

Dear FPC family and friends,

It is hard to believe that in a month from now the youth and adults from FPC will be heading to the airport to begin the Mission 2026 trip to Naples, Italy. International mission trips take a lot of planning and a lot of logistics from afar. We are blessed here at FPC because in Naples we have someone who is our direct contact and has sacrificially been willing to give of her time every four years for us to come. Rosaria Vincenzi grew up in the Casa Materna orphanage in Portici, which borders on Naples, Italy. As a child it didn't take long for her intelligence and curiosity to be noticed and she was offered an opportunity to study and take trips to the UK and the United States where she quickly learned English.

When Stacy and I arrived at the orphanage as young 25 year olds, she was the executive secretary and really made the place run. There were 60 children living in the orphanage and a school that welcomed 300 students during the week. By the time we left four years later Rosaria was the Director of the orphanage and actually running the place. When the orphanage closed down in 2003 she began another ministry, always with children, and has been heading that up since then. It is called *Imparare Giocando* (learning through play). You can find the website here: <https://italianchildmission.wixsite.com/italianchildmission>.

Yesterday I got off the phone with Rosaria and everything is in place for the mission trip. She is organizing the transportation, the lodging, the meals, the school where we are doing VBS, and a whole variety of things that only happen in the background and aren't noticeable on paper. I know that she reads every single one of these enews that I put out so I wanted to take this space to thank Rosaria, whom Stacy and I have known now for 32 years, for the incredible work that she has done for us since 2000 in helping to organize and direct the now 8 different mission groups that we have sent her way. Everyone who has been on one of these trips knows and loves Rosaria.

It is hard to imagine what it is like to be a Protestant Christian in the cultural context of Naples. You are not a follower of Jesus by birth, you have to make that decision. When you make that decision then in schools you are singled out because you don't participate in the hour of religion that takes place every day, because the flavor of Christianity that is exclusively taught is that from the Roman Catholic tradition. I remember being in first and second grade in Rome and having to sit in the corner because I was a Protestant during the hour of religion.

Rosaria has been a faithful member of the Portici United Methodist Church for years and continues in a faith that propels her to action. Naples is a region where the presence of non-Roman Catholic Christian churches is pretty rare. The children to whom she ministers pretty much all come from either secular or Roman Catholic households. But this doesn't impact the ministry that she is able to do and has opened so many doors for people to see the presence of Christ through her work.

We are so blessed to be able to be served in a very significant way by this woman of faith. We do want you to keep her in your prayers as she prepares for our coming, because we can be very taxiing! Pray for the children of the elementary school of Barra as they prepare for our coming. Pray for the principal of the school who opened the doors to the school for us to come. Her daughter was a student in Rosaria's after school program, this is why we have access to the school.

Finally pray for your youth and adults who are going on the trip. I am going to list their names so that you can pray for them individually if you would like: Amanda Allison, Connor Allison, Jackson Allison, Todd Allison, Jezabel Alvarez, Sheenita Brogdon, Pastor Bob, Jace Buzzard, Ephram Claycomb, Ethan Claycomb, Easton Cunningham, Sam Depue, Gavin Elias,

Amy Fasnacht, Bennett Fasnacht, Ryan Hagerich, Jen Kloppmann, Kristin Kondratowski, Maria Kondratowski, Tessa Kondratowski, Logan LaFontaine, Abi May, Jaina Poirier, Theresa Rineer, Ben Sheehan, Lindsay Sheehan, Caden Thomas, Garrett Thomas, Lily Underhill, Dominic Walmer and Gianna Walmer.

Finally, won't you join us on June 28 after the second service as we have a cook-out to send off the group. This is for the entire church, so y'all come!

Your servant in Christ,
Pastor Bob

HAPPENING IN THE LIFE OF FPC...

CONSTRUCTION – WHEN IT RAINS IT POURS: So, we have A LOT going on at the church and around the church in regards to construction and things happening so pay attention. It could impact your access to the church.

- 1) Painting is happening around the church but it should not impact your access to the church at all.
- 2) New Flooring is going in on the hallways and it could limit your access. Pay attention to the congregation wide emails that Nicole sends out and the signs on the front door. Right now we have complete access to all locations in the church. That may change next week.
- 3) Road Construction: just remember that during the week you can only enter through the south and on Sunday you can come to church the way you normally do.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JULY 12 – 17 : There are sign-up sheets under the TV in the Welcome Area for anyone wishing to volunteer to help with VBS. Our theme this year is, "Tell It on the Mountain."

VBS WORKDAY: Join us on Saturday, June 13th starting at 9am! We will be cutting out mountains, sheep and goats and painting them. Please join us in Fellowship Hall!

DECORATING DAYS: We will be decorating for VBS July 7th – 10th. Join us from 9am – 12pm to transform the church into scenic mountain areas.

MISSION TO ITALY BBQ SEND OFF: Join us on Sunday, June 28th at 12:15pm for a special BBQ send off for our students and leaders who are traveling to Italy for their mission trip. Come enjoy food, fellowship, and encouragement as we support those serving abroad. Everyone is welcome! Anyone wanting to help, and we do need help, please contact Marta Troiani at debeachbound@aol.com.

CELEBRATE AMERICA AT THE BARN AT PARADISE STATION: Are you free Friday, July 3rd and interested in being a part of Celebrate America concert and fireworks at The Barn at Paradise Station? They need 6-8 volunteers for the evening from 6:30-10:15pm to assist with parking. You will be fed! Please contact Nicole Keays in the church office if interested and available.

GREAT BEGINNINGS PRESCHOOL IS LOOKING FOR PRESCHOOL

AIDES: for the 2026-2027 school year. We need an aide for Miss Heather's Monday morning Pre-K class. We are also in need of one person to assist Miss Brianna's Tuesday/Thursday 3-year old class. All morning aide shifts start at 9am and end at 11:30am. For more information or to express interest, please contact Heather Reynolds, Administrative Director, at hreynolds@straspres.org.

CONSTRUCTION IS IN MOTION: If you will be accessing church during the week, you will need to access from the south. That means you will come from either Funk Street and turn left or drive north on S. Decatur Street. On the weekends there will be no restrictions.

Also happening is the remodeling of the hallway floors. Please be on the lookout for continued updates as well as please pay attention to signs/instructions as they will be changing daily.