

**JOIN US IN PERSON
FOR OUR WORSHIP SERVICE ON THE
DAY OF PENTECOST
SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2022, 10:30 AM**

This Sunday, the Day of Pentecost, we will celebrate the Birth of Christ's Church. Why not wear some red to church, the traditional liturgical color of Pentecost?!

Our Scripture readings will be: Genesis 11:1-9; and Acts 2:1-21. The title of the sermon is "The Birth of Christ's Church," and a copy of the Bulletin for this service can be found here: <https://fpcofvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/2022-5-6-Bulletin-Communion-smaller-pdf.pdf>.

Please join us in person for this special celebration, and why not bring a friend?



**GOOD FOOD, GOOD FELLOWSHIP
AT OUR “5TH TUESDAY” GATHERING OF THE
CROSSROADS REGIONAL COHORT OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES**

On Tuesday, May 31, 2022 (the fifth Tuesday of the month), members from many of our sister Presbyterian churches in the Crossroads region gathered for a covered dish dinner-- our first in-person gathering in over two years (thank you, Mr. COVID!).

Over 20 faithful Presbyterians gathered in our Fellowship Hall from FPC and area churches in El Campo, Luling, Gonzales, and Palacios and also from across town (Grace Presbyterian). Sally Watson, General Presbyter of Mission Presbytery, made a special trip over from San Antonio to be with us as well.

As always, the prepared-at-home salads, casseroles, and desserts were delicious, and we all enjoyed meeting new friends and getting reacquainted with friends of long-standing. During our unstructured discussions we covered many topics: the tragedy, grief, and pain in Uvalde; preparations for hurricane season; and an exchange of experiences about how the pandemic had changed our worship habits (most notably during the celebration of communion).

Interestingly, every church had devised some means of maintaining contact among its members for collective worship on Sundays. The members of one small church met during the pandemic by means of a telephone conference call. Others used the traditional resources of Zoom, Facebook, YouTube, and websites. One of our visitors reported on a neighboring Presbyterian church that met in their cars in the church parking lot on Sunday morning and tuned their FM radios to a low-power frequency over which the minister would broadcast his sermon. Whenever the minister called for an “Amen!”, those gathered would honk the horns on their cars! What mighty praise to our Lord!

All but one of the churches present reported that even though they had resumed in-person worship, they continued to “live-stream” their services in the same way they were doing during the pandemic. Most churches recognized that this is the “new reality” of the twenty-first century. Many of us also agreed that, while the presence of a streaming service might encourage some ‘laziness’ among members to stay home rather than attend in person, by and large the benefits of reaching homebound members and visitors in distant places outweighed the temptation presented to some to stay home on Sunday morning.

All in all, we had a wonderful evening of food, conversation, and fellowship, and we adjourned looking forward to when we can gather again. The next time we get together (in August!), we hope you will join us. *“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them”* (Matthew 18:20).



**THE VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL
IS COMING TO FPC ON
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 2022, 6:45-9:00 PM AND
THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2022, 12:00–1:00 PM**

In our Newsletter last week, your pastor mentioned only one performance scheduled for our Sanctuary during the Victoria Bach Festival's annual program. Happily, however, I have learned there will be two concerts here at FPC.

The first concert (the one I failed to mention last week) will be a performance of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos 3, 5, and 6 by the Victoria Bach Festival Baroque Ensemble, lead by Stephen Redfield. The concert will begin in the Sanctuary at 7:30 p.m. Prior to the performance, there will be a "pre-concert talk" in the Parlor by George Stauffer. For lovers of classical music, the talk and the concert are not to be missed! To obtain tickets and to learn more about this year's Victoria Bach Festival in general, go to: <https://victoriabachfestival.org/concerts/events/>.

The second concert will be free to the public and be held during the noon hour on Thursday, June 9, 2022. "Duo-B," a string duet of Hirono Borter (violin) and Philip Borter (cello), will perform "Postcards from South America."

Don't forget to mark your calendar for these spectacular community concerts in our glorious, acoustically vibrant Sanctuary!

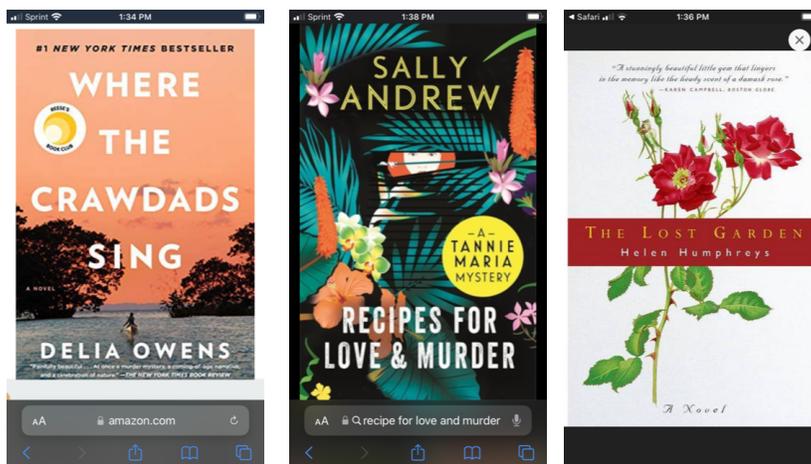
WALKING CLUB / BOOK CLUB

Don't forget that the church is open for a nice and cool walk. One large circle around the Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary will add 300 steps to your daily total. Walk alone or with a friend and let's step our way into better health.

Please join us on Tuesday, June 28th, at 1:00 pm in the church parlor for our discussion on the book "Where the Crawdads Sing". We will be making decisions concerning dates and times for our future gatherings. If you have any recommendations on books to read, please bring those titles with you.

Our book for late June is "Where the Crawdad Sings" by Delia Owens. In July we will read "The Lost Garden" by Helen Humphrey. And we will finish off our summer with "Recipes for Love and Murder" by Sally Andrew.

Any questions, contact Roxanna Hauschild or Dawn Neel.





PENTECOST SPECIAL OFFERING FOR PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY

The Mission & Outreach Committee of our Session invites your attention to the quarterly offering that our church supports for the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

This quarter's offering, collected during Pentecost, is dedicated to supporting ministries with children, youth, and young adults. These gifts, when combined with gifts from other churches throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), make it possible to join in ministries that connect young people with one another and with caring communities, helping them shape a life and a future beyond even our greatest dreams.

Such quarterly offerings allow us to contribute to worthy causes outside our operational needs for this church. Even small gifts, when coupled with gifts given by faithful members across our denomination, can have a powerful impact on our ministry and mission to help God's people all over the world. For more information, please review the insert that will be included in our Bulletin for Pentecost Sunday or click here:

<https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/resource/building-life-faith/>. To make an online contribution, click here: www.pcusa.org/donatepentecost.



OUR FORWARD JOURNEY

As part of the Session's *Our Forward Journey* initiative, we have been conducting an exhaustive review of our 2022 Operating Budget. Led by Ruling Elder Dawn Neel, and supported by Erica Colding and your pastor, the Session has already begun to identify areas of cost reduction, and we will report on our efforts in greater detail during a congregational meeting which we will call (likely in July) after we have finalized our work.

This budget review is an excellent example of the Session exercising its stewardship responsibilities on behalf of the congregation. To be clear, the Finance Committee continually monitors our Operating Budget and reports to the Session on no less than a quarterly basis. The extended review which we are conducting now, however, is a "deeper dive" into the church's budget that allows the Session to focus line-by-line on the church's expenditures as well as its sources of revenue.

This review also allows us to remind the congregation that while the Body of Christ does not need a building to be the Church, if the members and friends of First Presbyterian Church want to maintain a house of worship in Victoria, they need to determine the priority they are prepared to give to their financial support of our church, its operations, and its ministries.

If you have not recently given prayerful consideration to what this church means to your faith, then as we approach the middle of 2022, now might be an appropriate time to consider again how much you are able to tithe in support of the church we love. Pledge cards are still available in the church office if you

have not made your pledge for 2022. Moreover, if you believe that God is calling you to increase your level of giving for the remainder of the year, you need only to fill out a revised pledge card or otherwise inform Jim Stokes (Treasurer) or Dawn Neel (Assistant Treasure) of your intentions.

May God bless you and our church as, in the course of *Our Forward Journey* initiative, we plan how best to continue to the work of the Lord in the years to come.



Gone fishing . . .

REDUCED NEWSLETTER COVERAGE DURING JUNE

This month, Sally and I are taking a two-week vacation to attend the 50th reunion of my law school class and to travel thereafter. Since Sally also worked very hard as a teacher while earning her Ph.T. (“putting hubby through” as it was known back in the day), she is every bit as much a member of the Class of 1972 as I am, and she will enjoy catching up with old friends as much as I will.

After the reunion, we are taking our granddaughter on her “very own grandparent trip” which we have promised to each of our grandchildren. It is an indulgence we allow ourselves to introduce our grandchildren to the excitement of travel and the adventure of diverse cultures. We count ourselves blessed, and pray that God will surround us with travel mercies as we spend some one-on-one time with a child we love dearly.

I will be out of the office from Wednesday, June 8, 2022 (the day I leave) until Thursday, June 23, 2022 (the day I return). Meanwhile, the Worship Committee is planning some exciting worship services during the three Sundays I will be absent (June 12, 19, 26). There will be a congregational “sing along” of our favorite hymns, plus some interesting guest preachers whose invitations are pending as this Newsletter is being prepared.

And speaking of the Newsletter, while I am away, Erica Colding (our indomitable Office Administrator who now runs the church with me or without me!) will publish an abbreviated version of the Newsletter with information about the upcoming worship service for each successive Sunday. While the Newsletter will be uncharacteristically short, it will still be published (and mailed) each Wednesday. Those who receive the Newsletter by mail will also receive, as usual, a copy of the Bulletin for the following Sunday’s worship service.

When Sally and I travel, we try as best we can to attend a church service on Sunday in whatever locale we find ourselves. Not only do we experience worship, but we enjoy witnessing the myriad of ways that Christ’s flock chooses to worship and adore him. We hope that you, too, will be in church on Sunday to glorify God and praise his name. As a friend of mine is fond of saying, “It doesn’t matter who is in the pulpit; it matters only that the Holy Spirit is present!” You will be in our prayers as we travel, and especially on Sunday morning we will be thinking of all our friends in the pews at FPC!

Peace, grace, and mercy,

Pastor Jim

