

World Communion Sunday
October 4, 2026 10:30 a.m. Worship



Created by www.bwccamden.com

"Above all, show sincere love to each other, because love brings about the forgiveness of many sins. Open your homes to each other without complaining. And serve each other according to the gift each person has received, as good managers of God's diverse gifts."

—1 Peter 4:8-10

First Presbyterian Church

Mailing address: P.O. Box 2729; San Bernardino, California 92406

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, November 8th.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Jon Horstmann

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

These verses collectively call us as Christians to prioritize love, practice generous hospitality, and actively use our God-given gifts to serve others. They highlight the importance of community, selflessness, and faithful stewardship, showing that spiritual life is expressed through both attitude and action.” (www.biblestudytools.com)

The first Sunday in October is designated as World Communion Sunday (originally called World Wide Communion Sunday), which originated in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In 1936, for the first time, the first Sunday in October was celebrated in Presbyterian churches in the United States and overseas. From the beginning, it was planned so that other denominations could make use of it, and after a few years, the idea spread beyond the Presbyterian Church. Today we celebrate our oneness in Christ with all our brothers and sisters around the world. Paul tells us that we are to “discern the body” when we partake of Holy Communion, mindful that we note our relationship to all our brothers and sisters in Christ in the celebration.

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Prelude & Fugue in G J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

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

INTROIT

With a Voice of Singing

Martin Shaw

With a voice of singing declare ye this, and let it be heard, Alleluia. Declare ye this, and let it be heard, Alleluia.

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Lamentations 3, Psalm 137)

Sing to the Lord, whose mercy is from everlasting to everlasting!

✠ But how can we sing the Lord's song when so many are without?

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

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

Sing to the Lord, whose faithfulness renews us every morning!

✠ **But how can we sing the Lord's song when so many are gone?**

Sing to the Lord, who has not forgotten the melodies of salvation!

✠ **Let us remember the joy of the Lord, and sing a new song together!**

***HYMN 39**

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

FAITHFULNESS

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Great indeed is the faithfulness of God, and yet our hearts are not so reliable. We wander. We argue. We forget. We divide ourselves with anger and bitterness and falsehood. Let's try to come back together again, and let's start with the truth. Let's confess our sins, to God, and also, to each other. We will offer our prayer of reconciliation first in silence and then together.

Moment of silent prayer

✠ **Almighty God, mother of mercy, father of grace: You have called us to one table, but we have pursued our own course. You have promised us the abundance of all creation, but in our greed, and in our envy, the world goes without. You have promised us the bread of life itself, but in our pride, and in our arrogance, the world goes hungry. You have promised us the waters of peace and justice, but in our violence, and in our discord, the world goes thirsty. And now we are famished, too, Lord. Have mercy on us. Forgive us, again. Transform us, at this table, and for this table, and send us from this table as servants of your righteousness, by the power of your Son, our Lord. Amen.**

ASSURANCE of FORGIVENESS

Even when our cups run dry, God's grace overflows. Even when our plates are empty, God's generosity overflows. And even when our hearts feel barren, God's love overflows. Friends, you have been called and claimed by the God of all things, and by the abundance of God's grace, and by the power of God's love, your sins have been forgiven. Go in peace.

✠ **Amen.**

(We stand and sing the Response)

***SUNG RESPONSE 587**

Alleluia!

CELTIC ALLELUIA

Sing three times through.

TIME with the YOUNG DISCIPLES

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Why I Give to Christ's Church

Christa Wallis

ANTHEM

One World¹

Mark Hayes

One world, that is what I dream of, One world, where ev'rything is light. One world, I can live in, where all is right. One people, standing by each other, United, they will become strong, Blending all their voices in one song. I want this world to be a place of harmony, where love abounds, and hope is found, and music rings the whole world round. What a wonder this one world could be. I wonder if I can make a difference? Can one voice really make a change? Can one flame pierce the darkness and light the way? If love can join two perfect strangers, Then I can learn to be your friend. Imagine such a future, one day. Oh, come with me, to a place of perfect harmony. Spirit is calling, calling us all together. One world, that is what I dream of, One world, where ev'rything is light. One world, I can live in, where all is right. One people standing by each other, United, they will become strong, blending all their voices in one song at one time for one world. For one world!

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION *(Luke 17:5-10)*

✠ **Almighty God, give us ears to hear your story in these words of Scripture; give us eyes to see your story in the faces of those that surround us; and give us faith enough, that by your grace, we might serve you until the end of our days. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 4:8-11 (CEB)

Above all, show sincere love to each other, because love brings about the forgiveness of many sins. Open your homes to each other without complaining. And serve each other according to the gift each person has received, as good managers of God's diverse gifts. Whoever speaks should do so as those who speak God's word. Whoever serves should do so from the strength that God furnishes. Do this so that in everything God may be honored through Jesus Christ. To him be honor and power forever and always. Amen.

This is the word of faith that we proclaim.

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

¹ © 2004 Malcolm Music, a division of Shawnee Press. Reprinted by permission under ONELICENSE #A706254. All rights reserved.

SERMON *Why I Give to Christ's Church* *Rev. Dr. Brian S. Symonds*

Why I Give to Christ's Church

Marion Wiens

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**

Gracious God, you create more than we could ever hope to return. You share more than we could ever hope to deserve. And yet, we pray, accept these humble gifts. May they honor and glorify you in all creation, and may they empower us for the work of witness and service, for the sake of justice, and for the sake of peace, now and forever.

✠ Amen.

SACRAMENT of the LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION to the LORD'S TABLE

This table is for all of us, near and far, high and low, east and west and north and south. This table is for all of us, but it is not our table. It's not a Presbyterian table. It's not an American table. It's God's table, for all of us, and it's a table of grace. So come and take your place at the table. You are welcome, you are invited, you are called: come, let us share this meal together.

SURSUM CORDA

The Lord be with you.

✠ And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

✠ We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

✠ It is right to give our thanks and praise.

GREAT PRAYER of THANKSGIVING

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe. Even when we were dust, when our story begins in dust, you were there, your word was there, your breath into the lifeless void. And upon your word all creation sprang into life.

When we were in the wilderness, terrified, timid, you were there, your word was there, with manna just enough for today, with water even from the driest rock, with the abundant grace upon which our story always rests.

And when we fell short, slaves to power and greed, you were there, your word was there, on the lips of prophets, and in the hearts of servants, in stories of revolution and revelation and liberation, calling us even now to acts of courage and witness and peace.

Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

SANCTUS

James C. Huffstutler

✠ **Holy, holy, Lord Almighty, God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory,
Glory in the highest.
Blessed, blessed,
blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna, hosanna,
Hosanna in the highest.**

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Indeed blessed are you, O Christ, our Lord, for risking yourself among us, vulnerable and rejected; for teaching among us, teaching the radical hope of God; teaching grace to a world bent on vengeance, teaching love to a world bent on destruction, teaching peace to a world bent on tearing itself apart.

You were there, your word was there, even to the point of death itself. Even faced with terror and hatred and the brokenness of the world, you rose again, to new life, to new creation, to resurrection, that we might know something other than the dust, that we might

expect something other than the end, that we might work for something other than ourselves.

And so, you speak to us again, with these abundant gifts of bread and wine, with which we joyfully celebrate your dying and rising, as we await the table of the Kingdom yet to come, and as we dedicate ourselves again to you, thankful, and transformed, as living and holy sacrifices, that our lives may proclaim the one crucified and risen. Great is the mystery of faith: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us, and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break together, and the cup we share together, may retell our common stories together and reshape our common bonds together, and remember our common grace together, in the communion of the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ, the one in whose life and death you have torn down our divisions.

And so may we be one with all who share this feast, on this day, of all days, with all your children at every corner of your table. May we share this abundant cup with all those who thirst for your justice. May we share this abundant bread with all those who hunger for your righteousness. May we be united with every corner of your story, united in hope, united in vision, united in purpose, united in ministry in every place.

As this bread is Christ's body for us, send us from this table to be the body of Christ in all the world. Send us with a spirit of courage, a spirit of power and love, that we may be witnesses in all creation to the unending story of your word breathing life into the dust. Keep us faithful, and fruitful, and hopeful, and peaceful, until we come at last to the one table of your Kingdom, to feast with all your saints in the joy of your eternal realm, with you and with your Word, through Christ and in Christ, the one who came for us, died for us, and rose for us, the one who prays even for us, the one who first taught us to pray, saying:

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.**

PRAYER of CONSECRATION

Jesus, Breathe your Spirit upon us
and upon this bread and cup.
Fill them -and us – with your Presence,
Feed our deepest hunger, and our persistent thirst.

THE WORDS of INSTITUTION

On the night of his arrest,
Jesus took bread,
and after giving thanks to God,
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
“Take. Eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
“This cup is the new covenant sealed in my love,
poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.”

Look, here is your Lord, coming to you in bread and in cup.
The gifts of God for the people of God.

CELEBRATION of the MEAL

(Communion will be served by intinction at two stations. As you feel ready, please come up the center aisle to a station, receive a piece of bread, dip it in the cup, eat it, and return to your seat by the side aisle. The cup is non-alcoholic. Gluten-free bread can be found at the station by the pulpit. There will be rovers to bring the elements to you if you do not wish to come forward.)

MUSIC for COMMUNION

PRAYER after COMMUNION

✠ Gracious God, we offer our thanks, for the whole communion of saints’ witness to this feast, and for the ministry of churches around the world who gather with us today. By this broken bread may we each be restored for the work yet to come. By this shared cup may we each be claimed for the proclamation of your Kingdom. At this shared table may we be united as children of your promise, children of your word, dying and made new again, sent boldly together into the world as servants of your peace.
Amen.

***MOMENT for REFLECTION**

Where have you seen or experienced Christ in this service?

***CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

RESPONSE *The Lord Bless You and Keep You²* *Peter C. Lutkin*

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord lift his countenance upon you; and give you peace, and give you peace, the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you, be gracious, the Lord be gracious, gracious unto you. Amen.

POSTLUDE

GREETER: Phyllis Hough

USHERS: Mark Adelson, *Lead Usher*

Rick Rodriguez, *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

Noé Falconi, Marianna Fowles, Debora Holk

Elders: Katie Smith, Neal Williams, Robin Edwards

Deacons: Brent Nord, Amy Gano, Dave Thomas

This Weeks' Celebrations

Oct 4 Jennifer (Coyne) Scerra
Lisa (Coyne) Star

Oct 5 Caleb Christopher Jones

Oct 7 Carmen Avila
Edward Munz

Oct 9 Phyllis Hough

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

² ©1954 Theodore Presser. Reprinted with permission under ONELICENSE #A706254. All rights reserved.

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

You Are Invited!

TODAY after Worship (in the Fellowship Hall)

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!***

~~~~~

***World Communion Offering, October 4***



~~~~~

The Pastor's Book Club will meet **Thursday, October 8 at 5:00 p.m. at the Lamplighter, 255 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.

~~~~~

***Blood Drive - October 11. 8:00 a.m. -- 12:30 p.m.*** Sign up after church or come by that day and we may be able to fit you in. Remember to drink a lot of water and a healthy breakfast. Including some extra iron would also help.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

***A Service of Healing and Wholeness*** will be held in the Chapel on Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. This is a chance to hear the hopeful promises of God that speak to all of us who wonder about our own sorrow or the pain of the world. Join us for comfort and healing.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

The Deacons are having a ***Fundraiser at Mimi's Restaurant on October 26- all day long.*** Take a flyer (available in the reception area) with you for breakfast, lunch or dinner (or all three?) and 20% comes back to the church!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

***Symphonie Jeunesse Orchestra*** will perform a ***Halloween concert on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.*** The price of admission is one donation of canned food per person. Enjoy beautiful music and help the Food Program here at FPC!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

***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.**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

***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***

For centuries, Homer presented scholars with a problem. The Iliad runs to nearly sixteen thousand lines. The Odyssey adds another twelve thousand.

Yet these poems grew out of an oral world. The Greeks once had a writing system called Linear B, but every surviving example is inventories and palace records, not literature. Even Linear B

disappeared altogether for centuries. The epic tradition that eventually gave us Homer had no writing tradition to preserve these enormous stories.

So how did anyone remember all that?

In the early twentieth century, the scholar Milman Parry thought he'd tackle the question by looking for living bards — people still singing epic tales in an oral tradition. With his young assistant Albert Lord, he found some in Yugoslavia. They were called *guslari* — epic singers who accompanied themselves on a one-stringed instrument called the *gusle*.

What Parry and Lord discovered was that “remember” may have been the wrong word. The singers knew the stories. They knew the characters, the episodes, the turns of phrase, the rhythms of the language. But they weren't reciting thousands of memorized lines like actors delivering a script.

They were creating the poem again. Indeed, the word “poem” comes from the Greek word *poiēma* — “a made thing.” A poet was, quite literally, a maker.

And these poems could be enormous. One of the greatest singers they encountered, Avdo Međedović, could sustain an epic for days, sometimes reaching fifteen or sixteen thousand lines.

Was it simply brute, prodigious memory?

In 1935, Lord had another singer perform for Avdo a song Avdo had never heard before — about 2,000 lines long. Avdo listened to it once. Then Avdo sang it back. His version was about 6,000 lines long.

Avdo hadn't memorized the poem. He had learned the story, and composed his own version on the fly.

==+=+=

At some point, somebody wrote Homer down. But something happened when they did: what had been a living process became an artifact. A thing.

We did something similar with music. A musical score looks impressively detailed. It tells us which notes to play, when to play

them, maybe whether they should be loud or soft, short or long. But how loud? How short? Exactly how long should that pause last?

No score can completely define the music. It is more like a semi-detailed set of instructions, with the player supplying everything that's missing.

Then we invented recording. For most of human history, if you wanted to hear music, somebody had to make it. Now music became a thing. Something you can buy, own. Collect all the Beatles albums.

And now we have AI, which is remarkably good at making artifacts. For those who only want artifacts, that may be enough.

Yet people still go to concerts, at which the sound can be worse: weird acoustics, thousands of people coughing, yelling, you name it. But you are there. So is the musician. So are your fellow fans. Something is happening.

==++==

We do this with bread, too. The grocery store has perfectly good bread. Yet people still make it. They make a mess in the kitchen with flour and water. They knead it with their hands. They wait for it to rise. They fill the house with its smell.

Apparently, having the thing is not always the same as making the thing.

Perhaps this shouldn't surprise us. God Himself did not create a universe filled with finished artifacts. He created a universe that makes things. Trees make trees that make trees. Frogs make frogs that make frogs. No two exactly alike.

And we aren't so much 'human beings' as 'human becomings.'

Creation is still creating.

==++==

I sometimes think about this when we celebrate Communion.

Jesus left remarkably few instructions: Eat bread. Drink wine. Remember me. Do this.

And from those few words has flowed an astonishing variety of human practice. High mass in cathedrals with ornate robes, grand processions, incense and bells. Country churches passing little silver trays from pew to pew.

Once I celebrated Communion at a drive-in theater. When we arrived, we were handed little plastic packets. Pull back one tab, and there was some bread. Pull back the other, and there was some grape juice.

Nobody in the upper room could possibly have imagined all this.

And yet —

I picture that first Communion as a spring appearing in an upper room two thousand years ago. A living water bubbling out of the earth, from which flows every Communion that has ever been celebrated.

This Sunday, Christians all over the world will celebrate it once again. Not reproducing an artifact, but stepping into the stream — receiving what has been handed down, and creating it again, together.

And the water is still flowing.

*-- 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.