December 19, 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.



FPC Sarasota Blood Drive

TODAY - December 19
8:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

SUNCOAST BLOOD CENTERS

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/



Presbyterian Women Events

Join us **Tuesday, January 4, at 10:00 a.m.** in the Fellowship Hall guest is **Cindie Moore** from the Association of Mam Christian Women for Development. She has recently been to Guatemala and will give an update on the Mam, an indigenous people living mainly in the western highlands of Guatemala. Cindie will also be making a fruit punch similar to one the Mam women serve.

If you have any postage stamps to share, please leave them in Mary Webb's mailbox in the church office or bring them to our January meeting. We will be addressing birthday cards to our circle members.

Save these dates! Scholarship funds are available for the cost of attending any of these events.

- **Saturday, February 5, 2022 - Peace River Presbytery PW Annual Gathering** at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Ft .Myers from 9:30a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Lunch included.
- **Monday, March 28 and Tuesday, March 29, 2022 - Peace River Presbytery PW Spring Retreat** at DaySpring Episcopal Conference Center, Ellenton.
- **Friday, October 21 - Sunday, October 23, 2022 - Synod of South Atlantic PW Triennial Retreat** at Epworth by the Sea Conference Center on St. Simons Island, GA

Dec. 26 • Christmas Stories & Carols

Don't stay home in your pajamas next Sunday; it's okay if you want to wear them to church!

We will have an intergenerational service in the sanctuary at 10:00 a.m., during which we will share Christmas stories and sing lots of carols. If the children would like to bring a quiet toy and play by the tree, we'd be glad to have them up front. Come be the church family together on the morning after Christmas. It will be so good to be together.





Adult Education In-person Class:
"Spiritual and Moral Issues in American Fiction"
Last Class Today, December 19, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 223

This class taught by **Dr. John Parks** finishes today. Stories are posted in *News@First* and on the church website under the "Grow" tab.



Adult Education Zoom Class
"Advent: The Season of Hope and Expectation"
Continues Tuesday, December 21, 11:30 a.m., through December 28

You can sign up for the class by emailing **Elaine Barnett,** class leader, at ewbarnet@me.com.

Dec. 21: Christmas Savior I Dec. 28: Epiphany Light



New Eight-Week Adult Education Class
"Every Living Creature: God's Design for Animals"
January 16, 23 & 30; February 13 & 20; March 6, 13 & 20
Room 223, 10:00 a.m.

Most of us who have had pets intuitively understand that animals are wonderfully noble and have a capacity to love that only can come from God. However, we never hear much in church about animals—why God created them or what God intends for them. The scope of grace is vaster and more creative than we had once thought. Bible verses such as Colossians 1:15-20, which speak of God's interest in all things, in fact abound in the Old and New Testament.

Several academic theologians are beginning to think freshly about all living creatures as players in God's plan. This class will draw on their work and set before the participants the biblical evidence that God's intention is to preserve all things, bringing them to perfection and a joyous, harmonious existence. We will consider the nature and destiny of the whole created world.

This class will be taught by **Doug DeCelle,** retired minister, and **Hal Serrie,** anthropologist. For more details about this unique class, visit Doug DeCelle's website:

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE
OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

PC(USA) Responds to December Tornadoes

In the early hours on December 11, several tornadoes ripped through multiple U.S. states, resulting in extensive damage and significant loss of life. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is in touch with affected presbyteries to coordinate resources and assistance.

Donations made be made to First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota, with "Tornado Relief" in the memo line. To give online to PDA go to: https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/december-tornadoes/



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 **THIS Sunday, December 19**.



Invest in Children - Bountiful Blessings!



Wow! You First Presbyterian members have again gone he extra mile as you've contributed to the Blessing Tree project for Brentwood Elementary School. Thank you, thank you!

You have contributed over $8,000 in gift cards or cash contributions for the families of 50 Brentwood students. The gifts were distributed at the church on December 17 and 18 by Sandi Soper, Rachel Martin, and Jinny and Ron Miller. Each family received an attractive bag filled with beautiful Christmas stockings for each child and a special gift bag full of gift cards for the family.

Thanks to your generosity, we were also able to provide additional grocery gift cards for each family! A check for the remainder of the contributions will be sent to Brentwood for ongoing needs of their students. Thank you, again, for bringing a Christmas blessing to these Brentwood families! Please continue to pray for them, and others, whose needs are so great—and have a blessed Christmas!



Former FPCS Pastor, Rev. Susan DeWyngaert, Retiring
- A Letter from Susan's daughters, Sarah and Rachel

Dear FPC Sarasota Family and Friends,

At the end of January 2022, our mom, **Susan DeWyngaert,** will be retiring after 39 years of ordained ministry. She has passionately and faithfully served four congregations throughout the last four decades; Selwyn Avenue Presbyterian Church, Venice Presbyterian Church, First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota, and Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church, Severna Park, MD. Throughout those years we know she has touched many lives. She has ministered, mentored, loved and cared for so many of you during her ministry. We have been fortunate enough to witness these relationships and also receive your love and friendship. Our family is incredibly grateful for the many ways our churches loved and supported us while mom served.

As a celebration of Susan's life and ministry, we would like to put together a book of notes and photographs from the important people in her life. If you're able, please consider taking a few minutes to write a note to Susan. It can be as long or short as you'd like. It can include a favorite or cherished memory, a photograph, a note of gratitude or admiration, etc. We will assemble everything into a scrapbook to give her after her retirement. Remember to sign your name!

Please send your items by **January 30, 2022.** You may email a copy to Sarah Bumgarner at: sarahkdbum@gmail.com, or mail a handwritten version to Sarah at **693 Counsel Drive NE, Marietta, GA 30068.** Please include a photo if you can!

If you are interested in sending a video format, please let us know and we'll figure out the best way to receive that.

Many blessings,

Sarah DeWyngaert Bumgarner and Rachel DeWyngaert Workman

In Our Prayers

Please remember in prayer Ellen and Craig Gesell as they grieve the loss of their son, Harrison Reid Withrow. Reid died Sunday, December 12, in Tampa. A memorial service was held Friday, December 17, at Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, Tampa. Notes of condolence may be sent to

Ellen and Craig Gesell
1155 N. Gulfstream Ave., Ste. 1002
Sarasota, FL 34236-5728



2022 Stewardship Pledge Update

Thank you for your financial generosity. We are in the homestretch but need to finish strong to prepare for the coming year. At last report, we had about $60,000 to go to match our 2021 pledges. If you haven't had a chance to complete a pledge card, we need you! Your gifts will make such a difference as we ready our hearts for a new season of ministry and service. Won't you join us?

2022 Offering Envelopes

This Sunday, December 19 there is 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. This is our last Sunday to make the envelopes available before or after the services.

Contributions for 2021

The end of 2021 is quickly approaching, and the last day to receive contributions to be credited towards this year is **Friday, December 31**. Please place your donations on the offering today, bring them to the church office, or put them in the mail; they must be postmarked no later than December 31.

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!