



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



Please join us for our worship service this Sunday, March 19, 2023, the Fourth Sunday in Lent. Our Scripture readings are Psalm 93 ("The Lord is my Shepherd") and John 10:11-16 (Jesus declares, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep"). The title of the sermon is "A Song of Confidence," and a copy of the Bulletin for this service can be found here: <https://fpcovictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-3-19-Bulletin-PDF.pdf>.



During each week of Lent, we are featuring excerpts from the Lenten Devotional published by the *Vital Congregation Initiative* of the Presbyterian Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The complete Devotional can be found here:
<https://fpcovictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2023-Lenten-Devotional.pdf>,
and your pastor, together with the Mission & Outreach Committee, would like to encourage you to examine the document online. In addition to complete Lenten essays, the Devotional contains some fun recipes and information to consider during Lent.

Below is the reflection for the Fourth Sunday in Lent. We hope that you are comforted and inspired by these words on your Lenten journey.

Empower Servant Leadership

Rev. Dr. Flo Barbee-Watkins
Lead Presbyter for Vision & Collaboration
Presbytery of the James

Philippians 2:3-8, NRSV

Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human,

he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross.

This Scripture represents the nature and attitude that we should focus on cultivating as followers of Jesus. As the Amplified version puts it in verse 3, "Don't act from selfishness or pride, but instead, through humility, consider each other as better than yourselves". I believe that if we are attempting to possess the perspective of Christ, we need to demonstrate His humility. But if we are honest with ourselves, we have been unable to differentiate humility from servitude. Too often, people of color have been warned that there will be serious repercussions if they do not remain in "their place". Similarly, women have often been belittled and expected to be obedient to their husbands. Thus, this Lenten season, the real question that comes to mind is how do we self-reflect on our own intentions? How do we put into perspective the humility of Christ?

Humility is a characteristic of empowered servant leadership which involves recognizing that one does not have all the answers or power, and that others may possess more knowledge and aptitude. By admitting one's own fallibility and recognizing the boundaries of one's knowledge, the servant leader helps to create a learning environment in which colleagues, and folks within the congregation can gain knowledge through their own attempts and from others.

We are not called to be Jesus, but to have the same motivation for our actions. The attribute of humility comes out of a wellspring of knowing oneself and allowing others to be themselves. Humility is other-centered, rather than self-centered. We learn a lot more when as we seek to live out our calling in partnership with others rather than alone.



OUR JOURNEY FORWARD:
YOUR NEW MISSION STUDY TASK FORCE
BEGINS ITS WORK

Our session has approved the creation of a Task Force to begin a prayerful study and discernment about the current health, spiritual life, and future of First Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Texas. This is a daunting task, but the challenge was quickly accepted by faithful members of our church. The members of your Mission Study Task Force are:

Donald H Anderson, Facilitator and Chairperson

Rev. Jim DeMent, Interim Pastor

Roxanna Hauschild, Presbyterian Women Representative

Jim Miller, Congregation Representative

Dawn Neel, Church Treasurer and Presbyterian Women

Representative

Patrick Patterson, Active Ruling Elder

Bill Wilkinson, Ruling Elder and Congregation Representative

Gayla Whitaker, Presbyterian Women Representative

Your Task Force held its first meeting on Saturday, March 11, 2023, during which we began to discuss our methodology on how we will proceed with this study. The first task is to proceed with a data-based discernment of our heritage, who we are, current mission and outreach activities, local community demographics, our congregation demographics, Presbyterian Women, Presbyterian Day School, and our staff.

The second task is how your Task Force will conduct a survey to gain a better understanding of the views of our church's congregation. The development of technology and the ease on how to implement so much of what we do today led your Task Force to decide to use an electronic survey of the congregation. We currently send 91 newsletters by email on a weekly basis, with an additional 12 newsletters delivered by the US Mail. While your Task Force realizes that the results of the survey may be difficult to accept, the results may also be highly enlightening. It is a process that we believe we need to complete. Your help is urgently needed and greatly appreciated.

You will receive the survey via email, if we have your email address, on Tuesday, March 21, 2023. Please watch your mailbox for a message from *fpcofvictoria.org*. It will be sent from the same email address from which you receive the weekly newsletter. Please check your spam box if you don't see it. Those of you who receive your newsletter by US Mail, you will also get the survey in the same manner. It will include a self-addressed envelope for you to return your completed survey to the church office or you can simply bring it to church with you the following Sunday. Please feel free to discuss any concerns or issues with any of your Task Force members.

While we do not like deadlines, your Task Force would like your responses either by email or US Mail by **March 31, 2023**, to help us move forward with this important work.

Continuing the momentum generated during your Task Force's last meeting, we will meet again on **Monday, March 20, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.** in the Session conference room.

Please pray for your Task Force, please help us in this critical mission, and if you have any ideas, questions, or suggestions about how we may move forward, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to continue this church's 182 years of Christian worship and service in this community, please share your thoughts with any of the Task Force members.

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?

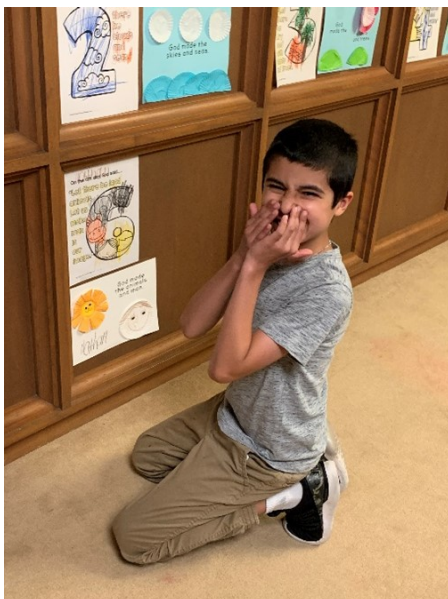
Isaiah 43:18



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

"Now it was Day 6 and God was ready to create all the creatures that roam the land, and then He created man." Not sure what was more exciting: creating a snack for Day 6 using pudding and animal cookies, or taking a picture with the finished art work! We are almost finished with our Sunday school series on God's creation. Hope you can join us for Day 7 – and see what the mystery snack will be!

Come by and experience our multi-sensory bible lessons. 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 have questions or would like to participate. 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**

**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN MISSION PROJECT
APRIL 2023 - THE VINE SCHOOL**

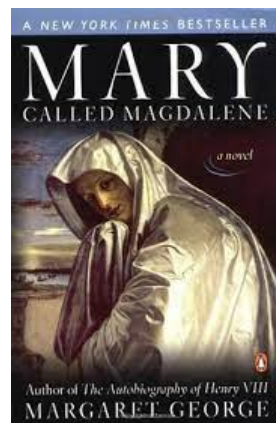
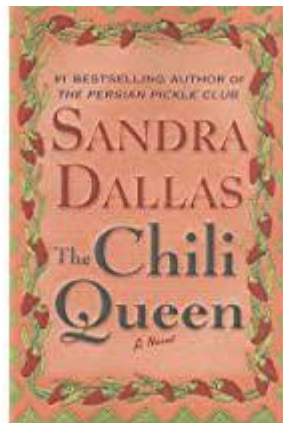
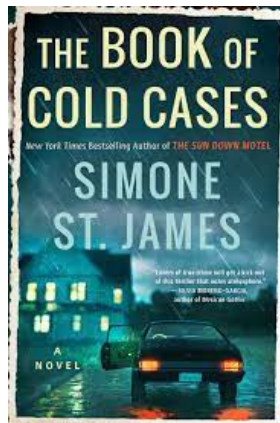
Items needed by The Vine School are:

- * 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

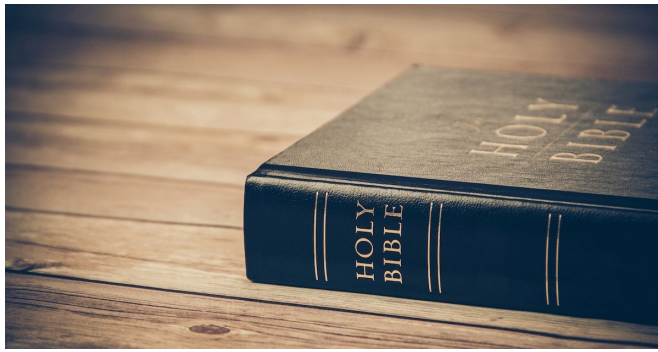
by Simone St. James

April 25th - The Chili Queens

by Sandra Dallas

May 23rd - Mary Called Magdalene

by Margaret George



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CALENDAR

- Sunday, March 19, 2023, 9:30 – 10:15 a.m., in the Parlor: This Sunday, Dawn Neel continues the class's Lenten Study using *Inward Work for Outward Living: 2023 Lenten Devotions*. 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.
 - Kid's Kingdom: Sunday Morning starting at 9:45 a.m. Come by and experience our multi-sensory lesson about Day 7 of God's creation.
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ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING: THIS FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2023, AT 10:00 A.M.

Our schedule for future cleaning sessions appears below (all dates are on a Friday). If you have some time to help us save money for the church while enjoying fellowship with good friends who love our church, please join us. No prior experience required!

March 31 at 10:00 AM: Sanctuary & Restrooms

April 14 at 10:00 AM: Office Spaces & Halls
April 28 at 10:00 AM: Kitchen & Fellowship Hall
May 12 at 10:00 AM: Sanctuary & Restrooms
May 26 at 10:00 AM: Office Space & Halls
June 9 at 10:00 AM: Kitchen & Fellowship Hall
June 23 at 10:00 AM: Sanctuary & Restrooms
July 14 at 10:00 AM: Office Spaces & Halls
July 28 at 10:00 AM: Kitchen & Fellowship Hall

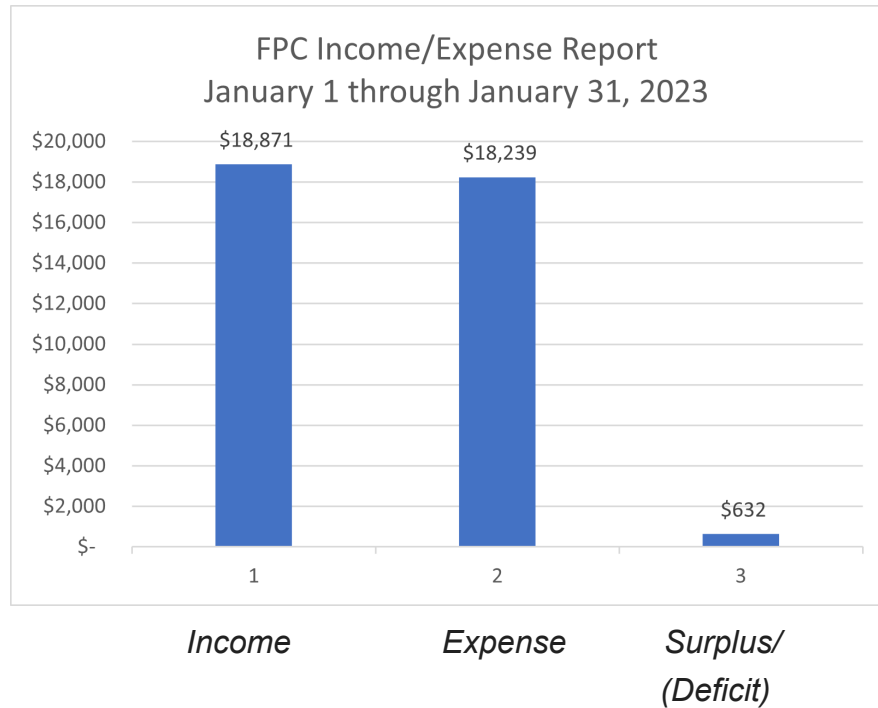


**PERIODIC FPC FINANCIAL REPORT
TO THE CONGREGATION
(JANUARY 1 THROUGH JANUARY 31, 2023)**

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback on the copy of the FPC Financial Report that we published in last week's Newsletter. The basic reaction was that while the information was appreciated, there was too much of it!

After further discussion, therefore, the Finance Committee has decided that, while the information in the Report was helpful for the Committee's careful monitoring of the church's finances, the basic detail with which the congregation was interested was simply whether or not our income was sufficient to meet our expenses. Accordingly, below is a newly formatted chart containing only that basic information.

Our Finance Committee, Session, and Treasurer (Dawn Neel) are working tirelessly to be good stewards of your tithes and offerings. Part of that work involves providing the members and friends of our church with current and transparent financial information. Therefore, we continue to welcome your input and suggestions about how we can best accomplish those goals.



*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

