

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Bringing hope to the heart of Charleston and beyond.



The Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost
October 18, 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:

"Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity."

— Simone Weil

"The greatest gift you ever give is your honest self."

— Fred Rogers

"The friend who can be silent with us... that is a friend who cares."

— Henri Nouwen

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

Semicontinuous

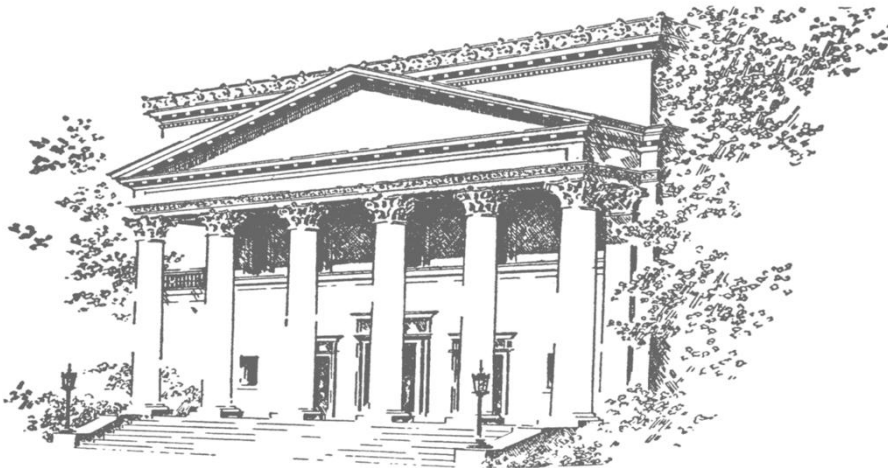
Exodus 33:12-23 • Psalm 99

Complementary

Isaiah 45:1-7 • Psalm 96:1-9 (10-13) • 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 • Matthew 22:15-22

Cover art:

Roman Coin of Caesar Augustus (1st century)
Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France



*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: *Aus Tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir*
Chorale Prelude

J. S. Bach
J.C. Bach

Introit

God Is Calling Through the Whisper

W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY
The Sanctuary Choir

God is calling through the whisper of the Spirit's deepest sighs,
Through the thrill of sudden beauties that can catch us by surprise.
Flash of lightning, crash of thunder; hush of stillness, rush of wonder:
God is calling— can you hear? God is calling— can you hear?

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

Becky Ceperley

One: Come into God's presence with joy.

All: We come to sing, to pray, and to offer ourselves to God.

One: Tell of God's goodness from day to day.

All: We come to remember the One who has never left us alone.

One: Bring an offering and come into God's courts.

All: We bring our gratitude, our hope, our need, and our lives.

One: Worship the Lord in holy splendor.

All: For God is here, and we are here. Let us worship God.

*Prayer of Adoration

Becky Ceperley

All: Gracious God, you are with us before we speak and nearer than we know. Receive our songs, our prayers, and our lives, and draw us more deeply into your presence. Amen.

*Hymn of Praise #401

Here in This Place

GATHER US IN

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 do not always show up for God or for one another as faithfully as we intend.

All: **Trusting in the mercy of the One who never turns away, let us confess our sin.**

Merciful God, we confess that even in your presence our hearts are often elsewhere. We hold back parts of ourselves from you, and we fail to be fully present to one another. Forgive us for the ways we do not notice, listen, stay, or love. Gather us again into your grace, that we may worship you with our whole lives.

(Silence is kept for personal confession.)

Assurance of Pardon

One: Hear the good news: God does not turn away from us. In Jesus Christ, God comes near, forgives us, and makes us new.

All: **In Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.**

*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

Becky Ceperley

All: **Present God, quiet our hearts and open our minds, that in the words of Scripture we may hear your voice and know you are near. Amen.**

A Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures Exodus 33:12–23

Becky Ceperley
page 80, *Hebrew Scriptures*

The Psalter

Psalm 96

John W. Becker
The Sanctuary Choir



Refrain 1x: Choir | 2x: ALL

- ¹Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
- ²Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.
- ³Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.
- ⁴For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.

Refrain: ALL

- ⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.
- ⁶Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.
- ⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
- ⁸Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.
- ⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

Refrain: ALL

A Reading from the Epistles 1 Thessalonians 1:1–10

Becky Ceperley
page 203, *New Testament*

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Anthem

Sing a New Song

Michael Praetorius, arr. Mark Schweitzer
The Sanctuary Choir

Sing a new song, sing to God with a voice of triumph,
Make his praises known to all the nations;
Sing the honor of his name.

A Reading from the Gospels Matthew 22:15–22

Pastor Myers
page 24, *New Testament*

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

All: Praise be to you, O Christ.

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 Gift of Showing Up"

Pastor Myers

***Hymn #69**

Here I Am, Lord

HERE I AM

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.*

Prayer of the People and The Lord's Prayer

Pastor Myers

**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.**

Sung Response to Prayer

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

CHILDREN PRAYING

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 4/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are: "Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing. Lord, send your Spir - it in this place. Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing. Send us love; send us power; send us grace." The score features various musical notations including eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes, with some parts marked with repeat signs and fermatas.

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

Religioso

J.L. Battmann

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

***Offering Response #607 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

Pastor Myers

We Go Forth in Hope

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

*Hymn #761	Called as Partners in Christ's Service	BEECHER
*Benediction		Pastor Myers
Closing Voluntary	Sortie: Allegretto non troppo	Jacques Lemmens

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
Becky Ceperley

AUDIO & VIDEO

Byron Goodew
David Cottrell

THE MUSIC TODAY

Jayson Keeton, Director of Music & Organist
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, Facility/Maintenance Coordinator

WOMEN'S WEEKLY BOOK STUDY

The Women's Book Study Group will begin a new book on Wednesday, October 28th at 1:00pm in the Ruffner room. The book *Bible Stories for Grown-Ups: Reading Scripture with New Eyes*, Pastor Josh Scott looks at familiar Bible stories and reveals new details and interpretations for an adult audience. This six-week Bible study will consider stories, many read as children including, Noah's Ark, the binding of Isaac, Jonah and the big fish, Jesus and Zacchaeus, Jesus healing a blind man, and the parable of the talents. Scott reimagines these stories and opens new visions for readers to understand well known pieces of Scripture in our current cultural environment. Books are available in the church office.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNERS

Join your church family for a free meal on Wednesday nights at 5:30 as a part of LIFT (Living in Faith Together). After dinner you can stay in the dining hall to continue fellowshiping or join the adult class or the children's class and nurture your faith. We finish the evening with a brief communion worship service from 7:00 – 7:15.

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.

October 21 — Why Does God Let Terrible Things Happen?

If God is loving and powerful, why cancer, war, children suffering, hurricanes, accidents, and terrible things that seem utterly pointless? We'll look at what Christians have said—and at some answers that may do more harm than good.

October 28 — Do We Really Have to Forgive Everybody?

Jesus tells us to forgive seventy-seven times. But what about abuse, betrayal, people who never apologize, or relationships that are no longer safe? Does forgiveness mean forgetting, reconciling, or letting someone off the hook?

November 4 — Is Jesus the Only Way? What do we believe happens to those who worship God but may not accept Jesus Christ as their resurrected Savior? What about faithful Jews, Muslims, people of other religions, or people who have never really encountered Christianity? We'll wrestle with Jesus' claim, "*I am the way*," alongside the wideness of God's grace—and ask what Presbyterians actually believe about salvation.

November 11 — Is Hell Real?

Fire and brimstone? Eternal punishment? Separation from God? Something else entirely? We'll look at what Scripture actually says about hell, how Christian thinking about it developed, and whether a loving God condemns people forever.

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 Personnel Committee.

Personnel Committee

First Presbyterian Church has both ordained and non-ordained staff. To provide guidance and oversight to both groups, the Personnel Committee conducts reviews of staff performance and, in conjunction with the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of West Virginia, conducts a comprehensive review of pastoral leadership every five years.

In consultation with the Pastor, the Committee determines non-ordained staffing needs consistent with the mission and vision of the Church and approves position descriptions for non-ordained staff. As with most organizations the Committee reviews and oversees a Personnel Handbook, approves policies and procedures, conducts searches and makes recommendations for new hires.

The Committee meets with newly hired staff following a 90-day probation for consideration of permanent status and recommends ongoing staff training and continuing education.

The Committee addresses staff concerns, consistent with current policies, and seeks to provide support and recognition for good work by friendly visits and staff appreciation activities. If you feel called to participate in these vital functions, contact the Church office.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee seeks persons called to be Deacons or Elders willing to be nominated for election to the Class of 2029 (three year terms). Anyone interested, contact the Church office.

HOPE VILLAGE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Believe it or not, Hope Village is right around the corner, and we have already received merchandise from a few vendors. The tsunami of fun items will hit in October and Debbe and Dina would appreciate help with inventory and tagging. If you have worked in the past or have never been able to participate but wanted to, please reach out to Debbe at (304) 444-9272 or Dina at (304) 444-2211 and we will be happy to include you in this fun and worthwhile mission. We set up work times as we receive the merchandise, so hours and days vary. Many hands make light work! Thanks so much.

KNITTING GROUP

Did you know First Presby has a Knitting Group? They meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month at 10:30am up in Room 406. All supplies are included but of course you're welcome to bring your own project. If you are a beginner or expert level, you are welcome to join! This group teaches kids at the King Center how to knit as well!

ROLLER SKATING

Join us for Roller Skating this Sunday, October 18th from 3-5pm. Roller Skating will be cancelled during the month of November due to Hope Village using the space.

YOUTH GROUP

The Youth Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month from 3:00 – 5:00 in the Activity Building Youth Room for fun, fellowship, food, and faith formation. All youth in grades 6th – 12th are welcome!

TROT AND TREAT

The Preschool is hosting Trot and Treat Thursday, October 29th from 6-7:30pm. Wear your costumes, play games and of course take home lots of treats!

GABRIEL PROJECT FUNDRAISER

One of our local mission partners, Gabriel Project, is hosting their annual food product fundraiser. They are offering delicious treats such as jams, preserves, salsas, dressings and more all made in America and make great gifts for the holiday season. You can find the order forms on the Mission bulletin board where the Panera table is located on Sunday mornings. All orders must be submitted by October 26th. You can mail or hand deliver the form to their office at 1207 Jefferson Road in South Charleston, or email it to info@gabrielwv.org. Items will be distributed by early December. Call their office (304)205-5865 for more information.

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.

TIME FOR REFRESHMENT

Join Pastor Myers on Thursday afternoons at 4:30pm in the Ruffner Room 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.

ALZHEIMERS WALK

Deacons are participating in the 2026 Walk to End Alzheimer's - Charleston, WV on October 24th with the "First Presby" team and we're raising funds to make a difference for an important cause. Together, we can make a lasting impact – please consider joining our team or making a donation to support us by scanning the QR code below. You may also write a check to First Presby with Alzheimer's Walk in the memo. Last year we raised \$2000 and we hope to contribute more this year with your help.



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 Philippi Presbyterian Church and Pineville Presbyterian Church.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBY

Sunday, October 18

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

Monday, October 19

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

Tuesday, October 20

10:00am	Staff Meeting	<i>Ruffner Room</i>
7:00pm	Boy Scouts	<i>Activities Building</i>
7:00pm	Civic Chorus Rehearsal	<i>Choir Room</i>

Wednesday, October 21

8:30am	Aerobics	<i>Bud Francis Rec. Room</i>
10:30am	Knitting Club	<i>Room 406</i>
1:00pm	Women's Book Study	<i>Ruffner Room</i>
5:30pm	LIFT	<i>Dining Room</i>
7:00pm	Session Meeting	<i>A201</i>

Thursday, October 22

4:30pm	Time for Refreshment	<i>Ruffner Room</i>
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Friday, October 23

8:30am	Aerobics	<i>Bud Francis Rec. Room</i>
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Saturday, October 24

2:00pm	Higginbotham/Carpenter Wedding	
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DAILY SCRIPTURE READING

Sunday, October 18	Matthew 16:13-20
Monday, October 19	Luke 9:51-62
Tuesday, October 20	Luke 10:1-16
Wednesday, October 21	Luke 10:17-24
Thursday, October 22	Luke 10:25-37
Friday, October 23	Luke 10:38-42
Saturday, October 24	Luke 11:1-13

DISCOVERY CLASS

October 18	Margaret O'Neal – United Way
October 25	"My Cuban Journey" – Pastor Myers
November 1	"That Was Easy" – Rob Kuenzel



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF CHARLESTON**

