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, September 7, 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.

Congregational Meeting — TODAY, Sunday, September 7

The session has called a congregational meeting for **today at 12:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary**. The purpose of the meeting is to hear the report of the congregational nominating committee and to elect a slate of elders and deacons for the class of 2028, as well as any unexpired terms. Your presence and participation are important—please join us for this meaningful time in the life of our church family.

Today We Welcome Rick Holdsworth

Rick is the founder and principal conductor of *Ring Sarasota*. A retired U.S. Navy Master Chief and longtime music minister, Rick is a published arranger and a devoted leader in the handbell community, passionate about sharing the joy of music with others.

Inquirers Class – Today

You are warmly invited to join the upcoming inquirers class starting today, Sunday, September 7, at 10:05 a.m. in the parlor, meeting for four weeks: September 7, 14, 21, and 28. This is an excellent opportunity to learn more about our church family, our beliefs, and how to become an active member. You'll meet church leaders, tour the facilities, and have time to ask questions about our congregation and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A called session meeting to receive new members will be held on September 28. New members will be introduced on Sunday, October 5, during the 10:00 a.m. combined World Communion Sunday service, followed by the mission fair and congregational potluck lunch.

Rise Against Hunger – Meal Packing Event - Next Sunday!

Join us on **Sunday, September 14, from 1:00–3:00 p.m.** in the fellowship hall as we partner with *Rise Against Hunger* to pack nutritious meals for communities in need around the world. This is a hands-on, family-friendly event—everyone can help make a difference! Invite a friend, roll up your sleeves, and be part of this exciting mission opportunity. Use the QR code to register. Help reach our goal of 100 volunteers!

Learn More!

First Connect / Adult Education

No Ordinary People: C.S. Lewis and the Weight of Glory—Continues Today
Trace the remarkable pilgrimage of C.S. Lewis—from the trenches of WWI to the halls of Oxford—and discern with us his profound vision for a Christian life that speaks with hope and clarity to our own time.
Dates: September 7, 14, 21, 28
Leader: Stephen McConnell, retired pastor from Church of the Palms
Location: Room 203

TODAY IS THE FINAL CLASS The Psalms as a Window to Deeper Bible Engagement
In this hands-on, class, you'll learn how to use the Psalms as a guide to deeper Bible study, equipping you with new tools and confidence to enrich your faith.
Dates: September 7
Facilitators: Eric Robinson and Doug DeCelle
Location: The Cowden-Smith Library

Parent Small Group Returns – September 14
Join us this fall as we build community and support one another in the journey of family life and faith. Together, we'll explore practical ways to nurture faith at home, using helpful resources including tools from the family newsletter.
Dates: Sept. 14, 28; Oct. 19; Nov. 9, 23; Dec. 7
Leaders: Eric Robinson, George Chorba, and others
Location: Hospitality Suite

Wednesday Night Dinners – Launching September 17!

Join us for the first First Pres Wednesday Night Dinner on September 17, from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m., as we kick off "Growing Together"—our new intergenerational fellowship and community time!
Enjoy a delicious dinner of lasagna, salad, and breadsticks, play fun intergenerational games, and let the kids get creative with the "Scribble Monster Game." Adults will also have the chance to learn about upcoming gatherings.
Please RSVP by September 10th via the QR code or the link in *News at First*. Don't forget to let us know about any food allergies so we can plan accordingly.
We can't wait to see you there!

Register Here!

Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ

We invite you to take part in the 2025–2026 *Horizons Bible Study, Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ*. Together we will explore how several biblical figures encountered Jesus and discovered healing, strength, and purpose in him.
Our first lesson, "Mary Magdalene, the Tower," will be held on Wednesday, September 17, at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom and will be led by Elaine Barnett. We'll reflect on how Mary Magdalene experienced healing, became a faithful witness, and shared the good news of Jesus Christ.
This study meets on the third Wednesday of each month. All are welcome to join in the conversation and grow together in Christ. For Zoom information and a copy of the lesson, please contact Elaine Barnett at ewbarnet@me.com.

Clare Carter, Preschool Director, Celebrating Her 15 Year Anniversary

Clare Carter has been with First Presbyterian for 15 years. She joined us in 2010 as the Director of the pre-school, considering this a quiet call to be part of a ministry that has shaped generations. We want to thank her for her dedication and devotion to the preschool. She is loved and adored by the children. When she walks into a classroom, the kids line up to give her a hug.
We will recognize Clare's 15-year anniversary on September 21 at the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services. Please feel free to express your appreciation when you see Clare in and around the church.

Community Blood Drive

Mark your calendars! On **Sunday, September 21**, First Presbyterian Church will host a blood drive in partnership with Suncoast Blood Centers. Donating blood is a simple way to give the gift of life and help neighbors in need. The bloodmobile will be in the church parking lot from **8:30 a.m.–1:15 p.m.** Walk-ins are welcome, and appointments can also be scheduled in advance. Contact Cheryl Track to sign up: 4tracks@comcast.net or (941) 321- 3828. We encourage everyone who is able to participate. Your donation makes a real difference in our community. **Give blood. Save lives. Share hope.**

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