



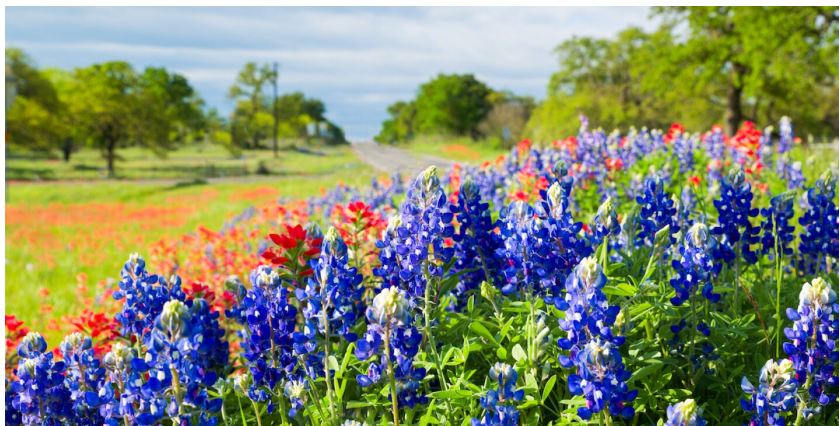
**TO CELEBRATE PENTECOST,
FPC AND GRACE
WILL HOLD A JOINT
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE,
MAY 28, 2023, 10:30 A.M.
(COME EARLY FOR
COFFEE, DONUTS, AND FELLOWSHIP!)**

To celebrate Pentecost, First Presbyterian Church and Grace Presbyterian Church will hold a combined worship service this Sunday, May 28, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. in FPC's Sanctuary. Worship leaders from both churches will preside during the service.

As a special element of our worship, Grace choir members will join FPC choir members to lead us in our hymns and to sing a special Choir anthem.

The Scripture readings are John 7:37-39 (Jesus promises the Holy Spirit) and Acts 2:1-21 (the Holy Spirit arrives among the crowd in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost). 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/2023/05/2023-5-28-Bulletin-PDF.pdf>.

Please join us for this joyous Sunday morning worship service, and why not invite a friend? In the spirit of fellowship, we will have coffee, donuts, and other breakfast sweets in Fellowship Hall. Come to church early (10:00 a.m.) and spend some time with our friends from Grace. Oh, and don't forget to wear something red!



**SPRING HAS SPRUNG,
AND FPC IS GETTING SPRUCED UP!**

Here in South Central Texas, Spring is always a fleeting thing. As your pastor writes this, it is 92 degrees outside, with 65% humidity. I believe Spring may be behind us by now!

Still, our church has come alive recently with folks who, just out of the goodness of their heart, want to spruce up the church. As we become aware that more visitors are joining us on Sunday mornings (Please Lord, keep them coming!), so many of us want to bring our building up to par because, as we used to say in the South, "company's coming!"

Among other things, we are making repairs to our restrooms and doing some

needed chores around the building. Spectacularly, however, many folks have also been paying attention to our gardens and grounds. Kathleen Carey has sent her yard crew over to our interior Memorial Garden to clean out vines and brush. Kathleen herself has come, in the afternoon heat no less, to trim back our olive tree. Her yard crew has already come once, and they will be coming again next week. Already you can see a huge improvement!

Jim and Camille Miller have been concerned about the heavy leaves around our front entrance and in our packing lot, so Jim has been blowing the leaves and dust away from the front door before our Sunday worship services. Recently, Jim also brought his pick-up truck with plenty of landscaping bags so that he could pick up leaves and debris from around the north edge of our parking lot where the dead leaves are piled several inches deep in places.

Finally, Billy Leske, who always keeps a watchful eye on our building and grounds, determined that our gutters needed cleaning and arranged for the labor to do that.

Respectful pride in our appearance is different from vanity. When our building is clean, well maintained, and well repaired, it is an especially inviting place for members, friends, and visitors. Because we love the Lord, we want to take care of the place where we come to worship him!





**ONE GREAT HOUR OF CARING:
THIS FRIDAY, MAY 26, 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 take pride in our church, please join us. No prior experience required!

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



SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 2023!
THE CONGREGATION WILL GATHER
TO RECEIVE AN OVERVIEW OF
THE MISSION STUDY REPORT PREPARED BY YOUR TASK FORCE

Under the skillful and devoted leadership of its Chair, Donald Anderson, your Mission Study Task Force has now completed its preparation of a prodigious Mission Study as the next step in *Our Journey Forward* program to reawaken, revitalize, and expand the impact of our church in the Victoria community.

The Task Force presented the Mission Study to the Session on Monday evening, May 22nd. Although the meeting lasted roughly three hours, the Holy Spirit was surely present as Session members reviewed the document, asked good questions, and in a few instances recommended changes designed to enhance the quality and utility of the Mission Study.

Now, we want to share an overview of the Mission Study with you, the members and friends of our beloved church.

It is the Session's responsibility to approve the Mission Study for submission to the Mission Presbytery's Commission on Ministry-- something that will be accomplished formally at our next Session meeting on Monday, June 5, 2023. Meanwhile, however, both the Task Force and the Session believe it is imperative to share an overview of the Mission Study with our membership at large (but don't worry, we won't take three hours to do it!).

The church will provide the main course for a congregational luncheon to be held after our worship service on Sunday, June 4, 2023. Members are invited to bring a side dish such as a vegetable, salad, or dessert. We will have lunch in Fellowship Hall and then listen to brief presentations from members of the Mission Study Task Force regarding the major topics addressed in the Mission Study.

Your pastor believes this will be one of the most important meetings in the recent history of our church. We all know the problems facing this and other churches across Christendom-- declining membership, aging demographics, reduced financial resources, and so on. Your Session has decided to address those problems head on, and this Mission Study is a major step in that direction, a major step of progress in *Our Journey Forward* as we continue our 182-year tradition of worshiping and serving Christ in this community.

The Mission Study contains no panacea for growth and improvement, but it does embrace a commitment to address the problems we are facing and to exploit the many resources with which we are currently blessed. Realistically, the members of the Task Force realize that the observations and suggestions set forth in the Mission Study may contain errors or may result in failures. With God on our side, however, we are prepared to make the effort to revive, reawaken, and rejuvenate our church. The members of the Task Force often said during our many hours of work, study, and meetings that we may fail in our efforts, but greater was our apprehension of how we would feel if we failed to try to *succeed* in those efforts.

Please join us for a good lunch and a consequential presentation!



**FRIDAY, MAY 19, 2023:
THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL
FOR OUR PDS DISCIPLES**

In the last Newsletter, we mentioned that our PDS young disciples, their teachers, and their families, would be celebrating the end of the 2022-2023 school year in our Sanctuary on Friday morning, May 19th. Both ceremonies, the “Kindergarten Graduation Ceremony” at 9:00 a.m. and the “End-of-the-year Program” at 10:00 a.m., were enjoyed by all.

A few tears were spotted by you pastor in the eyes of the assembled teachers and parents, but of course I did not dare look in a mirror at my own. How happy we are for the life that God has given our young students who we pray will grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. How bitter-sweet it is to see them leave us.

Enjoy the pictures below; more will be available in August when we start the PDS cycle all over again!



OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR AGES 5-12



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

Anything is possible with the Lord! This past Sunday, we journeyed with Abraham and Sarah as they traveled to their new home. Using our felt story characters, we read all about God's promise to Abraham and Sarah and all they encountered while waiting on God to fulfill His word. For craft time we 'constructed' a tent to remind us of Abraham and Sarah's journey and kept with the tent theme for snack time as well. A tent never tasted so good!

We will be taking a break this Sunday (05/28), but we will be back next Sunday (06/04) - hope you can join us as we continue our lesson on Abraham and Sarah!

Join us on Sunday mornings from 9:45 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.. Children ages 5-12 are welcome. Contact Leila Galvan at 956-367-2234 if you have questions or would like to participate. All are welcome!



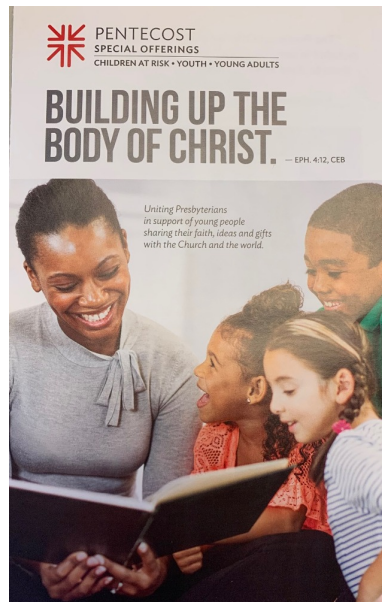
**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN
INSTALL NEW OFFICERS
FOR 2023-2024**

At our worship service on Sunday, May 21, 2023, the Presbyterian Women installed their officers for 2023-2024. Pictured above are:

Moderator: Dawn Neel
Vice-Moderator: Martha Tarkington
Secretary: Sally DeMent
Treasurer: Paula Leske
Christian Community Action: Francis Miller
Prayer Chain: Lynn McAuley
Nominating Committee Chair: Bonnie Wilkinson
Historian: Helen Williams

To mark this joyous occasion, PW ask the congregation to contribute to the PW annual "Birthday Offering" for various local and worldwide missions supported by the national organization of Presbyterian Women. Immediately after our service, PW fed the entire congregation with a luncheon in Fellowship Hall that included fried chicken, all the "fixin's," and a humongous slice of birthday cake!

FPC loves its Presbyterian Women in so many ways, but this Sunday we especially showed our loved by donating in excess of \$800 to the PW Birthday Fund. May God continue to bless the work and support provided by these women to build God's kingdom on earth!



**PENTECOST SPECIAL OFFERING
FOR PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY**

It is time once again for the quarterly offering that our church supports for the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Last quarter this offering was taken on Easter, and now in the second quarter this offering will be taken on Pentecost. The funds collected from the Pentecost offering will be 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. To make an online contribution, click here: www.pcusa.org/donatepentecost.



WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE HYMNS?

Among clergy and church musicians, there are at least two tasks that are considered impossible to achieve. The first is to get the temperature in the Sanctuary at the level where *everybody* is comfortable, and the second is to pick a hymn that *everybody* likes! But nevertheless we try, dependent on the grace and understanding of the congregation when we fail.

As to finding hymns that (almost) everyone knows and likes, we are going to have a worship service, on June 11, 2023, that consists principally of singing hymns selected in advance by the congregation. We have done this before, and everyone enjoys it!

We have begun placing a “suggestion form” in the Narthex on Sunday mornings, and already we have begun to receive suggestion cards-- and we are bound to receive even more. For the benefit of our Newsletter readers, we are also printing a copy of that form below. If you have a suggestion to make, you can clip this form, fill it out, and mail it to the church office. Better yet, just call us (361.575.2441) or email us (info@fpcovictoria.org), and we will make sure that your requests into the right hands.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE HYMNS?

On Sunday, June 11, 2023, our worship service will concentrate on congregational singing, especially the great, familiar hymns of the Church. Do you have a favorite? Is there a precious hymn that we have not sung for a while and you would love to hear? Let us know!

Fill out this form and either place it in the offering plate or turn it in to the church office. Our Worship Committee will do its best to pick the most popular hymns nominated by the congregation.

Title

Number in the Hymnal
(if you know it)



VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL RETURNS WITH PERFORMANCES AT FPC

As a reminder, the Victoria Bach Festival will be presenting its annual series of concerts in Victoria on June 4-11, 2023. For more information and to purchase your tickets (hurry!), click here: <https://victoriabachfestival.org/concerts/events/>.

Of special interest to the members and friends of FPC are the programs that will be held in our church this year, namely:

Thursday, June 8,
2023
6:45 pm - 7:15 pm

[PRE-CONCERT TALK WITH GEORGE STAUFFER](#)

First Presbyterian Church, Victoria Texas

[Purchase Tickets](#)

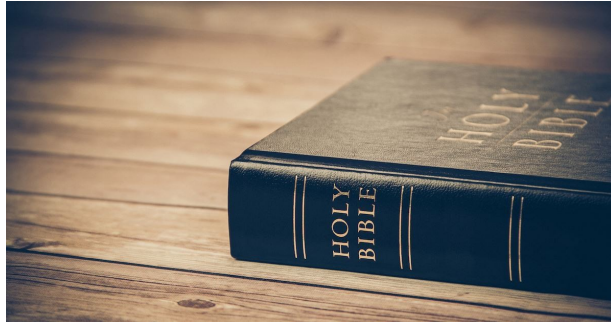
Thursday, June 8,
2023
7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

[VBF BAROQUE ENSEMBLE LED BY STEPHEN REDFIELD](#)

First Presbyterian Church, Victoria Texas

[Purchase Tickets](#)

Without a doubt, the performances organized by the Victoria Bach Festival are of world-class quality, and we, as residents of this community, are blessed to have access to them. All music, whether of the church or otherwise, is one of God's greatest gifts to his creation. Whether you attend the Bach Festival performances at FPC or elsewhere (or everywhere!), you will be enthralled by the quality of the performances, not to mention that you will be supporting the high caliber of musical artistry that this community enjoys.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- Sunday, May 21, 2023, 9:30 – 10:15 a.m., in the Parlor: The Nellie Hudson Adult Sunday School Class continues its study entitled, “*Prayers and Poetry*,” a spiritual study of the beauty, majesty, and power of prayer. Materials will be provided, and you can be sure of a great time of fellowship and learning.
- Kingdom Kids: There will be no Kingdom Kids May 28, 2023, join us again June 4.



PERIODIC FPC FINANCIAL REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION (JANUARY 1 THROUGH APRIL 30, 2023)

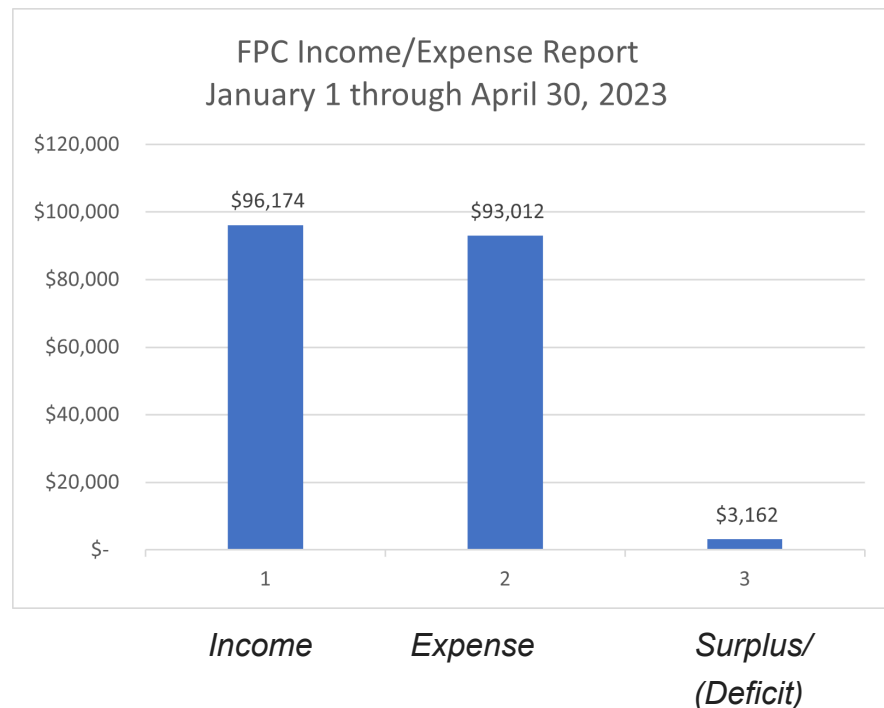
Through the first four months of 2023, church revenue improved in April to the point where a negative cash-flow of \$10,678 at the end of March was reversed into a positive of \$3,162 at the end of April. Obviously, a lot of this has to do with the timing of our collections versus the timing of our payments, but anytime we are collecting more than we are spending is a good day at the church house.

But now a cautionary word based on experienced. Historically, collections decline during the summer months, both in large churches and small. Attendance

drops as folks go on vacation and forget to send in their tithes and offerings while they are away. Unfortunately, given our razor-thin financial circumstances, any decline in revenue risks our having to dig into our savings accounts to keep the lights on.

Hopefully, however, among this vigilant and faithful congregation, we will not see this customary “summer lull.” Please mail us your offering if you are going to be away, or drop two offerings in the plate to cover, in advance, the time you will be away!

The Finance Committee is very grateful for the faithful stewardship of this congregation. We, in turn, promise to be faithful stewards of the church’s financial resources.



*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



Billy Ruddock, long-time and beloved member of our church, passed peacefully into the Church Triumphant on Friday, May 19, 2023, at the age of 91. The family has confirmed that they want to hold a memorial service in our Sanctuary, but details about the time, date, and other arrangements are pending with the family and Rosewood Funeral Home.

In life and in death, we belong to the Lord!



THE LAST FULL MEASURE OF DEVOTION

These are the famous words that President Abraham Lincoln used in his Gettysburg Address to describe the sacrifice of those valiant soldiers who died in battle while fighting for their country.

Memorial Day, the last Monday in May, is when all Americans remember those members of our armed forces who have given their lives in service to our country. May we be humbled by their devotion, may we be inspired by their heroism, may we never forget their sacrifice for our freedom and way of life.

In honor of Memorial Day, the church office will be closed on Monday, May 29, 2023.

Peace, grace, mercy,

Pastor Jim

PRODUCTION NOTICE: GIVEN THE MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY NEXT WEEK, WE WILL NOT BE CIRCULATING NEXT WEEK'S NEWSLETTER (EITHER BY REGULAR MAIL OR EMAIL) UNTIL THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2023. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING.

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