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**WORSHIP SERVICE**

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**PRE-SERVICE MUSIC**      *Scripture and Songs*      Gail Thornton

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE**      *Gentle Shepherd*      William J. Gaither

**CALL TO WORSHIP****PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

**INTROIT**      *Rejoice the Lord is King*      C. Wesley/J. Darwell  
Chancel Choir

\***HYMN #337**      *Nothing but the Blood*

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH - The Apostles' Creed (Unison)**

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

**\*GLORIA PATRI**

**ANTHEM**      *If We Will Seek the Lord*      Nancy Price / Don Besig  
Chancel Choir

**PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER (debt/debtors)**

**OFFERTORY**      *In the Holy Presence*      Lani Smith

**\*DOXOLOGY****\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Thanks be to You, O God, for all good gifts, and especially for Your inexpressible gift of the Lord Jesus. Help us, O Lord, to see how we have been blessed and use our offering as a blessing to others. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

\***HYMN #349**      *O How He Loves You and Me*

**SCRIPTURE**      Acts 15:1-33

**MESSAGE**      *Jerusalem Council*      Pastor Barksdale Pullen

\***HYMN #512**      *Jesus Is All the World to Me*

**\*BENEDICTION**

\***RESPONSE**      *Lord, Let Us Now Depart in Peace*      George Whelpton  
Chancel Choir

**POSTLUDE**      *Postlude on Azmon*      Don Phillips

\*Please stand, if able

Hearing assist devices are available at the tech booth

CCLI #1140231 CVLI #505465757

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**MINISTRY OF PRAYER**

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**Prayer Focus**

- Pray for those who serve in the military and their families.
- Pray for First Responders and Healthcare Workers. Pray for our church as we seek to be a flourishing church that makes disciples of Jesus Christ.
- Pray for Lisa Alfonsi, Eric Stone family, and Chasen and Katie Brokaw, missionaries we support in Peru, Guatemala, and Nicaragua.
- Pray for Crossroads, the mission for foster boys in Punta Gorda.
- Pray for Jesus Loves You Ministry for the homeless in Charlotte County.
- Pray for Misión Peniel, the mission that we support in Immokalee.
- Pray for persecuted Christians throughout the world.

**Those who Grieve**

Pray for former member, Art Koon and family, whose wife Fran went home to the Lord on March 28th. Fran is the sister and sister-in-law of Andy and Nancy Smith. A Memorial Service will be held at FPC on Friday, May 31st at 11:00am and at the National Cemetery in Sarasota at 2:30pm.

**Those with Special Needs**

Rachel Pfaender      Phyllis Ehrhardt      Rick Berner  
Lynn Lang      Ron Sixt      Dave Sifferd

**Those who are in Assisted Living or Nursing Homes**

Marion Brown - *Life Care, Punta Gorda*

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**NOTES**

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**FLOWERS** – The flowers are given today by Laurel Aumend in memory of her father, Lester Blenman.

**CELL PHONES** – Please remember to silence or turn off your mobile devices.

**APRIL NEWSLETTER** – Available in the church foyer and on our website.

**CHURCH DIRECTORIES** – Available in the church office.

**FLOWERS** – May be sponsored for **\$37.50**. To make a donation, sign up in the church foyer, listing the flowers in honor and/or in memory of something or someone.

**BULLETIN BOARD** – Check out notes and messages of interest on the Bulletin Board in the church foyer.

**PRAYER EMAIL LIST** – If you would like to be on Pastor Barksdale's prayer email list, email Pastor Barksdale at [bmpullen3@fpcpunta.org](mailto:bmpullen3@fpcpunta.org).

**OUR DAILY BREAD** – This booklet of daily devotionals is on the table in the back of the Sanctuary.

**STREAMING MINISTRY** – Live stream our services on our website homepage ([fpcpunta.org](http://fpcpunta.org)) by clicking the logo **YouTube**.

**FELLOWSHIP TIME** – Following the Worship Service, join us in Fellowship Hall for a time of fellowship and refreshments. You may bring cookies / treats to share!

**Comparative Financial Operations / Performance**

	<u>March 2024</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Tithes & Offerings	\$25,039.01	\$74,499.59
Cash Expenditures	<u>\$21,837.10</u>	<u>\$70,195.90</u>
Net	\$3,201.91	\$4,303.69

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**MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES**

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**GATHER FOR PRAYER** – **A prayer meeting is held Sundays at 6pm online**. Please submit any prayer requests to [first@fpcpunta.org](mailto:first@fpcpunta.org).

**CHURCH MEMBERSHIP CLASS** -- **Sunday, April 28th at 9:30am**. If you are interested in joining the church, or just finding out more information about FPC, please join us for a one class introduction to FPC. (For Seasonal Residents, we have an Affiliate Membership, so you can maintain your Membership back home.)

**PRESERVATION COMMITTEE** - During Workday a couple of weeks ago, the team ran across many items that were saved from the church pre-Hurricane Charley. If you would like to be on a committee to help decide what will happen to these items - use in church, save, donation, etc. - contact Gene McPherson.

**MISSION COMMITTEE** – The Mission Committee is planning to give Gift Certificates to the Vets in Veterans Village to say “Thank you” on Memorial Day. If you want to help, we are in need of an additional \$350.00. Any extra donations will be saved for our annual Christmas gift to them. **Thanks and many blessings.**

**ACTIVITIES / EVENTS**

**BURGERS FOR BADGES** – **Tomorrow, April 15th, 11:00am – 1:00pm**. Help us show our appreciation to our Sheriff's Department as we grill out hamburgers and hotdogs. Sign up in the church foyer to bring cookies or desserts. If you would like to make a donation to help defray the costs of this outreach event, please designate it as “B4B”.

**WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY** – **Tuesday, April 16th at 10:00am** – “Turning Point to Greatness” – **Esther 5:1-8**. Join us for our study of “Esther”, based on “*Becoming a Woman of Beauty & Strength*” by Elizabeth George. We meet the first and third Tuesdays of each month in Fellowship Hall. Call Kathy Belville at 508-733-0546 for more information. **All women are invited for study, fellowship, and refreshments.**

**DONUTS & DOCTRINE** – **We will not meet next Wednesday, April 17th. We will begin a new study for Wednesday mornings at 10:00am from April 24th through May 29th.**

**LADIES LUNCH BUNCH** – **Friday, April 19th, 12:00pm** – Please sign up and join us for lunch at Red Lobster in Port Charlotte. **All ladies are invited!**

**MISIÓN PENIEL** – Our next trip to Immokalee is **Friday, April 26th** – we will help at the Mission in the morning. Please meet at the church at 9:15am, leaving at 9:30am. **We need 5-6 people to go**, so please sign up in the church foyer.

**CROSSROADS HOPE ACADEMY** – **Monday, April 29th, 4:00pm – 8:00pm** – We will be providing and serving dinner to the boys. Please sign up in the church foyer to provide food or serve dinner to the boys at the Davidson Campus. We will meet at the church parking lot at 4:00pm and return around 8:00pm.

**MOTHER'S DAY BREAKFAST** – **Sunday, May 12th at 9:00am** – Sign up now!

**THE CHOSEN SEASON 4** – Postponed due to technical issues. Stay tuned!

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## MISSIONS SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

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**DISASTER RELIEF SUPPORT** – A reminder that our trusted partners at World Renew are ECO’s go-to resource for long-term disaster relief.

<https://worldrenew.net/disaster-response-services-us/disaster-response-services>

**JESUS LOVES YOU MINISTRY SPECIAL NEEDS – Shower Ministry (Wednesday mornings in our parking lot)** – Please place “shower” items in the donation box in Fellowship Hall.

**MISSIONS SUPPORT** – If you would like to donate to the missionaries and organizations that we are supporting in 2024 in our church budget, please make checks payable to FPC and on the memo line write the name of the mission.

Antioch Partners – Stone Family (Guatemala) or Lisa Alfonsi (Peru)

Crossroads Hope Academy (Punta Gorda)

Jesus Loves You Ministry (Port Charlotte)      Misión Peniel (Immokalee)

Missionary Ventures (Chasen & Katie Brokaw – Nicaragua)

**STAND IN THE GAP FUND** – The purpose of this fund is to assist supported missionaries and ministries of our church, when they face unexpected financial burdens. To donate to this fund, please mark your gift as SITG.

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## EVENTS FOR THE COMING WEEK

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*April 14th to April 21st*

**Sunday, April 14**

10:30am      Worship Service (Also Online)  
11:30am      Fellowship Time  
6:00pm      Prayer Meeting-FB

**Monday, April 15**

11:00am      Burgers for Badges  
2:00pm      Session

**Tuesday, April 16**

10:00am      Women’s Bible Study

**Wednesday, April 17**

10:00am      Donuts & Doctrine  
10:00am      Jesus Loves You Shower Ministry

**Thursday, April 18**

10:00am      Game Fellowship  
3:30pm      Chancel Choir Rehearsal

**Friday, April 19**

12:00pm      Ladies Lunch Bunch

**Sunday, April 21**

10:30am      Deacon’s Fund Sunday  
Worship Service (Also Online)  
11:30am      Fellowship Time  
6:00pm      Prayer Meeting-FB

**First Presbyterian Church of Punta Gorda**  
25250 Airport Road Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
941-639-1959 (phone)      941-637-3763 (fax)  
Email: [first@fpcpunta.org](mailto:first@fpcpunta.org)      Website: [fpcpunta.org](http://fpcpunta.org)  
Office hours: 9:00am to 1:00pm Monday – Thursday

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## SERMON NOTES

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### Acts 15:1-33

<sup>1</sup> Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: “Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.” <sup>2</sup> This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. <sup>3</sup> The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the believers very glad. <sup>4</sup> When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them. <sup>5</sup> Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, “The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses.” <sup>6</sup> The apostles and elders met to consider this question. <sup>7</sup> After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: “Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. <sup>8</sup> God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. <sup>9</sup> He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. <sup>10</sup> Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? <sup>11</sup> No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.” <sup>12</sup> The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. <sup>13</sup> When they finished, James spoke up. “Brothers,” he said, “listen to me. <sup>14</sup> Simon has described to us how God first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles. <sup>15</sup> The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

<sup>16</sup> “‘After this I will return and rebuild David’s fallen tent.

Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it,

<sup>17</sup> that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord,

even all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord,

who does these things’— <sup>18</sup> things known from long ago.

<sup>19</sup> “It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. <sup>20</sup> Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. <sup>21</sup> For the law of Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.” <sup>22</sup> Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, men who were leaders among the believers. <sup>23</sup> With them they sent the following letter:

The apostles and elders, your brothers,

To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia: Greetings.

<sup>24</sup> We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. <sup>25</sup> So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul— <sup>26</sup> men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>27</sup> Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. <sup>28</sup> It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: <sup>29</sup> You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell.

<sup>30</sup> So the men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. <sup>31</sup> The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message. <sup>32</sup> Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers. <sup>33</sup> After spending some time there, they were sent off by the believers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them.



*Loving...Growing...Going...in Jesus!*

*This morning as we join in worship, our hope is that each of us will find renewed life, health and strength in God.*

*We are glad to welcome each guest and friend, and that you have chosen to hear God’s call with this congregation.*

**April 14, 2024**

**10:30am**

**PASTOR**  
**MUSIC DIRECTOR**  
**ORGANIST**  
**OFFICE & WORSHIP ADMIN**  
**LITURGIST**  
**USHERS**

Dr. Barksdale Pullen  
Joan Byron  
Denny Ausman  
Debbie Rostad  
Sam Cessna  
Kathy Belville, Roy Belville, Merrilyn Ellison, Susie Lorenz