



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PERRY

## JANUARY 2026 CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Office Closed	2	3
4 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 11 am	5	6 Fellowship meeting 5 pm Worship Meeting 6 pm	7 Prayer meeting 9:30 Soup for the Soul 11:30 am Fellowship Supper 5:45 pm Choir 7 pm	8 Christian Educa- tion Meeting 10 am	9	10
11 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 11 am	12 Craft & Fellowship 1:00pm	13 Beach Bible Study 9:30 am FPC Bible Study 10:00 am Administration meeting 4 pm	14 Prayer meeting 9:30 Soup for the Soul 11:30 am Fellowship Supper 5:45 pm Choir 7pm	15 Finance Meeting 11 am	16	17
18 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 11 am	19 Office Closed Mission Outreach Meeting 4 pm	20 Beach Bible Study 9:30 am FPC Bible Study 10:00 am Session Meeting 5:30 pm	21 Prayer meeting 9:30 Soup for the Soul 11:30 am Fellowship Supper 5:45 pm Choir 7pm	22	23	24
25 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 11 am	26 Craft & Fellowship 1:00 pm	27 Beach Bible Study 9:30 am FPC Bible Study 10:00 am	28 Prayer meeting 9:30 Soup for the Soul 11:30 am Fellowship Supper 5:45 pm Choir 7pm	29	30	31

# A letter from our Pastor

Friends,

While Advent marks the start of the Christian new year, January begins the solar new year. Although there is little difference between December 31<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>, many people act as if a great magic is invoked when the clock strikes 12 and 2025 turns into 2026. They behave as if this moment alone grants them the power to make and follow through on resolutions.

New Year's resolutions originated in Ancient Babylon. Many are made each year, but few are ever fully achieved. Researchers say the most common resolution is to lose weight. For Christians, typical resolutions include reading the Bible in one year, praying more, volunteering more, and dedicating more time, money, or resources.

Mostly, even for Christians, we often struggle to follow through on our resolutions. Two questions can help us understand why this happens:

1. Who is the goal of our resolution?
2. What is our motivation?

Let us consider the question of our goal. 1 Timothy 4:8 states, “for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” Since we are Christians, shouldn't our goal be aligned with some aspect of godliness?

Take the common resolution about losing weight—is it about being physically fit to further God's Kingdom work, or is it so others see us and comment on our physique, dedication, or ability to squeeze into the slacks we wore back in tenth grade? Is our goal focused on God and God's purpose, or is it about us and our purpose?

Now, let's address the question of motivation. Jesus says, “I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5) Since Jesus is the Vine, our Source, we are dependent branches. Our motivation must therefore align with what our Source seeks to produce through us. Any fruit that results from us should be because the Vine intends for it to be so. Otherwise, the pruning shears will come.

If God is the Source, Center, and Motivation for our resolutions, we have a better chance of success because God will empower us to achieve them. Regarding doing it on our own, under our own power and driven by our own motivations, Jesus says, “Apart from me, you can do nothing.”

It is good for us to consider these things as we enter 2026. What might God prefer First Presbyterian Church's New Year's resolutions to be? More kindness, more flexibility, more community engagement, less anxiety, less gossip, etc.

I wish you all a blessed Christmas season and the very best in the New Year! Your pastor resolves to see you in 2026 after Christmas vacation. I will be out of the office from 12/27/2025- 1/13/2026. Fr. Kent Thompson (St. James, Perry) will be available for emergency calls.

Until next year, we pray:

Eternal God, you have placed us in a world of space and time, and through the events of our lives, you bless us with your love. Grant that in the new year we may know your presence, see your love at work, and live in the light of the event that gives us joy forever—the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

*(prayer from Sundays and Seasons)*

Peace,

JDB+

## Notes and Reminders

People of God---

Beginning on Thursday, January 15th, at 10 am in the sanctuary, we will start studying the Heidelberg Catechism. We will meet weekly. This will take around 26 weeks to complete. To participate, you will need a copy of the Book of Confessions.

Peace---

JDB+



Dear People of God, Pr. Bryant is out of the office 12/28-1/13, taking time to rest and check on GA relatives. Please call Fr. Kent Thompson (850.843.0369) in the event of a pastoral care emergency. Have a safe, blessed, Christ-centered Christmas season. JDB+



# LITTLE SPARKS

A Children's Ministry  
First Presbyterian Church of Perry, FL



**Programs for 2 & 3 years olds**



**Tuesday through Thursday**



**9 a.m.-12 p.m.**



**Biblically-based Abeka Curriculum**

**Perfect for:**

- ✓ **Mom's day out**
- ✓ **Developing social skills**
- ✓ **Developing independence**

**\*Enrolling now**  
**\*Next session starts January 6th**



[littlesparks@firstpresperry.org](mailto:littlesparks@firstpresperry.org)



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**FPC Website:**

[www.firstpresperry.org](http://www.firstpresperry.org)

**Office Phone:**

1(850) 584-3826

**Email:**

[office@firstpresperry.org](mailto:office@firstpresperry.org)

**Mailing Address:**

P.O. Box 837 Perry, FL 32348

## January Birthdays

Jalen Albritton—January 6	Sally MacNeill—January 13
Sandi Hilgendorf—January 19	Mike Perrine—January 20
Isabel Campbell—January 23	Nancy Bell —January 24
Stephen Seecharan—January 31	

## January Anniversaries

Steve & Cindy Brown—January 5  
 Bobby & Kristie Harper—January 21