



**VIRTUAL WORSHIP SERVICES
ON
FACEBOOK/FPCOFVICTORIA:
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2020**

Our Scripture readings for next Sunday (the Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost), September 6, 2020, are: Psalm 119:33-40; and Matthew 18:15-20. The sermon title is "The Rule of Christ," and the Bulletin is available here:

https://fpcofvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/2020-09-06-BulletinPDF.pub_.pdf

Being the first Sunday in September, we will also celebrate the Lord's Supper. Please be prepared to take communion from wherever you may be watching us on the FPC Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/fpcofvictoria/>). As we have mentioned before, bread of any sort is suitable, including crackers, tortillas, etc.; any sort of fruit juice would be appropriate, as would wine or even water.

Howsoever we take communion, the central theological message is that we do these things "in remembrance of" the One who lived, died, was resurrected, and will come again in glory. In ceremonially sharing with one another the Last Supper that Christ served his disciples, Christians around the world remember that Christ died so that we might be in eternal communion with our God and Creator.



CARES AND CONCERNS

Our dear friend and member, Kathleen McCameron, had surgery last week at DeTar Hospital to implant a pacemaker, and although she was initially released, she was readmitted due to post-operative complications.

We have now learned, however, that Kathleen has been released into the care of her grandson, Scott, and she, together with her husband, Mac, are currently being cared for by Scott in his home in the Houston area. May God bless our dear friends, Kathleen and Mac, and their loving grandson as he cares for them during these perilous times.

Felicia Juenke, the granddaughter of member Ruth Ann Barnard, underwent serious surgery in San Antonio today, Wednesday, September 2nd. Ruth Ann reports, however, that the surgery was completed without complications and that

Felicia is well and recovering nicely. Let us be in prayer for Felicia, Ruth Ann, and their family as we wish Felicia a full recovery.

IN MEMORIUM

With broken hearts, we have learned that Kay Walker, former member of our church and beloved by so many among us and throughout the Victoria community, died suddenly on Tuesday morning, September 1, 2020. Initial reports (although not always reliable) are that Kay suffered a fatal stroke caused by a clot that had formed in her lungs and then escaped into her blood stream. Kay had been recovering from COVID-19 which, sadly, can cause embolisms of this nature-- with fatal results.

Final arrangements for Kay obviously remain pending, but we will circulate more information when we receive it. Meanwhile, we pray for Kay, her husband, Ron, and all her family and friends who mourn the sudden loss of this cherished woman. Kay's faith is fulfilled as she finds peace in the loving, caring arms of God our Savior. For those of us whom remain behind, may we find comfort and assurance in the words of Scripture (Romans 14:8):

*If we live, we live to the Lord,
and if we die, we die to the Lord;
so then, whether we live or whether we die,
we are the Lord's.*



PRESBYTERIAN DAY SCHOOL OPENS CAUTIOUSLY

After careful and prayerful consideration, the Session and the Board of Presbyterian Day School elected allow PDS to resume instruction and day-care on the church's premises, subject to strict public health protocols. The originally planned opening day was postponed to allow teachers ample time to clean, disinfect, and prepare their classrooms for our returning young disciples.

Among the strict protocols now in place, no parents or other visitors are allowed into the building while PDS is in session. Students are picked up from their cars by the PDS teachers who first take the child's temperature with a "touchless" thermometer before escorting the child to his or her classroom. After school, students are returned to their parents' car in the same, individual manner. Any child showing signs of fever, cough, or other symptoms of illness will be sent home immediately. Classes do not mingle with other classes, and only one class at a time is allowed out on the playground.

Sadly, we will also temporarily suspend gatherings for Children's Chapel in the Sanctuary, BUT we will be holding (naturally!) "virtual" Children's Chapels by using Zoom to broadcast the fun to a laptop computer in each classroom. In addition,

Pastor Jim (wearing a happy facemask) will visit each classroom after Labor Day for a “Blessing of the Backpacks” ceremony. Your Pastor had thought we might suspend that activity this year in light of the pandemic, but the teachers have told me that more than one child has asked when their backpacks would be “prayed for like they were last year.” Isn’t it amazing what young children are able to recall, even when the adults aren’t aware!

Finally, all of us involved with PDS understand that the decision to reopen is not without risk. Nevertheless, we believe that our education ministry through PDS is one of the most important ministries we support in our community and that we would be remiss if we did not at least try to reopen the school. We will be careful, we will pray, and if we detect the virus, we will take appropriate measures (up to and including suspending classes). We hope you will join us in prayer as well. While this provides no long-term assurance, we can report that last week the school was subjected to a rigorous inspection by the Childcare Licensing Division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. No discrepancies, violations, or other deficiencies were found.



September 2 - Friench Tarkington

John Christian

September 7 - Harper Edwards

September 8 - Martha Tarkington

If you or someone you know, has a birthday this week please contact the church office:

361.575.2441 or info@fpcovictoria.org



A REPEATED CALL FOR HELP FROM CHRIST'S KITCHEN

Christ's Kitchen has again been overwhelmed by an increase in the number of homeless who look to that organization for likely their only meal of the day. At the same time, the customary suppliers who assist Christ's Kitchen in providing desserts for the meals prepared by the volunteers at Christ's Kitchen cannot keep up with the demand. ***Therefore, Christ's Kitchen volunteers from First Presbyterian Church once need the congregation's help.***

Frances Miller and Billy Leske send us this reminder of how each of us can donate desserts to feed the homeless on Tuesday, the day that FPC's dedicated volunteers prepare to-go lunch boxes for over 750 needy people:

1. If you are able to donate store-bought or homemade cakes, cookies, brownies, etc., you can bring them to the church office on Monday or to Christ's Kitchen (611 Warren Ave.) by 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday mornings.
2. Individual desserts such as cookies, brownies, lemon bars, etc., should be put in small ziploc storage bags before being delivered. Typical servings per storage bag are 3 to 4 cookies or 2 to 3 donuts, brownies, lemon bars, etc. Cakes or pies should be delivered in disposable, non-returnable containers.

As noted in an earlier Newsletter when we first identified the need for FPC's support, Christ's Kitchen has always been a "loaves and fishes" operation--

stretching its limited resources beyond any normal expectations. Please heed this call to help our tireless volunteers following the command of our Lord and Savior to feed the hungry. As always, if you have any questions or comments, please call the Church Office. We are here to help you help others.

ONLINE GIVING NOW POSSIBLE-- AND SUCCESSFUL!

In last week's Newsletter, we reported that the church has upgraded our website to make it possible for visitors and for the members, family, and friends of FPC to make contributions to our church via the Internet. This week we can report that the upgrade is successful!

After a trial run of donations made by each Session member, we are now receiving gifts from both members of our church *and* the general public via the Internet! Naturally, we cannot predict whether this trend will continue, but we are enthusiastic that the mechanism is now in place, making it possible for our church to receive gifts and donations even while our in-person services are suspended. Moreover, this means of giving is working quite well and operating just the way we intended. We are notified of gifts the day they are made, and we are able to record them in our record-keeping system quite easily.

So, by way of encouragement and continuing publicity for this new, convenient "tool" available to members and visitors, we are going to repeat the information about website giving that appeared in our last Newsletter.

If you have ever made an online purchase (on Amazon, for instance), you will find our website simple to use. Just go to our homepage (<https://fpcovictoria.org/>), and there you will see this screen:

Welcome

Welcome to the First Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Texas— one of the oldest churches in Victoria and the fifth oldest Presbyterian Church in Texas.

We strive to be a congregation of loving, caring Christians, deeply concerned with the welfare of our community, our nation, and the world. If Victoria is your home, or even if you are just visiting, we invite you to join us in worship and service where we are called daily to renew minds and redeem lives with the steadfast love of Jesus Christ.

What's Happening at FPC

Giving

Click on the green “Giving” rectangle, and you will be guided through the easy donation process. Have your credit card or checking account informatin handy, and the process should go smoothly. As always, however, if you need assistance, please contact the church office. Meanwhile, here are answers to some “FAQ’s” (frequently asked questions) that you may find helpful:

Q1: Do I now have to make all my donations on the website?

A1: *No. If you currently mail your check or drop it off at the church office, you may certainly continue to do so. The website is just **another, optional** way for you to make gifts to the church.*

Q2: If I make my donation via the website, can I use my checking account instead of my credit card?

A2: *Yes. After you follow the process on our website, you will be taken to a screen that will allow you to choose between your credit card and your checking account. Simply click “checking account” and enter the appropriate banking information.*

Q3: Does the church have to pay a fee when a gift is made via our website?

A3: *Yes. The fee varies from 3% to 6% of your gift. The amount of the fee is based primarily on what your credit card company charges to process your “purchase” (just as if you were using it at the gas station). The company that we use to handle the transaction also adds on a small fee for handling each gift. To be clear, however, the church pays nothing (no montly fees, for instance) for this service. Fees are imposed only when a gift is made.*

Q4: Can I help the church cover the costs of the fees incurred when I make a contribution via the webside?

A4: *Yes. After you enter the amount of you gift, your name, and the appropriate information for your credit card or checking account, you will see a “button” that says “Cover Costs.” If you select that button, your gift will be increased by the amount of the fees applicable to that particular transaction.*

E4(a): *As an example, suppose you make a gift of \$100.00 using your credit card and suppose the fee for your credit card is 4%. When you click “cover costs,” the amount of your gift will be increased to \$104.00. The result is as follows: you will be charged \$104.00, the church will receive \$100.00, and you will receive credit for a tax-deductible donation of \$104.00 (not \$100.00). The credit card and Internet service companies will receive a total of \$4.00.*

E4(b): *As another example using the same assumptions, suppose you make a gift of \$100.00 but do not select “Cover Costs.” The result is as follows: you will be charged \$100.00, the church will receive \$96.00, and you will receive credit for a tax-*

deductible donation of \$100.00. The credit card and Internet service companies will receive a total of \$4.00.

Q5: How does FPC receive my gift?

*A5: Our Internet service company deposits the amount of your gift (minus fees) **immediately and directly** into the church's account at Prosperity Bank. The church office also receives an email when that deposit is made.*

Q6: Does FPC keep a record of my gift?

A6: Yes. Whether you drop off a check at the church or make a gift via our website, FPC records your gift in our financial records. Whenever we mail you a report about your contributions to FPC, it will include all gifts, whether mailed, delivered personally, or made via our website.

E6: As an example: If you mailed a \$100.00 check to the church and made a \$104.00 gift via the Internet, you would receive a "Detailed Statement" from the church verifying that you made total gifts to the church of \$204.00.

Q7: Can I set up automatic, "repeating" contributions to the church?

*A7: Yes. By following the options given on our website, you can set up periodic contributions (e.g., weekly, monthly, or other) from either your credit card or your banking account. Remember, however, that the applicable fee will apply to **each** contribution.*

The Session wants to emphasize that this giving feature has been created for two main reasons: (a) to allow visitors to our virtual worship services to make donations they cannot make at this time because we are not meeting in-person; and (b) to provide a convenience to our members who might want to use it.

In no way, however, is the Session trying to encourage members to change their current manner of giving if they are satisfied. The cost of a stamp to mail your check is still cheaper than the fees that would be incurred by using our website. The website is simply there for your convenience, if and only if you prefer it.



As our nation celebrates a holiday devoted to the dignity of labor and the men and women who work for a living, let us thank God for the many blessings we receive from the hands of those who labor and toil that we might be fed, clothed, and sheltered.

Also, as you enjoy this Labor Day Weekend, please be safe and careful. The COVID-19 takes no holidays from illness, infection, and death, so let us all remember to observe the public health protocols designed to keep us, our loved ones, and all our neighbors safe and protected from this pathogen.

Subject to being careful, have a Happy Labor Day Weekend!

Peace, grace, and mercy,
Pastor Jim

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