

The Window



First Presbyterian Church
SANTA MONICA

MAY 2022



Photo by Solo Shutter on Stocksnap

“What a wildly wonderful world, God! You made it all, with Wisdom at your side, made earth overflow with your wonderful creations.”

Psalm 104:24

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Thank you to everyone who did something this last month to honor or care for our planet. And thank you to all of you who helped with our beach cleanup.

To be honest, global warming and the climate crisis is overwhelming. There is so much that we can do, but because change requires collective participation it's hard to see the ways that our actions make a difference. But when we turn to our faith story in the Bible, we see that this isn't a new struggle.

This is what we can see in our earliest parable-like stories in the book of Genesis. This first couple (Adam and Eve) have a meal that opens their eyes to a world of good and evil. They see our world as we see it and experience it. It's sort of like a coming-of-age story where they leave the safety of the garden to discover a world that is more beautiful and more dangerous than they imagined.

At the beginning, the real world is a bit too much for them, which is why God almost immediately finds them hiding. But later in the Easter story there is another couple who are walking away from the crisis of Jesus' death in Jerusalem. And like Adam and Eve, they have a meal that opens their eyes, but this time what is new is the possibility of hope. Having seen the darkness of the cross, their eyes are now open to the hope of resurrection and new life.

In response to this eye-opening meal, the couple in the gospel of Luke return to the Jerusalem. They return to the ongoing crisis of life in a city ruled by an oppressive empire. They remain engaged with the reality of our world AND they are ready for their actions to make a real difference.

What is your coming-of-age story? When did you first realize that the world was both more beautiful and more dangerous than you knew? And how have you tried to cope with that tension? I certainly understand the impulse to turn away and close my eyes to what is difficult. Unfortunately, every time I close my eyes to the struggle, I'm also closing my eyes to what is so good.

If we continue to close our eyes to the climate crisis, we know that everything will find it harder to see and enjoy the beauty and goodness of our home.

So, in this Easter season may the death and resurrection of Jesus embolden us to see clearly. And may God multiply our actions as we collectively make a difference in our world.

Blessings,

Rev. Tim Vance

MAY 2022 Calendar

Sunday, May 1st

10:00 a.m. Lunch Bag Assembly, Patio (Sandwich Drop-off)

11:15 a.m. New Member's Class

Friday, May 6th

6:30 p.m. Vawters' Daughters, Online via Zoom

Tuesday, May 17th

6:15 p.m. Finance Team Meeting, Online

7:15 p.m. Session Meeting, Online

Saturday, May 28th

5:00 p.m. Kids Night Out, Youth Lounge

WEEKLY AT FIRST PRES

Thursdays: 9:30 a.m. Bible Study, Online via Zoom

Sundays: 10:00 a.m. Worship Service, Sanctuary and Online

10:00 a.m. Children's Faith Groups, 2nd Floor Admin Bldg

10:00 p.m. Youth Faith Group, Youth Lounge - 2nd Floor Admin Bldg

SUMMER 2022 EVENTS



Women's Retreat | Saturday, June 18

CALM IN THE CENTER OF CRAZY

We had crazy-busy lives that came to a screeching halt with the pandemic. The question now is, *do we trust God with what we let back in?* Join us for the 2022 Women's Retreat as we explore with question with author and speaker, Nicole Johnson. Registration can be completed online at bit.ly/FPCWomensretreat. Presented by the Spiritual Growth Team.

Vacation Bible School | June 27 - July 1

FOOD TRUCK PARTY: ON A ROLL WITH GOD!

VBS is back! Children aged 3 through 5th grade are invited to join us daily from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. for this year's VBS program. All kids are invited to stay for VBS Plus from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. That's a full day of activities for kids age 3 to rising 5th grade (*that means kids entering 5th grade in the fall*). Please contact [Peter Earhart](#) for [registration](#) and more information.



Spiritual Growth Ministry May 2022

SUNDAY FAITH GROUPS

Children in preschool – 5th grade are invited to join us for the Children’s Faith Group’s lesson and activities. Upon arrival, children are invited to attend Children’s Time in the service and then head to their faith groups. All children will need to wear a facemask while in their Faith Groups.

Church Mice (Pre-K – Kinder) - Faith Discoverers (1st -2nd Grade)
Faith Explorers (3rd – 5th Grades)

May 1 – One Body
May 8 – What is Love?
May 15 – Breaking Down Walls
May 22 – God is Near
May 29 – Remain in God’s Love

SUNDAY YOUTH FAITH GROUP

Youth in grades 6-12 are invited to join us for the Youth Faith Group’s lesson and activities. Upon arrival, youth should go directly to the Youth Lounge. All youth will need to wear a facemask while in Faith Group.

Kids Night Out

On Saturday, May 28, from 5-8 pm you can drop off your 3 year-old to 5th grader at the church and we’ll feed them food, play games with them, create art with them, and just have a fun time being together. And you’re free to do, well, whatever you want for three hours.

There’s no cost, but you do need to sign up. Middle and High School Youth can join us as well! Get valuable service hours by helping out.

We will still be operating under *pandemic procedures*:

- 1 The number of attendees will be limited.
- 2 Pre-registration is required.
- 3 Screening and temperature checks will take place at sign-in.
- 4 Masking and physical distancing will be required.

Vacation Bible School



FOOD TRUCK PARTY: ON A ROLL WITH GOD!

June 27– July 1, 2022 9 am—noon - For children age 3 to rising 5th grade and an optional plus program from noon—3 pm. Cost: \$40 for VBS; \$40 for plus program.

Please contact [Peter Earhart](#) 310-451-1303 for [registration](#) and more information. Space is limited so register early!

Spiritual Growth

Ways to Walk

There's something sacred in choosing to love the world at the speed of walking.

by Debra Dean Murphy

There are more than 200 references to walking in the Bible. Some have to do with physical mobility ("take up your bed and walk"). Many are metaphorical, like Micah's famous dictum that ends with the phrase "walk humbly with your God." There is also much talk of paths—ancient paths and slippery paths, paths of the wicked and of the upright, crooked paths and straight ones. The earliest Christians were called people who belonged to the Way, which suggests that discipleship from the beginning was a collective movement, with fellow travelers bound to each other in mutual care and affection. Certain strands of modern Protestantism would come to promote a more private spiritual project, posing questions like, "How is your walk with Jesus?"

In recent months I found myself walking more than I ever have in my life. I walked for the benefits to my physical well-being. (I ran a good bit, too, but that is a different thing, with other associations to the Christian life.) I walked to relieve mental and emotional stress—to work some things out in my head and heart. And I walked to transport myself from hotel, to train, to hospital, and back again many times while my son was ill for several days in a faraway city.

Freedom from our devices is also a gift of mindful walking. We live so much of our lives in virtual spaces, interacting—even with those in close physical proximity to us—across digital platforms that are simultaneously everywhere and nowhere. But when we walk, we traverse geography at scale—moving through real time and real space with our real bodies. If the phone is pocketed and ignored, it is possible even to perceive differently, to engage all the senses, to be aware of one's body and the parallel rhythms of walking and breathing, step-taking and heart-beating, moving with intention and thinking with precision.

In many religious traditions, pilgrimage is a form of walking that holds together the spiritual and the material, the journey and the arrival. Historically, pilgrims were not physically fit but often frail, walking great distances to reach healing wells and holy relics that would confer a blessing and restore well-being. Then and now, to make a pilgrimage is to walk not only in time and space but in a story. The hajj, for instance, highlights the significance of Abraham (Ibrahim) for Islam, and Muslim pilgrims from around the world enact ritualized walking in the city of Mecca, dressed identically in simple white clothing meant to conceal wealth and social status. The story of St. James the apostle's evangelizing work in Spain anchors the Santiago de Compostela, also known as the Camino ("the Way"). Most who walk this 500-mile trek attest to Thomas Merton's insight that "the geographical pilgrimage is the symbolic acting out of an inner journey."

Walking the Camino may be on my bucket list, but every day that I choose to walk mindfully—in my neighborhood, on my campus, on the streets of unfamiliar cities—is an opportunity to despiritualize geography: to be attentive to the spaces, places, people, creatures on the path in front of me and alongside me. We are all of us fellow pilgrims on this journey, bearing unseen burdens, looking for healing and holiness, even if we cannot fully name that longing. There is something sacred in this: choosing to love the world at the speed of walking and to recognize the shared, if unspoken, vulnerabilities of all whom we meet. Doesn't "walk humbly with your God" mean at least that?

I couldn't write this column without walking it into being, so to speak. There are "surprises, liberations, and clarifications," as Solnit puts it, in rising from my chair, closing the laptop, and setting forth on foot to experience walking's peculiar utility for thinking. It's a privilege, I know, and I try not to take it for granted. I commend it to you, dear reader, and wish you well on your own journey.

Debra Dean Murphy is associate professor of religion at West Virginia Wesleyan College and author of *Happiness, Health, and Beauty: The Christian Life in Everyday Terms*.

Concerts in May 2022



KALEIDOSCOPE

Sunday, May 8, 2022, 2:00 p.m.



Saturday, May 21, 2022, 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, May 22, 2022, 8:00 p.m.

ITALIAN MODERN | Saturday, May 21

Luigi Dallapiccola – *Tartiniana Seconda*

Ferruccio Busoni – *All' Italia! (In modo napolitano)* – *Elegy* – *Berceuse Élégiacque*

Luciano Berio – *O King* – *Chamber Music* (text by James Joyce) – *Wasserklavier, Erdenklavier, Luftklavier, Feuerklavier* – *Sequenza No. 2*

Igor Stravinsky – *Suite Italienne*

Kristen Toedtman, mezzo-soprano; Steven Vanhauwaert, piano; Movses Pogossian, violin; Alison Bjorkedal, harp; Jacaranda Chamber Ensemble, Mark Alan Hilt, conductor

Italian cars, shoes and sculpture resonate for everyone with the idea of modernism, yet Italian music, not so much. Luigi Dallapiccola and Igor Stravinsky, inspired by Nicolo Paganini's diabolical virtuosity, fashioned fiendish violin suites of Italian Baroque dance mannerisms twisted by modern obsessions with the machine. Two elegies by Ferruccio Busoni emerged from the end of the 19th century as it crashed into WWI, the influenza pandemic of 1918, and the aftermath of both. Luciano Berio penned an intimate elegy of Martin Luther King that would grow to his shatteringly original *Sinfonia*. The ultra modern writer James Joyce collected his love poems as *Chamber Music* and Berio set them as an offering to his teacher Dallapiccola. *Sequenza II* for Harp abandons stereotypes and turns to electronic inspiration. The four elements: water, earth, air, and fire stirred Berio to make a set of scintillating encores.

ITALIAN MODERN | Sunday, May 22

Franz Liszt – *Les jeux d'eau à la Villa d'Este*

Nicolo Paganini – *Caprice No. 24*

Luciano Berio – *Sequenza No. 2* for harp

Berio – *Folk Songs*

Steven Vanhauwaert, piano; Movses Pogossian, violin; Alison Bjorkedal, harp; Kristen Toedtman, mezzo soprano; Mark Alan Hilt, conductor

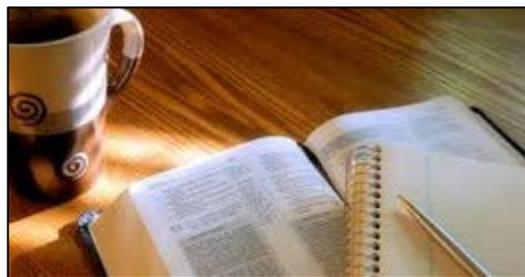
Continuing the Italian Modern theme, avant garde composers of the nineteenth century Liszt and Paganini are represented by works that set the high water mark for virtuosity, and that inspired generations well into the twentieth century. Such virtuosity is evident in Luciano Berio's brief *Sequenza* for harp, reprised from Saturday night's concert. *Folk Songs*, Berio's most popular work, was a vehicle for his then-wife Cathy Berberian's linguistic talents. It is sung in Italian, English, Armenian, French, Azerbaijani, Occitan, and Russian. Steven Vanhauwaert, piano, Movses Pogossian, violin, and Alison Bjorkedal, harp, return in solos. Mezzo-soprano Peabody Southwell returns with conductor Mark Alan Hilt and Jacaranda Chamber Ensemble to perform *Folk Songs*.

FIRST PRES COMMUNITY



Bible Study

Join Pastor Tim as we continue a season of exploring what it means to be a follower of Jesus by reading and discussing the Bible. We meet **online** via Zoom at 9:30 a.m. on Thursdays [here](#). Please contact the church office at info@fpcsantamonica.org or 310.415.1303, for information on how you can join.



Vawters' Daughters

Join the women of the congregation in-person and/or online, the first Friday of every month. In honor of those spunky sisters who played such a vital role in the history of the church, we are the *Vawters' Daughters*. We meet at 6:30 p.m., contact the church office at (310) 451-1303 or info@fpcsantamonica.org for information on how to get connected.

The Gift of Flowers

What better way to honor or remember someone special in your life by dedicating the chancel flowers in his or her name – to the glory of God.

Your gift also brings joy to First Pres members confined to home or hospital due to illness, injury or frailty. Each Sunday, the deacons deliver bouquets of the colorful arrangement to several First Pres friends unable to attend the service.

The cost of the weekly flowers is \$65.

While our Flower Calendar for the month of May is filled, there are plenty of opportunities to claim a Sunday in June or July as tribute to a friend or loved one. As of May 1, every Sunday in June is available, as well as July 3, 17 and 24. And many Sundays are still open in September, October and December.

Please let Pat Alston know which date you'd like to reserve. You can reach her by phone at 310-390-5206, or by email: pat@patalston.com. Or you can call the church office at 310-453-1303, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Fun fact: New Year's Day 2023 falls on a Sunday this year, so let Pat know if you'd like to be the flower donor to welcome in the New Year!

And if you have vases to spare, please bring them to church or contact Pat for a pick-up. We also welcome donations, in any amount, to the flower fund. Thank you for your support.

Westside Food Bank

The Westside Food Bank provides immediate hunger relief to the people of our community. Please consider making a donation to the WFB COVID-19 Emergency Food Fund here:

<https://wsfb.org>

Or you can donate to the Westside Food Bank through First Pres. by check or online

<http://fpcsantamonica.org>



Online Giving

Please know that your donations are appreciated and if you are able, the online giving site is an efficient and easy way to make your offerings. You can use the QR code below or access it through our website at <http://fpcsantamonica.org> and click **Give Your Support**.

You can also contact Kathy at kathy@fpcsantamonica.org if you have any questions or need help making a contribution.



May Birthdays

May 1	Avelaine Thompson	May 13	Gemma Rodriguez
May 2	Cory Bales	May 14	Colton Thompson
May 2	James DiGaetano	May 16	Sophia Vance
May 4	Gavin Dechaussé	May 17	Jeffery Wilkins
May 4	Tyrone DuBose	May 17	Hugo Wolff
May 4	Carl Forsander	May 18	Madison Forsander
May 7	Maliyah Farmer	May 18	Carole Riggs
May 7	Stephen Hall	May 20	Suni Allen
May 8	Sarah Baum-Lopez	May 20	Isaiah Begert
May 10	Antonio Hernandez	May 20	Thomas Cho
May 11	Karen Carrey	May 20	Richard Vincent
May 11	Judy Sommer	May 22	Melanie Wolff
May 12	Dionicio Aguilar Martinez	May 24	Marlo McNeil
May 12	Tess Knightbrook	May 29	Eric Larson
May 12	Shelly Hyde-White	May 30	Hahrin Chiang

Happy Birthday to you!



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