



MARCH 2021

**Worship Service in our Sanctuary at 10:30am
or watch our worship service LIVE! at:
www.fpcpunta.org and click on the logo "vimeo livestream"**

25250 Airport Road
Punta Gorda, FL 33950
941-639-1959
first@fpcpunta.org
www.fpcpunta.org

Church Calendar

Around this time last year, we were preparing to go into lock down and have Worship Services online only. Seems like yesterday and like a million years ago. I am excited as we enter the Lenten Season this year; it will be my first time through Lent and Easter at First Presbyterian Church in person. I am looking forward to gathering for Worship during Holy Week (March 28 - April 4) culminating on Easter Morning, and experiencing all the traditions here.

As we enter the month of March, I want to encourage you to remain diligent in the daily devotions from *Journey to the Cross* by Will Walker. This is a great time to reflect more deeply on the meaning of this season in the church calendar. It is central to what being a Christian is all about. From the introduction to the book, the author writes:

Lent is first and foremost about the gospel making its way deeper into our lives. This season is an opportunity to root ourselves in the good news that God saves sinners through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It is a time to take stock, examine our hearts, repent of sin, turn to God, reflect on the suffering our Savior endured to accomplish our salvation, and finally, rest in the assurance of that salvation.

Observing Lent is not necessary or central to experiencing life in Christ. Furthermore, this is not a season of "doing penance." Rather, having been sealed in Christ with the Holy Spirit, Lent is a season where we intentionally set aside time to remember Jesus and the grace that is found in Him alone. Lent is not about our faithfulness, but rather about the faithfulness of Jesus on our behalf.

Lent is the season leading up to Easter. We are all familiar with the celebration of Easter, and even the somber reflection of Good Friday. But Lent is an extended time of repentance and preparation leading up to those two days. In the fourth century, the church marked the beginning of Lent by counting back forty days from Easter (excluding Sundays), which takes you to the Wednesday seven weeks before Easter. Sundays themselves are not counted in these forty days, as they are generally set aside as days of renewal and celebration ("mini-Easters" of sorts).

The number forty carries great biblical significance based on: the forty days of rain Noah and his family endured in the flood, the forty years Israel spent in the wilderness, Jesus' forty-day fast in the wilderness, the forty days Jesus spent on the earth after his resurrection, and so much more. Forty days has been used by God to represent a period of trial, testing, and preparation.

Likewise, Lent is a season of preparation and repentance during which we anticipate the death (Good Friday) and resurrection (Easter Sunday) of Jesus. It is this very preparation and repentance – aimed at grasping the intense significance of the crucifixion – that gives us a deep and powerful longing for the resurrection, the joy of Easter.

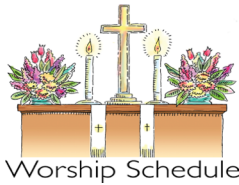
As the title of this devotional suggests, Lent is a journey to the cross: meditating on our sin and weakness, looking to Jesus as our perfect example and substitute, and being heightened in our worship of his victory over Satan, sin, and death. On the cross, Jesus took our place to appease God's righteous anger toward our sin and rebellion. He was separated from God so that we could experience union with God. He was crushed by God so that we could be adopted by God. He was raised with God so that we too might walk in newness of life.

The journey of Lent is to immerse ourselves in this grand story so that it might increase our appreciation of Easter and love for Jesus. Throughout this journey, may we be "looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2).

If you have not picked up a copy of the devotional, they are available in the church lobby, or we can mail one to you. It is not too late to start! In addition, for our members who are joining us online, we want you to be able to participate in Communion during the Maundy Thursday Service (April 1), so we would like to mail you one of the pre-packaged Communion sets to use at home. If you are interested, please email (first@fpcpunta.org) or call the church office (941-639-1959).

In Christ,
Pastor Barksdale

WORSHIP MINISTRY



Sunday Mornings - 10:30am Worship Service (Also Online)
Sunday Evenings - 6:00pm Prayer Meeting (On Facebook)

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE



<i>Palm Sunday, March 28th</i>	<i>10:30am Worship Service</i>
<i>Maundy Thursday, April 1st</i>	<i>7:00pm Communion Service</i>
<i>Good Friday, April 2nd</i>	<i>12:00pm Good Friday Service</i>
<i>Easter Sunday, April 4th</i>	<i>7:00am Sunrise Service</i> <i>9:00am Worship Service</i> <i>10:30am Worship Service</i>



Season of Lent Devotionals

If you would like a copy of the Lenten Devotional "Journey to the Cross" by Will Walker, please call the church office.



Easter Lilies for Easter Sunday

We will be decorating the church with Easter lilies again this year. You may donate one in remembrance or honor of a loved one. The cost per lily is \$7.00. Special envelopes can be found on the table in the back of the Sanctuary.



Living Cross for Easter Sunday

*Please bring **flowers and greenery** for the "living cross" which will be presented on Easter morning. Please bring both the flowers and greenery on Saturday, April 3rd, between 9:00 and 10:00am. Also, please sign up in the foyer to help with the cross.*

CHRIST ON THE CROSS

I DID NOT SEE
 CHRIST ON THE CROSS
 I DID NOT SEE HIS SUFFERING
 WITH TAUNTS AND STONES
 THEY TOSSED.

I DO HOWEVER KNOW
 HE IS WITH ME FOREVER MORE
 BECAUSE HE SUFFERED ON THE CROSS.

HE SAVED O WRETCHED ME
 FOR I WAS LOST
 HE TOOK MY SINS
 UPON THAT CROSS.

HE GIVES ME
 EVERLASTING LIFE
 AND HEALS ME
 AFTER PAIN AND STRIFE.

HIS CRUCIFIXION
 WAS FOR ALL
 TO SAVE US EVERY TIME
 WE FALL.

PRAISE GOD
 FOR SENDING US
 HIS SON
 FOR SAVING EACH AND EVERYONE.

Holy Spirit/Nancy Beasom



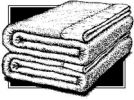
MISSIONS MINISTRY FOR 2021



First Presbyterian Church proudly supports
Missions from our church budget.
If you would personally like to make additional
donations, please make checks payable to FPC
and indicate the mission on the memo line.



Special Mission Support



Your donations for **Blanket Sunday, March 7th**, will help provide warmth for victims of disasters and communities worldwide through **Church World Service**. Make a gift of love that will keep on giving throughout the year. **Make checks payable to FPC.**



Thanks to your donations of cookies - we were able to deliver over 100 boxes filled with cookies to First Responders in Punta Gorda!

Monthly Mission Support



CROSSROADS HOPE ACADEMY (PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA)

Crossroadspg.org



JESUS LOVES YOU MINISTRY (PORT CHARLOTTE, FLORIDA)

Jesuslovesyouministryinc.com



MISIÓN PENIEL (IMMOKALEE, FLORIDA)

Misionpeniel.com

ANTIOCH PARTNERS MISSIONARIES



Eric and Debbie Stone, Guatemala

Lisa Alfonsi, Lima, Peru

theantiochpartners.org



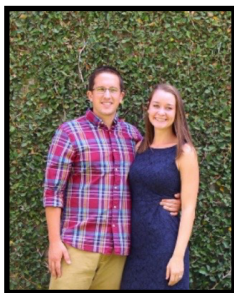
MISSIONARY VENTURES INTERNATIONAL

Chasen and Katie Brokaw

Nicaragua

mvi.org

breakingborders.org



MEMBER CARE AND ACTIVITIES

Prayer Requests and Hospital / Rehab Information

Address, Phone, Email changes

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Email to first@fpcpunta.org

First Pres is on Facebook!

Go to:

[facebook.com/FirstPresbyterianChurch-Punta Gorda](https://facebook.com/FirstPresbyterianChurch-PuntaGorda)

Giving to FPC - In person or

Mail to the church office: 25250 Airport Rd; Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Online Giving through our website: fpcpunta.org, click Donate

PRAYER SHAWL GATHERINGS

Monday, March 8th, at 10:00am in Fellowship Hall to knit or crochet.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Tuesdays, March 2nd and 16th - Our study is entitled *If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat* by John Ortberg. We will meet at the church from **10:00am - 11:30am**.

For additional information, please call Kathy at 508-733-0546.

All women are invited to join us for study, fellowship, and refreshments!

DONUTS & DOCTRINE

Our Wednesday Morning Bible Study meets at **10:00am** both at the church and online. In March and April, we continue with the stories of familiar hymns and look at the Book of James.

Please join us in person or online!

GAME FELLOWSHIP — *Thursday mornings at 10:00am* in Fellowship Hall. *All welcome!*



Congratulations to John and Gail Evans

on the birth of their new granddaughter!

*Kenzie Mozelle Madison was born on January 23rd
to Josh and Noella (Evans) Madison of Vincennes, Indiana.*

*Our sympathy to the family of Anna Hill, who went home to the Lord on January 17th.
Anna and her husband were active members of FPC for many years.*

*Our sympathy to the family of Kay Berner,
whose mother went home to the Lord on January 31st.*

*Our sympathy to Joanie Mock and family,
whose brother Roger went home to the Lord on February 10th.*

*Our sympathy to the family of Marcia Ling,
whose husband Cy went home to the Lord on February 11th.*

*Our sympathy to the family of Dianne Sizemore,
who went home to the Lord on February 21st.*



MARCH 2021

CHURCH PRAYER CALENDAR AND CELEBRATIONS

Prayer is the place where burdens change shoulders - We pray for....
*The elderly, the infirm, the hospitalized, those in nursing homes, the homebound and lonely,
 and all those who have requested our prayerful support.*

Each month we remember church members and friends on a rotating basis...



1 Jene Shafer	11 Don & Mary Anne Washabaugh	21 Shirley Berg
2 Dave & Ella Sifferd	12 Dave Woods	22 Rick & Kay Berner
3 Ron & Billie Sixt	13 James & Teri York	23 Bonnie Brown
4 Dianne Sizemore	14 Carol Zutter	24 Marion Brown
5 Andy & Nancy Smith	15 Jay Aldridge	25 Ray & Joan Byron
6 Jerry & Margie Smith	16 Rex & Helen Anderson	26 Kay Callahan
7 Bo & Karen Sostar	17 Laurel Aumend	27 Bonnie Carey
8 Anne Swift	18 Denny & Minty Ausman	28 Sam & Patricia Cessna
9 Gail Thornton	19 Ron Beasom	29 David & Cathy Coleman
10 Larrie & Marjorie Tisdale	20 Roy & Kathy Belville	30 Cara Coletti & Family
		31 Charlie & Doris Costa



3—George Fallenbeck	15—Sonja Dosse
8—Sue Mesler	15—Barb Harris
8—Carol Zutter	19—Kay Berner
9—Nelson Parker	19—Marjorie Tisdale
10—Don Washabaugh	31—Patti Nuznoff
12—Al Lorenz	



15—Roy & Kathy Belville	52 yrs.
21—Ron & Billie Sixt	57 yrs.
26—Jerry & Margie Smith	55 yrs.