



## October 2017 Newsletter First Presbyterian Church Port Charlotte

### *What I Learned from a Hurricane*

I'm not sure I would call Irma a mentor, but she sure did teach me a lot over the last couple of weeks. My weather app on my phone began alerting me that Irma became a named hurricane in the Atlantic. And before long, the hurricane became the biggest hurricane in size with the strongest winds ever recorded. When the spaghetti models started showing up on the Florida coasts, I became more attentive and began my early checklist at home, throwing out a few non-perishables that seemed to have perished in the year since I last checked my hurricane supplies. I bought new batteries, as even if Irma didn't come our way, there would be other storms that might blow out the power for a little bit. The colorful spaghetti tracks started shifted more and more west and becoming more in sync overlapping with one another.

Irma issued us a hurricane watch invitation which we accepted and began getting the church ready, just in case she decided to follow through with her hurricane party. This was one party I wanted to miss as soon the watch turned into a full-blown warning. After living in Florida for ten years, I was finally going to experience my first hurricane.

I went into overdrive and didn't stop until the day before Irma was coming to town; I stopped when I needed to be shifting toward shelter, but I froze instead. A terrible time to freeze! After sitting in front of the TV all day Saturday watching Irma make her way toward us, my worried brother called and gave me a direct order, "Get up and go!" And go I did, along with Sarah the cat and Roro the dog in tow and headed to my mom's place (a hurricane category 5 safe building). I closed the door to my house, wondering if a storm surge would take all my possessions, then hopped in my car and drove. The director of Mom's memory care facility had invited all families and their furry family members in to ride out the storm.

As soon as I got settled, I breathed. I was around people, and people who cared. I had what was most important to me and no matter what happened to my house and my belongings, I had my mom, my dog and cat, my favorite bible that has been passed down through the generations, and a 2 week supply of Diet Coke.

There are so many things I learned that come with images that will always remain with me, but here are a few:

**Hospitality:** There were well over 100 extra people staying at my mom's place, along with who knows how many dogs and cats and even a bird. We were all welcomed in, kept safe and even had fun together forming a human chain to get the food upstairs when the elevator went out in the storm.

*Continued of page 3*

## SPOTLIGHT ON OUR MEMBERS - PAULINE PAQUIN



Music has been a large part of Pauline Paquin's life for as long as she can remember. Her grandmother piqued her interest in music at an early age. "I remember when I was five years old; my grandmother would pump the player piano and sing songs from the 20's and 30's. I would sing along with her," Pauline said. Additionally, Pauline's great grandmother was an opera singer.

Pauline went on to learn to sing and to play several musical instruments including the trombone, "fiddle", piano and harmonica. Through the years she also gave vocal lessons to students who wanted to learn to sing.

In the past, Pauline was part of a singing duo. She gave vocal concerts in California, Texas and locally. In the 1990's she directed and produced the dinner theaters at the local Cultural Center. She has sung at weddings and funerals and until recently, had sung in the FPCPC choir. At age 82 she still sits in on local jam sessions, usually playing her trombone which she says is probably her favorite instrument.

Pauline was born in Rhode Island and pretty much grew up in Providence. She went to parochial elementary school and Mt. Pleasant High School. Pauline describes her parents as good people. They worked hard and raised six children. "They taught us honesty, acceptance and to be kind," Pauline said. She is the oldest of the six children. All six are alive and they still keep in touch.

Pauline held several jobs after high school. She was a jewelry maker in a jewelry factory and a waitress. Pauline married at age 20 so never went to college until after having three of her four children. "I attended nursing school because I needed a better job for financial reasons. I obtained an Associate degree from Rhode Island Junior College in 1970 and I worked as an RN for many years," she said.

Besides Rhode Island, Pauline has lived in several states including California, Texas and Florida. She said she liked Florida best but she also liked things about the other states. She came to live permanently in Florida in 1989.

Pauline, who was widowed six years ago, has been a member of FPCPC for about 17 years. "I love the church. The people are so friendly and everybody knows each other. Terri Jo is just wonderful. She is so down to earth," she explained.

One of Pauline's sons struggled with drug abuse so the advice she would give young people is to be strong enough not to get involved with drugs. "Drugs will ruin your life," she said. "Stay away from them and even move away from those who abuse drugs."

She also advises youth to stay in school. "Learn all you can and you can have a better life no matter what color you are or whatever background you have," she said.

Two of Pauline's four children survive today. She is a proud grandmother of five and a great grandmother of three.

*By Kathy Bruyere*

*Continued from front cover*

Hospitality is opening our arms and doors and inviting people in to be safe and welcomed, which brings a sense of peace in the storms of life. St. Benedict upheld that "hospitality maintains a prominence in the living (Christian) tradition . . . the guest represents Christ and has a claim on the welcome and care of the community." In other words, if we love one another, God abides in us and God's love is perfected within us and is showered on those with whom we come in contact. I experienced hospitality in a way I have rarely experienced as deeply and I hope I can do the same with others in the future.

**Community:** There is strength in community and knowing we are not alone. There was something very powerful about riding out a storm together. There is something very powerful being in community and experiencing God's presence. Rev. Graham Hart called me first thing on Monday, making sure I was alright and checking to see what I had heard so far about our congregation and our church building. He called every pastor in our presbytery. A representative from the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance called to see how we fared. Though without power, we gathered as a church on Wednesday night for dinner then circled up outside and heard everyone's experience of what they learned from the storm, what they were concerned about and we prayed together. We gathered on Sunday morning, just hours after the power came back on, and we worshipped around tables in a make-do space. I experienced God's presence is in community and know we are not alone.

**Light:** I was reminded that light is stronger than darkness. Even when the power was out, watching people reach out and help each other was powerful. Driving up and down I-75, I saw utility teams from all over the country coming to help bring light. I heard of one utility worker from Ohio who came to help, who only paused once while 20 feet up in the air, so he could watch from his phone, his baby be born. He was there to help, which came with a sacrifice, but his commitment to bring light motivated him to overcome the dark. There is still so much destruction and places without power, but there IS light that will drive out the darkness.

**God's abiding love:** There will be more hurricanes and there will be more earthquakes. There will be more fires and there will probably be more wars that disrupt, change and bring devastation to our lives. No matter what happens; no matter what changes around us, we hold onto our faith that knows one thing remains constant. . . .even when power goes out, and that is **God's abiding love and LIGHT** which most often comes to us visibly in the phone call, hug, email, text, meal, Facebook message or other tangible expressions of friends, family, colleagues, and sometimes, even strangers.

In the days ahead, stay connected; stay connected to one another and to God. Hold one another in the Light of Christ. Reach out and connect with your neighbors and allow them to support you as you support them, knowing we are all held and connected in God's great Circle of Love.

*Rev. Terri Jo Crego*

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Children, youth, and adults from FPCPC and Wintergarden Pres. are enjoying the time to gather on Tuesday evenings from 4:45 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. for a variety of activities each week. Participating in our Drum Circle has been an exciting way to build community, and our congregation will have an opportunity to see the kids (and adults) drum along with the song "Marching in the Light of God" in worship on Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Children in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and above are invited to join us for these events this month.**

**Tuesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>** 4:45 – 6:00 p.m.

After snacks, Kathy will lead us in drumming.

**Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>** 7:00 -7:30 p.m.

Drum Rehearsal with the choir in the Sanctuary to prepare for next Sunday's worship.

**Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup>** 9:15 a.m.

Rehearse in the Sanctuary for worship. We will play drums in worship at 10:00 a.m.

Make sure to invite your parents and friends to worship.

**Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>** 4:45 – 6:00 p.m.

After snacks and some brief drumming, Darlene will lead us in a cooking activity.

**Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>** 4:45 – 6:00 p.m.

After snacks, Kathy will lead us in drumming.

**Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>** 4:45 – 6:00 p.m.

After snacks and some brief drumming, Terri Jo will lead us in a mission project.

**Tuesday, October 31<sup>st</sup> Happy Halloween!**

Enjoy your trick-or-treating!

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

**Sundays at 9:00 – 9:45 a.m.**

**Youth Room**

Our Sunday School classes have kicked off the new year following Rally Day. A majority of our children and youth are between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade, so we are meeting as one combined group in the Youth Room each week. Initially we began our new year of Christian Education by studying the Rally Day theme of light and also created a mobile with Jesus' seven "I Am" statements in paralleling our sermon series. Now we are using the "Feasting on the Word" Presbyterian curriculum for multiple ages, which is lectionary based and offers a variety of hands-on activities.

## ACOLYTE RECOGNITION AND COMMISSIONING SUNDAY

Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>  
10:00 a.m. in Worship



A special day is coming! On Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> the congregation will hold a special service to formally recognize and commission our Acolytes as servants of God in our community. On that day, youth wishing to serve Christ and His Church will be brought before the congregation and asked if they are willing to serve the church, in the name of Jesus, to the best of their ability. Please come to worship with us and help us to pray and support our youth. Also if anyone knows of someone willing to serve as an Acolyte, please contact the Church at 941-625-5045 or Diane Schmidt at 941-423-5731.



## CELEBRATING WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017

10:00 a.m.



Sunday, October 1st is World Communion Sunday. Established by the Presbyterian Church (USA) in 1936 and originally called World Wide Communion Sunday, this day beckons us to be mindful that when we gather at the table, we celebrate not only with those present but also with sisters and brothers around the world.

This piece of artwork is entitled *The Best Supper*, by Jan L. Richardson. It is used with permission from the artist. © Jan L. Richardson. Janrichardson.com

Jan writes: *Inspired by the image of Wisdom's Feast in Proverbs 9, this piece evokes the myriad meals that have fed me in body and soul. As I created this image, I was visited by memories of so many of the tables where I have found hospitality. Those memories are embedded among the pieces of this collage. Circling the table once again, I capture glimpses of those with whom I shared those sacred meals. I remember how we savored every scrap, how we lingered long after the last bite was consumed.*

Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup>  
10:00 a.m. Worship  
Service  
In the Sanctuary



*Commemorating the  
500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the Reformation  
and  
Celebrating the  
Church Still  
Reforming*

The year 2017 marks 500 years since a stubborn monk and towering thinker, Martin Luther, published his 95 theses or complaints against the Catholic Church and launched the Protestant Reformation, a momentous religious revolution whose consequences we still live with today. Five centuries on is an exciting time to reflect on what we bring forward from the past that strengthens us and future generations for the coming 500 years of ministry of the gospel of Christ. On October 29<sup>th</sup>, we will celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation and celebrate the future ministry of the church ahead. We have a bagpiper who will help lead us in worship and our children and youth will be presented with bibles. In times of crisis, challenge, conflict, growth and peace-then and now-God calls us to be transformed by the Word and Spirit.



**SMART PHONE HELP**  
**Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**Conference Room**  
**11:15 a.m.**

All are invited to bring their smart phones to the Conference Room on Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup>. Children, youth, and adults will be available to answer your questions about the phones. This technology help will take place on the first Sunday of each month in October – December.



**FROM THE CHOIR LOFT**

After a brief hiatus, the First Presbyterian Chancel Choir has returned with the addition of two new sopranos - Barbara Rowland and Carol Spacy. We welcome them with open arms. We have an exciting season planned which will include our drum circle, a children's choir and bells. We are currently on the lookout for bell ringers. If you have played bells or are willing to learn to play, we need you for the Christmas Anthem. We are still looking for "a few good men" to join our tenor and bass sections. We meet every Wednesday evening in the Music Suite and rehearse from 7:00 to 9:00. If you come a little earlier, you will get a chance to grab a cup of coffee and chat with your fellow choristers. Interested singers should give me a call at 941-661-1553 or email me at [jfbyron@comcast.net](mailto:jfbyron@comcast.net).  
*Peace, Joan Byron Music Director*



**VETERANS MEETING**  
**Thursday, Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**4:00 p.m.**  
**Conference Room**

The Veterans Group will have their Oct. meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will start at 1600 hours in the Conference Room. The widows of Vets are invited too. We will be having a dinner for our Vets. This is an appreciation dinner for our Vets. All Vets please come and enjoy! Dinner will be corned beef and all the trimmings.



***WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE  
PRESBYTERIAN?  
WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT  
PRESBYTERIANISM?***  
**Evening Classes on Wednesdays**  
**Oct 4<sup>th</sup>, Oct 11<sup>th</sup>, Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.**  
**Conference Room**

If you are a visitor or new to FPCPC, grew up without a church, grew up in another faith tradition or are a “cradle Presbyterian,” this class is for you. The series began the last Wednesday of September and continues for three more Wednesdays in October. We started with an overview of Christian history in order to locate the Presbyterian branch of the family tree alongside Catholics, Lutherans and Baptists, discussing generally what these groups have in common and how they differ.

In October, we’ll begin focusing on Presbyterian beliefs about God (Presbyterian theology) and how Presbyterians interpret scripture. We’ll see how our theology is the scaffolding under everything: our Sunday morning worship (e.g., the language, liturgy, music and sacraments), the governance of the church (e.g., the responsibilities of pastor, session, deacons and members) and our spiritual practices (e.g., prayer, study, hospitality and stewardship). Ultimately, we’ll talk about how our theology shapes our view of humanity, the world, and our mission which is to share the gospel and to lift up the poor and the downtrodden. Come discover or revisit what you inherit when you belong to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). This class will give you new insight into what it means at FPCPC to grow with God.

Led by guest teacher, the Rev. Victoria Millar who herself grew up without a church. She is a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary who served as a pastor in churches in IL and WI before moving to Venice, FL in 2015. Occasionally a guest in the pulpit when Pastor Terri Jo is out of town, she finds the FPCPC congregation to be warm, smart and spiritually hungry which are three of her favorite qualities.



**FOOD PANTRY**  
**1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month**  
**9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.**  
**and the**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month**



September proved to be a rather exciting month for all thanks to Hurricane Irma! The Food Pantry committee had discussed hurricane plans and the possibility of power failure when we first became a Harry Chapin agency with freezers and refrigerators. It was decided then that the frozen and refrigerated food would be donated to groups cooking for the community or at shelters and to other nonprofits who could help distribute the food to the needy. Luckily, we had very little in the refrigerator and were much lower on frozen meat also as the food pantry had just been open. When Pastor Terri Jo called and said the freezer in the pantry was not working, it was time to call 211 for information on places that could use the food. Meanwhile Tanga was moving some food to the working chest freezer in MacHall. The Homeless Coalition responded quickly to the notice put out by 211 and picked up probably 80 pounds or more of ground beef and 30 pounds of pork. The power situation at the church kept fluctuating. Luckily, we had Tanga who kept checking freezers and moving items from one chest freezer to the other as the freezers took turns working. We also donated meat to the Bread of Life Mission in Punta Gorda and some nice steaks to Fire Station Number One in Port Charlotte and the Fire Station in Punta Gorda Isles. The first responders were thrilled - they said no one ever thinks of them.

Things are getting back to normal; we will be getting some frozen poultry and meat soon for our clients. We are well stocked with canned goods and the other items we distribute except for RAMEN NOODLES ENVELOPES. Please consider donating the chicken or beef flavor to the pantry if you can find them.

In August, we served 94 households for a total of 277 unduplicated people. Unduplicated counts a person coming to the pantry only once; many people come to the pantry on both the first and third Tuesday of the month so you feed more than 277. Thank you and keep an eye out for Ramen Noodles!

**This institution is an equal opportunity provider.**

# HOME ALONE

Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup>

10:00 a.m.

Carpool from FPCPC

On Friday October 6<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m. the Home Alone Group will carpool from FPCPC to Solomon's Castle for a tour of the late Howard Solomon's unique home and museum that features his idea of art using "found" and unusual objects. We will lunch in his "Boat-in the Moat" restaurant next to the museum.

Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup>

10:00 a.m.

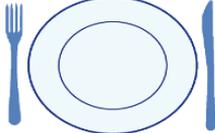
Carpool from FPCPC

On Thursday October 19<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m. the group will carpool to Arcadia from FPCPC to visit "The Old Opera House Museum & Shops," then lunch at "Mary Margaret's Tea & Biscuit" tea room.

**Our group is no longer just for those who live alone.** If you wish to join others for fun and Christian fellowship, please join us for any activity you find appealing. See the bulletin board in the New Life Center for event info.

*Jan Baker*

ALL CHURCH

Fell  wship

BREAKFAST

Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup>

8:00 a.m.

MacDonald Hall

All men and women are invited to join us on Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. for breakfast. Meet in Mac Hall for some delicious breakfast and fellowship. After we eat, Rev. Terri Jo will help us plan out the rest of the year, figuring out who to invite as speakers and our programs. In the meantime, we will just enjoy being together and eating the delicious breakfast Tanga cooks for us. Bring \$2 to help cover costs. See you there!

## SEPTEMBER 2017 SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Rev. Terri Jo Crego expressed deep gratitude to all who prepared the church building and reached out to the people of the church before and after Hurricane Irma.
  - Members of the Disaster Committee reached out to the people of the church before and after the storm to check on everyone that could be reached.
  - Building damage from the storm was primarily soffit and a shed roof.
- Rev. Victoria Millar will be teaching about Presbyterianism for 4 weeks on Wed. evenings from 5:30-6:30. The dates are 9/27, 10/4, 10/11, and 10/18.
- Our required annual review of the church's Active Membership roll has begun.
- 2018 Pledge cards will be sent out in November.
- There is a need for additional Visiting Shepherds.
- The Presbyterian lectionary-based "Feasting on the Word" curriculum has been approved to teach children and youth in their Sunday School class.
- Presbyterian Women Circles meet the first Tuesday of each month for study and fellowship.
- The Food Pantry was able to donate frozen foods to 4 different community organizations when our freezers lost power during the hurricane so the food would not go to waste.
- Technology help will take place on the first Sunday of each month after worship. Children and youth are available to help people with their smart phone questions.
- The Nominating Committee has begun meeting to discern our next class of officers.
- Upcoming Special Worship Services:
  - 10/29 is the 500 year anniversary of our Reformation and we will have a special service along with a bagpiper.
  - 11/5 will include bell tolls for All Saints Day
  - 12/24 Christmas Eve (Sunday) will have a 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Service

FPCPC

2230 Hariet St

Port Charlotte, FL 33952

**The Mission of First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte is:  
To be a beacon in the community by leading all people into a life changing,  
ever growing relationship with Jesus Christ.**

### **Ministry Staff**

Rev. Terri Jo Crego, Pastor	<a href="mailto:pastor@fpcpc.com">pastor@fpcpc.com</a>
Betty Smith, Financial Secretary	<a href="mailto:bsmith@fpcpc.com">bsmith@fpcpc.com</a>
Tanga Killian, Church Secretary	<a href="mailto:tanga@fpcpc.com">tanga@fpcpc.com</a>
Lamont "Butch" Rotert, Custodian	<a href="mailto:butchnjoyce@yahoo.com">butchnjoyce@yahoo.com</a>
Judy Prier, Organist	<a href="mailto:judyprier@comcast.net">judyprier@comcast.net</a>
Joan Byron, Music Director	<a href="mailto:Jfbyron@comcast.net">Jfbyron@comcast.net</a>

### **Session**

Class of 2017: Sandy Asaro, Rebekah Baird , Ambrose Woods  
Class of 2018: Barbara Danylak, Nancy Sharpless, Ron Smith  
Class of 2019: Joan Barry, Gail Gamble, Richard Lund

### **Deacons**

Class of 2017: Doris Coddington, Dottie Messick, Don Phillips, Elaine Woods  
Class of 2018: Dottie Gamble, Pauline Paquin, Laverne Sinkia, Donald Whitmarsh  
Class of 2019: Andy Buell, Clarence Diersing, Addie Schaad, Diane Schmidt

### **Trustees**

Richard Lund (President), Ambrose Woods (Treasurer)  
Sandy Asaro (Secretary), Ron Smith (Finance Committee Elder)  
Class of 2017: Bob Hull (Member at Large)  
Class of 2018: Clarence Diersing (Member at Large)