Biographies of Nominees for Church Officers

Elders, Deacons, and Congregational Nominating Committee

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Congregational Meeting
September 7, 2025
12:00 noon in the Sanctuary

2050 Oak Street Sarasota, FL 34237
941.955.8119 www.firstpressarasota.org

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

September 7, 2025

Dear Members,

Your Congregational Nominating Committee is pleased to present to you the following slate: five elders in the class of 2028, one elder in the class of 2026, four deacons in the class of 2028, and six at-large members of the Congregational Nominating Committee for 2026. We are confident that these individuals, by God's grace, will help to strengthen and nurture the faith and life of our congregation and lead us forward in our vital ministry in Sarasota and beyond.

We are grateful for each of these individuals and for their faithful response to God's call to serve our congregation. We invite you to keep them in your prayers as they enter into this new chapter of their faith journeys and share in the leadership of our church.

Blessings,

The 2025 Congregational Nominating Committee

Victoria Guenther, elder, moderator
Kay Dunn, deacon representative
Annette Landes
Adam Martin
Wendy Miller

ELDER NOMINEES



MARK CARLESON
Elder, Class of 2026

Mark and his wife, Wende, moved from San Diego to Parrish in July 2023. Married for 25 years, they have a 22-year-old son, and Mark also has two older sons.

Born in Los Angeles County and raised in various California cities, Mark earned a degree in Public Administration from the California State University System. His career was largely spent with the State of California and several large counties, including nearly a decade managing California's statewide Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) enforcement program.

Raised in the Christian Science tradition, Mark found his way to the Presbyterian Church in his late 20s. He previously served as an elder at Christ Presbyterian Church (Carlsbad, CA), where he was part of the personnel committee. At FPC, Mark and Wende have volunteered with the Beth-El Farmworker Ministry, recently joined the usher team for the 11:00 AM service, and Mark served as a chaperone for the 2025 Montreat Youth Conference.

In his free time, Mark enjoys golf, softball, hiking, movies, and traveling.



RICK FOLTZ
Elder Class of 2028

Rick & Lorraine relocated to Sarasota in 2017 from the Philadelphia area, drawn by its vibrant philanthropic and cultural opportunities. Their journey has been shaped by a deep appreciation for diverse cultures, having spent over a decade living in Canada, Taiwan, The Philippines, and Shanghai, China. These experiences broadened their perspective on home, faith, and the importance of inclusivity—values that guided their choice of

First Presbyterian as their spiritual community.

Rick's professional career spans human resources, sales & marketing, and general management in health care, as well as entrepreneurial ventures in retail, a logistics startup in China, and his current role as a business coach for privately held companies. Through his work, he has found joy in mentoring others, a passion that extends into his church involvement.

Previously, Rick served as an elder at Thompson Memorial Presbyterian Church in New Hope, PA, focusing on personnel and the Five-Year Strategic Initiative Plan. At First Presbyterian, Sarasota, he has been a tutor for the past two years at Brentwood Elementary as part of the Invest In Children mission. Being a tutor is a reminder that small acts of service can have a lasting impact.



FRANK FREY
Elder, Class of 2028

Frank and his wife, Annette Landes, moved to Sarasota from Nazareth, Pennsylvania, in July 2016. Frank retired in May 2016 after a 47-year career with the YMCA. He continues to serve YMCAs and communities as a Y-USA CEO Coach, Interim CEO, and Consultant.

In Pennsylvania, Frank and his family were active members of College Hill Presbyterian Church in Easton for over 20 years. An ordained elder, he chaired the finance committee and served on the stewardship committee.

Since joining First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota in 2016, Frank has served on the worship committee, mission study committee, as an elder, and as chair of the Pastor Nominating Committee.

Frank and Annette have three children—Frank (Hamilton, NY), Kris (St. Louis, MO), and Kate (Nokomis, FL)—and four grandchildren: Cora (18), Lily (14), Lucas (12), and Paul (16 months). They enjoy babysitting Paul, downhill skiing, traveling, and attending Broadway shows.



VICTOR GARRAUS
Elder, class of 2028

A lifelong Sarasota resident, Victor Garraus grew up in the Spanish-speaking neighborhood near Tuttle School surrounded by extended family. He attended multiple local schools and earned an Associate of Science in Culinary Arts from Johnson & Wales University.

Raised Catholic, Victor's faith journey took a new direction in 1993 when he met Ray Woody at Siesta Chapel. He later began attending First Presbyterian Church, where a moving invitation from Pastor Susan DeWyngaert to "come and partake" led him to join the congregation. Pastor Susan baptized his children, Austin and Madison, and they enjoyed many church children and youth activities together.

Victor has helped lead middle school Sunday school and joined mission trips to Wimauma, Immokalee, Cedarkirk, Thornwell, Detroit, New Orleans, and Montreat. He also serves faithfully on the church's audio, video, and property teams.



PATRICIA HIGGINS
Elder, Class of 2028

Patricia ("Pat") Higgins was born and raised in Seattle, Washington, and earned her nursing degree from Emanuel Hospital in Portland, Oregon. She began her career as an operating room nurse at Emanuel before moving to New York, where she met her husband, Bruce, through their shared volunteer work with Young Life.

In 1964, Bruce's career took them to Mexico City for five years and then to Caracas, Venezuela, for three years. By the time they returned to the U.S., they had three young children—Jennifer, Leigh, and Scott. While raising her family, Pat later returned to school, earning a B.A. in Arts and Literature from Empire State College.

Over the years, Pat has been deeply engaged in church ministry, serving as a youth leader, Bible study leader, head of small group ministries, elder, and member of the Committee on Ministry for the Long Island Presbytery. She also worked as ministries coordinator

at her church and was active with the National American Mothers Committee, serving on the national board and leading small groups for young mothers.

Since joining First Presbyterian Church Sarasota in 2004, Pat has served as an usher, deacon, Stephen Minister Leader, liturgist, and member of the pastoral care team. She has been team leader for SURE, participated in a mission trip to New Orleans for hurricane relief, and joined mission day trips to Immokalee and Beth El.

Pat's interests include the arts, personal growth, and building meaningful relationships within the community. She values opportunities that challenge and broaden her perspective while fostering connection with others.



RANDY HUFFMAN
Elder, Class of 2026

Randy and his wife Carol have lived in Sarasota for six years after Randy retired in 2019. They have raised a blended family of four daughters and a son and now enjoy visiting their seven grandchildren scattered across the country.

Born in Toledo, Ohio, Randy earned a registered nursing degree and a master's in health care administration. His healthcare career included various clinical and administrative roles in Toledo, Indianapolis, and Ft. Lauderdale. Randy and Carol were members of Faith Presbyterian Church in Castleton, Indiana, before transferring membership to First Presbyterian Church Sarasota.

Randy's proudest achievement is raising his children into productive adults, alongside a fulfilling healthcare career where he supported patient care. He currently serves as an usher at the 11:00 Sunday service and assists with Thursday All Faith Food Bank food distribution when available.

His hobbies include creating stained glass art, golfing, archery, and fishing. Randy brings valuable administrative experience in personnel, budgeting, mentorship, and capital project financing, which he hopes to contribute to FPC's committees and session as the church continues to grow.



KIMBERLEY WHITFORD
Elder, Class of 2028

Kimberly (Kim) Whitford has lived in the Sarasota area since age six, though she was born in Hornell, New York. Her two children, Kirsten and Cameron Whitford, were baptized and raised at First Presbyterian Church (FPC), beginning at ages four and eight. Kirsten now lives in Washington, D.C., with her husband Jack, while Cameron is a local college student. Kim's parents, Jane and Jim Minton—also FPC members—reside in Sarasota and often visit Columbus, Ohio, where her sister Ashley, her husband, and their young children live.

Professionally, Kim has over 28 years of experience in the debt collection industry and currently serves as Director of Training and Development at National Service Bureau. She earned her bachelor's degree from Eckerd College as an adult learner and later pursued a master's degree in human resources.

Among her favorite childhood memories are tossing messages on rocks across Lake Erie with her grandfather, Hiller Minton, and swimming at Welch Field while crafting boondoggle bracelets during summers. Kim was baptized as an adult at FPC Pittsford, New York. Early in her faith journey, she interned with FPC's children and youth program, a deeply rewarding experience. She has taught Sunday school to children from preschool through high school and has served on session twice. Kim is passionate about nurturing faith in children and supporting their families as they grow together at FPC.

DEACON NOMINEES



JILL CARDINAL
Deacon, Class of 2028

Jill has been a member of First Presbyterian Church since 1999, having first attended in 1998. After a nine-year hiatus during a move to Orlando, she returned to active participation in 2022. Jill has served in children's ministry and recently as a deacon, and she is honored to accept a new term in that role.

She is a proud mother of three grown children and eagerly anticipates becoming a grandmother. Professionally, Jill works full-time as an audiologist in Venice. Born and raised in a Chicago suburb, she enjoys yoga on the beach, swimming, and is an active member of the Venice Lions Club. Jill looks forward to playing pickleball and kayaking again soon.



WENDE CARLESON
Deacon, Class of 2028

Wende and her husband Mark moved from San Diego to Parrish in July 2023. They have been married for 25 years. Their son Jack recently graduated from Arizona State University and will begin graduate school this fall at Cal Poly Pomona. Mark has two older sons, Christopher (married to Francesca) and Michael, who live in Sacramento, California.

Wende was born and raised in western New York and earned a BS in Biology from the State University of New York at Cortland. After relocating to Florida, she briefly lived in Sarasota and worked at Mote Marine. She then moved to San Diego, where she lived for 37 years and earned an MS in Public Health from San Diego State University. Most of her career was spent in the health and safety field, including 25 years working for California's statewide Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA), where she met her husband Mark.

Before moving to Parrish, Wende, Mark, and Jack were members of Christ Presbyterian Church in Carlsbad, California. Since relocating, Wende and Mark have volunteered at Beth-El Farmworker Ministry and recently begun serving as ushers at the 11:00 a.m. service.

Wende enjoys traveling, playing Rummikub, painting, golfing, and relaxing at home with their dog, Sami.



BARBARA CHASE
Deacon, Class of 2028

Barbara Chase was raised in Southern New Hampshire, first in Salem and then, at age nine, her family moved to a farm where they raised steers to help feed their large family. She is the second of

seven children, following an older brother and followed by five younger siblings.

After graduating from Timberlane Regional High School in 1974 at the age of sixteen, Barbara visited friends in Sarasota, Florida, and fell in love with the beautiful, city and its stunning white beaches. In 1978, after enduring one of the worst blizzards on record, she made the decision to move to Sarasota with her daughter and partner, Mike. She has now lived in Sarasota for 47 years and has witnessed many changes in the community.

Barbara's faith journey deepened in 2011 after experiencing significant personal loss, including the deaths of her father in 2010, her mother nine months later, and her partner Mike six weeks after that. Through this difficult time, she found strength and comfort in God's presence. It was during this season that she became a follower of Jesus Christ and was baptized.

Since then, Barbara has served the church in many roles, including twice as a Deacon, Family Promise Coordinator for five years, Elder, Clerk of Session, Mission Committee member, advocate for Beth-El, spokesperson and network member for SURE, and as a Stephen Minister for over eight years. She is honored to serve whenever called, grounded in the belief that she can do all things through Christ who strengthens her.



JUNE ROMERO
Deacon, Class of 2028

June met her husband, Stan, in college and they married during their last semester. She graduated with a dual major in Psychology and Sociology. Together, they have four daughters and ten grandchildren.

June was raised in Valparaiso, Indiana, met Stan in Arkansas, and then moved to his hometown of New Orleans. After a job transfer brought them to Birmingham, Alabama, they eventually made their way to Sarasota, where two of their daughters now live, thirty years later.

While in Birmingham, June worked in the church's preschool program, which inspired her to earn two additional degrees: a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education and a Master of Education in Early Childhood Special Education. She spent 20

years working for a nonprofit focused on Early Intervention in Alabama.

Before joining First Presbyterian Church Sarasota, June was active in Sunday school, hosting fellowship groups, and serving on Ladies Day committees. Since coming to FPC Sarasota, she has participated in Salt Shakers (leading a group), volunteered with Celtic Christmas, and served as an Arts Advocate. More recently, she has helped with the Thursday All Faiths Food Bank ministry. Outside of church, June enjoys antiques, reading about historical events, and volunteering as a docent at the Ringling Museum of Art.

CHURCH OFFICER NOMINATING COMMITTEE NOMINEES



BRENT CAMPBELL

Nominating Committee (2026 - 1st Year of Service)

Brent grew up in the Twin Cities and studied English at the University of Minnesota before moving to New York City after undergraduate school. There he worked in publishing and as an outdoor excursion guide, which led him to meet Jaclyn, a native Brooklynite. Together they relocated to Sarasota and were married in Sarasota in 2014.

While working for his parents' business, Brent attended graduate school at USF in Tampa, earning his MBA in 2017. He joined Edward Jones as a Financial Advisor in February 2018 and continues to serve clients in that role today. Jaclyn works for Edward Jones as a Branch Office Administrator. They have two daughters, Catalina, an avid volleyball player, and Sienna, a competitive gymnast. As a family, the Campbells enjoy traveling, camping, and going to the movies.

Brent plays guitar in the New Song worship band and enjoys spending time in fellowship with other members of the First Presbyterian Church family.



KAREN EASTMOORE
Nominating Committee (2026 - 2nd Year of Service)

Karen Eastmoore is married to Ted Eastmoore and they have two daughters, Ryan (husband), Allan LeBlanc and granddaughters, Virginia (10), Marguerite (8), and Emily Rose (6); Emily (husband), Todd Weitekamp, granddaughter, Charlie (10) and grandson, Wells (8); and three sons, Evan, Marshall, and Matthew.

Karen, the daughter of Dee and the late Charlie Stottlemyer, was born in Sarasota and grew up at First Presbyterian. She did undergraduate and graduate work at the University of Florida and Emory University and worked as a physical therapist while raising their children.

She has served as an elder and a deacon. She has been involved in adult and youth education, LOGOS, and Sunday school. She has served on the congregational nominating committee, the pastoral nominating committee, and the former World Service Committee. She has helped prepare for the Faith Focus Weekends, been a member of the Preschool Board, and has been a greeter at New Song. She has also been a volunteer with Family Promise, Brentwood Elementary, Meals on Wheels, and Caritas.

In the community, Karen has served on the Library Foundation Board and the Ringling College Library Association Board. She is a sustaining member of the Junior League of Sarasota. Her hobbies include swimming, pickleball, travel, reading, and being with family and friends.



ANNETTE LANDES
Nominating Committee (2026 - 3rd Year of Service)

Annette has been a member of First Presbyterian Church since 2016, shortly after she and her husband, Frank Frey, moved to Sarasota from Pennsylvania. They will be celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary later this year. Between them, they have three children—two sons and a daughter, Kate, who is also a member of FPC.

Before retiring, Annette practiced law in Nazareth, PA, focusing on estate planning and administration, business law, and real estate. In Pennsylvania, she was an active member of College Hill Presbyterian Church in Easton, where she served as both a deacon and a trustee.

At FPC, Annette has served as an elder and has been active on the worship committee and nominating committee. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling, downhill skiing, walking, cooking and baking, reading, and knitting.



ADAM MARTIN
Nominating Committee (2026 - 3rd Year of Service)

Adam and Pat moved to Sarasota in 1999 and joined First Presbyterian Church in 2001. They have two daughters and five grandchildren.

Since joining the church, Adam has served as an elder and has been a member and moderator of the finance committee (now called business affairs). He has also co-moderated the stewardship committee and participated on the pastor nominating committee as well as the most recent capital campaign committee. Additionally, Adam served on the personnel committee and was the treasurer of Peace River Presbytery for five years.

Adam looks forward to continuing his service on the nominating committee.



WENDY MILLER
Nominating Committee (2026 - 3rd Year of Service)

Born in Scotland and baptized into the Episcopal Church, Wendy spent her early years at St. John's Renfield Presbyterian Church in Glasgow. She later moved "across the pond" to Newport Beach, California, where she worked as Administrative Coordinator for a thirty-broker stock brokerage and met her husband. Together they owned a market research company before moving to Sarasota in 1990 with their daughters, Nicole and Margot.

After her marriage ended, Wendy chose to remain in Florida, building a home for herself and her girls. Before retiring, she worked for the Sarasota YMCA, fully embracing its mission. For the past 33 years, she has devoted herself to bringing the FPC church family and community together in faith—especially in times of need. Today she sings soprano in the choir, serves on the Business Affairs Committee, and volunteers at Beth-El Farmworker Ministry in Wimauma and at All Faiths Food Bank on Thursdays at FPC.



JEAN RASKIN

Nominating Committee – (2026—1st Year of Service)

Jean is single and values her many friendships. She has a sister who lives in Colorado with her husband, Ted, and their son, Ben. Born and raised in Newburgh, NY, Jean lived there for 23 years before moving to Danbury, CT. In 1997, she relocated to Sarasota, FL, where she currently resides.

With over 25 years of experience in human resources, Jean currently works as a Senior HR Manager at an insurance company. At her previous church, she was an ordained elder and sang in the choir, inspired by her mother's involvement. She has also served on the Personnel Committee at First Presbyterian Church for eight years.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ELDERS

The name "Presbyterian" comes from the Greek New Testament word *presbuteros*, which means "elder" and refers to the leaders of the church. A Presbyterian church is a church governed by elders

Elders provide Christian leadership to the congregation in all areas of church life. This requires dedicated effort by each individual elder and by the elders as a group. People of committed Christian character are elected, ordained, and installed to serve according to Chapter 2 of the Form of Government in the *Book of Order*. "Ruling Elders" are so named not because they "lord it over" the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with teaching elders, (pastors) exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline, and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships" (G-2.02).

DEACONS

Deacons, as officers of FPC, also provide Christian service and leadership to the congregation. Our constitution describes the deacons' work as "set forth in Scripture as one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ. . . . Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry" (G-2.02). This is the responsibility of each individual deacon, as well as a coordinated effort by all deacons together. People of committed Christian character are elected, ordained, and installed to serve, according to chapter 2 in the *Book of Order*.

CHURCH OFFICER NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Two elders currently on the session serve on the Congregation's Nominating Committee, one as the Moderator and one as the Vice-moderator. In addition, there is one deacon representative. The congregation also elects six at-large members not currently serving on the session or Board of Deacons. The committee receives recommendations from the congregation and selects names to be presented to the congregation.

First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota
Mission, Vision and Core Values

Our Mission

We believe we are called to faithfully serve
the Lord Jesus Christ, giving glory to God.

Our Vision

We desire to be a leading, faithful, witnessing, diverse
and growing community of God's people.

Our Core Values

Leading

We have an ongoing tradition of leadership in the community.
We are committed to meeting the ever-changing
spiritual and physical needs of our community.

Faithful

Our life together centers on vibrant worship and praise
as we glorify God.
We are a dynamic community of faith –
reformed and always reforming.
We strive to be faithful managers of the gifts
that God has provided for us.

Witnessing

Through compassionate service and working for justice,
we share the hope we have in Jesus Christ
seeking to become spiritual partners with our neighbors.

Diverse

As a community of Jesus Christ, we unconditionally welcome
all people, in the manner of our Lord and Savior.

Growing

We seek spiritual growth for children and adults
through prayer, the teaching and study of Scripture,
and the sharing of our faith's journey.