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 8, 2026

If You Are New Here Whether you are searching for a church home or visiting from out of town, thank you for worshiping here today. If you are interested in receiving more information about membership or the ministries of this congregation, please be sure to speak with the pastor after today's worship or share your information on the pew pad or friendship card. We would love to get to know you.

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 Livestreams of the contemporary and traditional worship services are available at www.firstpressarasota.org/worship-live and on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@fpcsarasota4017.

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.

Your Generosity Overflowed — We Exceeded Our Goal!

With grateful hearts, we are delighted to share that we have exceeded our Stewardship 2026 goal. This remarkable milestone reflects the generosity, faithfulness, and shared commitment of our congregation. Your response has been extraordinary. Together we have shown what is possible when a community believes in its mission and lives out the call that Love is First.

Thank you for your gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Thank you for saying "yes." And thank you for helping our ministries continue to grow in grace and impact.

Financial Update

December	**Actual**	**Budget**
Revenues (pledge, non-pledge, and other receipts)	$ 177,434	$ 129,328
Expenditures	119,942	112,160
Year-to-date		
Revenues (pledge, non-pledge, and other receipts)	1,344,900	1,208,364
Expenditures	$ 1,273,334	$ 1,290,948

Realm Directory

Check out the online directory — all you need is your login. Need help? Call the church office (941) 955-8119 for more information.

Combined Children and Youth Sunday School on February 22

On February 22, we will have a combined Sunday School for children and youth, where we will decorate bookmarks for Brentwood Elementary School. This will also give room for our parents and teachers to attend the Immigration Justice Coalition of Southwest Florida presentation.

First Connect / Adult Education 10:05 –11:00 a.m.

The Final Word – Unpacking the Mysteries of Revelation Join us for "The Final Word," as we continue to unpack the mysteries of Revelation through facilitated discussion, focusing on its rich symbolism and original first-century context. Together, we will move beyond literal predictions to grasp its core message of hope and find enduring relevance for our lives today. In our next class, Paul will lead us in an engaging discussion about Revelation.
Dates: Ongoing
Facilitators: Eric Robinson, Doug DeCelle, Richard Cole, Paul Urbanick **Location:** the library

Wonders of Worship Parent Group
How can we help our children truly engage with God during our contemporary service? Join us for a four-week *Wonders of Worship* group where we'll share simple, sustainable ways to involve our kids in the prayers and music of the church. These 40-minute conversational sessions are designed to fit your busy life while providing deep encouragement for your family's faith journey.
Note: The third session of this four-week series will be **Wednesday, March 1.**
Dates: March 1, 15, & 22
Time/Location: 10:15-10:55 | Hospitality Suite

First Connect Class Today: Estate Planning & The Theology of Legacy - Today

How do we ensure our responsibility as stewards extends beyond our lifetime to bless the people and causes we value most? The first in our new Faith and Finance initiative, this one-time class session will frame estate planning as a spiritual discipline, helping you shift your focus from a simple financial inheritance to a lasting, values-based legacy. Don't miss this opportunity! **Date:** February 8 **Leader:** Brent Campbell, Financial Planner with Edward Jones **Time & Location:** 10:05-10:55 in room 203

Ash Wednesday, February 18 | 5:30–7:00 p.m.

On Ash Wednesday we will gather for an intergenerational meal followed by a time of prayerful reflection and worship as we enter the season of Lent together. This service will invite us to pause, remember our dependence on God's grace, and turn our hearts toward the love and mercy revealed in Jesus Christ. Worship will take place in the Fellowship Hall and will include scripture, prayer, silence, and the imposition of ashes, concluding with a meditative walk through the labyrinth as a sign of our Lenten journey.
The shared meal will include soup, bread, mac & cheese, vegetables, and cookies. We are seeking contributions of eight crockpots of soup, three vegetable trays, eight trays of mac & cheese, and two cookie trays. Bread and beverages will be provided by the church.
If you are able to help with food, please contact Carol Papa at carolpapasrq@gmail.com.

Immigration Justice Coalition of Southwest Florida

A presentation on Immigration Justice Coalition of SW Florida will be given by Barbara Smith-Bacon, chair of the coalition's education team, on February 22, 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The stated mission of the coalition reads: "We are a community that advocates for and supports our immigrants, refugees, and asylum -seeking neighbors." Please join us as we learn more about the mission, purpose and work of the coalition and insights about current immigration policies and practices. Barbara is a lawyer by profession and a member of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Sarasota.

Finding Our Joy in Christ: I Will Say It Again – Rejoice!

How do we find joy in a chaotic world? Christian joy is more than just happiness—it comes from trusting that God is good and reigns forever. Our study is based on Philippians 4:1-23, where Paul, even while in jail, encourages the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord. Join us as we discuss how to experience joy, even in the midst of life's challenges. Wednesday, February 18 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom, Flossie Paul will be the leader, for Zoom info or a lesson copy, contact Jinny Miller at jinnyron@gmail.com

Inquirers' Class

Are you curious about First Presbyterian Church, eager to learn more about our faith, or thinking about becoming a member? We'd love to have you join us for our next **Inquirers' Class**! The class will meet on **Sundays, March 8, 15, and 22, 2026, from 10:00–11:00 a.m. in the parlor**. It's a relaxed, welcoming space to ask questions, explore our beliefs, and discover how we live out our faith together as a church family. New members will be recognized in worship on Palm Sunday, with one combined service at 10:00 a.m. on March 29. For more information or to register, call the church office or contact Janet Olshewsky at (941) 376-4431. We can't wait to meet you!

Would you like to receive our Friday E-Newsletter? E-mail info@FirstPresSarasota.org to be added to our distribution list.