February 6, 2022 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.



Our Guest Preacher



Today we welcome to our pulpit the **Rev. Dr. Neddy Astudillo.** Neddy is a Venezuelan-American, an ecotheologian, and a PC(USA) pastor. She explains ecotheology as "reflecting on our faith from a belief in God as Creator. It seeks to find faith-based solutions to the environmental challenges of our time, lifting up Creation care as an act of faith." Neddy has taught in seminaries in Guatemala, Bolivia, Peru, Mexico and the United States.

Neddy will preach at both the 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. worship services, and will be available from 10:15 to 10:45 a.m. for a time of conversation in the fellowship hall. We are honored to host this vibrant and prophetic pastor, and grateful to the Faith Focus Leadership Team for making her visit possible.

Souper Bowl of Caring
Next Sunday, February 13

Souper Bowl of Caring began in 1990 with the simple prayer by a Presbyterian seminary intern, desiring to inspire others on Super Bowl Sunday to donate to those "who are without a bowl of soup to eat." Since then, youth groups have been harnessing the energy of people coming together for football, food, and fun to raise funds to help feed those in need. Together, we tackle hunger by supporting local hunger relief through this ministry.

Our youth will be stationed with soup pots at the doors after both services **next Sunday, February 13,** to receive your gifts of money to help alleviate hunger in our area. Checks may be made to First Presbyterian Church with "Souper Bowl" in the memo line.

Including Your Photo in the Online Church Directory



On the next two Sundays, February 13 and 20, the Membership and Fellowship Committee will be on hand to take individual and family pictures for the online church directory. The photo shoot will be in the courtyard from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. No appointment is needed—just show up when you are able during these times. You also have the option of sending a favorite photo of yourself to the church office to be added to the online directory: Email: info@firstpressarasota.org

Please help us to update the online directory. Current photos will be helpful both to our members and to our new pastor!



"Every Living Creature: God's Design for Animals" Six-Week Adult Education Class Offered via Zoom Wednesdays, February 23 - April 3

The class will begin on **Wednesday, February 23, at 12:00 noon by Zoom.** The Zoom link is in *News@First,* our Friday electronic newsletter. This class, taught by **Doug DeCelle,** retired minister, and **Hal Serrie,** anthropologist, will present the biblical evidence that God's intention is to preserve all living things, bringing them to perfection and a joyous, harmonious existence. We will consider the nature and destiny of the whole created world. For details visit Doug DeCelle's website:

https://www.douglasdecelle.net/every-living-creature-gods-design-for-animals/

Look to the Cross: A Lenten Study

Lent is a time to focus on the cross as a central symbol of Christianity. Biblical and theological perspectives will be explored to understand why and how Jesus' death is so crucial to our faith. This class will be led by **Elaine Barnett via Zoom and held Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m. beginning March 8.** Sign-up by emailing Elaine at: ewbarnet@me.com

Lesson titles are:
Mar 8 - The Crux of the Matter
Mar 15 - The Cross as Necessary?
Mar 22 - Accessing the Presence of God
Mar 29 - Picturing the Atonement
Apr 5 - The Cross in the Tradition of the Reformers
Apr 12 - The Invitation to Live into the Way of the Cross

Sarasota Conference on Spirituality, Community and Social Change - April 1 and 2

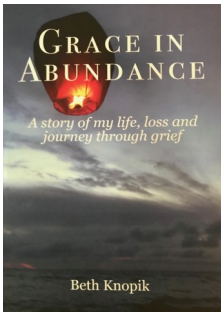
Friday, 6:30-9:00 p.m. & Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. (breakfast snacks & lunch included)



All are invited to this exploration of **Dr. Howard Thurman's** deep spirituality and his influence on the civil rights movement. Conference held at First United Church of Christ, 1031 South Euclid Ave, Sarasota. Registration: $35 per person.

Dr. Thurman was a bridge between Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. He provided theological and philosophical foundations for non-violent engagement in social change. He was a pioneer in interfaith work and a seminal figure in the American civil rights movement. **Dr. Luther Smith,** from Atlanta, and **Dr. Shively Smith,** from Boston, two of the leading experts on Dr. Thurman's life, will be coming to Sarasota to lead this reflection on his life and legacy. Register online through *News@First.*

Grace in Abundance: Beth Knopik's Memoir



Beth Knopik, a longtime member of FPC, has written a memoir entitled *Grace in Abundance,* which describes Beth's discovery of God's grace during a very dark time.

As many of you know, she lost her 16-year-old daughter to myocarditis in 2012, and she writes of her life, loss and journey through grief. Beth's story includes Dr. Ray Woody, Reverend Clay Thomas, and other FPC members. She has donated two copies to our church library. Powerful with beautiful imagery, *Grace in Abundance* is a must-read for anyone struggling with loss.

Sarasota Music Club

The Sarasota Music Club will be holding its free concert in the sanctuary on **February 18** at 10:30 a.m.. Anne Tormela, lyric coloratura soprano, will be performing *Beloved Opera, Operetta, Broadway and Popular Classics.* The congregation is cordially invited.



Annual Meeting Celebration: Sunday, February 27, 10:00 a.m.

- One combined service

Ash Wednesday Service: March 2, 6:00 p.m.

Invest in Children - Time to Celebrate



It has been five years since February 2017 when members of FPC were first invited to consider volunteering at **Brentwood Elementary School.** This mission partnership has blossomed into a cadre of volunteers, the adoption of many classes, Christmas blessings for students and their families in need, and a "welcome back" brunch for the staff. Thank you for your investment in this ministry!

The steering committee guiding this mission includes: George Chorba, Kay Dunn, Lorraine Foltz, Alan and Linda Nelson, Sandi Soper, Jinny and Ron Miller, Rachel Martin, and new members Mary and Tony Williams. Be sure to share your "Happy Anniversary" greetings with them as they celebrate five years of ministry with the students and staff of Brentwood Elementary School!

Family Promise of Sarasota-Manatee - Francis House

HAPPY NEWS! Francis House officially welcomed its first expectant mother and her ten-year-old son. They are now comfortably settled in and preparing for the March birth of their new family member. The family may remain at Francis House until mid-May while the mother makes arrangements for sustaining her family. Family Promise and several agencies will support and guide her on this journey. Last week this young guest celebrated his birthday with gifts from an anonymous donor—a member of our congregation. The child was overjoyed to receive the unexpected gifts and the birthday cake. Mother and child were homeless before moving into Francis House and are now safe as they await the birth of a new baby.

Francis House Steering Committee met last week to determine ongoing actions to support the families. **A weekend hot meal delivery** plan has begun. Host congregations are being surveyed to determine interest. Our First Presbyterian Church family already delivered a healthy hot meal. To support this mission with a cooked meal, contact **Pam Mathes:** cell phone (518) 495-3776; email: pjmathes@hotmail.com

Current Need: Infant Layette Sets - A supply of most new baby items is now available at Francis House. Many of the items are consumable and will need to be replaced on an ongoing basis. Please watch in *News@First* and *Cross Connections* for updated information. Contact **Pam Mathes** to help supply layettes. Pam Mathes - Cell: (518) 495-3776; Joanne Simons - Cell: (703) 798-7330

Caritas Announcement



Caritas of Sarasota is an outreach ministry that provides food and other assistance to Sarasota residents in acute financial need (e.g., utility payments, prescriptions, transportation, and work attire). **The Herrig Caritas Center** is located at 1645 Fruitville Road. **The Caritas Food Pantry** is housed at First Baptist Church on Main Street.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in new safety operating procedures requiring additional volunteers. Our church does not currently have sufficient volunteers to assist clients at the **Herrig Caritas Center.** However, FPC will continue sending financial support the **Herrig Caritas Center.** We are grateful for our teams of FPC volunteers who will continue to serve by assisting in the **Caritas Food Pantry.** We also thank the many volunteers that served **Caritas of Sarasota** for the past 20-plus years. If you would like to

Mark your calendar for the upcoming FPC Sarasota blood drives:

Sundays, March 20 and June 12; 8:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Current COVID Guidelines On-Campus

Due to continued high COVID rates in our area, masks are required for worship and while in any buildings on campus (regardless of vaccination status). Though rates continue to be high, we are grateful to see them declining steadily. The session will reexamine its policy on February 22. In the meantime, our prayers continue for all who are ill or suffering hardship because of the pandemic.

Welcome Baby!

Our congratulations go to **Eric and Rebecca "Becca" (Stottlemyer) Walther** upon the birth of their new baby girl, **Emery June Walther,** born January 28, 2021, weighing 6 lbs., 15 oz. Proud big sisters are Lily (age 5) and Vivian (age 3).

As you leave the service, be sure to sign the lovely poster-card for the Walthers designed by one of our wonderful artists on the We Care team. Cards of welcome may also be sent to

Eric and Rebecca Walther
130 Mimosa Drive
Sarasota, FL 34232-1652

Our Condolences

We have received notification that **Bradford Nees** (age 91) died August 6, 2021. He and his wife, Leona, became FPC members in 1960. Leona died in the month following Bradford. Please remember their family in your prayers.

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!