



This Week at FPC June 25—July 1, 2020

Thoughts from the Interim Associate Pastor by Walk Jones

Driving around Ocala this week I've seen the first blooms of the crape myrtle trees. These summer-bloomers started my thinking about pruning and bible stories about vineyards that did not produce and walls that fell from neglect. (see Isaiah 5) I thought about Jesus using a parable or figure of speech to talk vines and grapes when he said "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit." (John 15:1-2) God prunes the fruitful to make us stronger and better! God cuts the faithful.

I wonder if these difficult times in our nation and world are a pruning from God. It is painful and awful and seems like nothing good can come from anything happening. Yet, plants that have been pruned come back strong, fruitful, and beautiful.

I have endured pain in my life, and I have known suffering. Life is difficult and it is even harder for many folks than the struggles I have known. Yet through sadness and struggle I've grown up, matured, and become a stronger Christian. Could God be doing something for America through this virus and a reckoning with our past? My prayer is that God will guide us and show us the way God has planned for us. If this is a time for pruning and growth, may it be quick so we can start healing and growing stronger. Yet I remember to pray 'Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.'

We continue to worship in person at 9am on Sundays, visit the website or call the church by noon each Friday to make a reservation for in-person worship. We continue to provide a YouTube version of worship. Folks we know are ill with the COVID-19, and other illnesses, so pray for them and for our country.

The outreach committee has scheduled an Interfaith food drive!

You can bring food or monetary donations to service with you next week June 28th, or can drop them off during the Drive By Food Drive Monday June 29th between 1:00pm and 5:00pm. CDC Guidelines will be followed and we will have volunteers available so you don't even need to get out of your car! We are also looking for more youth volunteers to help with the food drive on Monday, if interested please call the church office.

Griefshare, a program for those who are grieving, will begin a new cycle on **Friday, July 10** in person and by zoom app or phone if someone is interested in that option. Please contact Rev. Jones at 352-629-7561 or email: wjones@fpcocala.org

PRAYER LIST

- David Arango and family** (on the death of his father)
- Jim Bennett** (brother of John Bennett)
- Pam Butcher**
- Andy Carlisle**
- Jimmy Cazin** (Covid 19)
- Shirley Cochran**
- Martin Cook**
- Stewart and Diane Edwards**
- Hank and Maranell Fleming**
- Norma Giles** (on the death of her husband, Jim)
- Bill Green** (friend of Richard Grosso)
- Barbara Gowie**
- Dick Hancock**
- Johnie Johnson** (son of Tommy Johnson)
- Brenda Jones and family**
- Ken Kramer** (brother-in-law of Evelyn Longo)
- Kathy Lance** (daughter-in-law of Lois Lance)
- Lois Lance**
- Grietje Lewis**
- Renate Lipp** (friend of Nita William)
- Kevin Lloyd** (cousin of Lee Ann Drake)
- Celine Mack**
- Ellen Matthews** (pacemaker surgery recovery)
- Skip McDonald**
- Jessie Moseley**
- Christian Myers** (friend of Julia Wirono)
- Raul Nieves** (brother of Mina DiGeronimo)
- Greg Robinson** (brother of Carolyn Varner)
- Michael Rou** (cousin of Dr. David Albright)
- Deloris Shotwell** (hospice)
- Steve and Keith Shotwell**
- Baldwin Switzer** (on deployment with the Navy)
- Nancy Wells** (daughter of Shirley Wells)
- Nancy Wollett**

This Week's Daily Bible Readings

Sustained by God's Life-Giving Word of Spiritual Renewal					
			Sunday	June 28	Ezekiel 37:15-28
Thursday	June 25	Ezekiel 36:1-15	Monday	June 29	Ezekiel 39:21-29
Friday	June 26	Ezekiel 36:16-38	Tuesday	June 30	Ezekiel 43:1-12
Saturday	June 27	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Wednesday	July 1	Genesis 12:1-20