



FPC ENews

The Communion of Saints

Most Christians today have heard of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German pastor and theologian who was martyred for his faith by the Nazis during WWII. Bonhoeffer wrote his doctoral dissertation, *Sanctorum Communio* (The Communion of Saints), at the age of 21. His choice of this topic was influenced by his understanding of Martin Luther's doctrine of justification and reformed view of the church as a community. Bonhoeffer understood the importance of Christian community and the fact that it could easily be taken for granted or misconstrued.

He realized that there were those who loved the dream of community more than the genuineness of Christian faith and community. Their inaccurate views of community were not properly developed or grounded within the Word of God. In his work *Life Together* Bonhoeffer writes:

“Precisely at this point, Christian community is most often threatened from the very outset by the greatest danger, the danger of internal poisoning, the danger of confusing Christian community with some wishful image of pious community.”

Bonhoeffer understood that genuine Christian community would be built upon a community of sinners. Sinners create imperfect communities. So any attempt at Christian community must be grounded in and built upon the Word of God. He understood that Christian community can never be formed in the abstract. Political slogans and causes will not enhance the bonds of a faith community. Justice comes from God, not from societies of sinners. God continues to be God, not just a name to be pulled out of a box by those who want to add weight to an argument or cause that they are promoting.

The Christian community is a community built on faith in God. it seeks to inform and promote the biblical justice of the God of the Old and New Testaments, not a flawed system of “social” justice where the wisdom of God’s Word is never mentioned in its proper context. The bond that holds our faith community, our church, together is our relationship with the one true living God, through His Son and our Lord, Jesus Christ.

During a very difficult time, the prophet Zephaniah wrote these words:

“The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you by His love; He will exult over you with loud singing.” Zephaniah 3:17

As Christians, we must continually be reminded that the essence of our faith community is “**HE**” and then “**WE**,” working together for **HIS** glory.

Blessings, Pastor Mike

With regards...

Last month, the Session, in a unanimous vote, approved some needed changes to update our current church bylaws. The changes will now be presented to the congregation at a congregational meeting scheduled for Sunday, August 30, immediately after the worship service.

These changes were enacted to remove references to our former affiliation with the PCUSA and align our bylaws with our current denomination, the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterian Churches, ECO.

Finally, there were three very specific changes (but not limited to) recommended in the updated bylaws: first, the number of elders be decreased from twelve to nine; second, the number of deacons be reduced from fifteen to nine; third, the number of people serving on the Nominating Committee be decreased to five. These specific changes are more reflective of the size of FPC and will allow a far greater opportunity to fill these positions with qualified individuals who are willing to serve.

Pastor Mike is preaching out of the New Testament book of Romans, the most complete book on theology in the New Testament. The author, the apostle Paul, lays out how the Old Testament and New Testament forever tie together through faith in Christ. Pastor Mike has been on fire as he preaches boldly about themes such as justification, reconciliation, peace amidst suffering, and most importantly, salvation through faith alone in Jesus Christ. Here's how you can access his most recent sermons:

The church website: fpcnewport.org

Facebook: [facebook.com/fpcnewport](https://www.facebook.com/fpcnewport)

Instagram: [fpcnewport](https://www.instagram.com/fpcnewport)

YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRsZk0Ncjjc&t=8s>



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praises that we are able to worship in person!
- Diane, Brian Petit's sister, who has cancer
- Lori (Alice and Ralph Thomas' daughter) doing Hospice at COVID Specialty Nursing Home
- Heather (Nancy and Ed Burgess' daughter) taking care of patients on the COVID Ward at Mass General
- Danielle (Dick and Cindy Price's daughter) working with COVID patients
- Charis and Joshua (daughter and son-in-law of missionaries Larry and Linda Jones) who are still in Bangladesh working in a missions hospital battling COVID
- Tim Mitchell, Pastor Mike and Irene's son-in-law, who is a firefighter and first responder in the Denver area, serving with a grasslands unit that deploys to fight wildfires.
- That people would turn to Jesus Christ in this time of crisis
- For our military, serving at home and overseas

Office Hours are flexible. If you can't reach the office by phone, please e-mail @ secretary@fpcnewport.org
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The prayer of the upright pleases Him. Proverbs 15:8b

WE'RE OPEN SUNDAYS FOR WORSHIP!



- Service begins at 10:00 am.
- All who enter the church must wear a face mask during the service.
- At this time, no Sunday School, nursery, or fellowship time will be offered.
- Pew Bibles will not be available so you will need to bring your own Bible.
- Hymnals will not be available so we will have printed music sheets in the bulletins.
- We will practice social distancing in sanctuary seating.
- Offering plates will be placed in the front and rear of the sanctuary for your convenience and will be collected during the designated offering time.
- There will be no children's sermon.
- No activity bags will be provided, so children may want to bring similar items of their own.

These guidelines/restrictions allow us to continue to worship together. Even with the restrictions, we have enjoyed meeting together to worship and hear preaching and encouragement through the Word of God.

Finally, remember there is hand sanitizer placed throughout the church for your use. We encourage you to bring your own as well. Also, if you are sick or running a fever, please remain at home.

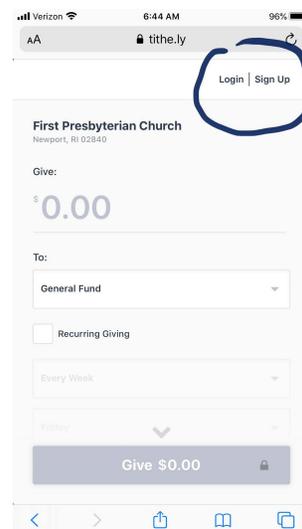
We can't wait to see you!

LOOKING AHEAD



**You can now
give online!**

Go to the church website fpcnewport.org and click on the far right GIVE tab on the main menu bar. You can then create an account by clicking on "Sign Up" in the top right corner.



Sunday, September 13, the worship service will move to 10:30 am.

Sunday School is tentatively scheduled to begin October 4 at 9 am. We will keep you updated on available classes for kids, youth and adults.

Small group Bible studies will be offered in the fall. They will be meeting via Zoom. Be looking for new opportunities to fellowship and study the Bible in more depth!

