



**WELCOME**  
THANKS FOR JOINING US

**MARCH 15, 2026 | 11:00 AM**  
*Traditional Worship*



**FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN**  
CHURCH OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**OUR MISSION** **CREATES SPACES**  
OF CHRIST-CENTERED CONNECTION  
**AND INSPIRES PEOPLE OF ALL AGES**  
TO EXPLORE FAITH IN OPEN AND HONEST WAYS,  
CULTIVATING POSSIBILITIES  
**FOR GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION**

401 Southeast 15th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301  
[www.firstpres.cc](http://www.firstpres.cc) | (954) 462-6200

## PRAYER FOR THE PREPARATION OF WORSHIP

God who holds all things together, as we gather in a world that feels fractured and uncertain, gather our scattered hearts. Draw us into your presence, steady us in your mercy, and center us again in Jesus Christ, who stands in the space between heaven and earth for us. In this hour of worship, hold us fast and make us one. Amen.

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mona Petersen

## PRELUDE

*Adagio Op. 102, no. 2 - Felix Mendelssohn*

Anastasiya Naplekova, piano

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Nicholas B. Merchant

## \*OPENING HYMN #321

*The Church's One Foundation*

AURELIA

## \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Petersen

**Reconciling God, we confess how quickly we draw lines and build walls. We avoid those who unsettle us. We cling to inherited divisions. We prefer distance over vulnerability. Break down the dividing walls we have constructed. Give us courage to meet you and one another at the well, and make us participants in your reconciling work. Amen.**

## \*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

## \*JOYFUL RESPONSE • *The Gloria Patri* #581

GREATOREX

**Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end.  
Amen, amen**

## FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

[Colossians 1:15-20](#)

Petersen

## ANTHEM

The Gift of Love - Hal Hopson

Cathedral Choir

**Giving Online is easy, [Click Here](#)**

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Petersen

**Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread: And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## SHARING OUR GIFTS

Ellen and Chuck Whiteman

## OFFERTORY

Cathedral Choir

*I Will Be A Child of Peace - Elaine Hagenberg*

## \*THE DOXOLOGY • Hymnal #606

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise him all creatures here below,  
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host,  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

## \*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & ILLUMINATION

Rev. Merchant

## PREACHING TEXT

[Ephesians 2:11-22](#)

## MESSAGE

*The God Who Holds Us Together  
(5) The Cross Between*

## \*CLOSING HYMN #216

ST. CHRISTOPHER

*Beneath the Cross of Jesus*

## \*CHARGE & BLESSING

Rev. Merchant

## POSTLUDE

Susan Dodd, organ

*Allegro assai vivace (Sonata I) - Felix Mendelssohn*

*\*please stand if you are able*

**Those participating in worship today are:**

Rev. Nicholas B. Merchant, Pastor;

Mona Petersen, Director of Adult Ministry & Small Groups;

Sophia Beharrie, Interim Director of Traditional Worship;

Anastasiya Naplekova, piano; Susan Dodd, Organist; Cathedral Choir

AV Team: Teo Constantinescu, Mario Rodriguez, Travis Fickinger, Ryan Tilbrook

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**The Flowers are Dedicated** in loving memory of Fred Slayter, who passed away on March 2nd, given by the Cathedral Choir. Today's music sung by the choir, as well as the organ postlude, is in recognition of Fred's nearly 60 years of singing in the choir.

**Flower Availability:** April 12th & 26th. If you would like to dedicate flowers for the Communion table or a rose-bud in celebration of a newborn, please contact Michelle Shev at [michelles@firstpres.cc](mailto:michelles@firstpres.cc).

## UPDATES & UPCOMING EVENTS AT FIRST PRES

### **ALPHA - HAPPENING NOW!**

*Wednesdays, 6:00 pm, Fellowship Hall*

Do you have questions about your faith? There's a place for you at the table! Come to Alpha and ask any questions you may have in a safe and supportive setting. Dinner at 6:00 pm, with the sessions to follow in the Neumann Center Library. [CLICK HERE](#) to register now or visit the church app. For more information, contact Mona Petersen at [monap@firstpres.cc](mailto:monap@firstpres.cc).

### **Adult Activity Center (AAC) for Seniors**

*Thursday, March 19th, 11:00 am, Fellowship Hall*

Elvis is in the building! Join AAC for a fantastic performance by Elvis impersonator, Dan Cunningham where you will hear all your favorite Elvis hits! Bring a friend and don't miss this extra special and FUN event! Menu offering is baked ziti with sausage. RSVP online now by [CLICKING HERE](#) or visiting the First Pres app or website. Or RSVP by 10:00 am on March 9th to Ellen Whiteman at 954-598-9312 or [ellenw@firstpres.cc](mailto:ellenw@firstpres.cc).

### **March Parents Night Out**

*Friday, March 20th, 5:30 - 8:30 pm, Fellowship Hall*

Plan a date night and leave the childcare to us! Kids Prek3-5th grade will enjoy crafts, games, a movie, and pizza while playing with their friends. [CLICK HERE](#) or visit our church mobile app to RSVP by Wednesday, March 18th.

### **March Habitat Build Day**

*Saturday, March 21st*

Join us for our monthly Habitat for Humanity Build Day! Email Kathy Craven for more information and to register at [wrcrv@aol.com](mailto:wrcrv@aol.com).

## **Cathedral Choir: Spring Concert**

*Sunday, March 22nd, 4:00 pm, Sanctuary*

Join us for an inspiring afternoon of music as our Cathedral Choir presents *Love Beyond Compare*. This special concert promises to uplift the spirit and invite listeners into a meaningful musical journey. It will be an afternoon not to be missed! Admission is free.

## **Easter Egg Hunt - Eggs Needed!**

*Saturday, April 4th, 11:00 am, Colee Hammock Park*

You can never have too many eggs! Filled eggs are needed for our annual Easter egg hunt. You can place them in the basket at the entrance of the Neumann Center or drop them off at the front desk. Please, no chocolate or peanuts. Thank you for helping make this event extra fun for our kids!

## **BOGO and PASS Mission**

Looking for a simple way to make a difference? Join our new BOGO & PASS (Purchase and Support Someone) mission and help local families facing food insecurity. When you spot a great deal or BOGO at the grocery store, purchase one for your family and pass one along to a neighbor in need by dropping off your non-perishable items to church and place them in the collection carts located at the back of the Sanctuary or the Neumann Center lobby. All donations will support Sister Robin Street Market, which gives to dozens of local families. It's a small act of generosity that creates a big impact. Purchase. Pass. Support someone.

## **Ways To Give**

At First Pres, your tithes and donations help create spaces of Christ-centered connection. Did you know you can give to the church in many ways? Use our Church App, available in your mobile app store, give on the church website, [firstpres.cc](http://firstpres.cc), where you can schedule a one-time or recurring donation, or you can also mail your offering to the church office. Thank you for your support of our ministries. If you have any questions, please call our main church office at 954-462-6200.

# REGULAR WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**9:30 am Contemporary Worship** - Fellowship Hall

**11:00 am Traditional Worship** - Sanctuary

**Livestream Sunday Worship** - Online

Both services are streamed live, so you can worship with us from wherever you are! Visit [firstpres.cc/worship](http://firstpres.cc/worship) to join our livestreams.

**Children's Sunday School** - Neumann Center

The Children's Ministry at First Pres provides a place where children can go while their parents are at our Sunday Worship services. Our Sunday childcare services are offered to infants - Prek4. For more info please stop by our Connection Counter today!

## HAPPENING THIS WEEK!

### GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AGES

*Grow in faith by connecting with one of our ministry groups at First Pres, there is something for all ages throughout the week - every week! Learn more at*

*[firstpres.cc](http://firstpres.cc) or contact us at 954-462-6200 or [info@firstpres.cc](mailto:info@firstpres.cc).*

#### MONDAYS

##### **Young Adults Virtual Bible Study**

7:30 - 8:30 pm / Via Zoom

(Meeting ID: 871 3336 6461)

Passcode: 177983

#### TUESDAYS

##### **Men's Morning Bible Study**

8:00 am / Via Zoom

(Meeting ID: 483 553 8166)

Book of Galatians

##### **Young Adults A Step Further Study**

6:30 - 7:45 pm

Spanish Room

#### WEDNESDAYS

##### **Cherub Choir Rehearsals**

5:00 - 5:30 pm

Happyland

##### **Good Game Wednesday**

5:30-7:30 pm

Family Campus

##### **Wednesday Night Live!**

5:30-6:30 pm

Fellowship Hall

[CLICK HERE](#) to

RSVP by Monday.

Adults: \$12 / Students: \$8

Kids Under 5: Free

This Weeks Menu:

Baked Ziti with Sausage

##### **2026 Lent Study**

6:30-7:30 pm

St. Andrews Rooms

#### ALPHA

6:00-7:30 pm

Neumann Center Library

## **THURSDAYS**

### ***Women's Bible Study***

10:00 - 11:00 am

Study & Renewal Center

### ***Adult Activity Center (AAC)***

11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Fellowship Hall

### ***Men's Bible Study & Lunch***

12:30 - 1:30 pm

Neumann Center Library

### ***GriefShare***

2:00 - 4:00 pm

Spanish Room

### ***Cathedral Choir (Adults)***

Rehearsal 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Choir Room

## **FRIDAYS**

### ***Middle School Youth Group***

4:00 - 6:30 pm - The Harbor

## **SUNDAYS**

### ***Children's Choir Rehearsals***

9:00 - 9:30 am - Choir Room

### ***New Testament Bible Study***

9:45 am

Bininger Conference Room

### ***Children's Sunday School***

PreK3 & PreK4

9:30 am: Neumann Center, Room #127

K-5th Grade

9:30 am: Neumann Center, Room #224

### ***Childcare***

Newborns-PreK 4

9:30 am - 12:00 pm

Neumann Center, Room #127

### ***Kirk Singer Rehearsal***

4:00 - 5:00 pm

Choir Room

### ***High School Youth Group***

4:30 - 6:00 pm

The Harbor

## **CONNECT WITH US ONLINE!**

Stay connected with everything happening at First Pres!

From upcoming events and announcements to weekly happenings, sermon sneak peeks, and so much more.

You won't want to miss it. [CLICK HERE](#) to follow us on your favorite social media platform and keep up with the life of the church!