

The Bell-Tower NEWS

Florissant Presbyterian Church

April 2020

*Enter as Guests, Leave as
Friends, Return as Family*

PARADOXICAL FEELING

As a people of faith in a pandemic, we are confronted with an awkward paradox. At this emotionally and socially traumatic time when we need the support of our church family the most, we have to be separated from them. Our church family are the people that many of us have trusted and relied on to point us to God's love and hope, yet now our gatherings have been suspended or closed to slow the spread of COVID-19. Our Holy Week celebration will change this year because we simply don't have the choice to do what we've always done.

Was it really only a bit more than a month ago that we observed the start of holy Lent by marking ourselves with ashes and hearing those humbling words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return?" Ash Wednesday feels like a lifetime away from where we are now. Maybe you feel that way too.

It was only seven weeks ago that the worship commission met to plan our Holy



Week and Easter services and, at that point, we had no reason to believe we wouldn't be doing those services the way we'd always done them at FPC. It was only three weeks ago that we gathered for a "normal" Sunday morning worship in our beautiful sanctuary. We had no way of knowing that that Sunday would be our last normal Sunday morning for what appears to be an extended period. And, it was only two-and-a-half weeks ago that we received the guidance of the Presbytery of Giddings Lovejoy to suspend all in-person worship and cancel all church activities to slow the virus' spread.

Grief and uncertainty have washed over us as a congregation. There is a grief in the loss of the traditions and rituals in our normal holiday services we had planned for Holy Week and Easter. There is uncertainty about how we will remind each other of the resurrection hope that is at the heart of who we are as disciples of Jesus Christ? The Session has brought



their creative energy to these pressing questions: How will we support and sustain our church now? How will we be the body of Christ for and with one another in this pandemic? Please look for emails, on our website, and on Facebook for updates on how we will worship at safe distances and how we can virtually share our faith together on our phones and computers. As the pandemic unfolds, we hope to respond in responsible and faithful ways to keep each other safe and still share in the joy that “Christ is risen!”

God only knows what April will hold, yet if this has been the beginning, then what will come we can be sure will be spiritually and physically challenging, but I am confident that we will respond with faithful, grace filled experiences of being united as a church. The leadership at FPC will continue to find creative ways to be connected with you and one another even during this season when we are physically set apart. We have to make these sacrifices to show our love and care for each other’s physical health and wellbeing. During this COVID19 pandemic, there is a way that we can each bear witness to our Easter faith. By staying connected to one another, we witness that our faith in Jesus Christ enables us to live in a way that in the midst of fear there is hope, in the midst of panic there is peace, in the midst of uncertainty there is faith and in the mist of death there is resurrection.



Stay safe, keep your social distances, and pray often.

Christ Is Risen- He Has Risen Indeed,
Pastor Sean

CLERK’S REPORT

The monthly Session of Florissant Presbyterian Church was cancelled. However, there was a called meeting on Monday, March 16, 2020 at 7 p.m. in the side room of FPC’s Harmon Hall.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and chart a way forward at least for the next few weeks at FPC regarding our response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Treasurer’s Report: A 2020 budget was approved. It was based on 2019 spending and expenses and anticipated income and expenses for 2020. Remember all financial reports are posted on the bulletin board outside the office.

COMMISSION REPORTS and Committee reports were postponed.

Pastor Sean closed the meeting at 8:25 pm with prayer.

– *Candy Shelton, Clerk of Session*

CHURCH NEWS





PER CAPITA -Per Capita for this year is \$32.00/person. We would appreciate it if everyone could complete this task by July 1st. Thanks for your support.

PRAYERS - Rich, Mike, Georgiana, Doris, Carol, Sara, Jon, Ester, Pamela, Mary's brother, Barb's son-in-law Cliff, Sue's friend Lill, Ruth and her great grandson, Sue and her brothers-in-law Jeff and Shawn and her sister Lynn.

BIRTHDAYS

- 4** Sue Kohler
- 12** Pamela Tumminia
- 14** Lauralyn Rosenberger
- 15** Wilma Thiedke
- 16** Candy Shelton
- 21** Vickie Goehri
- 29** Everett Flaker

**Happy
Birthday**

Palm Sunday at The FPC Drive-In-Worship

We are going to have a "Drive-in-Worship" this Palm Sunday, April 5th at 10:15. With the suggested restrictions on gathering in groups being extended, Florissant Presbyterian is going celebrate

the start of Holy Week from the comfort and safety of our own cars.

Many of us remember packing up the car with family and friends and going to see movies at a drive-in-theatre. You could stay in the comfort of your own car and see the shows. We at FPC have adapted that idea to our situation, to be able to worship together while keeping a safe distance from each other by remaining in our cars. This is a way for us as a church family to worship together to start Holy Week, while situated in a healthy and safe space.

When we gather in the parking lot for worship on Sunday, this is how we will proceed:

We will worship near the picnic pavilion in the back lot of the church. Someone will direct you to a specific space to park. We will be parking in every other space so that we have plenty of distance between us. Then we will stager the cars in rows to get the best position so that everyone will be able to see and easily hear (hopefully it won't be windy). We can worship safely and responsibly in our cars, but you must always make the final decision about what is right for your health and please stay safe at home if you feel at risk. Prayerfully discern what is right for you.

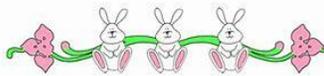
During this Covid-19 pandemic of 2020, FPC is going to try new and imaginative ways to stay connected, support one



another, and stay prayerfully and spiritually strong in Christ. I hope you can join us in the parking lot this Sunday as we, from the comfort and safety of our own cars, continue our journey to Jerusalem and the cross.

I hope to see you “from afar in a car” on Palm Sunday.

Christ’s Peace, *Pastor Sean*



For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven . . . a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; Ecclesiastes 3:1,5-6.

March 26, 2020

Friends, In the midst of change and challenge from the current pandemic, I am announcing a change in staff at the presbytery office. Rev. Vanessa Hawkins has discerned and decided to move on from Giddings Lovejoy and return to her home in North Carolina. We have been working on this transition for a while and had it all planned for the May presbytery gathering. But the season changed. The gathering was cancelled. Yet the need and urgency for Vanessa to get back to family remained. So, we have decided her last day will be May 9, 2020. Because of vacation time, her last day in the office will be April 17, 2020. Vanessa and I have been friends for over 15 years. Her



leaving is a personal loss, as well as a difficult loss to the staff. I believe her gifts have benefited the presbytery. She was instrumental in helping us through the transition and preparing us for GA in 2018. Her portfolio included Congregational Vitality and Mission and Outreach. But her work extended far beyond those two teams. She will be missed. Please take the time over these next three weeks to reach out and let Vanessa know how much you have appreciated her ministry, support, and caring relationship. My prayer for Vanessa is this old Irish blessing:

May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet

again, may God hold you in the palm of God’s hand.

Rev. Craig M. Howard Presbytery Leader

ACTIVITY

THE PROMISE

Find the missing letter in each row and write it in the space provided. Then read from top to bottom to hear Israel’s promise to Joshua (See Joshua 24:24).

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFDCBA



ABCDEF GHIJK LMNOP QRSTU VXYZ

ZYXWV UTSRQP ONMLK JHGFED CBA

ABCDEF GHIJK MNOPQR STUVW XYZ

ZYXWV UTSRQP ONMKJI HGFEDC BA

ABCDEF GHIJK LMNOP QR TU VWXYZ

ZYXWV UTSRQP ONMLK JIHGFDC BA

ABCDEF GHIJK LMNOPQ STUVW XYZ

ZYXWU TSRQP ONMLK JIHGFEDC BA

ABCDF GHIJK LMNOP QRSTU VWXYZ

ZYXWV USRQP ONMLK JIHGFEDC BA

ABCDEF GIJK LMNOP QRSTU VWXYZ

ZYXWV UTSRQP ONMLK JIHGFDC BA

ABCDEF GHIJK MNOPQR STUVW XYZ

ZYXWV UTSRQP NMLK JIHGFEDC BA

ABCDEF GHIJK LMNOPQ STUVW XYZ

ZYXWV UTSRQP ONMLK JIHGFEC BA

BCDEF GHIJK LMNOP QRSTU VWXYZ

ZYXWV UTSRQP OMLK JIHGFEDC BA

ABCEFG HIJK LMNOP QRSTU VWXYZ



ZYXWV UTSRQP NMLK JIHGFEDC BA

ACDEF GHIJK LMNOP QRSTU VWXYZ

ZYXWV UTSRQP ONMLK JIHGFDC BA

ABCDEF GHIJK LMNOP QRSTU VWXZ

ZYXWV UTSRQP ONMLK JIGFEDC BA

ABCDEF GHJK LMNOP QRSTU VWXYZ

ZYXWV UTSRQP ONLK JIHGFEDC BA

RIDDLE

A father is 62 when his daughter is 36. How many years has it been since she was exactly one-third his age?

Riddle: 23. She was 13, he was 39

Feed your faith and doubts will starve to death. - Debbie Macomber

He is Risen!