



FPC This Week



From the Pastor's Blog *The Reality of Change*

One of the greatest changes and challenges the church faces today is in the area of information, or more specifically, access to information. The continual development of digital tools and new technologies is moving at an unimaginable pace. "Well that's o.k. If you're into that sort of thing," I often hear folks say.

Reality Check Number One: You may not be interested in this, but the vast majorities of people under forty are.

Reality Check Number Two: Personal computers, tablets, mobile devices, and smart phones are providing our society with almost unlimited access to people, information, and their ideas. This is especially true for generations of people born after 1960 (the last birth year for those who qualify as Baby Boomers).

A few years ago when I was preaching in a church in Wichita, Kansas I gave a children's sermon before the "real sermon." In it I asked the kids what they enjoyed doing the most in their spare time. A very precocious little girl, about seven, answered with "I like to text my friends."

Reality Check Number Three: Technology is fueling rapid change in our society and generational disconnections. This is especially true of the current generation (who have been labeled Millennials) and the previous one (labeled GenX), to some extent. These generations have been born into and raised up in this age of overwhelming technological change. In fact, an argument could be made that the current generation not only continues to adapt to change but also now expects continual change. They look forward to the latest or newest version of a game, product, app, or technology.

Reality Check Number Four: In the midst of these new technologies and the access they bring, the church struggles to connect and minister. While our message of change, grace, and eternal life through Jesus Christ is alive and even viewed as "edgy" by many young people today, the church itself is often viewed as outdated, stiff, boring, and unable to change. Yes, it is here where the battle rages and challenges must be met.

We know our message is relevant but we must also address the necessary changes that will allow others, especially younger generations, to see the church itself as vital and relevant in their lives. This might be the greatest challenge before us.

Technology, information access, and change are part of the current generations self-identity. It affects how they view the world around them and previous generations' views on culture, politics- and especially their view of religion in general and Christianity specifically. Bottom-line, the church today must address the necessity of change if it expects to remain relevant in a changing world or as the Apostle Paul would remind us, we must be in the world but not of the world.

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~**Pastor Mike**

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

This Sunday, February 16:

Sexton: Phil Thow

Coffee Hour: Inner Life

Nursery: Deidra Ricci and Kim Aleicho

Young Children's Worship: Brian Ross

Hospitality: Brain and Darien Petit,
Ross Family, Charlotte Ricci, Don
Fennessey, John Wicks

This past Sunday, February 9:

Sexton: Brian Petit

Coffee Hour: Inner Life

Nursery: Deidra Ricci and Karyn Straka

**Young Children's Worship-Mikyong
Kim**

Hospitality: Tim and Stacie Schultz,
Judy Graves, Mike Franco, Charlotte
Ricci, Don Fennessey, Dave Kolator

Communion- Dick and Judy
Hoogendoorn

SAVE THE DATES!



● Congregational Meeting is Sunday, February 16 after the service. Lunch is provided.



● On February 19, the men's Bible Study begins ***The Battle Plan for Prayer*** by the Kendrick brothers, 6:30pm in the Hometime Room.



● Family Fun and Game Night is February 21 at 5:30pm at FPC.



● Daylight Saving Time begins March 8 (Spring forward an hour!)



● Palm Sunday is April 5

● Easter Sunday is April 12

Sermon Connect

Pastor Mike created Sermon Connect in a simple format so that it could be used for discussion between friends, in a small group, or over coffee. It can be a wonderful tool to engage people who have questions about God!

Sunday, February 9, Pastor Mike preached on ***What's Wrong with the World?*** from 1 John 2:15-17. John uses a series of contrasts to distinguish between distortion, deception and factual truth.

John uses the Greek word "cosmos" in a plethora of definitions - creation, mankind, and in this case, darkness.

Pastor Mike preached on 3 main points:

1) A distorted reality, vs. 15: Things of the world are twisted.

Fact: If you love the world and its darkness, the love of the Father is not in you.

2) A deceptive attraction, vs. 16: All that is in the world is a temporary attraction.

Fact: All that is in the world has been distorted by the desires promoted by the world and "is not from the Father but is from the world."

3) A factual alternative, vs. 17: The world is passing away. The world is in a state of decay.

Fact: Whoever does the will of God abides forever.

For thought and discussion:

~The world produces artificial light, but Christ is the true light. How does the artificial light of the world compare to the true light of Christ?

~The church grows when the Word is preached and when the church is persecuted.

~How is the eternal love and life that Christ gives in stark contrast to the decay of all that is in the world, and the world itself? Who can you share this eternal hope and love with this week?



We want to thank Chaplain Diana vanBuren Lantz for gracing our pulpit on Sunday, February 2. Diana is originally from New Zealand and married to Bob Lantz, who served First Presbyterian in the late 1990s. We give our heartfelt thanks for blessing us with your message!

FAMILY AND KIDS MINISTRIES

Bring your favorite game to share!

FAMILY NIGHT

FAMILY FUN AND GAME NIGHT
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21,
5:30pm at FPC.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

It's a perfect opportunity to get to know people in the church.

Come for a fun evening of pizza, games for the adults, and plenty of play time for the kids! It's a perfect opportunity to get to know people in the church. Bring a salad, dessert or drinks to go with the pizza.

Please contact Barbara Ross to find out what to bring,

barb.ross1015@yahoo.com or 904-742-9626.

Don't forget that the reading challenge ends on February 21! If your kids read 5 books from the church library, they will be awarded a small prize.

If you have any questions or want to share your kids progress, Barbara Ross would love to hear from you: barb.ross1015@yahoo.com or 904-742-9626.

We look forward to hearing about it this month!



The Sunday School class on the Westminster short catechism is off to a fantastic start! Pastor Mike and Rosanne Franco teach this class that prepares our youth to take communion and be members who profess their faith in Jesus Christ. The class meets at 9:15am on the second floor of the CE building.



Join us for Sunday School at 9:15am!

A discussion-based Bible study of 1 John, paralleling Pastor Mike's sermon series, is facilitated by John Wicks.

Where: The Lynch Room, 2nd floor above the Fellowship Hall (look for the sign on the stairs)

A Bible study on the book of Philippians, to be followed by a study of Ephesians, is led by Don Estes.

Where: The Hometime Room, main level off of the Fellowship Hall



Adult Bible Studies

For FPC Men:

Calling all Men Prayer Warriors. On February 19, the men's Bible Study will be starting a study of the book ***The Battle Plan for Prayer*** by the Kendrick brothers. The men's Bible Study meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 6:30pm in the Hometime Room.

Promise Keepers meet for optional breakfast at Chelsea's, 1015 Aquidneck Ave at 7:00 Saturday mornings, followed by a time of Bible study, discussion and prayer in the Hometime room at 8:00am. Contact Don Fennessey at fenns@hotmail.com

For Women:

Darkness and Light: A Study of 1 & 2 Thessalonians

Mondays 6pm at the Kolator home. Contact Alice Thomas at thomasesar@aol.com for more info.

For All: The Friday night group meets the second and fourth Friday of the month, rotating at members' homes. We are studying Genesis. Contact Tim Schultz @ 919-699-7576.

LEGEND HAS IT...the History of Valentine's Day

Did you know that Valentine's Day has its historical roots in Christianity?



A famous legend about Saint Valentine states Valentine was an early Christian in Rome who was popular among children. During the time when Valentine lived, the Roman regime persecuted Christians to make Rome free of the followers of Christianity. In spite of this strict law, Valentine continued to practice his faith and refused to worship Roman gods. An enraged Emperor Claudius II put Valentine into prison.

Valentine is said to have spent a year in rigorous imprisonment during which he was missed so much by his followers that they began to toss loving notes and flowers between the bars of his cell window. This legend may explain the traditions of cards and flowers on Valentine's Day.

Some scholars believe that during his stay in prison Valentine made friends with the jailer's blind daughter who at times brought him notes and flowers from children. Before his death, Valentine is also said to have written a farewell note to the jailer's daughter and signed it "From Your Valentine."

Other scholars believe that Valentine was killed because he tried to help Christians escape from the Roman prison as they were being tortured and beaten. Yet another legend say Emperor Claudius II was impressed by Valentine's kindness and good behavior. He even stated that Valentine could be freed if he agreed to worship Roman gods. Valentine did not only refuse, he also tried to convert the Emperor to Christianity. This made Claudius so angry that he ordered his execution. Valentine was beheaded on February 14.

Whether or not all of these stories are true, what is true is the love of God through our Savior, Jesus Christ. Valentine's Day is traditionally known as a day of romance, but what greater romance is there than the Divine One? God's love for us, His agape love transcends all other loves and reminds us that our life is a gift, a privilege, sacred because of the love that was demonstrated on the cross, while we were yet sinners. This week, let someone know you love them! February is the perfect time to exemplify the love of Christ to someone who is lonely or in need of encouragement.

SHARE YOUR HEART IN FEBRUARY: SIGN UP FOR FELLOWSHIP TIME!

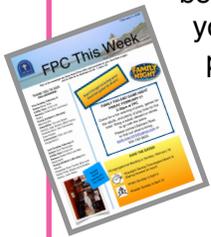
February is one of the best months of the year to share your recipes and celebrate the love of God. Pair up with a friend or better yet, someone you'd like to get to know better! You can sign up in the Fellowship Hall, where there are more detailed instructions on how to serve during this important time to connect with new and familiar faces on Sunday morning. Questions? Contact Tim Schultz at 919-699-7576.



Do you receive the **Enews** to your email? If you have access to the internet, you can also read it on the FPC website at

<https://fpcnewport.org/e-news/>

The print is clear, and you can enlarge the size to make it more legible. A page turner on the bottom left corner allows you to turn to each **Enews** page as though you are reading a magazine. It's eye-catching, as well as a practical format for everyone.



Social Media

Our Facebook page (facebook.com/fpcnewport) is updated several times a week with current information and spiritual encouragement.



Find us through Instagram at [fpcnewport](https://instagram.com/fpcnewport).



Church Office Hours
M-Wed, 9am - 1pm
401-847-1749



Please Pray:

- For our young people, as they participate in the communicant class, and for our new Sunday School classes and small group Bible studies, that God's Word would be understood with clarity and applied in truth.
- Praise that Barbara Estes is doing better and able to come to church!
- Praise that Charlotte Ricci's ankle is healing!
- **For our military and their families, stateside and deployed overseas.**
- For our pastor, elders, deacons, staff, musicians and volunteers.
- **For Dick and Cindy Price** as Dick continues to recover from his 2nd stem cell transplant. For updates, contact Deidra Ricci at pamperdee@cox.net

If you have a prayer request that you would like to be added to the ENews, please send it to irene@fpcnewport.org. Your prayer care and needs are of the highest importance!

We do our very best to include all the news you can use in the **Enews**. Here are the guidelines to share information in the **Enews** and the **Church Bulletin**. We appreciate your help in keeping our family, friends and the community up to date!

- **Enews Submissions:** Should be submitted to irene@fpcnewport.org by the Thursday prior.
- **Church Bulletin Submissions:** Should be submitted to secretary@fpcnewport.org no later than the Tuesday prior to when they will appear in the Sunday bulletin.
- **Please include in all submissions:**
 - Name of event/class/announcement
 - Start date/end date
 - Start time/end time
 - **Location** (room within the church)/Name and street address if outside the church
 - **A direct point of contact** to the person(s) in charge via email and/or phone.
 - Any other relevant details specific to the event/class/announcement

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