

First Presbyterian Church

P O R T C H A R L O T T E , F L

2230 HARIET ST
PORT CHARLOTTE, FL 33952
941-625-5025
WWW.FPCPC.COM



October/2026 E-GRAM



From the Pastor's Desk

Hello, **Everyone**, peace be with you!

With Thanksgiving and the end of the year around the corner, we are eager to welcome our seasonal regulars to First Pres. We look forward to connecting with our northern Presbyterian brothers and sisters as they join our church family for another warmer Florida season.

To help accommodate everyone, our elders and I have decided to adjust our worship service time to **10:30 a.m.** every Sunday, beginning **November 1, 2026**. That's next month only. This month of October will continue as usual.

Coming November and before the service, the Adult Bible School will meet at 9:00 a.m., leaving a relaxed 30-minute window for our Bible study enthusiasts to grab a cup of coffee and enjoy fellowship before we gather to worship.

We know that an 8:00 a.m. Bible Study and a 9:00 a.m. service often felt a bit rushed, so we hope this new schedule offers everyone a more relaxed, unhurried start to Sunday mornings. Keep in mind that this is a trial period, not a permanent move. By the end of January, we will ask for your feedback to decide whether we continue at 10:30 a.m. or return to our previous

schedule. On November 1st, do not forget to set your clocks back one hour for Daylight savings time. The first of November is the day we will be honoring loved ones with All Saints day, so you can't miss it.

We also have a wonderful month planned for October! Throughout the month, we will focus on the Protestant Reformation with a special sermon series. We will also have two special movie viewings accompanied with some delicious pizza. The viewing will be one in October and another one in November. Also, our Bell and Voice Choirs will resume practices. We will also share food and fellowship at our Men's Breakfast and PEP Gathering, as well as prepare for an exciting joint end-of-year concert with neighboring churches. There is so much to look forward to!

That's all for now, family. God bless you all!

Pastor Syl



What's Happening at First Pres

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays - 9 AM to 2 PM

Wednesdays and Fridays - **Office is Closed**

Friday, Oct. 2

- 12:30 PM - Knit/Crochet Workshop Class

Sunday, Oct. 4

- 7:45 AM - Coffee & Pastries
- 8:00 AM - Adult Sunday School (On Zoom at 8:05 AM)
- **9:00 AM - Lord's Supper Service**
- 9:20 AM - Children's Sunday School (after Children's Blessing)

Monday, Oct. 5

- 8:00 AM - *Lectio-Divina* with Wintergarden Pres on Zoom

Tuesday, Oct. 6

- 8:00 - 11:00 AM - Food Pantry

Wednesday, Oct. 7

- 12:00 PM - Prayer Group Meeting.
- **1:30 PM - Deacon's Meeting**
- 6:30 PM - Choir Rehearsal

Friday, Oct. 9

- 12:30 PM - Knit/Crochet Workshop Class

Sunday, Oct. 11

- 7:45 AM - Coffee & Pastries
- 8:00 AM - Adult Sunday School (On Zoom at 8:05 AM)
- **9:00 AM - Special Reformation Service**
- ~9:20 AM - Children's Sunday School (after Children's Blessing)
- **3:00 PM - Eirinn Abu Concert**

Monday, Oct. 12

- **Columbus Day / Indigenous Peoples' Day**
- **No Lectio-Divina.**
- 6:30 PM - Bell Rehearsal

Tuesday, Oct. 13

- 7:30 AM - Men's Breakfast
- **5:00 PM - "A Great Awakening" movie with pizza**

Wednesday, Oct. 14

- 12:00 PM - Prayer Group Meeting
- **4:00 - 6:30 PM - Food Pantry**
- 6:30 PM - Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, Oct. 15

- **3:00 PM - Worship Arts Committee Meeting**
- **4:00 PM - Finance Committee Meeting**
- **5:00 PM - Session Meeting**

Friday, Oct. 16

- 12:30 PM - Knit/Crochet Workshop Class

Saturday, Oct. 17

- **3:00 PM - Stated Presbytery Meeting (Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church - 1225 Piper Blvd, Naples, FL 34110)**

Sunday, Oct. 18

- 7:45 AM - Coffee & Pastries
- 8:00 AM - Adult Sunday School (On Zoom at 8:05 AM)

- **9:00 AM - Special Reformation Service**

- ~9:20 AM - Children's Sunday School - (after Children's Blessing)

Monday, Oct. 19

- 8:00 AM - *Lectio-Divina* with Wintergarden Pres on Zoom

- 6:30 PM - Bell Rehearsal

Tuesday, Oct. 20

- **8:00 - 11:00 AM - Food Pantry**

Wednesday, Oct. 21

- 12:00 PM - Prayer Group Meeting
- 6:30 PM - Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, Oct. 22

- **12:30 PM - PEP Group lunch at Donato's Italian Restaurant** (1900 S Tamiami Trl.)

Friday, Oct. 23

- 12:30 PM - Knit/Crochet Workshop Class

Sunday, Oct. 25

- 7:45 AM - Coffee & Pastries
- 8:00 AM - Adult Sunday School (On Zoom at 8:05 AM)
- **9:00 AM - Reformation Sunday**
- ~9:20 AM - Children's Sunday School (after Children's Blessing)
- Oct. Birthdays & Anniversaries Celebration (following the service)

Monday, Oct. 26

- 8:00 AM - *Lectio-Divina* with Wintergarden Pres on Zoom
- 6:30 PM - Bell Rehearsal

Wednesday, Oct. 28

- 12:00 PM - Prayer Group Meeting.
- 6:30 PM - Choir Rehearsal

Friday, Oct. 30

- 12:30 PM - Knit/Crochet Workshop Class

Sunday, Nov. 1
All Saints Day

**Worship Service begins at
10:30 a.m.**



Last Month's

Recap

Pastor Syl is Guest Minister at Ordination



Pastor Syl joined fellow PC(USA) ministers from Tampa Presbytery at Lutz Community Church to celebrate the installation of his friend, Rev. Brendan Ashley. Pastor Syl participated by taking part in the service and later by the laying on of hands to install Pastor Brendan as he begins his ministry with our Presbyterian brothers and sisters. Keep an eye out. Pastor Syl plans to host Pastor Brendan as a guest preacher with us soon!



Pastor Syl Finished Helping Our Lutheran Friends



Our Lutheran brothers and sisters in Rotonda West recently gathered for a special luncheon to celebrate Pastor Syl and bid him a fond farewell, as he concludes his temporary ministry with them.

At the same time, they officially welcomed ELCA Pastor Melba Dibble, who will serve as Interim Pastor. Pastor Melba will guide both Hope and Faith Lutheran churches as they seek to call a common pastor together.



Below, both pastors are serving communion together at Pastor Syl's last service with Faith Lutheran Rotonda West. In this picture, we can also see the beautiful three floating crosses artwork made by our own Weldon Degroot as a gift to that church. The crosses say: Faith - Love - Hope, and come from St. Paul words to the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 13:13).



9/11 25th Anniversary



Last month, on the 25th anniversary of September 11, we paused in prayer to honor the lives lost, remember the heroes, and pray for God's lasting peace in our hearts and world. We ask God to grant our nation unity, peace, and hope.

Elder and Minister in the Making Sandy Asaro Began Her Divinity Journey



Dear Church Family,

I am excited to share with you that I have begun my Seminary journey towards a Master of Divinity degree this semester (Fall 2026) through Union Presbyterian Seminary's hybrid online program. My classes this semester are: Pastoral Care, Greek 1, and Intro to Theological Research.

The first two classes meet online on Monday and Tuesday evenings, respectively, and the last one meets Asynchronously (at our own pace online).

Of my three classes this semester, one of them (Pastoral Care) has a required in-person component. At the end of September, I travelled to Richmond, VA for the Residency Week of this course and had an absolutely phenomenal time meeting my cohorts and reconnecting with friends from my previous work at Union when I was studying Christian Education from 2017-2021. This sacred space holds a special place in my heart. The picture shows me on my recent visit to campus.

As one who loves serving God and serving the people of God, I feel called to pastoral ministry and am eager to follow the path that I believe God has set for me to follow.

Currently I have 25.5 years of teaching in our school district, and 30 years is the earliest that one can fully retire. Therefore, my timeframe is approximately 4.5 years remaining as a school teacher with January 2031 being the earliest that I can retire.

Between now and then, my goal is to work on my studies in preparation for a pastoral call in the timing and placement that God knows to be best. Some of my previous work from the Christian Education degree transferred into my current M.Div. degree program, so I have 52 credits remaining. In my best estimation, this will take me approximately 3-4 years.

I appreciate your prayer support and look forward to updating you all on my journey through seminary along the way. Thanks for walking the journey with me.

Sandy

Go Make a Difference



Looking for a meaningful way to give back? Our church has a long history with Meals on Wheels—in fact, according to one of our elders, we may have been one of the very first local churches to support them! Today, they need our help again. If you'd like to make a difference—either by delivering meals or becoming a monthly financial supporter—please call 941-625-4343 or visit mowofcc.org/meal-maker-program to get involved.

(Just Two) Men's Breakfast



Our Men's Breakfast was joined by Pr. Syl and Mr. Weldon DeGroot. They could sure use a few more men. Won't you join them at **7:30 a.m.** on **Tuesday, October 13th** at **Bob Evans** near the mall?

PEP (People Enjoying People) Lunch



Our PEP group enjoyed lunch and good company at Pita & Puff with Pr. Syl, Elder Donna Young, Kathy Alexander, and Deacons Carol D.D. and Holly Parkin. Join us this month on **Thursday, October 22nd at Donato's Italian Restaurant at 12:30 p.m.**

Celebrating September Birthdays & Anniversaries



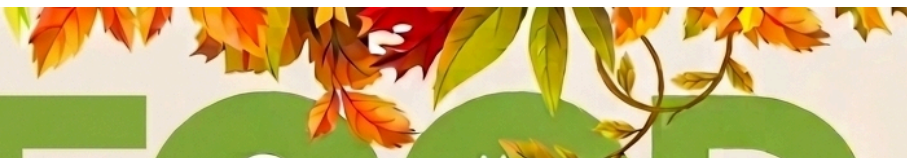
Pastor Syl stands proudly with John Danylak and Donna Young in honor of their birthdays. Happy Birthday to all who celebrated in September!



Upcoming *Events*

MONTHLY EVENTS

**Blessing Tree Collection for our
Thanksgiving Food Pantry Drive**



FOOD PANTRY

at the

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PORT CHARLOTTE

2230 Harriet St. Port Charlotte, FL

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER FOOD COLLECTION DRIVE



ACCEPTING: Turkeys (frozen), Stuffing,
Canned Vegetables, Cream of
Mushroom Soup, & all the fixings for a
Thanksgiving meal.

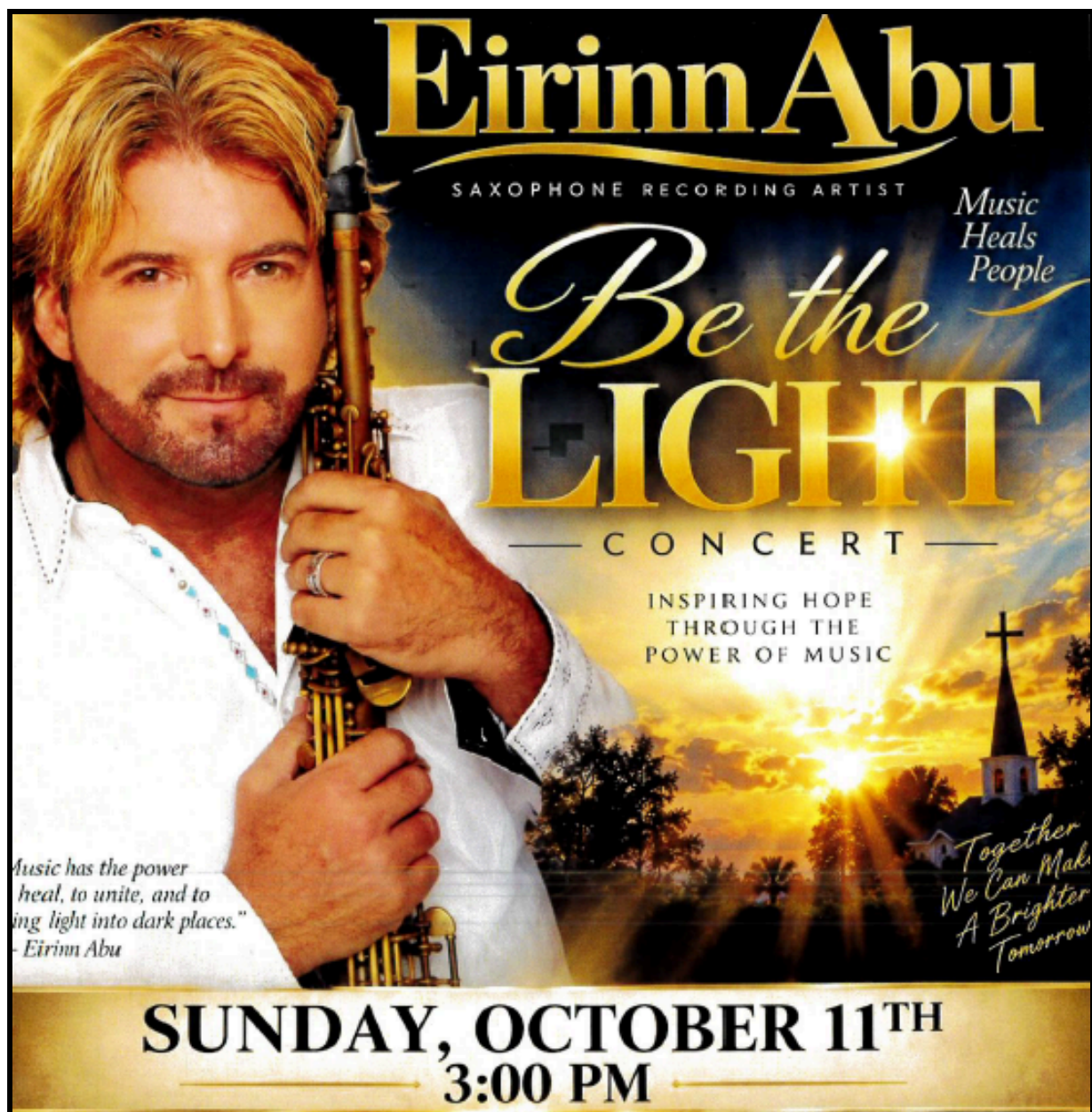
As always, canned goods &
non-perishables are welcome.

**To Feed Families of
Our Community**



This month, First Presbyterian's Blessing Tree will collect for our **Food Pantry**. Please donate non-perishable food for Thanksgiving meals to feed families in our community.

Eirinn Abu is Back With Us



Join us on **Sunday, October 11th**, at **3:00 PM** to welcome back Erin Abu who will perform a "Be The Light" Concert raising money for A Brighter Light Foundation.

Men's Breakfast



Gentlemen, mark your calendars! Join us on **Tuesday, October 13th**, at **7:30 AM** for our monthly Men's Breakfast. We're heading to Bob Evans near the mall for an hour of great food and even better conversation. Whether you're looking for a bit of mid-week encouragement or just a solid breakfast with the guys, there's a seat at the table for you. See you there!

Movie Night!



Join us for Pizza and Movie night on **October 13, 2026** at **5:00 PM**. We will enjoy pizza, popcorn & drinks. The 2026 faith-based historical drama "[A Great Awakening](#)" tells the true story of the unlikely friendship between the Reverend George Whitefield and Benjamin Franklin during the First Great Awakening.

PEP (People Enjoying People)

The PEP will meet for lunch on **Thursday, October 22nd**, at **Donato's** (1900 S Tamiami Trl,



Port Charlotte, FL) at **12:30 PM**.
Please RSVP by calling Carol DD
at 941-624-5402.

WEEKLY EVENTS

On Mondays - *Lectio Divina* Online



Join our brothers and sisters of Wintergarden Pres online every Monday at 8:00 AM for deep reflection on God's word.

To connect, go to www.zoom.us and click "Join" in the upper-right-hand corner.

Meeting ID: 878 3208 0869

Passcode: 396015

Prayer Changes Things: Join Us Wednesdays at Noon



They say prayer is the engine room of the church, and we invite you to be part of that movement! **Every Wednesday at 12:00 PM**, we gather in the First Pres Gathering Room to stand in the gap for our community, our loved ones, and our world. We have seen firsthand how prayer makes a tangible difference in people's lives. Whether you are a "prayer warrior" or simply seeking a quiet place to sit in God's presence, you are welcome here.

Wanna Learn to Knit or Crochet?

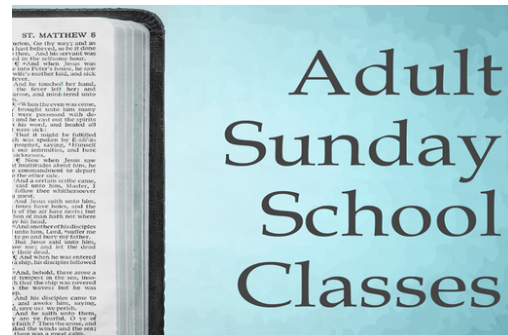


Interested in Knitting or Crocheting? Join our group every Friday at 12:30 PM in the Gathering Room. Below some of the awesome ladies who are attending.



Sunday Bible School (Adults and Children)

Our Sunday School classes are truly wonderful, thanks to our dedicated Christian Education Committee and our resident Bible expert, Elder Sandy Asaro. Whether you join us in person or online, there is a place for you!



Adult Bible studies begin at 8 AM, while children's classes start right after the Children's Blessing during the service.



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

October 1 - Rayetta Bittinger

October 5 - Joan Hawkins

October 25 - Myra Rose
October 30 - Malachi Barrett

Do not see your name here? Call the church office and let us know (941) 625-5045.



We are *Praying for...*

Eric & Ray Bittinger - health needs
Hazel & Jerry Brown - health needs
Carolyn & Charlie Brox - health needs
Lin Christian - health needs
Barbara Danylak - health needs
Carol Dunkak-Dunekirchen - health needs
Barbara Edwards - health needs
Jean Heim - health needs
Marjorie Hill - health needs
Carolanne Hoehle - health needs
Ronald Howard - health needs
Sue Littrell - health needs
Richard Lund - health needs
Courtenay Mason - health needs
Brad Messick - health needs
George Mothershed - health needs
Amanda Nunez - strength & comfort
Julie Nunez - health needs
Ray Omar - health needs
Mavis Powell - health needs
Samantha & Derrick Reams- strength & health
Gay Sorensen's Family - strength & comfort
Danny Webb - strength needs
Debbie Webb - health 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.



Our Church's *Affiliations*



First Presbyterian Church
of Port Charlotte



The **First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte** is part of the **Presbyterian Church USA**, under the care of the **Peace River Presbytery**. We are also part of the compendium of Reformed and Presbyterian churches worldwide.