

# FIRST NEWS



January 27, 2023

Your Weekly News from  
First Presbyterian Church  
St. Petersburg

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP  
this Sunday, January 29, 2023  
*Fourth Sunday after Epiphany / Mission Sunday*

SANCTUARY SERVICE at 11 AM (Sanctuary)

Rev. Ginny Ellis  
Sermon: "Walking the Path"  
Scripture: [I Corinthians 1:18-25](#), [Micah 6:1-8](#)

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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](http://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 worship service bulletin.

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



We will be joined by GUEST SOLOIST, Susan Hellman Spatafora, this Sunday!

Soprano Susan Hellman Spatafora has performed with companies including Palm Beach Opera, Opera Tampa, Sarasota Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, Central City Opera, St. Petersburg Opera, South Florida Lyric Opera and Green Mountain Opera. An avid art song recitalist, Spatafora has performed concerts with IlluminArts at the Bass Museum, Miami Center for Architecture & Design, and in the virtual concert "Unmasked" in collaboration with ICA Miami and Girl Power. Spatafora has won prizes in the Florida Grand Opera Young Patronesses of the Opera competition, the Palm Beach Opera International Vocal Competition, and the National Society of Arts and Letters Voice Competition. A graduate of the master's program in voice at the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati and bachelor's program in voice from Indiana University, Spatafora has been a participant in the EPCASO and Opera Lucca programs in Italy, as well as young artist programs at Central City Opera, Sarasota Opera and the Glimmerglass Festival.



**Please remember in prayer:** Millie Bradley, Ellen Carnahan, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Sandra Fay, Teresa Gasper, Margo Hart, Dorothy Harte, Larry & Diane Heath, Agnes Ingles, Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, Susan Key, Alisa Keys, Taffey Lichter, Dave & Pam Malone, Tony McCoy, Nancy McLaughlin, Alan Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Janet Poling, Henry Shaw, Judy Smith, Jane Snoke, Marsha Starkey

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:** 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.*



**Congratulations, Captain!**

U.S. Army CPT Liam Letterman Shelton, son of Gretchen Letterman and Bill Shelton, has graduated from the Military Intelligence Captains Career Course at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. He and his family will be stationed in South Korea later this year. Proud father Bill attended the ceremony with daughter-in-law Dakotah Shelton, pictured with Liam, who was baptized at First Presbyterian Church and attended its Day School.

**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](mailto:amym@fpc-stpete.org).

## From the Desk of Pastor Ginny

Dear Friends,

1. I can almost smell the pancakes! Mission Sunday is this week! Plan to join us in the Fellowship Hall from 9:00 to 10:45 for our PANCAKE BREAKFAST and MISSION EVENT. We'll enjoy music from our Praise Band as well as songs from children at St. Petersburg Primary School. For the mission project, we'll be assembling care packages of diapers and baby wipes. We will also decorate canvas totes and fill them with children's books (preschool and elementary ages). What a good day to welcome school families, make new church friends, and enjoy fellowship with old friends as well. And eat pancakes! See you there! (Then we get to go upstairs for the 11:00 Sanctuary worship service.) OH, and don't forget to bring diapers, wipes, and children's books (new or gently used) to contribute for the mission project!
2. Last week in my sermon I read a wonderful prayer by Thomas Merton. You'll find that prayer below. Keep it: you may use it in your own spiritual journey.
3. Are you interested in what I am reading as I try to "go deeper" in my faith? I am reading *Sailboat Church* by Joan Gray and *Horse*, by Geraldine Brooks (okay: not a spiritual book!). I am listening to podcasts: *Turning to the Mystics* with James Finley (I have begun with Season 1 on Thomas Merton and season 6 on Julian of Norwich.) What are you reading or listening to?

Love and peace to you all,  
Ginny Ellis

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A good prayer for all of us by Thomas Merton:

*My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always, though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.*

**Annual Congregational Meeting - Sunday, February 19**

The Session has called our Annual Congregation meeting for the close of the 11:00 Sanctuary service on Sunday February 19. At this meeting, the congregation will hear reports on our ministry in 2022, will elect the 2023 Officer Nominating Committee and our corporate officers for 2023, will be asked to approve Rules of Governance for the church (click [HERE](#) to view a copy of that document; paper copies will be available on Sunday mornings). The church has had corporate bylaws for years but has not had a set of ecclesiastical governing rules. This document is an important addition to the church operations manual.

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### Lectio/Visio Divina

Join in the Zoom devotion time at 10 a.m. on Mondays for the practice of Lectio/Visio Divina, a contemplative study of Scripture (and corresponding art) that will be used in worship the following Sunday. Click on the link [HERE](#) to join or enter meeting code 859 9201 7591 and password *lectio*.

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**CORNER**

### Fifth Sunday Mission Sunday - Jan. 29 *Pancakes, Children's Books, and Diapers*

Here's the latest info from the Mission Committee on our Fifth Sunday on January 29. Let us know you are planning to come by clicking [HERE](#) (so we'll know how many pancakes to make!).

Items needed from members and friends to be sorted and distributed:

1. Baby diapers, all sizes plus baby wipe'ems. Sharp-eyed shoppers say you can get good deals on these at Dollar General and Walmart.
2. Children's books ONLY. New or gently used books, grades Kindergarten thru 5th Grade.



What we will be doing after slurping down our delicious pancake breakfast?

1. For the children's books, we have 45 canvas backpacks to be creatively decorated with stickers and sharpies, then filled with a few books. PLUS, there will be bookmarks to be decorated with messages and drawings.
2. The diapers and wipes will be sorted and placed in bags.



**Who do we need help from?** Children and their parents from our church and from our day school, St. Petersburg Primary. Other children from ages 10-100+.

**What non-profits will be receiving the diapers and wipes and the books and canvas backpacks?** Resurrection House, CASA, and COSA (Operation PAR's pre-school).

**What's our schedule on Sunday, January 29?**

**9:00 AM:** In Fellowship Hall, we'll sit down for a delicious pancake breakfast

brought to us by the Christian Education/Fellowship Committee with help from the Men's Meal Ministry. We'll also be entertained not only by the FPC Praise Band but also by a children's chorus from the day school.

**10:00 AM** or thereabouts: Children, parents, grandparents and otherwise will begin decorating the backpacks and filling them with books. We'll also be stuffing and sorting for distribution the diapers and wipes.

**11:00 AM:** We'll move to the Sanctuary for our worship service. Please Note: There will be only one service on January 29th.

If you have questions of the Mission Committee, please contact Moderator Sandi Averitt (727.424.9300 or sanaveritt1@gmail.com).

Questions of the Christian Education/Fellowship Committee? Please contact Moderator Kyle Brinkman (727.455.6931 or browncongo@yahoo.com).

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## Staff Matters

### Five Questions for Dave Hunt

"I like constructing things, and I also like tearing things down," says Dave Hunt, referencing his earlier career in engineering. "In fact, I'm tearing out my kitchen right now." Dave joined our church staff last September as Coordinator of Pastoral Care. He spent three decades or so in the corporate world before deciding he was hearing God's call for serving others more tangibly, either through non-profit work or church work. "I'm not sure how I sensed this call. There's always been a warm, fuzzy feeling, a comfortable feeling when doing the 'Lord's work,' whether it's building stables, mopping floors, setting up chairs...whatever."

As you know by now, the Personnel and Administration Committee is profiling our staff members on the week of their birthdays. Dave's, however, was a week ago Wednesday, January 18.

"My corporate career took me around the world twice; I lived in Japan for 16 months." Much of his career was with Mazak, the global machine tool manufacturer based in Japan. Back in the day, Dave earned a degree in manufacturing engineering from the University of Cincinnati. He grew up in Cincinnati and was working there with Westwood Presbyterian when he decided to move to Florida two years ago, first to Brooksville and then here to St. Petersburg. "I'm doing no more winters in Ohio." His son Ben, 28, lives in Chicago and Eddie, 26, lives in Ohio.



**We'd like to ask you a few questions, Dave:**

**Q1:** What do you like about your job at First Presbyterian?

**Dave:** Getting people engaged in the mission of our church takes a lot of energy. I love it. I love meeting those who've been here and those who are new. This is the kind of work I'm being called to, yet it still doesn't completely

fulfill what I sense my call is. I'm still trying to figure that out.

Q2: I understand you like to cook.

Dave: Funny you should ask. I like cooking for 75 to 200 people, but I'm stymied when it comes to cooking at home for a handful of folks.

Q3: Interesting. So what's your favorite food?

Dave: Wow... I don't know. I'll have to get back to you on that. But I haven't missed a meal yet.

Q4: What's your favorite hobby?

Dave: I love woodworking, especially building wood furniture. I built out a 2,000-foot speakeasy room for a county commissioner in Ohio [below]. The smallest things I've done are cutting boards.



Q5: You say work has led you around the world twice. If you could visit one spot in the world today, where would you go?

Dave: I'd go right back to Japan. For one thing I was tall there, but not so much here in the States. More importantly, the Japanese are so friendly and inviting. When I lived there, I became conversant in the language, taking a conversational language course every morning for several hours.

Thank you, Dave, for giving us a peek into your life. Happy belated birthday to you.

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## Faith & Fiction

February 6, 7 PM, Room N-123

The book for February is *The Paris Library* by Janet Skeslien Charles. A wonderfully moving and interesting fiction book about the American Library in Paris during WWII. Although it is not a book about the war, the war does affect the characters' lives. In essence, it is about books and lovers. Cynthia Garrels will lead our discussion. We will meet on the first Monday of the month, February 6th, in Room N-123, at 7:00 p.m.



Also, it is time for us to begin collecting book possibilities for next year. If you have any books that you think would fit our description of a book containing an element of faith, please contact Linda Santoro (lindajsantoro@gmail.com). Most of our choices are fiction, but we do like to include a non-fiction or classic read every once in a while.



## Health for Honduras Fundraiser

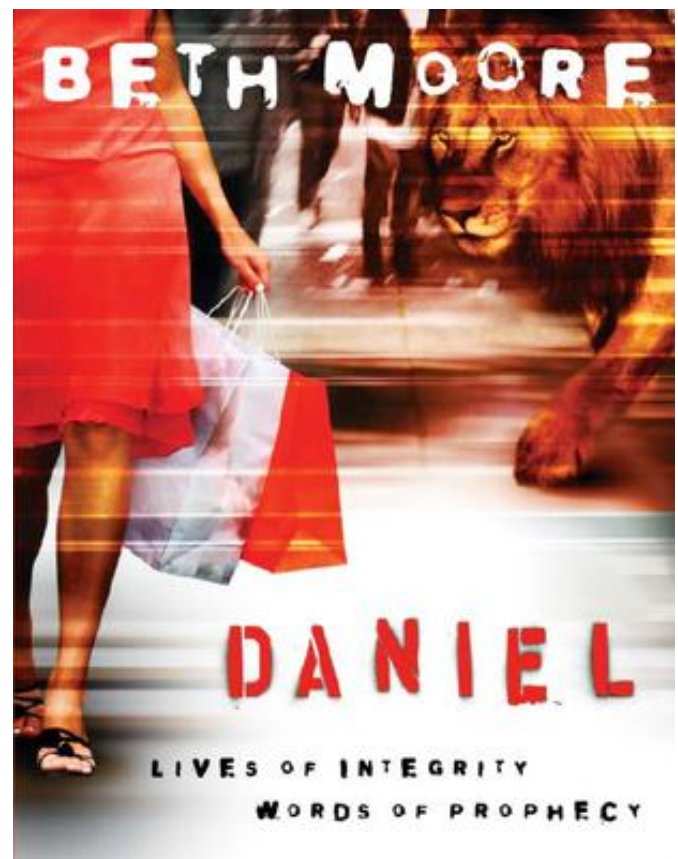
Please join us on **Saturday, February 11, 2023 at 6 PM** at St. Thomas Episcopal Church (1200 Snell Isle Blvd NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33704).

Tickets are available at [FFIM.org](http://FFIM.org) (\$50 per person). Heavy hors d'oeuvres and wine generously provided by Red Mesa.

### **Daniel: Lives of Integrity – Words of Prophecy** Tuesdays, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m. in the Youth Center

Everyone is welcome – no previous Bible study experience is necessary! This 12-week study will be in 2 parts:

- Part 1 (through Feb. 21) we will study Daniel's life as he faced the kind of pressures and temptations Christians encounter today. Daniel models how to develop integrity in an enticing world. (Note: there will be a 2 week break between Part 1 & Part 2)
- Part 2 (6 weeks: March 14 – April 18) we will explore the thrilling prophecies from the time of Daniel through the coming of Christ.

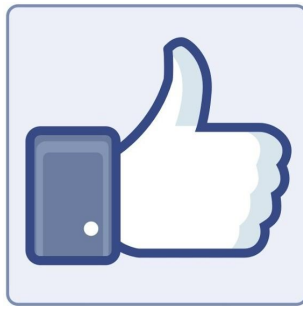


Workbooks will be available for \$20. Sorry, there is no childcare available at this time. Questions? Contact April Hussung at (727) 420-1758 or stapler39@aol.com.

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 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 February 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](#)
- **Tuesdays, 7 PM**, Christian Meditation, Chapel (meets in-person the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month)
- **Wednesdays, 7:00 PM**, Praise Band Rehearsal, Youth Center
- **Thursdays, 6 PM**, Bell Choir Rehearsal, Choir Suite



- **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](mailto:pjfwon@gmail.com))**

Upcoming Events:

- **Sunday, January 29, MissionSunday, 9 AM pancake breakfast and 10 AM mission project in Fellowship Hall, and 11 AM worship service in the Sanctuary**
- **Monday, February 6, 7 PM, Faith & Fiction**
- **Saturday, February 11, 6 PM, "Health for Honduras" Fundraiser**

## 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](mailto:amym@fpc-stpete.org).

**First Presbyterian Church**  
 701 Beach Drive NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
 (727) 822-2031 | [www.fpcstpete.com](http://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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