

February 9, 2023

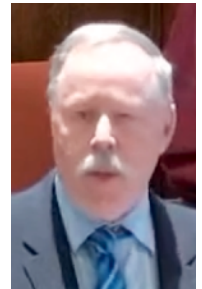


# This week at FPC

"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure." Hebrews 6:19

## Four Chaplains Sunday on the 80th anniversary of their sacrifice

The four chaplains were honored by Phil Haun, who read their biographies, Don Fennessey, who told their story, and the choir and congregation who sang patriotic hymns to remember these brave religious men. The colors were posted by members of VFW 406. Their story is recapped on page four of this newsletter.



### First Presbyterian Church 135th Annual Meeting!

Sunday, February 12  
in the dining hall, after worship service

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11*

Enjoy a lunch of sandwiches and salad as we review the past year and look forward to the challenges, opportunities and blessings God will provide in 2023. As we seek a new pastor, it is important to be present for the committee reports, especially the Pastor Nominating Committee. The 2022 annual report is available for advance reading. Copies can be picked up at the church, or members can obtain a digital copy at [secretary@fpcnewport.org](mailto:secretary@fpcnewport.org).

# On the Journey

*Please pray thanks and praise to the Lord for His faithfulness in bringing community members to FPC to commemorate those who exemplified selfless service to Him.*

## Search for a new pastor—update

The Pastor Nominating Committee (Greg Bloom, Deidra Ricci, Jamie Landsman, Barbara Ross, Mark Barnes, Nancy Burgess, Susan Fennessey) has begun meeting. The congregation is invited to reach out to any committee member with questions, concerns, or suggestions. The Vision Framing Team is also at work, and their findings will add valuable insight and information. The members are: Chip Wilson, Tim Schultz, Stacie Schultz, Rachel Nerheim, Mike Ricci, Phil Haun, and Daryl Kolator.

## Come sing with us!

If you like to sing and love praising God through song, our choir needs you! This is a warm and welcoming group. Just come to rehearsal Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m.! Music is an important part of our worship service, especially as we approach the season of Lent and Easter. Singing anthems like last Sunday's can enrich your spiritual life.

*My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine.  
Now hear me while I pray; take all my guilt away;  
O let me from this day be wholly thine!*

*May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart;  
my zeal inspire!*

*As thou hast died for me, oh, may my love to thee  
pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire!*

*While life's dark maze I tread, and griefs around me spread,  
be thou my guide.*

*Bid darkness turn to day, wipe sorrow's tears away,  
nor let me ever stray from thee aside.*

## A friendly and valued tradition

We are all grateful for those who bring treats and serve as hosts and hostesses for coffee hour after Sunday service. Your time and effort offer a blessing for the congregation to enjoy. It's an easy, much appreciated way to serve! If you've not signed up recently, please consider adding your name to the clipboard near the coffee. The table and coffee service are all set up so your part is simple—just set out some refreshments and keep the coffee pot filled—and there is always someone around to help.



**Friday, February 17**

**5:30 p.m.**

Games and activities for all ages, from 2 to 92! Families, singles, all are invited!

We'll provide pizza, and you may bring a salad or dessert if you'd like to. There's something for everyone, even if you just want to eat the pizza, relax and watch the fun, and enjoy the fellowship. To reserve your pizza slice, call Barbara at 904-742-9626.

## Weekly Meetings and Activities

### Thursday, February 9

9:00 a.m. —1 p.m. Church office open\*  
2:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study (Zoom)

### Friday, February 10

7:00 p.m. Small Group Bible Study

### Saturday, February 11

7:00 a.m. Promise Keepers breakfast  
at Chelsea's restaurant

### Sunday, February 12

9:15 a.m. Sunday School all ages  
10:00 a.m. Choir practice  
10:00 a.m. Pre-worship prayer time  
10:30 a.m. Worship service  
(nursery care available)  
11:45 a.m. Annual meeting and lunch  
6:00 p.m. Evensong (Zoom)

### Monday, February 13

9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. office open\*  
6:00 p.m. Building and Grounds  
7:00 p.m. 20s & 30s Small Group

### Wednesday, February 15

6:30 Choir practice

\* office hours may vary



## Reaching Out...

### "Soup"er Bowl Sunday Soup Drive!



This Sunday we encourage everyone to bring in a few cans of soup to contribute to our "Soup"er Bowl Soup Drive. FPC donates food each month to St. John's Lodge Food Bank in Portsmouth. At this time the need is great, and we are supplementing our regular donations with this special soup drive donation. Collection baskets are available all month in the fellowship hall to receive your items and we'll have additional collection baskets or boxes downstairs as we gather for our annual luncheon. So please check your food cupboards, and pick up a few extra cans of soup next time you shop for groceries.

### Serving food to our neighbors brings rewards to those who help

"I was moved by how appreciative the guests were for the delicious (and warm) meal that was made by Deb MacDowell and Jamie Landsman. As a meal server that evening, I heard numerous "thank you so much" "this is delicious" and "could I please have some more" from our guests. Driving home, I reflected on how lucky I was to be in a position to be of service and it made my heart feel full."



This comment from Julia Ward expresses the feelings of our Soup Kitchen crew. Last week they served 29 meals to grateful guests. Robert and Christine Sahms, Julie Ward, Linda Conheeny, Paul Cabral, Coleen and Jerry Spencer helped prepare and serve the meal. Sue Fennessey and others managed the clean-up process. If you would like to be part of this group, Contact Coleen Spencer, coleenspencer@cox.net, or text/call Darien Petit at 401-323-0077.

*"Thou preparest a table before me..."*

## Pray...



...for the **Pastor Nominating Committee** as they seek the Lord's guidance in finding our next pastor.

This week we offer these words from Proverbs 3:5-6:

*"Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
And lean not on your own understanding;  
In all your ways acknowledge Him,  
And He shall direct your paths."*

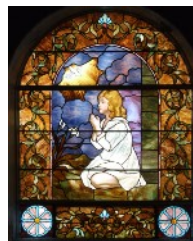
...for our church as we renew our faith in God's plan for all of us and reach out to those around us. Join Deidra Ricci in the Fellowship Hall Sunday at 10 a.m. to pray together before worship.

...for our nation and its leaders, for our first responders and for all those who serve our nation in dangerous parts of the world, including Jacob Ricci, Mark Incze, and others related to our church members.

...for the spoken and unspoken needs of those in our church family who will have or are recovering from surgery, are ill or enduring hardships or loss and in need of God's healing and grace. And as you pray, please remember these and many others in our church family and beyond.

Janet Champagne and family  
Tristan, Linda Conheeny's  
grandson  
Nadira Ferreira's father  
Bonnie Haun  
Ida (Stacie Schultz's mother)  
Ralph and Alice Thomas

Lynn and Larry Chase  
Rich DaGrosa  
Graciela Emerick's family  
Bonnie Haun's brother Mike  
Bruce and Jan Jones  
Lilia Svizzero Merrill  
Cindy and Chip Wilson



Isaiah 41:13 reminds us,

*"For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, 'fear not, I am the one who helps you.'"*



### First Presbyterian Church

4 Everett Street (Broadway and Everett)  
Newport, Rhode Island  
401-847-1749 • fpcnewport.org  
facebook.com/fpcnewport.org  
Sunday Worship Service 10:30 am  
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.



# The Four Chaplains

*Last Sunday's sermon referred to "The Four Chaplains."  
If you were unable to attend the worship service, here is a  
brief recap of this true and inspiring story of sacrifice.  
(From <http://www.fourchaplains.org> in Honor of the Four  
Chaplains 6 Feb 2005.)*



On the evening of February 2, 1943, the converted luxury liner U.S.A.T. Dorchester, was filled to capacity, carrying 902 servicemen, merchant seamen and civilian workers. The Dorchester and two other ships were steaming toward an American base in Greenland, escorted by Coast Guard Cutters Tampa, Escanaba and Comanche.

Earlier, the Tampa's sonar had detected a submarine sonar, most likely a German U-boat. Hans Danielsen, the Dorchester's captain, ordered the men to sleep in their clothing and keep life jackets on. Many soldiers sleeping in the ship's hold disregarded the order because of the engine's heat. Others ignored it because the life jackets were uncomfortable.

At 12:55 a.m., an officer aboard the German submarine U-223 spotted the Dorchester through his periscope. He gave orders to fire torpedoes. The hit was deadly, striking the starboard side, amid ship, far below the water line. Danielsen alerted the other ships by radio that the Dorchester was taking water rapidly and sinking and then gave the order to abandon ship. Aboard the Dorchester, panic and chaos had set in. The blast had killed scores of men, and many more were seriously wounded. Others were groping in the darkness. Those sleeping without clothing and life jackets rushed topside where they were confronted by a blast of icy Arctic air and by the knowledge that death waited. Men jumped from the ship into lifeboats, overcrowding them to the point of capsizing. Other rafts drifted away before soldiers could get in them.

According to those present, four Army chaplains brought hope in despair and light in darkness. Those chaplains were Lt. George L. Fox, Methodist; Lt. Alexander D. Goode, Jewish; Lt. John P. Washington, Roman Catholic; and Lt. Clark V. Poling, Dutch Reformed. Quickly and quietly the four chaplains spread out among the soldiers. They tried to calm the frightened, tend the wounded and guide the disoriented toward safety.

"Witnesses remember hearing the four men offer prayers for the dying and encouragement for those who would live," says Wyatt R. Fox, son of Reverend Fox. One witness, Private William B. Bednar, found himself floating in oil-smearred water surrounded by dead bodies and debris. "I could hear men crying, pleading, praying," Bednar recalls. "I could also hear the chaplains preaching courage. Their voices were the only thing that kept me going."

When a Petty Officer tried to reenter his cabin to retrieve his gloves, he was stopped by Rabbi Goode. "Never mind," Goode said. "I have two pairs." The rabbi then gave the man his own gloves.

With most of the men topside, the chaplains opened a storage locker and began distributing life jackets. When there were no more lifejackets in the storage room, the chaplains removed their own jackets and gave them to four frightened young men.

"It was the finest thing I have seen or hope to see this side of heaven," said John Ladd, a survivor who saw the chaplains' selfless act. The action of the four chaplains was one of the purest spiritual and ethical acts a person can make. When giving their life jackets, Rabbi Goode did not call out for a Jew; Father Washington did not call out for a Catholic; nor did the Reverends Fox and Poling call out for a Protestant. They simply gave their life jackets to the next man in line.

As the ship went down (only 20 minutes after the hit), survivors in nearby rafts could see the four chaplains, arms linked and braced against the slanting deck. Their voices could also be heard offering prayers. Of the 902 men aboard, 672 died, leaving 230 survivors. That night Reverend Fox, Rabbi Goode, Reverend Poling and Father Washington passed life's ultimate test. In doing so, they became an enduring example of extraordinary faith, courage and selflessness. The Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart were awarded posthumously December 19, 1944, to the next of kin in a ceremony at the post chapel at Fort Myer, VA. A posthumous Special Medal for Heroism, never before given and never to be given again was authorized by Congress and awarded by the President January 18, 1961.



Postage stamp issued May 1948

