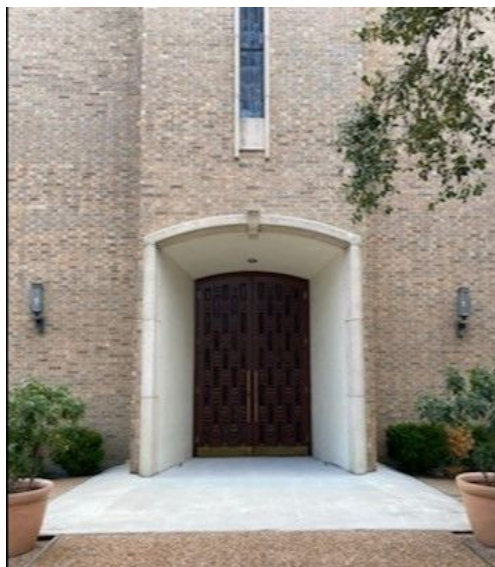


**BULLETIN FOR WORSHIP SERVICE
ON
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2020
(REFORMATION SUNDAY)**

Our Scripture readings for next Sunday (the Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost; Reformation Sunday), October 25, 2020, are: Psalm 1; and Matthew 22:34-46. The sermon title is "The Greatest Commandment," and the Bulletin is available here: <https://fpcovictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2020-10-25-Bulletin-PDF-1.pdf>



**IN-PERSON WORSHIP SERVICES
AND ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
RESUME THIS SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 25, 2020**

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**WORSHIP SERVICES ALSO
AVAILABLE "ONLINE" AT
[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FPCOVICTORIA](https://www.facebook.com/fpcovictoria)
AND
[WWW.FPCOVICTORIA.COM](http://www.fpcovictoria.com)**

As reported previously, at its meeting on Tuesday evening, October 13, 2020, the Session voted unanimously to resume in-person gatherings at the church, commencing with a Sunday School Class and a Worship Service at 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., respectively, on Sunday, October 25, 2020.

During the Session's discussions, several important points were made which bear emphasis:

- Barring unforeseen technical difficulties, Sunday morning worship services will now be "streamed" live on our Facebook page and our website, beginning promptly at 10:30 a.m. each Sunday. *This is new!* Join us on our Facebook page *or on our website* to participate, in real time, right along with your friends and neighbors in the worship services being held on Sunday mornings.
- Services will also, as in the past, be available for subsequent viewing on both our Facebook page and our website.
- The Session continues to stress that individuals whose health may be compromised, and who are thus especially vulnerable to the coronavirus,

should continue to worship with us from their homes. If we were to adopt a slogan about this, it would be “When in doubt, don’t go out!” You will be remembered in our hearts and prayers as we return to the Sanctuary for worship.

- While inside the church, everyone will be required to observe the Worship Committee’s Health Protocols. A complete list of those protocols appears at the end of this Newsletter. Please read them carefully and plan to follow them to keep you and all church members and visitors safe. We will have greeters at the entrances to the church, as well as additional copies of the Health Protocols, to help you remember all of the precautions we will have in place.

Please continue to pray for the safety of our congregation, our community and, indeed, all of God’s children as the coronavirus continues to disrupt lives as it spreads illness and death.



**ALL SAINTS DAY,
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2020**

On Sunday, November 1, 2020, our worship service will be based on the liturgy for All Saints Day. All Saints Day always falls on November 1st, and this year that date coincides with a Sunday.

During our worship service, we will celebrate the Lord’s Supper, and we will also remember those members and special friends of the First Presbyterian Church family who have joined the Church Triumphant in the past 12 months (November 2019 – October 2020).

These are the names we have in the Church Office of those whom we have lost during that period: **Claire Heger**; and **Kay Walker**. We would be greatly saddened,

however, if we failed to include someone about whose passing we were unaware. This is especially true in these times of reduced communication and stringent social distancing.

If you know of a loved one in the FPC family who has been called home, please contact the Church Office immediately. During our time of remembrance on All Saints Day, we do not want to overlook any saint whom we have lost from our midst.



October 26 - A.D. (Jack) Williams

If you or someone you know has a birthday this week,
please contact the church office:
361.575.2441 or info@fpcofvictoria.org



THANK YOU, ROBERT WYATT!

We thank God that our members, friends, and visitors are able to watch our worship services anytime by visiting our Facebook page or our website!

If you have not yet seen our worship service for last Sunday, October 18, you should make a special effort to watch it soon. Robert Wyatt told me that for that service he was going to play an Organ Anthem, entitled "There Once Was a Man." What he did not tell me, however, was that the "anthem" would be sung by him as a solo.

And what a beautiful solo it was! Of course, he was accompanied by the organ while he sang the anthem, and so the entry in the Bulletin was not entirely wrong. But how was Robert able to sing his solo while the organ played? Be sure and ask him when you see him next!

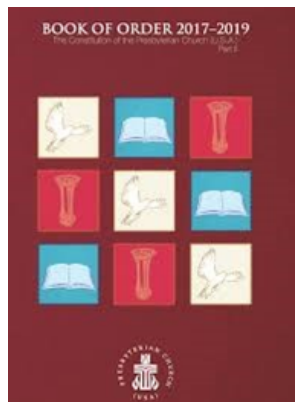


THANK YOU, RUTH WILLIAMS!

We are grateful for the generous donation by Ruth Williams of what she describes as only a “small portion” of her collection of nativity scenes-- nativity scenes that she has collected over a lifetime of travel around the world on choir trips and other occasions.

Lovingly, Linda Patterson has cleaned and arranged Ruth’s gifts in the curio cabinet located just outside the door to the Church Office. You are invited to spend a moment in front of the collection to admire the diversity of the art and the expressions of reverence, from around the world, that celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior. If you look closely, you will also see a small, clear plaque on which we have commemorated Ruth’s generosity and thoughtfulness.

First Presbyterian Church is genuinely blessed by the love, care, and devotion expressed by its many members, including Ruth, for the glory of God and the welfare of our church.



NOTICE OF A CALLED CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: OCTOBER 25, 2020

The Session has called a Special Meeting of the Congregation to be held at the conclusion of the worship service on Sunday, October 25, 2020. During this brief meeting, the Congregation will elect an Elder Nominating Committee for the purpose of recommending individuals to serve on the Session as Ruling Elders in the Class of 2023.

Elder Bill Wilkinson will present a report on recommendations prepared by a special committee of the Session. In addition to the nominations presented for the Congregation's consideration, the meeting will be opened for additional nominations from the floor, if any. Any member nominated to the Class of 2023 should, however, be consulted in advance regarding her or his availability and willingness to serve.

CURRENT COPIES OF “*THESE DAYS*”

The church has received the October/November/December 2020 editions of “*These Days: Daily Devotions for Living by Faith.*” Upon request, we would be happy to mail a copy to any member desiring one. Especially in these extended times of isolation and separation, the devotionals in this cherished publication are a wonderful source of inspiration, hope, and comfort. Please contact us at the church office so that we may send you your personal copy.

Peace, grace, and mercy,
Pastor Jim

**ADDENDUM TO NEWSLETTER:
COVID-19 Pandemic
Public Health and Safety Protocols
for In-Person Gatherings at the Church**

Before We Come

Check to be sure:

- In the past two weeks:
 - No foreign travel and no travel outside Victoria to any COVID “hotspots.”
 - No exposure to anyone who has tested positive for COVID.
 - No participation in large group activities, such as parties, weddings, funerals, demonstrations, or similar events.

- Before departing home:
 - No fever (temperature above 100.4).
 - No sore throat.
 - No shortness of breath.
 - No cough or flu-like symptoms.

- For your own safety and those around you, remember: *“If in doubt, don’t go out!”*

As We Enter

- Facemasks must be worn *at all times* while in the church. Maintain social distancing. Wash hands frequently.
- Tables with facemasks, hand-sanitizer, and Kleenex boxes will be located (a) inside the front door to the Narthex and (b) inside the door under the porte cochere. A greeter will be at each of these entrances to welcome you and answer any questions.
- Do not be offended if the greeter asks you whether you have complied with all the “Before We Come” criteria listed above. If you are uncertain about your temperature, the greeter will have a “touchless” thermometer to help you check it.

- Due to fire-code regulations, all of the exits from the Sanctuary will be unlocked. Entry to the church, however, will be *exclusively* through the front door to the Narthex or the back door under the porte cochere.
- At separate tables located in the Narthex and at the entrance to the front of the Sanctuary (at the end of the hall that runs past the Church Office), we will set out offering plates and Bulletins. Please place your offering in the plate (either before or after the service), and please take a Bulletin. In order to reduce person-to-person contact, Bulletins will not be handed out by the greeters. Take your Bulletin home with you or discard it in the receptacles provided.

While We Are Gathered

- Seating
 - Certain pews, which will be clearly marked, will be closed to seating. The cushions of open pews will be marked to facilitate social distancing. Family groups may sit together, of course, but otherwise congregants are asked to separate themselves by a minimum of six feet. The aisles will also be marked in six-foot intervals to facilitate social distancing.
 - Because the Sanctuary will be closed to the public and to PDS during the week, we will not remove the Bibles or the hymnals from the pew racks, although everyone is discouraged from touching them. The liturgy, the prayers, and the lyrics to all hymns will be printed in the Bulletin, making the use of the books in the pew racks unnecessary. We will, however, remove the shawls and the attendance pads from the Sanctuary until the pandemic has passed.
- Worship
 - Wear facemasks (securely covering nose and mouth) throughout the service, and always maintain social distancing. If you notice anyone failing to abide by these requirements, graciously remind them to comply so that we may all remain safe.
 - *Passing of the Peace*: There will be no “Passing of the Peace:” no hugging, shaking hands, or other personal contact. *Despite the temptation, we must avoid all person-to-person contact with one another.* We will, however, pause in the service to call out “Howdy” (or say, “peace be with you”), point or wave at our neighbors, and recognize our joy in being together in God’s house.
 - *Singing*: Based on the *best* medical advice available, the Worship Committee has decided: (a) the choir will not yet resume rehearsals; (b) familiar hymns will be played, *but not sung aloud*, during the worship service; and (c) our worship ministry will focus on brief ‘special

presentations' such as solos, duets, organ anthems, and invited instrumentalists.

- *Liturgy*: When indicated in the Bulletin, parts of our liturgy (such as the Lord's Prayer) will be recited in unison, but facemasks will continue to be worn.
- *Communion*: When served, communion will be voluntary. Those wishing to be served will come forward down the center aisle while maintaining a distance of six feet (based on the separation lines placed on the carpet). The Elders, wearing clean gloves, will place the host (the bread) into each communicant's cupped hands (please do not reach into the plate to take the bread yourself). The juice will be served in small plastic cups. Each congregant will take his or her own cup. There will be a separate receptacle in which to deposit each cup once it is used (please do not return the cup to the serving dish).

As We Depart

- As much as it grieves us to say this, do not linger after the service. Of course, we should wave at visitors, as well as each other, but it is simply unwise to gather or mingle in any public venue. Conversations, if any, must be brief and conducted outside the church building while remaining at least six feet apart, with all participants wearing facemasks.
- The best practice, however, is to leave the church property promptly, giving thanks to God for our time together, and vowing to stay safe and cautious during the week so that we may return to worship the One upon whom we depend to guide us, protect us, and sustain us not only now in the midst of this pandemic but throughout our lives.
- Tell friends and neighbors who were unable to attend that our worship services will continue to be streamed on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/fpcovictoria) and on our website (www.fpcovictoria.com). While each service will be streamed live on Sunday morning, it will also be "archived" so that it can be played anytime afterwards.
- If, after you attend a worship service, you or a family member or friend with whom you have been in contact tests positive for COVID (even if the family member or friend did not attend the same worship service as you did), you *must* alert the Church Office immediately. Just as the Presbyterian Day School does, we have in place a contingency plan to notify our members to have themselves tested if appropriate. Also, do not be alarmed. Such circumstances do not involve anyone's fault, but they do require everyone to take precautions when possibly exposed to the virus.

A Final Note from the Worship Committee

These protocols were prepared after a great amount of research and prayerful deliberation by the members of the Worship Committee. The protocols remain flexible and subject to change, and thus we welcome input from members and visitors alike about their worship experience while these precautions are in place.

As we made hard decisions (such as not to sing hymns out loud), we were guided by the advice of a pastor in one of our sister churches in Corpus Christi who said, "You will never know if you have been too cautious, but your failure to be cautious enough will become readily apparent." If we must err, we have chosen to err on the side of caution.

We acknowledge, also, that many in our midst are not ready to return to public worship. We understand. The preparation of these protocols does not mean that we believe *you* should return to worship. Each of our members should also err on the side of caution. If you have even the slightest concern, we encourage you to stay home, join us on Facebook or our website, and stay isolated until this plague has passed. You will not be forgotten or overlooked, for we shall continue to carry everyone in our hearts and prayers. May God be with us all as we try to cope during these uncertain times.

Amen!

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