February 20, 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.

Including Your Photo in the Online Church Directory - extended time to 12:30 p.m. today



Today—Sunday, February 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. AND from 12:00 to 12:30 p.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 to be helpful both our members and our new pastor!

Celebration Sunday—NEXT Sunday, February 27
One Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary, open-air POTLUCK BRUNCH at 11:00 a.m.

The session has called the **annual meeting of the congregation** to take place in conjunction with our worship on **Sunday, February 27 at 10:00 a.m.** in the sanctuary.* Music will be led by **Dixieland jazz instruments, choir, and guest singer Syreeta Banks.** Following joy-filled worship, we will fill our plates in the fellowship hall and **eat in the open air. PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE.** You may drop it off in the Fellowship Hall prior to the service. Warmers will be on and ready to receive anything that needs to stay warm.



Youth Fundraiser: Our youth will help to host the brunch. During the meal you will have an opportunity to make a donation to help fund summer youth trips, conferences, and mission trips. Just look for the "Moving Mountains" display! (Checks can be made to First Presbyterian Church, with "youth trips" in the memo line.) Please join us; it will be so good to be together!

**We do not anticipate needing to take any votes at this gathering, but want to receive officially the reports of all of our hard-working committees and other groups, and give thanks for all the labor and love that goes into the ministry of this community. We also want to be sure that you know the members of your Officer Nominating Committee, the officers of the church's corporation, and our Foundation's board of directors (meetings of the Corporation of FPC and the Foundation will run concurrently with the congregational meeting). Copies of the annual report are accessible now online and in News@First. Printed copies will be available in-person on February 27.*

Hope Seeds - Seed-Packing Event: Thursday, March 3, 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

The seed packing event in November for Hope Seeds International resulted in 2,500 packets of tomato seeds ready to benefit 250 families! It was such a success and a fun time that we're doing it again. **Hope Seeds International** is a charitable Christian ministry that seeks to improve the nutrition of the poorest in the world by providing quality garden seed and agricultural education through Christian missionaries and organizations. Hope Seeds strives to help as many people as possible grow food for themselves to help end hunger and to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with every shipment of seed and materials. Teaching someone how to grow their own food while sharing our faith in God is the core purpose of Hope Seeds.

Everyone is welcome! Instructions are given and the task is easy, all done while sitting at tables with other packers. Join us on **Thursday, March 3.** Packing begins at 10:00 a.m. and will continue until noon in the Fellowship Hall. Come and go as your schedule allows. If you help with the food bank distribution, stay a little longer and pack seeds!



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

The class is on **Wednesdays, 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. Register using the link in *News@First.***

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

Presbyterian Women

The annual PW Peace River Presbytery spring retreat has changed to one day only on **Monday, March 28** from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on the beautiful campus of DaySpring Episcopal Conference Center in Ellenton. There are mini-workshops, a service project, information about the next *Horizons* Bible study, worship, music, lunch and fellowship with ladies from all over the Presbytery. There is room to social distance. Access the informational flyer and registration form through the link in *News@First* or pick them up from the church office. **Send your completed registration** to Barbara Borderieux (address is on the registration form) **before March 9** and enclose the $30 registration/lunch fee. Scholarship money is available upon request for anyone that attends. Simply notify Flossie Paul or Pamela Lamb and they will make arrangements for you to be reimbursed.

If you want to join the effort to support the Mam women of Guatemala in providing nutrition to their malnourished children, Mary Webb is happy to accept a donation of any amount. A special drink mix called incaparina is making a difference in the lives of these children. Please **include "incaparina" in the memo line of your check made out to Presbyterian Women** and send or deliver it by the end of this month.

The Francis House Steering Committee has begun a weekend hot meal delivery plan. our First Presbyterian Church family has already delivered a healthy hot meal to the family currently staying in Francis House. To support this mission with a cooked meal, contact **Pam Mathes.** Cell phone (518) 495-3776; Email: pjmathes@hotmail.com

You can support Francis House by donating items from the list in *News@First*, most of which are found on Family Promise's Amazon Wish List. Look for a collection box in the narthex or go to: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1GU9NWA2IBW9C/ref=nav_wishlist_lists_1?_encoding=UTF8&type=wishlist (link in *News@First).* These items include necessities for babies, new moms, and the house.

Highlighting Our Cuba Partnership



Alison Infante Zamora, the pastor of our partner church, Juan G. Hall Presbyterian Church in Cardenas, Cuba, was just elected the moderator of the Synod of the **Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba (IPRC).** This is the equivalent of one of our pastors or ruling elders being elected moderator of the General Assembly of the PC(USA). Alison is young, energetic, passionate about his faith, a great communicator, emerging church leader, a wonderful husband and dad, and a 2005 graduate of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas.

FPC established a sister/partner church relationship with Juan G. Hall in 2017 and has supported the congregation since Alison was with us in 2017. Alison and members of Juan G. Hall are committed to deepening our partnership, pray for us on a regular basis, and have invited us to come visit us soon.

Members of FPC who have gone to visit with them, before the pandemic hit, have experienced people of such deep faith, resilience, and hope, and they have come back to FPC with a smile, a deeper faith, new understandings of the Cuban people, and hope. If you are interested in joining in the partnership relationship with Juan G. Hall or visiting Alison and his congregation in the next year, contact Margaret LaMotte Torrence, Graham Hart, Sue Hargis Spigel, Jay Swick, Jean Martin, or David Householder. **Please sign the card of congratulations for Alison as you leave the service.**



Volunteer Day Trip to Beth-El Farmworker Ministry

Sponsored by the Mission and Justice Committee

THIS Wednesday, February 23
Work at Beth-El: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

You are invited to be a part of the group from First Presbyterian, Sarasota, that gathers at Beth-El Farmworker Ministry in Wimauma to volunteer sorting food or related activities on the last Wednesday of each month. This mission partner distributes food to help 600-900 folks each week—a lot of help is needed. To sign up or for more information, contact Dave Householder at dphouse47@gmail.com; call or text (724) 462-4235. Let us know of your interest in carpooling. Come and make a difference!

Let's Take a Look at the FREE Church Life App



Church Life is an app that is available to church members with iPhones or Androids. You can search for members and view phone and address information, photos, and family members. You can send a text or call with a simple tap on the phone number. You can even send an email. Also, it is a quick way to give online.

Ready to go? Here are two simple steps:

1) **Download ACS Church Life** from your App Store using either iPhone or Android (Blackberry and other mobile devices can enter www.churchlife.mobi from any mobile browser).

2) **Log in.** Use the same username/email and password you use for your member login on our website.

** You can bring your phone into the church office and **Lisa Garcia,** Finance Manager, would be happy to help you navigate getting Church Life on your phone. Please call (941) 955-8119 to set up a time.*

Celebrating Our Congregation's Generosity

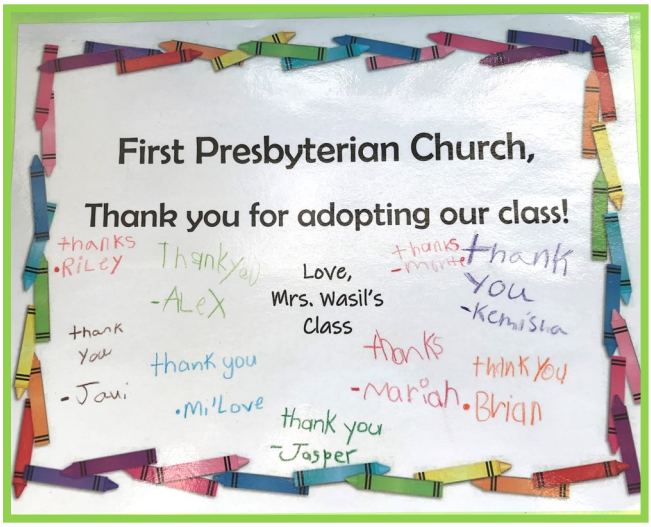
We are grateful for the generosity of the many who gave to Souper Bowl of Caring last Sunday. $2,000 was collected. These gifts will be used to help alleviate hunger in our area.

Invest in Children



Though volunteers are still not back in the Brentwood classrooms, First Presbyterian Church continues to support the school in other ways. One of these ways is to adopt classrooms. Recently, we received a colorful Thank You (at right) from one of the classes we have adopted during this school year.

Mrs. Wasil teaches ESE (Exceptional Student Education) and Access Points students in a self-contained classroom. Access points are for students with disabilities who need more support than a general education setting can provided. We're pleased to adopt this very special class.



Mark Your Calendar:

- ***Ash Wednesday Service* - March 2, 6:00 p.m.**
- ***Upcoming FPC Sarasota Blood Drives***
  Sundays, March 20 and June 12; 8:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. SunCoast Blood Centers

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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.

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!