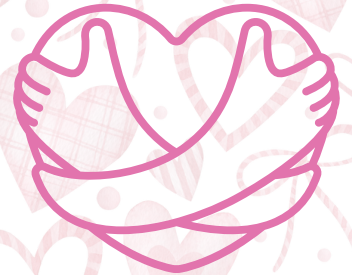




FIRST NEWS

Building Faith, Changing Lives, Sharing Christ

A Positive "Self-Love" on this Valentine's Day



February is the month of St. Valentine's Day. It is a religious Saint's Day that has been overwhelmed by the floral trade, swanky restaurants, greeting card companies, and, of course, the chocolate industry (yes, even Hershey). Valentine's Day is more of a creation of medieval European poets, celebrating the romantic intrigues of noble knights and ladies of the King's court. So, before I start sounding like the "grinch of romance," Valentine's Day is a great holiday, it just has very little to do with its name's sake.

While Valentine's Day often is expressed in our consumption, a Christian experience of the celebration would do better to focus on a positive view of "self-love." Clearly, we are not talking about "selfish aggrandizement," but rather, an acknowledgement of how deeply we are loved by God and the value we thus possess as "children of God."

Caregivers are often told that you cannot care for someone else unless you care for yourself. Likewise, if we want to love others, we need to affirm a sense of our own "self-love" and affirmation. In his book *Life of the Beloved*, Henri Nouwen writes about how God's message of love often gets lost in our own self-rejection, "It certainly is not easy to hear God's voice of love in a world filled with voices that shout: 'You are no good, you are ugly; you are worthless; you are nobody.' These negative voices are so loud and so persistent that it is easy to believe them. Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the 'Beloved.'"

CONTINUED →



The source of all love names us, "Beloved." Thus, we must seek to open ourselves to God's love and allow ourselves to be loved. We must remember that We are the "apple of his eye" (Ps. 17:8); we are his beloved (Isa. 43:1; Jer. 31:3); he came to save us so that we "may have life and have it abundantly" (Jn. 10:10). It is a truly humbling experience to be loved. Especially when this love is extended to us despite our shortcomings, selfishness, and waywardness. This is particularly true with God. The Lord of the Universe sees us and knows us fully and calls us "beloved!" This is a humbling truth!

On February 15th, the Presbyterian Men will host the "Sweetheart Luncheon." While we will celebrate the loves of our lives, we will more fully affirm the true meaning of a Christian view of St. Valentine's Day. We will celebrate that no matter where we are in life and present relationships, every one of us, each of us, are fully and profoundly loved by God. So, it is fully appropriate to have some "self-love," as the "God of Love," sees us as the "Apple of God's Eye!"

Enjoy your flowers, the restaurant, the cards, and especially the chocolate, knowing how profoundly you are loved!

May God bless.

Sincerely,

Pastor Tim



Dr. Tim's Bible Study

Every Tuesday Morning, 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM- ish in the Schumann Conferencing Center, Center for Christian Life. Bring your Bible. The coffee is hot and the cookies delicious. Come enjoy the opportunity to 'deep dive' into Scripture.

Discipleship

Quest
KIDS
CLUB

First
Presbyterian
CHURCH of Vero Beach

Kids Quest Club is an after school program that meets on **Wednesdays** only for children 4 year olds as Sept. 1, 2024 through 5th grade. We follow the Indian River School District calendar.

Sign Up at

www.firstpresvero.org/quest

Retreat



Discipleship is doing a retreat March 29 9-5. All who would like to help form the future of our church's discipleship. From children's events, youth group, Sunday School, adult classes and so much more. We really would love parents, current and past volunteers and all to join us. Please RSVP to Jessie jessiekuehner@firstpresvero.org



Helping Hands Needed!



Could you give 2 hours a month to help?

Sunday Mornings

- Nursery Care
 - One Sunday a Month during any of the 3 Worship Services
- Sunday School Teachers (9:40-10:30am ish)
 - One Sunday a Month teach one of our Sunday School Classes
 - Pre School Sunday School
 - Kindergarten through 2nd Grade Sunday School
 - 3rd through 5th Grade Sunday School
 - Youth Group Sunday School (6th-12th Grade)

Wed Afternoon and Night

- Quest (4year olds till 5th grade)
 - Bus Drivers and Assistants (3- 4pm)
 - Bible Teachers (4- 5:15pm)
 - Dinner Table Helpers (5:15-6pm)
 - Assistant in Music Classes (5:45-6:30pm)

Thurs Afternoon and Night

- Youth Group
 - Occasional Cooks
 - Food ready by 4:30pm
 - Youth Group Helpers
 - 4pm till 8pm or 2 hour shifts

EMAIL JESSIE FOR MORE INFORMATION.

JESSIEKUEHNER@FIRSTPRESVERO.ORG

SAVE THE DATE

VBS

FPC OF VB

JUNE 9-13 9-NOON

Email
jessiekuehner@firstpresvero.org
to be added to
get emails
updates

Older Adult Ministry

OVERNIGHT RETREAT

with DR. TIM: "10 Gospel Promises for Later Life".

Thursday, March 27th - Friday, March 28th

Morikami Museum and Japanese Sculpture Gardens , Delray Beach tour

<https://morikami.org/>

Dinner: The Cove Waterfront Restaurant, <https://www.thecovedeerfield.com/>

Overnight accommodations and retreat, the next day: LaQuinta East Hotel in Delray Beach

Sign up early in the lobby of Center for Christian Life. Trip cost is \$159

Space is limited

Communion at Home/Hospital/Rehab

Communion on the Second Sunday is available to all members whether at home, in hospital or at a rehabilitation facility. On the first Sunday of each month, members of our Church Family will bring Communion to you. Please contact Anne Adams, at the Church Office: 772-562-9088 to arrange for the next Communion Sunday, February 2, 2025 (or any future Communion 2nd Sunday)

Men's Gathering

Dr Tim and Jonathan Miller, Elder, will lead an exploration of how men grieve.

Loss of a spouse, a best friend, a child; the loss of one's place in the work world, even the loss of mobility and good health are significant emotional milestones. Men contend with loss and grieve in a special way. The gathering will take place in the Youth Room (2nd floor in the Center for Christian Life Building) on Thursday, February 6th at 10:30am. If you are interested in attending, please call the Church Office 772-562-9088 to register.

Welcoming Jessie Kuehner, Director of Christian Education

Jessie Kuehner (key-ner) is joining the ministry team of First Presbyterian Church as Director of Christian Education. Jessie and her family are relocating from Houston, TX. She is a Certified Christian Educator in the PC(USA). She graduated from Fuller Seminary with MDiv with "Emphasis in Family, Youth and Culture." She did her Undergraduate studies at the University of Nebraska in Sports Medicine and Pre-Med. She is a huge Huskers fan. She has been in ministry for more than 10 years serving children, youth, collegians and all ages. She has been married to her husband Brian for 11 years. Brian owns a company called Kuehner Solutions doing Controls Engineering. Prior to consulting, Brian worked for NASA in Houston. They have 3 children: Lauren (4th grade), John (1st grade), and Phil (3 years old). They have a miniature pincher dog named Dillon. The kids love Cub Scouts and John is into Gymnastics.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1. Karen Deigl, Marta Schneider, Pete Smith
2. Dorothy Flynn, John Klasing
3. Ted Fuller, Holly Ann LoGiudice
4. Art Irvine, Alice McKenna
5. Harry Offutt, Gloria Raines, Henry Ray, Tim Womack
6. Cynthia Judd, Gerry Marvin, David Stuhler
7. Tiffany Carlsen, Cindy Rogers
8. Kathy L. Melick, Roger Wagner
10. Elliott Bates, Marilyn Bauknecht, Ryan Capone, Emily Lagemann, Bob Lang, Harriet Moore
11. Donald Guisto
12. John Barley, Vernon Daniel, Emelie Horsley
13. Barry Berg, Susan Hofstetter, Susan McGarry
14. Elly O'Connor
15. Dale Peirce
16. Sally Dussing, Alan Wolford
17. Patti Frantz, Nikki Kaufmann, Peter Mahtani
20. Lyn Smith
21. Lona Bang-Olsen, Robert Gallagher, Gail Murdough
22. Carol Campbell
23. RoseBelle Broeffle, Jamari Chandler, Evan Chilberg, Rachel Horowitz
25. Stanford Erickson, Margaret Gasche, Richard Springmyer
26. Peggy Clarke, John Lindsey
27. Pam Dolby, Joe Moore, Ann Weir
28. William Hutchison

February Dates

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| February 2, Sunday | Art in the Park 2-4PM, Gifford Historical Museum and Cultural Center |
| February 6, Thursday | Men Gathering 10:30AM, Youth Room, 2nd floor, CCL Bldg. "D" |
| February 9, Sunday | Valentine's Cookie Bake 10:30AM - 12PM, McAfee Hall |
| February 15, Saturday | Sweetheart Luncheon 1-3PM, McAfee Hall |
| February 17, Monday | Presidents' Day, Office Closed |
| February 18, Tuesday | The Joys of Grandparenting 10:30AM - 12PM Earnshaw, CCL Bldg. "D" |
| February 18, Tuesday | Meet and Greet and Eat at Tuohy's Restaurant 5PM |
| February 20, Thursday | Session Meets, Earnshaw 6:50PM |
| February 20, Thursday | Mike Block Concert 7:00PM, McAfee Hall |
| February 21, Friday | PW Monthly Luncheon, Olive Garden, 11:30AM |
| February 23, Sunday | Duo Beaux Concert, Sanctuary, 4PM |

Celebrating Our Student Musicians at the Florida All-State Music Convention



From January 8-10, the Florida Music Educator's Association (FMEA) held its prestigious All-State music convention in Tampa, Florida. This annual event brings together the best and brightest young musicians from across the state, showcasing the extraordinary talent of students who have auditioned and earned spots in various music ensembles.

We are incredibly proud to share that over 15 students from FPC Youth Music Groups, in collaboration with Brevard String Academy and PRIMO School of Music, were selected to participate in this year's All-State festival.



These talented young musicians represented our church and our community in multiple categories, including: Elementary Orff Music, High School Mixed Choir, High School Reading Choir, High School Treble Choir, High School Tenor/Bass Choir, High School Orchestra.



The audition process for All-State is highly competitive, with only a small fraction of students selected from thousands of applicants statewide. It is a testament to the dedication, hard work, and talent of these students that they were chosen to perform at such a prestigious event. We are thrilled to see them represent our community and our church in such an incredible way.

While we believe their training at FPC Youth Music Groups has played a role in their success, we also recognize that their achievement would not be possible without the exceptional educators at their schools. These teachers dedicate countless hours to helping their students grow and achieve at the highest level. To those educators, we say thank you for your commitment to fostering the musical gifts of these students.

As a church family, we wanted to take a moment to celebrate their accomplishments. During one of the students' breaks, FPC hosted a pizza lunch where they could gather, share stories, and enjoy each other's company. It was a wonderful time for fellowship and a chance for our church community to support and encourage these amazing young musicians.



About the Florida All-State Music Convention:
The FMEA All-State Music Convention is one of the largest gatherings of music educators, students, and supporters in the country, drawing over 10,000 attendees each year.

Youth Music

Approximately 3,000 students are selected to perform in various ensembles, spanning all age groups and music categories—bands, choirs, orchestras, and more. It is a unique and valuable experience for all involved, offering students the chance to learn from top-tier educators, work alongside other talented musicians, and build lasting connections in the world of music.

We are grateful for the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our students and the strength of our music programs. These young musicians are not only representing their schools but also bringing honor to our church, and we couldn't be prouder of all they've accomplished.

Let us continue to lift them up in prayer, supporting their musical journey and encouraging them as they strive to use their gifts to glorify God.



Also in January, we were able to bring 60 people from our youth music programs to see and hear the Chicago Symphony Orchestra perform in Orlando at Steinmetz Hall. This is considered one of the best orchestra's in the world playing in one of the best concert halls in the world. It was an enjoyable and important musical experience for all.



WE'RE HEADING TO PITTSBURGH



Youth Music Tour to Central and Western Pennsylvania - June 15-22

Our youth music department is embarking on an exciting week-long tour through Central and Western Pennsylvania from June 15-22! The trip will include performances, cultural experiences, and spiritual growth. First Stop: Harrisburg, We'll begin with a concert at Market Square Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg. The group will also explore Amish Country and attend the immersive Christian performance of Noah at Sight and Sound Theaters.

Next Stop: Pittsburgh. In Pittsburgh, we'll perform with Peter Mahtani's alumni choir at a local PCUSA church and have the honor of singing the National Anthem at a Pittsburgh Pirates game at PNC Park. This tour will be a special time of music, faith, and fellowship, strengthening the bonds within our youth group while sharing their talents. Please keep our students in your prayers as we prepare for this exciting adventure!

Stay tuned for more updates, and thank you for supporting our youth music program!

We are looking for all kinds of help for the benefit dinner on March 15. If you are able to help Peter specifically with Ads and silent auction help, please contact him ASAP. Here is a QR code for registration for the benefit dinner. It also includes a donation link if you are unable to attend



Presbyterian Women

PW Sponsored Monthly Olive Garden Lunch

Ladies of First PresVero

please come join us at the Olive Garden

Friday, February 21, 2025 at 11:30 am

We gather for lunch and fellowship on the third Friday of every month.

All ladies are welcome

Call or text

BJ Fisher at 678-481-3835

If you prefer to respond online, my new email is:

harrysally11262@gmail.com

Presbyterian Men



Sweetheart Luncheon

February 15

1pm to 3 pm

Presented by FPC Men's Fellowship

The FPC Men's Fellowship Breakfast

Meets each Tuesday at 7:30 AM in McAfee Hall.

Our February speakers are:

2/4 Solemn Pride - Tom Fitzgerald discussing his caisson mission at Canaveral National Cemetery honoring fallen veterans

2/11 Al Diaz - Goddard Space Flight Center Director, discussing the Columbia shuttle disaster

2/18 Bill King - A look behind the iron curtain

2/25 TBA

Sweetheart Luncheon

Every year near Valentine's Day, the Presbyterian Men's Fellowship plan and host a Sweetheart Lunch. Planning begins months before the special day. Presbyterian Men with help from Presbyterian Women organise the atmosphere, the entertainment and the menu, prepared by Blessed Manna. This year it is Saturday, February 15th from 1:00 to 3:00 in McAfee Hall (Bldg. D).

All the women are invited: married ladies, single ladies and widows alike are our honored guests. We mean to show our love and respect for all of them.

Glenn Conn, president of the Presbyterian Men will preside. Jerry Garrett, the Master of Ceremonies will provide the entertainment.

Blessed Manna's Carol Campbell and her team will provide Honey Garlic Chicken, Grilled Vegetables, and a delicious Key Lime Dessert. Coffee, tea, and water, as well.

After lunch, Pastor Tim to send us on our way home with prayer for all.

SO, expect a call from a member of our Committee. If you know of anyone who has not been invited who wants to attend call Glenn or Phil or call the FPC office. Glenn Conn at 740-803-3519 or Phil LoGiudice - 203-507-0008

Ken Mitchell's Story by Phil LoGiudice

As I pondered my next article for the First Presbyterian Church's newsletter, Dr. Lucille Craig mentioned the names of a few men I might want to write about. It was an easy choice. I felt sure that Ken Mitchell would have a good story to tell. I first met Ken a few years ago when he and George DiBenedetto came to the Men's Fellowship Breakfast and told their fascinating stories of the liquor business. I fondly remember winning a bottle of Markers Mark during a short quiz! But that is a story for another time.



Ken's story about the wine business was especially interesting because I like fine wine. He was born in Yonkers, New York on July 29, 1940, one of four brothers. He would eventually move to Hull Massachusetts, his family's hometown. He traces his family in Hull back to 1634. He married Kathleen Johnson, and they were together for 52 years until she passed six years ago. They had two boys, Kenneth & Edward, and two grandchildren, Sean and Brendan.

He served in the U.S. Army from 1962 to 1965 and was stationed at Missile Master, a US Army surface-to-air missile-control complex/facility in Highlands New Jersey. It was at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis and President Kennedy called Ken and his fellow soldiers back to their base. Those were scary days!

He grew up in the Catholic religion but fell away after some troubling issues arose in the church. Upon moving to Vero Beach, a friend introduced Ken to First Presbyterian Church where he remains a member. He joined the Hospitality Committee, a pillar of the church, and has served for more than two years. He currently leads Meet and Greet efforts, and so far, they have been to many restaurants in the area and have taken several trips to places like the Piper Aircraft Factory and Triton Submarines. He enjoys the people he meets at our church and has high regards for our pastor, Dr. Tim Womack.

His career spanned over 50 years at various liquor companies in the New England area. He worked for Gallo Wines, and then at the Canandaigua Wine Company, one of the largest and most successful producers of wines, beers, and distilled spirits in the United States. He was the first employee to sell one million cases of Sun Country Wine Coolers. How many people can say that they sold a million anything? Later, he was employed by Glenmore Distillery, Fris Vodka, and Exclusive Vodka. After that he went to work for Horizon Beverage Company who have been in business since the end of prohibition in 1933. He worked as the sales training manager.

For a bit of fun, he belongs to the Knights of the Holy Smokers cigar club in Vero Beach. They meet weekly at member homes where they eat, smoke fine cigars, and drink whiskey! They share a love of politics and discuss current topics.

As Meet & Greet chair there were 669 church folks who attended his events. He is happy to say that he considers his biggest achievement to be the number of friends he has all over the world.



Ken Mitchell continues to delight members of FirstPresVero, with his choice of Joy Trips - this one to Hutchinson Island's Navy Seal Museum, in January.

FPC CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT SERIES

520 ROYAL PALM BLVD. VERO BEACH, FL 772 562 9088



2/23/25 - Duo Beaux 4:00 pm



3/30/25 - Con Brio Trio 4:00 pm



Hanneke Cassel (Scottish fiddle) Mike Block (cello/vocals) Jacob Craig (piano)

MCAFFEE HALL - FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VERO BEACH

\$25 TICKETS - DONATIONS ACCEPTED TO MIKE BLOCK STRING CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

FEB 20 HANNEKE CASSEL, WITH MIKE BLOCK & JACOB CRAIG

APRIL 23 MIKE BLOCK SOLO SHOW

**FPC YOUTH MUSIC
PITTSBURGH
BENEFIT DINNER
MARCH 15, 5:30PM
CONTACT PETER FOR RESERVATIONS**

From the Archives February 1955

In a Memo dated February 27th 1955 to Dr. McAfee, the founding minister, it was proposed that "a Men's Club be established, ... monthly dinner meetings at night on a certain day of the week, in a certain week of the month . . . that a project to be accomplished adds incentive to the work, such as help on the actual physical labor in seeding and

planting work". [this refers to the landscape requirements to our first Sanctuary, then in its first phase]

"Also, [it] might be desirable to raise funds in some manner to defray the expenses of planting large trees . . . note being made that the Catholic Church has just transplanted two very large Royal Palms in front of their church to set it off".

"A suggestion has been made that the June meeting could be a joint picnic with the Women's Association."



Presbyterian Communion Tokens

Communion tokens were a familiar feature of Presbyterian worship in past centuries. John Calvin suggested that tokens be used "to prevent the profanation of the Lord's Table." Huguenots in France and Presbyterians in Scotland began following Calvin's advice by 1560. Only those instructed in the Reformed faith were given tokens for admission to the Lord's Supper, and no one without a token was then allowed to take communion.

The use of tokens took deep root in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and was brought to colonial America along with other communion practices from the "old country." Most colonial congregations celebrated the Lord's Supper once or twice a year as part of a three to five-day series of services called the "communion season," a forerunner of later camp meetings and revivals. Often several congregations joined together and, because of the large crowds, held services outdoors.

A day or more before the communion service, the minister and elders questioned the members of their congregation about their beliefs and behavior. Only those who showed adequate knowledge of the faith and were deemed to be living upright lives received tokens. During the communion service, communicants came forward and sat at long tables where they turned in their tokens and received the elements.

Most tokens were cast or stamped out of lead or pewter, but other materials were used including brass, copper, silver, nickel, zinc, ceramic, wood, printed paper, and later even celluloid.

In the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., the use of tokens began to decline after 1825. [click on this link for more info https://www.pcusa.org/communion-tokens](https://www.pcusa.org/communion-tokens)



Fellowship

Wednesday Night Dinners

Sign up on realm or by calling Lisa in the Church Office

February 5

Coleslaw
Sloppy Joes
Cheesy Potatoes
Baked Beans
Strawberry Pie

February 12

Salad
Pork Tenderloin
Roasted Vegetables
Sweet Potato Bread
Valentine's Cupcakes

February 19

Salad
Meatloaf
Mashed Potatoes
Roasted Carrots
Lemon Brownies

February 26

Salad
Spaghetti/Meat Sauce
Southern Baked
Yellow Squash
Garlic Bread
Peach Cobbler

Sunday Worship

February 2025

8:30AM - Mighell Chapel

9:30AM - Sanctuary

11AM - Sanctuary

Childcare available at all services

February Sermons

February 2

Luke 7:1-17

“WOW: Power to Heal”

February 9

Luke 8:22-25

“WOW: Power to Calm
Our Fears”

February 16

John 6:1-15

“WOW: Power to Provide”

February 23

Matthew 14:22-36

“WOW: Power to Save”

Church Leadership & Staff

Rev. Dr. G. Timothy Womack, Senior Pastor

Rev. Holly Adams, Minister of Congregational Care

Jessie Kuehner, Director of Christian Education

Dr. Sam Rutland, Theologian in Residence

Dr. Jacob Craig, Director of Music & Arts

Peter Mahtani, Associate Director of Music & Arts

Ginny Bauer, Senior Administrative Assistant to the Pastors

Kimberly Ball, Financial Administrator

Lisa Jeffra, Administrative Assistant

Anne Adams, Membership Coordinator

Elders

Class of 2025 Carol Campbell, Carol Marks*,

Susie Nystrom, Bob Satola

Class of 2026 Louise Feroe*, Judy Garrett*,

Jim Gambill*, Ted Miller

Class of 2027 Ann Faunce, Bill King,

Jonathan Miller, Phil Schwin

Clerk of Session - Dr. Lucille Craig

Board of Trustees President - Holly LoGiudice

Treasurer - Scott Westermann

Director of Development - Allan Bixby

Trustee at Large - Anne Posey

Board of Deacons

Moderator - Holly LoGiudice

Class of 2025 Donna Blankenship, Gayle Bruce,

Nancy Bucklew, Cindy Judd, Bill Menzies,

Frank Smith

Class of 2026 Ginger Allen, Suzanne Breese,

Connie Derman, Carol Rhodes, Lee Tiebout,

Ashley Wright

Class of 2027 B J Fisher, Susan Gordon,

Eileen Ganser, Frank Iodice, Pat Stella,

Ruth Thomas

(*indicates Trustee)