



February/2025 E-GRAM

Hello, **Everyone**

Peace be with you!

As we step into February, we embrace the spirit of Black History Month, a time to honor the achievements and contributions of African Americans throughout our history. It's a month that encourages us to reflect on the profound impact of leaders like Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who once said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." The prophet Isaiah said that we should learn to do right, to seek justice, to defend the oppressed, and to take up the cause of the destitute (1:17). Let that be a reminder to all of us, as we celebrate the rich tapestry of our neighbors, to commit ourselves to creating a more just and equitable community for all.

February also brings the excitement of the Super Bowl. In 1990, a simple prayer: "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat." The prayer was delivered to a small youth group at Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, SC. The prayer gave birth to an idea.

Why not harness the energy and enthusiasm of Super Bowl weekend, a time when people come together for football, food and fun, to unite the nation for a higher good?

Individuals and groups could collect dollars in soup pots and canned food for those in need, and send every dollar and food donation DIRECTLY to a local charity of THEIR choice. As you know, here at First Pres, we are committed to help feed those in need within our community. So, we ask you to participate in our cans of soup drive to collect non-perishable food items to help those facing food insecurity. Your contributions will make a meaningful difference, and together, we can ensure that no one goes hungry during these challenging times.

Last year, First Pres together with St. Paul's North Port, Community Englewood, and Burnt Store Punta Gorda Presbyterian churches, collected 915 cans in total and \$915 in donations. We are so very grateful to all our Presbyterian neighbors. We are even more grateful that this year, our brothers and sisters next door at The Rock Calvary Chapel, joined us. We thank Pastor Aaron, his leadership, and the congregation for helping us feed our county.

Together, we can foster a spirit of love, generosity, and community that reflects the teachings of Christ. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our church family.

Have a blessed month and Happy Valentines!

Pastor Syl

IMPORTANT

Upcoming Congregational Meetings



CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING

- **Sunday, February 9, 2025 - Called Meeting to elect new church officers.**
- **Sunday, February 23, 2025 - Annual Congregational Meeting.**

The meetings are open to all who wish to participate, but only members of the church can vote. It begins 10 minutes after the end of the service.



The Walt Sanders concert **IS CANCELLED due to health issues. Please contact Sue at 941-241-6480 if you have already purchased tickets.**

A Note from the Music Director & Events Committee.

Plans have begun to schedule concerts for 2025. We had planned to have Walt Sanders back for an Elvis Concert on Feb. 23, but unfortunately, Walt had to cancel because of emergency knee surgery. We wish him a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing him soon.

Our next scheduled concert is Sunday, April 6, when we will have a concert by “The Goldtones”, who is well known throughout Florida for their fantastic singing of the music we all love and remember!

Tickets and additional information for this concert will be available starting Sunday, Feb. 16. You can purchase them after our Sunday Worship Service or by calling 941-241-6480. Tickets cost \$25 each. Because of the popularity of this group, I would suggest you purchase tickets A.S.A.P. as our Sanctuary has a small seating capacity.

February is Black History Month, and we will be celebrating by singing many beloved spirituals and other spirited music during our worship Services. Come and raise your voices in praise for our Lord!



The Goldtones are one of Florida's premiere vocal harmony groups singing songs ranging from the traditional doo-wop tunes of the 50s and 60s to those melodies sung by later groups of the 70s and 80s.

Black History Month Special Lunch



Pastor Syl's favorite event of the year is back this month. Join us for delicious fried chicken and the best Jamaican food in Southwest Florida. The Special Black History Month Lunch will be served on February 23, after the Annual Congregational Meeting.



WINTERGARDEN Presbyterian Church

SPAGHETTI FOOD PANTRY



FUNDRAISER

Saturday - February 1st, 2025 - from 3 to 7 PM

Dinner includes spaghetti, sauce, veggies, bread and dessert. **\$10 per adult** or **\$30 per family with kids** - 18305 Wintergarden Ave - Port Charlotte.

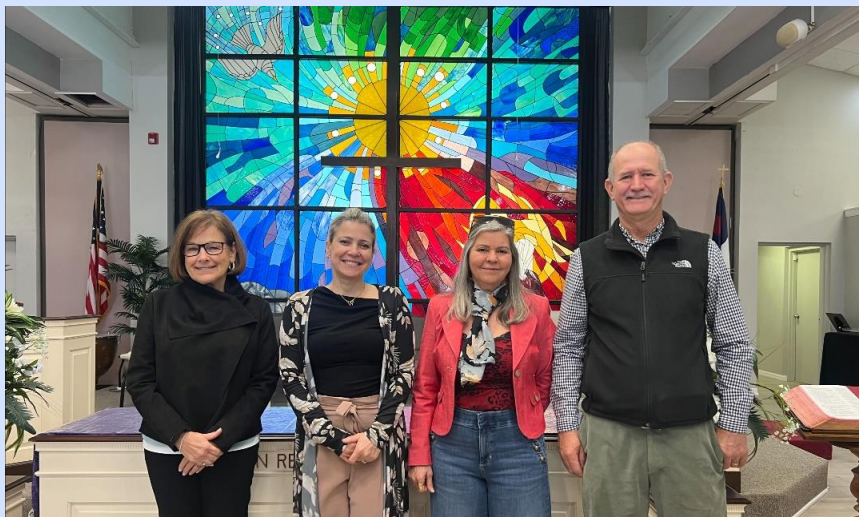
Christmas Cleanup Crew



These awesome people came to church on Saturday, January 11th to help to take down all the Christmas decorations. Well done, everybody. What a fantastic job. God bless you all.

Reception of New Members

Please welcome Sue McConochie, Betania Esteves, and Marilda and Claudemir Sathler to our church family, inducted on January 26, 2025.



The Chosen - Tuesday Nights

The Chosen Season Four

Viewing of the Chosen Season 4 began on Tuesday, January 7, 2025 and will continue through February. Every Tuesday night at 6:30 PM in the sanctuary with popcorn & soda.



Thursday Nights



Praise and Worship service began on Thursday, January 9, 2025 and will continue through March. Join us at 6:30 PM every Thursday.

PEP (People Enjoying People)



Our Pep group (pictured above) met at Skillet's restaurant for brunch on January 22, 2025. What a wonderful group. Not only had they shared a delicious meal together but also some great conversations. PEP is open to anyone (including your friends not from the church), to participate in it.

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

On Sunday, January 26th, we celebrated our January birthdays & anniversaries, with these amazing people: Sandy, Veronica Betts, Sandy Asaro, Amy Rupert and Barbara Danylak. Happy Birthday everyone!





February Pet of the Month



Meet "Sonny." He belongs to our brand-new members Claudemir and Marilda Sathler. They are both our Members of Focus this month. Sonny says "I Love you" and many other phrases. He especially loves to talk to Sophia (Claudemir and Marilda's granddaughter).

Do you want to see your pet here? Send Pam a picture of your pet to pastorsecretary@fpcpc.com, and your little friend could be one of our Pets of the Month.

Join us online on Zoom

Sundays at 8:05 AM
To connect, go to.
www.zoom.us
Click "Join" on the
right-hand upper
corner
Meeting ID:
9678044713
Passcode: X9b77



Mondays at 8:00 AM.
To connect, go to
www.zoom.us
Click "Join" on the
right-hand upper
corner
Meeting ID:
87832080869
Passcode: 396015





Saturday, February 1

- Southport Square Independent Living Worship Service - 10:00 AM.
- **Wintergarden Spaghetti Food Pantry Fundraiser - from 3 to 7 PM.**

Sunday, February 2



- Continental Breakfast - from 7:45 to 9 AM.
- Adult Sunday School - 8 AM. On Zoom at 8:05 AM.
- Children's Sunday School - after Children's Blessing.
- **Sunday Worship Service with Lord's Supper - 9 AM.**

Monday, February 3

- Lectio-Divina with Wintergarden Pres on Zoom - 8 AM.

Tuesday, February 4



- Food Pantry - from 8 to 11 AM.
- The Chosen - Season 4 - Episode 5 - 6:30 PM.

Wednesday, February 5

- Deacon's meeting - 1:30 PM.
- Bells rehearsal - 6 PM.
- Choir rehearsal - 6:30 PM.

Thursday, February 6



- Praise & Worship Service - 6:30 PM.

Sunday, February 9



**FINANCE
COMMITTEE
MEETING**

- Continental Breakfast - from 7:45 to 9 AM.
- Adult Sunday School - 8 AM. On Zoom at 8:05 AM.
- Children's Sunday School - after Children's Blessing.
- **Sunday Ordinary Service - 9 AM.**
- **Called Congregational Meeting - after the end of the service (Election of new church officers).**
- Finance Committee Meeting - after the congregational meeting.

Monday, February 10

- Lectio-Divina with Wintergarden Pres on Zoom - 8 AM.

Tuesday, February 11



- South Port Square Assisted Living Communion Service - 2:30 PM.
- The Chosen - Season 4 - Episode 6 - 6:30 PM.

Wednesday, February 12



- Worship Arts Meeting - 11 AM.
- Food Pantry - from 4 to 6:30 PM.
- Bells rehearsal - 6 PM.
- Choir rehearsal - 6:30 PM.

Thursday, February 13



- Praise & Worship Service - 6:30 PM.

Sunday, February 16



- Continental Breakfast - from 7:45 to 9 AM.
- Adult Sunday School - 8 AM. On Zoom at 8:05 AM.
- Children's Sunday School - after Children's Blessing.
- **Sunday Special Service (Ordination of Church Officers) - 9 AM.**
- **Session Meeting - 10:30 AM.**

Monday, February 17



- President's Day

Tuesday, February 18



- Food Pantry - from 8 - 11 AM.
- The Chosen - Season 4 - Episode 7 - 6:30 PM.

- Bells rehearsal - 6 PM.
- Choir rehearsal - 6:30 PM.

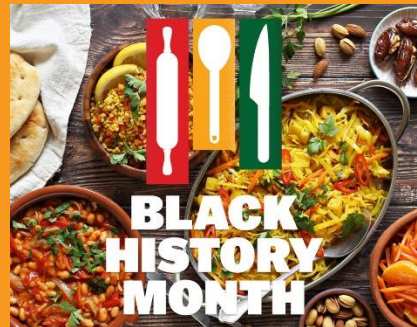
Wednesday, February 19

Thursday, February 20



- Stated Peace River Presbytery meeting - 9 AM.
- Praise & Worship Service - 6:30 PM.

Sunday, February 23



- Continental Breakfast - from 7:45 to 9 AM.
- Adult Sunday School - 8 AM. On Zoom at 8:05 AM.
- Children's Sunday School - after Children's Blessing.
- Sunday Special Black History Month Service - 9 AM.
- Annual Congregational Meeting - after the end of service.
- Black History Month Special Lunch - after the ACM.
- Celebration of February Birthdays & Anniversaries - after special BHM lunch.

Monday, February 24

- Lectio-Divina with Wintergarden Pres on Zoom - 8 AM.

Tuesday, February 25



- The Chosen - Season 4 - Episode 8 - 6:30 PM.

Wednesday, February 26

- Bells rehearsal - 6 PM.
- Choir rehearsal - 6:30 PM.

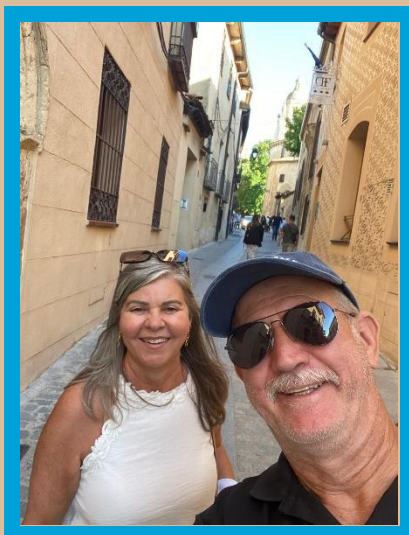
Thursday, February 27

- **NEW Praise & Worship Service - 6:30 PM.**



MEMBERS ON FOCUS

Have you met?



Marilda & Claudemir Sathler

Claudemir Sathler and his wife Marilda are two of the four newest members of our church. Claudemir and Marilda were born in Minas Gerais, a state in Southeast Brazil known for its minerals, art, history, and cuisine. He met Marilda as a teenager when his family moved to the city; her family lived across the street from his. It took persistence on Claudemir's side, but they eventually started dating. They were in a relationship for four years before getting married.

Claudemir was always familiar with hard work. After high school, he took on various odd jobs, including working as a gas station attendant and a delivery driver. In 1998, in

hopes of a better life, Claudemir, his wife Marilda, and two of their children moved to the Boston area in Massachusetts, where they lived and worked for many years.

Claudemir started working at a Dunkin' Donuts store. He began by cleaning and performing tasks typical for new immigrants. Marilda started by cleaning people's houses. As Claudemir's boss recognized his dedication and work ethic, and as his English skills improved, Claudemir moved on to learn different positions within the store to eventually become a store manager. After several years of hard work, Claudemir and Marilda were able to purchase their own coffee shop from a chain called Honey Dew Donuts. This was just the first of four stores they eventually owned and operated.

Even though Claudemir and Marilda retired and moved to Florida in 2016, he could not stay away from doing business. He currently owns a car wash in North Port but is planning to sell it and retire for good this time.

Already in America, Claudemir and Marilda had their third child. The oldest is Andreza, 40, the middle child is Paulo, 37, and their youngest is Bryan, 27. They also have three grandchildren: Sophia 13, Joshua 9, and Athina Ray who will be two months old this month.

One day, they learned about a Brazilian pastor at First Pres and started attending services just over a year ago. They enjoy Pastor Syl's sermons and appreciate the welcoming nature of the congregation. Claudemir remarked, "Everyone seems to be so nice, and the church is very organized." They also enjoy participating in The Chosen and the new Praise and Prayer Service on Thursdays.

Like many Brazilians, Claudemir and Marilda enjoy anything "BBQed" or grilled. They especially like a steak called "Picanha," which is the most popular meat cut in Brazil. Their favorite vacations include a cruise to the Caribbean Islands and visiting South America, but they have been to Europe recently, and enjoyed very much.

We are blessed to have Claudemir and his wife Marilda as new Affiliate members of First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte.

February

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Marjorie Lotz - Feb. 1

Alzie Lee - Feb. 7

Joan & Chris Barry - Feb. 16

Joleen Howard- Feb. 16

Carolyn Brox - Feb. 21

Jackie Witt - Feb. 26

Do not see your name here, call the church office and let us know (941) 625-5045

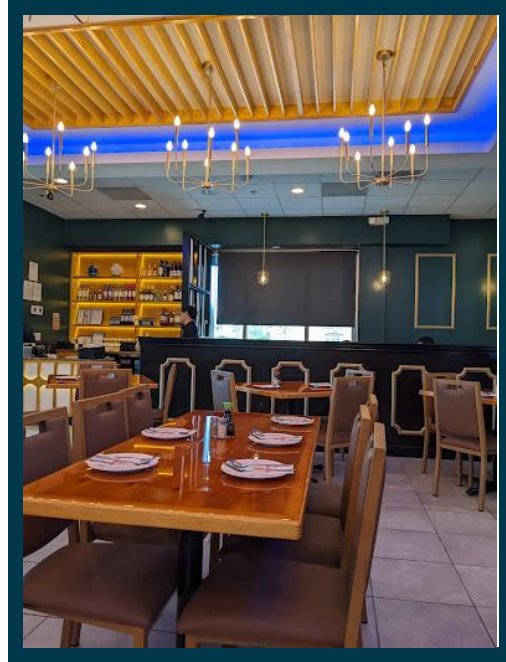
TACKLE HUNGER



Join us on Sunday, February 9th for Souper Bowl Sunday, as we join forces to support our Food Pantry in fighting hunger in our community by donating soup cans. Our very own Nancy Sharpless dressed in her best soup can attire announced just what Souper Bowl Sunday is about.



PEP (People Enjoying People)



Join us for a PEP lunch at Ginger Dim Sum and enjoy Asian BBQ on **Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 12:30 p.m.** RSVP by contacting Carol at 941-624-5402.

CHURCH OFFICIALS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- **The Board of Deacons** meets on the first Wednesday of the month, at **1:30 PM**. The next meeting is scheduled for **February 5, 2025**.
- **The New Chosen Bible TV series, Season 4, meets every Tuesday at 6:30 PM.**
- **The Worship Arts Committee** meets on the second Wednesday of the month, at **11 AM**. The next meeting is scheduled for **February 12, 2025**.
- **The New Weekly Praise & Worship Service meets every Thursday at 6:30 PM.**
- **The Finance Committee** meets on the second Sunday of each month, at **10:30 AM**. The next meeting is scheduled for **February 9, 2025**.
- **The Session** meets on the third Sunday of each month, at **10:30 AM**. The next meeting is scheduled for **February 16, 2025**.
- **Adult Sunday School** meets every Sunday, at **8 AM**, including by Zoom now.
- **Children's Sunday school** meets every Sunday, during worship and after the Children's Blessing.
- **The PEP (People Enjoying People) Luncheon** meets once every month. The next luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, **February 26, 2025 at 12:30 PM**, this time at **Ginger Dim Sum**.

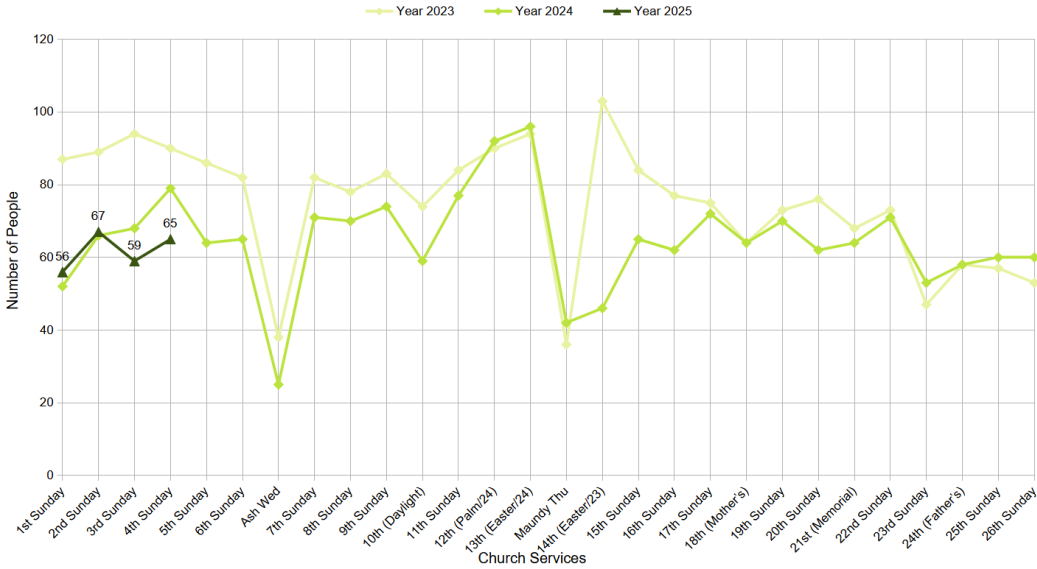


Are you able to volunteer your time? Click below to e-mail pastor Syl at pastor@fpcpc.com.

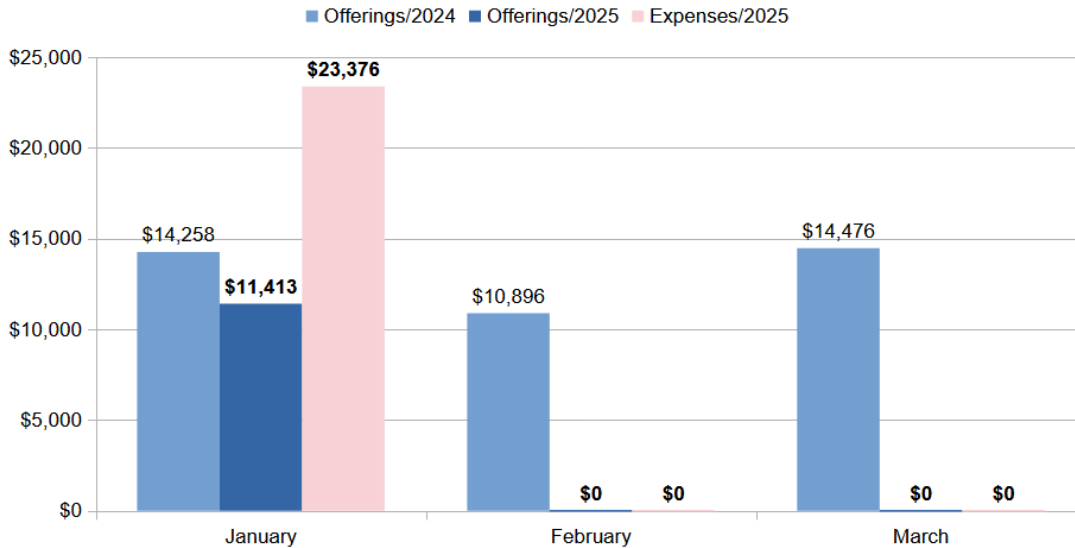
Yes, I am here Lord!

FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

Worship Attendance Comparison Chart
2023 - 2024 - 2025 1st Semester



Offerings Comparison vs Expenses



Average YTD 2024 Attendance - **66.25** people each Sunday
Average YTD 2025 Attendance - 61.75 people each Sunday

Average YTD 2024 Monthly Giving per Person/Family - **\$215.22** per month
Average YTD 2025 Monthly Giving per Person/Family - \$184.83 per month

*YTD = Year-To-Date (In this case, the numbers above are the comparison of the attendance and giving of **January** 24 and 25. Next month, because is year-to-date, the average will be the representation of January and February, and so forth).



Did you know you can add First Pres on your will or living trust, as your beneficiary? For example, one of the most advantageous ways to contribute to the First Presbyterian Church is through a gift of stock. Making a gift of securities is simple and offers a number of valuable financial benefits. You can give appreciated stocks to the church simply by transferring them into our account. The total value of the stock upon transfer is tax-deductible, and you will not be obligated to pay any capital gains taxes on the appreciation. For gifts of stock or gifts-in-kind, please contact the finance office for details or speak with our church treasurer, Elder Ambrose Woods.

**PLEASE, FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK,
 AND PASTOR SYL ON INSTAGRAM
 AND YOUTUBE.**





Please pray for ...

Adams Family - strength & comfort
Cathy & Rick Armstrong - health needs
Bernadine & Tom Allesee family - safety & health
Susan Baivey - health needs
Charlie Brox - health needs
Barbara Edwards - health needs
Jean Heim - health needs
Ruth Hester - health needs
Alzie & Senior Lee Family - strength & comfort
Sue Littrell - health needs
Violet Logan/Green - strength & comfort
Donna & Loren Livengood - health needs
Marjorie Hill - health needs
Courtenay Mason - health needs
Brad Messick - health needs
Louis Miceli - health needs
Samantha & Derrick Reams Family - strength & comfort
Olin Scott - housing needs
Mavis Powell - health needs
Danny Webb - strength needs

FPCPC FAMILY - If you know of anyone else who may need our prayers, please call the church office at 941-625-5045. Names will be removed after 3 months. If you wish to keep them on the list, please call the church office.

