



# The Messenger

April 2020

Watch our worship service at 10:30am LIVE! Go to our website at: [www.fpcpunta.org](http://www.fpcpunta.org) and click on the link "Watch services LIVE here" on our homepage.



In my office is a cute picture of two children trying to figure out the finger play for that old nursery rhyme:

*Here is the church and there is the steeple.  
Open the doors and see all the people.*

Nowadays, we might modify it to:

*Here is the church and there is the steeple.  
Open the doors and where are the people?*

It is definitely a new day in the life of the church, we are all learning to "do church" a little differently. But what does that phrase mean anyway, to "do church"? Let's remember what the church is; our standards (Heidelberg Catechism #54) define the church as:

I believe that the Son of God,  
out of the whole human race,  
from the beginning of the world to its end,  
gathers, defends, and preserves for himself,  
by his Spirit and Word,  
in the unity of the true faith,  
a church chosen to everlasting life.

And I believe that I am  
and forever shall remain  
a living member of it.

One of the things I love about the old standards is the bigger perspective that the writers had. We, the people, are the church family of First Presbyterian Church of Punta Gorda, but more than that we are part of the church universal, from the beginning of the world to eternity. And Christ has promised, as the Good Shepherd, that He will gather, defend, and preserve it. The King of all creation — He is the One in charge. Nothing can defeat it. So, as we gather around our tables, our computers, or in our living rooms to have Worship/Prayer Meetings/Bible Studies — we are gathering with saints around the world to bring glory, honor, and praise to the Triune God — and we will forever be a part of it! As I mentioned in my letter, it is never an easy decision to cancel our meeting together; however, we have an obligation to look after one another and consider the needs of others as more significant than our own. Our deepest concern is for those

most at risk. Whether they are a fellow church member, immediate family, friend, neighbor or colleague...we all likely know someone we can help protect. So, I just wanted to say thank you for working through this momentary inconvenience.

What about Easter? I know, there are lots of family and church traditions that are part of the season. As I write this to you, we have not made a decision about Easter Sunday. However, Services and activities are cancelled through Good Friday (April 1-10). I hope that we can meet together for Easter, but even if we are unable to meet together as a church family in our building, that doesn't mean that Easter is cancelled. I don't know about you, but a person really has to fight during the Christmas season to remember the true reason for the season, it has become so commercial. It seems that Easter is starting to feel that way too — with the candy, Easter Egg Hunts, new clothes, big meals, etc. Maybe, this is a corrective year. An opportunity to reflect on what Holy Week is all about, from Palm Sunday to Resurrection Sunday! We have been going through the Gospel of John on Sunday mornings, I would encourage you to take the time for family devotions to go back and read the last half of the book in preparation for Easter, and ask yourself, "Why do I celebrate Easter?" It may be a refreshing time to refocus on what it means to be a Christian. On Wednesday April 1 & 8, I will put up on our Facebook page a recorded Easter devotional that looks at some of the Messianic Psalms, I'll send the link out on Wednesday. (I'll also post links to two Holy Week devotionals, or email me and we will mail you a copy. One is produced by the Billy Graham Association, the other is produced by Desiring God Ministry.)

We are the church — perhaps for now scattered, instead of gathered for a season. But this too will pass, and when it does, our communion will be all the sweeter and appreciated.

# MEMBER CARE

*FPC Family,  
Keep us informed on:*

*Prayer Requests and Hospital / Rehab Information  
Address, Phone, Email changes  
Birthdays and Anniversaries*

*Email to [first@fpcpunta.org](mailto:first@fpcpunta.org)*



*First Pres is now on Facebook!*

*You may now see posts about the life of our church....  
Go to [facebook.com/FirstPresbyterianChurch-Punta Gorda](https://facebook.com/FirstPresbyterianChurch-PuntaGorda)*

*Giving to FPC - Punta Gorda*

*Mail to the church office: 25250 Airport Rd; Punta Gorda, FL 33950*

*Online Giving through our website: [fpcpunta.org](http://fpcpunta.org), click Donate*



# APRIL 2020

## CHURCH PRAYER CALENDAR AND CELEBRATIONS

**Prayer is the place where burdens change shoulders - We pray for....**  
*The elderly, the infirm, the hospitalized, those in nursing homes, the homebound and lonely,  
 and all those who have requested our prayerful support.*

**Each month we remember church members and friends on a rotating basis...**



1 Diane Culver-Truby	11 Ray & Cheri Foley	21 Bill & Ellen Hutt
2 Robert Cuzner	12 Frances Frost	22 Pat Ihrle
3 Bill & Sonja Dosse	13 Arlene Gebel	23 Bob & Beverly Ingalls
4 John & Ramona Douglas	14 Ron & Neta Gensemer	24 Tom & Carol Kerr
5 Helmut & Phyllis Ehrhardt	15 Rich & Barb Harris	25 Art & Fran Koon
6 Alan Engstrom	16 Marjorie Haun	26 Carolyn Kvam
7 John & Gail Evans	17 Anna Hill	27 Jean LaMantia
8 George & Beverly Fallenbeck	18 Jean Hinman	28 David & Lynn Lang
9 Tim Farris	19 Joan Hoffman	29 Ernie & DeAnn Lehman
10 Dick & Sandy Fisher	20 Bob & Jean Humphreys	30 Paul & Pat Longergan



3—Lynn Lang	9—Ella Sifferd	23—Nancy Smith
4—Phyllis Ehrhardt	19—Tom Kerr	24—Charlie Zietsma
5—Edwina Norton	20—Andy Smith	25—Dick Fisher
6—Helen Anderson	21—Bo Sostar	28—Anna Hill
9—Jean Humphreys	22—Carolyn Kvam	



12—Rich & Barb Harris	17 yrs
15—John & Ramona Douglas	63 yrs.
18—David & Lynn Lang	37 yrs.



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#### OUR MISSION AND PURPOSE

**LOVING...GROWING...GOING...in JESUS!**

*Loving...God and others through worship and fellowship.*

*Growing...in our understanding Jesus' and God's purposes for us through  
Bible study, and developing our ministries to serve God and others.*

*Going...into God's world with His message of love and salvation through  
Jesus Christ, and with His ministries of compassion and mercy.*



# ECO

A Covenant Order  
of Evangelical  
Presbyterians