



FIRST WORD

May 2020



Dear Friends –

Since we last worshiped together in person on March 15th, a lot has changed in the world. At that point, we were just learning how to social distance and only medical personnel were wearing masks. That day, there were approximately 4,500 identified Covid-19 cases in the United States and only 142 in Florida. As I write this, there are over 31,000 Florida cases and nearly 1,000,000 in the U. S. Things change! But be encouraged, for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). He is the Alpha and Omega. Through this time of uncertainty, worry and change, God's Word remains strong and sure.

Even though it is true that there are many things to be concerned about right now, there is much for which we can be grateful. I am especially grateful for you, your faith and your encouragement – I pray for you each day and thank God for you. I am also grateful for our strong church leadership. Our Staff, Session and Deacons have been working behind the scenes to ensure that our faith community stays strong and safe. Session and Staff have conferenced (by phone and Zoom) nearly every week to assure that we are continually moving forward and following God's guidance. They faithfully coordinated the slowing down of activities for our safety, and are now discussing how and when we will (safely) open the doors of the church again. In the interim, new technology has allowed us to reach out and enhance online worship opportunities.

As we do talk about moving forward, there are a lot things we do not yet know. We do not yet know when the Sanctuary will reopen, but we believe it may be relatively soon. With that in mind, there are a few things we have discussed. When we begin meeting, we believe that social distancing will still be a necessity. Session leaders are considering how we will:

- Social distance our seating arrangements
- Handle offering and Communion
- Limit the amount of items handled by more than one person (i.e. hymnals, etc.)
- Keep our greeters, volunteers and guests safe
- Possibly eliminate greeting and coffee fellowship for a period of time
- Inform the congregation and visitors of precautions

Once the decision is made to open the Sanctuary for Sunday Worship, we will continue to offer a strong online presence, since not everyone will be ready to attend in person. We will also delay the re-start of other activities until we are able to assess and plan for the safety of all.

Please be patient as we move forward together through these changes. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome and appreciated. Please feel free to email me at: deniselay05@gmail.com or call the church at (813) 782-7412.

In the name of the One who is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow,

Denise

“May today there be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be content knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.

It is there for each and every one of us.”

– Teresa of Ávila



STEPHEN MINISTRY



Stephen Ministry is a Christ-based ministry of our church, listening to people with a heavy concern for what they are feeling. Our Stephen Ministers who have Care Receivers at the moment, while social distancing, are still meeting them; some are using the phone for their visits.

In this world of local and worldwide pandemic that we're in, it seems that all of us have heavy concerns on our minds and need to get closer to the Lord.

If you would like to talk to someone about your situation, your thoughts and your own personal concerns, you can call a Stephen Minister, not as a part of the Stephen Ministry program, but just a conversation, friend to friend, about the effects of this pandemic.

Stephen Ministers

Bette Armon (813) 716-7002

Mary Clark (217) 343-1157

Terry Clark (217) 343-1157

Rev. Catherine Coffey (813) 312-1894

Joanne Combs (813) 788-3532

Barbara Crum (813) 334-2807

Pastor Denise Lay (813) 782-7412

Mike Heath (352) 206-6952

Patty Joyce Home (813) 258-8565, Cell (727) 254-1288

Roy Marks (352) 206-0464 - Call 24/7, seriously, because sometimes concerns are worst at 3:00 in the morning.

Lois Rosa (813) 416-2280

Vera Wilson Home (813) 778-6349, Cell (607) 760-8523

We are here for you.

“Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you,
All things are passing away:
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things.
Whoever has God lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.”
— **Teresa of Avila**



Saint Teresa of Avila, was a Spanish noblewoman who felt called to the monastic life and became a Carmelite Nun. Though she lived in the 16th century, people have found hope and inspiration in her words throughout the centuries, for they are timeless.



May

Anniversaries

05/01 Charles & Pat Smith

05/17 John & Shirley Hilbrandt



Birthdays



05/03 David Petryna

05/05 Liz Geiger

05/06 Lela Macleod

05/07 Elizabeth Hughes

05/10 Megan Hall

05/12 Char Brown

05/16 John Hilbrandt

05/16 John Neiswender

05/21 Debbie Edwards

05/21 Don Stevens

05/21 Larry Stickwood

05/23 Pat Reifsteck

05/25 Tom Todd

05/27 Jan Chambers

05/30 Ruth Gravengood

05/30 Sandy Thiese

Prayer List



Clarence Adams
Mary Andersen
John Britton
Barbara Campbell
Alan Crowe
Marty Drabek

Yvonne Daume
Mardell Franke
Tim Franke
Roger Gravengood
Jeanne Hague
Carol Hazlett

Demetra Jones
Paul Kneuss
Carson Linderman
Lela MacLeod
Diane Maddox
Christy Miller

Jeff Neil
Brian Oles
Suzann Parrish
Don Sipple
Walt Steiert
Larry Stickwood
Laverne Torgerson

Pray for those in the Armed Force

Sr. Airman J. Haas
Corporal A. Lawson, USMC
L. Cpl. N. Schneider, USMC

LSC (SS) M. E. Edwards
Capt. C. McCubrey, USMC

L. Brooking, USAF
D. Henderson, USAF
M. Swanson, USAF



Thank you all so very much for your powerful prayers and thoughtful cards! I had my last av node ablation heart surgery on April 21. Our awesome Lord (as always) blessed me with His presence in the hospital, and now I trust Him to go forward with me as we enter this new chapter of my life. Lee and I very much appreciate your love and concern – AND PRAYERS. Hope to see you one of these days...

Love & prayers,

Suzann and Lee Parrish

OFFERING

Thank you for your faithful financial support! Many of you have continued to mail or drop off your offering; some have used the "online offering" option on the website. Through the online offering, you can use your credit/debit card or your checking account. It is also possible to set up a recurring offering, and you have the option of paying the small fee on behalf of the church. You can also designate where you would like your funds applied: tithe, building fund, food pantry, etc. We continue to serve our community to the fullest extent that we are able, and your generosity makes that possible. Thank you!!



COMMUNITY SUPPORT PRAISING AND SERVING!

God has blessed our church with the ability and desire to serve our community! Thanks to your support, we have been able to open our Food Pantry each week on Tuesday through Thursday from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. We also offer take-away meals on Wednesdays and Fridays from 4:00 to 5:00 PM. In partnership with Samaritan Project, we will soon be able to serve meals on an additional day. Be on the lookout for more information! It has been exciting to see how God is so graciously providing for this ministry. We have received monetary donations, donations of canned goods, and toiletries, pastries and breads, homemade cookies, milk, salads and much more. What a blessing to all who receive!

**The First Presbyterian
Church of Zephyrhills**
5510 19th Street
Zephyrhills, FL 33542
(813) 782-7412



May 2020

*First
Word*

“Together We Serve”

Office Closed Except by Appointment
Office: (813) 782-7412 E-mail: Firstpcz@verizon.net
Sunday Worship Service at 10:00 AM at: Firstpcz.org

Church Staff:

Rev. Denise Lay, Pastor
Cheryl Heath, Office Administrator
Debbie Edwards, Director of Music
Jason Edwards, Choir Director
Tracy Clemmer, Nursery Attendant

Deacons

Joyce McDonagh,
Moderator

Class of 2020

Maggie Andersen
Ron Bergstrom

Class of 2021

Catherine Coffey
Bob Crum
Donna VanTassel

Class of 2022

Mike Heath
Audrell Howard
Joyce McDonagh

Session

Barbara Crum, Clerk
of Session
Bob Crum, Treasurer

Class of 2020

Doug Dorgan
Mardell Franke
Rhonda Register

Class of 2021

Mary Margaret Trice
Roy Marks

Class of 2022

Barbara Crum
Tracy Linderman