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, January 4, 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.

Third Annual Chili Cook-Off & Youth Fundraiser

Join us January 11 after the combined 10:00 a.m. worship service in the Fellowship Hall for our Third Annual Chili Cook-Off.

Taste the chilis and vote for your favorite by placing dollar bills next to each pot. The chili with the most dollars wins! All proceeds support our youth attending Montreat.
Want to compete? We have space for 12 chili chefs, first-come, first-served. Contact: Kim Whitford (941)413-8796 Chili must be in a crock pot, labeled with ingredients/allergens, and unnamed for blind judging. Not cooking? Bring a side dish or dessert, or just come—we always have plenty! Chefs, please take leftovers home or trade afterward. Come enjoy the fun and support our youth!

Lisa Garcia's 20-Year Anniversary

Since joining FPC on December 1, 2005, Lisa Garcia has been instrumental in securing grants for the church, organizing annual stewardship campaigns and the budgeting process behind the scenes, and managing monthly expenses. Lisa has also edited various versions of the church newsletter, prepared the weekly bulletin, and has kept Realm up to date, all with warmth and friendliness to her coworkers and church members. We will recognize Lisa on January 11 during the 10:00 church service and the chili cook-off that follows. There will be a gift basket for those who wish to give Lisa cards and thank you notes.

Upcoming Worship & Events

NEXT WEEK Sunday, January 11 - *One Combined Service* 10:00 a.m. – in the Sanctuary
Installation and Ordination of new church officers, Chili Cook-Off following worship (proceeds support youth trips) and celebration of Lisa Garcia's 20-year anniversary.

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

The Final Word - continues today
– Unpacking the Mysteries of Revelation
Join us for "The Final Word," a new study that unpacks 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 10.
Dates: Ongoing
Facilitators: Eric Robinson, Doug DeCelle, Richard Cole, Paul Urbanick
Location: The Library

First Connect Class Begins TODAY January 4:
Screwtape Letters with Stephen McConnell
Come view human vulnerability through the eyes of a devil in our four-week study of C.S. Lewis's *The Screwtape Letters*. Pick up your copy today to read along as we discuss this brilliant and humorous work. You won't want to miss it!
Dates: January 4, 18, 25 & February 1
Leader: Stephen McConnell, retired pastor from Church of the Palms and author of *Take Me to Aslan: C.S. Lewis and the Art of Trusting*.

Epiphany Star Words

As we celebrate Epiphany, we will be giving out *Star Words*—guiding words chosen randomly on star-shaped paper. These words, inspired by the star that guided the Magi, can serve as a focus for prayer, reflection, and spiritual growth throughout the year. Examples include **Curiosity, Justice, Generosity, Journey, Peace, Courage, Imagine, Believe, Rest,** and **Dreams**. Take a word and see where God leads you in 2026!

Join us for the Perlman Music Program Winter Residency

First Presbyterian Church is thrilled to host the Perlman Music Program (PMP) Winter Residency from December 26, 2025, through January 10, 2026!
The first week has been a wonderful success—students, staff, and our facility are all energized and delighted to be part of this musical journey. Gifted young string musicians from around the world are rehearsing, studying, and performing on our campus, bringing incredible talent and joy to our community. The public events so far have been very well attended, and the audience response has been amazing!
Students ages 14–20 train under Toby Perlman, Maestro Itzhak Perlman, and a distinguished faculty. All residency events—including rehearsals, recitals, and masterclasses—are free and open to the public. Come attend an event and experience the music firsthand!
Our congregation can also support the residency by helping serve meals in the Fellowship Hall—**use the QR code to sign up**. To see a full listing of events, **visit the Perlman Music Program website**: https://www.perlmanmusicprogramsuncoast.org/residencyevents/

Hope Seed Event Thursday, February 5

Start the new year by serving others in a fun and meaningful way! Presbyterian Women is sponsoring a **Seed Packing Event with Hope Seeds** on **February 5 from 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.** Together, we will pack seeds that will help provide food and hope to communities in need.
Come for all or part of the time—everyone is welcome. Light refreshments will be available, and no prior experience is needed. This is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship while making a tangible difference.

Year-End Giving Statements

This year, your giving statement will be sent electronically, so please watch your inbox in the coming weeks. If we don't have an email address on file for you, your statement will be mailed instead.

From Cheryl Track, Faith Community Nurse

For the flu season, CDC recommends seasonal flu vaccination. If you're not feeling well, please stay home and join us online if you can. We will have masks available for anyone who wants one while attending in person. This is the season when flu and COVID tend to spike, so thank you for helping us keep our congregation safe.

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