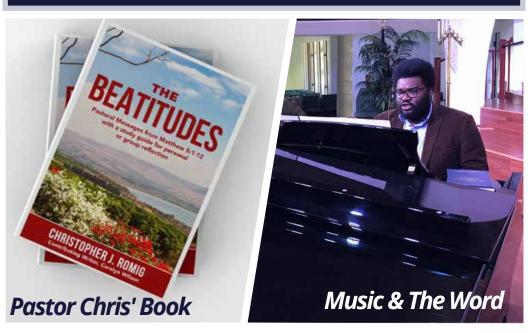


## Here's What's Going on at VPC in February 2021



#### **Church Leadership**

#### Session

#### **Teaching Elders**

Christopher Romig Carolyn Wilson

#### Clerk of Session

Laurie Wright

Bob Allen
Jennie Chaplin
Nick Clemmer
Susie Gottschalk
Tom Hoffman
Judith Holmes
Sheryl Morford
Carlene Painter
Jamal Sarikoki
Carolyn Stephens
Jim Weeks
Shelly Wharton

#### **Board of Trustees**

Bob Allen (Chair) Fred Francis Jim Fullerton Richard Gilbert Mary Gregory Ann Stark

#### **Human Resources**

Carlene Painter (Chair)
Anna Marie Brummett
Carol Dickinson
Bob Jelenchick
Bill Morgan
Tom Saye
David Schoenthaler
Sydna Zeliff

Board member contact information is available through the Realm app via your phone or signing in to www.onrealm.org

## **Our Vision in Action**



#### **OFFICE HOURS**

Mon - Thurs, 9 am - 4 pm Fri, 9 am - 12 pm

#### OFFICE PHONE

941-488-2258

## WORSHIP SERVICE HOURS

Sunday, 9 am and 11 am in-person & online at www.venicepres.org

To Glorify God As A Disciple-Making Outpost Of Kingdom Life

## COMMUNION ON THE LAWN

Third Wednesday of the month at 3 pm.

#### LIBRARY HOURS

Open during church office hours, please see the receptionist for entry or contact <u>chaplin@gmail.com</u>

## CHAPEL HOURS FOR PRAYER

Thursday, 9 am - 1 pm

#### **VPC Staff**

SENIOR PASTOR Rev. Chris Romig <u>cromig@venicepres.org</u>

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Chris O'Brien cobrien@venicepres.org

PASTOR OF CONNECTION & OUTREACH

Rev. Carolyn Wilson <u>cwilson@venicepres.org</u>

DIRECTOR OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT & A/V MANAGER Genna Sarikoki gsarikoki@venicepres.org

MINISTER OF MUSIC & WORSHIP ARTS Jamal Sarikoki *jsarikoki@venicepres.org*  DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATON Cherie Loomis cloomis@venicepres.org

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS Kelly Wensley kwensley@venicepres.org

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTANT Barb McElfresh bmcelfresh@venicepres. org

FACILITY MANAGER Nick Clemmer nclemmer@venicepres.org

BOOKKEEPER Megan Lechlitner mlechlitner@venicepres.org

FACILITY & A/V Gary Youngberg gyoungberg@venicepres.org

#### Academic Scholarships Available

Members of Venice Presbyterian Church and mission partners approved by the Mission Committee are eligible for scholarships to be used for tuition to fully accredited colleges, universities, and technical schools.



Scholarships are granted based on service to:

- · church, school, community
- academic standing
- · justifiable need
- special circumstances

Scholarship Opportunities are available in January 2021 for the 2021/2022 school year. The deadline for submission is March 15.

#### 5 Ways to Give

Giving Boxes mounted on the wall by exit doors are available to receive your Gifts. Thank you for your continued support during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Text Giving 73256 venicepres + amount



Online Giving venicepres.org



Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)



Cash/Check 825 the Rialto Venice, FL 34285

#### "Beginning the Journey" New Member Class

Like many other events, our regular cycle of Beginning the Journey new member classes has been interrupted due to COVID. While we cannot yet resume our normal way of holding the class with dinner and discussion with others around the table along with learning about VPC, we would like to have a modified Beginning the Journey beginning mid-February if there is enough interest. The classes will either be held in person, socially-distanced, or via Zoom — depending upon your input. We will still have 5-6 sessions where you will learn about how we implement our vision of how we glorify God as a disciple- making outpost of Kingdom life:

- 1. Campus Tour (tentative)
- 2. Our Mission and Vision
- 3. Disciples of Jesus CONNECT
- 4. Disciples of Jesus GROW
- 5. Disciples of Jesus GO
- 6. Covenant Ceremony

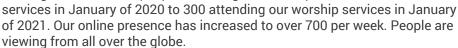
If you are interested in participating in the next Beginning the Journey or wish to know more about it, please contact Pastor Carolyn at 941-488-2258 or <a href="mailto:cwilson@venicepres.org">cwilson@venicepres.org</a>.

## Desk of Executive Director

#### Dear Church Family.

#### How are we managing eleven months into COVID-19?

Here we are church family, 11 months into a new normal and we still do not know what normal will be. We've gone from 1,500 people attending our worship



We celebrate **Communion on the Patio** once a month outside so those not comfortable can be part of our church family. We continually invite you to connect with others via telephone calls, writing notes, emails so we are caring for one another in ways we may not have in the past. We are realizing, more than ever, each day matters, each other matters, connection matters!

You have seen changes in the way Venice Presbyterian Church presents church. We've worked with Session to implement the friendliest, yet safest, worship environment possible for you to attend based on your comfort level. We take temperatures as you enter the building. Glory be to God that we have not had to turn anyone away because of a high temperature! Glory be to God that the Holy Spirit continues to move each Sunday whether you view online or in person! We are thankful for the volunteers who continue each week to clean pews, usher, greet, take temperatures, run sound and AV so you are able to worship God in the environment you are most comfortable in. Sometimes we do not stop to realize the effort it takes to prepare for worship. I would encourage you to pray for those who work to make worship all happen each week. It takes a village!

You will see many updates on church happenings in this month's Connect Grow and Go! We may not be up and running full speed ahead, but we are certainly up and running! Many have asked about the financial position of the church. If you would like a full year-end report, they are available in the church office to pick up. I will briefly tell you we ended the year \$260,000 to the good! Praise God! The reason we ended so well is that we are not fully engaged in ministry at this time. We are not having New Member Classes which offer a meal, we are not offering Youth Group, small groups, our campus was closed six months in 2020 saving on utilities and ministry expenses. This overage will go into a fund called Operating Reserves. To put this overage into perspective, \$260,000 is six weeks of normal operating expenses. We are in very uncertain times. The Trustees feel comfortable putting this money into reserves for lean months that normally arrive during our summers. If you have questions or would like to see a full overview of our finances always feel free to speak with

**Notes From Cherie Loomis** VPC Director of Administration)

Christine O'Brien our Executive Director or any of our Trustees. Due to your continued generosity VPC is operating smoothly. We continue to be grateful for your gifts, online, in person, through the mail. Your faithfulness allows us to fulfill the ministry of God's Church.

Lastly, I would ask that you *pray for your pastors and staff*. We all work to the best of our ability to glorify God as a disciple-making outpost of kingdom life. I would ask you pray for:

- 1. Protection from spiritual warfare
- 2. Families their spouses, children
- 3. Protection from critics and naysayers
- 4. Preaching ministry pray for the pastors as they prepare their sermon and as they preach
- 5. Rest for our Pastors
- 6. Leadership clarity
- 7. Encouragement

Christine Brun Executive Director, VPC

#### We love to stay in touch!

Please be sure we have your most up-to-date information such as address, email, phone etc. You can check your info by signing into Realm and reviewing your profile.

To make changes or to be added to our records, you may:

- 1. sign up at onrealm.org
- 2. call the office: 941-488-2258
- 3. email us: Volunteer1@venicepres.org
- 4. mail us a note: 825 the Rialto, Venice, FL 34285

#### Let's get to know each other!

Nametags are available for \$6. Email Cherie at *cloomis@venicepres.org* to order and make arrangements for payment. Pick up at the Welcome Center in the sanctuary on Sundays.



## Worship Ministry



Over the next several months, our Sunday messages will unpack the core beliefs of the Christian faith, looking in-depth at each phrase from the Apostles Creed - the oldest and most succinct summary of Christian beliefs. In a world where values seem to be ever-shifting with the winds of popular culture, God's essential and eternal truths will always stand the test of time and provide unmatched hope. The goal of this preaching series is to help us better appreciate the essentials of our Christian faith, and to understand why it's so important to affirm these truths that have been shared by Christians across the centuries. Each of the sermons will be creatively supported with music, readings, and prayers to highlight the central message and give glory to God.

January 31 February 7	I Believe God the Father	April 11	Guest Preacher: Dr. Carl Ellis, Reformed Theological Seminary	
February 14	God the Almighty	April 18	He Ascended Into Heaven and Sits at the Right Hand of the Father	
February 21	The Maker of Heaven and Earth			
February 28	Jesus Christ, God's Only Son, our Lord	April 25	Coming Again to Judge the Living and the Dead	
March 7	Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary	May 2	The Holy Ghost	
		May 9	The Holy Catholic Church	
March 14	He Suffered Under Pontius Pilate	May 16	The Communion of Saints	
March 21	He Was Crucified, Dead, & Buried	May 23 (Pentecost)	The Forgiveness of Sins	
March 28	He Descended Into Hell	May 30	The Resurrection of the Body	
(Palm Sunday)		June 6	The Life Everlasting	
April 4 (Easter)	The Third Day, He Rose Again From the Dead			

## ASH WEDNESDAY Communion on the Lawn

Join us outside on the front lawn of the church, February 17 at 3:00 PM for Ash Wednesday to receive ashes and communion in this simple, intimate outdoor service.

Bring a lawn chair and sunglasses as we gather together while social distancing. All safety protocols will be in place.





#### Get on the Waiting List!

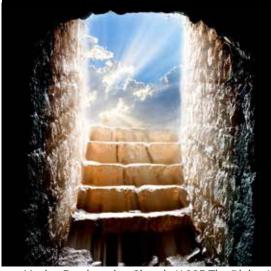
We are all anxiously awaiting the release of Pastor Chris' Book, "The Beatitudes, Pastoral Messages from Matthew 5:1-12 with a study guide for personal or group reflection". We anticipate the release in the next few days. To get on our waiting list, go to www.venicepres.org/beatitudes-book.

#### **Upcoming VPC Podcast**

The VPC sermon series, Kingdom Life, will start off the ongoing audio podcast on your favorite podcast channels this month. Look for the upcoming announcement.



#### Holy Week Service Times: Please note the change on Sunday!



MAUNDY THURSDAY
April 1 at 7:00pm
Mask Mandated
No Congregational Singing

GOOD FRIDAY
April 2 at 7:00pm
Mask Recommended

EASTER SUNDAY
April 4 at 8:00am
Mask Mandated
No Congregational Singing

9:30am &11:15am

Mask recommended service

## **Music Ministry**

#### Venice Community Concert Series: A Shelter In The Time Of Storm

Our staff, volunteers, and leaders have been prayerful that we would be able to offer a concert season. Well, those prayer have been answered. In our earnest desire to keep all of you safe we will be offering a hybrid season. There will be tickets for 200 socially distant patrons to enjoy the concert in person and we'll also offer virtual tickets, for those who aren't comfortable coming in person, to enjoy these concerts from the safety of their own home. For those attending the concert in person, we will require all to follow the same guidelines of Sunday morning worship. Those purchasing virtual tickets, your receipt will have a link to the concert and a password to view the concert.

#### DuPue Brothers Band Sunday Feb 21, 3pm Cancella

We regret to inform you that due to covid the DePue brothers have canceled their concert for February 2021. While this is disappointing, it is always better for musicians, and all of us, to err on the side of caution. The DePue Brothers have moved their contract to February of 2022 and we look forward to hosting them then, hopefully with an in-person and sold-out audience.

#### Stephen Lynerd Group Sat, March 20, 7pm

The Stephen Lynerd Group is no stranger to Venice Presbyterian. Stephen and his group have a flair for taking traditional hymnody and giving it a fresh and modern jazz approach. Join us for a night of great music and worship.



#### Music and the Word #1

#### Ash Wednesday, February 17, 9 AM

Jamal Sarikoki, Minister of Music & Worship Arts

On Wednesday, February 17th, Jamal Sarikoki and the VPC chancel choir will lead us in a special Ash Wednesday Music and The Word. A Time of music, scripture, and prayer centered on confession and repentance and

looking with expectancy to the ways Christ will speak to us during the Lenten season. While many of us try to "give up something" during lent, may this time of virtual worship invite us to give up ourselves to the transforming work of Christ and cause our hearts, minds, and souls to enter into deep gratification for the work Christ accomplished for us on the Cross and through his resurrection. This virtual service will be premiered at 9 am on Ash Wednesday but will be available to you anytime during the day and during the Lenten season.



## Music and the Word #2 Celebrating the Black Church Wednesday, February 26, 1 PM

In January, Pastors Chris and Carolyn, led us in a unique and Christ-centered celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr and his work for Justice in America for people of all races. Dr. King's work was steeped in the understanding of Revelation 7 that there will be people of every nation, tribe, and tongue who will worship at the throne of God in heaven. Dr. King valued that this piece of Heaven be lived out in our Churches and in our country. So, this gave way to the Civil Rights Movement. Much of the Civil Rights movement was birthed through the Black church. A major part of the black church experience is music. Hymns, anthems, gospel music, and even songs of freedom and liberation were birthed by the African American Church. On Friday, February 26th, gather around your computer or tv and join Jamal and some special musical guests for a soul-stirring, and toe-tapping time of worship.

### **Missions**

VPC supports numerous mission types and locations around the world. The Monthly Mission Partners (MMP) are our major support missions both local, regional and to the ends of the earth. Join us the second Sunday of the month as we present a MMP to the congregation. Usually the MMP is chosen for a specific month as that mission has an event forthcoming which we can share with the congregation and seek congregational participation. Emphasizing a particular mission each month is a way to make the congregation aware of the work of each mission. All funds given (100%) through VPC are forwarded on to that mission partner. Below is the schedule of MMPs along with their assigned liaisons for 2021. *Thank you for the generous support of our Mission Partners*.

#### **2021 Monthly Mission Partners and VPC Liaisons**

JAN	TCM (Training Christians for Ministry)	Fred Gossman
FEB	Agape Flights	Jim Sager
MAR	Day 4 Hope	Fred Gossman
APR	Laurel Civic Association	Robin Frost
MAY	Guatemala Clinica Medica/Orphans	Larry Vander Wal
JUN	Habitat for Humanity	Jim Turner
JUL	CAM (Community Assistance Ministry)	Lois Weeks
AUG	Center of Hope	Donna Pirozzi
SEP	Mision Peniel	Jim Sager
OCT	Pregnancy Solutions	Karen Norwood
NOV	Helps Intl Guatemala Stoves Team	Lois Weeks
DEC	Family Promise	Kathy Wood

#### **Blood Donations Needed!**

We will not be having the Red bus come to our campus this winter, but we are highly encouraging our church family to donate blood at the local donation center. Along with the usual health tests, your blood will be checked for Covid antibodies. Please contact <a href="https://www.oneblood.org">www.oneblood.org</a> to make an appointment.



Due to COVID-19 circumstances, event plans may be modified.

## February MMP **Agape Flights**



Imagine a world where missionaries never lack the resources to share the unconditional love of Christ. Agape Flights mission is to provide excellent aviation service delivering cargo, mail and humanitarian aid to missionary partners serving Christ, carrying hope to the nations of the Caribbean.

Nearly 20 million people live in the areas regularly reached by Agape's flights to Haiti, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas. More than 350 missionary families rely on Agape Flights to transport the mail and supplies they need while living and working on the mission field in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and the Bahamas. Agape Flights is an important state side connection for missionaries — by serving as their "home" address, by providing dependable mail service and the personalized cargo service the missionaries need.

Agape Flights also delivers humanitarian aid and religious supplies into Cuba via the Cuban Council of Churches and expedites relief supplies during disasters and emergencies.

During times of disaster in the Caribbean, the local community comes together to fill and fund relief flights. Through the energy of community volunteers and generous contributions, the Agape plane and pilots are able to deliver thousands of pounds of relief supplies including: generators, buckets, food, water filters, tarps, chain saws, flash lights, batteries, solar lights and more.

Agape Flights receives and distributes supplies through the missionaries and their ministries: medicine, medical supplies, nutritional supplements, Bibles, school and office supplies, building materials and other needed items. Agape Flights also speeds relief supplies during disasters and emergencies.

Weekly mission flights are fueled through the generosity of our donors.

When you support Agape Flights, you're investing in the Kingdom ministry of more than 350 missionary families.

Jim Sager, Agape Liaison jharosager@gmail.com

## January MMP TCM: Training Christians for Ministry

#### Mission

TCM International Institute develops Christian leaders for significant service through higher learning.

#### Vision

That every nation will have effective leaders of disciple-making movements impacting their churches, cultures, and countries for Christ.



Since 1957 TCM has come alongside Christians throughout the world who have a passion for raising up disciple makers and planting churches. Through our institute, we develop bi-vocational Christian leaders for less than two percent of the cost it would take to send a U.S. missionary to that same country. Since these disciple-makers already know the cultures and languages, they are equipped with the needed advanced training for successful ministries and a lifetime of service.

TCM currently has over 1,500 students and over 700 graduates working in 43 countries. Accredited Certificate, M.A., and M.Div. courses are offered in a flexible format so that the disciple-makers can stay fully

involved in their local ministries and employment.

Many students are unable to travel to our Austrian Center because of family or ministry situations, lack of finances, or political issues. So TCM has strategically utilized online services and created 23 additional mentoring centers in 15 other countries to provide the students with easier access to the training. Currently over 50% of our classes are finished face-to-face at these centers, making our ministry training cost-effective and convenient.

Fred & Cindy Gossman, *TCM Liaisons* 513-836-6839 <u>fredandcindy89@gmail.com</u>

#### **SAVING YOUR COINS?**

We are still collecting for 3 Cents a Meal. Simply drop off your donation at the church using any container you choose every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday. Or you can also give online using the GIVE NOW Button on the website. Thank you for continuing to feed the needy in our area during the pandemic.



Join Pregnancy Solutions for the 2021 Walk for Life: Together for LIFE! You do not want to miss this fun family day out! The Walk for Life is more than a fundraiser, it's about coming TOGETHER as a community, as a church, as a family, as a team to celebrate the beauty of life. Walk with us, Together for Life!

Saturday, March 6, 9 am at Woodmere Park in Venice. To participate as a walker or to donate, visit PSWalkforLife.org



#### **Helps International**

A HUGE thank-you for over \$2,000 donated to Helps International to help those devastated by Hurricanes Eta and Iota. Large bags of food and cleaning supplies, water filters, solar lamps, masks and other supplies were delivered by Helps International, some to areas where vehicle traffic was impossible. Supplies were carried across mudslides to Santa Avelina, a town many of our congregation have worked in during stove teams. Thank-you so much for your faithful love shown in action.

Jim or Lois Weeks, TCM Liaisons loismweeks@gmail.com





#### Connect & Grow

## Couples 6-week Zoom Bible Study

Paul writes to early believers, and to us today, with lessons for everyday living as Christians. Work, marriage, home and family are all topics he explores. With degrees in Christian education and decades of experience



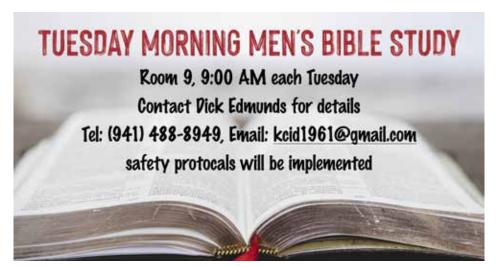
in marriage ministry, we are still learning after 50 years! We will meet to discuss Christian marriage over Zoom for 6 sessions, Let us know by email if you would like to join us. *This study is intended for couples*. No materials needed except a Bible.

Karen Langlais, <u>kolanglais@verizon.net</u> Richard Langlais, <u>lindentree14@gmail.com</u>



#### Having difficulty getting the Covid-19 vaccine?

If you are a veteran of active duty service in the United States Armed Forces, you may be eligible for a Covid-19 vaccine. Call The Sarasota VA Community Based Out Patient Clinic at 941-371-3349



#### It's not too late to join Jennifer Speer's Study!

Live Strong - Facing Life with Faith, is available online both live and recorded each week. In-Person attendance in our sanctuary is also available but registraiton is required and space is limited. You may view the weekly live-streams or the recordings at <a href="https://www.venicepres.org/jenniferspeer">www.venicepres.org/jenniferspeer</a>. There is no charge for this year's event. Wednesday, 10 am - 11:30 am. All notes are provided online and are available each week.

#### VPC Book Club: 2020-2021 Book List

All are invited to participate. Initial meetings will be held on Zoom

February 3 The Pioneers by David McCullough

March 3 Where the Crawdad's Sing by Delia Owens
April 7 A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles

May 5 The Great Alone by Kristen Hannah

Contact: Mary Gregory, <u>mgregorysmiles@gmail.com</u>





#### Nomads Bible Study

Nomads Bible Study will meet weekly through April and is *open to all women in our church* and beyond. This year we will be using a study guide called "Colossians and Philemon" by Christopher A Beetham, contact group co-leaders Karen Langlais at *kolanglais@verizon.net* or Anna Marie Brummett, 847-309-8005, *amdrbrum@gmail.com* 

#### Presbyterian Women (PW) Update

On Tues., February 16, 2021 at 2:00pm in our Fellowship Hall, our program will be the lovely Chris Dowden portraying a new Woman of The Bible. We will have our Birthday Offering (projects are funded annually that touch the lives of women and children). Feel free to bring a friend or friends to our gatherings. Please RSVP by contacting Niki Steitz (Moderator), nsteitz33@comcast.net, (941) 493-7628

Since we had no Christmas Tea in Dec. 2020 and will not have our annual Yard Sale in March 2021 (our biggest fund raiser), we will have a **Silent Auction** at our Feb. 16 gathering and ask you bring an item or two (something

nice you no longer need and come 15 minutes earlier if you bring something). Checks or cash only, please.

Our final gathering of the season will be bringing in a treasure or two as we will have an appraiser telling you its worth. The date will be Tues., April 20 in our Fellowship Hall at 2:00 pm.

A huge Thank You is extended to Carolyn Wilson (pastor of Connection and Outreach at (VPC) as Pastor Carolyn is also our PW liaison.

PW gatherings are always on the third Tuesdays of the month on the months we meet. Masks are mandatory and Social distancing will be observed.

## Care & Compassion

# GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Help and encouragement after the death of a loved one

GriefShare is a special weekly seminar and support group designed to help you rebuild your life. We know it hurts, and we want to help.

#### Women's Group:

Tuesdays 9:30 – 11:30 am March 2 – May 25th

#### Contact:

Mary Gregory, (716) 984-3613 <u>Mgregorysmiles@gmail.com</u>

Donna Wainright, (941) 800-4196 ravenblackVet2000@yahoo.com

#### Men's Group:

Begins 1<sup>st</sup> week of March day and time TBD

#### Contact:

Nick Clemmer, (941) 488-2258 nclemmer@venicepres.org



GriefShare will be held via Zoom so if you are a seasonal resident and will not be in Venice for some or all of the sessions, you can still participate.