



SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:00 am
September 6, 2020

Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.

-Corrie ten Boom

Our Mission Statement

Called to love God and one another, First Presbyterian Church responds to God's grace by following Christ with ministries of hospitality, worship, faith development, service and generosity.

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church

We're glad you're here with us today. We fondly refer to this community of Christ-followers as "First Pres," and you being here is one of God's blessings for our fellowship. If you wonder what we're up to at First Pres, it's actually pretty simple. In fact, we use a short phrase to remind ourselves of our shared purpose: "Above all, love." Drawn from a New Testament text (1 Peter 4:8-11), those brief words challenge us to focus everything we do on loving God and loving every single person we encounter. So every day we're learning how to do just that, as God's Spirit keeps working in our lives.

By the way, we can't take credit for this idea. It goes as far back as Jesus. He was once asked to sum up what it looks like to really be alive; what we should aim for in our lives if we want to live as fully as we can. His answer? Love God with every fiber of your being, and love the people around you.

Welcome

Prelude

Meditation from Thais
Jules Massenet

Call to Worship

**We are called to be people of faith in the midst of the world,
worshipping and working,
building and resting.
We gather here as people who live in the world
and yet are not of the world.
God has called us together as blessed community.
Let our worship challenge us to live differently.
Let us praise God.**

Hymn #260

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus
Hyfrydol

Prayer of Confession

**God, we follow your call to labor in the world,
but at times our work does not honor your children,
nor is it done in a spirit that is pleasing to you.
Too often we forget those who work in unjust systems,
for long hours, with not enough pay.
We disregard those who work in dangerous conditions,
and turn away from the ways our labor devastates your creation.
Your people value more for themselves,
rather than enough for all.
Help us to work like you do,
not for selfish gain,
but for the building of your kingdom in this world. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

**Our God makes all things new – even those systems we feel powerless to fight
against. God gives us the courage to live differently at church, at home, and in the
world. Thanks be to God, our sins are forgiven.**

Response

Meineke

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life.

The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church.

The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.

In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Ministry Updates

Phyllis Taylor

Scripture Reading

Lamentations 2:10-12, 18-22

Special Music

Intermezzo
Johannes Brahms

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray to the Lord of all creation,
from whom comes life and work and purpose.

Almighty God,
when you formed us lovingly out of the dust of the earth,
you breathed into us the breath of life
and gave us work and purpose for living.

You placed Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden to till and keep it.

Through our work, you made us co-creators with you,
shaping the world in which we live.

You gave dignity to our labor by sending your Son to labor with us.

By our labor, you enrich the world.

By our labor, we enjoy the fruits of creation.

By our labor, we find direction and purpose.

By our labor, our families are made secure.

For providing varieties of work and for blessing us by our labor:

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For those who plow the field and those who make the plow;
for farmers and farm workers, for steelworkers and machinists;
for those who work with their hands and those who move the earth:

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For those who tend the sick and those who seek new cures;
for doctors and nurses, for scientists and technicians;
for those who keep notes and those who transcribe:

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For those who think and those who create;
for inventors and explorers, for artists and musicians;
for those who write books and those who entertain:

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For those who work in offices and those who work in warehouses;
for secretaries and receptionists, for stockers and bookkeepers;
for those who market products and for those who move them:

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For those who inspire our minds and those who motivate us;
for teachers and preachers, for public servants and religious servants;
those who help the poor and those who work with our children:

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For those whose labor is tidiness and cleanliness;
for janitors and sanitary workers, for drycleaners and maids;
for those who produce cleaning products and those who use them:

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For those who sail the waves and those who fly the skies;
for captains and attendants, for astronauts and deep sea divers;
for those who chart and those who navigate:

We give you thanks, O Lord.

You bless us all with skills and gifts for labor.
**You provide us opportunities to use them,
for the benefit of others as well as ourselves.**

Guard and protect those who labor in the world.
Bless the work of our hands, O Lord.

Visit your justice and mercy on those who wish to work but cannot,
and those whose work is not sufficient for health and contentment.
Give health to the sick, hope to the bereaved.

Keep us from laboring only for greed.
Make us loving and responsible in all that we do.

Creator Lord, you are the source of all wisdom and purpose,
you are the blessing of those who labor.
Be with us in our labor to guide and govern our world.
Give all people work that enhances human dignity
and bonds us to one another.
Give us pride in our work,
a fair return for our labor,
and joy in knowing that our work finds its source in you;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us how to pray, saying...

**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.**

Offertory

O Lord, Have Mercy
Marc Willerton

Hymn #418

Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling
Softly and Tenderly

Scripture Reading

Mark 10:46-52

Sermon

Dr. Erin Raffety

Hymn #39

Great Is Thy Faithfulness
Faithfulness

Blessing

When you work,
work as though you worked for the Lord.

When you rest,
rest in the sovereign grace of God.

And when you celebrate,
celebrate as a people with the greatest reason
for love, joy, and celebration.

Go now in the grace and forgiveness of our Savior,
and in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Peace be with you.
And also with you.

Response

Seven Fold Amen

Postlude

Improvisation on Alleluia! Sing to Jesus

Leading us in worship today are Caroline Cupp, Executive Pastor; Rev. Dr. Erin Raffety, Guest Preacher; Sándor Kádár, Director of Music; Kira Boros, Choir Accompanist; Lyndsay Varsaci, soprano.

WORSHIP NOTES

Prayers of the People is a litany for Labor Day written by the Rev. Thomas L. Weitzel;
The Blessing is used in worship at Sojourn Community Church, Louisville, KY.

FIRST PRES MATTERS

In Memoriam – Martin T. Brittingham, member of First Presbyterian Church from May 21, 2000 to August 22, 2016, passed away August 26, 2020.

Our sympathy and prayers are with the family and friends of Martin T. Brittingham and with Sandi Preston and family in the death of her uncle, Walter Preston.

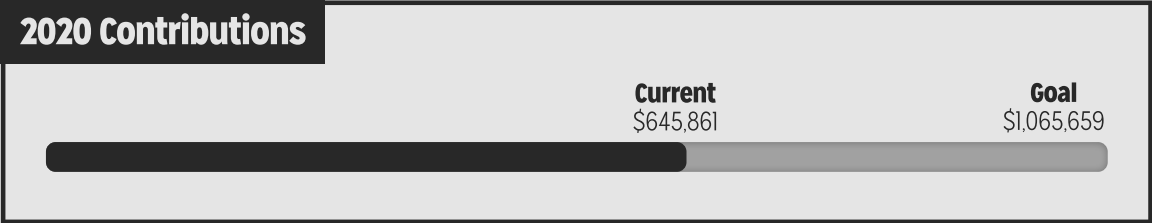
Zoom Coffee Hour - Next Sunday! - On Kick-off Sunday, September 13, you are invited to join us on Zoom for a congregation-wide Coffee Hour starting at 10 am. We hope that you will attend to see and hear from many faces that you haven't seen in a while. The Zoom link will be <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86942502439?pwd=RG04QjhpVEw1YkFtck5EdmNMKotKZz09>
Can't wait to catch up with you!

Kick-off Sunday Family Service Project - To celebrate a new year, First Pres families are invited to gather at church, in stages, on Sunday, September 13 from 1 – 3 pm for an easy service project. Parents and kids will be outside planting flowers in pots and coloring cards, which our friends from the First Pres choir will then deliver to some of the members of our church. Families must sign-up for a specific time to attend - contact Sara Pantazes or find the link to the sign-up genius in Wednesday's e-news email.

Presbyterian Women Circles starting this week - A warm invitation is extended to all women who are interested in finding a place where they can nurture their faith and develop friendships in a caring community. First Pres has five circles that meet monthly, and their new year kicks off this week! For more information on the circles and their meeting times, go to www.firstpreswc.com/adult-groups.

Wednesday Night Adult Bible Study Starting Soon - The Wednesday night adult Bible study class will resume on Wednesday, September 16 at 6: 30 pm on Zoom. We will begin this program year with a 6-week study of *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven* by Amy-Jill Levine. The text may seem familiar, but this thought-provoking study will frame Jesus' instructions in a new light and "provide instruction on how best to live into the kingdom of heaven." Participants are encouraged (but not required) to purchase the book for this study. If you wish to join the email list for this study group, please contact Sara Pantazes, Director of Christian Education, at spantazes@firstpreswc.com.

Connect with a Neighbor: Citizen Advocacy is a non-profit that has been working in Chester County for 40 years, and believes in the power of relationships to transform lives by introducing two people who might otherwise never have met. One of those people is an independent member of the community, and the other is someone who has been marginalized by disability. Through their relationship, lessons are learned, lives are changed, and the fabric of our community is made stronger and safer for all. We are currently looking for someone interested in getting to know a teenager living in West Chester who loves all things tech - computer and video games especially! In these uncertain times relationships are still possible and even more critical for the well-being of individuals and our community. We have seen advocates and partners grow and maintain relationships through virtual connection, socially distant visits, phone calls, letters, and more. For more information about Citizen Advocacy and how to get involved, feel free to call 610-933-1299, the Citizen Advocacy office, or email Marnie Melvin at Marnie@CitizenAdvocacyCC.org.



The above shows the giving amount as of 9/2/2020 compared to the 2020 full year goal. This chart will be presented each week to keep the congregation well-informed of our progress. Further details can be found on the Financial Reporting page on our website.