

**VIRTUAL WORSHIP SERVICE
ON
FACEBOOK/FPCOFVICTORIA:
SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2020**

Our Scripture readings for next Sunday (the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost), August 16, 2020, are: Psalm 67; and Matthew 15:21-28. The sermon title is “The Pushy Woman,” and the Bulletin is available here: https://fpcofvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020-08-16-Bulletin-PDF.pub_.pdf



During our Session meeting yesterday evening (August 11, 2020), the Elders were discussing various and sundry things about the worship services we have been streaming now for over 20 weeks, and one Elder asked why we were no longer singing the *Doxology* during worship. Your Pastor replied that, because we cannot pass the offering plates among a congregation that is not present, the “tithes and offerings portion” of our “normal liturgy” had simply been eliminated.

With, I am sure, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, one of our Elders then said, “Well, even if we can’t pass the plate, we can still thank God for the many blessings we have received-- even in this time of a terrible pandemic.” How wise; how true! Just because we no longer have a “collection” during our virtual worship services, that does not mean we should suspend thanking God for the love, mercy, and blessings we receive every day. Sometimes theology is practiced at a Session meeting, even when we don’t call it that!

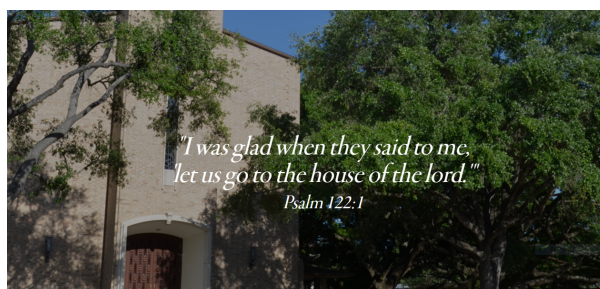
During our worship service for August 16, 2020 and continuing thereafter, watch for the addition to our liturgy of a Prayer of Thanksgiving, followed by the always appropriate *Doxology*.



**GUEST ORGANIST:
MS. MURIEL COTMAN**

As mentioned before, Robert Wyatt, our faithful Choirmaster, will be enjoying a well-deserved vacation for three Sundays this month (August 9, 16, and 23). Leading us in our ministry of music during Robert's absence will be Muriel Cotman, a talented musician who has played in our Sanctuary before as a featured guest piano soloist. Now she returns to play our new organ for the entirety of three of our worship services in August.

You can read more about Muriel and her musical talents in our Bulletin for each of the worship services when she will be with us.

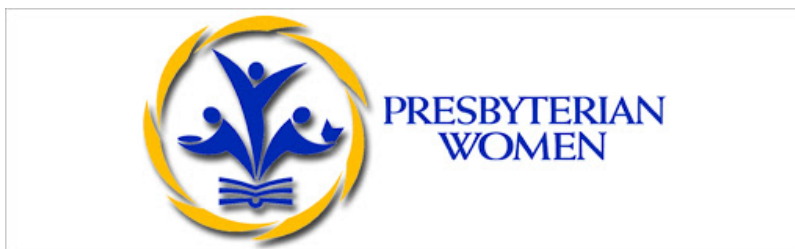


**DID YOU SEE THE ARTICLE ABOUT FPC
THAT RECENTLY APPEARED IN THE
VICTORIA ADVOCATE?**

In its Saturday, August 8, 2020 edition, the *Victoria Advocate* published a very nice feature article about our church and its rookie Pastor. Of course, I was flattered and encouraged by the kind words said about me, but more importantly, I was very proud of the nice things the reporter picked up about our church: its history; its vitality; and its determination to continue to worship and serve the Lord in this community of which it has been a part for over 175 years.

If you have not seen the article, you can read it here:

https://www.victoriaadvocate.com/news/features/pastor-helps-church-conquer-hurricane-adjust-to-pandemic/article_87f52e8c-d6b9-11ea-8dde-5fdb0dc5d8b0.html?fbclid=IwAR2K8-YQkFOuEAivOgf_ed7M8HkYupstZ63zvlw4Vn1KgMo8Vvky55avYfA



I recently received a copy of an email from Lynn McAuley, our “soon-to-be installed” Moderator of PW of FPC of Victoria, concerning future PW programs. Due to the limitations on in-person gatherings imposed by current public health protocols, Mission Presbytery has had to cancel all face-to-face gatherings among the regional PW clusters.

In their place, however, Mission Presbytery has organized a presbytery-wide Zoom event, “Come Live in the Light!,” on Saturday, September 12, 2020, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. A copy of the information circular for that event is reproduced below. Both Lynn and I encourage everyone to participate in this joyful event.

Meanwhile, Lynn suggests that, should you not have the capabilities to take part in a Zoom meeting or just want an awesome introduction to the new PW study book (which is still pending delivery), you can watch either or both of the following pertinent YouTube videos:

Introduction to the “Into the Light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament” Bible Study by Lynn Miller

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VwExYuUHAQ8&list=WL&index=4&t=22s>

In-depth Webinar with Lynn Miller, author of "Into the Light"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgykJqtyEaY&list=WL&index=2>

May God bless the faithful members of Presbyterian Women as they continue to study, serve, and follow in the way of our Lord Jesus Christ.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

There are many worthwhile activities going on outside the church that your Pastor will highlight from time to time in in this Newsletter in case any of them may be of interest to you or to those you know.

First, the flyer which follows discusses an important initiative sponsored by the Victoria County United Way, Be Well Victoria, Center for Peace Victoria, and the University of Houston Victoria.

There are some intelligent and some not-to-intelligent ways to address the undeniable racial tensions and social unrest evident in our country today. The programs and activities sponsored in partnership by the foregoing nonpartisan institutions in our community afford an intelligent way to engage in discourse and dialogue free of hostility, ill-feeling, or bias in order to address social justice issues of interest to all Christians and, indeed, all persons who love our country and wish to improve the lives of all its citizens.

FPC is not an official sponsor of this program, but I pass this information along to those who may have (or who may, as led by the Holy Spirit, wish to cultivate) a deep and abiding interest in racial and social justice issues of such great importance to our nation. Patient, reflective, non-confrontational engagement of such issues will always be more effective than riots, burning, and violence. I invite you to consider examining the information and resources contained in the flyer which appears below.



Hello, fellow Allies!

We are excited to have several new opportunities in the pipeline to continue our Equity work.

Your friends, family, and peer groups have another chance to join the [7-Day Equity Challenge](#)! You asked for it and we're delivering! **The Challenge runs August 17th - 23rd, with wrap up meetings on August 24th.** We're counting on you to share it with everyone you know. If all of you encourage just 2 friends to join, we'll have 250 new participants!

We are working with our partners at Be Well Victoria, Center for Peace Victoria, and University of Houston Victoria to bring you some fantastic opportunities to engage with each other (virtually) in community discussions and learning opportunities. Look for a link to a calendar of opportunities on our website, coming soon. In the meantime, check out this list of webinars, podcasts, and videos. We encourage you to continue the work you started in the Equity Challenge by digging into these resources.

The [Network for Dismantling Racism Series](#):

All webinars are from noon to 1:30. Register for one or all of these free webinars with the link, above.

- Friday, August 14th @ noon – 1:30 -What Does It Mean To Be an Anti-Racist?
- Friday, August 21st -Engaging Colleagues in Anti-Racist Learning Moments
- Friday, August 28th -Identify and Combat Institutional and Structural Racism
- Friday, September 4th -Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression

What does it really mean to defund the police? Find out by watching this [video](#).

Find and join a local "[white space](#)" to learn more about and talk out the conscious and unconscious biases us white folks have. [Here's one](#), or start your own.

Are you teaching your kids at home? Make sure their history lessons aren't whitewashed. Here are some great resources:

- <https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/slavery/teachers/index.html>
- <http://www.poconlineclassroom.com/blog/2018/2/7/black-history-month-resources?rq=black+history&fbclid=IwAR1wtmLhwnhY7q1L1X1MFC2GH7j2YrRRrGRpQcnH-au2fhX5Y3S1QgweOHY>
- <https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tdih>
- <https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tdih>
- <https://nameorg.org/>

Speak up. When people say that Black Lives Matter is a violent/terrorist group, explain to them that there are [fringe groups that are being misrepresented as part of BLM](#). If conservatives don't want to be lumped in with the KKK, they can't lump violent protesters in with BLM.

Watch Jane Elliot's blue eyes/brown eyes racism experiment [here](#). Watch Jane Elliot's a follow-up on the blue eyes/brown eyes racism experiment on Oprah [here](#)

Share your reflections on today's topic on social media using the hashtag [#UnitedForEquity](#) and tag [@UnitedWayXroads](#) on Twitter or [@VictoriaCountyUnitedWay](#) on Facebook and Instagram.

Also within our community, the Victoria 2020 Census Complete Count Committee is working hard to encourage everyone in Victoria County and the surrounding area to be counted in the 2020 Census. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the population of Texas was undercounted by almost 1% in the 2010 Census. This may not sound like much, but the failure to identify every individual in our state resulted in a cumulative loss of nearly \$300 million *annually* in federal funds to Texas during the past decade, or \$1,161 per person missed in the census count.

If you have not completed your census form, please do so promptly. Equally important, if you know someone who has been neglectful or suspicious of the census,

please encourage them to overcome their unfounded apprehensions and complete their census form. Every taxpayer in Victoria, and of course in Texas, has a vested social and financial interest in making sure that everyone in our community and in our state is accurately counted in the current census.



For more information, see: <https://comptroller.texas.gov/economy/fiscal-notes/2020/jan/census.php>.



**IMPROVING THE “PRODUCTION VALUES”
OF OUR
VIRTUAL WORSHIP SERVICES
(HELP WANTED!)**

Thanks to Bob Whitaker, we are completing significant upgrades to the audio system in the Sanctuary. Not only will this improve the quality of the sound which we stream over the Internet, it will be a beautiful enhancement to the worship services when we return to in-person worship in our Sanctuary.

While all of this is going on, we are still searching for a camera person to help us operate our new camera equipment which we obtained with a grant from Mission Presbytery. We need someone to be available for two hours on the Saturdays when we record our worship services and, once the pandemic has passed, for two hours

on the Sundays when we gather again in the Sanctuary. Additionally, a few additional hours are necessary to process and upload each video from our new equipment to the Internet.

Do you know of someone who might be interested in working for the church in this manner? Do you know a student, family member, or friend who could use some extra cash and would enjoy helping our congregation with this task? If so, please ask them to call (361.575.2441) or email (info@fpcovictoria.org) the church office. We would love to speak with them!

**NEW EDITION (FALL 2020) OF
“ *THE PRESENT WORD*,
ADULT BIBLE LESSONS”
NOW AVAILABLE FROM CHURCH OFFICE**

An additional burden which we must bear during this pandemic is the inability of our Adult Sunday School Class to meet under C.F. Schneider’s faithful leadership. Nevertheless, several members have asked to receive copies of the “Participant’s Book” which are published as study guides for class members.

If you would like to receive a copy of the latest study guide, entitled, “Love for One Another,” we would be more than happy to mail one to you from the church office. You know what to do! Contact us by phone or email, and we will promptly mail you your copy.

As a reminder, the July/August/September 2020 editions of “*These Days: Daily Devotions for Living by Faith*” are likewise available by request.

Also as a reminder, if you are interested in online worship devotionals, please remember there is none better than *The Presbyterian Outlook*. Investigate this timely, informative, and spiritually motivating publication at: <https://pres-outlook.org/>. I particularly recommend the devotionals presented by Jill Duffield. If you enjoy this publication, you can sign up for a free “Internet subscription” and receive the weekly editions by email.

Peace, grace, and mercy,
Pastor Jim

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