

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 27, 2023, AT 10:30 A.M.**

Please join us this Sunday, the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 27, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. Our Scripture reading will be Matthew 16:13-20 (Jesus asks Peter, "But who do you say that I am?"), and the title of the sermon is "Our Piece of the Rock." A copy of the bulletin can be found here: <https://fpcovictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/2023-8-27-bulletin-5-PDF.pdf>

A Special Program Note (Repeated)

During the months of August and September, the Worship Committee will be introducing some modest changes to our traditional Order of Worship. In August, we will be listening to the words of familiar hymns as they are read aloud, or we will ourselves recite those words aloud, to hear afresh the spiritual messages they contain. Bob Whitaker will be our featured reader this week.

In September, we will have a Moment for Mission each Sunday to remind ourselves of just a few of the many community organizations that the members and friends of our church support with their offerings of time, treasure, and prayer.

More Musical Program Notes

This Sunday, while Robert Wyatt is on vacation, Marylynn Fletcher will be our guest organist. Accompanied by Marylynn, Dawn Neel will sing a solo entitled, "Wade in the Water."



**OUR 2024 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN
IS OFF TO A GREAT START!**

***I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?***

Isaiah 43:19

Only three weeks after we kicked off our church's 2024 Stewardship Campaign, we have already received 15 pledge cards in the church office (as you can see numbered on our "Stewardship Campaign Quilt" in the picture above). Some have been mailed, but a large number have been placed in the offering plates during our Sunday morning worship services.

Howsoever you chose to respond, please do so as promptly as you are able. The small amount of time it takes to complete and return your pledge card helps us enormously in planning our budget for 2024. By your generosity, let us help God do a "new thing" among us!

If you have returned your pledge card recently, our Treasurer, Dawn Neel, will soon mail you a letter of acknowledgment and gratitude. May God bless your generosity, and may your gift be used wisely in service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

WHAT A GREAT TIME WE HAD AT OUR "END OF SUMMER' FELLOWSHIP EVENT ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2023!



With an attendance that rivaled any of our Sunday morning worship services, the members and friends of FPC, Victoria, celebrated our Caregiving & Fellowship Committee's "End-of-Summer Picnic" with laughter and enthusiasm. Children of all ages enjoyed the hot dogs, chips, snacks, and ice

cream that were in abundant supply.

Ruling Elder John Horadam thoughtfully invited our friends at Mount Nebo Missionary Baptist Church to celebrate with us after their Wednesday evening Bible study, and at least four of them joined us while we blessed backpacks, played happy "cup games," and joined our voices in the sing-along led by Lynn McAuley's sister, Liz Williams, accompanied by her trusty guitar.

In case you missed it, Dawn Neel announced the news that until Wednesday evening was known only by her. She revealed that, thanks to the generosity of our members and friends, not to mention the long hours of dedicated sorting, arranging, and tagging by our numerous volunteers, our Stupendous FPC Rummage Sale raised \$2,345 for the church's operations. This is nearly 65% more than the amount raised for the church during our rummage sale last year!

Finally, I am happy to announce the results of the big "vote off" among hotdog fans as they were allowed the opportunity to vote early and often for their favorite hotdog topping. The vote, as audited by our trustworthy Assistant Treasurer, Jim Stokes (while your pastor counted the quarters from the respective "vote cans"), was:

| | |
|-------------|--------|
| Mustard: | \$8.25 |
| Mayonnaise: | \$2.25 |
| Ketchup: | \$1.50 |

I cannot remember the last time I had just a joyous time of fellowship with friends and neighbors-- all of whom love Christ and one another. Don't talk to me about dying churches! Witness our bake sale, patronize our rummage sale, come to our picnic, join us in Sunday School or Sunday worship. We are healthy and vital at FPC, Victoria. May God uphold us and bless us as we share with others in our community the joy we know and the Good News we have received!



PAW BITES

Bark! Bark! Meow! Meow! That is THANK YOU in dog and cat language. What a wonderful response from all of us. WOW!!! We filled the Meals on Wheels wagon again. Each week please add to our meals on wheels for those great companions of the mobile-limited citizens of Victoria.



Cat food and dog food are delivered once a month on or around the last Friday of the month based on the number and size of their clients' pets by Victoria Meals on Wheels.

Get Support

PAW Pet Care Assistance



We ask for your assistance by providing dry cat food or dog food by dropping the bags off at the church. We have already begun to place a red wagon in the hallway around the fellowship hall or in the Narthex to collect your gifts. When you buy food for your cat or dog remember those that are less fortunate whose only companionship and love is their pet.



VISD Connection

The Lord through his Spirit made it possible for our congregation to make the lives of young girls attending Victoria Independent School District more comfortable and meaningful through our gifts to the VISD Connection program. Our gifts will go to homeless girls and girls in foster care. We will continue to support VISD Connection throughout the school year. Your prayers for these young girls will be known. We give thanks to God for his goodness and grace.

Through the gifts and the efforts of our volunteers, our church continues to support Christ Kitchen and VCAM. Through the use of our facilities, we also support the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, the Presbyterian Day School, and the dedicated programs of Presbyterian Women.



VCAM ANNUAL RAFFLE FUNDRAISER

The Victoria Christian Assistance Ministry (VCAM) has once again started selling raffle drawing tickets to support its annual fundraiser. Originally established in 1986 as a food pantry, VCAM is a non-profit organization which serves as a safety net for families in Victoria County in need of food, clothing, and other essentials.

This year's raffle drawing includes \$6,500 in prizes, including \$5,000 in HEB gift cards as well gift cards to local restaurants and retail businesses. Tickets are \$5.00 each or six tickets for \$25.00. The raffle drawing will be held at 12:00 noon, Friday, September 29, 2023, at the VCAM office.

Becky Richter, current member of the VCAM Board of Directors, will be selling tickets at First Presbyterian Church throughout the months of August and September. Thank you for your continued support of our local outreach.



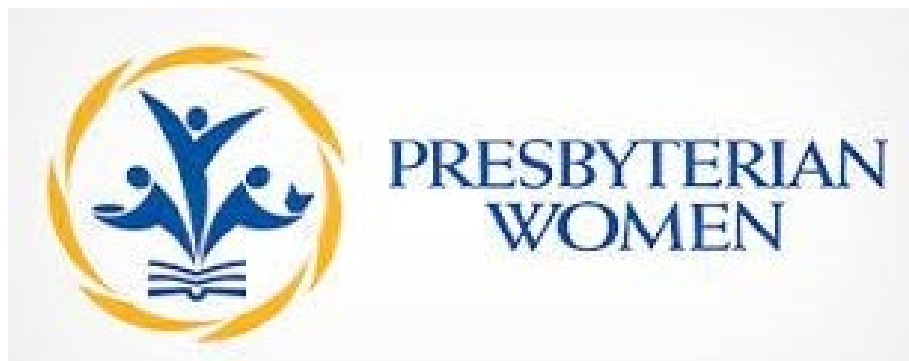
Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these". Matt 19:14

Do not misuse God's name - the 3rd commandment (well, at least it's how we say it in 'kid language'). In order to convey the meaning of this 'rule' we crafted a stop sign to remind us to 'stop' before we use God's name in a mean way. Our snack was made of some fruit roll-ups (used for the outline of our

stop sign) and strawberry slices to fill in the octagon shape.

We will be taking a break for a few weeks, but we will be back on Sept 10th! Mark your calendars to join us then, from 9:45 a.m. – 10:15 a.m., as we continue our new multi-sensory series. We will recap the first 3 commandments and then spend some time learning the 4th commandment – Remember the Sabbath day. Plus, we will add our newly learned commandment to our 'tablets'.

Contact Leila Galvan at 956-367-2234 if you have questions or would like to participate. All are welcome!



**NEWS FROM
PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN**

The PW Coordinating Team will meet on Tuesday, September 5th, at 12:00 noon in the Conference Room for our first meeting as new officers. As we organize ourselves for the 2023-2024 Bible Study year, we pray for the Spirit to guide all who are interested to join us in fellowship, study, and mission.

Women of Faith Circle
4th Wednesday of the Month
2 pm in the Church Parlor

Evening Circle
4th Tuesday of the Month
6 pm in the Church Parlor

The Horizon Bible Study Guides, *Sacred Encounters*, have arrived and are available for pick up at the church office or for delivery to your door. Please let us know how best we can serve you by contacting Dawn Neel (361-652-3925) or the church office (361-575-2441). The Bible Study Guides are \$10.

Our Victoria Cluster Fall Gathering will be hosted this year by the women of First Presbyterian Church of Palacios on Saturday, October 14th. Ellen Gray, cluster leader and daughter of our own Mardy Ratliff, will be sending us more information in the following weeks, so be sure and mark your calendars!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- *Nellie Hudson Adult Sunday School Class, Sunday, 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor.* This Sunday, the class will conclude its six-week study entitled, *Being Reformed Faith Seeking Understanding: Christian Hope*. Our final lesson is entitled, "Living Hope in Church and World."

As one good study series comes to an end, another is about to begin! On Sunday, September 3rd, we will commence a new six-week study in the same “Being Reformed Faith Seeking Understanding” series, but this time the topic will be “Faith and Science.” We live in a world of faith and science. As Christians in the Reformed tradition, we recognize our duty to love God with our mind and intellect, as well as our heart and soul and strength (see Mark 12:30). We embrace science as one of God’s many gifts to his creation, and we do not see it at all as a threat to our faith or as antithetical to religion.

Come and study with us to learn more! Dawn Neel will have copies of the study material for all who wish to participate in this thought-provoking examination of the interaction of faith and science in our journeys of faith.

- *Kid’s Kingdom, Sunday, 9:30 a.m.*: We will be taking a break for a few weeks, please join us when we come back September 10, 2023.



Our beloved FPC member, Mardy Ratcliff, has moved to Seguin, Texas to be closer to her daughter. For those who would like to send Mardy a card or note, her new address is: 226 Preston Drive - Apartment 212, Seguin, Texas 78155.

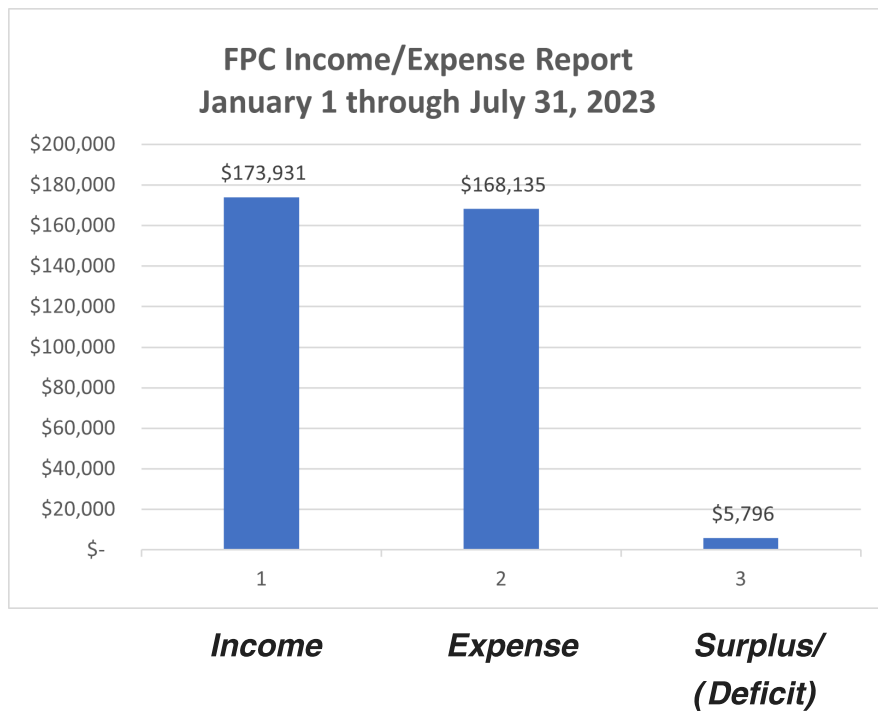


**PERIODIC FPC FINANCIAL REPORT
TO THE CONGREGATION
(JANUARY 1 THROUGH JULY 31, 2023)**

I am happy to report that, through the first seven months of 2023, church revenue exceeded church expenses by \$5,796. As always, we must remain cautious even in the midst of good news. Nevertheless, this surplus is particularly encouraging, not only by its amount, but also by the fact that it indicates our members and friends have faithfully maintained their generous level of giving even over the normally sleepy summer months.

This is also encouraging news in the midst of our 2024 Stewardship Campaign. It is reassuring for us to see that the hard-earned money we pledge to this church is carefully monitored and wisely spent. You may be sure that the monitoring and other fiscal practices that have been implemented by Treasurer Dawn Neel, our Finance Committee, and our Session keep us watchful and financially responsible every month of the year.

So, as we embrace our 2024 Stewardship Campaign, let us also commit to finishing 2023 in the strongest financial shape possible. If, by God's will, we are able to close out 2023 with a balanced budget, and if we have a strong and generous response to our 2024 Stewardship Campaign, then *Our Forward Journey* will only become stronger and more exciting!



*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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