

December 5, 2021 Announcements

We're glad you joined us today! We hope that you experience the love of God and of this congregation as we worship, celebrate, and serve together.

Adult Education In-person Class:
"Spiritual and Moral Issues in American Fiction"
Resumes TODAY, December 5, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 223



This class taught by **Dr. John Parks** continues today, and December 12 and 19. As serious literature, good stories offer what Mathew Arnold called a "criticism of life." Stories invite readers to a reflection upon our condition in the world. Stories to be discussed are posted in *News@First* and on the church website under the "Grow" tab. They are also provided as printed hand-outs in the class and the church office one week prior to discussion.



Adult Education Zoom Class
"Advent: The Season of Hope and Expectation"
Continues December 7, 11:30 a.m., through Tuesday, December 28

The class is discussing together the rich biblical and theological terms centering on the message we proclaim of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Join with others to engage in the wonder of preparing for Christ's coming. The class is led by **Elaine Barnett,** an elder and a Certified Christian Educator. You can sign up for the class at any time by emailing Elaine at ewbarnet@me.com.

December 7: Advent Joy
December 14: Advent Love
December 21: Christmas Savior
December 28: Epiphany Light

Presbyterian Women

THIS Tuesday, December 7, at 11:30 a.m., all women of the church are invited to **lunch** for a time of fellowship at MADE Restaurant, 1990 Main St, #112, Sarasota, in Courthouse Centre.

Weaving
a new tomorrow

2022 Stewardship Pledge Update

You are such a generous congregation. You give of your time and energy and expertise to bless this community and further God's work in the world. You line up on Thursdays to hand out food. You gather for worship and study. You teach our children. You serve on the committees of the church. You volunteer at Brentwood and Mision Peniel and countless other places. You visit homebound members and serve as Stephen Ministers. You build friendships across generations. You sing. You work for justice. You live your faith.

Thanks to your financial generosity, **we are just ahead of where we were last year at this time (having received 88% of the total amount pledged for 2021), but we need to finish strong in order to prepare for the coming year.** If you have not had a chance to complete a pledge card, we need you! Your gifts will make such a difference, as we prepare for a new season of ministry and service. Won't you join us?

Electronic pledge cards are available through the church website (www.firstpressarasota.org), or you may call the church office to request a new stewardship packet. Thank you for all the ways you embody the hope that is within you!

2022 Offering Envelopes

Beginning TODAY—Sunday, December 5, through Sunday, December 19 there will be a table set up for you to pick up your 2022 offering envelopes as you enter or depart from services. Please pickup your envelopes so we can avoid the cost of mailing.

First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota
presents our annual

Blessing Tree

Brightening Christmas for
Brentwood Elementary School
Students in need & their families



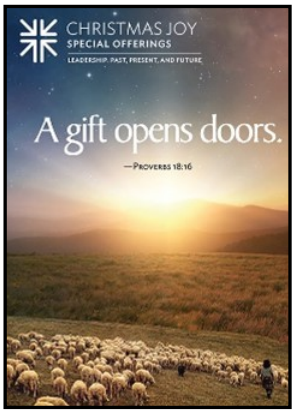
In the past, our congregation has been extremely generous in providing thoughtful gifts for students in need from Brentwood Elementary school (BES), their siblings and parents. We have received stars from our Blessing Trees, shopped for gift suggestions received from the families, and celebrated together at a spectacular dinner in the FPC Fellowship Hall. Due to lingering COVID-19 concerns, this year we will continue to express our love and care to these students and their families by sharing gift cards. We will still . . .

- **Provide gifts for BES students and their siblings** (fifty children total) from families in need—in the form of ***two $30 gift cards each!*** *(Target or Walmart, suggested)*
- **Bless their parents with *two to four* $50 *grocery gift cards!*** *(Publix, Winn-Dixie, Target or Walmart, suggested)*
- **Joyfully receive *checks* to support this project and Brentwood Elementary School—** made out to FPC with "BES Christmas" in the memo line.

Please deliver your gift cards and/or checks to the church office by December 12.

Your support is needed to reach our goal of one hundred $30 gift cards for the children and forty to eighty $50 gift cards for groceries for the whole family. Thank you in advance for your generosity. You will be a blessing for these families in need!





Good News of Great Joy Christmas Joy Offering

The PC(USA) offers you the chance to bring Good News of Great Joy to the poor in circumstance or spirit.

Your gifts to this special offering will be distributed to retired ministers and missionaries in need and our Presbyterian racial-ethnic colleges. We will be receiving the Joy Offering on **Sunday, December 19**.



Advent to Epiphany

at First Presbyterian Church Sarasota

FRIDAY, DEC. 10
A Celtic Christmas
7:00 pm Musical Presentation
$10 - suggested donation

FRIDAY, DEC. 24
Christmas Eve Services
4:00 pm Family Nativity
7:00 pm Candlelight and Communion

SUNDAY, DEC. 26
Christmas Hymns and Carols
One 10:00 am service

SUNDAY, JAN. 2 (2022)
Second Sunday of Christmas
One 10:00 am service

SUNDAY, JAN. 9 (2022)
Epiphany Worship Services
One 10:00 am service

www.firstpressarasota.org

2021

Christmas Poinsettias



As the joyous season of Christmas approaches, our thoughts turn to holiday traditions. Each year we decorate the church with poinsettias for Christmas. Plants may be ordered in memory, or in honor, of loved ones. **To assure quantities, all orders are to be submitted by Wednesday, December 14**. Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church with "poinsettia" in the memo. Order forms may be turned into the office.

Number of poinsettias at $10 each: _____

Paid by check #: _____

Amount by cash: _____

Name:_____

Home phone:_____

IN MEMORY OF_____

_____

IN HONOR OF _____

_____

Please check one:

___ I will pick up my poinsettia(s) after the 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service.

___ I wish to donate my poinsettia(s) to the homebound.

___ I wish to help deliver to the homebound.



New Address

Our member, **Jean Hall,** is moving to live near family in Winder, Georgia, a NE suburb of Atlanta. Jean has been an active member of our church for over 18 years. She will be residing at The Landing of Winter, an assisted living facility. Below is Jean's new contact information. All who know Jean are encouraged to send notes reminding her of your love and support as she makes this transition.

Jean Hall
901 Haymon Morris Road, Apt. 305; Winder, GA 30680
Phone: (678) 219-3974

In Our Prayers

During this Advent and Christmas season, please remember in your prayers the families of those in our congregation who have recently died. Pray also for those who are experiencing particular health needs. A link to our weekly prayer list is included in *News@First.*

Pastor Nominating Committee Update

The Pastor Nominating Committee elected by you on October 3 has been working diligently. They received training from Executive Presbyter Melana Scruggs, and elected a moderator, Frank Frey; and a secretary, Steve Knopik. They have completed the Mission Information Form (MIF) that will advertise and describe this position to interested candidates.

The session approved the MIF at its November 16 meeting and the form has gone to the Peace River Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) for consideration at its December 14 meeting. Once the MIF is approved by the COM, it will be posted on our denomination's website and begin to make its way in the world. Please be praying for our search committee as they engage this work of discernment: Michael Fingerle, Frank Frey, Steve Knopik, David Landers, Carrie Mills, Janet Olshewsky, and Kay Steinman.

SUNCOAST BLOOD CENTERS

FPC Sarasota Blood Drive
Sunday, December 19, 8:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Contact **Cheryl Track, Faith Community Nurse,** to sign up: (941) 320-3828; 4tracks@comcast.net. You may use the Quick Pass to begin the blood donation process on the day of your donation.

Access Quick Pass at https://suncoastblood.org/donate/quickpass/

FPC Sarasota Giving Options

Offering baskets will be available as you exit. Your gifts make a great difference during this transitional season.

Online: If you are interested in giving electronically through our secure e-giving process, please visit FirstPresSarasota.org and select the online giving button.

Texting: Are you interested in the convenience of contributing by text message? Text FPC2050 to 73256 to donate via text. Standard rates may apply.

Mail In: All mail, including contribution checks, securely arrives to our church office.

If you are not currently receiving the weekly electronic newsletter, *News@First,* and would like to, please call the church office at (941) 955-8119 or email info@firstpressarasota.org to sign up!