

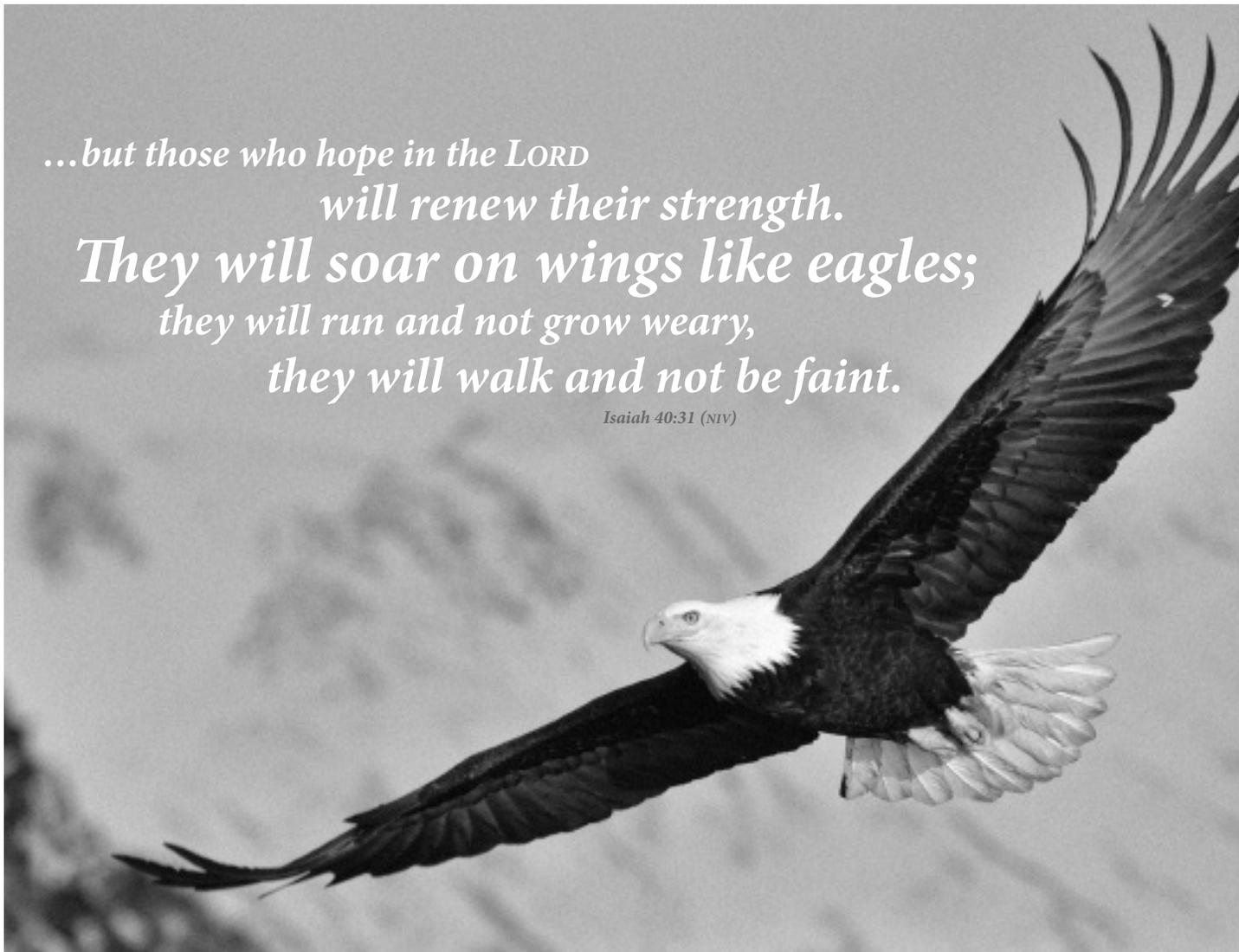
# Epistle *to the Bonitians*



THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BONITA SPRINGS | JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2016

*...but those who hope in the LORD  
will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.*

*Isaiah 40:31 (NIV)*



## OUR MISSION

To welcome and nurture our community, help people grow as disciples of Christ,  
and present a positive witness in today's world.

**First Presbyterian Church of Bonita Springs**

*A BIBLICALLY-CENTERED CHURCH IN THE PRESBYTERIAN FELLOWSHIP*

9751 Bonita Beach Road, Bonita Springs, FL 34135 | 239 992 3233 | 239 992 7547 fax | [fpcbonita.org](http://fpcbonita.org)

# Doug's Desk

Dear Members and Friends of First Church,

**A**s we enter into a new year, I look forward to seeing you, worshiping with you, and serving with you through First Church in the months ahead. This is always an exciting time for me as a pastor because I get to interact with my entire congregation during the winter months!

In this letter I want to propose a profound question that I suspect we have all wrestled with at times. *“When I’m gone, then what?”* Even Christians who know with confidence where we are going when God’s time comes for us to leave earth still have natural concerns about those who are left behind. We may plan wisely, set aside adequate resources, and talk with our family and our advisors about our preparations. But the future is always at least partially unknown.

Parents feel a concern for their children and grandchildren: how will they get along when I’m no longer here to be the “glue” that keeps the family together? Will they still gather together for holidays when I’m not there to host? Our nation is rightly concerned for its future. When the current generation is gone will the next generations have the values and the wisdom to guide our country through difficult times? Will the debt load we bequeath to them be unsustainable? Will the erosion of traditional values in our secular culture weaken America? And churches likewise wonder about the future of the Christian faith. When current pastors and lay leaders are gone, will a new generation arise to guide the church? Or will the Gospel be buried with our generation? Will our churches have to close their doors because of a lack of visionary and godly leadership?

One of my favorite New Testament books is 2nd Timothy, the last letter written by the great Apostle Paul before his death. These same questions about what will happen once he is gone are in Paul’s mind. And the letter is appropriately addressed to his young protégé Timothy, a gifted pastor who is at least one generation younger than the Apostle, and who will have the task of carrying on the work of the Gospel once his mentor is no longer there. Paul cares very much that his legacy be continued, and that the church he helped to build survives.

My reading of 2nd Timothy confirms to me that it is strategically critical for the American church to invest in raising up the next generation of its leaders. In fact, I will boldly claim that the **most important thing** we can do for



Rev. Dr. Doug Pratt

our grandchildren and their children is to help raise up pastors and Christian leaders of their own age, who can take God’s message to them effectively and lead their churches to be biblically faithful and culturally relevant. And even though we may no longer be with them in person, we need the church to be there for them.

Two years ago, First Church began a commitment to a partnership with Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Boston, one of the largest independent graduate schools for training future Christian leaders. A scholarship fund was created, and to date has received from our members over \$225,000. This allows us to provide annually two full scholarships for gifted students who are in their final years of preparation for ministry. Additional funds would be greatly appreciated—and would allow us to provide assistance to additional students.

Beyond providing full tuition grants, our church is also hosting a pilot program of a two-week intensive mentorship for four seminary students in early January. These young men and women will be involved in all aspects of the life of our church, and you will likely have a chance to meet one or more of them when they are here. The four students who were chosen have already demonstrated superior academic skills and a deep commitment to Christ and His work. This program, which we hope can be a model for other churches, offers practical training and skill-development in the areas of pastoral ministry and church leadership that graduate schools can’t provide. Please pray for this mentorship, that it be effective in training leaders for Christ’s church.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Doug Pratt

# Special Art Gallery Exhibits

## Art from Thread: Our Sacred Story

January 23 – February 9

Threads are the raw material of so much of what we encounter in our everyday life. A variety of thread woven together become essential elements in our lives, but those same threads in the hands of an artist can be a form of beauty and expression. At First Presbyterian Church we utilize the arts as a way of expressing our story of salvation, and offering our thanks to God for His gift of grace.

Beginning January 23, our Art Gallery will be offering a unique show featuring the result of thread in the hands of sacred artists. This exhibit highlights the tradition of textile art in expressing a very personal sacred story. Textile arts like quilts, needlepoint, cross stitch and knitting are often labor intensive and therefore require a great investment of time and skill from the artist.

“When so much time is invested in a creative effort, it becomes a reflection of something profoundly important to the artist,” said Director of Sacred Arts Jeff Faux, who is organizing the show. “We can see that an artist’s spiritual story is often reflected in their art work, so we’ve asked church members who work in textiles to share that with us.”

Jeff is calling this gallery show “Art from Thread: Our Sacred Story” because it will demonstrate how each artist’s work reflects their faith and their divine journey. Each display will include a description written by the artist explaining their spiritual connection to the piece and how it has become part of their Christian walk.

Details about submission can be found in the entry form available in the Art Gallery or by contacting Jeff Faux ([jfaux@fpcbonita.org](mailto:jfaux@fpcbonita.org)).

Special classes related to textile arts and guided gallery walks will be scheduled in January. Watch *First Things First* for all the details.



Michael Belk

## Journeys with the Messiah

*Michael Belk*

February 14 through Easter Sunday

Imagine Jesus in the 21st century. This Lenten exhibit features the storytelling skills of Michael Belk, renowned fashion photographer for over 30 years. Michael embarked on a spiritual journey with his camera, pursuing an idea he believes God placed on his heart—to explore the modern day relevance of the centuries-old messages of Jesus. The result is a magnificently beautiful and challenging collection of fine art that will be here on display in February and March.

Michael’s compelling photographs capture a 1st century Jesus interacting with 20th and 21st century people from all walks of life—Wall Street executives, high rollers, Nazis and regular everyday people. Many of the pieces on display will be the topic of our Lenten worship services.

Michael Belk will be here for a special presentation of his work at all four of our worship services on February 13 and 14. Plan to attend his in-depth presentation as he shares his own spiritual journey on the afternoon of February 14.

*“Through these powerful and thought-provoking images, my desire is for you to hear Jesus’ messages and to appreciate their relevance in your life today.”*

– MICHAEL BELK

## Sundays

Our winter schedule of three services includes First Light at 7:30 AM followed by full services with choir at 9 AM and 11 AM. CenterPoint is open for the two later services.

Our adult education classes are held from 10:05 to 10:50 AM between services. Children's Sunday school (Neon Kids) is held during the 11 AM service. Childcare for children ages 6 months to 3 years is available at the 9 AM service.

Coffee and refreshments, what we call our "First Stop," is offered after each service in McClure Hall and the Art Gallery.

### First Light

This early Sunday service is held at 7:30 AM. It includes all the basic worship elements of music, message and Scripture—having the same preacher and message as the 10 AM service—but neatly packaged into a 40-minute time frame. Coffee and refreshments are available following First Light; make that your first stop before getting on with the activities of your day.

### A Time of Prayer & Communion

Sundays • Noon • Price Hall Chapel  
This opportunity to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion and experience a time of healing prayer (except on Sundays when the sacrament is shared during worship) is held after the 11 AM service. Come to Price Chapel where one of our ministers will be present to welcome individuals who wish to take Communion and receive healing prayer offered by our prayer teams.

### Sunday Worship Schedule

7:30 AM First Light  
9 & 11 AM Traditional Services

#### January 10

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

#### January 17

New Horizons Super Kids Club Choir/  
Ordination & Installation of Church Officers

#### January 24

Stewardship Sunday

#### January 31

Kirkin' o' the Tartan

#### February 7

Seraph Brass, musical guests  
with a recital after the final service

#### February 14

Guest Michael Belk, photographer  
"Journeys with the Messiah" art exhibit

## Saturdays

### CenterPoint Praise

5:30 PM • CenterPoint

Worship with us on Saturday evenings in the casual atmosphere of CenterPoint. The preaching pastor and message are the same as Sunday but the music is contemporary in style—led each week by Brent Taylor.

Children and youth are encouraged to attend. Childcare is available for children ages 6 months to 3 years.

## Special Service

### Ash Wednesday Worship

February 10 • 7 PM • Sanctuary

## Leadership through Service

is a characteristic that Jesus lived out perfectly with every breath. Our cover verse (Isaiah 40:31) and Scripture focus for January reminds us that our God is everlasting—never growing weary, always strong and giving power to the weak. His understanding is unfathomable, yet He came down from heaven, taking on the robe of humanity in all its essence. He became a flesh-and-blood man who wept from sorrow, who washed the feet of His followers, who healed the sick, who died for our sins. By living (and dying) as our most perfect servant, Jesus showed us how to live and how to lead... with humility yet with the power of His Father to uphold us. We place our hope in Him because "we are like clay jars in which this treasure is stored" (2 Cor. 4:7). Jesus tells us, "for the least among all of you is the greatest" (Luke 9:48).

As you read this issue featuring those among us who choose to "Lead through Service," be open to how the Lord may be leading you to serve in 2016, to grow in your love for Him and in the service of His kingdom.

## Epistle *to the Bonitians*

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2016

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# Leadership 2016

## Thank You for Your Service!

The following elders just completed their 3-year terms of church leadership in December. We want to acknowledge and thank them for their faithful service.

- **Diane Lepola**  
*Diane has served on the Fiscal Stewardship Committee.*
- **John Lewis**  
*John has chaired the Worship and Music Committee.*
- **Nancy Near**  
*Nancy filled a one-year unexpired term for Betty Kelly, who passed away in 2014. She has been active with the Membership and Resurrection Garden Committees.*
- **Dave Nichols**  
*Dave has served two consecutive 3-year terms, and has given strong leadership to our Human Resources Committee. (He also has been active with the Membership Committee and the Bonita Christian Forum.)*
- **Monty Robson**  
*Monty has served on the Building and Grounds Committee.*
- **Dave Stauffer**  
*Dave's service to the church, in partnership with his wife Lynne, has been as manager of the Thrift Shop Ministry.*



Outgoing elders (from left to right): Dave Nichols, Monty Robson, Nancy Near, Dave Stauffer, John Lewis. Not pictured: Diane Lepola



Outgoing deacons (left to right): Jim Brandreth, Lynn Heinold, Marty Howard, Ellis Gery, John Hashek. Not pictured: Peggy Stottmann

## Once a Deacon, Always a Deacon

A sincere thank you goes out to the Deacon class of 2015 for their service in the many ministries and projects overseen by these officers. Many of them will continue to be active in these ministries.

The outgoing Deacon class includes: **Jim Brandreth, Lynn Heinold, Marty Howard, Ellis Gery, John Hashek, Peggy Stottmann.**

A special thanks to John Hashek who served as Moderator of the Board of Deacons this past year. Judi Van Cleave will serve as Moderator in 2016.

Our Deacons are charged with serving the needs of the congregation. Originally (in the Book of Acts), deacons were the men appointed by the Apostles to take care of widows and the poor in the early church—giving the Twelve more time to focus on teaching and preaching.

At First Church, our Deacons are ordained officers who seriously undertake certain ministries involved in caring for our congregation. Serving in 3-year terms, they are involved in 13 main ongoing ministry projects, including Home Communion, visitation, and Sunday morning hospitality.

*Read more about our newest Elders and Deacons on the next pages.*

**Save the Date:** The congregation elected a new class of Elders and Deacons on December 6. They begin their 3-year terms of service on January 1. A service of ordination and installation will be held on Sunday, January 17.

# Incoming Elders



## John Cardwell

John (wife Betty) became an affiliate member in 2012 and a full member in 2014 after moving to Fort Myers year-round. He was previously ordained as a deacon in his former church in Pittsburgh. At FPC, John is active in the Great Banquet and Men's Ministry, a member of the Chancel and Men's Choirs, and recently traveled with Betty to the DR on a mission trip. Now retired, John worked in various sales and management positions for DuPont, Chrysler Corp. and Shared Medical Systems. He enjoys golf, is an avid Pittsburgh Steelers fan, and has four children and five grandchildren. John says, "I am honored to serve His church and pray that I will be a good servant, using my skills to further the mission of FPC."



## Judith "Judy" Graham

Judy (husband Ross) joined our church in 2012. She was previously ordained as an elder, serving her former church in Michigan. She is a member of the Worship and Music Committee, Chancel Choir, Contemporary Ensemble, Tuesday Singers, and active in the Great Banquet. Now retired, Judy is a former executive with the Chrysler Group, a former professor at the University of Windsor (Ontario, Canada) School of Business, and a consultant in Change Management. She enjoys golf, singing, reading and travel, and has two daughters and four grandsons. Judy says, "God has blessed me with leadership skills and experience, and I felt called to put these spiritual gifts to use for His glory here at First Church."



## Michael "Mike" Greene

Mike (wife Janet) joined our church in 2011. He is active in the Men's Ministry Leadership Team, serving as Chair and Vice-Chair, and also volunteers at First Thrift Shop. Mike grew up in Miami and lived in the southern U.S. during his career as a hospital administrator. He retired to Hilton Head, SC then moved to SW Florida. Mike enjoys tennis, golf, reading and travel. He says, "Joining the FPC family has meant a great deal; it has changed our lives. I agreed to serve as an elder to do just that—to serve and to live my life as Christ directs."



## Linda "Lin" Rhode

Lin joined our church in 2004 and has been previously ordained as both an elder and a deacon at First Church. She has served on the Worship Committee as a Communion Coordinator for five years and on the Human Resources Committee for four years. Now retired, Lin was on the U.S. Senate and House of Representative legislative staff in Washington D.C. Before coming to Florida, she lived on Hilton Head Island, SC. Lin enjoys reading, travel and volunteering in the community and for hospital auxiliaries. She says, "I Peter 4:10 tells us, 'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others...' For the immense enrichment, spiritual nourishment, love and support of my FPC family, I am again pleased to serve as elder in stewardship toward our congregation and its ministries."



## Nelson Robbins

Nelson (wife Susie) joined our church in 2006 and previously served as a deacon at First Church. He has been a member of the Chancel Choir for nine years and the Visitation Team for seven years. Nelson serves as Endowment Committee Chair, and is active in the Great Banquet and Men's Ministry. He is retired as VP of AON Corp. and still consults on group insurance/pensions. Nelson is a current board member of the Bonita Springs YMCA. He has lived in Ohio, California and Honolulu, and enjoys golf, finance and reading. He and Susie have three children. Nelson quotes 2 Corinthians 5:20 — So we are Christ's ambassadors: God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "come back to God." "I will do my best to do what the Apostle Paul has asked each of us to do."



## Paul Spinka

Paul (wife Gail) joined our church as an affiliate in 1998 and as a full member in 2014. He was previously ordained as an elder, serving two terms at his former church. Paul lived in Illinois where he owned a printing company. Over the years he has served FPC through his love for mission work. Paul organized teams to rebuild after Katrina, which led him to a volunteer staff position with Samaritan's Purse. He often leads local volunteers for Habitat for Humanity and is active in the Great Banquet. Paul says, "Having read *Half Time* by Bob Buford, I decided the only way I can show appreciation for what God has done for me through Christ is to volunteer in His name for those less fortunate. I cannot earn my way to heaven but I can thank Him for His grace."

# Incoming Deacons



## Betty Cardwell

Betty (husband John) became an affiliate member in 2012 while living in Ocean View, Delaware, and a full member in 2014 after moving to Fort Myers year-round. She previously served as a deacon in her former church in Pennsylvania. A retired Registered Nurse, Betty is actively involved in the Great Banquet and Prayer Shawl Ministry. She has served as an Usher and Thrift Shop volunteer, and she and John recently participated in the DR Project Mission Trip. Betty enjoys gardening, baking and knitting, and has four children and five grandchildren. She says, "I am most humbled to even be considered and invited to serve as a deacon, and look forward to serving the church to the best of my ability."



## James "Jim" Gelhaar

Jim joined our church as an affiliate in 2001, moving to full membership in May of this year. He served as an elder at his former church in Illinois. Jim grew up there in Mt. Prospect, and was the high school mathematics teacher, tennis coach and ski instructor for over 31 years. At FPC, he has been active in the Great Banquet and served as Lay Director. He also organized FPC's annual CROP Walk mission project and, in Wisconsin, was the county chair for this fundraiser for 18 years. Jim has two children and three grandchildren.



## Barbara "Barb" Goff

Barb (husband Jim) joined our church in 2010 and has served as co-chair of the Women's Ministry Special Events Committee since then. She has also been active in the Great Banquet. Barb moved to SW Florida from Farmington Hills, Michigan where she was an educator — teaching elementary school, then high school for 17 years, ending her career teaching English at a private girls' school. She enjoys reading, gardening and knitting, and has tutored at the Literacy Council for the past 10 years. Barb has two sons and three grandchildren. She says, "I agreed to serve as a deacon because I felt God has led me to honor Him by serving others in our church, and showing compassion and encouragement to those who are in need."



## Karen Hatten

Karen (husband Gregg) joined our church in 2009. She volunteers in the FPC BookCenter and participates in the Tuesday night Working Women's Fellowship. In the past, Karen has volunteered with FPC mission partners New Horizons Kids Club and the Café of Life. She has been an administrative assistant for the City of Naples and recently retired from Collier County Public Schools as an assistant for special needs students. Moving to Florida from Des Moines, Iowa, Karen enjoys beading, reading and travel. "Jesus said, 'I will never leave you.' So I know He will be with me in this new endeavor. I agreed to serve as a deacon because I believe this is my next step in growth with my relationship with the Lord."



## Ronald "Ron" Maki

Ron (wife Polly) joined our church in May 2008, attending since 2004 after moving from Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota to Naples. He serves as MC for our Concert Series. Now retired, Ron is a former corporate executive with Perkin's Family Restaurants and HR director for Green Giant Corp. He enjoys tennis and fishing, and has four children and 11 grandchildren. Ron says, "After prayerful consideration, I wish to follow Christ's example to all believers — to accept the responsibilities of a deacon in becoming a servant and helper to our Pastors, lay leadership and members. My prayer is that I will glorify Christ in all that I do in representing our church."



## Linda Wallace

Linda (husband Jack) joined our church as an affiliate in 2009 while living in Northern Virginia and as a full member in 2012. She has been actively involved in the Women's Ministry, Women's Prayer Group and New Member Orientation. Linda has served as a Greeter on Sundays and, more recently, as an Usher co-captain with her husband. From 1981-1988 she was a constituent services representative for a Northern Virginia Congressman. She served in the House of Delegates in the Virginia General Assembly from 1989-1993. Linda and Jack have seven children and 19 grandchildren between them. Linda enjoys golf, reading, praying for others and traveling. She says, "It was an honor to be asked to serve as a deacon. I enjoy serving others so, after prayerfully considering it, I felt it was something God wanted me to do."

# Christian Education

## Hiding It in Our Hearts

*"I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." (Psalm 119:11)*

The value of the Bible to the life of the Christian goes much farther than just giving us the "facts" of God's work of redemption and the correct theology of who God is. It also helps us to resist temptation and grow in faith and obedience. One of the most helpful ways to "hide" the Word of God in our "hearts" is by committing key verses to memory. First Church will be offering help and encouragement to you throughout the coming year, so that Scripture might become more familiar to you, and so that you can recall it when you most need it.

Many adults think that, since they are long beyond their schooldays, they can no longer memorize anything. But our minds are always capable of learning new things—and in fact, scientists have shown that lifelong learning is a great way to keep our minds sharp.

Each month we will choose a single verse of Scripture, and we will say it together at the start of every worship service that month. Our first verse, for the month of January, is Isaiah 40:31:

<sup>31</sup> *but those who hope in the LORD  
will renew their strength.*

*They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.*

## Monday Pastor's Class 2016

Mondays • 7-8:30 PM • CenterPoint

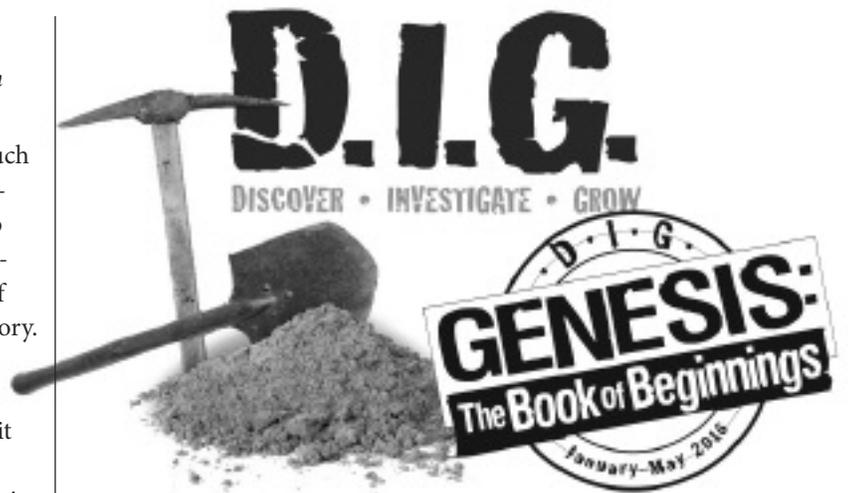
January 11: "Checking for Warning Lights on Your Marriage Dashboard" Dr. Al Barrow

February 8: "How to Share Your Faith More Effectively With Others" Pastor John McWilliams

February 15: "Predestination, Election, Free Will and All That Good Stuff!" Pastor John McWilliams

February 22: "The Differences between Islam and Christianity" Pastor John McWilliams

March 7: "A Trip from One World to Another"  
Pastor John McWilliams' presentation of his trip to teach indigenous Indian tribes of the Panamanian jungle.



We invite you to join us on Sunday mornings as our on-going D.I.G. (Discover, Investigate, Grow) Bible study class helps us discover the teachings, opportunities and blessings God has in store for us.

## Sunday Mornings: D.I.G.

### Genesis: The Book of Beginnings

Sundays, January through May • 10:05-10:50 AM  
Great Room

Genesis, as the name implies, is all about beginnings. It is not only about the beginning of all that exists in our world and universe, but also the beginning of salvation history as we prepare to read about the call to Abraham and events leading to the formation of the Nation of Israel in the Book of Exodus and beyond. The Book of Genesis describes the roots of our faith that come to fruition in Jesus Christ. This book is not just a fascinating read; for Christians it is essential for us grasp the meaning of Genesis' lessons in order to fully embrace the necessity of the Savior and the character of Almighty God. Classes will be team-taught by the pastoral staff.

# An Open Letter

Dear Congregation,

Many of you know me as the “camera guy.” This is a hobby I enjoy and one day I hope to improve!

Since joining First Presbyterian Church 9+ years ago I have found there are many more areas in which to contribute and, quite frankly, that have deeper meaning and personal satisfaction. Our church, with over 2,000 members, has so many different ministries it would be impossible for someone to say they don’t have the skillset for at least one or two of the 80+ ministries in which to serve.

I started helping with the New Member Class, followed by serving on the Human Resources Committee, Bonita Christian Forum, Buildings and Grounds, the Senior Pastor 10 year Anniversary Committee, the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee, Men’s Great Banquet, and the Succession Planning Committee. Each ministry required different skillsets, with the only common skillset being a passion for serving our Lord.

My greatest honor has been to serve two consecutive terms as an Elder. What a joy to serve with 17 other ruling Elders as well as our Pastors. Serving as a Trustee for the church while serving as an Elder provided me with an opportunity to become familiar and assist with the business side of a church our size.

1 Peter 5 (NLT) says: “As a fellow elder, I appeal to you: <sup>2</sup>Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. <sup>3</sup>Don’t lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example.”

First Presbyterian Church has a phenomenal pastoral and administrative staff, all unselfishly focused on doing God’s work by serving each of us. We are a flagship church in our community, and it is because of the leadership of a committed staff and lay people who want to serve our Lord. It has been my pleasure and honor to have been able to have humbly served with these wonderful people.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve.

Dave Nichols

## Sunday Mornings/Monday Evenings

### The Evidence for Christian Truths: Defending Your Faith

Begins January 10

Beginning January 10 and continuing through April 11, we are offering an apologetics class on five topics. Each topic will be covered in two Sunday morning sessions (from 10:05-10:50 AM in the Chapel), with a more in-depth class on the same topic offered the following Monday evening (from 7-8:30 PM in CenterPoint). We hope you will join us for this exciting series.

#### Topic 1: Truth and Reality

Sunday, January 10 & 17 & Monday, January 18

Learn the fundamental “first principles of thought” and how to apply them. We will discuss “Truth” and how it relates to “Reality,” as well as some foundational building blocks for defending the Christian faith.

#### Topic 2: Existence of God

Sunday, January 24 & 31 and Monday, February 1

Explore the logical necessity of the existence of God derived from the existence of the material world. Scientific evidence for God will be introduced, specifically surrounding the beginning of the universe and the latest origin of life research.

#### Topic 3: Reliability of the Bible

Sunday, February 7 & 28 and Monday, February 29

Review the burden of proof used by secular historians for ancient sources, comparing ancient Biblical documents to others to determine historical reliability. We will consider the accuracy of the New Testament texts as compared to the originals, and examine non-biblical, ancient texts and how they demonstrate the trustworthiness of the Bible.

#### Topic 4: Problems of Evil and Sin

Sunday, March 6 & 13 and Monday, March 14

A more complete view of the attributes of God will be presented as a basis for understanding the relationship between good and evil. We will address the contention: “If God exists, why is there evil in the world?” and speculate on the purpose of evil.

#### Topic 5: Science and Faith

Sunday, April 3 & 10 and Monday, April 11

Modern science will be considered as perhaps the most compelling evidence supporting the Christian faith. We will examine evidence from deep within living cells to the furthest reaches of the universe.

# Meet Judi Van Cleave

Judi joined our staff in October as Pastoral Assistant to support Pastor Steven Grant and eventually the newly called Associate Pastor. In addition to all the organizational and administrative work, her duties include creating PowerPoint presentations for teaching and preaching, and helping develop and reproduce materials for classes. Judi also works closely with the Parish Nurses and deacons, maintains the pastoral care log, and provides administrative support to the Spiritual Development Center.

Born in Denver, Judi lived in many states (WA, IN, PA, IL and SD) before moving to Florida in 1986. She spent most of her career in corporate tax management, first with General Electric, then with tax software developer Burr-Wolffe and finally Allyn International.



Judi Van Cleave

Judi is already a familiar face on the FPC campus, as Judi and her husband Dorn have been church members since February 1996. Over the years, she has shown her commitment to God and His church by serving as a consummate volunteer in many ministries. Together with her husband of 49 years, Judi has ushered, greeted, helped direct traffic, and assisted with the Military Care Ministry. Since her (second) retirement in 2010, Judi became involved in the Visitation Ministry, organized church Communion Services and Home Communion, served on several Great Banquet teams and volunteered at First Thrift Shop. In January of last year, Judi began her service as a deacon.

“My mother was always very active in church activities so it played a big part in my life growing up,” Judi said. “In our South Dakota church, Dorn and I organized and directed the children’s Christmas Pageant... the same long lost program in which Dorn participated as a child; and I served as Church Moderator there. When the opportunity presented itself here at First Church, it seemed like a natural path to follow.”

Judi was active in USA Swimming when her children were competing, but now enjoys all college sports as a spectator, especially the Nebraska Cornhuskers. An energetic tennis player for many years, Judi still loves working out, and she and Dorn have competed in their first marathon. Judi also loves to read and enjoys knitting for both our Prayer Shawl Ministry and for their three children and six grandchildren.

“Obviously the work and challenges are very different from those I encountered in the corporate world,” Judi said, “but it is a joy to work with our wonderful church family. First Church is a great place to serve the Lord!”

## Membership Classes

**Saturday, January 16** • 9-11 AM

**Sunday, January 17** • 5:30-7:30 PM

*Classes are held in McClure Hall*

First Church extends an invitation to those interested in learning more about church membership. This class, led by Senior Pastor Doug Pratt, covers what it means to be a Christian, what it means to be Presbyterian, and what it means to be a member of First Church. You’ll hear a little of our history and get a snapshot of our various ministries. Connect with others new to our church; get to know our pastors and church leaders; discover opportunities for fellowship and service. Various options for membership will be explained; there is no obligation to join at that time. Choose the session most convenient, then contact Membership Coordinator Rebecca Harley (239-229-8953) to reserve your space.

If you have any questions about church membership or our membership classes, contact Rebecca Harley at 229-8953 or visit the Welcome kiosk in the Narthex on Sunday morning.

# The Great Banquet

## A banquet is being prepared... for you!

The Great Banquet is part of a family of ministries at First Church that brings people together for a life-changing experience of God's grace. The Great Banquet weekend is a 72-hour experience, beginning on Thursday evening and ending Sunday evening. For three days, guests live and study together in a worshipful time of singing, prayer and discussion. During each of fifteen talks given by laity and clergy, the theme of God's grace is presented. Guests participate in the daily celebration of Holy Communion and experience God's grace through the prayers and acts of a loving Christian community.

Team leaders work for months in advance, making preparations for each banquet. Teams consist of members of First Church and other churches who have already experienced the Great Banquet. They work behind the scenes to make this event unforgettable for each person attending for the first time. Enveloped in the love of Christ, each guest and speaker is lifted up in prayer so all may experience true Christian community.

Do you want to strengthen your spiritual life? Do you want a better understanding of prayer, the sacraments and Christian action? Do you strive to live a Christian life that bears fruit for God? Do you seek to know Jesus as Lord and Savior and to make Him known? If your answer is yes to any of these questions, God may be drawing you toward accepting His invitation to the Great Banquet. We welcome your R.S.V.P.

For more information, contact Community Lay Directors David Mustian (239-498-5972; [jadmust@aol.com](mailto:jadmust@aol.com)) or Jerry Weisenauer (239-948-8056; [jerry@jerrylw.com](mailto:jerry@jerrylw.com)).

Men's Banquet  
February 11-14, 2016

Women's Banquet  
February 18-21, 2016



## A Letter from John & Sally Myers

Our Great Banquet experience began one evening while enjoying dinner with church members Chuck and Jeannette Vogt. They had invited us to join them with the intention of sponsoring us to the Great Banquet of SW Florida. We had been talking and praying about the Great Banquet, but had not reached a final decision.

We were unsure about two separate 72 hour retreats, being apart and sleeping at the church. There was also a bit of fear of the unknown. But that evening God moved us to accept His loving invitation through Chuck and Jeannette.

Well, that decision certainly paid off. In addition to being exceptionally moving, the experience was personally and spiritually life-changing. While we both have considered ourselves Christians for many years, our spiritual connection with Christ as Lord and Savior was tremendously enhanced. He has always been there for us, but our hearts and minds are now more connected with Him in a daily relationship. We have a greater awareness that all things come from the Lord, and our worship now includes more service and outreach offerings.

On a personal level, the Great Banquet has done two things. It has strengthened an already amazing marriage relationship and opened up a new community of Christian friends. We are very humbled by the many blessings we have received and encourage others to accept the invitation to God's Great Banquet... and receive the enrichment this experience brings.

In Him,  
John and Sally Myers

## First Missions

# A Month for Missions

During November, First Church celebrated “First Missions” with a month-long emphasis on our mission partners. On November 2, members of the DR Project mission team who spent five days in the Dominican Republic shared their experiences and photos following a potluck dinner. The 18-member team visited the Compassion national office, FPC’s Child Survival Program in Santo Domingo, met with staff at the headquarters of International Justice Mission and spent a day with their sponsored children.

Our November 8 services highlighted the work of Wycliffe Associates with our guest Dan Kramer, developer of their Mobilized Assistance Supporting Translation (MAST). We were blessed to have Pastor Paul and Linda Fahnestock return to First Church and, following worship, share a presentation on their recent adventures in Africa and India leading MAST workshops. Pastor Paul retired from FPC in August after 10 years of service, and he and Linda are now missionaries with Wycliffe as MAST Global Coordinators.

Prior to their presentation Paul and Linda were given a book of love letters from Session, the Mission Leadership Team and the FPC congregation as well as a photo memory book presented to them by Dave Lyons. Pastor Steven Grant, representing the Deacons, presented them with a plaque recognizing their years of service to First Church. We continue to pray for Paul and Linda as God uses them in a mighty way!

### Dear Congregation Members,

Everybody likes a good surprise. Many of you give those in need a good surprise when, without being asked, you add an extra donation to a particular mission of the church. The Mission Leadership Team would like to say thank you for good surprises like this. Because of your thoughtfulness and the extra dollars you designate in your offering, many persons locally and around the world receive the encouragement and hope that comes from knowing Jesus Christ. Your unsolicited donations show how much you truly care for your brothers and sisters wherever they may be. While we cannot identify all those who provide this additional support personally, we can say thank you for remembering those who benefit from the many missions served by First Presbyterian Church, because you care. Thank you for caring.

In Christ,  
The Mission Leadership Team



Dave Lyons presents Paul and Linda Fahnestock with a photo memory book (above).



Pastor Doug Pratt with Eddie Kaufholtz from IJM (left).

On November 21 during our CenterPoint Praise Saturday evening service, Pastor Doug Pratt introduced us to Eddie Kaufholtz, who serves as Director of Church Mobilization for International Justice Mission. Our 10 AM service on November 22 featured an interview with Tim and Annette Gulick, missionaries with OC International. Following worship, our Mission Fair in McClure Hall featured many local and international mission organizations and missionaries supported by FPC. The Mission Leadership Team also hosted a fellowship luncheon for our mission guests so they could network with one another.

Many other church ministries were also involved in missions this past holiday season. Illumination Student Ministries spent two mornings of their school vacation at the Café of Life in Bonita helping to serve lunch. Our Women’s Ministry organizes a monthly Friday meal at the Café. Wonder Years Preschool donated food for the Café during the holidays. The Women’s Connection annual Missions Brunch on November 18 featured Lowell and Sally Senitz, founders of Wings of Shelter International, a local mission organization supported by First Church.

Director of Missions Trusha Barner initiated the first annual Mission Prayer Tree, with ornaments specifying one missionary or mission organization supported by First Church with their prayer requests. Members and friends were asked to become Mission Prayer Warriors by taking an ornament from the tree and praying specifically for that missionary’s concerns.

# The Bible's Two Best Verses for Leaders

by Pastor June Barrow

One verse in the Psalms offers the perfect definition of leadership; another offers the perfect prayer for leadership.

Psalm 78:72 offers a simple but unsurpassed definition of true leadership: "And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them." Skill and integrity—both are essential. Can you guess which of these two the Bible says most about? Most of what the Bible teaches about leaders deals with character, with integrity of heart. David, for instance, is described as "a man after God's own heart." Moses, Abraham, Gideon, Deborah, Esther—none were perfect people yet all sought to honor and obey the Lord. All of them acknowledged a higher authority to which they must bend the knee. None of these leaders were self-seeking or self-promoting. In fact, they questioned whether they were adequate for the difficult tasks assigned to them. Yet each agreed, in obedience, to trust the Lord would help them and guide them.

"David shepherded them..." That is an interesting word for describing the use of power and position that King David had. It suggests gentle leading and tender care. Good leaders love those entrusted to their care. The word "pastor," of course, means "shepherd" in Latin. Pastors shepherd a flock and how blessed the people are when pastors demonstrate both "integrity of heart" and "skillful hands."

Every person, including every leader, is under another's authority. We serve well when we respect those in authority, supporting them, never forgetting that ultimately we all serve a Greater, Higher Authority, to whom our first loyalty is always due. All leaders in the church—those who head a small group, a prayer group, a Bible study, a ministry, or a family—can lead as David did, with integrity of heart and with skillful hands. All can lead as a shepherd does, with love and protection for those under their care.

So what is the perfect prayer the leaders should pray? Psalm 143:10 says, "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. May your gracious Spirit lead me forward on a firm footing."

## Operation Christmas Child

Members and friends of FPC donated 865 shoeboxes filled with special gifts for our annual OCC collection. Your gifts and prayers brought Christmas hope to many children worldwide. Thank you for caring and giving. Many thanks to organizers Anne Price and Bethel Baumann, and our many OCC volunteers.



Organizing 865 shoeboxes is no small feat! It took a small army of volunteers led by Anne Price and most of McClure Hall to ready the boxes for shipping. Bethel Baumann (above) even brought her grandchildren to help make sure each shoebox had the necessary items.

## Manger Tree "Thank You"

A big "thank you" to all whose generous hearts brightened Christmas for area children through the Manger Tree project. The Deacons report that your gifts were delivered to 634 children from New Horizons Super Kids at Bonita Methodist Church, New Horizons Super Kids and Super Teens at Rosemary Park, Pinewoods Elementary Kids Club in Estero, and the Bonita Springs YMCA.

Thank you for your generosity! Please continue to pray for the child you sponsored through the New Year.



2015-2016

# Bonita Christian Forum



Karen Hughes and Devon Zimmermann at the November 10 Forum event.

## Eternal Impact

The Bonita Christian Forum continued to impact audiences with its first speaker of Season 11, Karen Hughes. Speaking to a full house on November 10, this former Counselor to President George W. Bush during 9/11 shared about her amazing career and how her faith guided her life and decisions. Karen revealed the true reason she left the seat of world power in Washington, D.C. after just two years: for her teenage son and her role as “Mom.”

Today, children grown, Karen is global vice president for the public relations firm of Burson-Marsteller. She serves as advisor for major crises, such as the Ebola outbreak at Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas. But if you ask her about her true love, she’ll tell you she prefers teaching young children. Karen said that is what kept her grounded during her political career. She and her husband taught Sunday school; she was able to focus on what really mattered.

Karen’s honesty, integrity and deep faith no doubt impressed the audience. They saw a woman, a Christian, who has well-served the highest office in the land and continues to make an eternal impact on its future—its children.

**Nabeel Qureshi...** Now a *New York Times* bestselling author, Nabeel is an itinerant speaker and lecturer with Ravi Zacharias International Ministries based in Atlanta. He holds an MD from Eastern Virginia Medical School, an MA in Christian apologetics from Biola University, an MA in Religion from Duke University, and is currently pursuing a doctorate in New Testament studies at Oxford. Nabeel’s journey from Islam to Christianity grabbed our attention as well as our hearts in *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*. Through the eyes of a devoted Muslim we witnessed an amazing transformation and, because of this, our own perspective has been changed and our faith strengthened.

**Dinesh D’Souza...** Dinesh is a native of India, a convert to Christ and a passionate naturalized American citizen. A former domestic policy analyst in the Reagan White House, his prominent career over the course of 30 years has included many successful and controversial endeavors as an author, scholar, public intellectual, political commentator and documentary filmmaker. He has been named one of America’s most influential conservative thinkers by the *New York Times Magazine*.

Dinesh came to the U.S. as an exchange student, graduated from Dartmouth College and, in recent years, has been an articulate spokesman and forceful defender of Christianity. His books on apologetics use reason to show the limits of the atheist worldview and issue a challenge to believers to defend their faith. With intelligence, sharp wit and an engaging manner, Dinesh has participated in highly-publicized debates about Christianity with some of the most famous atheists and skeptics of our time.

**Kevin Sorbo...** Now an internationally known actor and filmmaker, Kevin Sorbo’s career skyrocketed with his popular action series “Hercules: The Legendary Journeys” and the Gene Roddenberry sci-fi series, “Andromeda.” In his powerful autobiography, *True Strength*, he is candid about his harrowing journey after a sudden health crisis nearly killed him. Sorbo is an outspoken Christian and, working in the most influential art form of the 20th and 21st centuries, is uniquely positioned to bring about change in Hollywood. Star of the successful 2014 Christian film, “God’s Not Dead,” he and his wife are working faithfully with other believers in the film industry. Sorbo is the celebrity spokesperson for the nonprofits The Afterschool Alliance, A World Fit For Kids and Gen. Colin Powell’s America’s Promise Alliance.

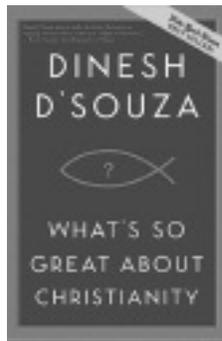
## BCF Book Corner

Available in the FPC BookCenter

**Dinesh D'Souza**

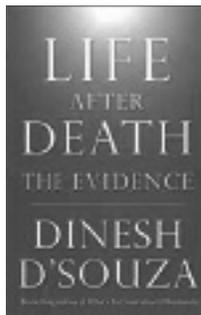
### *What's So Great about Christianity?*

Believers will find this a straightforward tool kit for meeting the challenge of modern atheism and secularism, explaining not only the core doctrines of the Christian faith but how Western Civilization has flourished by using its ideals as its foundation. Nonbelievers get a compelling apologetic to challenge their assumptions and affirm the true greatness of Christianity. The American Spectator calls Dinesh “one of the great Christian apologists” and this book “a book that both G.K. Chesterton and C.S. Lewis would have appreciated...”



### *Life After Death: The Evidence*

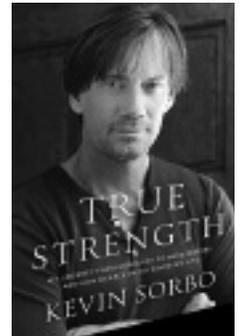
Drawing on some of the most powerful theories and trends in physics, evolutionary biology, science, philosophy and psychology, Dinesh shows why the atheist critique of immortality is irrational. He concludes that it is reasonable to believe in life after death and, by doing so, it adds significance and hope to this life.



**Kevin Sorbo**

### *True Strength*

A sudden health crisis at age 38 forced this actor, at the height of his career, to totally redefine his life. Sorbo's widely-praised book has been called “honest and insightful” (Gary Sinese), “surprisingly bold and well told” (Bret Michaels), and “an inspiring and uplifting journey into the world of never giving up” (Wayne Gretzky). He makes the details of his illness as compelling as a mystery novel and his struggle gut-wrenchingly human—a passionate testimony of survival, and physical and spiritual triumph.



**Nabeel Qureshi**

### *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*

Nineteen months after its release, Nabeel's first book has sold over 160,000 copies (1,200 of which were from our FPC BookCenter), achieving *New York Times* Best Seller status last September. His passionate spiritual journey as a devout Muslim wrestling with the evidence of Jesus as God has wide appeal and is currently being translated into 10 languages.



## What's ahead

**Dinesh D'Souza**

Monday, January 25, 2016 | 7:00 PM

**Kevin Sorbo**

Tuesday, March 8, 2016 | 7:00 PM



D'SOUZA

SORBO

**All events  
begin at 7:00 PM  
Doors open at 6:15 PM**

Visit [bonitachristianforum.org](http://bonitachristianforum.org) for more information.

## Please remember!

- **CARPOOL.** Help us maximize the limited parking available!
- **PARKING.** Traffic control on Bonita Beach Road and a professional crew in our parking lot together will manage traffic flow and direct cars to the next available space.
- **BRING YOUR TICKETS** to guarantee entry.
- **BE PATIENT.** Many who come will be unfamiliar with our campus. Watch for opportunities to be helpful and ensure a good experience for everyone!

# Let Your Light Shine Brightly!

At Neon Kids, our mission is to partner with parents to lead children into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Neon Kids provides quality programs for children ages 6 months through 5th grade. We invite you to visit us on Sunday mornings before worship. Check your children in at the Children's Desk for both nursery or Neon Kids Sunday school. You can also visit us on the web at [neonkids.org](http://neonkids.org) to catch up on all the latest news.

## Children's Christmas Program

This year's Christmas program included the students of Wonder Years Preschool, Neon Kids and Illumination. They filled the Sanctuary stage dressed as townspeople, barn animals, angels, stars, the three wise men, shepherds, the drummer boy and, of course, Mary and Joseph. The story of Jesus' birth was illustrated through narratives and songs performed by all the students. The program was a great success with over 250 in attendance, followed by birthday cake for Jesus in McClure Hall. Heartfelt thanks go out to all the parents and families who attended to make this program such a joyous occasion.



Littlest angels from Wonder Years Preschool

## Wonder Years Preschool

Wonder Years provides a nurturing and loving Christian environment that enriches the lives of children through preschool activities. Open enrollment for 2016-2017 begins January 11. Parents are encouraged to participate to ensure a spot in the upcoming school year.

Contact Preschool Administrator Nancy Bolognese ([nbolognese@fpcbonita.org](mailto:nbolognese@fpcbonita.org) or 239-948-6677).



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

### Children's Choir

Sundays • 10 AM • Family Ministries Center  
Children in kindergarten through grade 5 are invited to join the FPC Children's Choir and learn about God's love in a musical environment. Attendance may be on a week-to-week basis. Consider giving your child or grandchild this chance to "find their voice" in an atmosphere of love and acceptance.

Contact Associate Director of Sacred Arts Peter Lewis ([plewis@fpcbonita.org](mailto:plewis@fpcbonita.org)).

### Kids Night Out

Friday, Jan. 15 & Feb. 26  
5-8 PM • Family Ministries Center  
Children ages 1-11 years are invited to join us for our monthly Kids Night Out. To find out more about our planned theme and activities, contact Lauren Hargis ([lhargis@fpcbonita.org](mailto:lhargis@fpcbonita.org); 239-992-3233).

### Questions?

Contact Children's Ministry Coordinator Lauren Hargis at [lhargis@fpcbonita.org](mailto:lhargis@fpcbonita.org) or 239-992-3233.

"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

MATTHEW 5:16

# Illumination

EQUIPPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

## A Question of Faith

For this *Epistle* column, our children, youth and families ask our pastors their toughest faith questions.

Dear Pastor John McWilliams,

**What should a person do if they ever start to question their faith or things regarding Christianity?**

Sincerely,

Members of Illumination Student Ministry

Dear Illumination Students:

Thanks for your good question. It seems that every Christian has doubts and questions about their faith at some point in their life. It's normal to question our faith. Even Thomas and Peter, who had been with Jesus for years, had serious doubts and questions regarding their faith. Elijah, who saw possibly the greatest miracle of the Old Testament as God sent down fire to show He was really God, also began to have doubts about his faith only a few days later. He was ready to quit his ministry. So first of all, anyone who has doubts is in some good Biblical company.

In my opinion, when doubts and questions come up we should be honest enough to face them and to seek what the Bible says. The answers are there if we search for them. Yet sometimes we just have to blindly trust that God is Who He says He is and hang on to that, even though it is hard to do. Sometimes we even have to pray to God to give us the faith to hold on.

When a pilot flies into the clouds he or she loses all sense of orientation and direction. It's impossible to tell whether the plane is flying straight and level, or is climbing or descending or banking left or right. At that time the pilot has to trust the instruments in front of him or her and the voice in the tower that he or she can never see. When we fly into the clouds of doubt and questions regarding our faith, we too have to trust The Voice in The Tower and listen to God and do what He says, because He can see what we are unable to see and can direct us, through prayer and His Word, on the course that will take us out of those "spiritual clouds." It can sometimes take quite a while, but as one person said, God is faithful and can bring us to actually "doubt our doubts" and have the answers to our questions.

Working through questions and doubts can and does also strengthen our faith, growing us into more mature Christians.

— Pastor John McWilliams

Does your child have a faith question? Submit your question to Family Ministry Director Amanda Zaengle ([azaengle@fpcbonita.org](mailto:azaengle@fpcbonita.org)) and it may be featured in a future issue of the *Epistle*.

"Illumination has embarked on an Apologetics journey!" says Youth Ministry Coordinator Rachel Steffens. "An important part of being a committed Christian is understanding why we believe what we believe, and how to share it in a compelling and relevant way with friends, family and peers. Our study series on Apologetics is really charging up the students to ask questions and seek to deepen their faith."

Illumination meets on Wednesday and Saturday evenings, and students are always provided resources and Scriptures to reference for answers. And now that the Student Ministry Center (SMC) is up and running, they have a comfortable and safe environment to learn and grow in their relationship with each other and with Jesus Christ. Located across the street from our main campus (at 9696 Bonita Beach Road), the long-awaited opening was celebrated by a ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony in early December.

"Our students are now able to fully experience learning opportunities, plan movie nights and group events and, of course, enjoy fellowship at their new home-away-from-home," Rachel said. "They are being equipped to feel confident in their knowledge of who Jesus is to them, and now are excited to share His Good News to others!"

While on their school vacation, members of the Youth Group spent two mornings serving lunch at the Café of Life in Bonita Springs. They are not only learning that service takes sacrifice but that that service can be rewarding.

"We had an outpouring of volunteers from First Church, including our students and their families," Rachel added. "They even got to serve some of their classmates, and learned first-hand that we are called to serve and love everyone around us. With humbled attitudes, our students served 98 people and are looking forward to serving more in the future!"



Illumination serving others at the Café of Life, Bonita Springs (left to right): Nick Zimmermann, Parker Hazen, Ashley Adkins, Holly Hazen, Haley Adkins, Brooke Klinker.

# Steven's Study

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

**F**or the past three years I have had the opportunity and the great pleasure to offer our new elder training program. Each year, six people who have been elected by the congregation to serve as elders are required to participate in these training sessions. This program is intended to not only orient them to the work they will encounter as they serve on Session, but more importantly to lift up who the Bible reveals God is calling each elder to be. This will determine what they do and how they do it.

The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task." Indeed, the office of elder is a tremendous honor, but it is also a great responsibility; one that is not to be taken lightly. It has been written that President Benjamin Harrison repeatedly said that he had many honors which he held dear and to which he tried to be true but, of them all, none could be rated higher than his position as a ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church. President Harrison once made this remark in the presence of the great merchant, John Wanamaker who was said to have responded, "And you feel that, too? I have felt and said the same thing for years."

Being a Presbyterian Church, our very name declares the importance that is placed on the office of elder. Elders, as overseers of the church, are the basis of the model of church government that the Apostle Paul chose when planting churches during his missionary journeys. This is understandable because it was the model he knew from the synagogue and the Temple. "Presbyterian" comes from the Greek word, "presbuteros." There is also a word "episkopos" which is used interchangeably with "presbuteros" to refer to the same people (cf. Titus 1:5-9). "Presbuteros" relates to the spiritual maturity that is required of an elder, and "episkopos" refers to their authority as overseers. Elders are always mentioned in the plural, because in God's church the leadership is not to be in the hands of one person, but rather a plurality of leaders.

Oftentimes people are allowed to assume that the office of elder is an administrative one. Serving on the Session is often viewed as being akin to serving on a Board of Directors. Nothing could be farther from the biblical view. The New Testament description of elders is that they are the spiritual shepherds of the people of God. And what do shepherds do? Shepherds **care** for the sheep, **protect** the



Rev. Steven Grant

sheep, **guide** the sheep and **feed** the sheep. This may include some administrative decisions, but the primary purpose of the elders is to provide for the spiritual well-being of the congregation. The Apostle Peter wrote, "So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder... shepherd the flock of God that is among you" (I Peter 5:1). Peter goes on to say that this shepherding is to be done with humility, not domineering, but as examples to the flock.

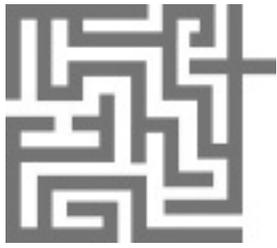
This is why when Paul described the requirements for being an elder in his letter to Timothy he lists fifteen things to be noted. Only two of them have to do with what an elder should do; the rest have to do with the elder's character. In the Presbyterian Church (USA) we have two types of elders: teaching elders (your pastors) and ruling elders (your session). Together we make up the group of elders that are charged with the spiritual oversight of a given congregation of God's people.

While it is a tremendous responsibility and one that deserves honor and respect, it is also a great blessing as elders are called and equipped by the Holy Spirit to fulfill their responsibilities, provided they submit to His leading rather than to their own agendas. The type of leadership we are talking about here is **servant leadership**. I am reminded of Jesus' statement in Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many."

Please pray for your pastors and elders as they give of themselves in service to God and to His church, so that they may grow in their leadership to fulfill the Apostle Paul's encouragement, "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor" (I Timothy 5:17).

Pastor Steven Grant

# Preparedness Ministry



*“Without counsel plans fail,  
but with many advisors,  
they succeed.” – Proverbs 15:22*

*MISSION STATEMENT: To identify, understand and prepare for life's challenges in wholeness with Christ in mind, body and spirit.*

The Preparedness Ministry works year-round in order to present worthwhile seminars that offer positive witness toward life's challenges. Each seminar is free and open to church members as well as the community. Events are held on Thursdays in McClure Hall from 2:00-3:30 PM; coffee and treats are always available. The speaker's presentation is 45 minutes to an hour followed by 30 minutes for questions. Information packets are ready for each attendee.

## **How to Declutter and Simplify Your Life**

Thursday, January 28 • 2-3:30 PM • McClure Hall

Is your home overcrowded with “stuff” you haven't seen or used in years? Do you often complain that you can never find what you need? Are you moving or downsizing your home? You may feel helpless and overwhelmed—with no idea how to begin sorting through and deciding what is trash and what is treasure. If you are facing this dilemma, we invite you to attend this seminar and learn how to achieve freedom from clutter and the stress it causes.

## **Identity Theft and Senior Scam Protection**

Thursday, February 25 • 2-3:30 PM • McClure Hall

Southwest Florida leads the nation in the occurrence of senior scams and identity theft. The Internet and use of computers for Social Security, Medicare and the Internal Revenue Service have contributed to senior fraud. These thieves are becoming more sophisticated and tend to prey on the vulnerable using cyberspace—phishing, emails, phone calls, smart phones, credit cards and even death—to scam seniors. Join us in February to learn how to avoid these situations while protecting yourself, your family and your finances.

For more information on these seminars, contact Connie Duquin (239-287-7649; [cjduquin@comcast.net](mailto:cjduquin@comcast.net)).

Associate Pastor Nominating Committee

## Update from the APNC

Following approval from the congregation in October, the APNC was formed to find the right candidate to fill the open Associate Pastor position at First Church. The committee first agreed on a Purpose Statement: *Prayerfully discern God's will to seek, woo, and welcome an Associate Pastor who is passionate about Christ.* Since then we have met with Session, Pastor Pratt and Joyce Geary, the Peace River Presbytery liaison.

We have completed the Ministry Information Form (MIF) which provides statistical and demographic information about our church as well as information regarding the characteristics we are seeking in an Associate Pastor. This form has been reviewed by Session and was forwarded to the Peace River Presbytery Committee on Ministry in December. Following their approval, the MIF was sent to the PCUSA main office for access by interested pastors.

In January we begin receiving Pastor Information Forms (PIF) from those interested in being considered for the Associate Pastor position. The process of reviewing all PIF's to identify the top 10 candidates is expected to take several months. The committee seeks to have the final candidate selected for review by Session, the congregation and Peace River Presbytery no later than April.

The APNC welcomes any recommendations from the congregation. Any Christian pastor, whether ordained in the PCUSA or not, may be considered. We are seeking a candidate who is passionate about Christ and an exceptional speaker deeply committed to the Word as written in the Bible. This individual must possess phenomenal interpersonal skills and be a team player, anxious to be part of the growing ministry our flagship church offers.

During the month of January, church members are welcome to provide recommendations and candidate contact information in writing to Dave Nichols at [kd1000@aol.com](mailto:kd1000@aol.com). It is preferred that the committee be the initial contact. After review, a formal application may be requested from the candidate.

Your APNC appreciates and values your continued prayers and will provide additional updates in the future.

# Spiritual Development Center

## Who We Are

Rev. Steven M. Grant, M.Div.

Associate Pastor/Program Director SDC

Alfred R. Barrow, Ph.D.

Director of Spiritual Development

Maria Karl, CBC

Biblical Counselor

Rev. June G. Barrow, M.A., M.Div.

Assistant Pastor

## How We Serve

The Center offers compassionate and confidential counseling, spiritual direction, retreats, support groups, and classes related to marriage & family as well as spiritual and emotional growth. We focus on Biblical truth and counseling excellence. The Center office is open Tuesday-Friday, 9 AM - 1 PM. Appointments may be scheduled by calling the Center at 239-221-8250. There is no charge or fee for services.

## Our Location

The Center is located directly across the street from the main church campus:

9696 Bonita Beach Road, Suite 207  
2nd Floor, down the hall on the left

## Our Mission

Our mission is to help individuals and families, no matter their background, meet the challenges they face in a complex world, to strengthen their relationships with one another and with God, and to offer opportunities for personal and spiritual growth.



First Church is blessed to have on staff an amazing couple who are knowledgeable, experienced and passionate about helping people make emotional and spiritual changes in their lives. Dr. Al and Pastor June Barrow helped open the Spiritual Development Center in October 2014. Together, they offer compassionate spiritual direction based on Biblical truth through a variety of formats—including teaching, seminars, retreats and classes concerning spiritual, interpersonal and emotional growth in a Christian context.

With a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology, Dr. Al is happy to use his 30+ years of professional counseling to provide individuals, couples and families with tools to improve their relationships. He is certified by the National Board for Certified Counselors. Rev. June has served as a pastor for 16 years; First Church is her second pastorate. She is certified as a Spiritual Director and, in addition to offering spiritual guidance and counsel to individuals, couples and groups, fulfills her pastoral duties through teaching, preaching and congregational care. Both Al and June are certified marriage coaches.



Dr. Al & Rev. June Barrow

## Dr. Al Speaks on Marriage

This season, the Barrows are offering some unique opportunities for interpersonal growth, spiritual rejuvenation and self-care. Their upcoming course, Love and Respect, strives “to make an average marriage good and a good marriage better.” With this in mind, the *Epistle* asked Dr. Al a few questions as a “preview.” Here is what he said:

### Why is it important for a couple to step back and assess their marriage from time to time?

**Dr. Al:** Like a car, checking the oil every 3,000 miles makes sure it runs smoothly. Marriages need regular maintenance for the same reason. They don’t run under their own power, but need intentional adjustments and periodic corrections by both “drivers” to maintain optimum performance.

### What are some of the warning signs that your relationship needs more attention?

**Dr. Al:** When little arguments become big ones; when less time is spent together; when each partner assumes they know the other completely and there is nothing else to discover; and when a couple can no longer “dream” together, to name a few.

### What makes a “Christian” couple different?

**Dr. Al:** A Christian couple realizes that the other is a gift from Him and as such, the love that cements their marriage is also a gift which transcends anything they could will on their own. As a result, each partner’s gaze is fixed first and foremost on Him, so that in the end their view of the other is always cast in the light of His love which unites them in purpose and meaning.

### What does Jesus tell us about marriage?

**Dr. Al:** Jesus re-emphasizes the Old Testament teaching that a man and woman, when marrying, shall become one flesh. He further adds that a marriage is a sacred trust because God put a man and a woman together.

*Suggested Scripture for couples:*

*I Corinthians 13; Ephesians 5:22-33; I Corinthians 11:11-12*

Do you recommend couples read the book *Love and Respect*? If so, why; how can it help?

**Dr. Al:** Everything in our culture speaks to the “temporary” nature of relationships; the assumption being that love is something you either fall into or out of. In his book “Love and Respect,” Dr. Eggerichs expands on Ephesians 5:33 where Paul commands a husband to love his wife as himself and for a wife to respect her husband. By understanding that such actions require intentional obedience and mutual submission, love between couples grows and can even flourish and is not dependent on either spontaneous regeneration or atrophy, i.e., falling in or out of love.

## Unique Offerings from the Spiritual Development Center

### Checking for Warning Lights on Your Marriage Dashboard

Monday, January 11 • 7-8:30 PM • CenterPoint  
Monday Pastor’s Class

As in vehicle maintenance, it is always prudent to give your marriage a periodic “check-up” so as to avoid a complete breakdown later. Using Scripture and the insights of leading marriage experts, Dr. Al Barrow will help us understand what to check for, where to look, and what to do when your marriage needs a tune-up... whether you’ve been “on the road” a few years or a few decades.

### Love and Respect:

#### Having the Marriage You’ve Always Wanted

Tuesdays, January 19 through April 19 • 4-5:15 PM  
Location to be announced

Based on the best-selling book, *Love and Respect* by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs, this 14-week class will feature video from a live weekend with Dr. Eggerichs and his wife, Sarah, as they walk participants through a practical understanding of Ephesians 5:33. Their presentation has been described as “engaging,” “humorous” and “moving.” Dr. Al and Pastor June Barrow will lead discussion and provide additional instruction to supplement the readings.

To register: Email Dr. Al ([abarrow@fpconita.org](mailto:abarrow@fpconita.org)) or Pastor June ([jbarrow@fpconita.org](mailto:jbarrow@fpconita.org)), or leave a confidential voicemail by calling the Center at 239-221-8250. Please include your name, email and phone number.

### Growing Weary in Well-Doing:

#### Self-Care for the Caregiver – Parts 1 & 2

Tuesday, Jan. 12 and Thursday, Jan. 21 • 10:30 AM - 12 Noon  
Price Chapel

Presenters: Dr. Al and Pastor June Barrow with Parish Nurses, JoAnn Hochstetler and Stephanie Stec

Caring for a chronically ill spouse, parent or child around the clock can be a supreme act of love on one hand and a tiring, grueling ordeal on the other. Feelings of frustration, mental confusion, physical fatigue, guilt and emotional numbness are all signs of “compassion fatigue” that can cause a caretaker to despair. Learn to identify the signs of compassion fatigue and discover ways to better care for yourself spiritually, emotionally and physically. By so doing, you will be able to “be the best that you can be” when caring for those dearest to you. This seminar is free and open to the community.

To register: Email Dr. Al ([abarrow@fpconita.org](mailto:abarrow@fpconita.org)) or Pastor June ([jbarrow@fpconita.org](mailto:jbarrow@fpconita.org)), or leave a confidential voicemail by calling the Center at 239-221-8250. Please include your name, email and phone number.

### “Rest, Peace, Prayer” A Day Away Retreat

Friday, January 22 • 10 AM-2:30 PM • CenterPoint

Jesus offered an invitation to His friends: “Come away by yourselves to a quiet place and rest for a while” (Mark 6:31). His invitation to quiet, to rest, to peace, and to coming near to Christ Himself is still open.

The poet Wordsworth wrote, “The world is too much with us...” We could add that the daily noise and the daily news are too much with us. Many of us carry solemn and solitary burdens that others know little of. We need the kind of soul-rest that renews peace and hope, that lifts our gaze and our spirit.

You are invited to *A Day Away*—a personal, guided retreat that includes some teaching, times for silence, private journaling, reading, prayer, and lunch together. Pastor June Barrow will lead. The cost is \$10 for lunch.

To register, email Pastor June ([jbarrow@fpconita.org](mailto:jbarrow@fpconita.org)); please include a phone number.

*“When people choose to withdraw far from a fire, the fire continues to give warmth, but they grow cold. When people choose to withdraw far from light, the light continues to be bright in itself but they are in darkness. This is also the case when people withdraw from God.” – Augustine, 4th century*

# Men's Ministry Fellowship

Changing Men's Hearts One at a Time



## The Ministry of Listening

by Scott Flaig

Leadership through service within the Christian community is manifest by teaching, speaking, giving sermons and offering personal insights on matters of spiritual significance. This is how our leaders serve fellow Christians as well as those who are not.

But "leadership through service" is something every person is capable of. You don't have to be a pastor. There is a quiet ministry that always seems to get second billing, but is often the best thing a person can do. The art of listening is both a service and a ministry. "By listening," Krista Tippett, author of *Speaking of Faith: Why Religion Matters*, says, "Be open to be surprised."

How good does it feel when someone listens intently with heart, mind and soul to your concerns and even your "wow moments"? They are ultimately serving you in a most Christian way. When we sit in church and are captured by the pastor's message, our body language gives positive feedback that reinforces that message. It's a two-way conversation.

The importance of learning to listen is emphasized by Proverbs 2:2: "Make your ear attentive to wisdom and incline your heart to understanding."

### MMF SCHEDULE

Thursdays • 7:20 AM • McClure Hall

For more information, please contact Scott Flaig at 239-949-7307 or [sflaig51@aol.com](mailto:sflaig51@aol.com).

*"The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out."*

— Proverbs 20:5

**MMF VISION STATEMENT: To build relationships with men, to mutually encourage them, and bring them closer to Christ through fellowship and discipling.**

In Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book, *Life Together*, he says, "The first service that one owes to others in fellowship consists of listening to them. Just as love to God begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love of brethren is learning how to listen to them." He later says, "But he who can no longer listen to his brother will soon no longer be listening to God."

Here at First Church we are blessed with many ministries that both listen and give us the opportunity to listen:

- Clergy sermons serve to enlighten and inspire;
- Mission projects inform us of ways we can contribute;
- The FPC staff listens to our needs and serves behind the scenes each and every day;
- Our Sunday "Discover-Investigate-Grow" study classes;
- The Music Ministry provides meditation and inspiration;
- The Bonita Christian Forum brings in world-renowned leaders;
- The Prayer Chain provides responsive prayer for our most personal needs and concerns;
- The Spiritual Development Center offers an opportunity "to sit with someone who will take your life seriously, listen to you and with you."

Krista Tippett states, "Through listening you can make a choice to honor the other's humanity."

Then of course, there is the Men's Ministry Fellowship with a rich set of events and programs. We have annual sporting events, charity events and weekly fellowship as well as teaching from our pastors. The Pastor's question at the Thursday morning breakfast offers each of us the opportunity to serve each other—just by listening.

A highlight of the year is the Great Banquet weekend, which is followed by the formation of reunion groups [small Bible study groups]. The Great Banquet and reunion groups offer us time to listen, converse with each other and meditate on the most essential and fundamental meaning of a Christian life.

Lani Leary, PhD, makes this point, "So listening is a ministry, an art of hearing and experiencing what the world is like to the person talking. Listening is a prayer."

Our Men's Ministry is in the work of listening and serving. How can we not, when there is so much offered?

Bonhoeffer concludes, "We should listen with the ears of God that we may speak the Word of God."

## Book on Leadership

Recommended by Pastor Doug Pratt

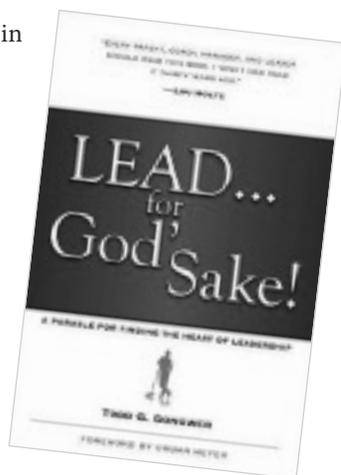
“Lead... for God’Sake!”

by Todd G. Gongwer

The Men’s Ministry recently studied and discussed the new novel *Lead... for God’Sake!* by business executive and former college basketball coach Todd Gongwer. The story follows the struggles of two friends, a CEO and a Head Coach, who are trying to find the right ways to motivate their employees and players. Their quest brings them in contact with a remarkable man who helps them understand the heart of true and effective leadership.

This book is credited by Ohio State football coach Urban Meyer as having turned his life and career around. During a time of career transition (after two national championships at Florida), Meyer was burned out and struggling to reconnect with his family, his values and his faith. A friend, sports broadcaster Todd Blackledge, gave the book to him—and when he read it, Meyer realized what he had been missing.

The book is available in our FPC BookCenter. It is a fascinating look at how we can influence others—in sports, in business, and in our circles of family and friends.



## Order of St. Luke (OSL)



Ready to Serve. Pastor Steven Grant and OSL Convener Margaret Gieselmann (both on right) present the newest class of OSL members for induction into the Order: (from left to right) Dr. George E. White, Greg Gerstler, Georgia Gerstler, Dr. Al Barrow and Elizabeth Freihofer.

OSL is an international Christian healing ministry dedicated to developing a member’s prayer life so they are equipped to encourage the healing of body, soul and spirit in others. The Bonita Springs chapter at First Presbyterian Church is Mercy and Grace, inspired from Hebrews 4:16. The OSL chaplain here is Pastor June Barrow. The Order of St. Luke provides an in-depth detailed study of the 26 healing miracles of Jesus for those interested in membership and service.

The OSL Reunion Group will meet on January 21, February 18, March 17 and April 21 at 2 PM in Lightner Conference Room for continuing education. Contact Margaret Gieselmann ([mgieselmann@att.net](mailto:mgieselmann@att.net)) for more information.

# Women's Connection

*The mission of the Women's Ministry of First Church is to help women of all ages reach UPWARD to a deeper relationship with Christ, reach INWARD to one another in love and fellowship, and reach OUTWARD to our community and world in service.*



The best thing we can do as Christian women is develop our hearts and minds toward God and others. Continuing to learn and to pray is a large part of our spiritual journey, and sharing this with like-minded women can be a source of great joy and comfort.

Women's Connection invites the women of First Church to consider beginning the New Year with a resolution: to delve deeper into God's Word and experience the fellowship of believers through a small group women's study. Topics vary, but our goal is consistent and unwavering—to grow in faith, hope and love.

## A Taste of Women's Connection

Tuesday, January 19 • 10-11:45 AM • McClure Hall

*"Taste and see that the Lord is good." – Psalm 34:8*

All women new to the church, including new members and those wanting to learn more about Women's Connection, are kindly invited to a tasting of delectable treats, gourmet teas and coffees, and a menu of ways to connect with other women at First Presbyterian Church.

Sign up at the Women's kiosk or contact Beth Johansen (239-676-1650; [bethanjohansen@gmail.com](mailto:bethanjohansen@gmail.com)) by Sunday, January 17.

## Wednesday in the Word

Wednesdays • 9:30-11 AM • McClure Hall

**Coffee Cup Compassion: What to Say When You Don't Know What to Say**

*When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them... Matthew 9:36*

All of us have sat across from a friend or family member in need of comfort. All of us have been asked for advice. How do you know what to say? What NOT to say? How to listen well? When to offer your opinion?

During the month of January, Pastor June Barrow will help us learn together how to become more caring and compassionate friends. We will dip into the great well of Scripture and learn how God comforts and cares for us, and how we can care for others wisely and well. We realize that stress, grief, worry and fear can be consuming; we may not realize what a great difference can be made by a little comfort and compassion.

If you have any questions about Women's Connection studies or events, please contact Donna Tenfelde (239-992-3233 ext. 293 or [dtenfelde@fpcbbonita.org](mailto:dtenfelde@fpcbbonita.org)).

## Study & Prayer Groups

Get connected! ALL women of First Church are invited to grow deeper in their relationship with God and their sisters in Christ by getting involved in one of our ongoing Bible studies or Prayer Group:

### Manna for Monday

Resumes Monday, January 11 • 2-3:30 PM  
Price Hall Parlor

Study: *One Thousand Gifts* by Ann Voskamp

### Working Women's Fellowship

Resumes Tuesday, January 12 • 7-8:30 PM  
Lightner Conference Room

Study: *Discerning the Voice of God* by Priscilla Shirer

### Wednesday in the Word

Resumes Wednesday, January 6 • 9:30-11 AM  
McClure Hall

Study: "Coffee Cup Compassion" with Pastor June Barrow

### Wednesday Prayer Group

1st & 3rd Wednesdays • 11 AM  
Price Hall Parlor

All women are welcome to help us pray for the concerns of families, friends, church, community, country and world.

### Moore on Thursday

Resumes Thursday, January 21  
10:30 AM - 1 PM • CenterPoint

Study: *Children of the Day* by Beth Moore

Be sure to check the weekly *First Things First* announcement for the latest information.

2015-16

## Fine Arts Series

This season's Fine Arts line-up is our greatest yet. The quality of this year's artists and music is the best you will find anywhere is Southwest Florida. At the same time, the cost per ticket is lower than you will pay elsewhere. Why drive further, fight traffic and pay more to hear world class music? We bring the best right to you!

Ticket order forms are available at the church. Tickets may be purchased at the Ticket Office, Monday–Thursday, 9 AM–3:30 PM, or at the door prior to each concert.

For more information, call the Concert Line at 239-992-3410 ext. 250.

### Fine Arts Series 2015-16

#### Naples Philharmonic

##### "Around Town: Brahms and Schubert"

January 28, 2016 • 7:30 PM

Tickets: \$35

#### Samuel Ramey in Concert

##### Metropolitan Opera Star

February 21, 2016 • 4:00 PM

Tickets: contact [gulfshoreopera.org](http://gulfshoreopera.org)

#### Hector Olivera

##### Internationally Acclaimed Organist

March 13, 2016 • 3:00 PM

Tickets: \$10

#### Naples Philharmonic & Chorus

##### Presents Beethoven's "Mass in C Major"

April 7, 2016 • 7:30 PM

Tickets: \$35

**The Fine Arts Series** is being presented as a fund raising effort for the First Academy of Music's (FAM) financial aid program. FAM provides high quality musical instruction for students of all ages and levels of skill. Private lessons on individual instruments are offered as well as group musical experiences for children and adults, with performance opportunities over the course of the program year. Financial assistance is available to qualifying students aged 18 years and younger enrolled in private lessons at the school. For more information, call the music office at 239-992-3410 ext. 232 or visit [firstacademyofmusic.org](http://firstacademyofmusic.org).

2015-16 | Our 28th Season

## Concert Series



Our Concert Series presents first-class musical entertainment to the Bonita Springs community free of charge as a way of welcoming them to our church home. This is made possible through the support and generosity of the congregation, sponsors and through freewill donations received at each performance.

### Concert Series 2015-16

#### Embraceable You: The Music of George Gershwin

January 15, 2016 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

#### Nicole Sassen Live

January 29, 2016 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

#### The Four Freshmen

February 5, 2016 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

#### Barbary Coast Show Band

February 26, 2016 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

#### The Browns

March 4, 2016 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

#### Let's Hang On

March 18, 2016 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

Tickets are free but required for seating and available to the public at the Ticket Office 10 days before each concert date. Information about our Concert Series and sponsorship program is available at the church, online at [fpcbbonita.org](http://fpcbbonita.org) and also by calling the Concert Line at 239-992-3410 ext. 250.

# Church Directory

All of our staff are committed to the mission of First Presbyterian Church and would like to make ourselves available to assist you in whatever way we can. The directory listing below, although not comprehensive, includes contact information that may be helpful to you.

## PASTORS

Rev. Dr. Douglas G. Pratt Senior Pastor/Head of Staff  
Rev. Steven Grant Associate Pastor  
Rev. June Barrow Assistant Pastor

dpratt@fpcbonita.org  
sgrant@fpcbonita.org  
jbarrow@fpcbonita.org

## ADMINISTRATION

Elsie Nesbitt Administrator  
Ed Gonzalez Office Manager  
Dave Reynolds Accountant

enesbitt@fpcbonita.org  
egonzalez@fpcbonita.org  
dreynolds@fpcbonita.org

## BIBLICAL COUNSELING

Dr. Al Barrow Director of Spiritual Development  
Maria Karl Biblical Counselor

abarrow@fpcbonita.org  
mkarl@fpcbonita.org

## BOOKCENTER

Ed Schick BookCenter Manager

eschick@fpcbonita.org

## FACILITIES

Tom Bunt Facilities Manager

tbunt@fpcbonita.org

## FAMILY MINISTRY

Amanda Zaengle Family Ministry Director  
Nancy Bolognese Preschool Administrator  
Lauren Hargis Children's Ministry Coordinator  
Rachel Steffens Youth Ministry Coordinator

azaengle@fpcbonita.org  
nbolognese@fpcbonita.org  
lhargis@fpcbonita.org  
rsteffens@fpcbonita.org

## HOSPITALITY

Vivien Wain Hospitality Manager

vwain@fpcbonita.org

## MEDIA

Tommy Hillegass Media Specialist

thillegass@fpcbonita.org

## MEMBERSHIP

Rebecca Harley Membership and Volunteer Facilitator

rharley@fpcbonita.org

## MISSIONS

Trusha Barner Director of Missions

tbarner@fpcbonita.org

## PARISH NURSE MINISTRY

Stephanie Stec RN & JoAnn Hochstetler RN Parish Nurses

parishnurse@fpcbonita.org

## PASTORAL SUPPORT

Donabeth Urick Executive Assistant, Pastor Pratt  
Judi Van Cleave Pastoral Assistant

durick@fpcbonita.org  
jvanleave@fpcbonita.org

## PUBLICATIONS

Rita J. Flower-Opdycke Publications Manager

flower@fpcbonita.org

## SACRED ARTS

Jeff Faux Director of Sacred Arts  
Peter Lewis Associate Director of Sacred Arts  
Cheryl Bauer Director of First Academy of Music/  
Administrative Assistant-Sacred Arts  
Jeff Wain Event Manager

jfaux@fpcbonita.org  
plewis@fpcbonita.org  
cbauer@fpcbonita.org  
jwain@fpcbonita.org

## THRIFT SHOP

Lynne & Dave Stauffer Thrift Shop Managers

lstauffer@fpcbonita.org

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Donna Tenfelde Women's Ministry Coordinator

dtenfelde@fpcbonita.org

## 2016 SESSION

Moderator  
Rev. Dr. Douglas G. Pratt

Clerk of Session  
Tom Grafton

## ELDERS

Ron Brown  
John Cardwell  
Jim Croley  
Tom Grafton  
Judy Graham  
Mike Greene  
Mal Griffin  
John Holdeman  
Carl Johansen  
Stevie Joslin  
David Lyons  
Mary Ann McCoy  
Gary Norbo  
Lin Rhode  
Nelson Robbins  
Paul Spinka  
Jack Wallace  
Sharon Weisenauer

Elder Emeritus  
Frank Provenzano

## 2016 DEACONS

Moderator  
Judi Van Cleave

Betty Cardwell  
Leslie Durling  
Jim Gelhaar  
Barb Goff  
Karen Hatten  
Polly Grafton

Joan Havens-Kester  
JoAnn Hochstetler  
Bob Lorenz  
Ann Luedke  
Ron Maki  
Jerry Meier  
Wendi Owens  
Norma Reynolds  
Judy Teasdale  
Judi Van Cleave  
Linda Wallace  
Margaret Winn

Office: (239) 992-3233  
Fax: (239) 992-7547

First Academy of Music: (239) 992-3410 x232  
First Thrift Shop: (239) 992-0285  
Spiritual Development Center: (239) 221-8250  
Wonder Years Preschool: (239) 948-6677  
Event Office: (239) 992-3410 x250

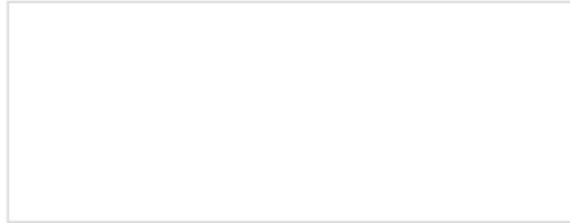
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# Kirkin' o' the Tartan

Sunday, January 31

On January 31, First Church will observe the annual "Kirkin' o' the Tartan" which celebrates the Scottish heritage of the Presbyterian Church. Both the 9 AM and 11 AM services will include a procession led by the Harp & Thistle Pipe and Drum Band and members of our congregation carrying tartan flags. Worship will close with the presentation and blessing of the Clan Tartans with members of the St. Andrew's Society of SW Florida.

## From Scottish History

In remembering our Scottish heritage, we recall the Reformation of 1560, when the Scottish Parliament ratified the Scots Confession of Faith, abolishing the jurisdiction of the Pope in Scotland. Written by John Knox and five colleagues, it continues to this day as one of the foundations of the Book of Confessions of the Presbyterian Church.

The word "kirk" is the Gaelic (ancient Scottish) word for "church." The ceremony of Kirkin' o' the Tartan is of American origin but based on Scottish history and legend. When the Scots were defeated at the Battle of Culloden in 1746, the British banned the keeping of any Highland culture. Forbidden to speak Gaelic, carry weapons, play their ancestral bagpipes or wear clan tartans, it is said they initiated a secret tradition of attending church one day a year wearing a concealed piece of tartan. This overt act of defiance came to be known as the Kirkin' o' the Tartan.

## In America

Our present-day Kirkin' ceremony is believed to have been originated by Rev. Peter Marshall, a Scottish immigrant who was appointed twice as Chaplain of the U.S. Senate. He was a member of the St. Andrew's Society of Washington D.C., who assisted him with the first Kirkin' service in 1943. Since 1954, the Washington Kirkin' service has been held at the National Cathedral. Today many Scottish, Caledonian and St. Andrew's Societies across the U.S. hold Kirkin' services, with the majority of them celebrated in Presbyterian churches.

