



**PLEASE JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 2024, AT 10:30 A.M.**

Please join us for worship this Sunday, the Second Sunday after Epiphany, at 10:30 a.m. Our Scripture readings will be Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15 ("It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to you, O Most High") and Mark 4:26-29 ("The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how"). A copy of this weeks bulletin can be found here: <https://fpcovictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024-1-14-bulletin-PDF.pdf>

A Special Musical Note

Robert Wyatt will undergo a minor medical procedure this Friday, January 12, and thus will not be able to play for us on Sunday. While wishing Robert a speedy recovery, we are happy to welcome back Marylynn Fletcher who will again lead our music ministry while Robert is resting. Get well soon, Robert! It is nice to have you back, Marylynn!



WE WELCOME MASTER BAIN WILLIAM ROGERS INTO CHRIST'S CHURCH

The Sacrament of Baptism is a happy, holy occasion for parents, family, congregations, and ministers alike, and so it was with great joy last Sunday that we baptized Bain William Rogers, son of Virginia and Wilson Rogers, in the same Chancel where his parents were married on December 12, 2020.

The cycle of life is so beautiful to witness and experience in the context of a church family, and it was a joy and privilege for our congregation to welcome Bain into the fellowship of believers, while we, his parents, his grandparents (Gayla and Bob Whitaker & Elizabeth and Bruce Rogers), and his extended family looked on. Welcome, Bain! We look forward to watching you grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord!



WELCOME TO THE CLASS OF 2026

Having been elected at a Special Meeting of the Congregation on November 12, 2023, and then having been appropriately examined by the Session at its meeting on December 12, 2023, Paula Leske, Chris Neel, and Marsha Ricottelli have become, effective January 1, 2024, active Rulers Elders (the Class of 2026) serving on the Session of our church for a three-year term.

Last Sunday, January 7, 2024, we held a Service of Installation for Chris Neel and Marsha Ricottelli. Paula (and Billy Leske) were on “grandparent duty” last weekend, but we will find an opportune time to install and bless Paula for her new duties as well.

John Horadam, Lynn McAuly, and Bonnie Wilkinson (the Class of 2023) have rotated off the Session. The congregation, the current members of the Session, and your pastor want to express their heart-felt gratitude for the faithful service and leadership that these fine folks, our friends, have so freely given our church during their three-year term. Although their service on the Session is complete for a while, each of these Ruling Elders has pledged to continue to support our church with their time, energy, and talents.

Let us pray that God will grant our new leaders and all of us strength, wisdom, and perseverance as First Presbyterian Church enters a new year of hope, promise, and continued service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



News from the Pastor Nominating Committee

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) has entered the next phase of its search process, and with the approval of Mission Presbytery's Commission on Ministry, now has our church profile online through the nationwide Church Leadership Connection of PCUSA. *And we are excited to have received our first group of profile matches this week from individuals who are seeking a call to full-time church ministry!*

As we carefully review the profile information received from potential candidates, we humbly ask for God's guidance and your continued prayers. Please contact any of us if you have questions about the process of calling a new pastor as together we continue *Our Journey Forward*.

With joy and gratitude—

Pastor Nominating Committee Members

Billy Leske Dawn Neel Patrick Patterson Bonnie Wilkinson Robert Wyatt



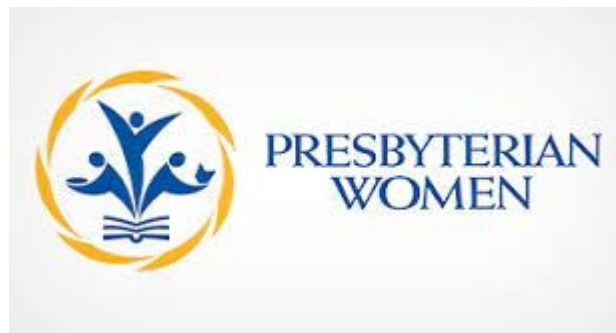
Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these". Matt 19:14

KINGDOM KIDS RESUME THEIR SUNDAY SCHOOL

We're back and ready to learn! We are starting off the New Year learning about David and Goliath. We crafted up our very own 'pouch of stones' and also created our own edible stones using vanilla wafers, frosting, and grey sprinkles. We also spent some time singing and dancing to (the oh so catchy tune) "Only a Boy named David".

Our lessons are multi-sensory – so we read, craft, sing/dance, and eat during each lesson – and are so much fun! We will continue learning about David and Goliath next Sunday, so spread the word – we'd love to have more friends join our classes this year.

Contact Leila Galvan at 956-367-2234, or the church office, if you have questions or would like to participate.



We look forward to our January circles and the “Sacred Encounters” we will have.

Evening Circle

4th Tuesday of the month at 6pm (January 23)

Church parlor

Women of Faith Circle

4th Wednesday of the month 2pm (January 24)

Church parlor

VISD Connections is the Presbyterian Women Mission Focus for **January 2024**. Presbyterian Women will be collecting:

Laundry Pods

Disposable Plates (8" or 9"; paper or plastic)

Food Storage Bags (all sizes)
Battery Operated Alarm Clocks (with batteries)
Pots, Pans, Skillets, (with or without lids)
Hand Held Can Openers
Condiments: chili powder, cumin, salt & pepper,
garlic powder, onion powder
Sugar
Flour

FPC members and friends can assist Presbyterian Women by purchasing any of the above items and leaving them in the church office.



Book Club will meet January 23, 2024 at 1:00 P.M. in the parlor to discuss "Comfort & Joy". We hope to see you there for discussion, and to find out our next book!





CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

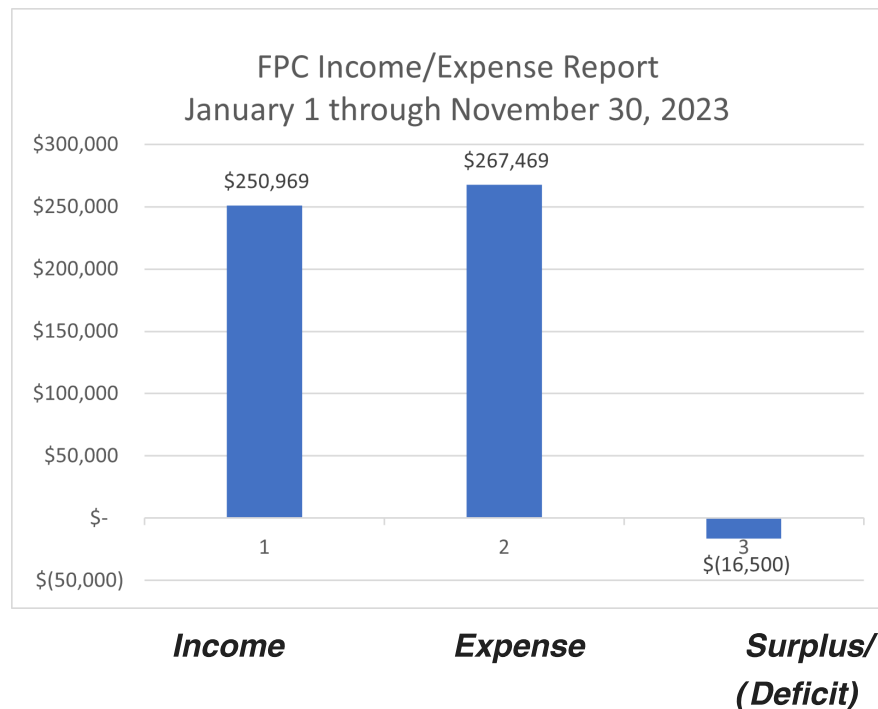
- This Sunday, January 14, 2024, the *Nellie Hudson Adult Sunday School Class* will resume its study of “The Seven Essential Marks of a Vital Congregation.” After having had four lessons in this remarkable publication, the class paused to take up a study over the holidays of “Illuminating Advent,” by Donald K. McKim. With Advent behind us now, the class will continue with three more sessions studying the *Seven Essential Marks*.
- Kid’s Kingdom, Sunday, 9:30 a.m.: The Kingdom Kids are back in Sunday School learning about how David, with God’s help, overcame his bigger, more powerful foe, the giant Goliath!

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

Church expenses through the first eleven months of the year exceeded church revenue by \$16,500. Fortunately, however, we are aware that, as anticipated (but never taken for granted), our collections during the five Sundays in December were strong. It will be several more days before Dawn Neel, our Treasurer, has the final financial reports for 2023 from our accountants, but given the strength of the generous contributions of the members and friends of this church in December, we hope soon to have

positive news about the church's 2023 financial results.

Still, our operating expenses never take a vacation or a break, so we must remain faithful and timely with our tithes and offerings. Your church always needs your support!



**BE PREPARED FOR
INTERMITTENT PUBLICATION
OF THE NEWSLETTER
(PLUS A CALL FOR VOLUNTEER[S]!)**

As we have reported before, there is a bit of uncertainty surrounding the publication of our Newsletter while the church works to identify the next minister whom God is calling to lead this church. Therefore, going forward,

there may be weeks when we will not be able to publish a Newsletter, and we pray that you will be patient with us.

The Session is prayerfully considering how to maintain this important means of communication during the period while we await the arrival of our new minister. Erica Colding is, of course, a crucial resource for the publication and distribution of our Newsletter, and the various chairs of our Committees have done a wonderful job this year of submitting timely articles to be inserted directly into the Newsletter.

Still, every publication needs an “Editor in Chief.” So, have you considered whether God might be asking you to “do your part” in helping us during this period of transition? We really could use one or more dependable volunteers to step forward to help us publish the Newsletter. Keeping things simple, we are asking for a volunteer or volunteers (who could work from home) to help us a maximum of three to five hours a week (principally on Tuesday and Wednesday) to help Erica compose, edit, and publish the Newsletter.

This is not, by the way, an empty, futile task. Fifteen homebound or out-of-town members and friends of our congregation receive printed copies of the Newsletter which we mail every Wednesday. Our electronic distribution (also on Wednesday) reaches over 100 readers. There is a congregation to be served, and a ministry to be met among believers who are physically unable to come to our church, not to mention the many folks who do attend regularly but who depend on the Newsletter to keep them informed of the many exciting activities going on in our church every week.

If you feel a tug in your heart--a quiet whisper in your ear, “you know, I would enjoy doing that”--please do not resist. Your church needs an editor for a while. Are you the person God is calling to help carry this church through this critical transition between ministers?



**FELLOWSHIP AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEES PLAN
A POTLUCK LUNCHEON
FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 2024**

To mark the departure of Pastor Jim and Sally after six amazing years in our midst (where *did* the time go?!), and to wish him and his wife “Happy Trails” as they leave us, the Finance and Personnel Committees have organized a Potluck Luncheon to be enjoyed following the last worship service in which Pastor Jim will be preaching, Sunday, January 14, 2024. Please plan to join us on this happy occasion, and please bring a salad, a side dish, or an entrée. The Finance and Personnel Committees will provide the beverages and dessert.

*If you would like to bring a note or card for Sally and Jim,
a ‘Happy Trails to You’ basket will be available in Fellowship Hall on Sunday.*

Peace, grace, and mercy,
Pastor Jim

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