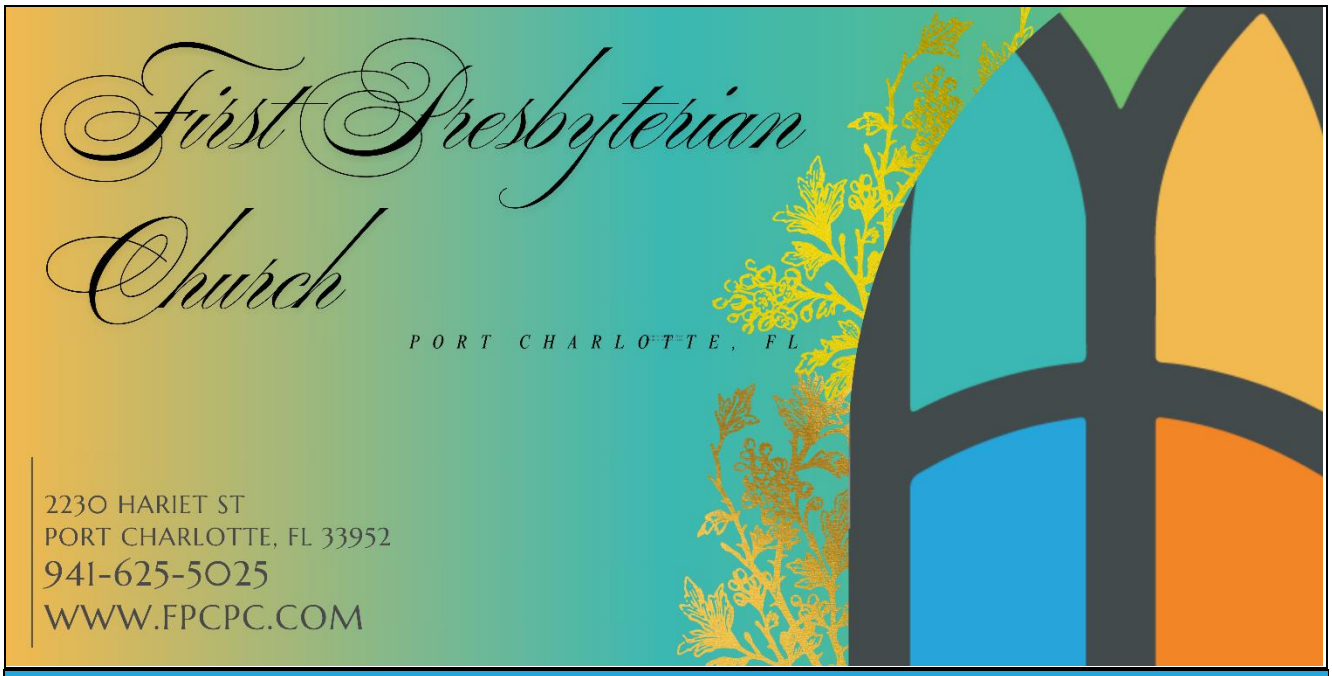


November/2026 E-GRAM

From the Pastor's Desk

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

"I thank my God every time I remember you." (Philippians 1:3, NRSVue)

When Paul wrote these words to the church in Philippi, he was not writing from a place of comfort. He was in chains, his future uncertain, his people far, and still the first thing that rose in him was gratitude. Not gratitude for easy circumstances, but for people: the ones who had shared his journey, prayed with and for him, and stayed with him. As Thanksgiving approaches, I find myself with a heart full of thankfulness for this 2026.

There are many reasons to be thankful this past year: food on our tables, roofs over our heads, a hurricane-free season, the small mercies we barely notice until they are gone. But if I am honest, one of the deepest reasons I give thanks is the community that gathers with me on Sunday mornings. Yes, we are a small church, and I will

not pretend that smallness has never made us wonder about our future. Yet I have come to believe that small is not the same as lacking. In a congregation our size, no one disappears into the crowd. We know one another's names, stories, joys, and griefs. And this is special.

I am also thankful for something more personal. Now that I am on my way to my mid-fifties, I have been doing ministry long enough to know how much I still have to learn. And what a gift it is to be a pastor among people who are generous with their wisdom! Again and again, a conversation after worship, a quiet word in the hallway, or a question asked at just the right moment, among other things, has shaped my thinking and sharpened my preaching. I do not carry this ministry alone, and I would not want to. Wisdom does not live only in the pulpit. It lives in the pews, in the kitchen, in Bible study discussions, in feeding neighbors, and in the lives we have each walked through.

What moves me most is how committed you are to one another and to God. We show up for each other in hospital rooms and at kitchen tables, in casseroles and in prayers, in the long, unglamorous work of staying faithful. That kind of commitment is exactly what Paul gave thanks for in Philippi, and the very reason Betania and I have to be thankful.

Thank you, God, for my wonderful little church, for my faithful people, and the honor of pastoring them.

Pastor Syl



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays – 9 AM to 2 PM
Wednesdays and Fridays – **Office is Closed**

Beginning now…

- **Adult Sunday School begins at 9:00 a.m.**
- **Worship Service begins at 10:30 a.m.**

Sunday, Nov. 1

- 8:45 AM – Coffee & Pastries
- 9:00 AM – Adult Sunday School (On Zoom at 9:05 AM)
- **10:30 AM – Lord's Supper Service + All Saints Service**
- 10:20 AM – Children's Sunday School (after Children's Blessing)

Monday, Nov. 2

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

Tuesday, Nov. 3

- **8:00 – 11:00 AM – Food Pantry**

Wednesday, Nov. 4

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

Friday, Nov. 6

- 12:30 PM – Knit/Crochet Workshop Group

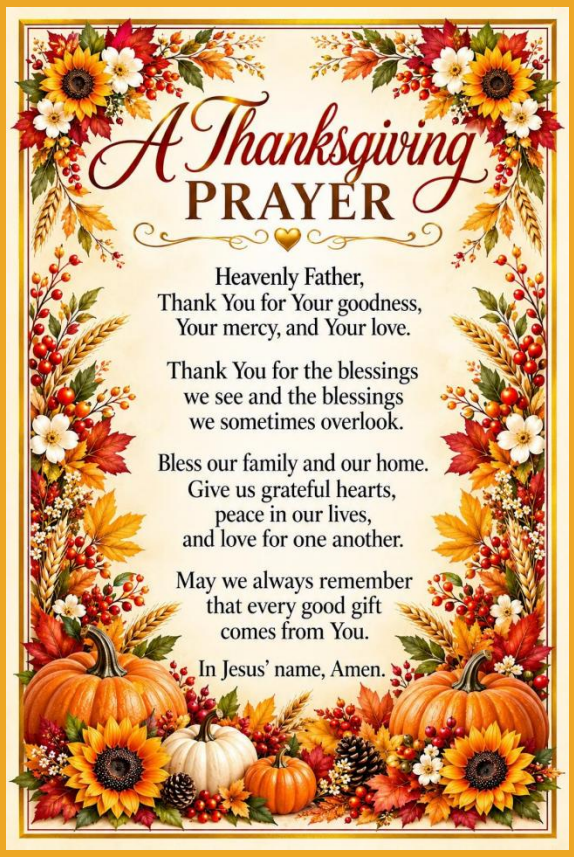
Sunday, Nov. 8

- 8:45 AM – Coffee & Pastries
- 9:00 AM – Adult Sunday School (On Zoom at 8:05 AM)
- 10:30 AM – Ordinary Service
- ~10:20 AM – Children's Sunday School (after Children's Blessing)

Monday, Nov. 9

	• 8:00 AM – *Lectio-Divina* with Wintergarden Pres on Zoom • 6:30 PM – Bell Choir Rehearsal
Tuesday, Nov. 10	• **8:00 AM – Men's Breakfast** • **5:00 PM – Movie + Pizza Night featuring "Bonhoeffer: Pastor. Spy. Assassin."**
Wednesday, Nov. 11	• 12:00 PM – Prayer Group Meeting • **4:00 – 6:30 PM – Food Pantry** • 6:30 PM – Choir Choir Rehearsal
Friday, Nov. 13	• 12:30 PM – Knit/Crochet Workshop Group
Sunday, Nov. 15	• 8:45 AM – Coffee & Pastries • 9:00 AM – Adult Sunday School (On Zoom at 8:05 AM) • 10:30 AM – Ordinary Service • ~10:20 AM – Children's Sunday School (after Children's Blessing)
Monday, Nov. 16	• 8:00 AM – *Lectio-Divina* with Wintergarden Pres on Zoom • 6:30 PM – Bell Choir Rehearsal
Tuesday, Nov. 17	• **8:00 – 11:00 AM – Food Pantry**
Wednesday, Nov. 18	• 12:00 PM – Prayer Group Meeting • 6:30 PM – Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, Nov. 19	• **3:00 PM – Worship Arts Committee Meeting** • **4:00 PM – Finance Committee Meeting**

	• **5:00 PM – Session Meeting**
Friday, Nov. 20	• 12:30 PM – Knit/Crochet Workshop Class
Sunday, Nov. 22	• 8:45 AM – Coffee & Pastries • 9:00 AM – Adult Sunday School (On Zoom at 8:05 AM) • **10:30 AM – Ordinary Service** • ~10:45 AM – Children's Sunday School (after Children's Blessing)
Monday, Nov. 23	• 8:00 AM – *Lectio-Divina* with Wintergarden Pres on Zoom • 6:30 PM – Bell Choir Rehearsal
Wednesday, Nov. 25	• 12:00 PM – Prayer Group Meeting • 6:30 PM – Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, Nov. 26	• **Thanksgiving Day / Office Closed**
Friday, Nov. 27	• **No Knit & Crochet Workshop due to Thanksgiving**
Sunday, Nov. 29	• 8:45 AM – Coffee & Pastries • 9:00 AM – Adult Sunday School • **10:30 AM – Ordinary Service** • ~10:45 AM – Children's Sunday School (after Children's Blessing) • November Birthdays & Anniversaries Celebration (following the service)
Monday, Nov. 30	• 8:00 AM – *Lectio-Divina* with Wintergarden Pres on Zoom • 6:30 PM – Bell Choir Rehearsal





1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will

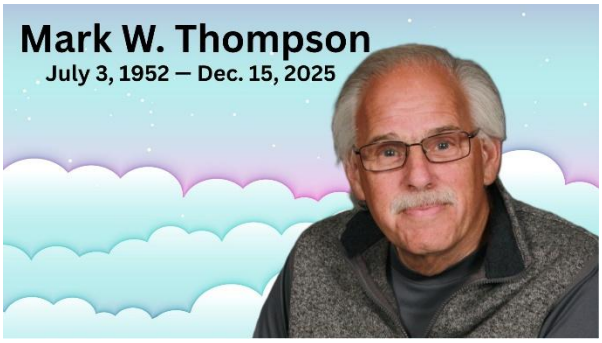
be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words."

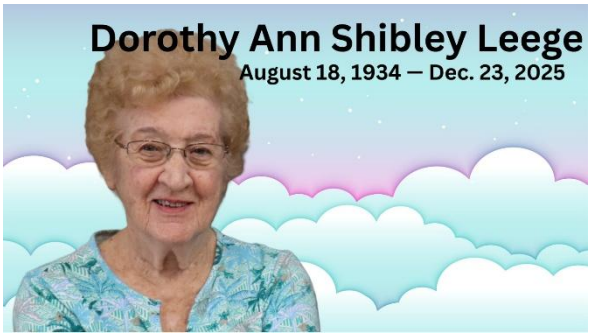
On November 1, 2026, we honor and remember our Saints. Take a moment to remember our loved ones.

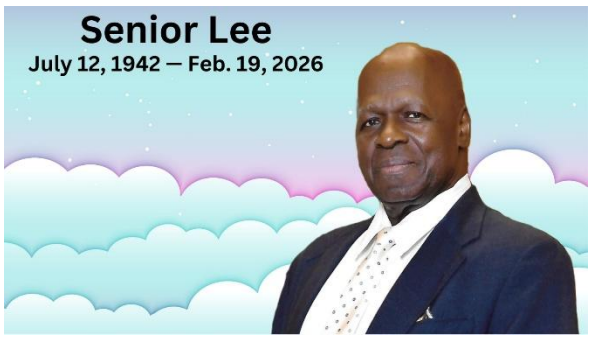






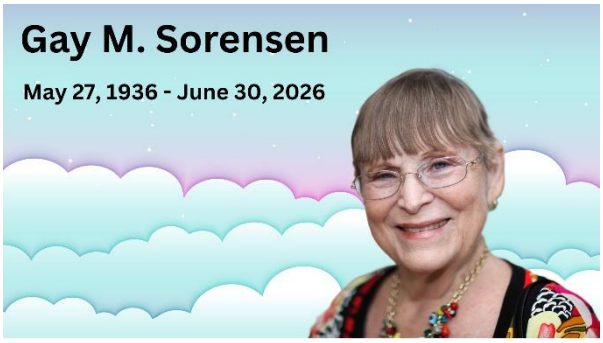












Last Month's *Recap*

World Communion Sunday and Reformation Sunday 2026



October is a wonderfully vibrant month in our church life, filled with connection and joy.

On World Communion Sunday, we celebrate our global unity in Christ, breaking bread alongside believers of every tongue and tradition. Later in the month, Reformation Sunday reminds us of our rich heritage and the enduring, free gift of God's grace, renewing our commitment to grow together in God's Holy Word.

Together, these two Sundays capture the heartbeat of our community: a family united in Christ, anchored in grace, and joyfully moving forward!



Eirinn Abu: Another Unforgettable Performance!



On **Sunday, October 11th**, at **3:00 PM**, we welcomed back Eirinn Abu, who performed a "Be The Light Concert" to raise money for A Brighter Light Foundation. Our next concert will be our Christmas Concert on December 6th. Check for details in our Music Note below.





Our talented Amy Rupert gives a beautiful solo performance





From heartfelt worship to stunning performances, FPCPC always shines. A special thank you to Elder Amy Rupert for her gorgeous solo, perfectly accompanied by our music director and pianist, Ms. Sue Brembs.

PEP (People Enjoying People) Lunch

Our PEP group enjoyed lunch and good company at **Donato's Italian Restaurant** with Elder Donna Young, Kathy Alexander, and Deacons Carol D.D. and Holly Parkin. (no image available)

Celebrating October Birthdays



First Pres celebrated our October birthdays with cake and fellowship! Pictured above is Pastor Syl with Joan Hawkins, one of our wonderful October birthday celebrants. Happy birthday to everyone who celebrated last month!

RCC and FPC: Another Year Together



Last month, Pastor Syl presented The Rock Calvary Chapel — our brothers and sisters next door — with a beautifully crafted art piece of floating crosses, created by our own extraordinary artist Weldon DeGroot, in celebration of another anniversary together. This meaningful piece reflects the spirit of Psalm 133:1: “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (NKJV).

In the picture below, we see Pastor Syl from FPC alongside Pastor Dave from RCC celebrating this wonderful partnership.



Presbytery Meeting: Being Church Together



Last month, Pastor Syl and Elder Donna Young went to the beautiful Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church in Naples for the Peace River Presbytery meeting. They were accompanied by Pastor Syl's wife, Betania, who participated for the first time in a Peace River Presbytery meeting, although without voice or voting rights.

We Presbyterians believe individual congregations do not work in isolation. Thus, we send representatives to presbytery meetings to uphold connectional church governance, oversee regional ministry, and receive mutual support across different congregations.

Presbytery is also a place for mutual encouragement and fellowship. Pastors and elders share meals, swap ministry ideas, pray together, and find support among peers facing similar vocations.

Go Make a Difference

Meals on Wheels of Charlotte County

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.

Upcoming Events

MONTHLY EVENTS

Blessing Tree Collection for our Thanksgiving Food Pantry Drive



November is the Last month for the First Presbyterian's Blessing Tree to collect for our **Food Pantry.** Please donate non-perishable food for Thanksgiving meals to feed families in our community.

Acrylic ornaments, T-shirts, and coffee mugs!! Gifts for you or a friend.

This holiday season, you can share a piece of church heritage while supporting First Pres. We are offering special Christmas tree ornaments made of acrylic, T-shirts, and coffee mugs, all featuring the PC-USA Ninth Confessional Banner. The banner was originally created by Gay Sorensen, whose artistic legacy is cherished and replicated in Presbyterian churches across America, and whom we lovingly commended to the Lord this year. These beautiful items have been lovingly crafted by Elder Cathy Asaro. Donations for the ornaments and T-shirts will directly benefit the church. The coffee mugs will be donated to the Food Pantry. Stop by to pick yours up as a gift for yourself or a friend!









PC-USA Ninth Confessional Banner Gifts
Acrylic Christmas ornaments: $6 (small) - $8 (large)
$10 Coffee mugs - $15 T-shirts

- Donations for ornaments and T-shirts will be donated to the church general fund.
- Coffee mug Donations, **a cup of Kindness,** will go to our Food Pantry.

Men's Breakfast



Gentlemen, mark your calendars! Join us on **Tuesday, November 10th**, at **8:00 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 **November 10, 2026** at **5:00** PM. We will enjoy pizza, popcorn & drinks. Based on an incredible true story, *Bonhoeffer* follows a German pastor who joins a covert network of spies to stop the Nazi regime. As Hitler's shadow darkens Europe, he faces the ultimate moral dilemma: uphold his commitment to nonviolence, or risk everything in a high-stakes plot to assassinate the dictator from within.

PEP (People Enjoying People)



The PEP group will not meet in **November** due to Thanksgiving or in **December** due to Christmas Eve. We will start up again next year. Stay tuned.

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.

Interested in Knitting or Crocheting? (Yes, guys, that means you too!)



Whether you're a seasoned crafter or just looking to untangle a little stress, come join our group every Friday at 12:30 PM in the Gathering Room. Don't let the ladies have all the fun—bring a friend, grab some yarn, and let's see who can create the least lumpy scarf! All are welcome!

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 9 AM, while children's classes start right after the Children's Blessing during the service.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

November 3 – Tanner Brawn

November 8 – Kathy Bruyere

November 8 – Mavis Powell

November 28 – Courtenay Mason

November 28 – Stephen Goettler

Anniversaries

November 14 – Natasha Andrew

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

Upcoming December events...

Honor a loved one…



If you would like to purchase a poinsettia to the glory of, in honor of, or in loving memory of a loved one, please fill out the form found in your bulletin. Place it in the provided envelope and drop it in the offering plate, or return it to the church office by Monday, December 14th. Please be sure to specify the quantity and whether you prefer a live or silk poinsettia.

Let's Decorate the Sanctuary for the Christmas Season





We need volunteers for Saturday, **December 5, 2026** at **10 a.m.** to help decorate our Sanctuary for Advent Season. Bring your creative talent & Christmas spirit.





A Musical Note from our music director Susan Brembs

As a familiar Christmas song says, “It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas.” So, mark your calendar for a **Christmas Concert** on **Sunday, Dec. 6** at **3 p.m.** The program will feature familiar Christmas songs and carols with audience participation. There will be special guest musicians and many surprises! We have also invited two special guests from the North Pole, so let’s hope for some snow to help them on their way! Please invite your family and friends to this concert. Admission is free.



Chris Barry – health needs
Eric & Ray Bittinger – health needs
Hazel & Jerry Brown – health needs
Carolyn & Charlie Brox – health needs
Weldon Degroot – 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 & comfort
Samantha & Derrick Reams– strength & health
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.



First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

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.