# Love is First

*We are delighted that you are joining us for worship today! We are a curious, inclusive, and diverse gathering of imperfect people united by our common hope in Jesus Christ. Through worship, study, and service, we seek to know and show the transformative love of God found in the pages of scripture and revealed in the person of Jesus. No matter who you are or where you are on your spiritual journey, know that you are welcome here.*

## Sunday, November 23, 2025

**If You Are New Here** Whether you are searching for a church home or visiting from out of town, thank you for worshiping here today. If you are interested in receiving more information about membership or the ministries of this congregation, please be sure to speak with the pastor after today's worship or share your information on the pew pad or friendship card. We would love to get to know you.

**Prayer Concern?** Please let us know how we can be praying for you by filling out the welcome card and placing it in the offering plate or by calling the church office: (941) 955-8119.

**Children Of All Ages Are Welcome in Worship!** At the New Song (9:00 a.m.) service there are coloring sheets on the tables and an activity center in the corner. At the traditional (11:00 a.m.) service, children are invited to take a worship bag hanging in the narthex. Sunday School is from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. in the children's wing on the second floor. Ask a greeter for directions.

**To Aid In Worship** In the sanctuary, a T-Coil Hearing Loop is available for people with equipped hearing aids. Headphones to amplify sound are also available at the tech booth in the rear of the sanctuary.

**Worship Online** Livestreams of the contemporary and traditional worship services are available at www.firstpressarasota.org/worship-live and on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@fpcsarasota4017.

**Ways To Give** There are many ways you can support the mission and ministries of First Presbyterian. During worship, you may place your gift in the offering plate or you can scan this QR code. It will direct you to our online giving portal. Additionally, you can mail a check to the church office. Thank you for your gifts. Questions? Contact Finance Manager, Lisa Garcia: (941) 955-8119/Lgarcia@firstpressarasota.org.

## 10th Annual Celtic Christmas Concert

Celebrate the magic of the season at **First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota** with an unforgettable evening of Celtic music! Now in its 10th year, this beloved concert features a 70-voice choir, including the **First Presbyterian Choir** and the **Via Nova Chorale**, joined by piper **Kevin Wiegand** and the acclaimed folk band **The Lubben Brothers**. Together, they will bring to life the rich sounds of the six Celtic nations, from haunting ancient melodies to lively jigs.
Last year, both performances sold out—don't miss this opportunity to share Christmas music, warmth, and tradition with your friends and family. This festive evening promises to be a highlight of the holiday season!

### *The Blessing Trees Are Here!*

These special trees are filled with gold stars offering ways to bless Brentwood Elementary families in need this Christmas. Your gifts will support 50 children and their families: each child will receive two $30 gift cards, and each family will receive at least two $100 grocery cards. Stars on the tree request either $30 or $100 gift cards, and checks of any amount are welcome.
Choose a star and record your selection on the nearby sign-up sheet. Thank you for supporting our mission partner, Brentwood Elementary School, and for blessing these families during a difficult season.

### *Next Week: Advent Workshop Sunday, November 30 at 10:00 a.m. in the Courtyard*

Join us for a joyful morning of holiday fun, creativity, and family fellowship at our annual Advent Workshop! We'll have hands-on activities for all ages—faith-filled crafts, seasonal decorations, and a few surprises—to help your family prepare your hearts for the coming of Christ.
As we enter this season of hope, peace, joy, and love, come celebrate with your church family and create meaningful memories together. All ages are welcome—bring your family, friends, and festive cheer!

## First Connect / Adult Education 10:05 –11:00 a.m.

***Our Parent Small Group Meets TODAY***
Our parent small group will continue to build community, encouragement and support as we navigate life together as families. We'll continue to share ideas and resources to equip parents together to pass on what matters the most.
Dates: Nov. 23 & Dec. 7
Leaders: Eric Robinson, Susan DeWyngaert, George Chorba
Location: Hospitality Suite

**TODAY: *The Final Word – Unpacking the Mysteries of Revelation***
Join us as we explore the mysteries of Revelation, uncovering its symbolism, first-century context, and message of hope. In today's class, Paul will lead us in a discussion about the Great Seals of Revelation 6!
Dates: Ongoing
Facilitators: Eric Robinson, Doug DeCelle, Richard Cole, Paul Urbanick
Location: The Library

**The Legacy of Celtic Christianity—continues today**
Explore the ancient world of Celtic Christianity, a faith that flourished on the frontiers of the Roman Empire with saints like Patrick, Columba, and Brigid. This tradition offers a unique and powerful vision for faithful living, especially in difficult times.
Dates: Nov. 23, 30 & Dec. 2
Leader: Dent Davis, retired minister and former faculty member at Columbia Seminary
Location: Room 203

## Stewardship 2026 Update — Love is First in Action

We are grateful to share encouraging news from our Stewardship 2026 campaign:

- 84% of our goal has already been reached
- 10% of commitments are from first-time pledgers
- 81% of returning members have responded to the requested increase

These numbers reflect a congregation that is vibrant, faithful, and deeply committed to our mission. We are truly blessed. If you contributed last year but haven't yet made your 2026 commitment, we invite you to check this off your list this week. Every pledge makes a difference. Every "yes" helps us grow in grace. Thank you for helping us live out our calling that Love is First.

## Sign-Up for the Christmas Pageant

Use the QR code to fill out a form for each child who plans to participate — due TODAY, Sunday, November 23. Preschool families are welcome to join us as part of the heavenly hosts.
Let us know if your child would like a speaking part and whether they prefer to be a nativity character or a narrator. We will do our very best to match each child with a role they'll be excited to play!

## Sew, Ho, Ho! Holiday Helpers

Our Christmas Pageant costumes need some last-minute tailoring and hemming to ensure a perfect fit for our Family Christmas Eve Service. If you have sewing skills and a little time to spare, your help would be a holiday gift to our Christmas Pageant team! Contact Leah Cotter leah.t.cotter@gmail.com

## Come Decorate the Chrismon Tree TODAY! 11:00—11:30 a.m.

Children and families are invited to help decorate the Chrismon Tree for Advent and learn more about the meaning of these important symbols! Come to the Fellowship Hall after Sunday school.

## Help Wanted

Do you enjoy food preparation and service? Do you have the gift of hospitality? The Fellowship Committee offers you the opportunity to help with Sunday morning refreshments at the Fellowship time following the New Song service. This includes setting up coffee, lemonade, and snacks from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m., and serving and clean up from 10:00 to 11:15 AM. Volunteers also assist with set-up and clean-up for our quarterly potluck dinners, held four times a year following a combined worship service. Could you help out one Sunday a month? Please contact Janet Olshewsky at 941-376-4431.

## Year-End Giving To The Foundation of First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota

As the end of the year approaches, thoughtful planning can benefit both you and First Presbyterian Church. Gifts to the church's Foundation made before December 31 can reduce your income and estate taxes while providing long-term support for the church's mission and ministry. Your gift can be in the form of cash, securities, retirement benefits, or other assets and directed to any of the five designated endowment funds: (1) General, (2) Property, (3) Mission and Ministry, (4) Scholarship, or (5) Temporary Fund for Designated Gifts. Undesignated gifts go to the General Endowment, the Session's preferred choice. For questions, contact Tim Boggess or any Foundation trustee: Betsy Marshall, Diane Johnson, Ric Saba, Rich Paul, Michael Brown, Richard Clapp, or Steve Largo.

***Would you like receive our Friday E-Newsletter? E-mail info@FirstPresSarasota.org to be added to our distribution list.***