

FIRST NEWS



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

September 17, 2021

WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY

Join us at 10 AM in the Sanctuary
for an In-Person or Online Worship Service
this Sunday, September 19
Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Rev. Megan McMillan

Scriptures: [Psalm 54](#), [James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a](#), [Mark 9:30-37](#)

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



FPC Mask Policy

Reminder: in response to rising cases of COVID-19 and in conjunction with updated CDC guidelines, FPC St. Pete has re-implemented a **mandatory mask policy indoors** during worship and all other indoor campus activities.

Music This Sunday

The Chancel Choir returns to lead worship this Sunday, singing "For the Beauty of the Earth" by John Rutter. All are welcome to join us for rehearsal at 9:30

AM in the choirroom. Regular Chancel Choir rehearsals begin this Thursday, September 23 from 7:00 - 9:00 PM in the choir room.

Praise Band Preview - Let's Sing Together!

There is nothing quite like the sound of a congregation singing. This week, your FPC Praise Band is going to make it easy for you to sing along. We will be performing contemporary versions of two hymns that you likely know: *Jesus Paid It All* and *In Christ Alone*. Click the links below to check out the modern versions. We look forward to seeing - and hearing - you on Sunday!

[Jesus Paid It All](#)
[In Christ Alone](#)

The flowers in the Sanctuary this Sunday are given to the glory of God and in memory of Sarah Fechter by her family.

If you would like to honor or memorialize a loved one with chancel flowers, please fill out a green envelope, available in the church pew. Enclose your donation of \$45 with the memo "Chancel flowers." Flower envelopes may be dropped in the offering plate or delivered to the church office.



***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: Guy Anderson, Millie Bradley, Bob Burkhardt, Carol Daniel, Pat Eckert, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Sandra Fay, Teresa Gasper, Elizabeth Hammer, John & Dorothy Harte, Larry & Diane Heath, Agnes Ingles, Russ Johnson, Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, Alisa Keys, Jean Kohler, Margie Laughlin, Taffey Lichter, Dave & Pam Malone, Nancy McLaughlin, Karen Mossman, Peter Pav, Alan Pfleider, Richard Pfleider, Janet Poling, Jane Pruitt, Ken Robinson, Henry Shaw, Judy Smith, Jane Snoke

Please continue to lift our church up in your prayers during this time of transition.

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 Juliá, 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.

Update from the Presbytery of Tampa Bay Administrative Commission

Greetings from your Administrative Commission,

We welcome Rev. Ginny Simmons Ellis! Rev. Ellis started as the temporary stated supply pastor this week and will continue working with First Presbyterian Church until we hire an interim pastor and complete our other work in support of the session and the church. [For more information about Rev. Ellis, please see article below!]

The interim pastor search continues as the ministry information form was completed and approved by the Presbytery of Tampa Bay Commission on Ministry. We are now scheduling our first interviews for the coming week.

If you are looking for a motivational read during this time of transition, we highly recommend this book that we have been reading: *Interim Ministry in Action: A Handbook for Churches in Transition* by Norman B. Bendroth.

Pray that the Holy Spirit guides our interviews and leads an interim pastor to First Presbyterian Church.

You can communicate directly with the AC

- using email at: fpcsp-ptb@googlegroups.com
- or by mail at: Presbytery of Tampa Bay, ATTN: FPCSP-PTB AC, 455 Scotland St, Suite 1, Dunedin, FL 34698

In Christ's Love,

Stacey Quick, Co-Chair of the Administrative Commission and
Rev. John DeBevoise, Co-Chair of the Administrative Commission

A Note from Rev. Ginny Ellis, Temporary Stated Supply Pastor

I have begun my work as Temporary Supply Pastor at First Presbyterian Church of St. Petersburg. I met some of you last Sunday and have been in Zoom meetings with some of you. But this is to greet you as a group. I am eager to speak personally with each of you!

Let me introduce myself a bit. I grew up in Jacksonville, the second of five children. We were members of the Arlington Presbyterian Church where I sang in the Children's and then the Youth Choirs. College took me to the Atlanta area, to study philosophy at Agnes Scott College, with a Junior Year abroad in Aberdeen, Scotland (very cold for a Floridian!). I worked in north Georgia (Dalton) for two years, and then attended Columbia Seminary, marrying Harry Ellis in 1976, graduating in 1978.

We came to St. Petersburg in 1978

when Harry joined the Physics faculty at Eckerd College. I was ordained in 1980 as an interim pastor, serving five churches in five years. I then became pastor at Bayshore Presbyterian in Tampa, where I served as solo pastor for 19 years. After leaving Bayshore in 2004, I have served in a variety of transitional pastorates.



Here at First Church, I will offer leadership in worship, in administration, and in pastoral care. I also hope to help the church find stability and confidence by listening to absolutely everyone. With that in mind, I invite you to consider how I can meet with you: on the phone or over Zoom, at a coffee shop, in the church conference room, or coming to sit on your patio. I am mindful of the need to wear masks and keep safe distances, but I am sure we can find safe ways to engage in ministry and in community together.

My contact information is below. Please let me know how we can best grow in relationship with one another for Christ and for the church. I am so eager to get to know you and support you in your work as a church.

Yours, in the name of our Lord Jesus,
Ginny Simmons Ellis
Cell phone: 813-404-6723; Email: ginny_ellis@yahoo.com

From the Welcome Desk: Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye!

The Welcome Desk (located in the Sanctuary) has received new and improved hearing assists, thanks to our FPC Technical Guru, David Aumack.

I wear hearing aids and traditionally have had difficulty understanding the person speaking from the pulpit. With these new hearing assists, I can understand every word!

If YOU are having difficulty understanding the spoken word in our FPC Sanctuary, my suggestion is...TRY USING AN ASSIST! I think you will be pleasantly surprised! Last week we had 6 new people trying the assists and they were all very pleased.

Dick Luehrs,
Welcome Desk volunteer

FPC Concert Series

If you missed our St. Pete Baroque Concert last Sunday, you can view it [HERE](#).



Mark your calendar for our next Concert: **VOCES8** on Saturday, October 30,

2021 at 7:00 PM in the Sanctuary. This concert will be free but will not be recorded or livestreamed.

From the Return to Church Task Force

Greetings Friends:

We hope this message finds you blessed by God and in fine emotional and physical health. For those of you who have been struggling with illness or loss, our love and prayers are with you.

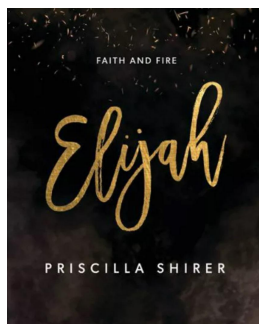
For some time now, the Return to Church Task Force has been meeting regularly, reviewing the recent COVID data available, and keeping up with advancements in science and CDC guidelines. We are a very dedicated Task Force and take seriously our charge to protect the health and safety of those who enter our doors for worship and other church activities.

Recently, as the COVID-19 Delta variant surged and the CDC returned to its earlier advice for individuals to wear masks indoors, we took the same extra step to reinstate the required mask policy at our church. It proved to be the right call, with Delta variant cases rising significantly in September.

Even though the data are beginning to show daily case counts decreasing, the number of daily cases in Pinellas County is still extremely high. Consequently the mask policy will remain in place at FPC as the Task Force continues to monitor the case numbers. As our Chancel Choir returns from its summer break, members will not process or recess and will wear masks as they sing.

The Task Force will continue to pray for the safety and health of all our congregation, families and staff, and for continued decrease in cases and positivity trends. We will keep you informed.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call Karen Mossman at 727-400-5079.



Ladies' Tuesday Morning Bible Study

9:15 - 11:30 AM

Please note we will NOT be meeting next Tuesday (9/21), and will extend the study through October 5.

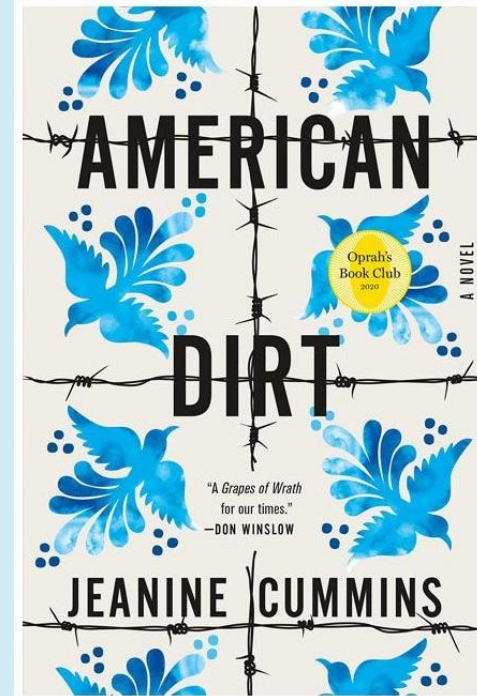
Faith & Fiction will begin again on Monday, October 4th, and although we had hoped that it would be in person, due to the rising COVID levels, it is rather likely that it will have to be via Zoom until most of us get the vaccine booster.

THIS YEAR WE ARE TRYING AN EARLIER TIME: 4:00 p.m.

We have a dynamite book to start off our season! *American Dirt*, by Jeanine Cummins. We decided to have a theme this year, books about social

justice, or injustice as the case may be. In this first book, which is an immigration story, a woman and her son experience violence in Mexico and must flee to try to reach the United States. This book is a real page-turner!

More information regarding our meeting will be announced closer to the beginning of October. If you have questions, call Linda Santoro, 727-897-9543.



Devotionals Available

Copies of the Oct/Nov/Dec edition of "Our Daily Bread" and "These Days" devotionals are now available for pick-up from the Church Office during normal business hours or at the Welcome Desk on Sunday mornings.



Presbyterian Women's Bible study for 2021-2022

Our Horizons study this year, is "What My Grandmothers Taught Me: Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus." Plan to refresh your spirit and enjoy fellowship with other women, beginning in September and continuing through May 2022.

If you are not a current circle member and would like to join, please contact Rachel Bowron (rbowron@aol.com or 727-433-0571) to be connected to a circle that works for you.

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!

Pastoral Emergency Number

If you have a pastoral emergency, please call (561) 805-1514.



During this season, we are especially thankful for the generosity of all of the people who continue to financially contribute to the church.

Online Giving



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 September Birthdays



Some 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, Chapel.
- **Sundays, 10 AM**, In-Person Worship Service, Sanctuary or [Online](#).
- **Sundays, 11:15 AM**, Westminster Sunday School Class will not be meeting again until Fall.
- **Tuesdays, 7 PM**, Christian Meditation, meeting every other week in the Chapel at 7 PM (next in-person meeting is September 14). For more information, contact Carlen Maddux (cmaddux@maddux.com).
- **Fridays, 7:30 AM**, Men's Bible Study, in-person, Room N-123. For more information, please contact Ken Young (youngkd1492@comcast.net).
- **Fridays, 12 PM**, Men's Lunch Bible Study; the last Friday of the month is in-person in Room N-123 (next in-person meeting will be September 24). For more information, contact John Underwood (pjfwon@gmail.com)

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](#).

First Presbyterian Church
701 Beach Drive NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701
(727) 822-2031

[Contact Us](#) | [Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTUBE](#)

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

