

Connect, Grow & Go

To Glorify God as a Disciple-Making Outpost of Kingdom Life



Alternative Gift Market

"Home for the Holidays"

Here's What's Going on at VPC in Holiday 2020

***Goodbye
Pastor Burke***

***Venice Community
Concert Series***

Church Leadership

Session

Teaching Elders

Christopher Romig
Carolyn Wilson

Clerk of Session

Laurie Wright

Bob Allen
Jennie Chaplin
Nick Clemmer
Susie Gottschalk
Tom Hoffman
Judith Holmes
Sheryl Morford
Carlene Painter
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Board member contact information is available through the Realm app via your phone or signing in to www.onrealm.org.

Our Vision in Action

To Glorify God As A Disciple-Making Outpost Of Kingdom Life

OFFICE HOURS

Mon - Thurs, 9am - 4pm
Fri, 9am - 12pm

OFFICE PHONE

941-488-2258

WORSHIP SERVICE HOURS

Sunday, 10am in-person & online at www.venicepres.org.

LIBRARY HOURS

Open during church office hours, please see the receptionist for entry or contact chaplin@gmail.com

CHAPEL HOURS FOR PRAYER

Thursday, 9am - 1pm

DRIVE-IN CHURCH

98.3FM

thank you

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VENICE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRESENTS

HOLIDAY Drive-Thru



NOVEMBER 18, 10AM
825 the Rialto, Venice, FL

Immediately following Communion on the Lawn

Food Drive & Operation ShoeBox drop-off
Pick up a bag of holiday goodies
Visit with pastors & staff

Church Update



Dear Church Family,

Welcome to our Thanksgiving and Christmas edition of the Connect Grow and Go. Welcome back to those who have been away. We are glad you are returning from many parts of the United States. It is always so fun to see you and welcome you back to VPC!

Church is facing a new reality. What does “normal” look like? This is a question churches across the world are struggling with. VPC leadership continually works to do all we can to keep you safe in the environment of worship as we live into this new reality. Some of the measures we continue to take for your safety are:

1. **Asking you to register for worship.** This is very important during our time of Pandemic. If you are struggling to register please call the church office for help. Your registration is important to Sunday morning. If at all possible we ask you to visit the web page at www.venicepres.org and register!
2. **Taking temperatures as you enter the building.** We have not had to turn anyone away, praise God! Although this seems extreme to some we’ve learned that taking temperatures has prevented the outbreak in gatherings such as ours.
3. **Asking you to wear masks to worship.** Even though it is not required it is highly recommended. We have people on both sides of the spectrum when it comes to masks. We continue to ask for grace as each person must make the decision of wearing a mask based on their ability to do so. God is in control and will see us through.
4. **We are no longer passing the offering plate** but truly are grateful for the ways you are supporting God’s church and mission to the community and world. We have offering boxes at each door, we offer online offering, and you can always mail in.

We continue to Glorify God in all we do even though we’ve had to change some of the ways we do things.

Session recently made the decision to not open campus to groups at this point. They prayerfully discerned that it is not the right time. Thank you for your understanding as we work through this unprecedented season.

You will read about big news in this issue! Burke Johnson has decided to retire at the end of 2020. Pastor Burke has been a vital part of VPC ministry and we will truly miss him. We understand that after 54 years in pastoral ministry Burke feels its time. He will be sadly missed. Learn more about Pastor Burkes ministry in the pages that follow!

Trustee Update

The Trustees of Venice Presbyterian Church are very busy with many projects. Below is a list of projects being looked at as we continue to keep up with our facilities. There are many more projects as we work on general maintenance but we chose the following list as a way to inform you of ways the Trustees are stewarding the gift of facilities God has given us. Funding for these projects will come through a fund called Capital Improvements and designated gifts from the congregation.

- The Bell Tower has not worked in a few years. We would like to repair the bells to ring through the community once again. Cost: \$2,485
- While looking at the Bell Tower we also obtained a cost to pressure wash and paint the steel formation. Cost: \$3,600
- The parking lots could use a facelift. We would like to paint the curb stops and directional arrows to help you be able to more clearly see where to park. Cost: \$5,984
- We would like to replace the ceiling lights in Fellowship Hall with LED lighting to help conserve energy. Cost: \$10,540
- Other projects we are looking at that do not have costs attached are:
 - ◊ New ceiling tiles in Fellowship Hall
 - ◊ Outdoor signage to replace two rusted signs
 - ◊ Signage to identify buildings – currently there is no place on our building that identify us as Venice Presbyterian Church.
 - ◊ Replace the roof on the Church House (Not an immediate need, planning for this one)
 - ◊ Enhancement of the Memorial Garden. If you have questions about any of these projects please feel free to contact any of the Trustees: Bob Allen, Mary Gregory, Richard Gilbert, Fred Francis, Jim Fullerton, Ann Stark, Chris O'Brien

Let's be reminded God saw this pandemic coming and will see us through. This is no surprise to Him. After Jesus gave his disciples instructions to go and make disciples, he said "Be sure of this" I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 18:20. God is with us through the Holy Spirit. Lean into that as followers of Christ. Find ways to connect to others and be the church in this time of change.


Executive Director, VPC

Saying Goodbye

*Thank You Rev. Burke Johnson,
you will be missed!*

How long in pastoral ministry?

54 years. Ordained in January 1967 in Winston-Salem, NC

What are some the places you served?

Pastorates: Moravia Moravian 1967-1970; Advent Moravian, Winston-Salem, NC 1970-1973; Rolling Hills Moravian, Longwood, FL 1973-1980 and 2003; Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin 1980- 1990. Administrative: Western District President-Moravian Church Northern Province 1990-1998. Moravian Church Northern Province, President 1998-2002. Venice Presbyterian Church 2005-2020 Pastor of Member Care

Do you have a favorite place?

Have really enjoyed each place we have served and VPC for sure.



What brought you to VPC?

Seeking a church home when we moved to Venice in 2000. Felt at home on our first visit. Had visited several other Venice churches prior to visiting VPC.

How long have you served on staff and why 15 1/2 years?

Chris Romig asked me to come on staff in 2005.

How many phone calls have you made?

Approximately 180 Anniversary calls to couples in our church each year. And certainly many, many more on a daily basis.

What will you miss most about your ministry?

No sure yet.

What are your plans for retirement?

When safe to travel, hope to visit family throughout the country. We have two great-grandchildren we have not seen in person.

For those wanting to send cards or letters to Pastor Burke, please mail to the church (825 the Rialto, Venice, FL 34285) or drop-off on Sundays at the Welcome Desk in the Narthex.



VENICE
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

825 The Rialto
Venice, Florida 34275

—
Phone 941-488-2258

—
www.venicepres.org

Oct 26, 2020

Dear VPC Family:

Eleanor and I moved to Venice in 2002 following my retirement from the Moravian Church. Several months later, we were asked to serve an interim pastorate at the Moravian Church north of Orlando. We served there for one year, going back and forth each weekend.

Prior to the interim, we had joined VPC as affiliate members and became active in the life of the congregation. Shortly after retiring the second time, Chris Romig approached me with an opportunity to become a member of the staff here. When we had joined this congregation a few years earlier, the thought of serving on the staff never crossed my mind.

Honestly, when I graduated from Seminary, I had a personal desire to serve as an Associate Pastor in a congregation with a work emphasis on congregational care. Here was my opportunity, late in my career, to finally achieve that goal right here at VPC. God's plans are revealed in His timing.

Having served as an Ordained Pastor for 54 years, including 15-1/2 years here, I am retiring again! You have indeed enriched and blessed our lives as we have served together. Your friendship and love surround us time and time again. So many changes in staff, building and grounds, programming, serving, outreach, and missions have happened here. Through all these changes we have been blessed.

Continuously seeing God at work in so many ways, in and through our congregation, is rewarding. Thank you for the joy of serving Christ here in your midst.

We are not leaving. We had chosen Venice Presbyterian Church as our church home prior to the opportunity to serve on staff. We will remain here as affiliate members. We will continue to worship God and be a part of this special congregation.

In Christ's Service,

Burke Johnson

To Glorify God as a Disciple-Making Outpost of Kingdom Life

Worship Ministry

Kingdom Life Sermon Series continues

We will be continuing our preaching series on the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). We've already looked closely at the Beatitudes and the rest of the sermon's introduction, where Jesus proclaims who we are as Christians. Now we turn to the rest of the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus describes what we do as Christians. With all of the cultural anxiety and anger, what a wonderful opportunity for us to reflect on what it means to live as genuine followers of Jesus.



| | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| November 1 | Matthew 5:21-26 |
| November 8 | Matthew 5:27-37 |
| November 15 | Matthew 5:38-48 |
| November 22 | Matthew 6:1-18 |
| November 29 | Matthew 6:19-24 |

Advent

The season of Advent begins on Sunday, November 29. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin Adventus, which means "coming" or "arrival." Advent is a season of expectant waiting and preparation. We look forward to the celebration of Christmas and the joyful remembrance of Christ's first coming to earth. We also look forward to Christ's second coming. And, maybe this year - with all of the challenges we've face in 2020 - our longing for Christ's return has only intensified.

We will be offering weekly video reflections during Advent. These Advent devotional videos will feature Scripture, a short meditation, and a musical reflection. They will be sent as our midweek videos during the season of Advent and Christmastide, inviting us all to pause in the middle of each week to worship our Savior and coming King.

Advent Midweek Videos each week:

Lighting of the Advent Candle
Scripture reading, and a 4-5 minute reflection
Musical meditation (3-4 minutes)

| | |
|--------|-------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | December 2 - HOPE (Isaiah 9:2, 6-7) |
| Week 2 | December 9 - PEACE |
| Week 3 | December 16 - JOY |
| Week 4 | December 23 - LOVE |
| Week 5 | December 30 - CHRISTMAS TIDE |



Christmas Eve Services

5pm & 7pm

As much of the world around us seems to be in chaos, whether it be covid or politics, one thing we know for sure is God sent his only son into the world. Dressed in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger Christ came to be the savior of all those who believe and place their faith in him. Christmas is not just a time for hanging decorations, shopping for gifts, and having parties, but is a time for all to fall on our knees and hear the angel's voices. We invite you on this night divine to come and worship Christ the newborn King. We will hold services at 5pm and 7pm, following covid guidelines. Please register online at www.venicepres.org for either of the services.



5pm-Traditional Candlelight Service

Our 5pm service will feature traditional hymns accompanied by brass quintet and organ, a message from Rev. Christopher Romig, and will end with the singing of Silent Night by candlelight.

7pm- Jazz Candlelight Service

Our 7pm service, which has become a new staple to our Christmas Eve services, will feature Christmas carols accompanied by the VPC Jazz Ensemble, a message by Rev. Christopher Romig, and will end with a jazzy rendition of Silent Night by candlelight. We look forward to seeing you and pray you have a Christ filled Christmas.

Drive-in Church

For those still not ready to attend church in-person, **the service will air on Sundays at 10am on station 98.3** within the church grounds and a small surrounding area. We have reserved parking in the front of the church. If you long to return and have a desire to feel connected, this may be the answer. Communion is safely delivered to your car on Communion Sundays.



Upcoming VPC Podcast

Concluding the Kingdom Life sermon series and coinciding with the beginning of a new year, the VPC sermons will be available via podcast on your favorite podcast channels. Details to follow.



Communion on the Lawn *Celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*

Join us outside on the front lawn of the church for a simple communion service. Bring a lawn chair and a loving heart as we gather together while social distancing. All safety protocols will be in place. Please register online on our website at www.venicepres.org. Wednesday, November 18, 9am

Communion Instructions for 1st Sunday of the month

As we've resumed in-person worship, we will also be resuming our practice of celebrating the sacrament of the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of each month. As a special provision during the COVID pandemic, those who worship from home are also invited to participate as an extension of our communion at the Lord's table.

Those who would like to celebrate the sacrament of communion at home are invited to prepare in three specific ways:

- 1. Prepare the communion bread:** Place a cracker or a small piece of bread on a plate or napkin.
- 2. Prepare the communion cup:** The cup represents the blood of Christ, so grape juice or red wine would be ideal options to pour into a small glass or chalice.
- 3. Prepare your heart:** This is the most important preparation any of us can make before celebrating the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. As the Presbyterian Directory for Worship describes: "Worshippers prepare themselves to celebrate the Lord's Supper by putting their trust in Christ, confessing their sin, and seeking reconciliation with God and with one another." (W-3.0409)

Please have the communion elements close at-hand before the worship service begins. When it's time for communion during the worship service, we will sing a hymn of preparation and then offer a Prayer of Thanksgiving. Next, pastors and elders (*wearing masks and gloves*) will individually hand a pre-packaged communion set to each worshipper in the sanctuary. Each safely-packaged communion set includes a small communion wafer sitting on top of a sealed cup of grape juice. During the distribution of the elements in the sanctuary, worshippers at home are encouraged to set out their bread and prepare the cup.

After the communion elements have been distributed in the sanctuary, a minister will offer the Words of Institution from 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, inviting worshippers (*those in the sanctuary and those in the sanctuaries of their homes*) to partake of the bread, and then the cup. As we traditionally do, we will conclude our communion service with a Prayer of Dedication, the Apostles Creed, and a closing hymn.



Prayer in the Chapel

During the church closure, we have had many requests to make the church available for prayer. While we are open for worship on Sunday morning, we understand that gathering in large groups may make many feel uncomfortable.

Good News! The chapel will be available for quiet, individual prayer & reflection on Thursdays, 9am -noon.

While the chapel will be cleaned regularly, we ask that you please use the available hand sanitizer and wear a mask if others are present to ensure your safety.

Your physical, emotional and spiritual well-being are the utmost importance to us. Livestreaming service is available every Sunday at 10am for those not ready to return on www.venicepres.org.

Venice Presbyterian Church's
RE-OPENING GUIDELINES

Help prevent the spread of COVID-19
while gathering for worship at the church

| | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| REGISTER AT WWW.VENICEPRES.ORG | TEMPERATURE CHECK AT DOOR | MASKS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED |
| SOCIAL DISTANCING OBSERVED | PLEASE WASH & SANITIZE HANDS FREQUENTLY | LIMITED SINGING |
| GLASS HOUSE CLOSED | GUESTS WELCOME | SEATING EVERY OTHER ROW |

4 Ways to Give

*Thank you for your continued support during the quarantine.
Additionally, Giving Boxes mounted on the wall by exit doors, are available to receive your Gifts.*



Text Giving
73256
venicepres +
amount



Online Giving
venicepres.org



Electronic
Funds Transfer
(EFT)



Cash/Check
825 the Rialto
Venice, FL 34285

Music Ministry

A Shelter In The Time Of Storm

The great church reformer, Martin Luther said; "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Venice Presbyterian Church has actively lived that out for many years. As we have navigated through these turbulent times of covid, now more than ever, our church has worked hard to cultivate every possible way for our church family and the community at large to enjoy music. We've entitled this season of music A Shelter In The Time Of Storm.

Venice Community Concert Series

Our staff, volunteers, and leaders have been prayerful that we would be able to offer a concert season. Well, those prayer have been answered. In our earnest desire to keep all of you safe we will be offering a hybrid season. There will be tickets for 200 socially distant patrons to enjoy the concert in person and we'll also offer virtual tickets, for those who aren't comfortable coming in person, to enjoy these concerts from the safety of their own home. For those attending the concert in person, we will require all to follow the same guidelines of Sunday morning worship. Those purchasing virtual tickets, you will receive an email the day of the concert with a link to the concert and a password to view the concert.

It's A Family Affair Saturday, Dec 19, 7pm

Kicking off the new season of the Venice Community Concert Series is one of the most talented families in our community. Chris, Karen, William, and Nicholas Romig will delight us with Christmas favorites for flute, piano, bass and percussion. This couple and their two sons have spent many years entertaining audiences with their virtuosity, musicality, and engaging stage

presence. We couldn't think of anything more inspiring to begin the Christmas season then having the Romig's give a little piece of their family heart to us all.

DuPue Brothers Band Sunday Feb 21, 3pm

You might remember the DuPue brothers band from January of 2020 when they lead worship alongside our choir. We are excited to bring them back for an afternoon of grassical music. We promise that your toes will be

a-tappin as they delight us with their fusion of classical, bluegrass, and rock music.

Stephen Lynerd Group Sat, March 20, 7pm

The Stephen Lynerd Group is no stranger to Venice Presbyterian. Stephen and his group have a flair for taking traditional hymnody and giving it a fresh and modern jazz approach. Join us for a night of great music and worship.

For more information about our participating artists and purchasing tickets, see our website at www.veniceprs.org.

VENICE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Welcome to the 2020/2021

VENICE COMMUNITY CONCERT SERIES

Tickets on Sale
Sunday, November 8

In-person tickets \$25
Virtual Tickets \$15

In our earnest desire to keep all of you safe, the 2020/21 VCCS concert series will be a hybrid season. Only 200 tickets will be available to enjoy the concert in person.

However, as an added bonus, we'll also offer virtual tickets, for those who aren't comfortable coming in person but want to enjoy these concerts from the safety of their own home.

A Shelter in the Time of Storm



ROMIG FAMILY
It's A Family Affair

Saturday, December 19, 7:00pm



DUPUE BROTHERS BAND
Classical Music

Sunday, February 21, 3:00pm



STEPHEN LYNERD GROUP
Fresh Modern Jazz

Saturday, March 20, 7:00pm

825 THE RIALTO, VENICE, FLORIDA 34285

Tickets and information available at
www.venicepres.org or call 941-488-5525

Virtual Recital Series

In a normal year, there are only so many things we can offer in person. With brand new audio and visual equipment and in this current state of covid, technology has allowed for us to offer many more opportunities for you to enjoy music both in person and at home. We are excited to offer, for the very first time, a virtual recitals series. On November 6 at 1:00pm and November 13 at 1:00pm, we will offer two wonderful but distinctively different recitals.

On **November 6**, we will hear music featuring our concert grand Steinway piano, flute and bassoon. We are delighted to welcome Sarasota Orchestra's principal flutist, **Betsy Hudson Traba, Principal Bassoonist, Fernando Traba, and pianist and Director of Youth Opera at Sarasota Opera, Jesse Martins**. This program will feature. Music by Antonio Vivaldi, Camille Saint-Saëns, and Astor Piazzolla.

On **November 13**, our Minister of Music and Worship, Jamal Sarikoki, alongside a professional brass ensemble will feature works by J.S Bach, Marcel Dupre, Richard Strauss, Charles Marie Widor and some time-honored hymns of the faith. This will feature our grand and majestic pipe organ.



Betsy Hudson Traba has served as Principal Flutist of the Sarasota Orchestra and Sarasota Wind Quintet since 1993.

Ms. Traba is an active teacher working locally with flutists of all ages and has served multiple terms as a leader of the Sarasota Orchestra Musicians' Committee. She originated and lectures as part of the popular Symphonic Life series of classes offered by the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Ringling College, and since 2019 has been engaged to write program notes for Sarasota Orchestra's Masterworks Series concerts. She is married to Sarasota Orchestra Principal Bassoonist Fernando Traba, and they have 2 daughters, ages 17 and 19.

These recitals are free to the public, but if you would like to make a donation towards these programs, please feel free to mail a check made out to Venice Presbyterian Church and write Music Department in the memo.

MUSIC

Fernando Traba has served as Principal Bassoon of the Sarasota Orchestra since 1992.

Mr. Traba holds Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from The Cleveland Institute of Music and has done postgraduate work at the Juilliard School. In addition to his performing career, he is serving as Adjunct Bassoon Faculty at the University



of South Florida for the 2020-2021 school year. Mr. Traba has served on the faculty of Department of Music at Florida Southern College since 2000, and also teaches bassoon at the State College of Florida and Polk State College. He has edited and provided the Spanish language translation for the 2nd edition of *Bassoon Reed Making: Basic Technique* by Christopher Weait.



Jesse Martins is a conductor, pianist, and voice coach who has extensive experience working with all types of singers from children to experienced professionals.

Since joining the music staff of Sarasota Opera in 2011, he has been integrally involved in all aspects of the company's musicmaking.

He was the Chorus Master & Head of the Apprentice Program during the 2020 Winter Festival, and has performed as pianist in many concerts for the company and throughout the area. This fall he will collaborate in concerts at the opera house.

Maestro Martins has worked extensively as a coach in his native Brazil, New Zealand, and now the Sarasota Opera and area.

Music and the Word



After a hiatus, we are excited to bring back the Music and The Word series. This is a time for us to center ourselves on the word of God and to sing the truths of our faith. Beginning December 19th, we will begin the 2020/2021 season of the Venice Community Concert Series, offering both in person and virtual tickets. While we all may be in this time of storm and not able to enjoy the arts the way we normally would, may Venice Presbyterian Church be a place of shelter for you spiritually and artistically. We look forward, with great anticipation, to welcoming you all both virtually and in person to recitals and concerts.

Give Thanks With A Grateful Heart, November 26 at 9:00am

Even amidst covid 19, we have so much to be thankful for. A country where we can exercise our faith freely, family, friends, but most of all, a Redeemer who knew no sin but became sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God. On this Thanksgiving Day, we invite you and whomever you are with to gather around the tv or computer and join Jamal in psalms of thanksgiving, hymns of thanksgiving, and prayers of thanksgiving for the great blessings given to us by God. Begin your Thanksgiving Day by joining the church, virtually, in worship of God who has given us so much to be thankful for.

"It's one thing to be grateful. It's another to give thanks. Gratitude is what you feel. Thanksgiving is what you do." –Tim Keller

Christ is Born In Bethlehem, December 25 at 9:00am

What an exciting day for the life of the Christian. This is not just any day; this is the day the word became flesh and dwelt among us. While we traditionally give gifts on Christmas, let's remember that a baby was born to die a death he did not deserve so that we could have the greatest gift of all, salvation. This is the true meaning of Christmas. As we prepare for the festivities, open up the presents, eat a big meal, and settle down by the fire for eggnog and hallmark movies, lets join together on Christmas morning and hear the Christmas story and sing some of our favorite carols so that our hearts and minds are focused on the true reason for the season.

"And when the Lord Jesus has become your peace, remember, there is another thing: good will towards men. Do not try to keep Christmas without good will towards men." - Charles Spurgeon



ARE YOU EXPERIENCING PANDEMIC FATIGUE?



Are you feeling exhausted from all the disruptions to life brought on by the pandemic? Are you or someone you know struggling with challenges like . . .

- ISOLATION AND LONELINESS
- ANXIETY OVER HEALTH
- GRIEF DUE TO MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF LOSSES
- TENSION FROM JUGGLING WORK, CHILDCARE, AND SCHOOLING
- FINANCIAL STRAIN OR JOB LOSS
- UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE FUTURE
- OTHER UNEXPECTED LIFE CHALLENGES?



**STEPHEN
MINISTRY**

If so, you don't have to face it alone. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to listen, care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support.

A Stephen Minister will meet with you privately—by phone, by video chat, or, if safely possible, in person—to offer care and support. It's free and completely confidential. For more information, call our church office.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28

Family Ministry



Thank you for your generous outpouring of donations during the September Drive Thru. I was blown away by the amount of stuff that we collected for our community!

Your donations of paper towels and water bottles are at Laurel Nokomis School helping to keep students and teachers healthy.

We collected hundreds of shoes that will be in stock for handing out to schools throughout the year. Our volunteers sorted and organized your donations so that we can bring a selection to schools all year long

as they request them. God is so good in that we got the perfect balance of sizes this year. We also had many donations of gift cards to Walmart, so we are able to help out our schools this year in any way that God leads.

Most importantly, I am thankful that God is on the move here! We are able to encourage and uplift our school communities in a tangible way in this tough year. Please continue to pray for our teachers and school leaders on the front lines. The most important thing we can do for them is keep them lifted up in prayer as they continually make decisions to keep our kids safe while continuing to provide a quality education.

Operation Shoebox

Fill with Gifts

Select a medium to large “wow” item such as a soccer ball with pump or stuffed animal, then fill with other fun toys, hygiene items, and school supplies.

Pray

Most importantly, pray for the child who will receive your gift. You can also include a personal note and photo.

Drop off your box at our Holiday Drive Thru on November 18 at 10am, Please include \$9 for shipping.



Buddy Break Update

It has been great season of Buddy Break so far! While we cannot meet on campus for our typical Buddy Break Saturdays, the leadership team has come up with some fantastically creative ways to keep in touch with our families and support them from afar.

In August, we made sure to reach out and contact each of our families. Many of the adult volunteer buddies connected with the kids they are most often paired up with to chat with them over the phone. It is always a joy for the volunteer as well as the family to have a chance to talk!

In September, we had a great time at a Back to School Parade. The volunteers came to VPC and decorated their cars with balloons, streamers, and signs to welcome the kiddos. They socially distanced and wore masks as they greeted the kids who stayed in the car and drove past. Each child who came got a backpack filled with super cute school supplies, a quick Bible lesson, and some Bible based crafts. It was great to see their smiling faces! Parents were encouraged as they were reminded how much we love their children and want to see them succeed.



In October, Buddy Break was a virtual experience! The kids received a package in the mail with pages to paint and crafts to assemble as they followed along. We got together over Zoom so that we could talk and interact. After the Zoom call, the video also went on to YouTube. Check your VPC email for a link to see our virtual meeting.



These past few months in Buddy Break, we have been focusing on learning about prayer. While we are so far apart and in many cases are unable to talk to the people we love, it is such a blessing to know that God is near. Not only is He with us, but He loves to hear His children pray to Him! Our crafts, lessons, and activities have been centered around this truth as we encourage our Buddy Break kids and families to deepen their relationships with the Lord.

The Buddy Break Leadership team is striving to find creative ways to reach our families with little contact, but big impact. We will continue to hold some sort of activity the third Saturday of each month.



Our November event is called, ***"Pizza Palooza"***. We are working out details to have each family pick up a pizza making kit to take home and enjoy. Buddies, watch your email for more details and ways to volunteer!



***This Year it's
Different!***



2020 Alternative Gift Market Drive-Thru

***December 6, 2020 at 4:00 – 6:00 pm
Drive-thru at Venice Presbyterian Church***

In a normal year we hold our Alternative Gift Market in Fellowship Hall on two Sundays with displays of all of our monthly mission partners around the perimeter. We have music and food and it is a wonderful opportunity to talk to our Mission Partner Liaisons as well as representatives from many of our mission partners in person. ***But COVID-19 changed everything!***

With concern for the health and safety of all, the Mission Committee is hosting an Alternative Gift Market Drive-Thru that will include a live nativity scene, music, and we will provide gift bags with the Alternative Gift Market catalog and brochures for our mission partners along with some special goodies.

Our theme this year is "I'll Be Home for Christmas." The traditional meaning of the song by that name is that wherever I am in the world, I will be coming home for Christmas. Again, COVID-19 changed everything so that the meaning this year is that I can't go anywhere because of COVID restrictions, so "I'll Be Home for Christmas!"

Missions Committee/Alternative Gift Market

ZOOM Presentation on December 2, 2020 at 12:00 noon – 12:45 p.m.

Join in on our Missions Zoom call and get the inside scoop on what goes on in our Missions Committee and hear about our mission partners and the alternative gifts offered this year in our Alternative Gift Market Drive-Thru.

November MMP
HELPS International, Stove Team

Thank-you for your support of your Guatemala stove team in this most unusual year. We want to bring you up to date on the status of your investment.

The week before our anticipated team departure on March 14th, 2020 was unsettling as we tried to make wise, informed decisions on the pandemic. On the morning of the 13th there were no reported cases of Covid-19 in Guatemala and only two in our county, making it seem unlikely that we would expose our team to the virus in Guatemala, or worse, that we would introduce the virus into Guatemala. But that evening everything changed when Guatemala confirmed its first case and immediately closed its borders. As we woke our team members to inform them of our cancellation, there was major disappointment and sadness. But the decision was appropriate and we were likely spared difficult consequences had we made it in.

We were the first of multiple stove and medical teams to cancel. What Helps did was bring together their in-country support staff to keep them employed installing the stoves. All of the families awaiting stoves and water filters received them.

Many of our team members from 2020 remain hopeful to return in 2021. Currently that looks doubtful but we will be prepared and again identify and raise money for specific families to receive stoves and water filters. Should circumstances improve, our tentative dates are March 13 - 22, 2021. If we are unable to install them as a team, Helps will again have staff do the installations. An important goal for Helps is to keep their staff employed through this crisis so these well trained employees will be ready to host medical and stove teams when it is safe for us to return.

Knowing the damage open fires do to lungs, and the danger of impure water, makes us realize how important it is to have these healthier alternatives for an even greater number of people thrown into poverty by the pandemic.

Thank-you for your faithfulness over the years supporting this ministry. We would like to assure you that any money collected goes directly to providing stoves and water filters for the families in the highlands of Guatemala.

Jim and Lois Weeks

Venice Presbyterian Church // 825 The Rialto // Venice // 34285 // 941-488-2258 21



Mission Ministry

December MMP
Family Promise

Family Promise of South County is a faith-based, non-profit organization that enables the community to work together to address the needs of homeless children and families by providing temporary shelter, meals and comprehensive services to help them achieve lasting self-sufficiency.

We help families with children get back on their feet. Host congregations provide their facility for one week at a time—about once every three months. Families arrive at 5pm for dinner and stay overnight. During the day, kids go to daycare or school and parents go to work. On Sundays, the families move to the next host congregation site. Support congregations provide volunteer and financial support to host congregations. We provide shelter, meals, basic needs (clothing, toiletries, personal items), case management, referrals and resources. All adults meet with an Employment Consultant (to assist in job seeking/



EVERY CHILD DESERVES A HOME!

FAMILY PROMISE SSC DREAM WALK

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH, 2020
JOIN US 9 A.M. VIRTUALLY FOR A COMBINATION OF VIDEOS, PHOTOS AND LIVE ENGAGEMENT

Please go to our website:
www.familypromisessc.org/dream-walk to register to be a walker, donor or sponsor and to get more information and forms.

placement) and a Financial Counselor (to learn better management of finances and start a savings). We also provide them with a support system; volunteers who are there for them each day. Each adult, once working, must disclose all income to our Case Manager who then assists them in putting anywhere from 60% to 90% of their income into

a savings account. Once enough money is saved, we assist with local financial resources for the move, and families get back into housing. (We also assist with local resources for furniture and household items they will need.)

Please contact Carolyn Wilson, cwilson@venicepres.org for more information on how you can help.



Annual Food Drive

Please note that the Annual Food Drive will be a little different this year. We ask that you bring your donations to the Holiday Drive-Thru on November 18, 10 - 11am. We will also have a little gift for you!



Center of Hope

Yard sale to raise funds for Social Services at 2395 Shamrock Drive, Venice, FL, 34293

November 17
8am - 1pm

Pregnancy Solutions needs your help! In this difficult season of Covid-19 we need your help more than ever. Our client numbers are up and our supplies and volunteers are down. Please prayerfully consider how you might partner with Pregnancy Solutions today!

- Volunteers we need you! From Boutique backroom organizers to volunteers working directly with clients. Call to see how you can get involved.
- Our mothers and babies need you! Donate: White children's hangers, baby wipes, Newborn diapers, new clothes.
- Donations: 90% of our Operational Budget is dependent on individuals and organizations like you. Donate online at: pregnancysolutions.org or plan to attend our Annual Fundraising Banquet

"Priceless Love" Pregnancy Solutions 18 Annual Fundraising Banquet

Tuesday, November 10 at Plantation Golf and Country Club, Venice, Florida

Please visit www.pregnancysolutions.org or call 941.408.7100 to register

11:00 am Lunch
7:00 pm Dinner

Save the Date!
Tuesday, November 10

Priceless Love

PREGNANCY SOLUTIONS'
2020

Annual Fundraising Banquet

Connect & Grow

Nomads Bible Study

Nomads Bible Study, led by Anna Marie Brummett and Karen Langlais, will meet weekly starting January 12, and **is open to all women in our church** and beyond. This year we will be using a study guide called "Colossians and Philemon" by Christopher A Beetham, published by Crossways and available from Christian Book Distributors, or by contacting group co-leader Karen Langlais at kolanglais@verizon.net.



Service of Thanksgiving for Our Veterans

November 11, 2020 at 12 noon – 12:30 p.m.

Come join us on ZOOM in a service to give praise and thanks to God and to honor our veterans for the freedom we enjoy in our nation. Contact Carolyn Wilson, cwilson@venicepres.org for access.

Recommended Prayerful Resources

Advent Devotionals, Our Daily Bread: <https://odb.org>

Billy Graham – free Advent devotional: www.lp.billygraham.org/advent/

Devotional ebook with writings by Max Lucado, Eugene Peterson, Anne Graham Lotz, and the late Billy Graham: <https://lp.billygraham.org/advent/>

VPC Book Club : 2020-2021 Book List

All are invited to participate. Initial meetings will be held on Zoom

November 4 **The Dutch House** by Anne Patchett

December 2 **The Library Book** by Susan Orlean

January 6 **The American Story: Conversations with Master Historians** By David Rubenstein

February 3 **The Pioneers** by David McCullough

March 3 **Where the Crawdad's Sing** by Delia Owens

April 7 **A Gentleman in Moscow** by Amor Towles

May 5 **The Great Alone** by Kristen Hannah

Contact Mary Gregory at mgregorysmiles@gmail.com for more information



Presbyterian Women (PW) Update

We are non-profit and all about Mission Giving. The Thank Offering and Birthday Offerings are projects of PW. PW gives annually to The Least Coin which is a project of Church Woman United. CWU meet some first Fridays of the month at noon and at different churches.

For more information on CWU, contact Nancy Marik, our PW rep at nancymarik@comcast.net.

Our biggest fund raiser is our annual yard sale coordinated by Kathy Wood. Necessity is The Mother of Invention, and we'll see what transpires with the pandemic. We have also had our Christmas Tea with about 20 some tables and entertainment also coordinated by Kathy Wood. Women of the Church are considered members of PW.

On Tuesday on Oct. 20, 2020 at 2:00pm we had our first PW Gathering on ZOOM where 17 were in attendance.

Diane Penick was the recipient of the ***PW Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Honorary Life Membership Award (Woman of The Year) for 2020***. The Award was to be given in April (2020) but did not happen due to the pandemic. Diane was a Trailblazer and her accomplishments are many. Diane

(a very "Special Lady") is a Trailblazer and quite a Woman! ***Congratulations Diane!***

On January 19, 2021 at noon a presentation will be given by Kate Holmes on county history as January 2021 marks The Beginning of The Centennial of Our County. More to come.

A huge heartfelt thanks to Carolyn Wilson (*Pastor of Connection and Outreach at VPC*) as she is our PW liaison.

Currently, PW is offering two Bible Study Circles:

DORCAS CIRCLE

Beth Tieman (941) 564-6304
bethmn@comcast.net

Connie Householder (941) 882-3469
phouse1082@cs.com

ELIZABETH CIRCLE

Hope Gordon (941) 480-9393
hopecarroll12@yahoo.com

For more information on PW, contact Niki Steitz at nsteitz33@comcast.net or call (941) 493-7628. All ladies are welcome!



Advent Angels

(Secret Pen Pal Prayer Partners)

During the Advent Season, we would like to offer a fun way to connect with the VPC congregation through Advent Angels or secret prayer partners. Advent Angels operate similarly to a Secret Santa with the difference being you pray for your partner secretly, send them anonymous cards of inspiration, fun

notes, letters of encouragement, and whatever you feel is in your heart through the mail during the next few weeks. At the conclusion of advent, you then reveal yourself to your partner. This is a great way to feel connected during the Christmas Season during COVID when we are all trying to practice social distancing.

The 2nd week of Nov, you will receive a person to pray for and write to (remember don't sign it, it's a secret) We suggest a minimum of 1 correspondence a week. The last week of advent we will let you know when to reveal your identity to your secret prayer partner. What a wonderful time to be connecting!

If you would like to participate, please email (cloomis@venicepres.org) with name, address, prayer requests with Attn: Advent Angels. You may also call or mail your information to the church.

How to Sign-up for RightNow Media

1. Email cloomis@venicepres.org to request access.
2. Receive your invitation email.
3. Click the Get Started button in the email.
4. Create your profile...and explore!

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www.rightnowmedia.org

Safety Team

We have a wonderful group of people who came together in the early spring (via virtual meetings) to form the VPC Safety Team. Many safety aspects of church and campus life here at VPC have already been in place which has

made our job much easier. We have been busy reviewing what is already in place, adding some new safety features to the campus, and planning for a safe future. Here are some tasks the safety team is currently working on or are in the planning stages:

- Sanitizing of the sanctuary/narthex following services
- Worship Registration
- Secured Office Door
- Camera installations on campus
- Online First Aid Training for Seizures
- Security officer at Sunday service
- Painting of the parking lot lines and curbs
- CPR & First Aid training
- Evacuation procedures for weather or fire events
- Group sign in procedures
- Identifying Safety Team members for events
- Risk Assessments
- Safety Manual
- Additional trainings

If you would like to be a part of this team, please email Cherie at cloomis@venicepres.org



Watch Parties

What is a watch party? Watch Party is a new way for people to watch videos on Facebook together in real time. Once a Watch Party is started, participants can watch videos, live or recorded, and interact with one another around them in the same moment.

We encourage you to give it a try! Invite friends and family to watch Sunday's service together or host a watch party for Christmas Eve services.

All Saints 2020

We remember with love those from the VPC family who have died since All Saints Day (November 1) 2019

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Thelma Alexander | Don Larrabee |
| Bob Armstrong | Bill Lettow |
| Marjorie Balmer | Lennie MacArthur |
| Charlie Bruce | Don Manning |
| Fred Buehler | Doris McGregor |
| Betty Campbell | Betty Miller |
| Elaine Cassidy | Jan Nascimbeni |
| Madison Drew | Jackie Nash |
| Jill Engel | Peggy Nicholas |
| Marge Evans | Jim Northrup |
| Ron Ford | Phil Peterson |
| Bobbie Francis | Aline Powell |
| Gwen Gorham | Sharon Robinson |
| Dot Gorman | Marilyn Rynbrand |
| Bernie Grootwassink | Ray Smith |
| Don Harper | Fred Sputh |
| Dick Hauck | Jack Starks |
| Betty Herrick | Vera Taborsky |
| Herb Higley | Lee Thompson |
| John King | Mary Jane Walewyk |
| Carl Klopshinske | Esther Wells |
| Bernice Knezo | Donna Jean Wichser |
| Lorraine Koshak | Ron Wickham |
| Dottie Kummerer | Guenn Winterbottom |
| Victoria Johnson | |
| Libbye Larance | |