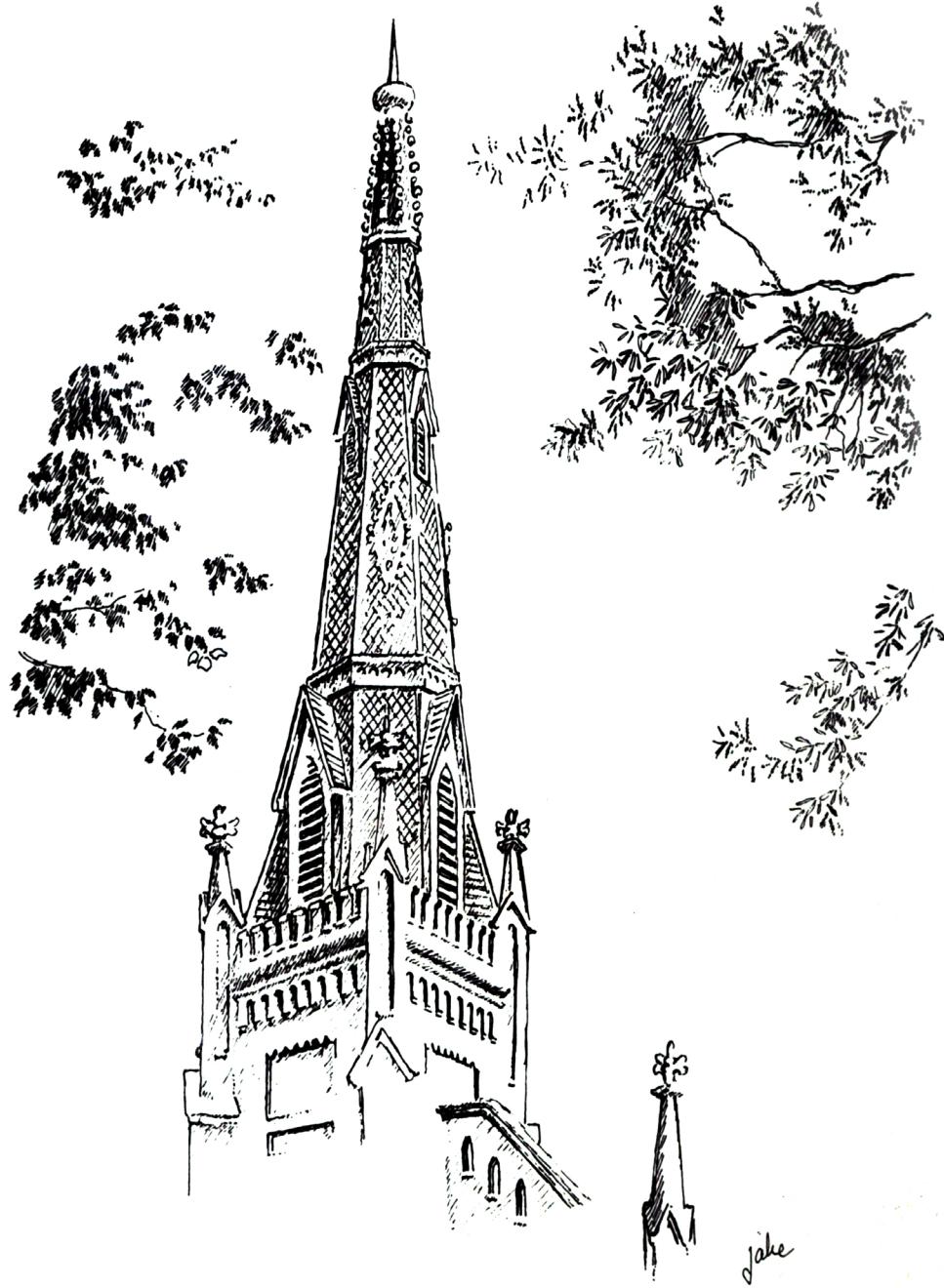


First Presbyterian Church

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP | 9 AM | OCTOBER 1, 2023
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



We invite you, whoever you are and whoever God is helping you to become, to join First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte in our journey of faith. God is love, and that love is for you. You belong as a child of God, and we welcome you. Come experience how that belonging might change you and our world as we seek to be for Christ in the heart of Charlotte.

Time of Quiet Meditation and Reflection | Silence begins in the Chapel at 8:50 a.m.**Words of Welcome** | Reverend Mary Henderson Bowman**Invocation** | Adapted from *A Guide to Prayer for All Who Walk with God*

Remembering Your faithfulness from age to age, O Lord, let us trust that You have our best interest in mind as You respond to our cries for help in times of need. By Your Grace, teach us to rely more and more on Your strong hand to support and guide us in the face of adversity and suffering. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditative Music | In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful | The London Fox Taize Chorus

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful; In the Lord I will rejoice. Look to God, do not be afraid. Lift up your voices, the Lord is near. Lift up your voices the Lord is near. [Refrain]

You are my salvation. I trust in You. I shall not be afraid, You are my strength, You are my song.

The Lord is my rock; The Lord is my fortress. My God, You are my refuge and my shield.

My God, You are at my right hand; He is worthy of praise. The Lord shall save me. My soul shall sing to You, You have done wondrous things O God. Let me speak more; Let me speak more of Your wondrous way.

Prayer for Illumination | Lisa Dillard**Old Testament Scripture Reading** | Proverbs 3:19-26

The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens; by His knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew. My child, do not let these escape from your sight: keep sound wisdom and prudence, and they will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck. Then you will walk on your way securely, and your foot will not stumble. If you sit down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Then you will not be afraid of sudden panic or of the storm that strikes the wicked, for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Moment of Reflection**New Testament Scripture Reading** | Matthew 6:25-34

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the gentiles who seek all these things, and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Moment of Reflection

Meditation | “Who of You By Worrying Can Add a Single Hour to His Life?”

Moment of Reflection

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession | Adapted from *The Book of Common Worship*

Merciful God, You pardon all who truly repent and turn to You. We humbly confess our sins and ask Your mercy. We have not loved You with a pure heart, nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves. We have not done justice, loved kindness, or walked humbly with You, our God. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in Your likeness and image.

Moment of Reflection

O Lord, we ask that You forgive what we have been and done, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy name. We receive Your forgiveness with grateful hearts, and we commit to the work of extending it to others. Amen.

Offering

The Christian life is marked by the offering of one's self to God to be shaped, empowered, directed, and changed by God. In worship, God presents us with the costly self-offering of Jesus Christ. We are claimed by Christ and set free. In response to God's love in Jesus Christ we offer God our lives, our gifts, our abilities, and our material goods, for God's service. The offering plates are located at the back of the chapel if you are interested in giving regularly as a spiritual practice.

Invitation to the Table

Meditative Music | The Good Shepherd | Fernando Ortega

I Am the Good Shepherd. I lay down My life for you.

Enter in, enter in, enter in.

I Am the Good Shepherd. As the Father knows Me, I know you. I know you, I know you, I know you
And no one can take you away; And no one can take you away.

You are the Good Shepherd. You lay down Your life for me.

Enter in, enter in, enter in.

You are the Good Shepherd. As the Father knows You, You know me.

You know me, You know me, You know me.

And no one can take You away; And no one can take You away.

And no one can take You away; And no one can take You away.

Prayers of the People and The 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.

Sacrament of Communion

To receive the gluten-free bread and the cup, come forward, take a piece of bread, and then dip the bread into the cup. It is still communion if you prefer to take only the bread. Please do not drink out of the cup directly. If for any reason you prefer not to come forward, please raise your hand and the Elders will be glad to serve you in your pew.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of grace, we thank You for welcoming us at this table to celebrate with all the saints Your generous love given in Jesus your Son. By the power of Your Holy Spirit, You have fed us in Word and Sacrament, and nourished us with the bread of heaven, the food that endures to eternal life. Make us always strong in our Lord's service so we will follow Jesus faithfully wherever He leads. Amen.

Charge and Blessing

We have been fed by the presence of God in the silence, by the Word, and through communion. Please feel free to greet one another in a warm and quiet way that allows an easing out of the silence. The minister is available for prayer or conversation after the service. Sunday School begins at 9:45 a.m. If you would like to visit longer with other members, you are invited to gather in the Welcome Center.

Announcements

Fellowship Gatherings

Various dates and locations

We hope you will join us for an informal gathering to build fellowship and hear the church's vision for 2024. Scan the QR code below to see the available dates.

Wednesday Night Dinner

October 4, 5:15 p.m., Wood Fellowship Hall

Learn more or prepay for this week by scanning the QR code below.

Health Ministry Team Startup

October 8, 10 a.m., P206

This ministry provides support for members facing medical challenges, offers knowledge about local community resources, and provides wellness programming throughout the year. This startup meeting is for adults who desire an active connection with health ministry. Scan the QR code to email Catherine and get involved.

Fall Vaccine Clinic

October 15, 9 a.m., P209

Flu and COVID vaccines will be available for ages seven and up. RSV vaccines will be available for ages 60+. Scan the QR code below to expedite registration. Contact clynn@firstpres-charlotte.org with questions.

Gun Violence Prevention - Combined Adults Sunday School

October 15-29, 9:45 a.m., WFH Overflow and Zoom

Adults and youth will discuss "A Faithful Response to Gun Violence" examining how our faith compels us to see and respond to gun violence. Scan QR code for Zoom link to participate virtually.

Plowshares Book Club Fall Selection

Discussion: October 26, 7 p.m., Zoom

Join FPC's book club to read and discuss "Common Ground." In this book, author Donald Gaffney, a pastor and Sandy Hook alumnus, explores gun violence in a thoughtful and respectful way. This book selection complements our October advocacy focus on gun violence prevention. Books will be available for \$10 today and Oct. 8. Register for the discussion below.



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