christian belief has provided the guidance and a map for his entire life.

After graduating from high school, Jim traveled across the country, and for two years he worked on numerous construction jobs. Coming home to Pennsylvania, he enrolled in the University of Pittsburgh and later Slippery Rock University and got married to Norma. In 1965 he joined the Marine Corps and went to flight school at Pensacola.

The following years in the Marine Corps were interrupted briefly by a return to grad school, but were marred by the death of his wife, leaving their two children, Shawn and Shan, then in college. After thirty years of service in the Corps, four wars, being wounded three times, and achieving the rank of Colonel, Jim retired and spent the next thirty years as a real estate broker in the Alexandria/Arlington area of Virginia.

During that time, he married again and with Bernadette’s three children and his two, they became a new family. However, she was a cancer victim and passed away two years ago. Last year, he came to Sarasota to spend some time with his daughter, Shan, and her family, while they were vacationing across the street from First Presbyterian Church.

Hearing the bells ring every morning, he decided to visit the church. He liked the sermon, the music, and the friendly members. And so after a successful two-day housing search, he has become a Sarasotan and a member of First Presbyterian. He says he prays many times daily and always asks God for help with large and small decisions. He has been given the guidance that he needs, but not always what he wants. He has been blessed much more than what he deserves, and every day counts his many, many blessings.



• **Presbyterian Women Activities**

February and March are busy times for Presbyterian Women! Won't you join us? All women and their guests are welcome to participate in any PW activity. You don't need to join a circle to attend.

PW Lite on Tuesday, February 6, will be in the fellowship hall at 10:30 a.m. Bring shoe boxes and donations of items to fill them for children at Misión Peniel in Immokalee, FL. We will assemble the boxes. All items should be age-appropriate for children up to 12 years of age and fit in a shoe box. Items for the boxes: toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, wash cloth, small towel, shampoo, deodorant, comb, hair brush, hair accessories, hand and body lotion, socks, t-shirts, underwear, pencils, pencil sharpener, colored pencils, markers, activity books, small games, card games, small puzzles, small stuffed animals, books, sunglasses, craft kits, blunt scissors, crayons, coloring books, and these items for babies: sippy cups, snack bowls, teethers, pacifiers, rattles, powder, lotion, baby shampoo, wipes, socks, onesies, bibs, little shirt and shorts outfits, soft toys. Cindie Moore will also join us. Cindie and her parents have accomplished mission work with the Mam women and their families of Guatemala for many years. Cindie will give us some exciting updates and photos of our Guatemalan friends for the PW ladies who volunteered to be prayer partners last year.

The Annual PW Gathering of Peace River Presbytery is at Burnt Store Presbyterian Church in Punta Gorda, FL on **Saturday, February 17**. The theme is *Christ Our Rock*. Registration is from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. with a continental breakfast. The event begins at 10:00 a.m. with the banner procession, followed by a business meeting, installation of officers, a worship service, and lunch. The \$12 registration fee covers breakfast and lunch. Please call Mary Webb (941) 758-6035 or the church office (941) 955-8119 no later than February 6 to register for this event. Also, please indicate if you want to car pool from the church. Burnt Store is not accepting any late registrations. Payment of the registration fee

can be left in Mary's church mailbox. Please make checks payable to Presbyterian Women FPC. Come have a fun morning and meet other PW women!

The next PW Gathering and Luncheon is Tuesday, March 6 at 11:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Jane Barr will be speaking. You will probably recognize Jane as a member and ruling elder of First Presbyterian. But, did you know that Jane is also an author, professional speaker, and a leadership and communications coach? Jane will be sharing with us wisdom from her book *Wise Woman Leadership: Your Key to Leading with Ease, Grace and Integrity*. We are asking you to bring your favorite salad to share. Drinks, dessert and bread will be provided. If you prefer not to bring a salad, you may pay \$10 in cash or check at the door and PW will purchase a salad. Make checks payable to Presbyterian Women FPC. Make a reservation by calling Mary Webb at (941) 758-6035 or the church office at (941) 955-8119 by noon on Monday, March 5. Please mention whether you will pay at the door or bring a salad.

The Peace River PW spring retreat is March 12 and 13 at DaySpring Episcopal Conference Center, Ellenton, FL. Participants may stay overnight or attend one or both days as a commuter. \$50 scholarships through the Margaret Day Fund of Peace River PW are available if you stay overnight; contact Pamela Lamb at (941) 210-7478 for an application. The theme of the retreat is *God's Guiding Hands*. Each participant must submit her own registration form and payment. Forms are available in the church office and are due no later than February 21. Each church is asked to provide a gift basket for the auction. The theme of our basket is "hands." Items for the basket or cash donations may be delivered to the church office no later than Friday, March 9th. Some examples for the basket are new hand towels, hand lotion and nail polish.

• **Faith Focus Weekend**

Wednesday, January 31 – Sunday, February 4

This winter's Faith Focus Weekend for our congregation and community will be Friday – Sunday, January 31 – February 4. Our keynote speaker will be **Rev. Paul Roberts, president of Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary in Atlanta, GA**—the only seminary in the PC (USA) with a distinctly racial-ethnic heritage.

Please mark your calendar now for our *College of Elders and Deacons dinner* on **Friday evening, February 2**, and Rev. Roberts' *all-church presentation* on **Saturday morning, February 3**. He will also be preaching at our **8:15, 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.** services on **Sunday, February 4**. Please make plans to join us on both Saturday and Sunday.

• **Pastoral Development Seminar**

Wednesday, January 31 – Sunday, February 4

We look forward to welcoming back our five guest pastors continuing their seminar from last October with resource leader Rev. Jorge Sayago-Gonzalez, a Presbyterian minister and singer-songwriter, currently working as the chaplain at St. Stephen's Episcopal Day School in Miami, FL.

In the chapel at 9:00 a.m. on both Thursday and Friday, show your support of these young leaders in the church by listening to their sermons and giving feedback. Come and hear more about their faith journeys in the adult education presentation in the forum on Sunday, February 4, at 10:00 a.m.

• **Biographical Statements of FFW / PDS Leaders and Participants**

January 31 – February 4, 2018



Rev. Paul Roberts
February 2-4, 2018 Faith Focus Weekend Keynote Speaker

Rev. Paul Roberts is president of Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary in Atlanta, GA. The seminary is one of ten of the PC (USA), and the only one that is historically African American. Under Paul's leadership, JCSTS is reinventing itself and has gained prominence as a new model of theological education.

Paul is a native of Stamford, CT and grew up in Bradenton, FL. He graduated from Princeton University in 1985 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in architecture and African American studies. He later received a Master of Divinity degree with a concentration in New Testament Studies from Johnson C. Smith Seminary. Prior to becoming seminary president, Paul was the pastor of Church of the Master PC (USA), an intentionally interracial congregation in Atlanta.

Paul preaches and teaches nationally. He is also a contributing writer to journals, such as the *Presbyterian Outlook* magazine. Recreationally, he enjoys tennis and yard work. Paul and his wife, Nina, have one adult daughter and two teenage sons.



Rev. Jorge Sayago-Gonzalez
2017-2018 Pastoral Development Seminar Leader

Jorge is a Presbyterian minister currently working as the chaplain at St. Stephen's Episcopal Day School in Miami, FL. He has previously served as an associate pastor at Second Presbyterian Church, Louisville, KY.

Jorge is a singer-songwriter with over 15 years of experience as a musician and worship leader in Puerto Rico and the United States (website: jorgesgmusic.com). Jorge finds great energy and joy in the power of liberation and unity through music.

Originally from Puerto Rico, Jorge earned his undergraduate degree in music from the University of Puerto Rico and received his Masters of Divinity from Louisville Seminary.

Jorge has a passion for helping young leaders in the church explore their own spiritual practices and transformation and discover together new tools for ministry. Jorge and his wife, Jannine, enjoy hiking and good music.

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**Rev. Walter Canter, Pastor
Blue Ridge Presbyterian
Church, Ruckersville, VA**

Walter Canter studied technical and scientific communication and geography at James Madison University. He earned his Masters of Divinity at Louisville Seminary. He was in the fencing club at both schools.

Prior to coming to Blue Ridge Presbyterian last fall, Walter was a solo pastor at a church in Tennessee for more than three years. In addition, Walter has worked with a new church development and has been a coordinator at Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference Center. He grew up in rural Appalachian Tennessee. Now, in his first year at Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church, he is just on the other side of the mountain range from where he lived as a child.

Walter is married to Allison who was also raised in the Blue Ridge area. They have a 10-month old daughter named Claire. Walter spends most of his spare time with Claire. He also has a dog named Kiki. Walter enjoys cooking, especially baking bread. His interests also include hiking, camping, forest bathing, and occasionally running. His favorite pastime is relaxing with a book, preferably fiction.



**Rev. Nick Cheek, Pastor
First Presbyterian Church,
Sumter, SC**

Nick Cheek was raised in New Hampshire and attended college at Queens University, Charlotte, NC. While there, he led a campus student ministry. He eventually became the student chaplain, found his calling as a worship leader and pastor, and began his ministry career.

Growing up in the Greek Orthodox Church as an altar boy, Nick had an early desire to serve God. He never wavered from involvement in Christian service—a call that led him to seminary, leading worship services for growing churches, volunteering as a hospital chaplain, serving

as pastor to youth and families, preaching, teaching, and caring for those in need.

Nick served as associate pastor for youth and families at Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church in Severna Park, MD prior to becoming senior pastor at First Presbyterian, Sumter, SC. Nick's wife, Ashley, is also an ordained minister serving as family pastor at the same church. They have three children, Lydia, Nicholas and Ada. As a family, they enjoy riding bikes, playing in parks, and going on east coast adventures. Nick is passionate about running and music. He plays the piano by ear, and he loves to sing, lead worship and compose.



**Rev. Linda L. Jiménez, Pastor
Church of the New Covenant,
Atlanta, GA**

Linda grew up in Vineland, NJ and received her Bachelor's in Religious Studies in 2005 from Montclair State University in New Jersey. She graduated with her Master of Divinity in 2011 from Princeton Theological Seminary. During college, she became involved in InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, a campus ministry, and worked on staff following graduation. She felt called to serve the wider church which led her to Princeton Seminary, her position at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian, and ordination.

Following seminary, Linda served as the first Lilly Resident in Ministry at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City, first as an FTE Transition into Ministry participant and then as an evangelist, as part of planting a new worshipping community in Harlem. Linda has continued her work with the Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE). She has had the opportunity to serve as a small group leader at several Christian leadership convocations around the country.

The church has played a significant role in Linda's life, growing up in a Latin Pentecostal church. Her parents and grandparents were all involved in worship, music and Bible teaching

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• **Biographical Statements of FFW / PDS** (cont. from page 9)

there. She loves singing and is learning to play the ukulele. She also enjoys fashion, reading, and documentaries.



Rev. Krystal Leedy, Associate Pastor for Campus Ministries University Presbyterian Church, Austin, TX

Krystal earned a Bachelor of Arts in youth and family ministry at Abilene Christian University and a Master of Divinity at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. She has previously worked as a chaplain and at Mo-Ranch Christian Conference Center and Summer Camp (west of Austin).

Her ministry interests lie in community-building, pastoral care for college students and young adults, worship, and preaching. She is interested in transitional ministry—ministry in the midst of transitions in life—as well as missions and social justice, particularly in the church’s unique location near the seminary, state capitol, and growing homeless population.

Krystal’s husband, John, participated in our Pastoral Development Seminar in 2014-2015. When she is not at church or having a chai tea with a college student, she is usually at home with John and their daughter, Lorelai. She enjoys writing, cross-stitching, and playing West African drums.



Eric Peltz, Associate Pastor Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC

Eric Peltz is the associate pastor at Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C. where he has worked with the church’s mission, youth, and deacon ministries since 2015.

From 2011-2015 Eric served as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in the rural town of Defiance, OH, and he has been involved in big and small churches in Joliet, IL (his hometown);

Bloomington-Normal, IL; Michigan; and New Jersey. He graduated from Wheaton College with a Bachelor of Arts in Business/Economics in 2008 and received his Master of Divinity at Princeton Theological Seminary in 2011.

Eric is a husband to Ellen and father of four children under age six—Theo, Henry, Eliza, and Waverly. In his free time, he is usually driving his family to a museum, festival, zoo or splashpad in metropolitan DC. When the silence creeps into the apartment around 8:00 p.m., he reads about organizational behavior, gets passionate about the newest podcast, and dreams about starting a social enterprise.

• **Misión Peniel Open House**

Please join Misión Peniel on **Sunday, February 11**, from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. as they celebrate their new location and our partnership (208 Boston Avenue, Immokalee). Come and see what God has been doing through our support!

- Meet the coordinating team and staff
- Tour the mission and community
- Learn about our vision for 2018 and beyond
- Experience the culture of the farmworker community.

• **Treasure Sale Saturday, March 17**

We have started collecting goodies for our **Treasure Sale** to help support our children and youth summer adventures! We are looking for good resale items (no clothes, please).

You can bring your donations to church and place them in the basket in the fellowship hall entrance or the sanctuary narthex on Sundays.





• **Don't Miss These Upcoming Concerts**
Co-Sponsored by FPC

• **Musica Sacra of Sarasota presents *Requiem* by John Rutter, with orchestra**

Monday, February 26 - 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary

• **International Guitar Night featuring four acclaimed finger-style artists:** Lulo Reinhardt, Calum Graham, Marek Pasieczney, and Michael Chapdelaine

Sunday, March 11 - 8:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall

Presented with Fogartyville Peace & Education Center

A limited number of discount tickets will be available in the church office for FPC members and friends.

Music Sacra \$20

International Guitar Night \$20

• **The Annual Congregational Meeting**

This meeting will be held **Sunday, February 25**, at 12:00 noon in the sanctuary. On the agenda will be receiving reports of the session, deacons, and other organizations of the church; transacting any business of the church corporation; and pastors' terms of call.

• **Wednesday Nights at First**

Claim one night for dinner with your church family. Gather any time after 5:00 p.m. for games, homework help, or conversation. Dinner will be served buffet-style at 5:45 p.m. Fun activities for all will round out our meal together. Small groups for children, youth, and adults run from 6:30-7:15 p.m. The cost is \$7 for adults, \$3 for children.

February 14 - Ash Wednesday

February 28

March 14

March 28

April 11

April 25

• **Think On These Things**
Desires

Each day may I show Thy chastening, O God;
 May I speak each day according to Thy wisdom,
 Each day and night may I be at peace with Thee.

Each day may I count the causes of Thy mercy,
 May I each day give heed to Thy laws;
 Each day may I compose to Thee a song,
 May I harp each day Thy praises, O God.

May I each day give love to Thee, Jesu,
 Each night may I do the same;
 Each day and night, dark and light,
 May I laud Thy goodness to me, O God.

Celtic Prayer from
The Carmina Gadelica

I bless the Lord who gives me counsel;
 in the night also my heart instructs me.
 I keep the Lord always before me;
 because he is at my right hand,
 I shall not be moved.

- Psalm 16:7-8



Christ caring for people
 through people.

**SOMETIMES
 LIFE CAN BE A
 STRUGGLE**

**Loneliness...Loss...Divorce...Illness
 Spiritual Emptiness...Depression**

STEPHEN MINISTERS ARE HERE TO HELP

If you would like a Stephen Minister to call on you, please contact the church office (941-955-8119) to speak with Pastor Glen Bell (x108), Pastor Kelly Fitzgerald (x106) or Stephen Ministry Leader Steven Phillips (x124). Visit our link on the church website: <http://www.firstpressarasota.org/stephenministry.html>.

• **SURE Events**

On Sunday, January 7 we announced in the church bulletin the resignation of SURE executive director, Rev. Ryan McBride who will be ending his ministry with us in early 2018. We have appreciated Ryan's leadership with SURE and pray God's blessings on him as he becomes the full-time senior pastor of Twelve Springs Church. We are pleased Will Newton has been hired as the new SURE executive director and has already contacted our SURE team. The passion Will brings for justice and his experience of working on behalf of the marginalized is exciting.

Meeting with Will, SURE contact person Dorothy Murphy and team leader Jim Murphy, discussed what needs to be done between now and the Nehemiah Assembly on **Monday, March 19**, at 6:00 p.m. at the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium.

Last year First Presbyterian Church had 93 members and friends in attendance, making it second place for all congregations. The 2018 commitment is 100 FPC people and friends in attendance.

When you are phoned, emailed, or contacted in person, please answer, "Yes, I will be at the Nehemiah Assembly on March 19. Because my neighbors, friends and relatives are all interested in affordable housing, civil citation and restorative justice (out of school suspensions), they will be there with me. Thanks for inviting me."

In preparation for the Nehemiah Assembly, on **Monday, February 26**, our congregation will be joining 19 other churches at Trinity Christian Fellowship Center, 1925 Northgate Blvd. Updates regarding affordable housing, civil citation, and restorative justice will be given. We'll witness the commitments made by each church so that we are assured that 1,000 people will be in attendance at the Nehemiah Assembly. The church bus (first come/first served) will be available at 5:00 p.m. for both the rally and Nehemiah Assembly. Please call the office for a seat (941) 955-8119.

Affordable Housing Update: Prayers were requested January 11 and 12 as our Oregon affordable housing expert Michael Anderson met

with five county and five city commissioners. At these meetings, team leaders Bob Kirkpatrick and Phil Kuebbeler, and SURE members Pat Higgins, Mary Willis and Judy Kuebbeler represented FPC.

Civil Citation Update: SURE, along with other Florida-based groups, spoke with Representative Ahern about the Florida House bill that he is presenting to promote and institute juvenile citation statewide.

Restorative Justice Update: Team leader Phil Kuebbeler attended the January 8 meeting. Three members of this group will travel to Jacksonville to observe the out-of-school suspension program.



• **Birthdays**

1	Robert Noble, III Jeannetta Mouncey Barbara Epperson Kara Delaney Charlotte Chapdelain Spencer Chapdelain Ida Tidwell	12	Julia Boehm
2	Allison Lindell Judy Kelly Sue Nurczyk Diana O'Neill Dwight Ferguson Rogers Knopik	13	Sally Scott Susan Robertson
3	Claire Steiner Kym Biggar, III Stephie Fleming Betsy Cairns Kathleen Harmon	14	Doris Stelzer Ellen Gesell Charlie Armstrong
4	Lauren Van Nostrand	15	Wes Burquest, Jr Dick Schlup Betty Fee
5	Robert Schwartzkopf	16	Tristan O'Neill Stephen Gifford-Bell
6	Ernestine Harris Shawn Gantert-O'Malley Connor Davis	17	Eleanor Strait Cy Wofsy Jeff Steinwachs Al Washington
7	Barbara Hostetler Jon Raynor	18	Martin Sabin Jack O'Neill Tammy Taaffe
8	Cajun Camastro	19	Chad Anderson
9	Leigh Armstrong Emma John	20	David Soper Susan Morrison-Narring
10	Wesley Hord Siena Cook Stephanie Tarnowsky Mike Frandsen	22	Beth Knopik
11	Jo Ann Heburn Rob Harrison Linda Parks Shelby Tatum Nikki Garraus	23	Matthew Ulsh Lynn Riechmann Lydia Chapdelain Suzanne Messick Sandy LaRose Jessica Armstrong
		24	Irene Halstead Beverly Koach
		26	Emily Rickloff
		27	Cindy Balistreri Sharon Oxley
		28	Jeanne Baum Marcia Morris Ray Hord



**Blessings from
your church family**

• **Anniversaries**

1	Bill & Linda Wishart	26	Charlie & Dee Stottlemyer
3	David & Maryann Boehm		Bill & Jo Ann Heburn
4	John & Elizabeth Allen		Todd & Emily Weitekamp
5	Bill & Judy Bosold		Phil & Jodilyn Khuu
13	Jerry & Heather Blanton	28	Ed & Alia Wilson
16	Denis & Julianne Romanenko		
17	David & Karen Johnston		
18	Bob & Diane Bittner		
25	Jerry & Roxanne George		

Cross Connections is a monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota, Florida, Volume 36 Issue #2. Please submit articles for the next issue by February 15, 2018. Articles submitted are proofed and edited.



Cross Connections

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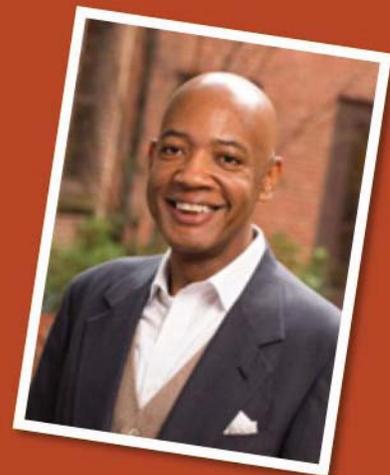


RACE, RACISM AND THE REFORMATION

Exploring God's call in our daily relationships
to live intentionally as people of faith

free community presentation at
First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota

**SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 3
9:30 - 11:00 AM**



**Rev. Paul Roberts, President
Johnson C. Smith Seminary, Atlanta**