

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026 **10:30 a.m. Worship**



**God is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for
God's good pleasure.** *Philippians 2:13*

First Presbyterian Church

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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, October 4th.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Katie Smith

“Experiencing the present purely is being emptied and hollow; you catch grace as one fills a cup under a waterfall.”

-- Annie Dillard, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Intermezzo

J. Brahms (1833-1897)

INTROIT

*From the Rising of the Sun*¹

Eric H. Thiman

From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the Lord's name be praised.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Beloved, come to the waters!

✠ **The maker of heaven and earth welcomes us.**

If you are thirsty, come!

✠ **Jesus, the living water, will quench our thirst.**

If you are lost, come!

✠ **The Spirit will guide our steps.**

If you are weary, come!

✠ **Here we will find rest and renewal.**

Beloved, come to the waters!

✠ **The maker of heaven and earth welcomes us.**

*HYMN 264

At the Name of Jesus

KING'S WESTON

PRAYER of CONFESSION

✠ **Almighty God,**

you love us, but we have not loved you.

You call, but we have not listened.

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

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

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We walk away from neighbors in need, wrapped in our own concerns.

We condone evil, prejudice, warfare, and greed.

God of grace, help us to admit our sin,

so that as you come to us in mercy,

we may repent, turn to you,

and receive forgiveness;

through Jesus Christ, Our Redeemer.

ASSURANCE of FORGIVENESS

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old has gone; a new life has begun. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

(We stand and sing the Response)

***SUNG RESPONSE 587**

Alleluia!

CELTIC ALLELUIA

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANTHEM

Be Not Afraid²

Craig Courtney

Be not afraid: for I have redeemed you; Be not afraid: I have called you by name. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when you pass through the floods, they will not sweep o'er you; when you walk through the fire, you will not be consumed; you are mine, you are precious in my sight. My love for you is everlasting, my love for you shall have no end, When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when you pass through the floods, they will not sweep o'er you; when you walk through the fire, you will not be consumed; you are mine, you are precious in my sight.

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

God be in our listening,

God in our understanding.

Our hearts and minds are open.

✠ **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 17:1-7

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people

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quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Philippians 2:1-13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God

as something to be exploited,

but emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave,

being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death--

even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him

and gave him the name

that is above every name,

so that at the name of Jesus

every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

This is the word of faith that we proclaim,

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

God's Good Pleasure

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Prichard

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**

Giver of all good things, grace abounds!

So also gratitude for all God's gifts.

Loving God, use our gifts for the life of the world.

✠ **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 630**

Fairest Lord Jesus

CRUSADERS' HYMN

***MOMENT for REFLECTION**

Where have you seen or experienced Christ in this service?

***CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE



Rev. Dr. Rebecca Prichard is a Presbyterian minister who has served congregations in California, Indiana and Scotland. A graduate of Occidental College, she earned her Ph.D. in Theology at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. For many years she taught Theology, Preaching, and Worship at San Francisco Theological Seminary/Southern California. At present she resides at Monte Vista Grove and

enjoys music, gardening, calligraphy, and travel in her retirement, along with occasional preaching and teaching. She has a special interest in Celtic Spirituality and art.

GREETER: Susan Skoglund

USHERS: Brad Smith, *Lead Usher*

Marilyn Kraft, *Hospitality Usher*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord, Brandon Turner

LIVESTREAM TEAM: James Welte, Kevin Lamb,

Oliver Lamb, Lynn Usher

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.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Judy Steppins, Lorraine Bishop

Elders: Norm Wallis, Pat Morris, Susan Skoglund

Deacons: Jim Siegmund, Kyle Smith, Rebecca Allen

This Weeks' Celebrations

Sep 27 Eli Morales

Sep 30 Carmen Paredes

Oct 1 Michael Snyder

Oct 2 Julie Aguilera

Dave Thomas

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Building, Becoming, Widening - The Beloved Community FPCSB Stewardship 2026

You Are Invited!

October 4, 2026 @ 11:45AM (in the Fellowship Hall)

Following the first worship service of our Stewardship Season, the Stewardship Planning Team would like you to join them for a Luncheon and Workshop. Come for lunch, stay for an informative workshop on the creative act of faithful giving, and then pick up your gift along with your stewardship packet. *Symphonie Jeunesse* will provide delightful musical selections for our luncheon. Pastor Brian, Philip Savage IV, and a representative from Bobbit Memorial Chapel will help us explore what giving to our church today and for tomorrow looks like as we build, become, and widen the beloved community. ***See you there!***

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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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Thank you for your generous support of our food participants.

We are using all of your helpful donations. Right now, we most need **pop-top meals-in-a-can (e.g. spaghetti-os) or pop-top or pouched tuna & chicken for non-cooking bags.**

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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!

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World Communion Offering, October 4



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The Pastor's Book Club will meet **Thursday, October 8 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 book for discussion is ***Migrant God*** by Isaac Samuel Villegas.

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Music Box

The flute lay on the altar in the small chapel, where it had lain for a long time.

No one knew who had placed it there. It was pale and smooth, neither wood nor stone. Some said it was bone, though of what creature no one could say. It was not locked away. It was not marked. Most people passed it without noticing.

One evening, a man named Eldritch noticed.

The day had been heavy, and he did not know where else to go. He sat for a while. After some time, he picked up the flute. He noticed an inscription in an ancient script, worn almost smooth with age: "Something given. Something taken."

"Curious," he thought, and played a single note.

It was not a melody. It was barely a sound.

An old woman who had been sitting nearby with her head in her hands lifted her face. Her breathing eased. She stayed a while longer, then rose and left.

Eldritch set the flute back on the altar and went home.

The next night, he returned.

This time there was a child with cramps. When Eldritch played, the child slept.

People noticed. Eldritch did too.

He found himself coming back, not always intending to. He learned how some notes steadied breath, and others eased pain.

And in time, he noticed the cost.

After playing, he grew tired in a way rest did not mend. His hands shook. His sleep shortened. When the elders suggested he should stop, he did not answer at once.

“This just costs someone,” he said finally.

He continued.

He played for children whose bodies burned with fever. For the old, when dying was too hard. For those whose pain had made living unbearable.

He did not count how often. He only noticed that lifting the flute required more care than it once had.

One winter, pain came and stayed. The flute lay within reach.

People came and sat with him. No one asked him to play.

One evening, a child — not ill — sat beside the bed.

“Why don’t you use it?” the child asked.

The man looked at the flute.

“It would help,” he said.

“Then why not?”

“Because,” he said gently, “it does not help in that way.”

After a long silence, the child asked, "If you had known, would you have kept playing the flute?"

Eldritch paused, then smiled.

That night, when the room was empty and the lamps had burned low, Eldritch lifted the flute once more.

He did not play what he had played for others. He played a single, low note.

The pain loosened. The fear softened. His body rested.

In the morning, the flute lay beside the bed. Eldritch did not wake.

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The village buried him without song. No one could have led it.

They returned the flute to the altar.

For a long time, it lay untouched.

Life went on.

Then one evening, a mother came with her child. The child's breathing was shallow, each breath an effort. The woman stood before the altar for a long time before lifting the flute.

She played one note.

It was enough.

Weeks later, a man came whose wife had not slept in days. He played with trembling hands. When he returned the flute, he stood in the doorway for a long while before he could walk home.

The flute remained on the altar.

No one guarded it. No rule was made. People took it only when they could not do otherwise. No one played it twice.

Until one winter evening, someone did.

Ronan.

One night he had come home late and found the house empty and blackened. His family perished. Lost, he now stood before the altar for a long time before lifting the flute.

He played.

And he kept on playing for all in need.

He learned the notes. He did not ask what they would cost — he had heard the stories, and seen the words on the flute.

The flute did not choose its keepers.

It just waited.

Reflection

What changes when there is no longer anything we're unwilling to give?

— 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.