



**WORSHIP SERVICE ON
SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2021**

Our Scripture readings for next Sunday, January 24, 2021, the Third Sunday after the Epiphany, are: Psalm 62:5-12; and Mark 1:14-20. The sermon title is "Christ's Transforming Call," and the Bulletin is available here: https://fpcovictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2021-1-24-Bulletin1-PDF.pub_.pdf

As was the case last Sunday, C.F. Schneider will be with us again to play the piano. This Sunday he will play a medley on the theme "Jesus Calls Us," which is so appropriate to our New Testament reading for this worship service. Thank you, C.F. We do so love to hear you play the sacred, familiar hymns.

<p>First Presbyterian Church Commitment Campaign 2021</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Understanding that all we possess is a gift from God, and that God delights in the generosity of His children, I/we rejoice in pledging to First Presbyterian Church:</i></p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin: 10px 0;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px;">Weekly</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">OR</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px;">Monthly</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> </div> </div> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 2px;">Name(s)</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 2px;">Signature</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 2px;">Address</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 2px;"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Phone:</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">E-mail:</td> </tr> </table>		Name(s)		Signature		Address				Phone:	E-mail:
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UPDATE ON 2021 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

As we finalize this newsletter, slightly more than two dozen generous and faithful members of this congregation have completed and returned their pledge cards in connection with our 2021 Stewardship Campaign. We are grateful, also, for those who were able to write an additional, supplemental check to help us close the COVID-caused shortfall in our budget for 2020. May God greatly bless you all!

Nevertheless, as, Jim Stokes, our Treasurer, reported at our worship service last Sunday, so far we have received only half in number, and only 2/3rds in amount, of our pledges received in 2020. Thus, if you got caught up in year-end distractions, the Session humbly asks you now to fill out your 2021 pledge card and mail it to (or bring it by) the Church Office as soon as possible.

If you have misplaced your pledge card, additional cards are available in the Sanctuary, at the church office, and here (for downloading and printing): <https://fpcofvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2021-pledge-cards.pdf>

The Session has already begun to set the church budget for 2021. We cannot plan to spend any more than we can reasonably expect to receive, however, so please help us plan and prioritize our spending for 2021 by sending us your good faith estimate of the financial support you expect to be able to contribute over the course of the year.



And speaking of gifts to our church, Tasha Wolf, our mighty Office Administrator, has begun to prepare the annual Contribution Statements which will be mailed to each person for whom we have a record of making a financial contribution to First Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Texas in 2020. These reports will first be reviewed by Jim Stokes and then mailed to the appropriate families and individuals by, we anticipate, no later than January 29, 2021.

When you receive your form, please review it carefully, and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tasha in the church office (361.575.2441; info@fpcofvictoria.org).

Once more, thank you for your faithful support of the missions of this church even in a time of pandemic and economic hardship.



CARES AND CONCERNS

When Donald Trump was inaugurated in 2017, I was a senior at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Some may have forgotten that there were equal amounts of joy and sorrow on that occasion as there will be on the occasion of the inauguration of Joseph Biden.

Four years ago, at the time of the last Presidential inauguration, the President of Austin Seminary reminded the students, faculty, and friends of the seminary, that regardless of our emotions, we must remember our loyalty to the God in whom Christians, regardless of our divergent political affiliations, place our faith. For Christians, “In God We Trust” is not a slogan. It is a deeply held confidence in the sovereignty of God. Ours is a God to whom we may turn to pray for the welfare of our nation and for the wisdom of all the nation’s leaders, red or blue, black or white, male or female, young or old.

Accordingly, the Seminary President circulated with his comments a prayer for our nation which was written by Woodrow Wilson at another time of great disruption and anxiety in our nation. The prayer is as relevant now as it was four years ago, as relevant now as it was one hundred years ago. May our hearts be strengthened and encouraged as we pray together:

For Our Nation

*Almighty God, ruler of all the people of the earth,
forgive, we pray, our shortcomings as a nation;
purify our hearts to see and love truth;
give wisdom to our counselors
and steadfastness to our people;
and bring us at last to the fair city of peace,
whose foundations are mercy, justice, and good will,
and whose builder and maker you are;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

CURRENT COPIES OF “THESE DAYS” AND “THE PRESENT WORD” HAVE ARRIVED

The church has recently received the January/February/March edition of “*These Days: Daily Devotions for Living by Faith*.” Upon request, we would be happy to mail a copy to any member desiring one. Also, we will place copies of the Devotional on the tables in the Narthex and in front of the Church Office for people to pick up on Sunday mornings or whenever they are at the church. Especially in these extended times of isolation and separation, the devotionals in this cherished

publication are a wonderful source of inspiration, hope, and comfort.

Likewise, the Spring 2021 edition of “*The Present Word*” has arrived, and again, we would be glad to mail this lesson book to anyone desiring it. We continue to coordinate with C.F. Schneider as to when it might be prudent to resume in-person meetings of our Adult Sunday School class-- especially as the COVID vaccine becomes more widely available. Until then, however, please do not hesitate to contact the church office in order to receive a copy of this publication.

Peace, grace, and mercy,

Pastor Jim

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