
WORSHIP SERVICE

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC Blended Christian Music

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Prelude on "Cleansing Fountain"* James Mansfield

CALL TO WORSHIP

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

INTROIT *Our Song Shall Rise to Thee* Joseph M. Martin
Chancel Choir

***HYMN #428** *In Christ There Is No East or West*

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Steadfast God, we confess to You and to one another that we rely more upon the things of our own invention than upon Your saving help. We have believed that our ingenuity would rescue us from all harm, and we have found it hard to let go of our pet projects. Forgive us, O God, for not having placed our faith in You. Have mercy on us for clinging so hard to our own concept of the way things should be and for failing to hear Your fresh alternatives. Turn our world upside down, O God, and teach us to trust in You above all else. (*Silent Confession*)

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

*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 *From an Upper Room* Joseph M. Martin
Chancel Choir

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

OFFERTORY *Wondrous Love* Esther S. Higgins

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Gracious God, accept these gifts as signs of our desire to serve You. Make our offerings to be instruments of peace and grace in the world. Use them to heal the sick, and to bring hope to the brokenhearted, comfort for the afflicted, justice for the oppressed and good news to all. And let all that we do be a foretaste of Your reign on earth. In Jesus's name. Amen.

***HYMN #465** *Baptized in Water*

SCRIPTURE Acts 8:26-40

MESSAGE *To The Gentiles* Pastor Barksdale Pullen

COMMUNION HYMN *Let Us Break Bread Together*

COMMUNION

***HYMN #410** *Standing on the Promises*

*BENEDICTION

***RESPONSE** *Lord, Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing* Sicilian Mariners
Chancel Choir

POSTLUDE *Just a Closer Walk With Thee* James Denton

*Please stand, if able

Hearing assist devices are available at the tech booth
CCLI #1140231 CVLI #505465757

MINISTRY OF PRAYER

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 the family of Barbara Harris, who went home to the Lord on November 25, 2023.

Pray for the family of Donna Peterson, former member, and mother of Diane Curtis. Donna went home to the Lord on February 11, 2024.

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*

NOTES

FLOWERS – The flowers are given today by Bev Brady in celebration of George's birthday.

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

MARCH 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.

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) 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

	January 2024	Year-to-Date
Tithes & Offerings	\$24,546.16	\$24,546.16
Cash Expenditures	<u>\$25,270.68</u>	<u>\$25,270.68</u>
Net	(\$724.52)	(\$724.52)

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

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

CHANCEL CHOIR – Singers are needed to balance out our church choir. Rehearsals are one hour long on Thursday and before services on Sunday. Call Joan at 941-661-1553 or talk to her on Sunday. **Come and join us in the pleasures of singing praises to God.**

SEASON OF LENT DEVOTIONALS – We have devotionals for you to choose from in the church foyer to help you prepare for Holy Week (**March 24 – March 30**).

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

EASTER LILIES – We will be decorating the church with lilies for Easter. If you would like to donate one in remembrance or honor of a loved one, please use the offering envelopes on the back table of the sanctuary. Suggested donation is \$7 for each lily. **Please have your envelope back by Monday, March 25th**, in time for the bulletin insert.

LIVING CROSS – We are requesting flowers and greenery for the "living cross" for Easter morning. **Please bring both the flowers and greenery at 10:00am on Saturday, March 30th**. Sign up in the church foyer to help with the "living cross".

EASTER POSTCARD – Pick up an Easter Postcard in the church foyer and invite a neighbor to church Easter Week.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS WITH OUR HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

- **Palm Sunday – March 24 – 10:30am Worship Service**
- **Maundy Thursday – March 28 – 5:00pm Communion Service**
- **Good Friday – March 29 – 12:00pm Good Friday Service**
- **Easter Sunday – March 31 – 10:30am Easter Sunday Worship Service**

ACTIVITIES / EVENTS

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY – **Tuesday, March 5th at 10:00am** – "Plotting a Pogrom" – *Esther 3:7-15*. 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 – **Wednesday, March 6th at 10:00am**. We continue our study of the book of Daniel which tells Daniel's story—and a fascinating and instructive story it is. But the main purpose of Daniel is to reveal to us who God is—his character, his purposes, his way of working in the world for the good of his people. The main lesson of Daniel, then, is not, as is often assumed (and taught!), *Dare to be a Daniel!* Rather, the main point is this: *Dare to trust in Daniel's God! All are welcome!*

MISIÓN PENIEL – Our next trip to Immokalee is **Friday, March 8th** – 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 – **Saturday, March 9th** – We will bring a dinner and serve lunch to the boys at Crossroads. **We will meet at the church at 11:15am and return around 3:00pm**. Please sign up in the church foyer to provide food or help serve lunch at the Davidson Campus on Bermont Road.

PULLEN UP A CHAIR – **Wednesday, March 13th at 5:00pm**. Barksdale and Bo host get-together dinners at their home for groups of eight. You can sign up in the church foyer, or call/email the church office to reserve a night. There is no agenda, lesson, or study; just a time to get together for fellowship and to learn more about one another.

LADIES LUNCH BUNCH – **Friday, March 15th, 12:00pm** – Please sign up and join us for lunch at Twisted Fork, Port Charlotte. **All ladies are invited!**

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER – **Wednesday, March 20th, 5:00pm** – our annual dinner with corned beef and cabbage and fixings, along with "green" desserts. Nancy Smith will play piano, and we will sing Irish songs. Pastor Barksdale will do a trivia game. Suggested donation is \$7.00. Sign up in the church foyer.

CONCERT SERIES – Sunday, April 7th, 3:00pm – Stephanie Smith, our former organist, will present the last concert of our 2023-2024 Concert Series. Stephanie will share some of her favorite hymn-based compositions. Free will offering.

MISSIONS SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

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 2022 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.

EVENTS FOR THE COMING WEEK

March 3rd to March 10th

Sunday, March 3

10:30am

11:30am

6:00pm

Monday, March 4

1:00pm

Tuesday, March 5

10:00am

1:00pm

Wednesday, March 6

10:00am

10:00am

Thursday, March 7

10:00am

3:30pm

Friday, March 8

9:15am

Sunday, March 10

8:00am

10:30am

11:30am

6:00pm

Third Sunday in Lent

Communion Sunday

Worship Service (Also Online)

Fellowship Time

Prayer Meeting-FB

Worship Team

Women’s Bible Study

Fellowship Team

Donuts & Doctrine

Jesus Loves You Shower Ministry

Game Fellowship

Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Mission Trip to Immokalee

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Daylight Savings – Spring Ahead

Sermon on the Sand – Fisherman Village

Worship Service (Also Online)

Fellowship Time

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

Website: fpcpunta.org

Office hours: 9:00am to 1:00pm Monday – Thursday

SERMON NOTES

Acts 8:26-40

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means “queen of the Ethiopians”). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.” ³⁰ Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked. ³¹ “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³² This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?
For his life was taken from the earth.”

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?” ³⁷ Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” The eunuch answered, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.



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.

March 3, 2024

10:30am

PASTOR

Dr. Barksdale Pullen

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Joan Byron

ORGANIST

Denny Ausman

OFFICE & WORSHIP ADMIN

Debbie Rostad

LITURGIST

Bev Brady

USHERS

Sharon Albright, Kathy Belville, Roy Belville, Maria Greene