

WORSHIP SERVICE
SUNDAY, APRIL 18, 2021, 10:30 A.M.

Our Scripture readings for next Sunday, the Fourth Sunday of Easter, are: Acts 4:5-12; and 1 John 3:16-24. The sermon title is "Love Is a Verb," and Dawn Neel and Linda Patterson will be singing the anthem, "More Like You, Lord." The Bulletin is available here: https://fpcovictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/04-25-2021-Bulletin-PDF.pub_.pdf

Although I have mentioned this before, I want to draw your attention to the picture above of the altar in our Chancel. The taller pair of candles and candlesticks (closest to the altar Cross) were purchased, as the Session directed, with funds we received as memorial gifts to the glory of God and in celebration of the lives of

Friench Tarkington and Ruth Williams. We hope the families of these dear departed saints, as well as their many friends in the congregation, will find these adornments to our altar to be a fitting and worthy tribute to those who served FPC-Victoria, our community, and indeed God's kingdom on earth so faithfully and so well.



**THIS YEAR'S PDS SUNDAY
WAS A JOYFUL SUCCESS!**

Our worship service last Sunday, April 18, 2021, was PDS Sunday, and it exceeded our every expectation for attendance, for participation, and for joy. The walls of the Sanctuary were lined with artwork by the PDS students, the pews were filled with smiling children, their families, and their teachers, and it was, to coin a phrase, "a beautiful day in God's neighborhood." Members of our congregation were also present in abundance to express their support for PDS and to enjoy the lovely voices of the children as they sang the old Sunday School favorites: *Good Morning Lord*; *This Little Light of Mine*; and *My God Is So Big (So Strong and So Mighty)*.

If you were unable to attend PDS Sunday in person this year, I want to urge you to view the worship service on our website (www.fpcofvictoria.org). You will, I have no doubt, experience the same joy, the same optimism for the future of God's creation, and the same love of God's precious children, that all of us in the Sanctuary that morning were able to enjoy as we were serenaded by enthusiastic children of the day school that we so deeply love and so faithfully support.



CONTINUED IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR ONLINE STREAMING

As many among us have noted, from a technology point of view the Coronavirus pandemic forced our church, kicking and screaming, to join the 21st century.

I remember those hasty, anxiety filled days in March 2020 when all of us on the church staff felt frustrated, apprehensive, and confused about how to proceed when the Session made the wise decision to suspend in-person worship in our Sanctuary. Miraculously it seemed at the time, we were able to “resurrect” the church’s long-lost Facebook page (last used in 2015, if I recall correctly!). Thankfully, our website had already been updated and modernized, but none of us knew how to record or upload worship services for later viewing on the website.

We scrambled, however, and led I am sure by the Holy Spirit, we learned how to record our worship services using an iPhone, how to post the recorded service on both our Facebook page and our website, and even how to place a copy of our bulletin on the website right next to the recorded worship service to which it pertained. And we learned how to do all this very quickly! All of the church staff was gratified to realize that there was only one Sunday worship service, between the date of the Session’s decision and the date of the first posting of our online worship service, that we “skipped” while we learned how to adjust to the new reality of the pandemic.

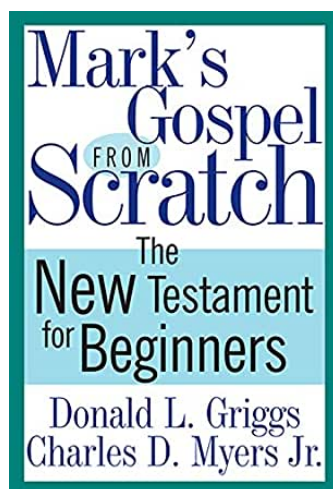
Since those first panicked preparations, we have come a long way in our technological capabilities. Now, not only do we record our worship services, we also “livestream” them so that visitors and homebound members can watch them at

10:30 a.m. along with those who, under our revised safety protocols, now attend church in person. At the same time, our worship services are also electronically archived so that they can be watch subsequently at the viewer's convenience.

Happily, we have also upgraded from our iPhone-on-a-tripod configuration, which did not allow us to move the camera, to a powerful (yet inexpensive) camcorder. Not only does the new camcorder move to follow the activities during our worship service, it also allows us to zoom in or zoom out to concentrate on various elements of our worship. Finally(!), we believe we have also fixed the problem of the "lag time" prior to our worship services, during which the camera broadcasts scenes from the Sanctuary prior to the commencement of our service.

Still, we continue to strive to improve the production quality of our internet broadcasts, and here is where we really need help from our members who watch our worship services electronically. Often we are unaware of problems with our broadcasts (sound quality, connectivity issues, etc.) unless and until someone mentions them to the church office. Also, because we are amateurs, we appreciate suggestions about how to improve our transmissions and recordings for the benefit of our viewers. Do you like the "opening shots" of the altar? Would you like us to focus more often on the Cross on the rear Chancel wall, on the stained-glass windows, on the congregation?

In short, we would like your help in improving the quality of our worship services when they are viewed remotely by members and visitors. Please don't be shy! No feelings will be hurt! If you have any suggestions, questions, or ideas about the livestreaming of our worship services, please share them with me, Robert Wyatt, or our Church Administrator, Tasha Wolf. We will bless you for your input!



**A SHORT BIBLE-STUDY COURSE,
EVERY TUESDAY, FROM 12:00 TO 1:00 P.M.,
IN FELLOWSHIP HALL**

It is still not too late to join us for our weekly Bible study classes on the Gospel According to Mark. Our classes are held in Fellowship Hall from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. on each successive Tuesday. By all accounts, the first two classes went well. Four classes remain, and you are welcome to join us. Each class is basically “self-contained,” and thus you won’t be behind even if you were unable to attend the first two classes.

Our easy-to-ready study guide is, “Mark’s Gospel from Scratch” (from the “New Testament for Beginners Series”). The book is authored by Donald L. Griggs and Charles D. Myers, Jr., prominent Christian educators and authors, and a picture of the cover of their book appears above.

If you are reluctant to start in the middle of our studies, please don’t be! We would love for you to join us as we concentrate on the oldest (the first-written) of the New Testament Gospels.

Peace, grace, and mercy,

Pastor Jim
