



“The Steeple”

A Weekly Newsletter from First United Presbyterian Church
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Friday, October 13, 2023

Do you suffer from friggatriskaidekaphobia? How about paraskevidekatriaphobia?

Friggatriskaidekaphobia comes from *Frigg*, the Norse goddess of wisdom after whom Friday is named, and the Greek words *triskaideka*, meaning 13, and *phobia*, meaning fear. Paraskevidekatriaphobia is also derived from Greek: *paraskeví* translates as Friday, and *dekatria* is another way of saying 13. Not sure? Well maybe you have Triskaidekaphobia, or the fear of the number 13.



The creepiest day on the calendar has returned: Friday the 13th. In 2022, there was just one ill-fated Friday—May 13. But in 2023 the inauspicious day occurs twice: January 13 and today. 2026 will feature three of the ill-fated days.

For a month to have a Friday the 13th, the month must begin on a Sunday. Friday the 13th, is long-thought to be a very unlucky day full of bad omens, myths, and superstitions. But there is very little evidence to show that Friday the 13th is indeed an unlucky day. Many studies have shown that Friday the 13th has little or no effect on events like accidents, hospital visits, and natural disasters.

Very little is known about the origin of the day. Some historians believe that superstitions surrounding it began in the late 19th century. The first documented mention of the day can be found in a biography of Italian composer Gioachino Rossini, who died on a Friday the 13th. A 1907 book, *Friday the Thirteenth*, by American businessman Thomas Lawson, may have added to its early superstition. Others believe that the myth has Biblical origins. At the Last Supper, the 13th and most infamous guest to arrive, Judas Iscariot, was the disciple who betrayed Jesus, leading to his crucifixion on a Friday. Also in Biblical tradition, the concept of unlucky Fridays, stretches back even further than the crucifixion: Friday is said to be the day that Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit from the Tree of Knowledge; the day Cain murdered his brother, Abel; the day the Temple of Solomon was toppled; and the day Noah’s ark set sail in the Great Flood.

Fear of the number 13, is widespread. So much so that many high-rise buildings, hotels, and hospitals skip the 13th floor, and many airports do not have gates numbered 13. In many parts of the world, having 13 people at the dinner table is considered bad luck.

It's also possible that 13 is considered "cursed" because it's the number after 12, which many people see as a number that completes things. 12 months are in a year, 12 inches in a foot, 12 tribes of Israel, 12 hours a day, 12 Zodiac signs, 12 days of Christmas, 12 pairs of ribs in a body, etc. So it's possible the number 13 makes people uneasy because it causes them to think about the unknown—beyond the number 12.



So what are we to make of Friday the 13th? I, for one, make nothing of it. I don't believe in good luck charms or other "lucky" objects, and I for sure don't believe that one day sandwiched in between Thursday the 12th and Saturday the 14th will bring any more negative energy to me than any other day.

Positive rituals can make the difference between a good day and a bad day. You can get up with a smile on your face or you can bemoan the fact that you have to get up. You can greet the day with optimistic affirmation or you can be a Debby-downer and find the negative in every situation. We are given the choice to incorporate healthy choices in our daily living. This is up to us, not luck.

I don't need to knock on wood, seek out a four-leaf clover, carry a rabbit's foot, throw salt, purposely avoid walking under a ladder or steer clear of black cats, but I do need to lean wholly on God. God gives me the opportunity to choose how I will handle what comes my way each and every day...including Friday the 13th.

- Dalene

It's that time again and we are doing the Samaritan's Purse Christmas Child Shoeboxes. Boxes will be available for pickup beginning **October 22nd**. Pick up one or two, then enjoy the fun of packing the boxes with great gifts for a child!



We pray for...
 Nolan Collins
 Hal Jackson
 Sally Leeper
 Tish McKee
 Prayers for Israel
 Those known only to God



"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Philipians 4:6

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Pastor Dave would like to meet with you! There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board by Fellowship Hall or you can call the church office to make an appointment. Pick a Wednesday afternoon when you'd like to get together, either at your home or in my office. Let's get to know each other!



Stir Your Coffee
 At the Steeple
 Wednesdays
 at 10am

Join with the pastor every Wednesday morning for an informal time of fellowship and coffee. There is no agenda except to enjoy each other's company. Bring a snack to share if you like, but it is not required!



Join with Pastor Dave on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall for a Bible study that looks at Christian Art History. This study will run through October 25 and will look at Art History from the Early Christian era through the Reformation. There will be lots of pictures, discussion and a fun time! Bring a sack dinner and enjoy this time of fellowship and learning!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS! Saturday, November 18, from 8:30 – 2:30 we will once again be having our annual Holiday Hop. Be thinking of what you can make to sell at the event. Baked goods, handmade items, and gently-used Christmas items will be available. Also needed is your help! Contact Rae De Regnier or Gaylene Blankers if you can help!

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Sunday, October 15 - Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
 9:00 am - Adult Sunday School
 10:15 am - Worship, Paul Millhollin, worship leader
 11:15 am - Fellowship

Wednesday, October 18 - 10:00 am Stir Your Coffee at the Steeple
 5:30 pm Christian Art History Bible Study

Sunday, October 22 - Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost
 Christmas Child Shoe Boxes available for pickup

9:00 am - Adult Sunday School
 10:15 am - Worship, Kevin de Regnier, worship leader
 11:15 am - Fellowship