

## God's Faithfulness Over 40 Years: The Story of Marco Presbyterian Church

### Introduction

Something was missing. Yes, the beauty of Marco Island, a 24 square mile tropical island south of Naples, Florida, is undisputed; the weather exceptional; the people friendly and welcoming. And yet hovering in the background to Paradise, lay a feeling of unease.

Perhaps it was too easy to head to the beach instead of traveling to a church in Naples. Perhaps our 'Northerners' reflected on how much they missed being part of a church family. Perhaps Islander's were pre-warned how much work it takes to start a new church.

Whatever their motivations, 40 years ago, a small group recognized the spiritual vacancy and in a spirit of collaboration, worked together towards launching MPC.

Of course, there were questions: If a building is built and dedicated but no one attends, is it a church? Can a handful of individuals establish a sound church based on the gospel and the truth of God's Word?

The answers will be told within as well as important dates and timelines. Additionally, and just as imperative in a church's conception and health are its people - who are they, why are they visionaries and what are their motivations.

Thus, alongside celebrating MPC's 40th Anniversary, we applaud the many individuals who marched into the 'heat' and made a joyful, thunderous sound - 'before the King, the Lord!' and "so with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church."

### The Miracle Church Begins

In the 1970's, a group of full-time residents and 'snowbirds' who wintered on Marco Island, felt God leading them to establish a place of worship.

Mission to North America is the church planting wing of the PCA. MNA has a protocol for starting a church beginning with gathering a core group, which includes a leader and a pastor. Out of that core group, the pastor trains elders and deacons to be leaders in the new church. The group then centers on outreach and evangelism to develop a healthy church. However, core group members may all have different agendas; then the pastors job is also Bible teaching, prayer and holding the group together!

The birth of a church is a fascinating time, the core group must be a team with enthusiasm, energy and a willingness to adapt to challenges. But Marco Island is no exception and even with a definite call from God, the church plant could have easily imploded.

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In 1978, Ford Fairmont was first produced, Jimmy Carter was President and Pete Rose landed his 3,000 major league hit.

On Marco, the S.S. Jolley Bridge opened nine years prior, new residents arrived in larger numbers and the Mackle Brother's of the Deltona Corporation continued to develop land.

Southwest Florida resident Charles Werner had a strong desire for an evangelical church on Marco Island. He contacted Jim Conrad, pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Naples, regarding the possibility of supporting a mission church on Marco. They met at Dairy Queen on the island where they talked and prayed. Suddenly, a very tall, distinguished looking man tapped them on the shoulder and introduced himself as Enno Haan, a retired CRC minister. Haan said, "We couldn't help overhearing your conversation and prayers, and we want you to know that, as a family, we have been praying about the same hopes, and need for direction from the Lord." Thereafter, Haan joined the "melding of the minds" and also became interim pastor for several winter seasons and later Charles Werner contacted Deltona, Marco Island developers, regarding land for the church.

In the meantime, Jim Conrad gives his account: "I arrived to pastor Covenant PC in Naples in June of 1974. Carl and Marge Hansen were living in Naples at the time and were members of Covenant. The Hansen's moved to Marco in the mid 1970's but continued to attend Covenant. Also attending Covenant were some families living on Marco Island. One of those families was Chuck and Marie Werner. About the same time, I was on the church planting committee of the Presbytery of the RPCES. Our committee was active in starting churches in southwest Florida. Mel Jones (an elder at Covenant) was also on the committee. In an effort to start a church on Marco, we began holding worship services in the Josberger Funeral Home on the island. Some of those who preached were Ken Bruce (an elder at Covenant); Jeff Boer who taught at NCA and later went to Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia and William Martin, a Covenant Theological Seminary grad. The 'work' on Marco limped along and in a meeting of the church planting committee, most of the members wanted to disband holding services and put our efforts somewhere else. Mel Jones and I opposed the others on the committee and pleaded with them to give it more time. Mel even said, 'I will walk up and down streets knocking on doors personally inviting people to worship with us at Marco Church.' The committee reluctantly agreed and gave us more time. At some point, Chuck Werner took me to lunch and said, 'Here's \$10,000 as seed money to get the Marco Church going.'"

"Also around this time, the Rev. Frank Fiol and his wife Esther, retired from missionary work in India after 44 years and moved to Naples. They became part of Covenant Church. Carl Hansen heard through the Fiol's, that their son Bruce, still a missionary in India, might be thinking about returning to the U.S. to pastor a church. Carl contacted Bruce Fiol to see if he would come and preach as a visiting minister. Bruce agreed and the rest is history. Bruce and Judy moved to Marco and began a very fruitful ministry. Also, as you are probably aware, there were a number of families from Covenant in those early days that made a commitment to support the ministry on Marco with their resources and time. Some of them were Carl and Marge Hansen, Mel and Dorothy Jones, Spike and Judy Martell, Sam and Judy Pennington and Jim and Jane Wilson."

Following newspaper ads, public meetings, and many prayers later, the first services were held on Sunday March 12, 1978 in Josberger's Funeral Home, or to quote Mel Verwys, "We were living among the dead!"

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A group of island Presbyterians contacted a man named William Martin, who was with the Naples Christian Academy, and asked him to serve them part-time. Martin later turned down the request for being our full-time pastor. After a brief period of time meeting in the old Marco Beach House, with William Martin as pastor, we started meeting at the Art League building in December 1981. Covenant Church gave us their organ and we worshiped in amongst the art.

In an atmosphere of camaraderie, nothing deterred our core group: Preparing communion without a kitchen - no problem - use the ladies room. No meeting room for the youth group - no worries - the kids meet inside the Martell's van. A nude painting behind the pulpit - interesting, but still no problem - turn the art to face the wall!

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### Even Core Groups Need a Funny Story

Among the founding members were Marguerite and Luther Fincke. While at the Art League building, Marge Fincke tells a story, (paraphrased): Lu, Rev. Luther Fincke, and I settled ourselves in the front row with Bill and Rita Doherty and Dave and Jean Taber to enjoy the song service led by Mel Verwys, who was standing behind the lofty pulpit, towering above us.

As we were singing, I observed one of our very large, ugly Florida cockroaches scurrying around on the floor in front of the platform. It would disappear, giving us a sense of relief, only to reappear suddenly, scrambling to the tune of whatever we were singing. I whispered to Lu that maybe he had better deal with the problem.

Little did I know what his solution would be! I was shocked to see my husband arise from his seat, hymnbook in hand, squat down with his behind towards the congregation and follow the elusive cockroach around the floor.

Mel, who was conferring with the organist and missed this new development, turned back towards the front and found the preacher of the evening crawling on the floor. Mel leaned over the pulpit, looked down and said, "What are you doing Luther?"

Luther, hymnbook aloft, looked up at Mel and replied in a serious tone, "I'm killing a cockroach." An explosion of laughter shook the room.

Then Carl Hansen said, "Did you have to use a hymnbook?" Unperturbed, Lu responded, "It's better than a Bible isn't it?" Another roar of laughter followed.

At this point, Mel said, straight-faced, "I don't know Lu. We of the laity are inclined to kill cockroaches with our shoes, but apparently the clergy has other methods." An outburst of belly laughs followed and it seemed the hilarity would never settle down to a sermon, especially one preached by the 'cockroach slayer.'

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In 1981, MPC emerged into a year-around church, although in the winter, only approximately 75 people carried on the work of the church.

The following notes are quoted from an anonymous author who recorded information in a black composition book found in MPC's office:

January 13, 1982

Frank Fiol was appointed to chair the committee by the moderator of the Florida Presbytery. Pastor Frank Fiol was asked to moderate the Steering Committee with three ruling elders from Covenant Presbyterian Church to nurse the vision and guide the process toward planting a daughter church on Marco Island. Elders present: Mel Jones, Sam Pennington, Carl Hanson. A building fund was established and totaled \$5317.00. Covenant church start up team to help MPC: Pennington's, Schlegal's, Martel's and Hanson's.

February - December 1982

Mission Fund started with \$10.00. Part time pastor discussed, Spike Martell started teaching a Sunday School class, Carl Hanson elected chairman of building committee, Marie Warner volunteered to clean the Art League Building floor. Fifteen attended a membership class, Good Friday would be a communion service and NIV Bible voted as the 'choice translation.'

February - December 1983

Bruce Fiol was called to be MPC pastor on April 12. MPC accepted a donated organ from Covenant church. A sign was approved for the corner of Collier and Winterberry. Discussion was held to obtain 50 charter members. Meeting at Jewish Synagogue. Lou Ann Martin hired as youth counselor. First missionary, Quentin Nantz, would be paid \$10 a week. The architect firm of Boran, Cassidy & Schreck named to design church building. Spike Martel named building committee chair.

January - December 1984

Deacon's fund started. Women's organization and fellowship team established. First deacons were Spike Martel, Mel Nantz, John Morris, Bob Huddle and Les Schlegal.

January - December 1985

Dedication of the new church was on February 3 with Rev. Don Seltzer as the speaker and bell ringers from Kendall Church in Ft. Lauderdale. Started printing a bulletin, appointed greeters and began coffee hour after church. Mission support went to David Fiol, Quentin Nantz and Kirk Nantz.

January - December 1986

Church loan to MTW paid in full. First DVBS planned for August. New missions approved: Operation Mobilization, Virginia Storm, Dan and Ira Pinckney, Steve and Beth Schoof and Gary Waldecker. First directory printed.

January - March 1987

Ordained new officers. Ten thousand brochures distributed. Radio announcements approved and weekly women's Bible study started.

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## MPC First Building

The vision of MPC is to make disciples of Jesus Christ on Marco Island, to be a strong fellowship of believers reaching out to Marco Island, Collier County, Florida and the rest of the world with the Gospel, and to be a mother church to other churches in Collier County.

In order to achieve their goals, MPC first needed to secure a loan, as told in the following note:

Reasons why MPC feels that the loan sought should be approved by the committee: "We feel strongly that a church building of our own on Marco Island is vital to the continuing growth necessary to become a particular church of the PCA. It would give us needed room to grow (we are at capacity now in the winter months) and make possible additional ministries to the community. We also see the building as a witness to the community of the permanence of our church. A strong Bible preaching and teaching in the Reformed faith is needed on Marco Island. We feel sure that sometime in the future there will be a Presbyterian church here and we don't want to pass up this opportunity to have a PCA church erected while the offer of free property is available. Our people have given liberally and to date we have \$176,417 in cash and pledges payable this year. We need this loan to complete the interior of the building. We believe the growth of the church will bring additional funds and we will be able to pay off the loan in a short time."

Following strict guidelines established by the committee on Mission to North America, on February 10, 1984 Rev. Fiol wrote to the Treasurer of the Presbytery of Southern Florida saying that MPC was ready for their \$20,000 loan.

November 6, 1985. To Marco Island Church: This is to confirm the status of the above named church as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America. Respectfully, James E. Ostenson.

### March 17, 1995 letter from Bruce Fiol to the Outreach Committee:

Dear Friends:

I would like to personally express my deepest gratitude to you all for a job well done! I know I speak for the session and the entire congregation when I say thank you.

Your enthusiastic and creative commitment to the task of making Christ known in our community has blessed my heart and has been used of God to spread the message of His love to a lost world. You have been diligent, untiring and persistent in the work entrusted to you. You have held the officers accountable in a loving way. Your passion for reaching our community for Christ has been seen in the excellent ideas you have implemented and the foundation you have so effectively laid for future ministries.

May the Lord be honored through your continued efforts and may great glory come to Him as he builds His church through you by the way in which you spark the passion in the hearts of each member of the Body.

Yours in the bonds of his love, Bruce R. Fiol

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PCA Bulletin News Supplement: "In answer to devout prayer, effort and sacrificial giving over several years, a thankful PCA congregation at Marco Island, FL gathered June 8 in front of a church sign - but no building - to receive a property deed for a 4.11 acre tract of prime property. Donor of the property is the Deltona Corporation, which is developing a major part of the island south of Naples, FL.

"With the deed in hand, the congregation looks forward to groundbreaking ceremonies in just a few weeks and possible completion of the project by the end of 1984. Although building plans had to be revised to include a \$70,000 figure for site elevation, the church is projecting a total program of about \$270,000, exclusive of furnishings.

"The Marco Island church is a 'daughter' congregation of Covenant PCA Church in Naples. Rev. Bruce Fiol is pastor."

From an anonymous handwritten note: "In the building of our first church building - besides generous giving of monies, our people had willing hands. Outside of actual building construction, our people did much of the work. Most of the landscaping came from our homes and was done by willing hands. We laid underground sprinkling system, did all inside painting, laid floor tile, etc. This made quite a statement, especially on affluent Marco Island."

By the fall of 1984, John Morris worked closely with contractors; Helen Peck and Marie Werner dug trenches for the sprinkling systems along with Ken Carter and John Just. Carl Hansen drove the tractor and even the preacher's mother, Esther Fiol, helped.

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### Who is MPC?

"...He is your life and length of days...For you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul."

MPC brochure: We seek to deepen our fellowship among those who worship with us and grow together as a church family for the purpose of doing the ministry of the church.

Naples Daily News sent out a questionnaire to local churches saying - "Spirituality is not only an important subject in the country, but it is an important subject to the Naples Daily News. What are your church's strengths?" MPC answered: "A caring family; small enough to provide individual love and care to each member, large enough to reach into the community with the same concerns."

Woven into the fabric of MPC is a strong foundation, as witnessed in the following:

Excerpts from Bruce Fiol's 'Stones of Remembrance:'

"We stand, as it were, before the pillar constructed of 12 stones taken from the Jordan River bed - from the very spot the Levites who carried the Ark of the Covenant stood, while the entire Israelite nation crossed the river on dry ground and began their conquest of the land

God had promised 500 years earlier. We've used that pillar of stones as a metaphor for the foundational principals upon which God has built MPC. The written word of God must be central: Read it, study it, think about what you read and then do whatever it tells you to do. Joshua 23:2-6 'Be very strong; be careful to obey all that is written in the book of the Law of Moses, without turning aside to the right or to the left.' From the earliest days of MPC, the leadership made a commitment from which we have never deviated. We believe THIS is the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of the living God. Everything recorded between these two covers is absolutely true, fully authoritative and must be received, and its precepts, and instruction, personally applied. That's why, from this pulpit, and in every Bible study and Sunday School class, THIS BOOK and this book alone is preached and taught."

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During the 1994 MPC building construction and expansion, where would MPC members worship? Bruce Fiol thought instantly of how we here in Marco live by the Golden Rule, and Dr. Fiol, Ralph West and Spike Martell asked members of the Jewish Center - Sam Friedman, Harry Pullman and Mel Raskein - if we could use their sanctuary. They said yes. Dr. Fiol reflected back, not on our differences but on "visible reminders of our common heritage - Father Abraham, Moses, King David and Daniel all illustrate what it means to walk in a personal relationship to Jehovah and be used by him. Sarah, Deborah, Ruth and Esther are all models of faith in God, which we desire to emulate."

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In 2001, with MPC attendance growing at 3.85% annually and Marco Island growing - 11,000 full-time residents - led to the need for 3 morning worship services during season. As a result, a new worship area, with seating for over 600, was projected to be completed by 2002.

A new sanctuary is the last building to be added to MPC's 4 acre site. The existing two buildings were the old sanctuary and administrative offices and the education center. Staff has also grown to include senior and associate pastors, a director of youth ministries, full-time secretary, part-time bookkeeper and dozens of volunteers.

Additionally in 2001, there were approximately 1,000 elementary students living on the island and MPC wanted to attract and retain these families to build the year round core of family members and give our youth spiritual direction.

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### We Believe

Marco Presbyterian Church believes that the Bible is the inerrant and infallible Word of God and holds to that system of doctrine summarized in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. We believe that Christ calls his church to faithfully preach and teach the Word, to grow through the sacraments, prayer, and fellowship, and to spread the Gospel at home and abroad.

Marco Presbyterian Church is a member of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) denomination. We seek to be scriptural in both government and doctrine. The PCA supports the largest missionary force among Presbyterian denominations in the United States - MTW. In the PCA book, To God All Praise and Glory, Paul Settle writes, "History is different because of

the PCA. In God's sovereign scheme of things, our choices do matter. Perhaps your life is different because of the choices made by southern Presbyterian men and women 25 years ago."

The form of government is called "Presbyterian." This means the local church is governed by presbyters, or elders who are elected by the people. There are two kinds of elders; those who spiritually rule, ruling elders and those who primarily teach, teaching elders.

This is the kind of government the New Testament Church enjoyed (for instance, see Acts 20:17; Titus 1: 5 - 7). It has been the form followed by the great Reformed & Presbyterian branches of Christendom since the days of John Calvin in Europe and John Knox in England and Scotland.

The elders sit in a "session." This session has been entrusted with the oversight of the faith and life of the local church congregation.

Representatives from the session along with the ordained ministers of the churches compose the "Presbytery." The Presbytery has oversight of the ministries of the churches in a given geographical area. Through the Presbytery, the work of many churches is coordinated and their combined efforts enable them to extend the Kingdom of Christ much farther than otherwise would be possible. Marco Presbyterian Church is a member of the Suncoast Florida Presbytery.

The local churches also send commissioners – elders and pastors – to the highest court of the church, the "General Assembly." The assembly meets annually and enables all the churches to have a voice in guiding the spiritual and practical affairs of the entire denomination.

In the Presbyterian Church in America the local church owns and controls its own property. A Church's relationship with the denomination is based on mutual love and commitment to the Bible, the Reformed faith, and the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

Our form of doctrine is also scriptural. As Presbyterian refers to our form of government, so "Reformed" denotes our doctrinal beliefs. We stand in the ancient heritage of true-to-the-Bible theology. We earnestly strive to follow Christ and His Apostles. We believe that the purest expression of scriptural doctrine is found in the Calvinistic creeds particularly the Westminster Confession of Faith with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

This means that we believe in the Trinity. There is one God who exists eternally in three Persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

We believe that the Bible is the written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit and without error in the original manuscripts. The Bible is our infallible and divine authority in all matters of faith and life.

We believe that all are sinners and are totally unable to save themselves or to even cooperate with God in efforts to earn their salvation.

We believe that God alone saves the people whom He draws to Jesus by His Holy Spirit. He convinces them of their sin and enlightens them so that they repent of their sins and trust in

Jesus Christ as He is offered in the Gospel. Because God alone knows who are His, we call on people everywhere to repent and to trust in Jesus Christ.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, who became man and lived and died and rose again to atone for the sins of those who trust Him alone for their salvation. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man.

We believe that God's Holy Spirit gives Christians the daily strength and wisdom they need to walk according to His Will and to grow in holiness.

We believe that Jesus Christ shall return personally, visibly and bodily to judge all mankind and to receive His people unto Himself.

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God is with me  
God is in me  
God is for me

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### Today

Visitors are greeted at the carport and again inside the door where an expansive, comfortable foyer has a welcome desk and informational brochures. Before the service, our pastor's and leader's extend handshakes. During the service, musicians and lead singers accompany and guide the congregation through the music and then every part of the worship service teaches, uplifts, strengthens - and is thoroughly Presbyterian.

In the existing sanctuary, high above the pulpit is a circular stained glass window. The gold circles represent the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit - interlocking, identical and yet distinct. The Holy Spirit is also represented by streams of light, the Son as the Lamb of God and the Father with His hands open.

The shepherds represent Psalm 23:1 the Lord is my shepherd and John 10:11,15 the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep.

On the left side of the sanctuary are themes taken from the Old Testament including the three intertwining rings of the Triune Deity, the two law tablets, and the children of Israel's banner of victory. Then the red bush on fire, a cup from the Good Shepherd and Abraham's altar.

On the right side of the sanctuary are themes from the New Testament including the Greek letters 'Chi' (X) and 'Rho' (P), which are the first 2 letters for Christ (Christus), and the other 2 symbols stand for the Alpha and the Omega. The crook and the lily represent the resurrection and the life and the third is an anchor to the soul. The Spirit is represented by a dove, the Last Supper by bread and wine and Jesus' death by a crown of thorns.

In early times, stained glass windows portrayed Biblical stories to church members unable to read the Bible. Today, several of our windows were designed by MPC members and continue to represent God's word.

"For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him." 2nd Chronicles 16:9

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### MPC Interesting Facts

In 1978 the average attendance was 15; in 1984 110; by 1993 MPC attendance 110; winter 500.

1991's financial report: Income \$100,075; Mission Fund \$40,544; Outreach Fund \$5,607.

In July 1992, Andrew Siegenthaler, accompanied by his wife Allison, was named Pastoral Assistant. He is a graduate of Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, MO.

In September of that same year, Pastor Andrew suggested several proposals to the Outreach Committee. His two major ideas were a Homebuilders Study for young couples with a goal to provide fellowship, encouragement and accountability, teach Biblical principles of marriage, lead unbelieving couples to Christ and enfold these couples into the church. The second idea was an after school program for children similar to the 'Logos' program at the United Church.

Towards the end of 1992, Jean Taber, Chairman, and Marguerite Fincke, Secretary of the Outreach Committee submitted an annual report which included: "MPC now hosts around twenty happy, noisy children, guided by Carolyn Elliott, Noni Montgomery, Phyllis Shively and Allison Siegenthaler."

Brainstorming ideas from the Session and Outreach Committee on March 7, 1995 included: We want to reach all ages and locations to include Marco, Isles of Capri, up to Manatee Rd. Must consider spiritual needs of Islanders and how non-Christians view life. Outreach Committee projects past and future - Easter Sunrise, video library, newcomer mailing, Pioneer clubs, couples seminar, bulletin, brochures and bookmarks, Jesus film, Dobson and Gary Smally series.

Pamphlet - How to Shop for a Church: What do they have to say? Is their style, your style? What do they believe? Remember, churches, like people, are different. And finally, don't forget the power of prayer.

Pamphlet - MPC invites you...We are your neighbors on beautiful Marco Island. You will receive a warm welcome at MPC. We believe in: God the Father Almighty, creator of Heaven and earth; the Bible as the inerrant Word of God; Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, as the only Saviour of men; the substitutionary death of Christ as the only means of salvation; the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; the certainty of Christ's second coming to take us with him to heaven and the sovereignty of God over all events of the world and our lives.

## Pastor Fiol

Bruce Fiol was born to missionaries in India. He visited Naples in 1980 and was asked to speak with the beginning members of MPC. "I thought it was audacious and crazy for them to go halfway around the world to ask me to start their church," said Fiol. Later in his ministry he said, "Through all I've experienced in the ministry, I feel like a spectator watching God at work. Indeed, I feel blessed."

In February 1992, the Marco Messenger newsletter printed The Pastor's Pastures, written by MPC Pastor Fiol. An excerpt includes:

"Judy and I were walking along the beach early one morning not long ago. The sun was still contemplating its rise - sending only very tentative rays into the new day. But we were memorizing Scripture. That's a neat thing to do - together. I heartily endorse it as a regular practice. It will grow your spiritual life and it will bring you both closer together. And doing it so early in the morning tends to heighten attentiveness: minds alert, spirits sensitive and there are few distractions. About the only competition to total concentration were the large flocks of sea birds we encountered. Some were squabbling at our intrusion, others were bickering among themselves over a clam shell, still others were testily fighting off the bullying of larger fowl. We would watch with fascination (momentarily side-tracked) the birds that hover over a school of small fish dancing in the waters and flashing their silver sides to the brightening sky. God's greatness revealed in creation on Marco Island is awesome and invigorating. So is God's Person and grace revealed in His special revelation - His Word. And Psalm 90:14 was especially appropriate: "Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days." The psalmist declares that a joyful heart is a singing heart. It's true. Judy and I didn't do much of it audibly - didn't want to startle or confuse the birds, whose music is often more pleasant(!) - but we were singing in spirit and humming out loud."

"Once one has discovered the simple key to a successful and fruitful day it's hard not to be glad all day long and, in fact, all our days. Memorizing Scripture is a tremendously rewarding discipline; living by Scripture is a growing experience. Try it. You'll love the results."

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## 2017 MPC Pastor's

"God has been simply amazing," says MPC Associate Pastor Jan Werson. "When Dottie and I came to MPC in the summer of 2012, Bill Lyle was the lead pastor. When Bill left in 2013, we assembled a pastoral search team to look for our next pastor. The team was unanimous in its recommendation to call Steve Schoof. Why is God amazing? When Dottie and I were in Virginia Beach in 1980, we attended New Covenant Church. The pastor was Bob Schoof, the father of Steve Schoof. And what was even more amazing, Bob baptized me and my daughter, Jana. Dottie and I loved New Covenant Church, not only because of the wonderful love and spirit of the church members, but because of Bob and Barbara Schoof."

And, in God's grace -

"26 years ago, MPC gave to Beth and I in Australia, in turn," says MPC Pastor Schoof, "there are new Christians in Australia because of MPC's gifts."

Then in December 2013, the Rev. Dr. Steven Schoof, accompanied by his wife Beth, answered God's call to become Senior Pastor at MPC.

God continues to be amazing, as evidenced in Pastor Steve's 2014 sermon excerpt - 'Is Your Heart Quiet?'

"Deep inside, is your heart quiet? A restless, agitated, fearful, doubting, churning heart is the result of various levels of unbelief and its side effects. Can you see that if you could learn to rest in God and trust him more, then the symptoms of a heart that is not quiet might find relief? A quiet heart is a heart that has absorbed hope in Jesus in such large doses that nothing can upset it. A quiet heart is content with what God gives and with what God takes. As impatience gets weeded out of our hearts, patience takes hold. Use the promises of God to persuade your heart that God's timing, wisdom and goodness can take your hard and hopeless situation and make something eternally valuable out of it."

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### Current Outreach

MPC outreach events include winter concert series, fellowship dinners, missions conference, Easter sunrise service on the beach, prayer breakfast, evening small group studies, Operation Christmas Child, Samaritan's Purse, English as a Second Language, God's First Kids, nursing home ministry, youth groups and retreats, Christmas parade, Good News clubs, Griefshare, Bible studies, Vacation Bible School and Evangelism Explosion.

"To pray...To send...To Go...To give." We at MPC are serious about our missionary's and their ministries. Across the Island, across the bridge, across the sea - accomplishing the mission of Jesus.

MPC offers many opportunities for people to find God's grace that will transform us into stronger and more loving people who will reflect God's glory to a hurting world.

### Missions

The mission of MPC is to worship and glorify God; serve our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by continuing God's work among residents and visitors to the community; make Christ known through evangelism and missions; nurture spiritual development in those that worship the Lord by commitment to the faithful preaching and teaching of the Bible as the inspired Word of God; encourage fellowship among believers and perform acts of mercy within the church and throughout the community.

Why is participating in missions so important for us as individuals and as a church?

Kirk Nantz responds, "Marco Island is not the real world, it has its own needs, but we need to be exposed to more of the opportunities for service around the world. Our supported missionaries live it every day, in different ways. In order to keep my heart from becoming hard, I like to go and see and participate with missionaries on the field."

"The history of this church: Founding pastor came from the mission field to Marco church. The standard was set at the beginning (really before we were a formed church) that for all incoming gifts to the church 25% would be for support of missions.

"As a church we exceed that target in total gifts to missions outreach annually."

Kirk also shares the following: "The local church is the entity by which God accomplishes His work in the world today. Clearly in Acts 13:3 we find the congregation of the local church in which the candidates were serving sending out the missionaries, literally, "releasing" them for the ministry to which the Holy Spirit had called them. The fact that the church released them for ministry indicates that the church had the authority to grant or deny permission for the two men to go forth to minister. The authority to preach the gospel, to conduct ministry in the name of God comes from Christ through the church."

<https://blogs.faithlafayette.org/missions/biblical-roles-in-missions-part-6-agencies-dont-send-missionaries/>

MPC Associate Pastor Jan Werson continues speaking about missions, "The theme of our 40th anniversary celebrations is "celebrating 40 years of missions." From the very inception of this church, missions was at the very core of what we would be about, because it is at the very core of the Gospel. Christ's last words in Acts 1:8 were, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

"This year we anticipate marvelous opportunities to participate in mission's endeavors:

-On Marco Island, Collier County and the U.S. by reaching:

- Children through Good News Club, G-1 Kids and Wednesday Night Youth Ministries, VBS, and the Giving Tree.
- People from around the world through English as a Second Language and our partnership with El Shaddai Church in Naples and Haiti.
- Re-building homes and lives through our Mercy Team due to Hurricane Irma.
- Assisting our Campus Minister at FGCU, Lucas Tanner.
- Partnering in missions with a church plant pastor in the U.S (still to be determined).

-Around the World we hope:

- To reach our neighbors in Cuba through a 3-year partnership with Kids Around the World and a network of evangelical churches in Cuba.
- To see a partnership arise with an orphanage in Cambodia sponsored by one of our own church members.
- Continue our missions outreach to Pastor Sainvil's hometown in Puerto Rico.

"We have been able to impact the world for Christ because of our faithful members as they have gone on short term mission's trips when called, given financially, and prayed without ceasing."

"As we look back 40 years, we see wonderful ways in which we have impacted Marco Island, Naples, Collier County and the World for His glory. As we look forward to the next 40 years, we pray that we will be faithful to Christ's Great Commission and continue to be His witnesses 'Across the Island, Across the Bridge and Across the Sea."

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Psalm 1:3 "They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither and they prosper in all they do."

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How can I help? - is a question that we hear often at MPC. Many people would like to be more involved in serving Jesus through the ministry of MPC.

Blaine Fluth answers, "THRIVE (Take part, Help, Involve, Volunteer, Encourage) is a tool which helps all of us find where we "fit together perfectly" in the body, using the gifts, talents and abilities we have received, "through the generosity of Christ" to help the body of MPC be "healthy and growing and full of love."

"We developed a THRIVE "Information Finder" on which each person can indicate where/how they might like to serve. This form is available on paper and on our website. This information is entered into our MPC database where it is available to the individual and to church leadership. The individual can search for service opportunities that interest them and in which they might like to explore serving. Church leadership can also search for individuals who have the gifts, qualifications and interests, which fit open serving opportunities. People are now joyfully serving, when before THRIVE, they did not know there was a special service opportunity just right for them. Church leaders have found people that were specially gifted and ready for specific serving opportunities."

"When "...each part does its own special work..." (Eph. 4:15-16 NLT) and we all are actively using our gifts (Mt. 25:24-27) MPC will be a healthy growing body, which draws people to Jesus."

### The Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministries is a not-for-profit Christian organization based in St. Louis. Since 1975, Stephen Ministries has trained more than 12,000 congregations from more than 160 denominations.

'We are all broken people and only Jesus can make us whole.' And, when broken, when facing challenges, receiving emotional and spiritual one-on-one care can be life-saving. The Stephen Ministry trains layperson's to provide confidential care to people in our congregation and community. "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2

With approval from the Elders, the Stephen Ministry officially started as part of the Mercy Team in June 2016 with three MPC members - Marge Beasley, Jo-Ann Garvin and Paul Flores - attending a week long Leadership Training Conference. The first class of 12 trained Stephen Ministers was commissioned in April 2017 with the primary objective of "caring for people through people." These trained ministers walk alongside people who are experiencing a difficult time in their lives and could benefit from ongoing, one-on-one Christian Care.

"And do you know what our problem is now?" says Jo-Ann Garvin. "We need to train more Stephen Minister's!"

### MPC Four-Legged Outreach

Joanne Thorstenson says, "Below is a picture of Mick and I with "Michael," one of the Southeastern Guide Dog puppies we have raised. This is what was written about "Michael" on SEG'D's website after he was paired up with his PTSD veteran:

"Meet Michael. He's the calming type, the kind that soothes anxiety with a body hug for his Navy veteran handler, a former aviation electrician who worked on jets aboard an aircraft carrier. Her PTSD tried to derail her life, and now Michael's smile and sweetness centers her once again. Way to love, Michael! Thanks for your service as a service dog!"

"I am so proud of Michael! He is a superhero pup. We are honored to have had the chance to contribute to his career of doing what he does best, giving lots of love. We love labs and know the difference they make in the lives of veterans with PTSD and the visually impaired. We are thankful for our community that allows these puppies-in-training to get exposures to all places a blind person or veteran would go. We also pray that the puppies we raise would be paired with a Christian, a sweet dog gift from God. Therefore, we are grateful to give them great exposure to MPC and the wonderful congregation that worships there."

"Thank you for your support, MPC congregation!" Mick, Joanne, Nicholas and Christy Thorstenson

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### Easter - on the Beach

Alan Sandlin, Chairman of the Marco Island Easter Sunrise Service on the Beach committee says, "2018 is the 30th anniversary of the Easter Sunrise Service on the Beach - another milestone in the history of MPC. Easter not only represents the foundation of Christianity through the sacrifice and resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, but Easter is also an incredible opportunity to fulfill Jesus' Great Commission to "make disciples of all nations." It is then a great credit to MPC that took the lead in establishing an Easter Sunrise Service on the beach. This community Easter Sunrise Service over the years has drawn many thousands to hear the great news of love and salvation from our Savior, Jesus Christ! The Beach Easter Sunrise Service has become Marco Island's largest single community event - last year drawing over 8,000 people. It is a tribute to Marco Island, its residents, city and business leaders and MPC that our small community has, according to verifiable sources, the largest Easter Sunrise Service on the beach in the country! Spreading this incredible Gospel story to so many through this outreach brings great Glory to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!"

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### ESL - English as a Second Language

Beth Schoof explains, "Scripture tells us that we are to reach the nations with the gospel of Jesus Christ. One way that ESL gives back is by taking advantage of the fact that it brings the nations right to our doorstep! It gives us as teachers the opportunity to help people who need a language skill, to love them as fellow image-bearers of God, and in the process share Jesus

with them. And as the Spirit of God calls them to Jesus, the church is there to embrace them and the Kingdom of God increases."

Pat Hancock shares her experience, "When I took the training to become an English as a Second Language teacher, I had no idea of the depth of relationship that I would develop with the students. As I team taught each week, I got to know the students on a personal level. Soon, the other 2 teachers and I were being invited to family events of our students. Along with teaching English, we also taught the Word of God, and the students began to have the freedom to share prayer requests. Those prayer requests became a window into their lives, hopes, dreams, and struggles. My life has been enriched beyond description through my involvement with ESL."

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MPC values are evangelism, teaching Bible doctrine, fellowship, worship and prayer. From these, the elders have established goals in the areas of worship and glorifying God, God's work among residents and visitors, evangelism and missions, spiritual development, fellowship and acts of mercy for our church and community.

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### We Take Care of One Another

MPC women have Bible studies, conferences and many opportunities to worship and serve others.

Nancy Francis, MPC's 'visiting angel,' has an area of ministry that she shares with other women such as Helen Bias, Barbara Bunting and Elfi Horn. Nancy explains, "Jesus is very clear on His instructions to his sheep and Jesus tells us in Matthew 25:40, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." What joy it is for me to serve Jesus in the way of Mercy Ministry and MPC. Visiting people, taking food to those who can't get out or are in need - the list is lengthy in ways we can serve. In addition to doing good for others a great thing happens in my own life - when helping others I also help myself. That's all part of the joy in serving Jesus it's a win-win for all those with faith and trust. There are so many other ways we can serve daily, letting our light shine at the grocery store, restaurant, on the beach or anywhere in public. The Love of Christ shines through us by our compassion to those in need or anyone we may meet and encourage."

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### Mercy Ministry

Paul Flores says, "God is amazing in His grace. When I stop to think about how God has located MPC to be able to bring His Word to Marco Island and to the world, it is nothing short of amazing. But that's our God, absolutely amazing in His mercy and grace. What greater mercy than to send missionaries throughout the world to bring His Spirit and Truth to a hungry and needy people. What greater mercy than to be His ambassadors to our neighbors and friends."

"Opportunities will always exist, whether it's responding to the devastation of a hurricane, as we have recently with Irma and in the past with Charlie, or one of the many others that caused damage to us or our neighbors. We have the opportunity when helping a neighbor in need by sharing both material goods and God's Word, or just sharing His Word to bring comfort."

"We are called to follow Jesus, "a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,"(Luke 24:19) and He helps us to bring His love to others through word and deed. What a privilege! What joy, as we reach out in the name of Jesus, to our brothers and sisters in the church, or those whom God brings before us from the community. Only He knows how He will use our willingness to be His hands and feet."

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### Nursing Home Ministry

Cheryl Petrich shares, "Every 3rd and 4th Sunday we take a team of volunteers to care facilities where we have a church service with residents and their visiting families. We praise and worship with them, share the Word of God, take time to pray with them, and show them the love of Christ. We sing old church songs and ask residents to tell us their favorite old hymns and we sing them. We have seen many people who no longer recognize their own children, but they seem to remember these old songs and their lips will begin to move and sing. What a joy."

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### Music Ministry

John Stein speaks about music in worship, "Music allows us to let go of everything that is demanding our time and attention, and it allows us to focus on the Lord. Music prepares our hearts before God in a way that allows the Holy Spirit to speak to us. I think about how the lyrics to the hymn, "Come Thou Fount Of Every Blessing," remind us about our need to separate ourselves from things that really do not matter and to worship the Lord in a way that is pleasing to Him."

'Come thou fount of every blessing tune my heart to sing Thy grace.  
Streams of mercy never ceasing call for songs of loudest praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.  
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it mount of God's unchanging love.'

Pat Kaikini shares, "Music plays an important vital role and has enormous power of effecting our emotions and the lyrics can swell our hearts and the Bible resounds with praise and thanks to God through Music. The Music Ministry led by John Stein includes an integral part of our communication with God. It teaches and helps us retain scriptures for a lifetime. Hymns, choruses, and new songs provide a means for us to express our thanks, praise and love to God. Through music we offer encouragement, hope, comfort, and guidance."

"It is powerful, through classic hymns of the faith and praise music led by orchestra, creative media and Bible preaching."

"We in Music Ministry desire to celebrate the musical gifts God has given to each of us. Music is in harmony with the Ministry of God's word and is a significant part of the life in our Presbyterian Church and points towards the role of music in our praise of God in heaven."

"Congregation singing songs to God with the Music Ministry is a great tool for helping us feel closer to God. I think the entire service is about worshipping, and showing reverence and gratitude to God."

"Christian Worship is all about the position of our hearts. The Music and songs continue to play a vital role in the life of God's people."

"Music and singing praise to God is not a Concert. It is an art form most suited to expressing the church's unity in the body of Christ. We all glorify God together, worshiping him with one spirit and the same faith."

"Our Presbyterian church's Ministry of Music is for the edification of God's people. But it is also important for the congregation to know some great hymns of faith in order to have a sense that the Christian Faith to be enriched by the faith of the 'great cloud of witnesses.'"

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Highlights of the MPC Special Music History, compiled by Linda Sandlin: In the 1980's, June West sang from the piano before the service and led congregational singing with her warm smile and beautiful voice. Carolyn Elliott faithfully played the organ for many years. In the mid 80's, Pastor Bruce Fiol asked Linda Sandlin to put together a choir for the Christmas service. This was the beginning of the choir which has faithfully served the church and glorified the Lord through music continuously since then in the church services with Linda directing until Sandy took over in 2004. "Serving the Lord and the Church directing the choir for all those years was truly a joy and a privilege," says Linda Sandlin.

The small choir first stood on the stairs at the front of the sanctuary (now the Fellowship Hall) with Pastor Bruce leading the bass section! Later a small nook at the front right of the Fellowship Hall was built for the choir along with small risers. One of the highlights for the early choir was singing the Hallelujah Chorus at the dedication of the new Sanctuary from the new choir risers in the front of the new Sanctuary. The new organ and piano were gifts from congregation members for the new sanctuary. Carolyn Turley gave the new choir robes. The Fee family was also an early contributor to the music program with Marion directing choir when Linda could not and professional singer daughter Connie singing solos. Jo-Ann Garvin recalls, "I remember playing the piano for Connie Fee to sing. She was always so encouraging and complimentary of me but I was a nervous wreck, trying not to make a mistake!"

Many, many soloists, musicians, and choir members throughout the years gave of their talents to glorify the Lord with special music. The choirs sang for the Sunday morning worship services from Thanksgiving through April when a majority of the members headed north. In addition, the choir sang for the Mission Conferences and community events. One choir highlight in the early years was doing a gospel concert at the Marco Island Yacht Club to raise money for the Make A Wish Foundation.

The arrival of Marv and Karen Hollenbeck from Grand Rapids brought another whole new dimension to the music at MPC with Marv's enthusiastic morning service greetings from the piano, "You are in the right place," and his exceptional prowess on the piano. Babs Hillenbrand replaced Carolyn at the organ when Carolyn moved West. That brought the "birth" of the fabulous Marv and Babs concerts as well as Babs creating the MPC Bell Choir. John Stein has carried on the MPC Bell Choir tradition with all the faithful "ringers." The Bell Choir playing on the MPC float in the Christmas Parade has been a wonderful community outreach.

Fellowship at MPC has blossomed over the years and Bonnie Seigfried and the team of ladies has taken that Christian fellowship to new heights with "Themed Dinners" and creative Variety shows with such highlights as Bob and Liz Hartman in costume doing, "I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandee," the "Gaither Show" gospel night and the Christmas Madrigal Dinner to mention just a few.

MPC loves to "Sing a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord!"

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### Music and Memories

Karen and Marv Hollenbeck remember, "On Christmas Day 1998 we left Michigan to become full-time residents of Marco Island where we had only a few superficial acquaintances and no close friends. One of our first endeavors was to find our new "home" church. We had never been Presbyterian but were told by friends in Michigan that Marco Presbyterian was the place to go for a Gospel message, so the first Sunday in January 1999 we visited MPC for the first time.

"As we entered the church we were immediately impressed by the sweet voice and spirit of June West leading a pre-worship singalong, ending with "There's Just Something About That Name." By the time the service ended and we had heard the message by Bruce Fiol, we knew we had found our home! Within just a few weeks, Dr. Fiol visited our home and asked Marv about "filling in" while June went on vacation. Little did we know that vacation would last nearly 10 months and Marv would continue to "fill in" for 15 years.

"We quickly developed friendships within the church and become more and more involved as each year passed. It was exciting to be there for the building of the new sanctuary and to sign our names on the beams before they were put into place. We both loved serving there and were "blown away" when we were gifted with enough money to buy a grand piano at the time of our move away. By the time we left Marco in 2013, it felt like we were leaving family and it continues to feel like our home and family each time we return to visit."

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### Sunday School

One of MPC's teachers, Jerry Francis, gives us insight, "Is the church a big deal? Yes, it is - my passion for the past 33 years has been leading an adult Sunday school class. I love reading/researching God's word and working to bring it to life for easy understanding and encouragement. We all need a savior, and the hope that Jesus brings, as we listen to God's

love/promises for mankind (Ladies too). I love to share these promises with all who feel led to attend class."

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### The B-I-B-L-E

Pastor Steve tells us, "God is speaking directly to us in the Bible's 66 books; treat His words with the same amount of respect as we would if God were standing and speaking right in front of us. Genesis 1 through Revelation 22:21 - all we need for faith and life."

From Jim Carl, "I love our Sunday evening teaching time; reading through God's Word, allowing God's Spirit to speak to God's people. Having many different teachers guide us through the Scriptures is a delight, because we get many different perspectives on what God is sharing with us. Being one of those teachers is a special privilege. No one gets more from a particular passage than the one who studies it to prepare for a time of sharing, such as Sunday evenings. It's fascinating to see how God often allows things to happen in our lives in such a way that the Scriptures come alive in a relevant and meaningful way when studying for, and then presenting, a Sunday night lesson. Cathy and I are so grateful for a church family that loves and honors the Word of God. ('All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, that the man (or woman) of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.' 2Ti 3:16-17)."

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### Knit and Pray

In 2008, we started our prayer shawl ministry, which has touched many of our church family members and friends. As a volunteer knits or crochets a shawl, we ask that they pray, asking the Lord to meet the needs of whoever will be the recipient of the shawl.

Carole Richards explains, "The prayer shawl ministry at MPC brings comfort and peace to the sick, hurting or grieving. Our ladies prayerfully make them for that reason. We encourage anyone who knits or crochets to join us in this ministry. It's a joy to those who make them and to know it will be a blessing to those who receive one."

Jill Yris shares a story, "In 2015, I was a patient at NCH Downtown. Several MPC members visited, sang and prayed with me. And then, unexpectedly, one visitor took a new prayer shawl and lovingly wrapped it around my cold shoulders. Warmth, prayers, God's love - immediate relief."

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### Our Men

Ward Petrich talks about the men's gatherings, "Marco Presbyterian Church sponsors two men's fellowship events, the weekly Bible study and the weekly men's lunch. The Bible study focus is on God's Word, the role of the Church, much looked to by the attendees. The weekly lunch promotes good conversation and fellowship. Both provide opportunity for men to enrich their lives and come to gather as Brothers of the Body."

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### 40 years

Linda and Jim Bolonda recall, "We have visited, vacationed and lived on Marco Island since 1971. The changes on the island have been vast. We learned about Marco Pres on the beach, at sunrise one Easter morning. From Bruce's message, it was clear that God was alive on this island paradise. The message from the MPC pulpit has never changed - 'God wants to establish and grow a relationship with you.'"

"The congregation demonstrated that rich relationship with its commitment to welcoming and warm fellowship. We found the generosity of MPC people real in giving to missions and later when we built a new sanctuary that opened debt free. This is a special place - we have been blessed to be a part of this body."

From 'our' Elfi Horn, "Ever since Waldemar and I came to Marco Island in August of 1997, friends told us of Dr. Bruce Fiol, who had been the speaker during their Missionary Conference. We did not find the church for the morning service, but when we came back in the evening, Paul Flores, who was meeting with the youth, directed us to the Seller's house at Buttercup Court - the church became our home, where we found people who loved the Lord and were desiring to serve Him."

"Many of the friends we came to know and love have been called to heaven. New faces, new pastors, new elders and deacons have taken their place. One thing has been constant: The Word of God has been proclaimed and Jesus Christ is the center of all activities. Over the years, it always has been the goal to reach people with the Gospel. We prayer-walked the streets of Marco, visited through the EE program, and tried to share where the Lord opened a door. Our pastors have guided us as a church to be focused on the Word of God and live lives that would please Him. I thank the Lord for the continued emphasis on Missions at home and abroad."

"What does Marco Presbyterian Church mean to me? It is my home away from HOME. Without 'her' I would be very lonely!!!"

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### Financial Health

Cathy and Jim Carl speak about Ed Crane, "We have heard more than one story about Dad's generous spirit at the church. Ed's favorite story was about the time that the church was taking pledges to raise money for the construction of the new sanctuary, or worship center. It was a multi-million dollar project, and the leadership did not want to take out a loan to complete the construction. It was quite a campaign with many meetings and presentations, with which Cathy's dad was apparently deeply involved. The day came to total up all of the pledges that had been submitted, and the team that added up the pledges was blown away to realize that they had just enough money to complete the project without borrowing any money. Whenever Cathy's dad shared this story he would get tears in his eyes and his voice

would crack a bit, as he conveyed the faithfulness of God in supplying the needs, and even wants, of His saints."

Judy Roberts shares a story, "The best example of unexpected generosity came from a very unexpected source. We publish in the bulletin where the church giving is compared to the budget each month. Often in the off-season, we are considerably behind budget. One Sunday an occasional attender handed the pastor a check after the service. The amount of the check was the exact amount of the deficit. We have been extremely blessed by God with a very generous congregation."

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### Elders

Ritchie Gillespie talks about the responsibilities of the ruling elder, "In 2 Tim 1:14 the apostle Paul urges Timothy to "guard the good deposit entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit" and in 1 Tim 6:20 he adds, "avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called 'knowledge.'" These words define the fundamental role of the ruling elder in the church throughout history. The church then as now remains surrounded by a sea of false teaching filled with the debris of doctrinal compromise. The elder is to serve, teach, and pray for the church to keep its focus on the truth and conviction given to us in scripture alone that we have been chosen by God for salvation by His grace alone, through faith in Jesus Christ alone, for the glory of God alone. This is the "good deposit" entrusted to every believer."

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### MPC Leadership

Retirement, by George M. Buck, "Cindy and I were introduced to Marco Church a few years ago by some friends staying in Naples for the winter. It didn't take too many visits before we began to feel drawn to the church by the preaching and the way we felt welcomed. By 2011, we were completely retired from our business in Michigan and began staying the whole season."

"Having spent most of my adult life in various church leadership roles, I thought I was ready to "retire" from such positions and enjoy worshiping. Having become friends with several men in leadership roles, by 2012 I felt called to be involved once again. After completing leadership training classes, I became an elder in 2016."

"Being part of the leadership of Marco Presbyterian Church and its mission to reach people with Christ's message is truly an honor and has become a heartfelt obligation to contribute to that mission."

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### Preparing for Westminster

Jonathan Hatt says, "I think Marco Presbyterian Church prepared me in an extraordinary way. Pastor Steve taught me that Ministry is beyond just studying; it's for broken people in need of

Jesus. I think MPC prepared me to have a love for God's Church, helping me to realize the great need for faithful ministers in our churches today."

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### Children, Youth and Family

Dena Hatt says, "Children are very important to our Lord and to Marco Presbyterian Church. God gave the Leadership of MPC the vision of reaching more children, youth and families on Marco Island. In October of 2014, Marco Presbyterian Church hired their first Children's Director.

"In those short three years, programs and events have been established for children, including a mid-week program called G1kids (God 1st kids), Good News Club at a local elementary school - (Tommie Barfield), Vacation Bible School, Youth events and Family fun nights.

"God has blessed Marco Presbyterian Children with growth in children, youth and families so much that our church is now searching for a Family Pastor.

"We continue to look for great and mighty things that our Lord will do for the ministries of Children, Youth and Families."

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### Service to God - Together

At MPC, we have couples who give back generously to the Lord with their time, sometimes separately, oftentimes together. One example is Bonnie and Mike Seigfried, "Mike and I consider it a blessing to have the time to do things for our church and church family. We love the Lord and to serve and give of one's time is all for his glory. Our time and talents are all gracious gifts from above. It is a privilege to use them in serving others. Marco Presbyterian Church is our church home and family. We are so blessed."

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### Three Generations - Worshiping, Learning and Growing - at MPC

"Reflecting over the past 30+ years worshiping at Marco Presbyterian Church, we see God in His Sovereignty, blessing people who have honored His Name and His Word. We see a unity of purpose and a shared vision developed by Godly people committed to a variety of ministries emphasizing missions and a constant preaching of the gospel. Our families are beneficiaries of these years on their spiritual journeys, for which we will always be thankful." Mel Nantz & Jim Garvin

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### The Future

Insights from Greg Poland, "My wife and I moved to Marco Island in January 2015. The move was in final obedience (I resisted it for 7 years!) to a clear sense of calling from God to move

from full-time academic medical practice, to full-time ministry. Since then, we have visited and attended all the evangelical churches on the island, and begun an organization of 4 of these churches into the Marco Evangelical Pastors Association, which meets monthly. In addition we biked every street on Marco (twice now!), praying for each home and meeting as many people as we could, talking with them about Faith. We discovered what is likely true throughout most of the US - very few committed believers, and lots of "none's and done." However, we were delighted at several consistent findings - the Haitian and Hispanic people we met were almost always grateful and eager for faith conversation, excitedly taking the tracts and "Our Daily Bread" we handed them in their languages! They are more than open, eager would be a better word, for a faith home! God has brought the nations to our very doorsteps! We were also surprised at how many people accepted our tracts and expressed genuine and sincere thankfulness for offering to pray for them. The fields are ripe!"

"In terms of healthy churches on Marco Island - we believe that a healthy church is a Christ-saturated church - a Philippians 1-like church where the leadership and fellowship are together engaged in the Great Commission locally and abroad - characterized by an outward focus, and on loving and serving others, while worshiping the Great God who has given us life. A healthy church has a clear structure and a clear fellowship-wide sense of function - that is, what their purpose is in Christ - and does it! We joined Marco Presbyterian Church when we moved here - and have seen the Holy Spirit beginning to stir this church into a new era and renewal, with prayers for revival in our fellowship and on Marco Island. MPC is a God-honoring church and we are here to serve and be witnesses to those "yet far away" from Christ. God has blessed the fellowship of MPC with everything we need to fulfill His call on our lives - and as the Book of James so well puts it - evidence of our faith will be our fruit - that is, what we do with these blessings from God. We see it already - the incredible outreach efforts of MPC to those suffering from the effects of Hurricane Irma, ESL, children's and youth programming, taking in the Montessori school, a recent day of fasting and prayer beseeching God for renewal and revival, the Sunday night congregational Bible study, the Elders hearing the people and beginning to talk about the possibility of new church plants and new worship service types, and many, many more ministries. We are, together, doing God's work! May He bless MPC as we live and move and have our being rooted solely in being set apart for His purposes!"

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### Marco Presbyterian Church

Marco Presbyterian Church offers a place where the Gospel of Grace is proclaimed and lived out. Our desire is that all of our members and visitors experience the powerful presence of God in a way that deeply changes each of us.

As we begin year 41, may we remember our history and the courage of our founders. May we treasure each present moment walking with our Lord and may our MPC grandchildren be visionaries for Christ and continue to stand tall on a firm Biblical foundation.

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## TIMELINE

MPC Pastor's

Bruce Fiol  
First organizing pastor 1983-1986  
Senior Pastor 1987-2008

Andrew Siegenthaler  
Assistant Pastor 1992-1993  
Associate Pastor 1993-1996

Tim Justice  
First Youth Pastor 1997

Don Hulsey  
Assistant Pastor 1999-2001

David Swicegood  
Associate Pastor 2002-2006

Jonathan Loerop  
Assistant Pastor 2003-2008

Bill Lyle  
Senior Pastor 2008-2013

Paul May  
Assistant Pastor 2009-2011

Ron Whited  
Special Assistance during season

Jan Werson  
Associate Pastor 2012-present

Steve Schoof  
Senior Pastor 2013-present

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### Timeline for Building Marco Presbyterian Church campus

Josberger Funeral Home March 12, 1978

Marco Beach House

Marco Art League

Deed from Deltona for land December 23, 1982

Groundbreaking for first Worship Center July 26, 1984

Dedication of new building February 3, 1985

Education building (and first mission conference) 1987

Addition to Fellowship Hall, which was previously the Worship Center, MPC met at Jewish Synagogue during renovation 1998

Groundbreaking for new Worship Center April 1, 2001

Dedication for new Worship Center March 10, 2002

Remodel and addition to Fellowship Hall 2012

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#### MPC Charter Members

Spike Martell

Judy Martell

Carlyle Hansen

Marjorie Hansen

Judy Fiol

Marie Werner

Noelle Martell

Sally Schlegel

Mel Nantz

Sharon Nantz

Karen Boyer

Terry Boyer

Cheri Smith

Lisa Fiol

Chris Martell

Andy Fiol

Kirk Nantz

Monica (Bobbie) Temple

Walter D. Temple, Jr.

Kathy Sue Price

Douglas Price

John Boothe

Catherine Both

Merle Thorp

Anthony (Tony) Wauterlek

Kathryn (Kay) Wauterlek

Ralph West

Deceased

Chuck Werner  
J.A. Morris  
Marge Fincke  
James J. Wilson  
Katherine Wilson  
Harold Gersten  
Doris Gersten  
Robert MacNulty Temple  
Hugh Athens  
June West

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Kids Around the World playgrounds built by MPC family members:

North America

Ridge Haven PCA camp, Brevard, North Carolina  
Marco Presbyterian Church, Marco Island, Florida  
El Shaddai Church of Grace, Naples, Florida  
Personal Family Build, Cypress Woods, Naples, Florida  
Center Point Church, Massapequa Park, New York

Caribbean Islands

Matanzas, Cuba  
Havana, Cuba  
Dominican Republic  
Trinidad, Jamaica

Central America

Bucerias, Mexico  
Jalapa, Guatemala (4)  
Remar Girl's Home, Antigua, Guatemala  
Chichicastenango, Park site, Guatemala  
WCC Guatemala

South America

Amazon Jungle, Peru  
The Sacred Valley School, Peru (2)  
Boca Manu, Peru  
Flores DeVilla, Lima, Peru  
Venezuela

Africa

Lusaka, Zambia (4)

Swedru, Ghana

Europe

Zalau, Romania

Middle East

First Baptist Church, Bethlehem, Israel  
United Nations Girl's School, Jerricho, Israel

Far East

Bangkok, Thailand  
India  
Viet Nam

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### Missionaries and Ministries

Diane and Peter Bakelaar, Japan, MTW  
Chimene and Sainvil Dorsainvil, Naples, FL, El Shaddai  
Heather and Craig Gahagen, Peru, MTW  
Marcia and David Jones, Closed, MTW  
Heather and Ian Jones, West Africa, MTW  
Kris and David Lawrence, Middle East, FOCUS  
Liz and Paul Meiners, Europe, MTW  
Karen and Quentin Nantz, Taiwan, MTW  
Denise and Jim Rosene, World, KATW  
Sharon and Dony St. Germain, Haiti, MNA  
Lucas Tanner, FGCU Campus, RUF  
Phyllis and Gary Waldecker, World, 3<sup>rd</sup> Millenium  
Crossroad Bible Institute, USA, CBI  
Good News Club, Naples & Marco Island, CEF  
Grace Academy India, India, MTW

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### Missions - Looking Forward

- I. Understanding Jesus' mission and how will MPC be engaged in missions for the next 40 years. To serve and liberate the poor, the captives, the blind, the oppressed - Luke 4:16-21
- II. Our mission field - Across the Island, the Bridge, the Sea. The Island: Giving Tree (Manatee Elementary), ESL (English as a Second Language), Parents and youth (including Montessori School, who after Hurricane Irma, were invited to share MPC's campus). The Bridge:

Pregnancy Resource Center, El Shaddai, Covenant - Cypress Woods Church plant, Lucas Tanner - RUF at FGCU and New City Church East Lake (Chattanooga). The Sea: Missionaries, Cuba partnership and possible Vision trip.

- III. Serving and reaching NONES and Millennials. World and life view: Understanding the issues that impact Millennials and challenging them to think through their context with discerning, Biblical eyes. Be authentic: Honest and open communications, substance over style, truth over subjectivism, strength in making the Bible the foundation of discussions. Care for the hurting: Serving others while helping them see Jesus and understanding that NONES (no religious affiliation) desire to engage in causes larger than themselves.
- IV. Digging deeper. How can we as individuals and as a church body better engage NONES with Biblical truths that resonate with today's issues?

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### OUR PURPOSE

We exist - to worship and glorify God by sharing the love of Jesus Christ through word and action.

### OUR VISION

To be a church  
Devoted to Jesus Christ  
Devoted to one another  
Dedicated to reaching all with the gospel

### OUR MISSION

To proclaim the word,  
Make disciples,  
Reach out to the unreached,  
Across the Island - Across the Bridge - Across the sea

### OUR CORE VALUES

We are a church - caring for one another, in the conviction that -  
God's inerrant, infallible word alone,  
Assures us that we have eternal life -  
Through grace alone,  
By faith alone,  
In Jesus Christ alone,  
For the glory of God alone.

In God I will trust - lean on, cling, receive strength and stand firm.

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Dear Friends,

Beth and I thank God for the privilege of serving with you in the Gospel. I pray that God will make us a Gospel-loving, Gospel-living, Gospel-telling community.

Please get up every morning and talk with God and read his word, not as a duty, but because with a working relationship with the God of the universe and His Son, Jesus, you will thrive!

Pastor Steve