

Since lent is traditionally known for devoting to spiritual disciplines, such as confession, if you are the party responsible for the cooler weather please come to the principal's office immediately and explain. Nevertheless, hopefully very soon we can get back to enjoying one of primary reasons we live in paradise- the weather! Specifically, I enjoy the nice breeze! It does make Colton and mine new favorite pastime more interesting when playing pickle ball on a Tuesday or Thursday evening. Perhaps if NASA engineers have spare time after using wind tunnels testing the Orion spacecraft and Space Launch System Rockets, I can inquire if they have had any new research on pickle balls staying on the court after each hit on a windy day. Well, it comes to no surprise that wind tunnels are ultimately designed to do one essential thing: enable movement visible. Engineers do not construct wind tunnels to create wind, but to examine how objects respond to forces already at work. For example, they observe the resistance, lift, and hidden weaknesses that become visible as soon as the motion begins. It's not the power generated from the wind tunnels that makes them valuable, but their honesty. Wind tunnels show what is actually happening rather than what designers hope is happening. They allow for adjustment without pretending to control the wind. Furthermore, the objective is not domination of the environment, but a faithful response to it.

In today's fast-paced and ever-changing society, I think this image can help us understand leadership and specifically the church. Throughout Scripture the Holy Spirit is referred to as wind, breath, and movement that is not summoned or managed. Instead, the Spirit is fully present and moving even in the environments that are chaotic such as the story of creation (Genesis 1). In John Chapter 3, Jesus informs the religious leader Nicodemus who visits at night, that the wind blows where it chooses and that while we hear its sound, we do not control its direction (John 3:8). Trusting the Spirit hardly ever means certainty, yet it always means attentiveness. That is, it causes leaders and communities willing to release control and together learn how to respond faithfully to movements they did not initiate or see approaching.

When Paul was traveling by ship as a prisoner, he underwent a violent storm overtaking the vessel. The storm intensifies and familiar markers disappear that previously assisted them on their journey. The crew's trusted strategies fail and cargo is tossed overboard. Even the hope of saving the ship itself is abandoned. During the chaos of the unexpected storm Paul becomes the clearest spiritual presence on the ship. Let's be clear that Paul does not calm the storm. Instead, he demonstrates that he *is sailing the Spirit* through prayerfully listening and discerning. Paul courageously speaks a word of trust amid uncertainty. He is able to help the people to make hard, yet wise choices by pivoting and adapting. Paul informs the people that the ship will be lost, but that every life will be saved, and this in fact happens.



Toured a fire truck at the youth sleep over.

*Spirit* through prayerfully listening and discerning. Paul courageously speaks a word of trust amid uncertainty. He is able to help the people to make hard, yet wise choices by pivoting and adapting. Paul informs the people that the ship will be lost, but that every life will be saved, and this in fact happens.

As we move forward in the 2026-27 fiscal year, it raises some questions for us at Fort Myers Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). First, are we more focused on saving old ships or saving lives? Second, can we trust the Spirit will lead us in chaotic, uncomfortable

times? If so, let's remember we cannot always control outcomes but are called to trust the lead of the Spirit. Further, let us continue to discern the Spirit's movement, reduce resistance, and respond with bold faith in the new year! Remember Paul learned to trust the Spirit not by escaping storms but by *sailing the Spirit*. And just maybe... I'll even learn to adjust to the wind by hitting the ball lighter and even changing a degree or two so that the pickle ball at least does not go over the fence. Finally, it's been a joy to serve alongside of Bruce M. during his fine leadership as the moderator. Bruce has only had good, genuine intentions and navigated hard decisions putting the church in a better financially position for ministry. And, now I look forward to serving with Dean B., who is as faithful as they come, as he becomes the moderator at Fort Myers Christian Church. – Pastor Zach

## Recent Prayer Request

**Sydney D'Alessandro**, in the death of her husband Joe, Church Family

Memorial Service will be at the Church of the Resurrection on Friday, March 6, at 11am.

**Millie Dalrymple**, at Health Park Hospice House, Church Family  
**Charlie and Sue Fink**, prayers for the Fink Family as they move back home to Indiana next month and will be greatly missed by all, Church Family

**Shirley Runyon**, Church Family

**Dan and Melanie Davidson's son, William**, 22 year-old with depression, John Davidson (nephew)

**Dan Lewis**, health is not doing very well, Church extended Family (volunteered in our community garden)

**(update) Vicki Iorio**, out of the ICU and in Health Park rehab, Church Family

**(update) Pam Johnson**, successful hip surgery and at home with rehab, Church Family

**(Update) Les Rogers**, discharged from the hospital, Pam and Vicki (brother)

**(update) Rev. John Vickers**, praise back home from rehab, Church Family

**(update) Barbara Synder**, praise back home from rehab, Church Family

**(update) Bill Garlow**, praise procedures have gone well, Church Family

**Nelli Sarkissian**, fell, Asya Teruni (mother-in-law)



*Be sure to pick up your 2026 Lenten Devotional. Daily readings from the Gospel of John and prayers.*



Daughters of the American Revolution celebrated Terry Garlow, Bob Coates, and Rev. Ed Bodanske on Sunday, Feb.15.

## **March Birthdays & Anniversaries**

*(Name Missing? Email the office.)*

Dean Brown	5 <sup>th</sup>
Rev. Dr. Peter Morgan	16 <sup>th</sup>
Kathy Harris	21 <sup>st</sup>
Sidney Kittila	26 <sup>th</sup>

## **Mark it Down!**

*Lenten Gospel of John Study*  
Mondays from 10-11:30am

*Game Nights*  
Sunday March 1 & 22  
from 6-8pm

*Annual Congregational Meeting and Potluck*  
Sunday, March 15

## **Outreach Corner**

During the month of March we will be having two game nights on Sunday evenings: March 1 and March 22 from 6-8pm.

Additionally, the youth continues to work on their roles for this year's new Maundy Thursday service in the fellowship hall. Plan already for a light dinner and the play "The Night Everything Changed" on Thursday, April 2.

—Linda Lee