

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

The First Presbyterian Church
of Howard County

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 22, 2024

10:30 a.m. In-person and Livestream Service



GATHER

Let all enter the sanctuary in a spirit of prayer.

Words in **bold** are read by the congregation.

* Please stand if you are able

Please remember to turn your cell phones to silent.

*This worship service is being livestreamed to the internet,
and you may appear on our Facebook page and YouTube channel.*

For our online congregation - Let us know you are here! Post a greeting!

*And remember that you can place a request in the Prayer Journal
in the comments on both You Tube and Facebook Live.*

Prelude

Be Still, My Soul

Jean Sibelius, arr. L. Larson

Lighting the Christ Candle

Whenever we light this candle, we proclaim:

Christ is the light of the world and the center of our lives.

Call to Worship

Who among you is seeking the wisdom of God?

We long to hear God's Word spoken to our hearts.

Who among you is seeking God's bright and holy truth?

We long to learn the ways of wisdom and righteousness.

Who among you is seeking a Spirit-filled life?

We long to live lives of holiness and light.

God grants God's wisdom generously to all who ask.

Come near, people of God!

Let us worship in wisdom and truth.

* **Hymn 645**

Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above
(see next page for hymn)

Mit Freuden Zart

645 Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above

1 Sing praise to God who reigns a - bove, the God of all
 2 What God's al-might - y power has made God's gra - cious mer -
 3 The Lord is nev - er far a - way, but, through all grief
 4 Thus all my toil - some way a - long I sing a - loud

cre - a - tion, the God of power, the God of love,
 cy keep - eth; by morn - ing glow or eve - ning shade
 dis - tress - ing, an ev - er - pres - ent help and stay,
 thy prais - es, that all may hear the grate - ful song

the God of our sal - va - tion. With
 God's watch - ful eye ne'er sleep - eth. With -
 our peace and joy and bless - ing, as
 my voice un - wea - ried rais - es. Be

heal - ing balm my soul is filled, and ev - ery faith - less
 in the king - dom of God's might, lo! all is just and
 with a moth - er's ten - der hand God gent - ly leads the
 joy - ful in the Lord, my heart; both soul and bod - y,

mur - mur stilled:
 all is right:
 cho - sen band: to God all praise and glo - ry!
 take your part:

The regal divine imagery here will not be new to most singers, but some may not expect the third stanza's image of God as mother. Yet it is part of God's self-description in Isaiah 66:13. This Bohemian Brethren tune resembles both Genevan psalm tunes and French folk songs.

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Lord Jesus Christ, there are times when we all feel like victims—
pawns in the powerplays which are so much a part of life these days.
As usual, however, you look into our hearts
and question what part we play in these power games.
We know that in your eyes it is not social status,
or wealth or reputation that count,
and we confess how easily our lives can become enmeshed
in such worldly values.
You risked personal comfort and security
when you reached out to those on the edge of your society,
lepers and sinners—people whom others considered unclean.
Forgive us when we fail to meet your challenge
to identify with those whom society would call worthless.
You showed us that the journey of discipleship
is a journey into servanthood and powerlessness.
Forgive us for being tempted to pursue power
and to favor competition over compassion.
You, Lord, saw the good in everyone
and showed us exactly what it means to be the servant of all,
while too often we see others as rivals
in the race for success, influence and popularity.
Imprint your words on our hearts
and put your living Spirit within us, we pray,
so that we serve others and you
with wisdom, understanding, love and compassion. Amen.

(A time of silence is kept during which individual confessions may be offered.)

Assurance of Grace

* **Response of Praise 659** *(singing together)*

Know That God Is Good

Know that God is good.
Know that God is good.
Know that God is good;
God is good; God is good.

Congolese Verse

Mungu ni mwema.
Mungu ni mwema.
Mungu ni mwema,
ni mwema, ni mwema.

*** Sharing the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

(We share peace with a nod or a bow, perhaps with hand on heart or folded hands, or with the ASL sign for peace. If worshipping from home, greet each other by sending a text, a wave or comment on Facebook or YouTube.)

*** Response of Praise 692** *(singing together)*

Spirit, Open My Heart

Spirit, open my heart
to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love,
in receiving and in giving.
Spirit, open my heart.

Words of Welcome

Newcomers please leave us your address and contact information on the Visitor Card in the pew rack! Place the Visitor Card in the offering plate.

ENCOUNTER

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson: Mark 9:30-37

³⁰They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it;

³¹for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again."

³²But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

³³Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" ³⁴But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. ³⁵He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." ³⁶Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

*Afterwards, children ages 4-7 may go with Ms. Kathy Moore to Godly Play.
Parents can pick up their children following worship in Rooms 110 & 113.*

Older children, grades 2-5, may go with Ms. Virginia Callegary to The Worship Bridge. They will return to the sanctuary later in the worship service.

(It is the church's policy to not put images of children on the livestream.)

**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.**

Second Lesson: James 3:13-4:3; 4:7-8

¹³Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. ¹⁴But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. ¹⁵Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. ¹⁶For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. ¹⁷But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. ¹⁸And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

⁴ Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? ²You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures.

⁷Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

For the Word of God in scripture,
For the Word of God among us,
For the Word of God within us,
Thanks be to God!

Sermon

Survivor

Kenneth Page

(after the sermon, we observe a time of silence and prayer)

RESPOND AND SERVE

* Affirmation of Faith

We believe in the One who gives us life as Creator and affirm that we are called to be witnesses to this creator God in the world. Therefore, there is no choice for us but to immerse ourselves in the stream of history, accepting our particular place in time and doing the best we can with what we have. We believe that failure to accept responsibility, refusal to take a stand on vital issues, timid rejection of the ties of true belonging are denials of life and of God's will for our lives - they are in fact deeds of death.

God calls us to do our best to understand the times in which we live, to add our weight to the scales on the side of justice and equality within valid differences. We know that if we live our lives responsibly, we need not worry about physical death. Our job is to live out God's love as we have learned it from Jesus right here, right now. God will take care of the rest. So be it!

* Hymn 373

O Day of Peace
(see next page for hymn)

Jerusalem

373 O Day of Peace



1 O day of peace that dim - ly shines through all our
2 Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, nor shall the



hopes and prayers and dreams, guide us to jus - tice, truth, and
fierce de - vour the small; as beasts and cat - tle calm - ly



love, de - liv - ered from our self - ish schemes. May swords of hate
graze, a lit - tle child shall lead them all. Then en - e - mies



fall from our hands, our hearts from en - vy find re - lease, till by God's
shall learn to love, all crea - tures find their true ac - cord; the hope of



grace our war - ring world shall see Christ's prom - ised reign of peace.
peace shall be ful - filled, for all the earth shall know the Lord.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This text on peace was created to offer non-nationalistic words for a popular British tune. The first stanza depicts *pax*, a mode of peace focused on ending conflict, and the second (based on Isaiah 11:6-9) describes *shalom*, the condition of living in harmony and mutual good will.

TEXT: Carl P. Daw Jr., 1982

MUSIC: C. Hubert H. Parry, 1916; harm. Charles H. Webb, 1987

Text © 1982 Hope Publishing Company

Music Melody © 1916, 1944, this Arr. © 1977 Robertson Publications (admin. Goodmusic Publishing Ltd.)

Music Harm. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House (admin. The Copyright Company)

JERUSALEM

LMD

Concerns and Remembrances

Prayers of Gratitude and Concern

Concluding Prayer *(together)*

Give us the Wisdom to do your will, that we might share your love with all, working together for the beloved community you long to fashion. As we worship together, may we work together in your world for your Kingdom. Amen.

The Offering

Offertory Anthem

O For a Closer Walk With God

Charles Villiers Stanford

O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!

Return, O holy dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest;
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast.

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

*** Doxology 708** *(singing together)*

We Give Thee but Thine Own

We give thee but thine own,
whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is thine alone,
a trust, O Lord, from thee.

*** Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

SEND AND BLESS

This Week at First Presbyterian Church

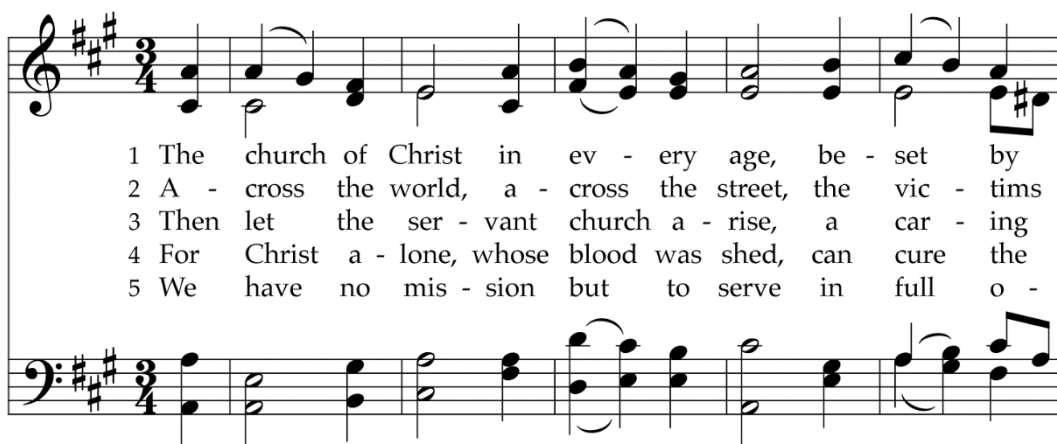
Minute for Mission

*** Hymn 320**

The Church of Christ in Every Age
(see next page for hymn)

Wareham

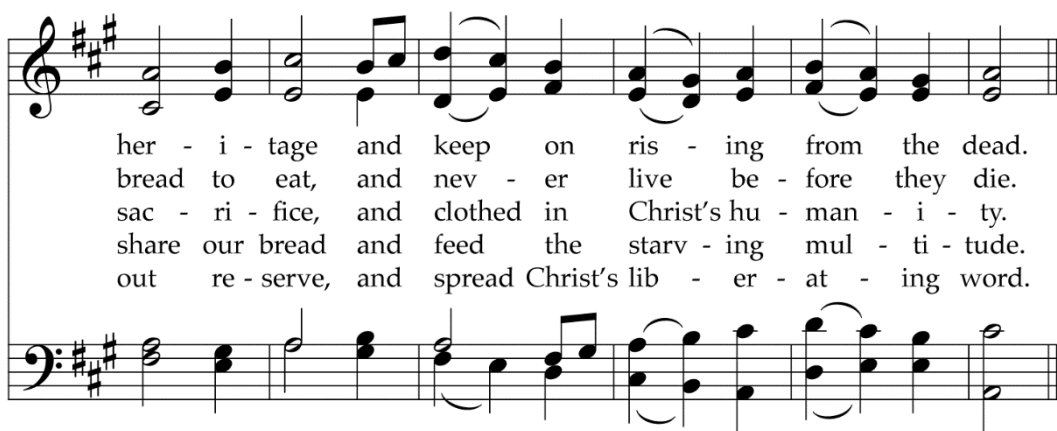
320 The Church of Christ in Every Age



1 The church of Christ in ev - ery age, be - set by
 2 A - cross the world, a - cross the street, the vic - tims
 3 Then let the ser - vant church a - rise, a car - ing
 4 For Christ a - lone, whose blood was shed, can cure the
 5 We have no mis - sion but to serve in full o -



change but Spir - it - led, must claim and test its
 of in - jus - tice cry for shel - ter and for
 church that longs to be a part - ner in Christ's
 fe - ver in our blood, and teach us how to
 be - dience to our Lord: to care for all, with -



her - i - tage and keep on ris - ing from the dead.
 bread to eat, and nev - er live be - fore they die.
 sac - ri - fice, and clothed in Christ's hu - man - i - ty.
 share our bread and feed the starv - ing mul - ti - tude.
 out re - serve, and spread Christ's lib - er - at - ing word.

In this challenging text by a British Methodist minister, the odd-numbered stanzas develop the image of “the servant church,” while the second surveys the many needs and the fourth describes the true source of strength for the task.

* **Benediction**

* **Response of Praise 314** (*singing together*)

Christ, Be Our Light

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

* **Postlude**

IV. March from Organ Concerto
No. 16 in F Major, HWV 305a

Georg Frederik Händel



WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate in the worship, education, mission and common life of First Church.

During Today's Worship

If your infant or child needs care during the worship service, you may leave the Sanctuary and return as you wish. Child care for infants and children under four years old is available all morning. The nursery is in Room 159. We have a texting system to alert you if you are needed while in the worship service. The ushers will be glad to help you.

Flash photography during worship is not permitted. Please, no food or drink in the Sanctuary.

If you are new to First Church

Communion is served on the first Sunday of each month.

Disabled persons entrance is through the Main Entrance in the rear of the building.

We invite you to become a member of First Church. Please speak with Pastor Ken or call the church office to set a time to meet.

Interested in the mission and activities of First Presbyterian Church?

Visit the church's website, www.firstpreshc.org for more info.

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The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County

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Ministers: All members of the congregation

Kenneth Page, Interim Pastor
Virginia Callegary, Director of Christian Education
Dr. Margaret McGillivray, Director of Music Ministries
Megan Bondhus, Church Office Administrator
Pat Travers, Bookkeeper
Woodrow Collins, Church Sexton
Kathy Moore, Godly Play Coordinator
Marla Youkers, Nursery Coordinator
Sarah Reinhardt, Nursery Assistant

The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County is a congregation of the Presbytery of Baltimore in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

✦ We are an Earth Care Congregation ✦

✦ We are a Matthew 25 Congregation ✦

Inspirit Counseling Services at First Presbyterian Church

Meredith Barger 410-433-8861 x104 | John Michalczyk 410-433-8861 x115

