

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Bringing hope to the heart of Charleston and beyond.



The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2026 | 10:30am

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church

16 Leon Sullivan Way • Charleston, WV 25301 • 304-343-8961 • www.firstpresby.com

Pastor: The Rev. Dr. William C. Myers

Ministers: All members of the congregation

A warm welcome as we gather for worship today. Whether you are a longtime member, a first-time guest, or joining us again after some time away, we are grateful you are here.

May our worship honor God, strengthen our faith, and send us into the world with hope and joy.

All children are welcome and encouraged to participate in worship.

A reflection for worship:

"Grace meets us where we are but does not leave us where it found us."

—Adapted from Anne Lamott, *Traveling Mercies*

"Everyone thinks forgiveness is a lovely idea, until they have something to forgive."

—C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

"You love God as much as the one you love the least."

—Quoted by Dorothy Day, "Poverty and Pacifism," *The Catholic Worker* (1944)

The following scriptures are provided for silent meditation during the prelude:

Semicontinuous

Exodus 14:19-31 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21 • Psalm 114

Complementary

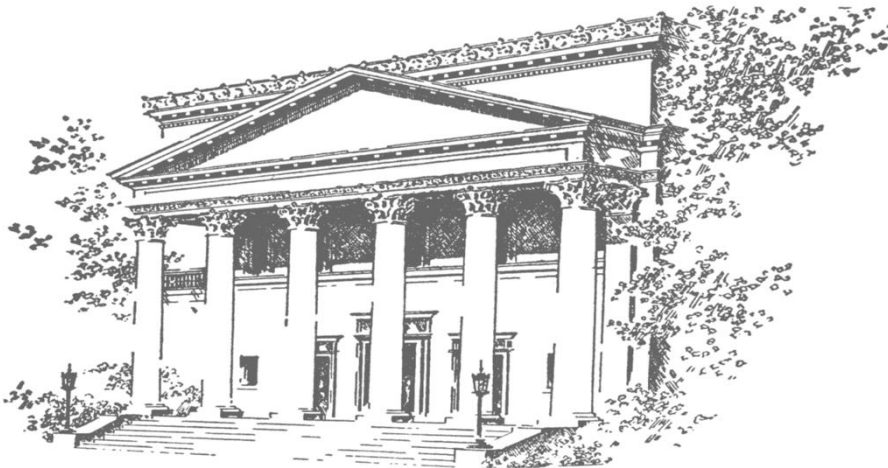
Genesis 50:15-21 • Psalm 103:(1-7) 8-13 • Romans 14:1-12 • Matthew 18:21-35

Cover art:

Joseph in Egypt

Jacopo da Pontormo (1494–1556)

National Gallery (London, United Kingdom)



*Seek the welfare of the city
where I have sent you...
and pray to the Lord
on its behalf for in its welfare
you will find your welfare.
Jeremiah 29:7*

Our Offering of Worship

We Come Before God

God calls us together as one people. We come with our joys and burdens, our questions and hopes, trusting that God meets us with grace and welcomes us into worship.

**indicates congregation standing, as able.*

Opening Voluntaries

Chorale: *Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben*
Chorale Prelude

J.S. Bach
Pedro Martins

Introit

Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain

Arthur Sullivan, John of Damascus
The Sanctuary Choir

Come, you faithful, raise the strain of triumphant gladness!
God has brought forth Israel into joy from sadness,
Loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke Jacob's sons and daughters;
Led them with unmoistened foot through the Red Sea waters.

Welcome

Pastor Myers

Chiming of the Trinity

We Give Thanks and Praise

*In song and prayer, we turn our hearts toward the God who creates, redeems, and sustains us.
Together we offer our praise and remember the faithfulness of God.*

*Call to Worship

Dina Mohler

One: Come, bless the Lord, who is merciful and gracious.

All: God does not deal with us according to our sins.

One: As far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our sin from us.

All: So great is God's steadfast love. Let us worship God.

*Prayer of Adoration

Dina Mohler

All: Gracious God, you gather us in mercy and hold us in steadfast love. You know the good we have done, the harm we have caused, and the wounds we carry. Yet you call us not to an audit, but into your presence. Quiet our calculations and teach us the freedom of grace. Unite us in Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

*Hymn of Praise #267

Come, Christians, Join to Sing

MADRID

We Confess and Receive Grace

*In confession, we acknowledge the ways we have fallen short and open our hearts to God's mercy.
Through Christ, we receive forgiveness, renewal, and the promise of new life.*

Prayer of Confession

Pastor Myers

One: We remember every debt against us and forget the mercy we receive.
Trusting in God's abundant grace, let us confess our sin.

All: **Merciful God, we magnify the faults of others and minimize our own.
We demand from them what we freely receive from you.
We cling to resentment and mistake judgment for faithfulness.**
Forgive us.

**Humble us beneath your grace,
free us from the need to condemn,
and shape us by the mercy of Jesus Christ.**

(Silence is kept for personal confession.)

Assurance of Pardon

One: Hear the good news: God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, released, and made new.

All: **Thanks be to God. The mercy of Christ is our freedom and our peace.**

*Congregational Response

Grace Greater Than Our Sin (*refrain*)

MOODY

Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that will par - don and cleanse with - in;

Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is great - er than all our sin.

*Sharing the Peace of Christ

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

We Listen for God's Word

*God speaks to us through Scripture. The Holy Spirit opens our hearts to receive its wisdom, challenge, and hope.
We listen together for the Word that calls us to faithful living.*

Prayer for Illumination

Dina Mohler

All: **God of truth and mercy, by your Spirit open the Scriptures to us. Free us from hearing only what confirms us or condemns our neighbor. Let your Word judge us, heal us, and draw us more deeply into the life of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Anthem

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

arr. James Kirkby
The Sanctuary Choir

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven, to the throne thy tribute bring;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, ever more God's praises sing;
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise the everlasting King.

Praise the Lord for grace and favor to all people in distress;
Praise God still the same as ever, slow to chide and quick to bless;
Alleluia, alleluia! Glorious now God's faithfulness.

Angels in the heights adoring, you behold God face to face;
Saints triumphant, now adoring, gathered in from every race.
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise with us the God of grace!

A Reading from the Gospels Matthew 18:21–35

One: This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All: **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

Pastor Myers
page 20, New Testament

A Time for Children

Pastor Myers

Birth – K may meet in the Nursery (Room 114) for a lesson and a snack.
Children in grades 1–5 are dismissed to Children's Church in Room E–117/119
or they may remain in the sanctuary with their parents.

Sermon

"The Family Ledger"

Pastor Myers

***Hymn #436**

God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us

O QUANTA QUALIA

We Respond in Faith

*As we come before God, we bring the joys and burdens of our lives,
the needs of our neighbors, and the hopes of the world.*

Prayers of the People

Pastor Myers

We Commit Our Lives to God

*Every good gift comes from God. In gratitude for God's abundant grace,
let us commit our lives and our gifts for the work of Christ in the world.*

Offertory

Adagio

Daniel E. Gawthrop

*Please bring your offering forward during the offertory.
You may also text "firstpresby" to 73256 to give from your mobile device.*

We Gather at Christ's Table

*Christ invites all who trust in him to this feast of grace. Here we remember his saving love,
receive his sustaining presence, and join the communion of saints
as the body of Christ in every time and place.*

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Great Thanksgiving

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: Holy and gracious God, you are the source of all life and the giver of every good gift...

...Therefore with all your people throughout all time and all creation, we join our voices in praise.

Sung Response

One Bread, One Body (*refrain*)

ONE BREAD, ONE BODY

One bread, one bod - y, one Lord of all, one cup of
bless - ing which we bless. And we, though man - y,
through - out the earth, we are one bod - y in this one Lord.

One: Holy are you, and blessed is Jesus Christ, our Lord...

...Remembering his life, death, and resurrection, we offer ourselves to you and proclaim the mystery of faith.

Sung Response

One Bread, One Body (*refrain*)

ONE BREAD, ONE BODY

One: Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us...

...Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever.

Sung Response

One Bread, One Body (*refrain*)

ONE BREAD, ONE BODY

The Lord's Prayer

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and Cup

(This morning we share the bread and the cup together, gathered and scattered, united in Christ at the Table.)

Communion Anthems

Sanctus & Agnus Dei

Josef Rheinberger
Lindsay Marchio, soprano

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua,
Osanna in excelsis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

*Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of hosts.*

*Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.*

Prayer after Communion

All: Faithful God, at this table you have given us grace without measure and mercy without price. Send us to live the same way: to tell the truth without vengeance, to forgive without keeping score, and to love without calculating the return. May the grace we have received become the grace we give; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We Go Forth in Hope

Having gathered in God's presence, heard God's Word, received God's grace, and been nourished at Christ's Table, we are sent into the world as Christ's people—called to love, serve, and share God's hope.

*Hymn #435

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

IN BABILONE

*Benediction

Pastor Myers

Closing Voluntary

Sortie: Allegro

Louis James Alfred Lefébure-Wely

Our Worship Continues in Our Service to Others.

Worship is broadcast at 11:00am on WCHS 580AM
Worship is also available on our YouTube channel: First Presby WV
Follow us on Facebook: First Presbyterian Church Charleston, WV

WORSHIP LEADERS

The Rev. Dr. William C. Myers
Dina Mohler

AUDIO & VIDEO

Byron Goodew
David Cottrell

THE MUSIC TODAY

Jayson Keeton, Director of Music & Organist
Lindsay Marchio, soprano
The Sanctuary Choir

CUSTODIAL SERVICES

David Wolf

Service music reprinted under CCLI License No. 3604127.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY:

An AED machine, Pediatric/Adult
Resuscitators, and a First Aid Kit are
located in the main church hallway
on the wall by the front offices.

THE STAFF OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

William Myers, Pastor/Head of Staff
Jayson Keeton, Director of Music & Organist
Jenny Pitchford, Financial Services Manager
Susan Smith, Christian Education Coordinator
Diana Vorhees, Office Administrator
Chelsea Greathouse, Office Assistant

Anne Moses, Director of the Preschool
Erin Stone, Preschool Office Administrator
Bernard Wooten, Preschool Custodian
Curtis Allen, Preschool Custodian
Patrick Barron, Custodian

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RALLY DAY DEACON RAFFLE

After worship, find a Deacon wearing a name badge and introduce yourself. This will earn you a raffle ticket. (A child or spouse of a Deacon cannot obtain a ticket from their own parent/spouse but they can obtain a ticket from another Deacon. Deacons are not eligible.) You may obtain more than one raffle ticket if you introduce yourself to another Deacon. Before the lunch concludes, two winners will be drawn. There will be one raffle for children/youth and one raffle for adults 18 years and older. You must be present to win.

BIBLE PRESENTATION

On Sunday, September 20th, we will be presenting bibles to 6 year olds. If you have a 6 year old or know of one that would be interested in receiving a bible, please let the church office know.

SCAM EMAIL

Be aware of texts or emails pretending to be Pastor Myers requesting gift cards. Pastor Myers or anyone from the church will NOT contact you asking for gift cards or money.

LIFT

LIFT (Living in Faith Together) resumes Wednesday, September 16th at 5:30pm with a Potluck Dinner for the whole church. Join us for an evening of food, fellowship and children's activities. Find out how LIFT can nurture your faith. Classes for adults and children will begin Wednesday, September 23rd.

LIFT AFTER DARK: QUESTIONS WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO ASK AT CHURCH

Some questions are too important for easy answers. This fall, LIFT After Dark will make room for honest conversation about faith, doubt, Scripture, and the questions many of us carry but rarely have the opportunity to explore together.

Each week stands on its own—no homework, no preparation, and no need to attend every session. Come for the questions that interest you. Bring your doubts, your experiences, and your curiosity.

September 23 — Does Prayer Actually Change Anything?

If God already knows what will happen, why pray?

September 30 — What Happens When We Die?

Heaven, resurrection, eternal life—and what Christians really believe.

October 7 — What Do We Do with the Parts of the Bible We Don't Like?

Difficult texts, troubling passages, and what it means to take Scripture seriously.

October 14 — Can You Be Christian and Doubt Almost Everything?

Is doubt the enemy of faith—or sometimes part of faith itself?

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INQUIRERS CLASS

Are you, or someone you know, interested in learning more about First Presby and/or becoming a member? Join us for the Inquirer's Class lead by Pastor Myers on Sunday, September 27th in the dining room after worship. The class will end around 1:00pm and lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to Diana at diana@firstpresby.com or call the front office. (304) 343-8961

TIME FOR REFRESHMENT

Join Pastor Myers on Thursday afternoons at 4:30pm in the Ruffner Room starting September 24th for tea, shortbread/cookies, and conversation. We'll talk about life, faith, church, politics, maybe even church politics! Bring your opinions. Bring your questions. All are welcome. Whatever is on your mind, we'll talk about it! You can come occasionally. You can come every week. Our only purpose is to enjoy the fellowship and get to know each other a little better. Please enter through the side ramp door.

CHANDLER FOOD BAGS

First Presby is sending weekend food bags to 10 Chandler Academy students this year who need a little extra. This is our fifth year with this mission and the feedback from students and staff is encouraging. If you would like to help with this mission, you can donate individual nonperishable food items or financial gifts for us to shop with, earmarked for Chandler. If you would just like to pray for this mission and these students, that would also be wonderful.

JOIN THE CHOIR!

Regular rehearsals for the Sanctuary Choir will resume on Sunday morning, September 13 at 9:00am in the choir room. The choir will also begin singing weekly in worship on this date. Whether you have sung previously or would like to join for the first time, all are welcome! If you have any questions, contact Jayson Keeton (jayson@firstpresby.com).

OPPORTUNITY FOR SERVICE

In our Presbyterian tradition, the work of the Church is made manifest through the collaborative effort of Church committees. At First Presbyterian Church, your Congregational Engagement Committee is charged with ".....encouraging participation in the life of the Church through membership on committees.....". Membership on these committees is free and open to all members of the Congregation. Beginning this week, we will give a brief description of each of the various Committees of the Session so you may join any committee you feel called to serve. This week we highlight the Christian Education Committee.

Christian Education Committee The Presbyterian Church has always highly valued education at all levels. Here at First Presbyterian Church we provide Christian education programming for children and youth. Further, because learning is a lifelong process, we sponsor adult learning classes and other opportunities for growth. If you would like to participate in the planning and oversight of these activities, contact the Church office or Susan Smith, our Christian Education Coordinator.

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PRESBYTERY CHURCH PRAYERS

Each week we pray for other congregations in our presbytery, along with the Presbytery of West Virginia and other ministry partners. This week please pray for First Presbyterian Church in Kingwood, Mount Hope Presbyterian Church.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBY

Sunday, September 13

10:30am	Worship	<i>Sanctuary & YouTube</i>
11:00am	Worship Radio Broadcast	<i>WCHS-580AM</i>
11:30am	Rally Day	<i>Activities Building</i>

Monday, September 14

8:30am	Aerobics	<i>Bud Francis Rec. Room</i>
6:30pm	FPC Bowling Team	<i>Galaxy Lanes</i>

Tuesday, September 15

10:00am	Staff Meeting	<i>Ruffner Room</i>
6:00pm	Girl Scouts	<i>Bud Francis Rec. Room</i>
7:15pm	Boy Scouts	<i>Bud Francis Rec. Room</i>

Wednesday, September 16

8:30am	Aerobics	<i>Bud Francis Rec. Room</i>
1:00pm	Women's Book Study	<i>Ruffner Room</i>
5:00pm	LIFT – Potluck Dinner	<i>Dining Room</i>

Thursday, September 17

8:30am	Shoney's Meeting	<i>Zoom (Virtual)</i>
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Friday, September 18

8:30am	Aerobics	<i>Bud Francis Rec. Room</i>
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Saturday, September 19

DAILY SCRIPTURE READING

Sunday, September 13	Matthew 5:21-26
Monday, September 14	John 11:55-12:8
Tuesday, September 15	John 12:9-19
Wednesday, September 16	John 12:20-26
Thursday, September 17	John 12:27-36a
Friday, September 18	John 12:36b-43
Saturday, September 19	John 12:44-50

DISCOVERY CLASS

September 13	"The Problem with Creeds" – Rick Vorhees
September 20	"The 12" by Paul Kinneberg
September 27	TBD – Ginna Taylor



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF CHARLESTON**

