

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 23, 2026

10:30 a.m. Worship



“My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power...”

1 Corinthians 2:4

First Presbyterian Church

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909.882.3308

www.fpcsb.net

MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT: REV. DR. BRIAN S. SYMONDS

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

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 with those who rejoice, weep with 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.

OUR NEXT COMMUNION will be Sunday, September 6th.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Helen Babcock

Paul first reminds the Corinthians about the way he preached and taught when he arrived in their city. Proclaiming the testimony that has come from God, he did not use “superior speech or wisdom” or “persuasive words of wisdom”. Instead, he came in humility and reverence, even in weakness. He concentrated not on his own skill as a speaker, but on the content of his message, “Jesus Christ and him crucified”. This unadorned delivery and controlled self-presentation were of one piece with the message of the cross. It was not personal charisma or smooth elegance that supported his message, but the power of the Spirit. As a result, the Corinthians can base their faith not on skillful rhetoric or on human wisdom, but on the power of God.

-- Bryan J. Whitfield *workingpreacher.org*

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Prelude in E

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

INTROIT (804)

Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!

MARION

Rejoice, ye pure in heart! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing! Your festal banner wave on high, the cross of Christ your King. Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing! With voice as full and strong as ocean's surging praise, send forth the sturdy hymns of old, the psalms of ancient days. Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Hear O People! I am calling! Are you listening?

✠ We are here and we are ready.

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

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

Beloved Children, who do you say that I am?

✠ **You are our rock and our redeemer. Our trust is in you. Our hearts, minds and souls belong to you!**

I created you, named you and have a calling for your life.

✠ **We give thanks with our whole hearts for your steadfast love!**

HYMN 619 *Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven

LAUDA ANIMA

PRAYER of CONFESSION (*Romans 11:32*)

You call out to us, Lord, but we struggle to listen. As we come before you with our hearts open, quiet the noise of the world, of our pressing thoughts and fears, so that we may hear your Spirit fully. Let us offer our prayer of reconciliation first in silence and then together.

Moment of silent prayer

✠ **God of truth, like a moth that gnaws at wool, our brokenness eats away at our souls. We allow the cacophony of greed, selfishness, apathy and ignorance to drown out your voice as you call us to see the suffering in our world and respond to the needs of your children. In our busy lives, we convince ourselves that there is no time to help, no space for prayer and no need for justice. Forgive us. Remind us that only when we slow down and breathe deeply of your Holy Spirit and holy Word can our ears hear your voice. Inspire us to greater love for you and for one another. Amen.**

ASSURANCE of FORGIVENESS

The prophet Isaiah wrote, "Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me." Jesus promised, "I will give you the keys to the kingdom." We know love and forgiveness because God first loved us and has been calling out to us forever, "You are my beloved!" May we respond to such abundant grace with deep gratitude for God's unending forgiveness.

✠ **God loves me, heals me, strengthens me and calls me by name. Through Jesus I am made whole! Thanks be to God!**

(We stand and sing the Response)

***SUNG RESPONSE 205 *Live in Charity*¹**
(*Sing English, then Latin, two times through.*)

UBI CARITAS

**Live in charity and steadfast love.
Live in charity; God will dwell with you.**

**Ubi caritas et amor,
Ubi caritas Deus ibi est.**

TIME with the YOUNG DISCIPLES

[After Time with the Young Disciples, children are encouraged to worship with us. There are activity bags and books available.]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANTHEM (366) *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*

HYFRYDOL

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

✠ **God of light, your wisdom is right here, speaking truth to us in love. We pray for you to open our eyes, our ears and our hearts so we may drink in all that you have for us to learn today. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

Galatians 5:22-23 (CEB)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against things like this.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 (CEB)

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I didn't come preaching God's secrets to you like I was an expert in speech or wisdom. I had made up my mind not to think about anything while I was with you except Jesus Christ, and to preach him as crucified. I stood in front of you with weakness, fear, and a lot of shaking. My message and my preaching weren't presented with convincing wise words but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power. I did this so that your faith might not depend on the wisdom of people but on the power of God.

This is the word of faith that we proclaim,

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Steadfast & Faithful

Rev. Dr. Brian S. Symonds

¹ Text: Latin, 8th cent.; English trans. Taizé Community. Music: Jacques Berthier. ©1979 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, agent. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-7062545. All rights reserved.

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 give your offering 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.

*PRAYER OF THANKS

God of Abundance, we have received blessings from you and today we hear your call to share our time, our talent and our treasure with your beloved community. May these gifts bring your light, love, and hope to all who need them.

- ✠ Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE and 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 716 *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending*

BEACH SPRING

*MOMENT for REFLECTION

Where have you seen or experienced Christ in this service?

*CHARGE and BENEDICTION

RESPONSE (216) *Beneath the Cross of Jesus*

ST. CHRISTOPHER

Beneath the cross of Jesus, I fain would take my stand, the shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land; a home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way, from the burning of the noontide heat, and the burden of the day. I take, O cross, thy shadow for my abiding place; I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of his face; content to let the world go by, to know no gain or loss, my sinful self my only shame, my glory all the cross.

POSTLUDE

GREETER: Doris Nord

USHERS: Katie Smith, *Lead Usher*

John-Paul Fletcher, *Hospitality Usher*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord, Brandon Turner

LIVESTREAM TEAM: James Welte, Kevin Lamb,
Oliver Lamb, Lynn Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Deborah Holk, Ron & Ruby Kraft

Elders: Sue Alexander, Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman

Deacons: Joyce Lyons, Amy Gano, Rick Rodriguez

This Weeks' Celebrations

Aug 25 Gill & Jane Snyder

Aug 26 Beatrice Star
Valentina Valenzuela

Aug 27 Jessica Edwards

Aug 28 Sarah Alyda Fletcher

Aug 29 Jim & Sheila Cimino

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Big Bear Lake Christian Conference Center is celebrating 100 Years!
with a weekend-long celebration from **Friday, August 28 thru Sunday, August 30.** If you would like to go up for the weekend, or just have a wonderful day in Big Bear, register at olena@bblccc.com

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JOIN OUR SUMMER CHOIR! Summer choir is an opportunity for anyone to drop-in and participate in shaping our worship! You don't have to be experienced in order to learn this music. All that is required is attendance at the 8:45 a.m. rehearsal before worship each Sunday. Regular choir members and director Curtiss Allen will welcome you!

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If you are interested in learning how/helping with the audio tech for our services, contact James Welte. We could use a few more people to help.

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Bakers needed! We would like to have some loaves of homemade bread, particularly breads from around the world, for our World Communion celebration on October 4th. If you are a baker, contact the church office and let us know if you can help.

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The Pastor's Book Club will meet **Thursday, September 10 at 5:00 p.m. at DJ's Coffee Shop**, 265 E. 40th Street. The book club will use scripturally provocative and institutionally controversial writings to generate real conversations with each other. The first book for discussion is ***Separation of Church and Hate*** by John Fugelsang.

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Thank you for your generous support of our food participants.

Your financial contributions have permitted us to get some staple cans in volume from Feeding America, as you can see in Fellowship Hall. (Whew! We ran out of veggies for a wee bit!) If you enjoy the gift of bargain shopping, **we still need pop-top meals-in-a-can (e.g. spaghetti-os) or pop-top tuna & chicken for non-cooking bags.**

Available for Food Work?

If yes, please contact Rick so we can add you to a list we can call when we need more workers for sorting, organizing, shelving, bagging or distributing food, photocopying and folding handouts, assembling kits, or maintaining food storage spaces. Thanks!

Music Box

The sign above the shop read:

ARVEN & DAUGHTER VIOLIN MAKERS

Elia Arven worked at the bench nearest the window.

At seventeen, Elia had won a place at the Royal Conservatory.

Two weeks before she was to leave, her mother fell ill.

Her father said he could manage.

Elia stayed anyway.

She cooked. Washed sheets. Sat beside her mother through the bad nights.

When her mother slept, Elia helped in the shop.

Her father taught her to sharpen a knife. To bend maple without scorching it. To carve soundboards. To tap and listen.

Her mother died the following spring.

The Conservatory offered Elia another place.

She thanked them and stayed.

A few months later, her father changed the sign above the shop.

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Elia liked it when musicians came to pick up finished instruments.

They would tune, play a few scales, perhaps a little Bach.

Then, sometimes, they would forget the instrument and lose themselves in the music.

She liked those days, hearing someone bring her violin to life like that.

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One autumn afternoon, a violinist named Vale came in.

Elia knew the name -- everyone did.

Her father showed him three violins.

Vale played the first.

“Too dark.”

The second.

“Too careful.”

He played the third for a long time.

“This one.”

“You haven't asked the price,” Arven said.

“I don't want to spoil it.”

Arven laughed.

Vale bought the violin.

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That evening Elia stayed late.

When the light began to fail, she put her tools away and took an old violin from its case.

She played.

She did not hear Vale enter.

When she finished, he was standing in the doorway.

“You never told me your daughter was a fine musician.”

“You saw the sign over the door.”

“I saw it.”

“Then I told you.”

Vale shook his head.

“Not the same thing.”

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The next morning Vale found her at the bench.

Elia looked up at him.

“I've been thinking about what you said.”

“What?”

“That I'm a musician.”

“You are.”

“I make violins.”

“I noticed.”

“You think I should go back to playing?”

Vale looked around the workshop.

“Back where?”

He smiled and left.

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Elia sat at her bench.

She fitted the bridge to a violin she had been making and strung it.

Played one note.

Listened.

She removed the bridge and shaved away a sliver of maple.

Another note.

Another sliver.

Her father appeared in the doorway.

“What are you doing?”

Elia smiled without looking up.

“Making another violin.”

-- *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:

Sue Alexander, Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis,
Pat Morris, Susan Skoglund, Katie Smith, Neal Williams,
Robin Edwards, John-Paul Fletcher, Jon Horstmann, Lynda Savage,
and Clerk of Session Amy Smith

and supported by our Board of Deacons:

Kristine French, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda,
Amy Gano, Rick Rodriguez, Jim Siegmund, Kyle Smith,
Rebecca Allen, Brent Nord, Dave Thomas, and Chris Wright-Thomas.