

FIRST NEWS



June 23, 2023

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

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
this Sunday, June 25, 2023
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

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

Guest Preacher: Rev. Tony Winter
Sermon: "I Was Blind, Now I See"
Scripture: [Psalm 23](#), [John 9:1-41](#)

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 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 11 AM worship service bulletin.

Guest Preacher this Sunday: Rev. Tony Winter

Reverend Tony Winter has been serving as an ordained (2014) PC(USA) minister in a chaplain role at Moffitt Cancer Center for 7 years. Just prior to that, he moved from Minnesota with his wife Jackie, and they added a daughter (Olivia). Tony's first career was as a radio broadcaster. Tony was probably most inspired by his mother who has been an active elder and/or deacon since before he was born. Tony is not afraid of being in front of crowds as he was a DJ for 20 years for parties and has been doing pulpit supply even longer. Tony and family just recently moved to Dunedin, very near to family.



June Music

Click [HERE](#) to see the exciting line-up of music for our 11 AM Sanctuary Service in June, featuring local musicians who identify as LBGTQIA+.



Please remember in prayer: Millie Bradley, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Sandra Fay, Teresa Gasper, Jane Harris, Margo Hart, Dorothy Harte, Larry & Diane Heath, Agnes Ingles, Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, Susan Key, Alisa Keys, Taffey Lichter, Dave & Pam Malone, Ginger McCoy, Nancy McLaughlin, John Ogden, Alan Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Henry Shaw, Jane Snoke

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.

From the Desk of Pastor Ginny

Dear Friends,

Our Honduras group returned over the weekend. They tell us they had a GREAT week, working well together and providing medical and dental care to hundreds of villagers in Honduras. It turns out their getting home was their biggest challenge! Ongoing rains delayed the flight into Miami, diverting the plane to Fort Myers, then back to Miami, but too late to make a flight home on Saturday. From there the stories get even crazier but everyone got home safely by Sunday morning or afternoon. Once again, we are reminded that our own plans don't always match up with what life brings. That's true of rain and air flights into Miami. It is also true of health issues and financial situations. It is true of the people around us and the choices they make. Life happens, as they say. But I know that the balance to that is that God loves. *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear.* Psalm 46: 1-2a

As summer settles in and the heat surrounds us, remember to hold your faith strong, to let the joy of Jesus fill your heart and lift you past the fears and uncertainties. Hold onto the promises. Mainly: that *nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Romans 8: 38-39.

I will be taking some time to be in the North Carolina mountains with my family. If you are in St. Petersburg on Sundays, please make the effort to be at church for worship; your presence makes a difference, for yourself and for others! I will see you in early July.

Blessings,
Ginny

Power Hour Sunday School Class

The Power Hour Sunday School class will be taking a summer break in July and August. Class will resume on September 10.

First Presbyterian Church of St. Petersburg welcomes and affirms the gifts of all people. As we end the month of June, we invite you to join us as we celebrate love, inclusion, and diversity. Experience uplifting worship services filled with relevant sermons and special musical guests. Together, we will explore meaningful ways to embrace our diverse community and foster a spirit of acceptance.



[Participate with FPC in the St Pete Pride Parade](#)

First Presbyterian Church will participate in the downtown St. Pete Pride Parade tomorrow, **Saturday, June 24th**. Our church van will serve as our float, offering a cool and comfortable respite from the heat as we walk in support of the LGBTQIA+ community. The parade starts at 6 PM. **Church participants** are invited to park at the church and will be shuttled over to church van (which will already be in place in the parade line-up). The shuttle will be leaving the church at 5:30.

Let us join together as a loving and inclusive community, spreading God's message of acceptance and compassion. #FPCSTPETE #LoveInclusionDiversity #PrideMonth #WeWelcomeAll

A Special **Red**, **White**, and **Blue** Sunday - July 2

Wear your RED, WHITE and BLUE and come worship the FREEDOM God gives us on Sunday, July 2 at 9 a.m. in the Youth Center CONNECT Service (with coffee and donuts served all morning) AND at 11 a.m. in the SANCTUARY Service (with a lemonade, tea, and cookie reception following). Join us in praising God together!



Church ***Shine*** Day – July 7

Would you like to help us honor God by **shining up** our church... that is cleaning, clearing out unwanted stuff and organizing the things we need to do our ministry in the best way possible? To that end, we are scheduling a Church "Shine" Day on Friday, July 7 from 9:30 am till we break for lunch! Serious shiners may choose to work into the afternoon! You may drop by for as long as you are able to help us get started on this BIG project! Some of the work will be physical, while other jobs can be done seated at a table. With many hands, food, drink, and music, it is going to be a FUN shine day! Please mark your calendars and plan to come!

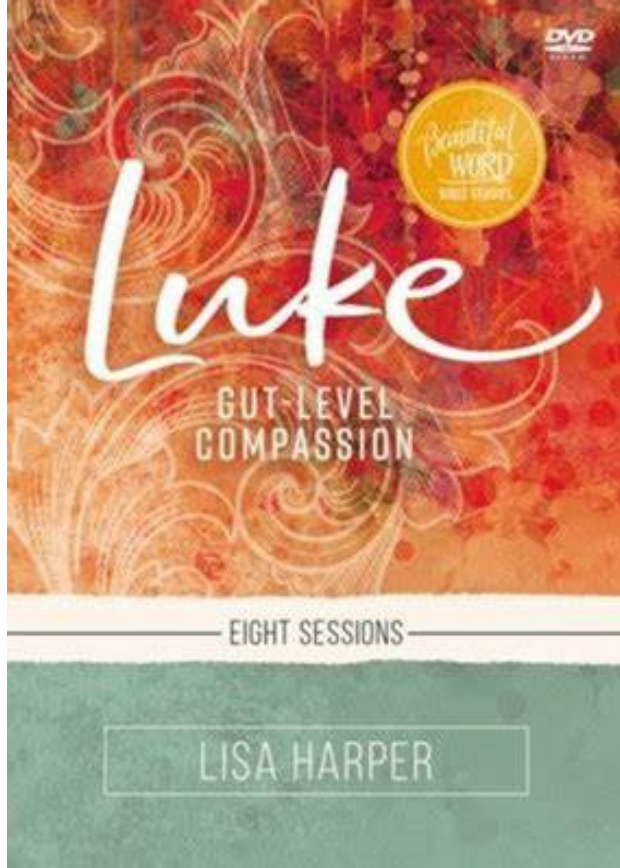
Exciting things are happening in the office at First Presbyterian Church! We are currently in the process of upgrading our church database. This new program is called **Realm**. It will offer more ways for our members and friends to connect with the church and with each other online. This new system will take a little while to roll out to everyone in the congregation, so stay tuned for more information as we get the ball rolling!



Some of you may have already noticed the more user-friendly, updated look of our online giving webpage. If not, you can check it out [HERE](#). Please note that if you already had a recurring gift set up using our old online system, you don't need to do anything! This should be a seamless transition. If you do see anything that looks different, or if you have any questions at all about this transition, please feel free to contact the Church Office any time!

**Ladies, you are invited to
Lisa Harper's new Bible Study!
Luke: Gut-Level Compassion**

For 8 weeks we will study the humanity and compassion of Jesus shared by Luke. The great



news woven throughout the Gospel according to Luke is that perfection is not a prerequisite for deep and personal relationship with Jesus!

Join us on Tuesday mornings
through August 8 (not meeting July 4)
9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
in the Youth Center

Workbooks (including streaming video access for all sessions) will be available for \$25. We know it's summer – come when you can! No previous Bible study experience is needed. Bring a friend! Sorry, at this time there is no childcare available. Questions? April Hussung: 727-420-

1758 or stapler39@aol.com.

Beach Drive Forum #3 (June 14)

We are sorry if you missed it! Dr. Kelli Cross enlightened those lucky enough to hear her share her great storehouse of knowledge about Food Is Medicine, with fascinating facts and data. Yes, red dye affects our children adversely. Not just an apple a day keeps the doctor away as we age, but a whole rainbow of fruits and vegetables and lean, organic proteins help! Growing your own veggies is another great way to help get and stay healthy. Look up info on terracotta earth boxes and check out spring water with minerals. Probiotics are important for good gut health as is staying away from too much sugar. Now, the self-discipline piece is another matter, but the healthier we eat, the less we crave what is not healthy.

The food served by our Beach Drive Forum Committee was delicious – fresh fruit and veggies, red pepper and jalapeno humus, spinach dips, fresh homemade pita, crackers and wow! what an assortment of cheese and meat on our charcuterie board table, along with fig jam, deviled eggs and nuts. The desserts-in-moderation table was both sensible and delicious with bite-sized treats! We know you are sorry you missed it, too (especially the fudge!)





Our next Beach Drive Forum is coming to FPC on Wednesday, September 20 when we will welcome St. Pete's own Poet Laureate, Gloria Munoz as our keynote speaker. The food spread will include notable inspirations to tickle your fancy as we promote the ARTS in a variety of ways all month. Plan now to be there!

Staff Matters

Five Questions for Jack Rain

"I wrote the pastor of this church and asked if I could practice on its new organ," says Jack Rain. "And the pastor told me, 'No.'" That was 1967, when Jack was still in college. He had recently attended our church's dedication ceremony for our new organ, and for him it was love at first sound.

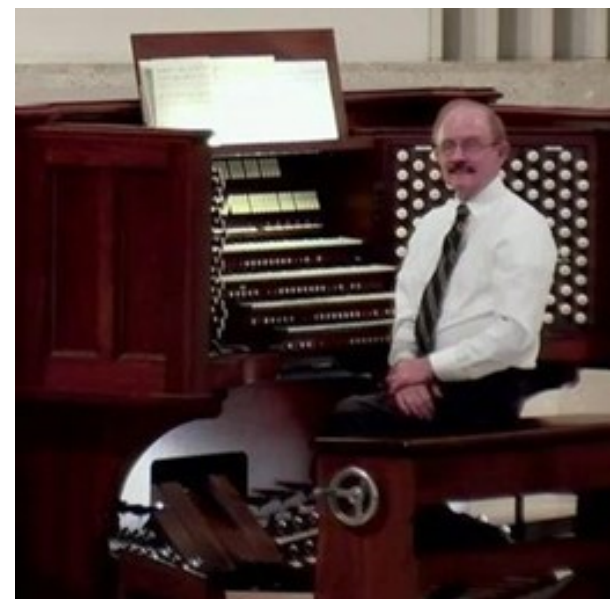
That pastor (the late Rev. Manny Douglass, for you old-timers) did say, however, that "I could practice if I were to take lessons from First Presbyterian's organist at the time. So I did."

(As you're aware by now, our Personnel & Administration committee profiles our staffers the week of their birthdays, and Jack's birthday is tomorrow, July 1, three days short of being an Independence Day baby.)

Back then, Jack was the organist for Tampa's Hyde Park Presbyterian, and he often trekked over the bridge to take lessons with FPC's George Boyd. Not long after starting these lessons, Boyd took a position in Detroit. "He suggested I apply for his job."

Jack did, and he got the job while still in college.

If anyone or anything is an icon at First Presbyterian, our distinguished organist Jack Rain certainly stands among them. He's been here almost as long as the burning bush that's ablaze on our church's prow. This marks his 54th year, and he and our organ have virtually merged into one voice. Over the course of his career here, Jack says he's served with six installed pastors, starting with Rev. Douglass, and an equal number of interim pastors.



Jack grew up in Tampa, graduating from Robinson High in 1965; Jack's father had been in the Army. His only sibling, Robin, now lives in Burbank, CA. He subsequently graduated from USF-Tampa with a major in Spanish and minor in French.

He's been an adjunct professor at USF-Tampa for years now, teaching what's called *Language Diction for Singers*. And that means what? "I work with serious singers, enabling them to correctly pronounce—and sing—words in Italian, German, and French."

As with our other staffers, Jack, we have five questions for you...

Q1: Aside from English, do you speak any other languages as needed?

Jack: Yes, I have a Hispanic neighbor and we chat on occasion in Spanish. And I'm also fluent in French and to a lesser degree in Portuguese.

Q2: When did you become interested in playing the organ?

Jack: Well, the first instrument I picked up was the violin in elementary school. Then when I was 11, I began taking piano lessons and did so for 7 to 8 years. I was in my late teens when I began to practice and play the organ. I was asked to play evening services at Bayshore Methodist, then I took a job at Davis Islands Presbyterian (now Bayshore Presbyterian). From there I became the organist at Hyde Park Presbyterian. So, it and the piano are the two instruments I've played over the past 55-plus years.

Q3: Do you have any hobbies aside from music?

Jack: Music obviously is my avocation as well as my hobby. But I do love to travel. I've been all over the U.S. and Canada every summer attending the American Guild of Organists conventions. I've also been to Europe 14 times, often traveling with other organists to visit some of the great churches there. I've been fortunate to play the great organ at the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris as well as play in more than 90 other cathedrals and churches across Europe. Moreover, I've had the privilege of giving organ recitals in Vienna and Mexico City.



Q4: Do you have a favorite religious hymn?

Jack: Hmm...yes, I do. It's called, [Savior, Again To Thy Dear Name We Raise](#). Interestingly, it's not in our latest hymnal. (You can listen to it and follow its words by clicking the link above.)

Q5: Clearly, the organ and piano are passions of yours. Are you willing to share

with us how your passions and skills have enabled you to grow spiritually, to grow within God's Spirit?

Jack: After a lifetime of playing in various churches, I cannot help but be influenced by the teachings of the church. Even our church building inspires me. To this day, every time I walk into our Sanctuary, I feel a sense of awe that God's presence is among us. The "floating roof" effect that architect Harold Wagoner designed gives the illusion that the ceiling extends to heaven and creates in me, and hopefully in others, a sense of spirituality. My passion for music tries to build upon this spiritual sense as I choose music appropriate for each Sunday of the year. I hope that my music—whether it is loud or soft, fast or slow, contemporary or classical—will move each listener into a closer communion with God, just as our building's architecture is designed to do.

Thank you, Jack, for sharing a slice of your life with us...and for your insights. Happy birthday!



Save The Date: September 17 "Hope for Ukraine" Concert

Our church will host a "Hope for Ukraine" concert on Sunday, September 17 at 4 p.m., presented by the Kyiv Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. These talented women will tour the southeastern United States September 11 - October 16 to raise money to support their mission of humanitarian aid to widows, orphans, and war victims. Currently the men of Ukraine are not allowed to leave the country due to the ongoing conflict with Russia.

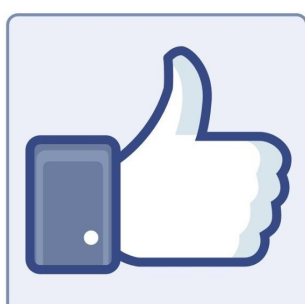
We are excited and honored to host this group. There are numerous opportunities for our members and friends to ensure the success of this event. Watch First News over the next few months to find out how you can help!

For additional information [click HERE](#).

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!



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 July 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 203
- **Sundays, 9 AM**, Connect Worship Service, Youth Center or [Online](#)
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Faith Journey Sunday School Class, Room S-202
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, Power Hour Sunday School Class, (on summer break until September 10)
- **Sundays, 11 AM**, Sanctuary Worship Service, Sanctuary or [Online](#)

- **Mondays, 10 AM**, Lectio Divina (on summer break until August 14)

- **Tuesdays, 9 AM**, Ladies' Bible Study, Youth Center
- **Tuesdays, 7 PM**, Christian Meditation (on summer break until August 8)

- **Wednesdays, 7 PM**, Praise Band Rehearsal, Youth Center

- **Thursdays, 6 PM**, Bell Choir Rehearsal (on summer break)
- **Thursdays, 7 PM**, Chancel Choir Rehearsal (on summer break)

- **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)

Upcoming Events:

- **Saturday, June 24**, FPC participates in the St Pete Pride Parade
- **Monday, June 26, 1:30 PM**, Card Fellowship
- **Tuesday, July 4**, Church Office will be closed in observance of Independence Day
- **Friday, July 7, 9:30 AM**, Church "Shine" Day

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.

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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.



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