

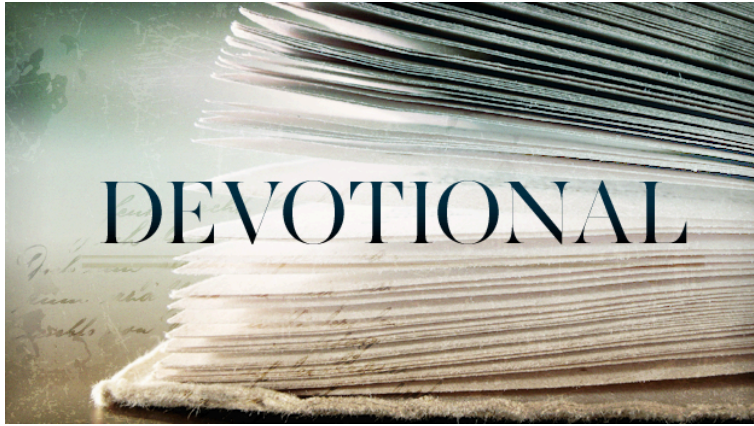


**PLEASE JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2024, AT 10:30 A.M.**

Please join us for worship this Sunday, the Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost at 10:30 a.m. Our Scripture readings will be Joshua 24:1-2, 14-18 (Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, . . .) and John 6:56-69 ("This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?"). A copy of the bulletin can be found here: <https://fpcofvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/2024-8-25-Bulletin-PDF.pdf>

A Special Worship Note

This Sunday we welcome back Rev. Carol Rahn!



"Grounded and Strengthened by God "

Ephesians 6:10-20

The Race for Peace

Lace up your sandals in preparation for the gospel of peace.

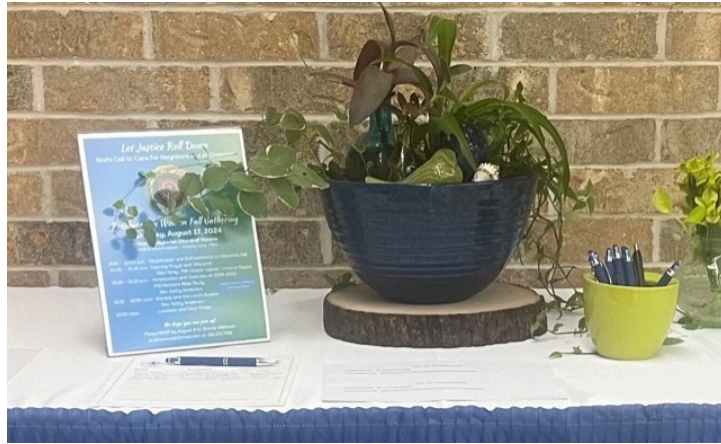
Ephesians 6:15

Waging peace takes much effort, whether it is peace in our hearts, peace with our next-door neighbor, or peace among nations. Because the word peace conveys tranquility and calm, we forget that sometimes really working for peace is the result of blood, sweat, and tears. I think that nothing brings God greater joy than all of God's children living together in peace - without fear, violence, hunger, or poverty. While few of us are politicians or rulers, or diplomats, and thus have less individual power when it comes to bringing an end to war and a reign of peace, we can work for peace in other ways, doing what we can to resolve conflict, doing what we can to make sure our neighbor has a full life with daily bread. To do this, we lace up our grown-up shoes and head out the door, confident of the good news we bring.

Daily Prayer

O God, make me, too, an instrument of your peace. Amen.

Beth Merrill Neel, Portland, Oregon



THANK YOU for the abundant outpouring of support and generous spirit of cooperation that made the *Presbyterian Women Fall Gathering 2024* such a wild success!

From Coordinating Team and church staff planners, yard care folks and super chefs . . . to worship leaders, cleanup crew and dishwashers *extraordinaire*—the journey has been a joy to watch unfold from beginning to end. To God be the glory . . . *always!*





Presbyterian Women

The words Thank You do not express the gratitude I feel to all the beautiful souls who gave of their time, talent, and hard work toward the success of the Annual Presbyterian Women's Fall Gathering, which was hosted in our church this past Saturday, August 17th. Fifty-two women and men from the Victoria region and beyond joined in a day of celebration to our Lord through relationship building to mission to study to worship and to fellowship.

What a joy it was to re-kindle friendships, but also to meet for the first time the many faces of PW from El Campo (she brought her husband along), Gonzales, Luling, and Palacios. Ladies and a few husbands also traveled up from Corpus Christi to join the gathering. We were also blessed to have representatives from the PW Mission Presbytery. Thank you, Lori Black, PW Co-Moderator and Melanie Petru, PW Treasurer for supporting our cluster.

Henry Owen, Executive Director of John Knox Ranch, presented a program on scholarships for children who wish to attend the many youth programs and camps offered at JKR. Toward the end of the gathering, we were able to present a check in the amount of \$1,321.48 in donations from our attendees. Thank you, Henry for your travel to Victoria and to your dedication to the youth of PC(U.S.A.).

We are thankful for the gifts of Rev. Kathy Anderson, pastor of El Divino Salvador Presbyterian Church in Corpus Christi, who led us in the overview of the 2024-2025 PW Horizon Bible Study. Kathy is the daughter of our own members, Ruth and Donald Anderson. She was raised in our church, and I had the privilege of sitting at table with her at the luncheon. It was wonderful to hear her remembrances of her youth in Sunday School classes led by Jud Austin and Bob Ratliff and Kathy Neece, who helped to instill her love of Jesus Christ. Thank you, Kathy for your enthusiasm and your dedication and your ease of spirit. And thank you for helping to lead worship and officiating the Lord's Supper.

To the ladies of our PW Coordinating Team, thank you for months of diligent work which came from your love of our Lord and the beautiful Spirit which lives in you all! For all the many volunteers who cooked and served and cleaned, you are saints. Robert Wyatt, thank you for sharing and blessing us with the beautiful music which graced not only the worship service, but also enriched the luncheon. Robert gave up vacation time to be with us and displayed his always visible service to our church, all through his love of God. Thank you to Erica Colding for printing the Fall Gathering Flyers for Bonnie Wilkinson and who assisted me in constructing our worship bulletin. She is truly a blessing to our church and is always willing and ready to lend a helping hand in the life of our congregation. Lynn McAulay, your crafting skills are simply amazing! God had granted you a very special gift. She made all the "circle trees" you see in the pictures from the gathering. When you see Bonnie Wilkinson, please give her a mighty hug for her work in assuring the success of the gathering by designing the flyer and hand delivering them to neighboring churches; coordinating the registration table; organizing the door prizes; gracing the fellowship hall with greenery from her own garden; confirming the luncheon menu; and finding volunteers to cook! Our church is blessed with her giving heart. Not that we judge a "book" by its cover, but when our guests arrived, the church yard looked fantastic. Thank you to Camille and Jim Miller; Ruth and Donald Anderson; and Bill and Bonnie Wilkinson for tending God's garden.

After a morning of greetings, registering, serving breakfast, conducting PW business, presenting mission, and serving lunch, the ladies of PW were truly blessed with the volunteer services of a group of men who did a phenomenal job washing all the dishes including the church china without

breaking a single dish! Bill Wilkinson, John Horadam, Billy Leske and Chris Neel, you guys are awesome!

Humbled in gratitude,
Dawn Neel, PW moderator



A LETTER FROM THE SESSION

Your Session has approved the search for a part-time pastor as opposed to a full-time pastor. The income required for a full-time pastor is above our current sources of revenue. The Finance Committee reports that January through July pledges are down \$15,000 and offering plate giving is down \$17,000. This fact, coupled with a noticeable decrease in Sunday Worship attendance has led to the request from our Pastor Nominating Committee that they be allowed to search for a part-time pastor. A pastor who would preach every Sunday yet with less time in the office.

A part-time pastoral call is NOT a sign of a weak or dying church, but it depicts the wisdom and strength of your elected Session and PNC. We are on a journey forward into the future of religious worship in the 21st century for which we know that First Presbyterian Church of Victoria with its 183-year history will be a part!

The Finance Committee will mail a mid-year statement of giving to all who have pledged in 2024. We encourage everyone to pray for our church and to be joyful in the Spirit as we travel on our path ahead in our continuing ministry to our community and the world.

This is an exciting time in the life of our church, and it takes all of us working together to discern the will of our Lord.

Chris Neel, clerk of session



Please mark your calendars for Sunday, September 8.

We will enjoy a delicious pot luck meal after the worship service, followed by a brief presentation by Donald Anderson who attended the 226th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. in Salt Lake City, Utah June 2024. Our friends from Grace Presbyterian Church will be invited to join us for this delicious and informative fellowship event.



**Victoria Salvation Army
Back to School Project**

Your Mission and Outreach Committee has partnered with several other non-profit organizations and businesses to participate in the Salvation Army's Back to School project. On Sunday, August 11, 2024, an additional \$265.00 was collected through a special offering to add to the \$500.00 committed by your Mission and Outreach Committee.

The Salvation Army staff were openly grateful for the support from our congregation where children living in poverty, single parent households, foster homes, and living with other family members benefited from this program by receiving clothing items, school supplies, and shoes.



November Brown Bag Scavenger Hunt

Please stay tuned for the November Brown Bag Scavenger Hunt to help Victoria Christian Assistance Ministry (VCAM) in providing food to their clients during the Thanksgiving time.

VCAM needs staple items: canned fruit & vegetables, packaged rice & beans, small, canned tomato sauce for their pantry. Items for the homeless such as: easy-open canned meats, nutrition bars, bottled waters, and fruit cups, as well as, small toiletry items, washcloths, towels and blankets.

Visit the website at: www.vcamvictoria.org or Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/vcam.org/> for VCAM services or news.

When you bring a bag of cat or dog food for our Paw Bites program please also bring an equal amount of the items listed above for our humans in need of our help.



Paw Bites – Meals on Wheels

Thank you to all who drop off your cat and dog food. It is always a blessing to hear the “thank you’ s” and words from the Meals on Wheels staff when our bags of food are delivered to the Meals on Wheels office. So far in the month of August you have delivered 78 pounds of dog food and 78 pounds of cat food to those that depend on their cat or dog for their only companionship.

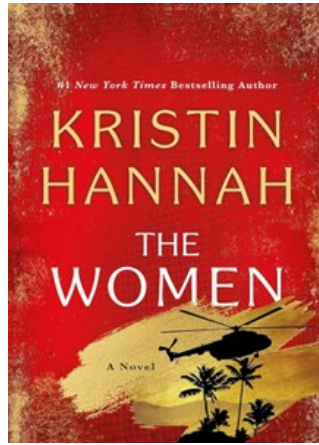
Your support of this important work of God in our community is being felt in the lives of many. We do this in the name of Jesus Christ.

Christ’s Kitchen

Christ Kitchen continues the amazing task of feeding over 200 mouths every day except Sunday. The Kitchen, as some call it, also is a wonderful place to share time with other volunteers. It is a fun place to see how our community continues to respond to the needs of those that are less fortunate than we are. They need you to volunteer. Contact the church office, Billy Leske, or Frances Miller about how you can spend 2-4 hours a week serving a community just across the fence. We are all created in the image of God and each person that graces The Kitchen each day are seen as the same whether one is a volunteer or one that is hungry for a fresh, hot meal.



Please join us on Wednesday, August 28th at 2pm for our next Summer read. Our book selection for August is *The Women* by Kristin Hannah. The main character in the book, Frances McGrath, hears the words, “Women can be heroes”, and dares to imagine a different future for herself. Joining the Army Nurse Corp., she follows her brother to Vietnam. Amazon describes this story as an intimate portrait of coming of age in a dangerous time and an epic tale of a nation divided. With rave reviews, this book promises great discussion by our book club. Even if you will not be joining us, we hope you will read the book as it is said to be a book that will stay with you long after reading it.



VCAM ANNUAL RAFFLE FUNDRAISER

Submitted by Becky Richter

The Victoria Christian Assistance Ministry (VCAM) has started selling raffle tickets to support its annual fundraiser. Established in 1986, VCAM is a non-profit organization which serves as a safety net for families in Victoria County in need of food, clothing and other basic needs. This year's raffle drawing includes \$5,000 in HEB gift cards as well gift cards to local restaurants and retail businesses. Tickets are \$5.00 each or six (6) tickets for \$25.00. The raffle drawing will be held at 12:00 pm noon on Friday, October 4, 2024, at the VCAM office. Becky Richter, current member of the VCAM Board of Directors, will be selling tickets if you are interested in supporting our fundraiser again this year.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Nellie Hudson Sunday School will resume our bible studies at 9:30am on September 8th. If you would like to join us, please contact Dawn Neel at (361)652-3925 and a study booklet will be provided to you. Our first six-week study will be from the PC(U.S.A.) curriculum, Being Reformed: Faith Seeking Understanding. The subject title is *Christian Living in God's Splendor* by Kendra G. Holtz and Matthew T. Mathews. We hope you will join us. Until then, stay cool in God's blessings!



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

Submitted by Leila Galvan

"Lazarus was dead when Jesus arrived. Jesus called him by name and gave him life again."

We finished our 2 part lesson on Lazarus this past Sunday, learning that, even when things seem too hard or even impossible, anything is possible with God. We crafted up Lazarus' tomb using paper plates and construction paper and also learned a catchy tune about Lazarus.

We hope you can join us this Sunday as we start our 6 part lesson about the meaning of the Lord's prayer.

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



WHAT'S AHEAD IN WORSHIP

The Worship Committee has strived for consistency in filling the pulpit for the fall season. We are happy to announce the Reverend Dan Fultz will deliver the sermon on the first and last Sunday of September, with Reverend Allen Mosiman filling in the second Sunday and Reverend Bette Burris the third Sunday. Since September is a five Sunday month, Reverend Dan Fultz has agreed to preach on the fourth Sunday.

Please join us in welcoming our visiting ministers, thanking them for agreeing to fill our pulpit.

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