

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY, MARCH 12, 2023, 10:30 A.M



Please join us for our worship service this Sunday, March 12, 2023, the Third Sunday in Lent. Our Scripture readings are Psalm 95 ("O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation") and Romans 5:1-11 (Paul's discourse on justification and salvation). The title of the sermon is "Justification," and a copy of the Bulletin for this service can be found here: <u>https://fpcofvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-3-12-Bulletin-PDF.pdf</u>.



FPC MEMBERS JOIN FORCES WITH OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN QUEEN CITY CLEAN UP PROJECT ON SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 2023

First Presbyterian Church of Victoria sponsored a team, Team #9, in the City of Victoria Queen City Annual Cleanup project. There were three members from FPC on the team of eight led by a City of Victoria volunteer. The team's assigned task was to walk Laurent Street from Red River to Hiller Street, pick up debris, and mow down grass along the City of Victoria right of way.

There were approximately 175-200 volunteers working to make the Queen City neighbor, our neighbor to the east, cleaner for the residents. Reliable sources report that everyone had a great time with donuts, tacos, coffee, and water available for the volunteers.

Let's all give a great shout-out of gratitude and praise to FPC members, Bonnie and Bill Wilkinson and Donald H. Anderson, who worked hard to brighten our neighborhood, and who faithfully modeled the type of Christian service to which our church family aspires.







FPC'S NEW MEMBER CONTINUES HER WINNING WAYS! Harper Edwards, the newest member of our church and granddaughter of our own Kay Edwards, recently won the Lauren Johnson Memorial Golf Tournament in Victoria, Texas. Harper is a graduate of the first Confirmation Class conducted by your pastor here at FPC. Our congregation could not be prouder of this young Christian woman's success in school, in sports, and in life, and we pray for her continued well-being.

Below is an except from the article about Harper's win which appeared in *The Victoria Advocate*. More information (especially some fantastic videos in which Harper is interviewed) can be found at the following link: https://www.victoriaadvocate.com/advosports/west-s-edwards-wins-lauren-johnson-memorial-tournament/article_f95bb13c-bacc-11ed-9014-47c72a1b36b3.html. Meanwhile, here is a except from the article reporting on Harper's victory:

Harper Edwards is no stranger to the Lauren Johnson Memorial Tournament.

The Victoria West junior has competed in the tournament since her seventh grade year, with her best finish (second place) coming when she was an eighth grader.

She got over the hump on Saturday, March 5th, at the Victoria Country Club, placing first after shooting a 3-over-par 146 over the two 18-hole rounds to edge out more than 60 other golfers.

"I was actually really excited to play Round 2 here since it's my home course, and I was proud of the way I played," Edwards said. "I minimized mistakes and kept my game plan, and I was just proud of the way I played today."

The junior, who is in her first year with West after playing for St. Joseph, ended with birdies on the par-3 15th and par-5 18th holes during Round 2.

"This is a pretty fun tournament for me since I get to see all of my friends, and I think it's a big step for me to win in my first year at West," she said. "I think it would springboard me to tournaments in the future." © 2023 *The Victoria Advocate.* Used by permission.



Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these". Matt 19:14

Animals in the air and in the sea, never looked so good! We are crafting, coloring, and snacking our way through Day 5, as we continued our journey through God's Creation (Genesis 1:1-2:3) at Kingdom Kids!

Come by and experience our multi-sensory lesson about Day 5 of God's creation - the creation of the animals in the sky and in the sea! Children ages 5-12 are welcome on Sunday mornings from 9:45 am – 10:15 am. Contact Leila Galvan at 956-367-2234 if you are interested in our class. All are welcome!





PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S SPRING LUNCHEON AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS, SATURDAY, MARCH 18, AT 10:00 AM, IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

All the women of the First Presbyterian Church of Victoria are invited to bring their favorite salad and share a time of food and fellowship during this potluck salad luncheon. Drinks, crackers, and dessert will be provided by Presbyterian Women. We will vote on a slate of officers for the upcoming year and discuss exciting plans for a daytime and an evening circle for 2023-2024. If you have a friend, or know of someone you feel may be interested in joining an evening circle, please invite them to join us at the luncheon. We hope to see you there!



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN MISSION PROJECT APRIL 2023 - THE VINE SCHOOL

Items needed by The Vine School are:

- * Disinfectant Wipes
- * Dry Erase cleaner (such as Mr. Clean Magic Eraser sponges). Dry Erase cleaning sprays and wipes are available at Walmart,

Big Lots, Office Depot, and Lowe's.

- *Nitrile disposable gloves, sizes medium and large
 *Baby Wipes (unscented)
 *Body Wash Fragrance Free, Sensitive Skin
 *Bubbles
- *Large bags of rice and pinto beans for tactile art activities

The Vine School provides a customized learning environment for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. April is Autism Awareness Month, so this is a perfect time for Presbyterian Women to assist the Vine School.



BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS

Join us on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 1:00 pm in the church parlor for an hour of great conversation and fellowship as we delve into our next book club choices.

> March 28th - The Book of Cold Cases by Simone St. James April 25th - The Chili Queens by Sandra Dallas May 23rd - Mary Called Magdalene by Margaret George



SESSION MEETING, MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2023, 6:00 P.M.

Our Session meetings are generally held on the second Monday of each month, and March will be no exception.

The Session has recommitted itself to a spirit of revival and service within our church and our community. If you have anything you believe would contribute to the vigor and welfare of our church, please don't assume that "someone else has probably already thought of it!" No, we want to hear from you!

If there is any matter of concern on your heart, or if there is something that you believe deserves careful consideration and thoughtful prayer involving our church and its members' work for the coming Kingdom of God, please share your thoughts with a member of the Session (their names are listed on the back of our Worship Bulletin every Sunday). We would love to hear from you!



OUR JOURNEY FORWARD

Great things are underway as First Presbyterian Church contemplates *Our Journey Forward* and undertakes to discern God's will for our continued Christian worship and service in the Crossroads Area. Come Holy Spirt, Come!

On Thursday, March 9, 2023, the Mission & Outreach Committee will meet in the Session conference room at 2:00 p.m.

On Saturday, March 11, 2023, the Mission Study Committee will likewise meet in the Session conference room at 9:00 a.m. Rumors abound that fresh donuts and hot coffee will be available! All members of the Committee are urged to attend to check out the rumors and to help us conduct this important study for our Church.

Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? Isaiah 43:18



As featured in last week's Newsletter, the *Vital Congregation Initiative* of the Presbyterian Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has published an inspiring Lenten Devotional which the Mission & Outreach Committee of our church would like to share with the congregation. It combines weekly readings with wonderful soup recipes, and the idea is to study the weekly readings and if so desired, prepare and enjoy a soup that others using this devotional might also be preparing. In a sense, we will be breaking bread and sharing a meal from afar as we journey through Lent together.

The complete Devotional can be found here: <u>https://fpcofvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2023-Lent-Devotional.pdf</u>, and we would like to encourage members to examine the document online. In addition to contemplative Lenten essays, the Devotional contains some fun recipes and information to consider during Lent.

Meanwhile, we will continue to publish successive excerpts from the Devotional in each our Newsletters that you will receive during Lent. Below is the reflection for the Third Sunday in Lent. We hope that you are comforted and inspired by these words on your Lenten journey.

Outward Incarnational Focus Rev. Jennie Sankey Associate Pastor, Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church

Romans 12:9-18, NLT:

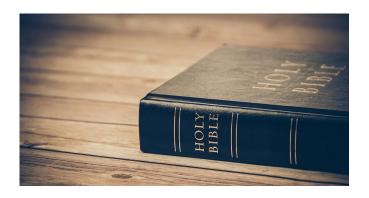
Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

Romans 12:9-18 is a popular wedding ceremony text because meaning can be found in these words by all, regardless of their faith. No one is going to disagree that we shouldn't try to let love be genuine. At the same time, these words are uniquely Christian, because these words are embodied in the life of Jesus. Jesus genuinely loved. Jesus persevered in prayer. Jesus offered hospitality to strangers. Jesus celebrated with guests at weddings and wept alongside mourners at funerals. Jesus associated with the vulnerable and did not exact revenge on those who sought to harm him. It seems unfair that Jesus had the advantage of God's incarnation while he lived among us. Being fully human and fully God surely makes it easier to live with an Outward Incarnational Focus. But as members of the body of Christ, we who are simply fully human are called to do the same. As far as it depends on us, we are asked to embody these Christian qualities.

The youth group I work with was recently looking for some service opportunities in our congregation. I called a few of our homebound members, asking if they had any household tasks we could help them out with, imagining yard work, house cleaning, and perhaps delivering some food. But when I asked Judy what she might need done in her apartment, she asked me, "do any of them know how to play Rummikub?" They did help her clean a closet out. But then they played Rummikub. Author Madeleine L'Engle wrote, "There is nothing so secular that it cannot be sacred, and that is one of the deepest messages of the incarnation." Sometimes Christ's incarnation is lived out through healing and hard work. And sometimes through Rummikub.

• Which characteristic of Christian community from Romans 12:9-18 have you experienced?

- Which is most natural for you to live out? Which is most challenging?
- Choose one of the qualities of community from Roman's 12 to focus on this week. Write down 3 ways you will intentionally try and live out this quality. At the end of the week, reflect on how you may have received this quality through the Outward Incarnational Focus of others as well.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CALENDAR

- <u>Sunday, March 12, 2023, 9:30 10:00 a.m., in the Parlor</u>: This Sunday, Dawn Neel will continue a Lenten Study using *Inward Work for Outward Living: 2023 Lenten Devotions* (a change from the devotional, *Water & Spirit: Devotions for Lent 2023* as originally announced). Copies of this new devotional will be provided to class members for personal study and reflection. We all need companionship and reinforcement during our Lenten journeys, and there is no better place to find that than with the members of the Nellie Hudson Adult Sunday School Class.
- <u>*Kid's Kingdom*</u>: Sunday Morning starting at 9:45 a.m. Come by and experience our multi-sensory lesson about Day 6 of God's creation.



GET ME TO THE CHURCH ON TIME!

Please don't forget to set your clocks FORWARD on Saturday night before next Sunday's worship service as most of the country switches to Daylight Saving Time. If you forget, you will arrive at church at 11:30 a.m., Standard Time, instead of 10:30 a.m. DST.

Your preacher has said before that he wishes "the powers that be" would pick one time-keeping standard and stop inconveniencing us with twice-a-year changes. Until that happens, however, we must conform to the system. Perhaps the discipline required to get up an hour "early" this Sunday can be rewarded with an afternoon nap! Such a schedule would be an inspirational way to spend your Sunday morning and a peaceful way to spend your Sunday afternoon-- not a bad way to spend the Lord's Day and enjoy Sabbath rest.



PERIODIC FPC FINANCIAL REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION (JANURARY 1 THROUGH JANUARY 31, 2023) Implementing the decision of the Session to begin periodic reporting to the congregation on the financial details of the Church's income and expenses (actual and as compared to budget), there appears below a brief report and chart on the status of the church's collections and expenses through January 31, 2023, that is, for the first month of operations during the current calendar year.

It may take a while for some to familiarize themselves with how our financial information is present below, but with time, we believe this information will become both easy to read as well as useful.

The same basic information is presented in two formats: text and chart, with the chart being perhaps being the easiest to understand. For example, in the chart below you can easily see, in column 3, that for the month of January 2023, we collected \$3,629 less than called for by our budget. At the same time, however, you can also see, in column 6, that for the same period our expenses were \$6,064 under budget.

In summary, columns 1 through 6 show us where we stand as compared to our budget (both for income and for expenses) for the first month of operations in 2023. The "acid test" number which appears in column 7, however, is computed without reference to our budget. It simply tells us how much money we actually spent as compared to how much money we actually received. For January 2023, therefore, you will see that we spent \$632 less than what we collected in that month.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if, for every one of the 12 months in 2023, the number in column 7 was always positive?! This will only be possible, however, with the combined efforts of the congregation (to maintain a faithful and sustained level of giving over the course of the year) and the Session (to monitor and be careful stewards of our tithes and offerings).

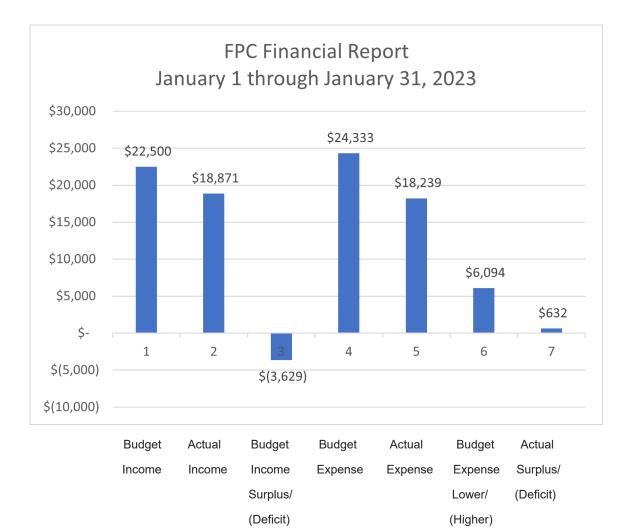
Should you have any questions about this Budget Report, please speak with Dawn Neel, our Treasurer, or your pastor.

BUDGET REPORT January 1 through January 31, 2023

2023 Budgeted Income YTD \$ 22,500

Actual Income YTD <u>\$ 18,871</u>

Income Surplus/(Deficit)		\$(\$3,629)
2023 Budgeted Expenses YTD	\$ 24,333		
Actual Expenses YTD	<u>\$ 18,239</u>		
Expenses Lower/(Higher)		\$	6,094
Total Surplus/(Deficit) of Actual Income vs. Actual Expenses		\$	632



Each of you must give as you have made up your mind,

not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. - 2 Cor 9:7

Peace, grace, and mercy,

Pastor Jim

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