



WORSHIP SERVICE
SUNDAY, AUGUST 22, 2021, 10:30 A.M.

Our Scripture readings for next Sunday, the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, are: Proverbs 9:1-6; and Ephesians 6:10-20 ("Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm."). The title of the sermon is "Stand Firm," and the Bulletin is available here: <https://fpcovictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/8-22-21-Bulletin-PDF.pdf>.

Once again, while Robert Wyatt continues to enjoy his well-deserved vacation, Muriel Cotman will join us to lead us in our music ministry. Muriel's presence among us has been a blessing not only for Robert but for our congregation as well. If you have an opportunity to greet Muriel in person this next Sunday, please thank her for sharing her talent with us and for her faithful service to the Lord.



**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE
TO VCAM REQUESTS
HAS BEEN GENEROUS!**

Ever since the Session decided to make a renewed effort to increase our church's support for Victoria Christian Assistance Ministry and its clients, the Congregation's response to feeding and clothing those less fortunate than ourselves has been amazing! As you can see in the picture above, "our cup runneth over."

Such generosity is continuously called for by our faith. Those who follow Christ feed his sheep. In addition, this year is a special occasion for VCAM as it celebrates its 35th year of serving Victoria County. Please take note of the following special ways in which you can support the Christ-honoring work done by this organization in our community:

- Becky Richter still has plenty of tickets to sell in connection with VCAM's annual Raffle Fundraiser. There are lots of great prizes, and the entirety of the proceeds go to VCAM's mission of providing food, clothing, and services to those in need in the Crossroads area. The grand prize is a \$1,000 HEB gift card, in addition to 30 more prizes valued from \$50-\$750. You do not need to be present at the raffle to win. If you haven't purchased your tickets yet, please speak with Becky during our Sunday worship service or, otherwise, please contact the church office.
- For August, VCAM is requesting particular attention to the following needs of those whom they serve:

Dried beans, canned vegetables, and toiletry items.

- And look! VCAM also provides "gently used" clothing in an attractive, dignified setting (they call it the "Family Clothes Closet") where customers can "shop" for their particular needs. As you may imagine, there is a special need for children's clothing as young students return to school. Please check you closets and bring anything you can (for men or women, adults or children) to help replenish the inventory at VCAM's Family Clothes Closet. You can leave such donations at the church office or place them close to the donation boxes in the hall outside the church office. We will make sure they are delivered promptly to VCAM.





**A NEW INITIATIVE
FROM OUR
MISSION & OUTREACH COMMITTEE:
A PRAYER TREE IS ABOUT TO BLOOM!**

Recognizing that prayer is one of the most powerful tools Christ has given his followers, the Mission & Outreach Committee of First Presbyterian Church is starting a Prayer Tree.

The members of that Committee have reached out to the families at Presbyterian Day School and The Vine School extending a sincere offer from the members of our church to pray for them. Prayer cards (as shown above) will be sent out to both schools on September 13, 2021. Once we begin collecting the prayer cards, we will hang them on our Prayer Tree in the Narthex.

It's simple, but it will be powerful and effective: the next time you are at church, swing by the Prayer Tree and take a prayer card! If you are unable to make it to church, but would like to participate, simply call the church office and let Erica know – she will get the request to the Mission & Outreach Committee. We can either mail you a card or come by your house to drop it off.

Once you have a card, all we ask is that you pray in the manner requested. Pray silently, pray aloud. Pray alone, pray with a prayer partner. Pray with the confidence you will be heard. We hope to keep this practice going during the school year for as

long as we receive requests, and we hope you will join us in this powerful Christian ministry!

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. Phil 4:6

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thess 5:16-18



**OUR SESSION IS
ONCE AGAIN MONITORING
COVID DATA AND PUBLIC HEALTH PROTOCOLS**

The Session is concerned, as we all are, about the recent, dramatic rise in COVID cases as a result of the virulent “Delta variant” of the COVID virus. According to reports in *The Victoria Advocate*, in less than seven weeks reported cases of COVID infections have increased almost *sixty-fold* (from 11 cases reported on June 26 to 642 cases reported on August 14, 2021).

Accordingly, the Session decided at its meeting on Monday evening, August 9, 2021, that while we would not yet suspend in-person worship, we would ask the congregation to be increasingly conscious of the need to maintain social distancing at *all* times before, during, and after the worship service. The Pastor’s “junior high school dance rules” are, alas!, back in force: no hugging, no kissing, no touching!

Moreover, please continue to spread out in the Sanctuary. We will not (yet) cordon off pew rows, but it would still be wise to skip every other pew for seating. Please also avoid sitting directly behind, or closer than six feet to, other worshipers around your family group.

Masks will not be mandatory, but as always, anyone who wears a mask will be welcomed and respected. In this regard, the Session does not know a single member of our congregation who is not fully vaccinated against COVID, although of course we will have visitors. In good conscience, the Session cannot image why, other than for specific medical conditions, a person in this great country would not elect to be vaccinated. At the same time, however, we must recognize the reality of our world and, accordingly, remain as cautious as possible.

Also, if you are nervous about singing in church (which, based on the precautions taken by our wise members, we will continue to do until further notice), we encourage you to sit in the back of the church. Everyone should spread out, with singers in the front half of the Sanctuary and non-singers in the back half.

Finally, if you have any concerns about, or recommendations concerning, our church's public health protocols, please share them with us. Other than accepting science and the other God-given miracles of modern medicine, the Session does not have any unique wisdom about how to respond to this fourth wave of pandemic infection. Any thoughts, ideas, or inspiration you may have to share with your pastor or any Elder on the Session would be greatly and sincerely appreciated.



**PRESBYTERIAN DAY SCHOOL
RESUMES CLASSES TODAY,
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2021**

Can you believe it?! Where has summer gone?!

It seems like just a blink of the eye ago when we were celebrating PDS graduation last May. Time marches on, however, and a new crop of young disciples marched back to school today.

As anticipated, the happy chatter and excitement of eager young disciples fills the halls! Please pray for our students, and their parents and teachers alike, as everyone adjusts to a new routine.

For 75 years now, First Presbyterian Church has been supporting the ministry of Christian education among the children of Victoria. Forgive us the sin of pride, but I believe our congregation is entitled to just a tiny bit of satisfaction that for three-quarters of a century we have supported countless faithful teachers, encouraged and trained countless young children during the formative years of their lives, and been a blessing to parents who have entrusted their most valuable possessions into our care.

May God bless our Presbyterian Day School and all who are returning to teach and to learn in the classrooms of our church!



Give me a "P!" Give me a "D!" Give me an "S!"



And speaking of PDS, exciting plans are also underway for a *Homecoming* celebration on Sunday morning, October 24, 2021, to rejoice during the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Presbyterian Day School by the First Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Texas.

If you are a PDS former student, teacher, or staff member, or have family or friends who are, please provide the First Presbyterian Church office (info@fpcovictoria.org or (361) 575-2441) with contact information to receive a special invitation. Tell your friends; help us spread the word! All are welcome.

With the support and far-sighted vision of the members of our church who have preceded us, the Presbyterian Day School held its first classes on September 9, 1946. The school's rich tradition of teaching young children in a loving and nurturing Christian environment has been fundamental throughout its history and continues today.



**THIS YEAR MARKS THE
180TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FOUNDING OF
OUR CHURCH**

First Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Texas was founded on October 2, 1841. We will mark that happy occasion during our worship service on Sunday morning October 3, 2021.

In preparation for our celebration, we are asking all the members and friends of FPC to make a special effort to search for any memorabilia or artifacts you believe would be of interest to our Congregation. Please check your closets, your bureau drawers, and “those boxes” in the attic, the garage, the basement, or wherever, and help us revisit some memories of the long and storied history of this church’s witness to the Gospel in and around the Victoria community.

We have already received some positive responses to our call for church memorabilia and artifacts, and we would like to keep the momentum going. So, please contact our church Historian, Henry Hauschild, or the Church Office about anything interesting that you discover! Every anniversary is a joyous one for our church, but let’s make this next one a particularly happy occasion as we continue to emerge from the pandemic.

Peace, grace, and mercy,

Pastor Jim

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