



OCTOBER 29, 2023

REFORMATION SUNDAY!

PLEASE JOIN US FOR WORSHIP AT 10:30 A.M.

Please join us for worship as we celebrate Reformation Sunday, October 29, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. We will be listening to, as well as reciting responsively, many of the Creeds which constitute our denomination's Book of Confessions, Part 1 of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Our New Testament reading will be John 16:4-14 ("I still have many things to say to

you, but you cannot bear them now”). The title of the sermon is “*Ecclesia Reformata, Semper Reformanda Secundum Verbum Dei*,” and a copy of the bulletin can be found here: <https://fpcofvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/2023-10-29-Bulletin-reformation-Sunday-PDF.pdf>

Please join us on this Sunday (and why not invite a friend?!) when we pause to celebrate our Reformed tradition by not only singing the great hymns of the Reformation but also by reminding ourselves of some of the dynamic theological Confessions that were written during that period as clergy and laymen reawakened their faith in our Risen Lord!

A Special Musical Note

Robert Wyatt is once again away for a brief week’s vacation, and in his absence we joyfully welcome our good friend, Dr. Marylynn Fletcher, to lead us in our ministry of music.

A Special Sartorial Note (of robes and collars and red vestments!)

During the Reformation, the Swiss clerics wore long, heavy black robes with long, flowing sleeves because, from a practical perspective, such attire was needed in order to keep them warm in the Chancels of the freezingly cold, stone-wall churches in which they preached. Such robes became known as a “Geneva gown,” and it is what your pastor most often wears when he preaches in our church’s magnificent Sanctuary.

Some have theorized that the Reformation clerics also wore these uniform, monochromatic robes to distinguish themselves from the heavily embroidered, multi-colored hierarchical robes (monsignor, bishop, cardinal) of Roman Catholic clergy. The Reformers’ theological point was that all humans stood equal before God and that clergy and laity were equally empowered by the Holy Spirit. Thus, there was no need to call special attention to clergy just because of what they wore.

Over time, of course, the black preacher’s robe did just the opposite of allowing clergy to “blend in” with the populace. The Geneva gown became synonymous with ‘holy authority,’ ‘man of God,’ etc., by uniquely identifying those who had been ordained to preach and perform the sacraments. In fact, in 1865, the Rev. Donald McLeod, a Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) minister

in Glasgow, added the white clerical collar to be worn by clergy with their black suits and black clerical shirts on those occasions when they were not preaching in church. Although the matter is not entirely clear, some historians write that the white collar (as we know it currently) was actually worn by Protestant clergy before it was widely adopted by Catholic clergy.

Given that American Presbyterianism traces its roots back to John Knox in Scotland (who was a student of John Calvin in Switzerland), some Presbyterian ministers to this day wear a white collar with “teaching tabs” that extend at matching angles below the collar. In Europe, and especially in England and Scotland, such collars were worn by academicians, lawyers, and clerics alike. As an homage to the Reformed pastors of our Scottish tradition, your pastor will be wearing a collar with teaching tabs on Reformation Sunday.

Finally, among American Protestants, the liturgical color of red is usually reserved for Pentecost and on the occasion of the ordination of ministers. In some Reformed traditions, however, red is also worn on Reformation Sunday. Thus, your pastor will wear a red stole with his robe and teaching tabs on this occasion. If you would like to join me by wearing a red item of clothing, please do! Our spiritual ancestors in the Church of Scotland would be pleased!



BOO!
HALLOWEEN IS COMING!

As predictable as pumpkin spice lattes and cooler mornings, Halloween will soon be here-- and our young disciples at PDS are ready for it!

Every autumn (to the extent we have autumn in South Central Texas!), PDS has a “pumpkin patch” celebration around the same time as its Book Fair. Talented, creative teachers paint pumpkins to match some of the children's books that are for sale. Students and their families bid on their favorite pumpkin creation, plus each student gets to take home a pumpkin from the pumpkin patch to decorate any way they wish.

Of course candy (in a reasonable amount) is also in the picture, and in next week's Newsletter, we will have some pictures of our young students in their *scary* costumes going around the church building (their classrooms *and* the church office) to collect their treats.

May God bless and keep safe our happy trick-or-treaters during this fun time of the year!





missions and outreach

UPDATE ON NEW COMMUNITY OUTREACH INITIATIVES

City of Victoria Queen City Cleanup Held on Saturday, October 27, 2023

This past Saturday a team of seven FPC members joined with two City of Victoria employees and students from Victoria College, The University of Texas, and Texas State University to form Team #5 in the City of Victoria Community Improvement efforts in Queen City, our neighboring community. There were an estimated 100-150 volunteers who were assigned specific city blocks to go knock on doors to do several things. The primary role was to inform the residents that we were there to help them move trash, brush, old tires, mattresses, and other household items in their yards. One team member conducted a short survey of the residents about improving Queen City Park. Another team member informed the residents that the City of Victoria Fire Department would install smoke detectors at no charge.

Several City of Victoria departments were also on hand. Victoria EMS personnel were there to check blood pressure and A1C levels and to administer flu shots to residents. The Victoria Police Department had a booth along with the City/County Library. Coffee and donuts were served in the morning with hot dogs served when the teams completed their tours. It was a fun time sharing this information and helping our neighbors.

VCAM Thanksgiving Food Scavenger Hunt

First Presbyterian Church has been a faithful supporter of VCAM's ongoing efforts to sustain the hungry, poor and homeless in our community. With Thanksgiving rapidly approaching, it would be helpful to provide additional assistance through our food donations. We will have a "Food Scavenger Hunt",

beginning on Sunday, October 29 and ending on Sunday, November 19. The Mission and Outreach Committee will provide large, brown bags and a weekly list of food items to “scavenge”. Each week, a bag and new list of canned foods and non-perishable items will be provided for members to pick up at church. The empty bags can be picked up in the Narthex or on the table in the back hallway. Filled bags can be deposited weekly on Sunday or dropped off during the week. The VCAM shopping cart near the Fellowship Hall, will be the drop off point. Your support of this outreach will make a difference in the lives of many in our community.

December 6, 2023 – FPC, Victoria will sponsor a Veterans Fair in partnership with the Texas Veterans Commission and the Veterans Resource Department of the Texas Workforce Commission. The goal is to inform our congregation regarding benefits available to our veteran members and their families and to provide outreach to all veterans in our community.

Gina Brown, Veterans Resource Coordinator, Coastal Bend & Golden Crescent Areas representative will organize the Veterans Fair, publicize the Fair through the various veteran organization contacts available to her. She has already gotten commitments from Victoria Veterans Center and the Military Veterans Network. She will be working to recruit more veteran organizations to participate.

FPC will provide the fellowship hall, bottled water, tea, and coffee



Our congregation has responded again in a huge way helping those in our community that cannot afford to buy cat and dog food for their loving animal companions. In September we donated 136 pounds of dog food and 60 pounds of cat food to the Meals on Wheels Paw Bites program. This was about one-third of what we contributed in August, but it was gratefully accepted and appreciated by the Meals on Wheels South Texas staff.

Each time a member of our Mission and Outreach Committee delivers our church's weekly donation, the staff greets them with open arms and gives thanks for what our church does for those senior citizens they serve. They report that because of our contributions Meals on Wheels has not had to purchase cat or dog food for the past two months to meet their clients' needs!

We fell short of our goal in September. You are encouraged to join in again by purchasing an extra bag of cat or dog food for those needing our help. Our red Paw Bites wagon will continue to be in Narthex of the church for your convenience. Please remember to bring a bag of cat or dog food with you on Sunday.

Your support of this important work of God in our community is being felt in the lives of many. We do this in the name of Jesus Christ.

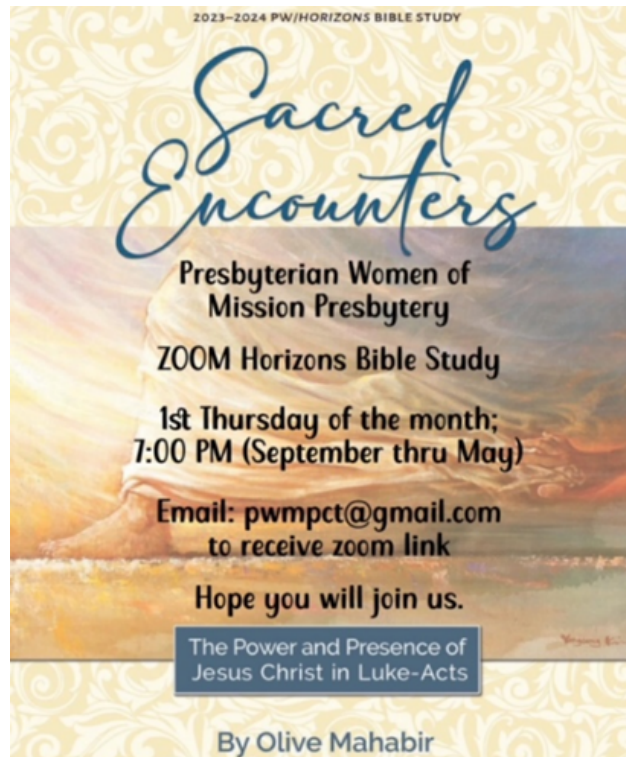
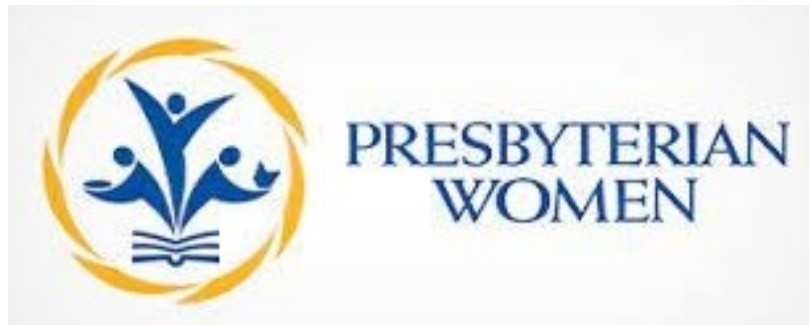


**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
AGAIN THIS
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2023, AT 10:00 A.M.**

This Friday, October 27, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., we will once again gather as has become our custom to do some light cleaning around the church. So, please join us for some good times and fellowship, all for the benefit of our church!

Here, for your convenience is a list of the upcoming dates for our One Great Hour of Caring:

November 10
November 24 (may change due to Thanksgiving)
December 8
December 22 (may change due to Christmas)



Great news for anyone who is unable to attend monthly circle meetings at FPC, Victoria, but who would still like to participate in the Horizon Bible Study.

This year Presbyterian Women of Mission Presbytery is once again hosting the Horizons Bible Study on Zoom. We will be meeting in online sessions on the first Thursday of each month, September - May at 7:00 PM. We hope you will join us as we consider Jesus and Jesus' disciples who shared the Good News through sacred encounters with everyday people.

If you would like to be added to our Zoom bible study invite, please email us at pwmpct@gmail.com.



Perpetual Help Home is the Presbyterian Women mission focus for **October**. Perpetual Help Home needs are:

- * Body Wash
- * Deodorant (solid)
- * Shampoo
- * Conditioner
- * Loofah Bath & Shower Poofs
- * Dish Soap (Large bottles; Dawn preferred)
- * Laundry Detergent (Powder, Liquid, or Pods)
- * Tall Kitchen garbage bags
- * Spray Disinfectant (for Kitchen or Bath)
- * Toilet Paper
- * Paper Towels
- * Condiments (salt & pepper, garlic powder, chili powder)
- * Plastic cereal bowls (found at various dollar stores)
- * Plastic food storage containers (sizes: 2, 3, or 5 cup)
- * HEB & Walmart gift cards

Please assist Presbyterian Women by donating any of the above items. Donations may be left in the Church office.



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

We were joined this Sunday by our friends as we learned all about commandment #8, Do Not Steal! For our craft, we colored a wallet with money, cut a slit in the cardstock, and inserted a 'moving' hand. The 'moving' hand could be slid back and forth toward or away from the wallet, which was a fun interactive craft for the kids. For snack, we made a 'hand' with chocolate candy and popcorn, to remind us not to take anything that does not belong to us. As with every lesson, we went through all the commandments by singing the 10 Commandment song and reading our book.

We will be moving right along with commandment #9 this Sunday, hope you can join us.

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



- This Sunday, October 29th (no class): Having finished its six-week study of “Being Reformed - Faith Seeking Understanding: Faith and Science,” the *Nellie Hudson Adult Sunday School Class* will not meet this Sunday (Reformation Sunday). Class will resume next Sunday, November 5th, however, with a new topic. Be sure and read next week’s Newsletter for further details.
- *Kid’s Kingdom, Sunday, 9:45 a.m.*: Join us this Sunday as we continue learning about the 10 commandments and making tasty snacks.



Requiesce in Pace
Lidia Serrata Ledesma

Nicea Presbyterian Church, Mission Presbytery, the legal community, and the entire Victoria community has lost a good and faithful servant of the Lord, Lidia Serrata Ledesma. Lidia joined the Church Triumphant on October 11, 2023, after a long and valiant struggle with cancer.

As the most recent issue of the Mission Presbytery Newsletter said so eloquently, “We give thanks to God for the outsized, faithful, and committed life of Lidia.” Lidia was a graduate of Presbyterian Pan American School and the University of Texas, and practiced law with a specialty in children's advocacy. She is survived by two sons, her brother Robert and another sibling, and a host of adoring family, colleagues, and friends.

FPC, Victoria is honored that our friends at Nicea have asked to have Lidia’s memorial service in our Sanctuary on Sunday, November 5, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. The Rev. Bette Burris will preside, and Robert Wyatt will play our organ for the service. A reception, hosted by the members of Nicea Presbyterian Church, will be held in our Fellowship Hall following the service.

We thank God for the life of Lidia, and we are grateful that we are able to support her family and many friends during this time of loss. Lidia is healed and at rest in the eternal company of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To God be the glory!

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

Peace, grace, and mercy,

Pastor Jim

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