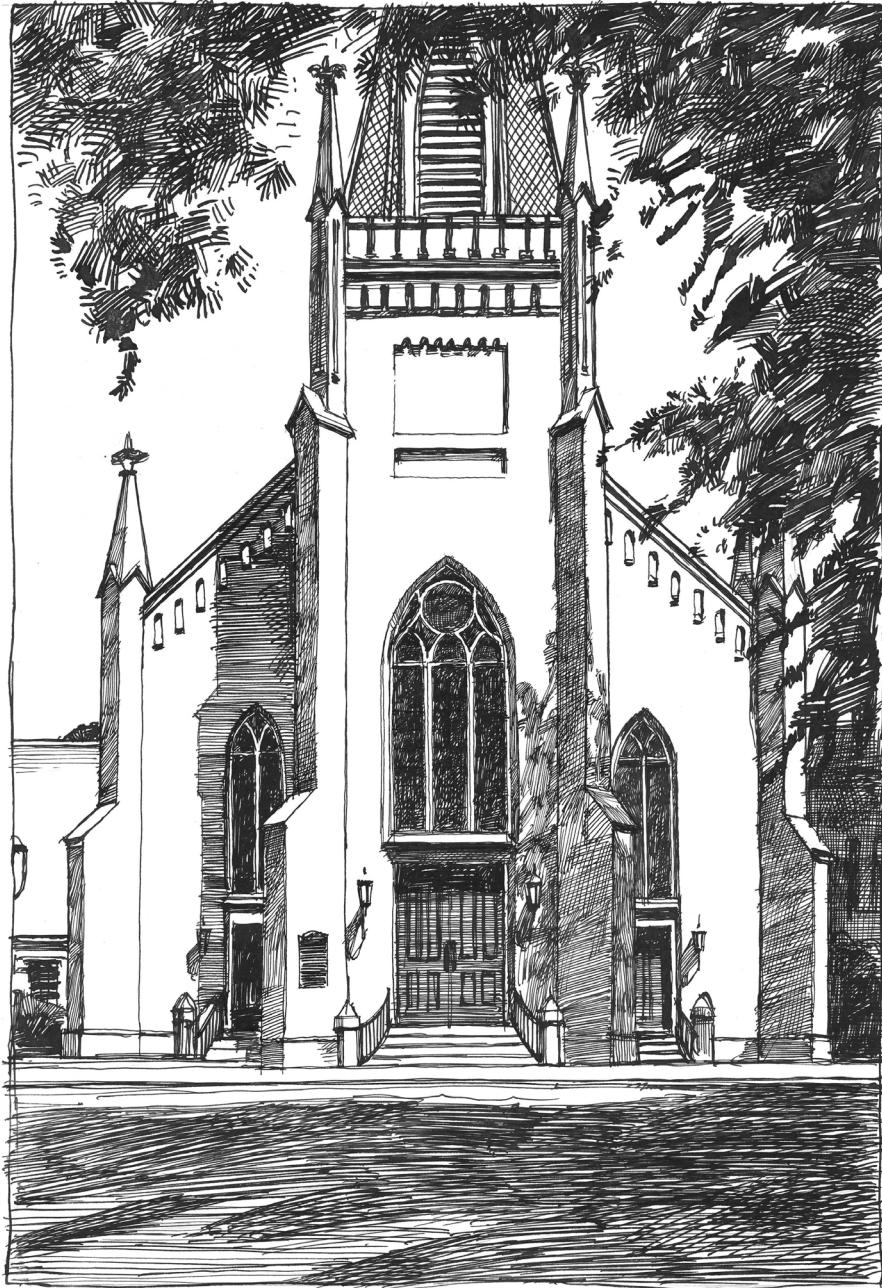


First Presbyterian Church

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP | 9 AM | SEPTEMBER 10, 2023
FIFTEENTH 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.



First Presbyterian
Church 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** | *The Book of Worship*

Lord of life and love, help us to worship You in the holiness of beauty, that some beauty of holiness may appear in us. Quiet our souls in Your presence with the stillness of a wise trust. Lift us above dark moods, and the shadow of sin, that we may find Your will for our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditative Music | Be Thou My Vision | Nathan Pacheco

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart; Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art. Thou my best thought, by day or by night; Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light. Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true word; I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord. Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son; Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one. Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise; Thou mine inheritance, now and always. Thou and Thou only first in my heart; High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art. High King of heaven, my victory won; May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun. Heart of my own heart, whatever befall; Still be my vision, O ruler of all. Amen.

Prayer for Illumination | Selina Malherbe**Old Testament Scripture Reading** | Isaiah 58:6-12

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke. Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and God will say, "Here I am." If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your needs in parched places and make your bones strong, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Moment of Reflection**New Testament Scripture Reading** | Matthew 5:13-16 (The Message) | Addison Ayer

"Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage. "Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Moment of Reflection**Meditation** | "If You Lose Your Saltiness (And Light), How Will People Taste Godliness?"

Moment of Reflection**Call to Confession****Prayer of Confession**

Merciful God, you made us in Your image, with a mind to know You, heart to love You, and a will to serve You. But our knowledge is imperfect, our love inconstant, our obedience incomplete. Day by day we fail to grow into Your likeness: yet You are slow to be angry with Your children. For the sake of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Savior, do not hold our sins against us, but in Your tender love, forgive.

Moment of Reflection

In Your mercy, O Lord, 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.

Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us. Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life has gone; a new life has begun.

O God, 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 | I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light | Kathleen Thomerson | Beverly Hills All Saints' Choir

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus. God sent the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus. In Him, there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike, The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus. I want to see the brightness of God. I want to look at Jesus. Clear sun of righteousness, shine on my path. And show me the way to the Father. In Him, there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike. The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus. I'm looking for the coming of Christ. I want to be with Jesus. When we have run with patience the race. We shall know the joy of Jesus. In Him, there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike. The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

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 | from *The Book of Common Order*

God of wisdom and love, Giver of all good things, we thank You for Your loving-kindness, and for Your constant care over us and all creation. In our weakness, You are our strength; in our darkness, light; in our sorrows, comfort and peace. From everlasting to everlasting, You are our God. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, glorified forever. 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 encouraged to move to the Welcome Center.

Announcements

New here? Please fill out a Connect Card, which can be found in the seatback of the pew in front of you, or scan the "Virtual Connect Card" QR code at the bottom of this page.

Wednesday Night Dinner

September 13, 5:15-6:15 p.m., Wood Fellowship Hall

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

Child Mental Health Classes for Parents

September 13, 20, 27, 6 p.m., WFH Overflow

Sun Counseling and Wellness therapists will offer three classes designed to empower parents with knowledge and techniques to support their child's mental health journey. You can attend one, two, or all three courses. Free childcare is available, and dinner is available to purchase at 5:15 p.m. Sign up at QR below.

Apple Tree

Now-September 17, after worship or online

Help PW provide Lakeshore gift cards to all teachers at Westerly Hills Academy so they can buy needed supplies for their classrooms. Donate at their table after worship or at QR below.



VIRTUAL
CONNECT
CARD



PRAYER
REQUESTS



TEXT
TO GIVE



GIVE
ONLINE

PW Fall Gathering

September 17, 12:15 p.m., Wood Fellowship Hall

Join PW for the annual kick-off event. Gather for lunch, enjoy fellowship, find out about plans for the year, and hear from guest speaker Principal Kiesha Pride of Westerly Hills Academy. Register at QR below.

Faith in Education Panel

September 24, 12 p.m., Wood Fellowship Hall

Enjoy lunch and a panel discussion featuring Kiesha Pride, Jasmin Harris, Dr. Sheba Surratt, and Emily Elliott Gaffney to inform and educate attendees about Westerly Hills Academy and the work FPC is doing there.

Family Funanza

September 23, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Hornet's Nest Park

A morning in the park, full of non-stop excitement for children ages birth to 18 and their families. We've rented out a pavilion, and a potluck lunch will be served. Scan QR to sign up to bring a dish.

Tutor a Student in Need

Our tutoring partners, Heart Math, Augustine Literacy Project, and HELPS, are recruiting now for tutors at Westerly Hills Academy and other schools in our community. Learn more or sign up at QR code below.