

Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 10, 2024 10:30 a.m. Worship



John August Swanson, *Story of Ruth**

Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without next-of-kin; and may his name be renowned in Israel! He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has borne him

--Ruth 4:14-15

First Presbyterian Church

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COMMISSIONED PASTOR: DR. WENDY L. LAMB

MINISTRY OF PASTORAL SUPPORT: REV. DR. STEPHEN W. SMITH

MINISTRY OF VISITATION: LAURIE STAFFORD

MINISTRY OF MUSIC: CURTISS ALLEN, JR., DIRECTOR OF MUSIC;
WILLIAM ZEITLER, ORGANIST; AMY GANO, BELLS

PASTOR EMERITUS: REV. JAMES C. HUFFSTUTLER

Welcome to Worship at First Presbyterian Church

This service is being livestreamed and can be viewed on our YouTube channel in real time or as a recording. **Large-print copies of this order of service**, as well as **audio enhancement devices** are available **from the ushers**.

We gather on Sunday for 3 reasons:

- **To seek God**- whom we find in sacred text and sacrament, in music and in song, in prayer, in the beauty of this space, in the stillness where we can hear our hearts. We offer God our thanks and praise, our lament and longing, and our resources. We let go of burdens and receive grace and forgiveness. We see the One our hearts love.
- **To practice Community** – rejoice w/those who rejoice, weep w/those who weep. To break bread with those whom we love and those whom we need to love more fully. We practice things our culture does not emphasize: resting, forgiving, sharing. Jesus asked us to love one another as he loved us, and we cannot do so without practice.
- **To listen for our Call**- often an invitation to go out and be or do or remember. God is speaking all the time: through conscience, nature, friends, and certainly scripture. We gather to listen for that Call and to recommit ourselves to discipleship.

Information on our common life can be found on our website www.fpcsb.net, along with sermons and newsletters. You can participate in our work by supporting us financially with a one-time or sustaining donation.

Children are **welcome** in worship. Younger children may go to the Nursery at any time.

OUR NEXT COMMUNION will be Sunday, December 1st.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Lynda Savage

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

But after Naomi's second command to return, amid such despair and dispiritedness, Orpah does return to her family and ancestral land, while Ruth clings to Naomi, dedicating herself to Naomi's well-being. This is evidence of Ruth's role as Naomi's caregiver, which explains why Ruth voluntarily migrates. Contemporary migration studies show that women frequently have more care responsibilities or caregiver roles that affect their choices and ability to migrate. As a caregiver, Ruth puts alleviating Naomi's fragility and economic instability above her own physical, cultural, and economic stability,

--Erica Shawndricka Dunbar, *Working Preacher*

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Concerto in Am Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Allow the music to usher you into sacred space and time.

INTROIT

O Beautiful for Spacious Skies

Bates/Ward

O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain, for purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain! America! America! God shed his grace on thee, and crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea.

*CALL to WORSHIP¹

Here in this place, there are no strangers,

✘ **for all are welcome in God's house.**

Here in this worship, there is acceptance,

✘ **for love is the language of faith.**

Here in our lives, there are no divisions,

✘ **for God dwells in each of us.**

Come, let us worship in unity and love.

*HYMN 301

All Are Welcome

TWO OAKS

† The symbols you will see in this order of worship mean:

* **Stand if you are able** ✘ **The congregation will read.**

¹ Adapted from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2012*, © 2011 Abingdon Press. Posted on the **Ministry Matters** website.

PRAYER of CONFESSION²

✘ Eternal God, God of all people and places, we confess that our ears are sometimes closed to voices of pain and wisdom when they speak in accents other than our own. Our sensibilities are jarred by the way those we call “foreign” express their faith in Christ. We cling to the pride of our way as if we have a special claim on truth and your love.

(Time for silent meditation)

✘ Gracious God, forgive us and renew a right spirit within us, a spirit of compassion, understanding, and humility. Enable us to incarnate God’s love and to see God’s love in new ways.

(We remain seated for the kyrie, an ancient song of the church. We will sing it through in Greek first and then in English.)

KYRIE³

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.
Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Note: Lower voices may hum.

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.
Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

ASSURANCE of FORGIVENESS

Friends, believe the good news:

✘ In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and are being made whole. Amen.

² Kathy Weaver Wenger, Common Word

³ Traditional Liturgical text. Music: Dinah Reindorf, 1987. ©1987 Dinah Reindorf. All rights reserved. Used by permission of OneLicense #A706254.

THE OFFERING of OUR TITHES and GIFTS

(We offer our tithes and gifts to be part of God's purposes in the world, and we invite you to take part. You may place your offering in the basket in front or give it to the usher. You may always send gifts by mail or online.)

OFFERTORY***DOXOLOGY**

OLD HUNDREDTH

- ✘ Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost, Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE, OUR LORD'S PRAYER

- ✘ 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.

HYMN 372O for a World*

AZMON

MOMENT for REFLECTION**CHARGE and BENEDICTION****RESPONSE***Sevenfold Amen**John Stainer***POSTLUDE***Improvisation*

*Cover illustration: Swanson, John August. Story of Ruth, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56561> [retrieved October 30, 2024]. Original source: Estate of John August Swanson, <https://www.johnaugustswanson.com/>.

GREETERS: Mindy Rueda, Amy Rueda

USHERS: Tim Usher, *Lead Usher*

Lynn Usher, Al Rueda, *Security Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord

LIVESTREAM ENGINEER: James Welte

CAMERA OPERATORS: Kevin Lamb, Lynn Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Noé Falconi, Marianna Fowles, Sandy Garza

Elders: **Norm Wallis, John-Paul Fletcher, Mary Bolaños**

Deacons: **Brad Smith, Dave Thomas, Chris Thomas**

Pastor Nominating Committee:

Susan Addington, Mary Bolaños, John-Paul Fletcher

This Weeks' Celebrations

Nov 10 Martin Luther

Nov 13 Susan Zeitler

Nov 15 Alyssa Arellano

Congregational Meeting. There will be a Congregational Meeting to elect new officers on **Sunday, November 17** immediately following worship.

Deacons' Community Outreach/Thanksgiving Gift Cards

Thanksgiving will be here before we know it and the Deacons are ready to take orders for Stater Bros. gift cards. **The Deacons' plan is for you to deliver these \$50 cards to your needy friends and neighbors.** The sign-up sheet is in the office, and names may be added until Sunday, November 17th. On the sign-up sheet, please list the recipient's name (non-church members only, this is part of the Deacons' Community Outreach ministry) and your name. The Deacons will have the gift cards ready for you to pick up and deliver on Sunday, November 24th. If you cannot pick up your gift card(s) that day, please let us know so we can make other arrangements. **Thank you for helping us help our neighbors!**

Celtic Christmas. The Kevin R. Blandford Memorial Pipe Band in collaboration with Claremont Community School of Music presents

the **5th Annual Celtic Christmas on Sunday, December 8 at 3:00 p.m.** at Claremont United Church of Christ, 233 Harrison Avenue in Claremont. You can purchase tickets here.

<https://blandfordbands.org/store/>

News and announcements are available in your Friday *Keeping in Touch* emails. If you are not receiving these, and you would like to, contact Mimi in the church office.

Music Box

In a village nestled between two steep hills, a wide river cut through the land, separating the village from the nearby towns. Though the river was usually calm, every few years, heavy rains would come, causing it to overflow and flood the surrounding fields. The floods were unpredictable, and though the villagers had learned to endure them, many homes and crops were lost over the years.

In this village lived Bram, a skilled carpenter known for his fine craftsmanship. His work was sought after by the wealthiest villagers, who often commissioned him to build beautiful, ornate furniture and large houses. But despite the demand for his talents, Bram spent much of his time on a task that others thought was beneath him. He would build simple, sturdy rafts and leave them by the riverbank. They weren't fancy or adorned like his other work, just plain wooden planks mortised together – strong enough to help villagers cross the river when it swelled.

Many of the wealthier villagers, who saw Bram as wasting his talents, would shake their heads. “Why does he spend so much time on those ugly rafts when he could be making fine tables and chairs for the important families?” they would say. “He should be making things that last, not these temporary, rough creations.”

Bram's answer was always the same. “The river isn't always calm. When it rises, we'll need a way to cross.”

One year, the rains came earlier than expected. The river, usually so quiet, turned into a roaring torrent within days. It surged beyond its banks, sweeping through the village and destroying many homes. Bridges were washed away, roads became impassable, and the fields were buried under water. The villagers scrambled to save their belongings and flee the rising waters, but many found themselves trapped, cut off from safety by the swollen river.

Bram, seeing the river rise, hurried to the riverbank where he had left his rafts. He climbed onto one and began ferrying people across the dangerous waters. Time and again, Bram returned to rescue those stranded on the far side of the river, risking his own life to save others. Other able-bodied villagers used his other rafts to help with the rescues. His rafts, once considered simple and insignificant, were the only means of escape for many villagers.

The same people who had mocked his efforts now found themselves relying on his rafts to save their lives. The wealthy families, who had once dismissed his humble work, were some of the first to be carried across the

river on Bram's rafts, clutching what little they could salvage from their grand homes. They realized, too late, that their fine tables and chairs, their large houses and intricate decorations, were no match for the force of the river. It was Bram's simple rafts, made with care and foresight, that were their salvation.

When the floodwaters finally receded, the village was left in ruins. Many of the homes and crops had been destroyed, but thanks to Bram's rafts, no lives had been lost. The villagers gathered to thank him for his courage and for his wisdom in preparing for the flood.

"Your rafts saved us," said one of the wealthiest villagers, a man who had once criticized Bram for his humble work. "We owe you everything. We were foolish not to see the value in what you were doing."

Bram smiled and shook his head. "I'm just a carpenter," he said. "I build what's needed. The river doesn't care for fine furniture or grand houses, but it does care that you have a way to cross when it rises."

As the village rebuilt, Bram's rafts became a symbol of quiet wisdom and foresight. The people learned to value not just the beautiful, but the simple and practical, understanding that the most important things are often those that go unnoticed — until they are needed most.

-- William Zeidler



The seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a symbolic statement of the church's heritage, identity, and mission in contemporary form. Its power depends on both its simplicity and complexity, as well as its traditional and enduring qualities.

The basic symbols in the seal are the cross, Scripture, the dove, and flames.

As a church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), our congregational life is governed by the Ruling Elders of our current Session:

Mary Bolaños, Brooke Dvorak, Pat Morris, Martha Pinckney, Lily Bolaños, Margaret Doane, Jon Horstmann, Phyllis Hough, Sue Alexander, Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis, and Clerk of Session Amy Smith

and supported by our Board of Deacons:

Rebecca Allen, Dan Direen, Robin Edwards, Rick Rodriguez, Katie Smith, Brad Smith, Dave Thomas, Chris Wright-Thomas, Kristine French, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda

In this time of change for our congregation, a Pastor Nominating Committee has been elected by the congregation:

Susan Addington, Mary Bolaños, John-Paul Fletcher, Brian Gano, Kendra Lamb, Jim Morris, Shelby Obershaw, Christa Wallis, Neal Williams