



APRIL 2025

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

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



Prayer

Dear Church Family,

As I mentioned in January, this year we are focusing on prayer. Throughout the year we will have special times of prayer - perhaps in a Service, or a Prayer Day, or items listed in the bulletin to especially focus on during a particular week. Prayer is seen throughout Holy Week – from Jesus praying the High Priestly Prayer, at the Last Supper, and in the Garden of Gethsemane. In its simplest form, prayer is simply talking to God.

Paul wrote, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6–7). Prayer is the Christian’s way of communicating with God. We pray to praise God and thank Him and tell Him how much we love Him. We pray to enjoy His presence and tell Him what is going on in our lives. We pray to make requests and seek guidance and ask for wisdom. God loves this exchange with His children, just as we love the exchange we have with our children. Fellowship with God is the heart of prayer. Too often we lose sight of how simple prayer is really supposed to be. (S. Michael Houdmann)

During Holy Week we will set aside Maundy Thursday (April 17, 2025) as a Day of Prayer. So, as we navigate the complexities of life, I want to extend a heartfelt invitation to you to join us and set aside Maundy Thursday as a special Day of Prayer where our church family can come together in united prayer, seeking God's guidance and provision for our families, our church, our ministry partners, our community and the world around us.

You are welcome to pray at home, or with a group of friends, or individually in the church sanctuary. In the church foyer is a sign-up sheet where you can sign up for an hour from 7:00am – 4:00pm. (If you choose to pray at the church, the sanctuary will have soft music playing in the background, and the lights will be dimmed.) When we think of praying for an hour, that can be a bit daunting. So, we will also provide a prayer book to help guide your prayers during that hour that you can use at home or at the church.

After the Day of Prayer, we will gather as a church family for our Maundy Thursday Service at 5:00pm, and celebrate Communion together. I am looking forward to spending Holy Week with you.

In Christ, Pastor Barksdale

WORSHIP MINISTRY



*Worship
Schedule*



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



Fellowship Time

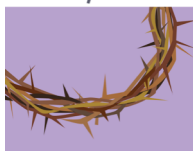
*Join us for beverages, cookies and treats
after Sunday's Worship Service*

Choral Ensemble

*You are invited to join with others in singing a song on Easter Sunday.
We will rehearse on Thursdays, April 3rd, 10th and 17th at 3:30pm.*



FIFTH
Sunday in Lent



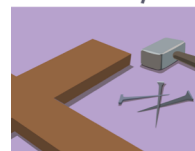
PALM
Sunday



MAUNDY
Thursday



GOOD
Friday



EASTER
Sunday



April 6 - 10:30am April 13 - 10:30am April 17 - 5:00pm April 18 - 12:00pm April 20 - 10:30am



SANCTUARY CROSS

The Colors of the Cross are a symbolic depiction of the Easter season. For the beginning of the Lenten Season the cross is draped in purple. The **purple cloth** remains on the cross from Ash Wednesday to Maundy Thursday representing royalty – the King of kings has come. The **black cloth** remains on the cross from Good Friday through Saturday – representing His death. The white cloth is placed on the cross Easter Sunday representing His resurrection – His victory over sin, death and Satan.



Easter Lilies for Easter Sunday

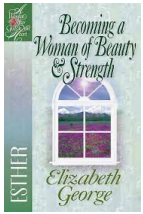
*We will be decorating the church with Easter lilies again this year. You may donate one in remembrance or honor of a loved one. The cost per lily is \$7.00.
Special envelopes can be found on the table in the back of the Sanctuary.
Please return envelopes by Monday, April 14th.*



Living Cross for Easter Sunday

*Please bring **flowers and greenery** for the "living cross" which will be presented on Easter morning. **Please bring both flowers and greenery on Saturday, April 19th, at 9:00am.** Also, please sign up in the foyer to help with the cross.*

DISCIPLESHIP 2025



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

April 1st and 15th

We meet on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 10:00am in Fellowship Hall

April 1st - Lesson 25 - Esther 10:1-3 "Reflecting on Esther's Beauty & Strength"

April 15th - Video - A summary of Esther

NEW STUDY BEGINS IN MAY- "Keep It Shut" by Karen Ehman

Call Kathy Belville at 508-733-0546 for more information - All are welcome!



DONUTS & DOCTRINE BIBLE STUDY

April 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th
Wednesdays at 10:00am



History of the Early Church -
Christ, Characters & Confessions

All are welcome!

DISCIPLESHIP WISDOM

Discipleship Making Affirmations for Church Leaders *by Bobby Harrington*

1. Disciple Making Gospel

We believe the gospel and it is our message—this good news is focused on Jesus as our Messiah (King) and his death, burial, and resurrection. All who respond to salvation are freely saved and called to discipleship, no exceptions, no excuses (Mark 8:34–38; 1 Corinthians 15:1–8). The gospel we preach and believe dictates the kind of disciples we are and the kind of disciples we make. If we attempt to make a Christlike disciple from a non-discipleship gospel, we will fail. A non-discipleship gospel is one that does not include discipleship as a natural part of the message and expectation.

2. Disciple Making Calling

We are compelled to be and make disciples of Jesus. We believe Jesus Christ is supreme and worthy of all devotion, worship, and emulation, and disciple making is a natural and necessary life response to Jesus. With laser focus, it was Jesus himself who made disciples who could make disciples... and Jesus commands us to do the same (Matthew 28:16–20; John 20:21). We prefer to use the expression “disciple making” over “discipleship” because the former is closer to the words of the Great Commission and the latter is often mischaracterized (Matthew 28:18–20).

3. Disciple Making Model

We believe Jesus is the model (for life and ministry). Jesus showed us how to live life and how to make disciples. We seek to emulate his method and model. As the sinless second Adam, Jesus was man as God intended man to be. He then told us, “Do the works I have been doing” (John 14:12). John said those who “claim to live in him must live as Jesus did” (1 John 2:6). Paul understood this when he said, “Imitate me, just as I imitate Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1 NLT). Discipleship demands us to “follow” the resurrected Christ and “imitate” the priorities and patterns of the incarnate Christ. We like the expression “Jesus’ model and method of disciple making” as a summary of what we do.

4. Disciple Making Motive

We believe love is the driving motive. The Great Commandment precedes the Great Commission. Loving God and loving people is the passion behind the priority, the motive behind the mission, the heart behind the hands. Love is the signature card of true disciples... disciple making cannot happen apart from loving and caring relationships...both a tough and a tender love (1 Thessalonians 2). Larger ministries require more relational disciple makers to keep growing. Disciple making is relational and, as ministries grow, more relational disciples are needed. “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35).

Continued on Page 4

5. Disciple Making Measure

We believe verifiable fruit is the measure. God's agenda for each one of us is that we stay close to him and bear "fruit," "more fruit," and then ultimately "much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples" (John 15:8). God transforms our hearts as we "remain in [him]" and he leads us into lives of love (John 15:4, 17). Jesus modeled the focus of love as he came to seek, save, and disciple people (Luke 19:10; 6:40). Jesus masterfully showed how love produces disciples... reaching and developing his men and helping them grow from nonbelievers all the way to disciple makers reproducing disciple makers (Matthew 28:19–20). There is a natural process of moving people from those who do not know Jesus all the way to becoming mature disciple makers... and Jesus showed the model to us. In short, we haven't truly made mature disciples until they are following Jesus' model of love and helping to make more disciples... this is fruitful multiplication.

6. Disciple Making Power

We believe Holy Spirit power is the means. Disciples cannot be made through fleshly efforts. Jesus, in His humanity, fully acknowledged his dependence on the Spirit. Disciple making is not just a good strategy... it is a way of life, accomplished through the fruit of the Holy Spirit living through a person's yielded and holy life (2 Corinthians 3:16–17). If Jesus fully depended on the Holy Spirit's power, how can we do any less? The Holy Spirit will lead us to be obedient people who live holy lives to God's glory.

7. Disciple Making Environment

We believe the local church is the primary environment for disciple making. The church is for discipleship, and disciples manifest the kingdom of God to the world (Colossians 21:28–29). When the church reverses this process and primarily attempts to get the world to go to church instead of the church going to the world, you get chaos. Pastoral and ministerial work should be evaluated and rewarded based on how many disciple makers are produced and the kind of people a church sends into the world. Jesus was a man for others; the church, likewise, is for others. Any plan that does not create disciples who live for others is a failure.

8. Disciple Making Movement

We believe that equipping disciple making leaders is the linchpin of disciple making movements. All Christians are called to be disciples who grow to help make disciples, using the unique gifts God has given each of us. Leaders are also called to grow a movement of disciple making leaders. How Jesus built a movement differs from how a person makes a disciple. Jesus made disciple making leaders. If we are going to create disciple-making movements, it is our conviction that we must train leaders in how Jesus built a movement – discipling leaders who become disciple making leaders who lead others. We are committed to 2 Timothy 2:2, where Paul casts the vision of four discipling four generations, when he told Timothy that "the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." Raising reliable leaders of a movement is harder and takes more time and prayer, but in the end this will bear fruit that will remain. Practically, this means we must develop a teams of disciple-making leaders who will fan the flames of reproducible disciple making into places where others have not gone before.

9. Disciple Making Definitions

We believe definitions are vitally important. Our definitions are in agreement with the following and where possible, we will use these definitions.

Discipleship – is simply the state of being a disciple. This word (like the word evangelism) is not in the Bible. Unfortunately, in the North American church, discipleship is typically seen as an educational process designed to orient new believers to the biblical and everyday practices of our churches – and so we often prefer disciple making.

Disciple – someone who is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus (Matthew 4:19).

Disciple Making – is entering into relationships to intentionally help people follow Jesus, be changed by Jesus, and join the mission of Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20).

Disciple Maker – a disciple of Jesus who enters into relationships with people to intentionally help them follow Jesus, be changed by Jesus, and join the mission of Jesus.

A Church – A spiritual family growing in surrendered obedience to all the teachings of Jesus Christ who gather together regularly under Biblically recognized leadership for the purpose of fulfilling the great commission (making disciples) with a Great Commandment heart (loving God, loving people).

A Disciple Making Culture – The beliefs, habits, and narrative of a church constantly repeated with congruence and intentionality, that make it clear to almost everyone, all the time, including newcomers, that disciple making is what everyone does in this church.

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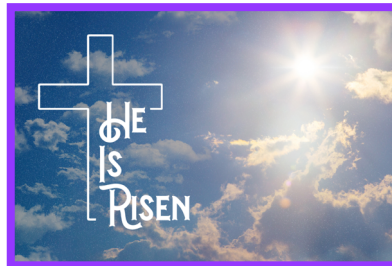
DISCIPLESHIP WISDOM *(continued from Page 4)*

Disciple Making Church (Level 5) – is a church where disciple making is the core DNA and culture of the church, where the average church member makes disciples to the fourth generation and this disciple making activity is regularly produced in significant and diverse streams within the church and these streams multiply consistently into new churches.

Disciple Making Movement (DMM) – A rapid and exponential increase in disciple making disciples within a local culture who plant multiple churches and these churches are churches which multiply disciples, groups, and churches of obedience-based disciples so that we can see at least four generations of churches produced in six streams of disciple-making activity and these streams multiply consistently into disciple making churches (100 churches or more within 2 to 5 years).

10. Disciple Making Book

We believe Jesus and Scripture are the basis. We believe the sixty-six books of the Bible are the authoritative, reliable, and ultimate standard for disciple making and life (2 Timothy 3:16–4:2). The Bible was written by disciples, to disciples, and for disciples. We find healthy guidance for our movement in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Jesus is our focus and he rightfully deserves our commitment and imitation as we seek the fullness of the kingdom he offers to us, both in this life and the in next.



MILITARY PRAYER LIST

Prayer

O Prince of Peace, we humbly ask Your protection for all our men and women in military service. Give them unflinching courage to defend with honor, dignity and devotion the rights of all who are imperiled by injustice and evil. Guard our churches, our homes, our schools, our hospitals, our factories, our buildings, and all those within from harm and peril. Protect our land and its people from enemies within and without. Grant an early peace with victory founded upon justice. Instill in the hearts and minds of men and women everywhere a firm purpose to live forever in peace and good will towards all. Amen.

- * Major John McPherson, Air Force, great nephew of Marguerite O'Brien, stationed at Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, Texas
- * Major Ryan Swisher, Army Ranger, grandson of Rachel Pfaender, stationed in North Carolina
- * Major Eric Engstrom, Army Intel., son of Alan Engstrom, stationed at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
- * Lt. Col. David Sifferd, Jr., Army Reserve, son of David Sifferd, stationed in Ft. Knox, KY
- * Pvt. Michael Robert Wagner, U.S. Marine Corp., great-grandson of Robert and Jean Humphreys, stationed in Hawaii
- * Second Lieutenant, JTAC, Alexander Kingsbury, Air Force, great-grandson of Tim Ronan, stationed in New York
- * Major Christina West, Army, granddaughter of William Dossé, stationed at Fort Liberty (formerly Fort Bragg, NC) and her husband Major Matt Walter, Army, currently deployed in the Middle East

Do you have a family member serving in the military?

If so, we'd like to add them to the newsletter prayer list. Fill out the form that's on the sign-up table in the church foyer and place it in the HELMET or let the church office know.

MISSIONS MINISTRY



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.



Ground Up
Ministries



STAND IN THE GAP FUND

The purpose of this fund is to
assist supported missionaries
and ministries of our church
when they face unexpected
financial burdens

To donate to this fund,
please mark your gift as SITG

Monthly Mission Support

Crossroads
HOPE
Academy



CROSSROADS HOPE ACADEMY (PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA)

Crossroadspg.org



JESUS LOVES YOU MINISTRY (PORT CHARLOTTE, FLORIDA)

Jesuslovesyouministryinc.com

**Shower & Lunch
Ministry**



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



FPC ACTIVITIES AND OUTREACH



PRAYER SHAWL GATHERING

Monday, March 10th at 10:00am



GAME FELLOWSHIP

Thursday mornings at 10:00am in Fellowship Hall All are welcome!



LADIES LUNCH BUNCH

1st and 3rd Friday of each month

Sign up in the church foyer

Friday, April 4th

12:00pm

Jay's BBQ

Punta Gorda



PULLEN UP A CHAIR

Barksdale and Bo will host get-together dinners for groups of eight at their home

Wednesday, May 7th at 5:00pm

Sign up in the church foyer or call/email the church office

There is no agenda, lesson, or study, just a time to get together for fellowship



Peace River Gardens Tour

Tuesday, April 8th, 9:00am

*Cost - \$15.00 — Sign up in the church foyer
Meet us at the Gardens!*



MISIÓN PENIEL (IMMOKALEE, FLORIDA)

Join us on Friday, April 11th for the morning session

We will meet at the church at 9:00am

We need 6 people to sign up in the church foyer



Burgers for Badges - Monday, April 21st, 11am to 1pm

*Help us show our appreciation to our local and retired First Responders
as we grill out hamburgers and hotdogs.*

Sign up in the church foyer to bring cookies or desserts.

*If you would like to make a donation to help defray the costs
of this outreach event, please designate it as "B4B".*



Mother's Day Brunch

Sunday, May 11th at 9:15am

Sign up in the church foyer

MEMBER CARE



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



To watch the current Service:

- 1) Follow the link: <https://www.youtube.com/@FPCPG>
(This link is also on our website in the top right corner, simply press the YouTube button.)
- 2) When you land on the FPC YouTube page you will see a small screen with the word LIVE, click it and it will fill up your screen.
The Service will begin at approximately 10:30am (Pre-Service at 10:15am).
(If you don't see a small screen with the word LIVE, we have not started streaming.)



Giving to FPC - In person

Mail to the church office: 25250 Airport Rd; PG, FL 33950
Online Giving through our website: fpcpunta.org, click Donate



Church Membership CLASS

Next class will be Sunday, April 27th at Noon

If you are interested in joining the church,
or just finding out more information about FPC,
please join us for lunch and a one class introduction to FPC.
(For Seasonal Residents, we have an Affiliate Membership,
so you can maintain your Membership back home.)

Sign up in the church foyer.



*Please pray for William Dossé and family,
whose wife, Sonja, went home to the Lord
on March 14, 2025.*



APRIL 2025

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	Lois Jornlin	11	Mark McCurdy	21	Rachel Pfaender
2	Tom & Carol Kerr	12	Gene & Barbara McPherson	22	Linda Potthoff
3	Art Koon	13	Larry & Sue Mesler	23	Barksdale & Bo Pullen
4	Jean LaMantia	14	Steve & Joanie Mock	24	Bill & Pauli Purcell
5	David & Lynn Lang	15	Steve & Valerie Neeley	25	Barbara Reynolds
6	Margo Lazzerini	16	Jim & Patti Nuznoff	26	Tim Ronan
7	Al & Susie Lorenz	17	Marguerite O'Brien	27	Pete & Debbie Rostad
8	Connie Luther	18	David Osweiler	28	Barbara Ryan
9	Steve MacDonald	19	David & Jane Otoupal	29	Andy & Katie Schulte
10	Carolyn Ann Maupin	20	Bruce Peters	30	Elaine Schultz








3—Lynn Lang	20—Andy Smith		
4—Phyllis Ehrhardt	21—Bo Sostar		
9—Jean Humphreys	23—Nancy Smith	14—David & Sharon Sifferd	2 yrs.
9—Barbara Reynolds	24—Charles Zietsma	18—David & Lynn Lang	42 yrs.
19—Sam Cessna	28—Katie Schulte		
19—Tom Kerr	30—Linda Wagar		



APRIL 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																										
Church Office Hours Monday - Thursday 9:00am to 1:00pm		1 10:00am Women's Bible Study	2 10:00am Donuts & Doctrine 10:00am Jesus Loves You Shower Ministry	3 10:00am Game Fellowship 3:30pm Choral Ensemble Rehearsal	4 11:30am Ladies Lunch Bunch at Olive Garden in PC	5																																										
FIFTH Sunday in Lent  6 Communion Sunday 10:30am Worship Service 11:30am Fellowship Time 6:00pm Prayer Meeting-FB	7	8 9:00am Peace River Gardens Tour Fellowship Team	9 10:00am Donuts & Doctrine 10:00am Jesus Loves You Shower Ministry	10 10:00am Game Fellowship 3:30pm Choral Ensemble Rehearsal	11 9:00am Mission Trip to Immokalee	12																																										
PALM Sunday  13 10:30am Worship Service 11:30am Fellowship Time 6:00pm Prayer Meeting-FB	14 10:00am Prayer Shawl Gathering	15 10:00am Women's Bible Study	16 10:00am Donuts & Doctrine 10:00am Jesus Loves You Shower Ministry	MAUNDY Thursday  17 10:00am Game Fellowship 3:30pm Choral Rehearsal 5:00pm Communion Service	GOOD Friday  18 12:00pm Good Friday Service	19 9:00am Living Cross																																										
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27 Deacon's Fund 10:15am Hymn Sing 10:30am Worship Service 11:30am Fellowship Time 12:00pm Membership Class 6:00pm Prayer Meeting-FB	28	29	30 10:00am Donuts & Doctrine 10:00am Jesus Loves You Shower Ministry			May 2025 <table><tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr></table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3				4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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