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, February 18, 2024

If You Are New Here Whether you are searching for a church home or visiting from out-of-town, we are delighted that you are worshiping with us today. If you are interested in receiving more information about membership or the ministries of our congregation, please be sure to speak with our pastor after today's worship or share your information with us in the pew pad. We would love to get to know you better!

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 Livestreaming of the contemporary and traditional worship services is available at www.firstpressarasota.org/worship-live. Additionally, sermons are archived on YouTube.

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.

Cuba Partnership Today will commission the Cuba Mission Team.



The Cuba Partnership trip is **February 22- 27,** ten people will be traveling to Cárdenas, Cuba. The team is comprised of Graham Hart, Linda Hart, Ken Papa, Carol Papa, Sue Hargis-Spigel, Elaine Moffitt, Dick Clapp, Rick Foltz, Nancy Wellinghoff, and Jay Swick. The primary purpose of the trip is to strengthen the relationship with our sister church, Juan G. Hall. Presbyterian Church in Cárdenas and to bring some much needed supplies.

Caritas Food Pantry



The Caritas Food Pantry located in First Baptist Church on Main Street in downtown Sarasota, is in need of volunteers on Thursday mornings from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. This site serves a growing number of people experiencing homelessness and families that are food insecure. First Presbyterian has been a part of this outreach ministry since 1980, partnering with four other churches. Along with First Baptist, St. Martha's, First United Methodist and Church of the Redeemer, we continue to provide volunteers and financial assistance to Caritas. If you are interested in helping one Thursday a month with the distribution of food, we would love to hear from you. Please call Susan Sanderson at 507-581-0310 or Emily Weitekamp at 941-232-3327 or Leah Cotter at 941-504-0362 to learn more about this opportunity to serve your neighbors in need.

2024 Lenten Devotionals "Local Pilgrim"

Devotionals are available in the Narthex of the sanctuary, in the foyer of fellowship hall and electronically in the *News@First.* Lent devotional for families is available in fellowship hall or by contacting Emily Weitekamp *emily.weitekamp@gmail.com*

Adult Education Class ~ Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts STARTING TODAY

Sundays, February 18 - March 24, 10:00 a.m. in room 203

Sacred Encounters invites us to consider Jesus and Jesus' disciples who shared the Good News through sacred encounters with everyday people. The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles demonstrate the unfolding of God's redemptive purposes in human history and present a distinctive perspective on the person and work of Jesus Christ. The message to the early Christian community (and to us) is joyous, life-changing, inclusive, and hope-filled.

This class will invite us into a deeper and more compassionate engagement with the world. The author asks: "What are the potential implications for the church if we treat our interactions as sacred encounters that demonstrate the transformative love of Christ Jesus?"

Discussion leaders for this class are R.C. Smith, a retired minister originally from Pennsylvania, and Susan DeWyngaert, also a retired minister who served FPC from 1997-2011.

Presbyterian Woman Bible Study

God calls us to affirm that each person is a child of God who should be treated equally with dignity and equity. In lesson 6 of the PW Bible study, Sacred Encounters, we will be studying the passages in Acts when Peter heals a disabled man. Flossie Paul will be leading the discussion of lesson 6, " A Person with a Physical Disability Encounters Jesus." Join us via Zoom on **Wednesday, February 21 at 10:00 a.m.** All are invited to join us in this study of sacred encounters. The study guide is optional. However, Elaine Barnett can scan you a copy if you would like one. Also contact Elaine at *ewbarnet@me.com* to get the Zoom link if this is your first lesson.

SURE Rally: Tuesday, February 27, 6:00 p.m.

BETHLEHEM BIBLE CHURCH, 1680 18TH STREET, SARASOTA

Who is Invited? SURE Network Members, Members of FPC, Friends, Relatives, and Neighbors

The Problem: The backbone of our community is breaking. The workforce in Sarasota County (the teachers, bartenders, waitstaff, caddies, firefighters and police officers, and government employees) cannot afford to live in the county that they have dedicated themselves to serving. No one with the authority or power to do so has any plan to fix this growing crisis.

Attending the Rally is Vital: When God's children come together, we make an impact. We Rally because we all need to be on the same page when our elected public officials are present for the **Nehemiah Action, on March 18, 6:30 pm, at First Congregational UCC.** At the Rally, we will be informed which city and county officials have said they were attending and know the potential issues to be addressed at the Nehemiah Action. Our elected officials publicly need to admit we have an Affordable Housing crisis. We'll come away from the Rally excited, energized, and knowledgeable regarding what is expected to take place at the Nehemiah Action.

Pastor Tim's Bible Study - Wednesdays, at noon on Zoom

Pastor Tim will be offering ONE Wednesday Bible study on Zoom at Noon. The Zoom link will also be in the *News @ First.*

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87466934598?pwd=VDrc5SDYig2I0E59oYAKcIA9VmVcLv.1

The Church Office Will Be Closed Monday, February 19 in Observance of Presidents Day.

The church office is open Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Friday 9:00 a.m. - Noon.
Our E-Newsletter, *News @ First,* is sent out weekly on Friday afternoons, we also send notices about special events or weather conditions. If you and not receiving it weekly, but would like to, please call the church office (941) 955-8119 or email, info@firstpressarasota.org.