

First Press

April 2022

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Easter Worship Service to Feature the Sanctuary Choir “Five Mystical Songs” to be Presented at 11 AM

On Easter morning, the Sanctuary Choir will present Ralph Vaughn Williams’ “Five Mystical Songs” during the 11 AM service.

Composed between 1906 and 1911, *Five Mystical Songs* is a set of four poems written by the seventeenth-century poet and Anglican priest George Herbert (1593-1633), from his 1633 collection, *The*

Temple: Sacred Poems. The movements (*Easter, I Got Me Flowers, Love Bade Me Welcome, The Call* and *Antiphon*) pertain to the resurrection of Jesus and the relationship of God and the human soul.

The presentation will be accompanied by a chamber orchestra. Matthew Walley, baritone, will be the featured soloist.

New Lenten Wreath In Worship

We've added a new Lenten tradition to worship this year. The Lenten wreath, or wreath of thorns, is at the front of Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary.

With six purple candles and a white Christ candle, this wreath is somewhat like an Advent wreath. However, on the first Sunday of Lent a candle is extinguished, and each Sunday thereafter another candle is extinguished. On Palm Sunday, the last of the purple candles is extinguished, leaving only the Christ candle burning. During our Maundy Thursday service, the Christ candle will be extinguished, too, as we prepare to commemorate the death of our Lord on Good Friday.

Even as we light candles during Advent to help prepare us for the birth of our Lord, we extinguish candles in Lent to help prepare us for his betrayal, suffering and death.

**Deacons ask that we
all stop and
pray for Ukraine
at Noon on Wednesdays**

Lent & Easter @ FPC

Stations of the Cross

Wednesdays during Lent, 10 AM – 6 PM
FPC courtyard

Walk the path of our suffering Savior using the images along the path and in a written guide.

Pause to Pray for Peace

Wednesdays during Lent, Noon

Pray for the people of Ukraine, Russia and neighboring countries; Pray for our own country, for those in authority, and for world peace. *God of Peace, may we learn how to live together in Your peace and love.*

April 9 ~ Easter Eggstravaganza for Kids!

10 AM - Noon (church front yard & courtyard)
Easter egg hunt - no reservations necessary

April 10 ~ Palm Sunday

9 AM Contemporary Worship (fellowship hall)
11 AM Traditional Worship (sanctuary)

April 14 ~ Maundy Thursday

6:30 PM Worship with Communion (sanctuary)
Feed My Sheep (food collection for a local food pantry)

April 15 ~ Good Friday

10-Noon & 3-6 PM; FPC courtyard
Stations of the Cross

Walk the path of our suffering Savior using the images found along the path and in a written guide. Noon–3 PM Good Friday worship service at St. Luke's Church

April 17 ~ Easter Sunday

7 AM Sunrise Contemporary Worship (FPC courtyard)
11 AM Traditional Worship (sanctuary)
Nursery provided for children through age 3 at 11 AM

"Easter Hope"



Ukraine is on our hearts, and on Sunday, March 13, one of our visitors was a "Canadian Ukrainian." He emailed us "to say a huge thank you for the support your church offered Ukraine from the pulpit, in prayer and through the offering." His mother and another family member were able "to finally and at great risk leave Kyiv and are winding their way to the Polish border." He added: "The tragedy, loss and suffering are simply unimaginable...it's difficult to even find the words to express it...From the bottom of my heart thank you for your support in this hour of deep darkness, for being the hands and feet of Jesus in your own ways from so far away." He ended: "Please, please keep praying and helping. And please pray also for the churches in Ukraine—that the Lord would give them hope in their despair, courage in their work, safety in their homes and peace in knowing that Christ is Lord of all, no matter how overwhelming the evil around them."

The people of Ukraine are experiencing their own Good Friday—the "deep darkness," the "tragedy, loss and

suffering" that are "simply unimaginable...it's difficult to even find the words to express," the "overwhelming evil around them." Christianity doesn't deny the unspeakable sin and evil that wreak such havoc and death in our lives and in our world. We have a name for it: Good Friday. Like Jesus' mother and others at the Cross that day, we're with the people of Ukraine—deeply troubled, agonizing, shaking our heads (and our fists), and vigilant.

As Mary and the other disciples would soon learn, we know that Good Friday is *not* the end of the story. We have Easter hope in a risen "Lord of all" who's able to give the Ukrainian people "hope in their despair, courage in their work, safety in their homes and peace" even amid overwhelming evil. We know that because he's given us that same hope, courage, safety and peace. We'll celebrate that *tenacious* hope on Easter Sunday. And as his "hands and feet" we'll bear that hope to those—like the Ukrainian people—experiencing their own Good Friday.

In Easter Hope,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Will".

Pastor Will

A Prayer For Ukraine

From PC(USA)



God of mercy, justice and peace we pray for lives in Ukraine caught in the grip of war, who hear the bombs in the night, the ominous movement of troops on the road into town, the whistle of incoming shells, for a cry from a desperate neighbor or a shout of warning. For those who huddle in subways and basements or flee for the borders, clutching their children's hands. We pray for families separated from fathers, brothers and sons who must remain to fight and protect their homeland.

We pray for neighbors in Eastern and Central Europe as their hearts and doors open to these refugees. That strained resources will become an abundance of hope. That fears and struggles with racism will yield to a generosity of profound welcome. That communities of faith within Ukraine will be protected from harm and sustained in their efforts to feed and shelter their neighbors. That peacemakers and protesters in Russia will be heard and their lives preserved.

May we undergird our prayers with tangible resources to help. May we reach deeply, give generously, and welcome extravagantly. May we lift our voices in a strong and unified advocacy. May we all, even as we breathe in lament, breathe out mercy, hope and peace. And, in this Lenten Season, when we walk the way toward death and resurrection, repent our complicity in cultures of violence and renew our efforts toward justice and peace! Amen.

To help the people of Ukraine FPC is collecting contributions and giving to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. PDA works with established, trusted partners that have the know-how and expertise to help refugees from and civilians still in Ukraine.



Annual Pledging Myth Debunked

Many know that when the green spartina grass turns brown, pumpkins greet you with a jagged smile, and mornings have that cool nip in the air, the annual stewardship campaign is near at FPC. So, why is fall the chosen time of year when we remind everyone to pledge? The end of the year is approaching, and it helps us plan for the new year ahead. Plus, the reminder helps many people track when they pledged, just like knowing mid-April is tax time. But that doesn't mean it's the *only* time you can make your pledge.

It's a myth that you can only make an annual pledge in the fall. The word *annual* also means occurring or happening every year or once a year. So, don't let the word annual trick you. You wouldn't give your time and talents only in the fall. The need within our community, our church, and globally is year-round. There's always an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others. The same is true for pledging.

You can pledge anytime that's right for you, no matter what month we're in or what season we're celebrating. Anytime is the right time to come alongside God and experience his Grace, respond with the practice of gratitude, and share what you have so that you can help move his mission forward.

So, if you feel you missed a chance to pledge in the fall, you haven't. No one's keeping score, most importantly God. Giving your time, talents, and treasure is between you and God. So, please prayerfully consider choosing your own unique time of year to make your annual pledge to support God's work. It will transform the lives of others *and* your own heart.

An Update from the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee

Your APNC has been working diligently since mid-January to call an Associate Pastor for Congregational Care and Connection. Building on work previously completed by prior PNCs, the committee prepared a Ministry Information Form (MIF) and Position Description. The MIF and Position Description then went through a number of internal reviews by staff and the Personnel Ministry before being approved by the Session on February 22.

After approval by the Session, the MIF requires approval of the Presbytery's Commission on Ministry. This approval is a major milestone in the work of the APNC and it was received on March 1. This approval signals the beginning of our public search for potential candidates through a number of sources. The APNC anticipates a high degree of interest in our search and will provide another update to the congregation at the appropriate time. Thank you for your continued prayers for this very important endeavor.

Members of the APNC

Henry Brown
Jan Cale
Rosalyn Lester
Barb Magee
Dale Peters
Jean Vahey
Bob White, Chair

APNC Chair Bob White spoke about the search during worship on Sunday, March 27. To see that service, visit the website, fpchhi.org, and click on the Sunday Service button.

It's Official! FPC Receives Earth Care Certification

First Presbyterian Church has received official certification as an Earth Care Congregation from Presbyterian Church (USA). The certification recognizes FPC for its environmental stewardship achievements in worship, education, facilities and outreach actions in the life of the church. "Being an Earth Care Congregation is an expression of our Christian commitment to help care for and protect God's creation," says Pastor Will Robinson. "I thank God for the people who worked especially hard to help us attain this significant achievement."

In August 2021, Session voted unanimously to move forward with pursuing the certification process. By voting to proceed, FPC committed to the "Earth Care Pledge" and confirmed that the church's Earth Care Team would complete its work documenting environmental actions and practices in the four categories.

Members of the Social Witness Task Force, chaired by Henry Brown, comprise the Earth Care Team. Working closely with past Associate Pastor Lisa Schrott, the group had completed the initial audit that was presented to Session. "Many of us dedicated time retracing and tracking what had been done in the four areas," said team member Juliana Kim. "We also identified education and outreach as areas in which we needed to take action to attain the required scores."

Last fall the Social Witness Task Force brought back Coffee & Conversation, an in-person program that had not met during the pandemic. Once restrictions were eased and people could return to the church, speakers were invited on Thursday mornings to talk about topics including Hilton Head's Sea Turtle Patrol program, our water system managed by the Hilton Head Public Service District, local recycling programs and more.



Coffee & Conversation returned on Thursday mornings

The Earth Care pledge acknowledges that God calls us to be careful, humble stewards of this earth, and to protect and restore it for its own sake, and for the future use and enjoyment of the human family. We know that caring for the earth means caring for all God's people, and that we cannot find environmental justice without social justice.



Wednesday night programs also focused on the many ways in which we express our care and concern for the earth. Global warming and its impact locally, the damage plastics are doing to the environment, and sharks and other creatures of importance to our eco-system, were topics addressed by guest speakers.



Enjoying fellowship in the courtyard

Last October, 75 people enjoyed an evening in the courtyard at the all-church picnic. After dinner there was a multi-age lantern-making workshop led by artist Juliana Kim, Faith Formation Director Jackie Wilhelm and staff from the Hilton Head Arts Council. The focus was making lanterns representing God's creations. Participants carried their lanterns in the Hilton Head Island Lantern Parade, a community-wide event that has become a local tradition.

Celebrating Creation Care!

From the beginning, FPC exceeded the required points in two of the four areas—worship and facility. On an ongoing basis, our worship and discipleship celebrate God's grace and glory in creation. And the beautiful tree-covered campus helped FPC excel in the assessment of the physical facility and grounds.



Honey Horn Chapel surrounded by nature

The goal of the Earth Care Program, started in 2010 by PC(USA), is to inspire churches to care for God's earth in a holistic way, by integrating earth care into all aspects of the church. "By being certified, FPC is one of 292 churches in our denomination that chose to dedicate themselves to intentional care of God's earth this year," said Jessica Maudlin, Associate for Sustainable Living and Earth Care Concerns for PC(USA). "This activity and commitment, even in the midst of navigating limitations brought about by COVID-19, brings hope to their community and indeed to the world."

What will happen now that FPC has received certification? Earth care activities must continue for FPC to retain the certification. On March 19, volunteers, including earth care team member Judy Pizzuti, collected trash along an identified portion of Pembroke Drive and Leg O Mutton Road as part of the Adopt-A-Highway Program. "We'll continue to be responsible for that section of the road and, in the next few months, a sign will go up stating that FPC is keeping it clean," said Pizzuti.

In addition, spring beach sweeps and other community events will be coordinated with local organizations, some possibly in conjunction with Earth Day on April 22. The hope is that groups, families, and individuals within the church will plan their own earth care activities, too!

On March 19 FPC volunteers collected litter as part of the Adopt-A-Highway Program. This is one of the earth care activities that will be ongoing. If you'd like to participate or learn more about earth care programs at FPC, contact a member of the Social Witness Task Force!



We are thankful for our moss and tree-lined campus

Children and Youth



Supporting Local Food Pantries

On Souper Bowl Sunday FPC youth raised \$2,300, collecting money at the 9 and 11 AM worship services.

This money is being donated to three local organizations helping to fight hunger in the Lowcountry. In addition, youth group members are visiting and serving at these local food pantries.

Pictured here, Liza and Millie Jones are working at the Bluffton Community Soup Kitchen during their spring break.

The other organizations receiving funds from Souper Bowl Sunday are St. Stephen's Outreach Pantry in Ridgeland and the Sandalwood Community Food Pantry on Hilton Head. Youth group members will take the donations to these organizations and volunteer, too.

WEDNESDAYS @ FPC W.O.W.

Children ages 3-5th Grade 3-5:30 PM

Day School children begin at 3:40 PM
on the deck with Ms. Beth

Children K-5th Grade meet at 3 PM
on the playground

Bible stories with Ms. Kay and Ms. Karen
in Creation Room at 3:30 PM

YOUTH MINISTRY 6th-12th Graders

4:15 Aim Choir
5:30 PM

Food, fellowship and faith formation!



WOW kids work on crafts
with Ms. Susan (left).

We love all of our WOW
teachers – Beth, Jenna,
Karen, Kay & Susan.

If you'd like your children
to join the fun at WOW
on Wednesdays, call Jodi
Krivda, 843.681.3696.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA!

Age appropriate egg hunts,
dance party, crafts,
refreshments
Reading of "The Easter Story"

SATURDAY, APRIL 9
10 AM FREE
540 WILLIAM HILTON PKWY
843.681.3696

Invite friends to join your family at the
Easter Eggstravaganza!
It's free and no reservations are necessary.



It's not too late to order Easter flowers!

As in year's past, members may contribute to Easter flowers in honor or memory of a loved one. Flowers will be displayed in the sanctuary for the Easter Sunday service.

This year, lilies are \$17 and azaleas are \$23 each. You'll notice an increase in price from years past. As with so many items recently, flowers have increased in cost.

To place an order, or with questions, please call the church office, 843.681.3696. The last day to order is April 8.

Meals from the Heart

This Deacon ministry delivers loving care and yummy food to support members who may be sick, have been in the hospital or are facing other personal challenges.

They provide homemade soup and chicken pot pies when requested. Call the church, 843.681.3696.



Volunteers preparing Meals from the Heart

Memory Matters Hosts Brain Boosters Class at FPC April 5, 12 & 19 1-3 PM in Fellowship Hall

This is a three-week brain wellness course for active adults. It promotes positive lifestyle strategies for improved brain health. Instructed by a Memory Matters staff member.

Since 2006, Brain Boosters has been helping people maximize their brainpower, which is why Brain Boosters is offered multiple times a year. "How to" steps are part of the classes and include ways to sharpen focus, create a brain-health lifestyle, relax the brain, become a flexible thinker, memory-enhancing techniques, and how worry affects the brain.

To register for the class, go to mymemorymatters.org and click on the EVENTS page. Or, call 843.842.2320.

Refresh driving skills at the AARP Smart Driver Course

This new course will be at FPC on Monday, April 11, noon-4 PM. Registration begins at 11:30 AM.

The course costs \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-members. To learn more about what is covered, visit aarp.org/drive.

To add your name to the class list, call the church office, 843.681.3696.

April
NEWSLETTER

Leadership Retreat: Becoming the Church God Wants in a Volatile World

Almost 50 people attended the retreat in the Gathering Space on March 18-19. That included deacons and elders, staff members, and the speaker, Rev. Dan Holloway.

Rev. Holloway is a Presbyterian pastor and has provided pastoral leadership for churches ranging in size from 37 to 1,300, assisting with long-range vision work and training opportunities for church leaders. He has also been working with Pastor Will Robinson and members of FPC staff for the past year.

The Friday night and Saturday sessions included speaker presentations, small group conversations and at the end of the program a Commissioning for all attendees.



One of many topics addressed was adapting to being a post-pandemic church.

Many members have expressed their longing to return to in-person fellowship and the face-to-face connections that are so meaningful.

At the same time, some are unable to return to the church physically. They have expressed appreciation for the connections available to them via Zoom small groups and bible studies and livestream worship services.