

# PRESBYTERIAN Punta Gorda The Messenger



## SEPTEMBER 2024

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



#### Generations of Generosity

Birthdays and anniversaries are times to stop and reflect on all that God has done in our lives. We can look back on family, friendships, careers, or accomplishments and see that we were blessed. If we are honest, we also can reflect on a few of the valleys of life, but again, as believers we know that God was there with us through the tough times, and maybe we learned a little more during those periods.

This fall, First Presbyterian Church, turns 129 years old. I wonder if those people who decided to start a little Presbyterian church in Jack's Hall on Marion Avenue thought much about the future. What that church would become, the peaks and valleys that she would go through, or the lives that would be changed because they decided there ought to be a church in Punta Gorda. This December First Presbyterian Church will be honored by the Punta Gorda Historical Society for our contribution to the history of Punta Gorda. (More on that later.)

As I look at our history, I am amazed by the things that God has done through our church over the years. (I encourage you to grab one of our updated history booklets in October in the lobby.) This fall our church theme will be Generations of Generosity – Stewardship At FPC -129 Years of Serving. I know when some people hear that phrase - generosity or stewardship, they think of money. Webster defines stewardship as "the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care." Without apology, yes, money is part of it. But the history of generosity/stewardship of our church is so much more. When we talk about stewardship for the Christian, that means using our time, our talents, and our treasure wisely in service to our King. We recognize that God has given us everything we have, and we want to make sure we use it wisely for the furtherance of His Kingdom, here in Punta Gorda and around the world.

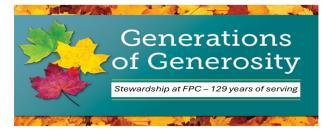
If we wish to continue to be a church of good stewards, that begins with each one of us. This fall we want to help equip you to do just that, to be faithful stewards. (I Cor 4:2 - Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.) Faithful stewards do at least four things: they receive God's gifts gratefully, they nurture God's gifts responsibly, they share God's gifts charitably, and they return those gifts to God abundantly.

As you look through the newsletter you will see various opportunities to participate in through the fall/winter. Some are opportunities to grow as a disciple, to share your time, others your talents, and still others your treasure. Some activities are outreach oriented; some are fellowship oriented, and others are Worship oriented.

As we get ready to enter our 130th year, let us reflect on the goodness of God over the past 129 years of First Presbyterian Church, and seek to be a church of faithful stewards that influence our community with the Gospel in Word and Deed.

In His Name,

Pastor Barksdale



## **WORSHIP MINISTRY**



Worship Schedule

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



#### Fellowship Time

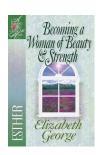
Join us for beverages, cookies and treats after Sunday's Worship Service



#### Sermon on the SAND

Every Sunday at 8:00am - 8:30am at Fishermen's Village Pastor Barksdale will deliver the Message on September 15

## **DISCIPLESHIP 2024**



#### **WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY**

We will resume on October 1st

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

October 1st - Lesson 15 - Esther 6:1-9 - "Spending a Sleepless Night" October 15th - Lesson 16 - Esther 6:10-14 - "Turning the Heart of a King" Call Kathy Belville at 508-733-0546 for more information - All are welcome!



#### **DONUTS & DOCTRINE BIBLE STUDY**



### Wednesdays at 10:00am

All are welcome to join us

II Peter - September 11, 18, 25

Beginning October 9th "Healthy Church" - Studies in 1 Timothy





## **Church Membership CLASS**

Next class will be Sunday, October 27th, 9:30am Join us for a one-class introduction to FPC

## **DISCIPLESHIP WISDOM**

## Preach and Normalize King Jesus by Curt Erskine

As I wrote in a previous article, *Christ* is one of those words in the New Testament that I believe it is unfortunate that we transliterated instead of translated. *Jesus Christ* would have been understood in the early church to mean "Jesus the Anointed King." Re-read Paul's letters and notice how often he refers to Jesus as *Jesus Christ*, *Christ Jesus*, or just *Christ*. Each time Paul wrote this, he was emphasizing Jesus' kingship. Therefore, it is perfectly normal for us to refer to Jesus as *King Jesus* or *Jesus the King*.

You might be wondering... preach "King Jesus," as opposed to what? What we are trying to avoid is the false dichotomy of "King Jesus" vs. "Savior Jesus." This is where you will need to put in the hard work as a pastor, minister, preacher, and teacher. You will need to integrate these positions rather than pit them against one another.

Here's the big point–Jesus is only savior because He is first, *King*. Think about it, in an alternate reality where Jesus decided not to save us, He would still be *King* Jesus. Jesus' position as King has primacy over His position as savior. He is only able to save us because He is our King.

However, we do not want to downplay His position as savior, we want to synthesize the two. Let me explain. In the church culture I grew up in, Savior Jesus was front and center. The focus was on the cross on which Jesus paid for our sins. This was obvious by the giant cross on the wall behind the pulpit. But, if you know Scripture, think about the events which led up to the cross. John wrote:

The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the **king** of Israel!"

Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written: "Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your **king** is coming, seated on a donkey's colt" (John 12:12-15).

Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem as the King is included in all four Gospels. Mark also wrote about what happened after He was arrested:

The high priest asked [Jesus], "Are you the **Messiah** [the Anointed King], the Son of the Blessed One?"

"I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:61-62)

This exchange is recorded in all three of the synoptic gospels. Luke also recorded the specific charges the Jews brought against Jesus to Pilate:

"We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Messiah, a **king**." So, Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the **king** of the Jews?" (Luke 23:2-3)

John gives the fullest description of the conversation between Pilate and Jesus. It would be extraneous to quote the entire exchange here, but the crux of the questioning is if Jesus is a king.

Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place."

"You are a king, then!" said Pilate.

Jesus answered, "You say that I am a **king**. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." (John 18:36-37)

All four of the Gospels recorded that Jesus was dressed in a royal robe, mocked, and beaten by soldiers. Matthew, Mark, and John specifically wrote that Jesus was also given a crown of thorns along with the royal robe and mocked as a king. Matthew wrote:

[The soldiers] stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, **king** of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. (Matthew 27:28-30)

Continued on Page 4

## **Preach and Normalize King Jesus**

by Curt Erskine (cont. from Page 3)

John likewise recorded that Pilate presented Jesus to the Jews dressed in the royal robe and crown:

"Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews.

But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"

"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

"We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

Finally, Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. (John 19:14-16)

All four of the Gospels then record that Pilate had a placard posted on Jesus' cross:

"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." (John 19:19)

John wrote that the sign was written in Aramaic, Greek, and Latin so everyone could read it.

Finally, what was it specifically that the repentant thief on the cross recognized about Jesus that led to his salvation? "Jesus, remember me when you come into your **kingdom** (or, come with your kingly power)." (Luke 23:42)

The repentant thief confessed Jesus as King.

So then, what led to Jesus being crucified according to Scripture?

Jesus was crucified because He claimed to be the Anointed King, and everyone rejected Him as that King.

Jesus was not crucified simply as a perfect man but as the Anointed King of men. He was enthroned on the cross as the King of fallen humanity. The cross was a fallen, broken, bloody throne that represented the fallenness and sinfulness of humanity. By taking His place on that throne, Jesus joined us as our King and took our sin upon Himself. Not only was the cross where fallen humanity rejected and tortured their King, but it is also where God poured out His rejection of mankind on their Anointed King.

When we look at the crosses displayed in our churches, we shouldn't just see a torture device that brought salvation, we should see the temporary, broken throne of our King. But it was a throne on which King Jesus only sat for a few hours; He will spend eternity on a different throne.

Even when seen in Revelation as the Lamb who was slain, Jesus is presented as the King worthy of worship. Ultimately, the Lamb who was slain is described as sitting on the throne of God toward which "every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:10-11)

There is no separation between "King Jesus" and "Savior Jesus." He is one and the same and must be accepted as both. He cannot be torn apart. We are saved by the death, resurrection, *and* cosmic enthronement of King Jesus.

I recognize there is a theological community that holds that accepting Jesus as savior is the only requirement for salvation (the only "repentance" being repentance from a belief in one's own goodness). To be honest, I don't have any great advice on how to make disciples for those with this particular soteriology. Because, technically, according to this belief, Christians (a first-century Greek abbreviation for "disciples of Jesus Christ") are not required to recognize Him as King or to commit to being disciples who imitate and obey Him (which would be my definition of "repentance"). I do however wish them the best of luck.

So, for the rest of us, how do you normalize "King Jesus?"

First, feel free to use the example presented in this article about the crucifixion being a response to Jesus claiming to be King, and His enthronement as the King of fallen mankind. Spread it out over several sermons leading up to Easter in order to drive it home.

If you are a pastor who preaches topically, I would also encourage you to preach an entire series about King Jesus and His Kingdom. If you preach exegetically, verse by verse through books of the Bible, I would encourage you to preach a series through the Gospel of Mark about how Jesus is announcing and implementing His Kingdom. Mark is a short book that is fairly quick to work through and I promise you the Kingdom is in there.

Even when Jesus is not specifically preaching about His Kingdom or being the Messiah (for example, when He is healing people) He is demonstrating that the Kingdom of God is about restoring creation and human beings to their original purpose under His rule. Such a series will help your church become accustomed to King Jesus and Kingdom language. It is also a great way to proclaim the good news of the Christ and the Kingdom of God.

The books I referenced in the previous article, <u>Why the Gospel</u> by Matthew Bates and <u>King Jesus and the Beauty of Obedience-Based Discipleship</u> by David Young are good books to help you understand and explain King Jesus and His Kingdom to your people. As I wrote in a previous article, slow down, step back, and educate yourself before you attempt to shift an entire church to King Jesus-style disciple making.

## **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.



#### INFORMATION FROM YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE

It was brought to our attention that there are people with Medicare Advantage Plans, which include OTC (over the counter) benefits, who do not use all of the provided funds that are offered each quarter or year. If this applies to you, we would like to suggest that you use your unused funds to purchase items for the homeless of Charlotte County who will benefit from them, such as antibiotic cream, band-aids, toothbrushes, toothpaste, hand sanitizer, insect repellant, etc. Because we work closely with Jesus Loves You Ministry, the items can be dropped off at church. Please contact Patti MacDonald or Gail Thornton with any questions.





#### **Monthly Mission Support**

## CROSSROADS HOPE ACADEMY (PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA)

Crossroadspg.org





## JESUS LOVES YOU MINISTRY (PORT CHARLOTTE, FLORIDA)

lesuslovesyouministryinc.com

Shower & Lunch Ministry



#### MISIÓN PENIEL (IMMOKALEE, FLORIDA)

Misionpeniel.com





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

We will resume in November

#### GAME FELLOWSHIP

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



#### LADIES LUNCH BUNCH

Ist and 3rd Friday of each month Sign up in the church foyer Friday, September 6th
12:00pm
Skillets
Port Charlotte

Friday, September 20th
12:00pm
Monty's
Punta Gorda



#### **PULLEN UP A CHAIR**

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

Wednesday, November 6th — 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





#### DINNER & A MOVIE - The Chosen Season 4

Wednesdays, September 11th and 25th, October 9th
Dinner at 5:00pm - Movie at 6:00pm
Final 3 episodes of Season 4 - Sign up in church foyer



#### MISIÓN PENIEL (IMMOKALEE, FLORIDA)

Join us on Friday, September 13th for the morning session We will meet at the church at 9:15am

Join us on Friday, October 25th for the afternoon session We will meet at the church at 12:15pm

Sign up in the church foyer



Monday, September 30th - 11:30am Lunch 'n' Learn - "Scams Affecting Seniors" Sign up in the church foyer



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

Help us show our appreciation to our Sheriff's Department as we grill out hamburgers and hotdogs
Sign up in the church foyer to bring cookies or desserts



#### **KITCHEN DEEP CLEAN**



#### KITCHEN CLEAN UP

Saturday, September 7th, 9:00am

Lend a hand and help get our kitchen ready for all the fall activities.
Sign up in the church foyer.



Wednesday, October 30th - 11:30am Lunch 'n' Learn - "End of Life Preparations" (Charlotte Funeral Home)



WELCOME BACK POTLUCK and TRIVIA Wednesday, November 13th at 5:00pm

> HANGING OF THE GREENS Saturday, November 30th at 9:00am





CHRISTMAS DINNER
Wednesday, December 11th at 5:00pm

9th ANNUAL SOUTHERN SUPPER
PUNTA GORDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Saturday, December 7th
First Presbyterian Church of Punta Gorda - Honoree





CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE at the Pullen's Home Sundays, December 8th and 15th from 1:30pm - 3:30pm

#### 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 Dosse, 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.

## **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: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/@FPCPG">https://www.youtube.com/@FPCPG</a> (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 10:30 AM.
(If you don't see a small screen with the word LIVE, we have not started streaming.)



YouTube

#### 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



#### BEREAVEMENT COMMITTEE

Sign up in the church foyer to help with our Memorial Service Receptions Food Prep — Greeters — Servers



Please pray for Sandy Fisher and family.

Dick went home to the Lord on August 2nd.

A Memorial Service was held in New York.



We are in the midst of hurricane season.
We want to remind everyone that if a storm is in the area,
please don't travel if you are not comfortable,
but you may still join us online.
Also, we have a text messaging system to notify folks

if Services/Events are canceled.

If you do not want to receive a text message,
please notify the church office.

Please note: You cannot reply to these text messages.

## SEPTEMBER 2024

#### 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...



I	Jene Shafer	П	Sharon Weed	21	Denny & Minty Ausman
2	Dave & Sharon Sifferd	12	Donald & Susan Willecke	22	Roy & Kathy Belville
3	Ron & Billie Sixt	13	Teri York	23	Shirley Berg
4	Andy & Nancy Smith	14	Charles & Evelyn Zietsma	24	Rick & Kay Berner
5	Margie Smith	15	Lois Zietz	25	Duane & Wanda Boyles
6	Bo & Karen Sostar	16	Carol Zutter	26	Bonnie Brown
7	Gail Thornton	17	George & Sharon Albright	27	Marion Brown
8	Larrie & Marjorie Tisdale	18	Jay Aldridge	28	Lili Bush
9	Richard & Linda Wager	19	Rex Anderson	29	Kay Callahan
10	Don & Mary Anne Washabaugh	20	Laurel Aumend	30	Bonnie Carey



2—Pat Ihrie 26—Karen Sostar

II—Carolyn Ann Maupin

27—Valerie Neeley

24—Donald & Susan Willecke

41 yrs.

13—Jane Otoupal





HELLO september	Section 1	<u>Т</u>	MBE	Y 70	024	SEPTEMBER
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Communion Sunday	2	$\sim$	4	2	9	7
10:30am Worship Service 11:30am Fellowship Time 6:00pm Prayer Meeting-FB	LABOR DAV	1:00pm Fellowship Team	10:00am Jesus Loves You Shower Ministry	10:00am Game Fellowship	12:00pm Ladies Lunch Bunch at Skillets, Port Charlotte	KITCHEN DEFICIENT  WE WAS A STATE OF THE STA
∞ :	6	0	Remembering 9/11	12	<u> </u>	7
10:30am Worship Service 11:30am Fellowship Time 6:00pm Prayer Meeting-FB Grandpanents	1:00pm Worship Team	10:00am Mission Team	10:00am Donuts & Doctrine 10:00am Jesus Loves You Shower Ministry 5:00pm Dinner and Movie "The Chosen"	10:00am Game Fellowship	9:15am Mission Trip to Immokalee	
Deacon's Fund	9	[]	<u>∞</u>	6	20	21
8:00am Sermon on the Sand 10:30am Worship Service 11:30am Fellowship Time 6:00pm Prayer Meeting-FB	2:00pm Session		10:00am Donuts & Doctrine 10:00am Jesus Loves You Shower Ministry	10:00am Game Fellowship	12:00pm Ladies Lunch Bunch at Monty's in Punta Gorda	
22. 10:15am Hymn Sing 10:30am Worship Service 11:30am Fellowship Time 6:00pm Prayer Meeting-	23	24	25 10:00am Donuts & Doctrine 10:00am Jesus Loves You Shower Ministry 5:00pm Dinner and Movie "The Chosen"	2610:00am Game Fellowship	27	28
29 10:15am Hymn Festival 10:30am Worship Service 11:30am Fellowship Time 6:00pm Prayer Meeting-	30 11:30am Lunch 'n' Learn "Scams Affecting Seniors"				Church Office Hours Monday - Thursday 9:00am to 1:00pm	October 2024  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