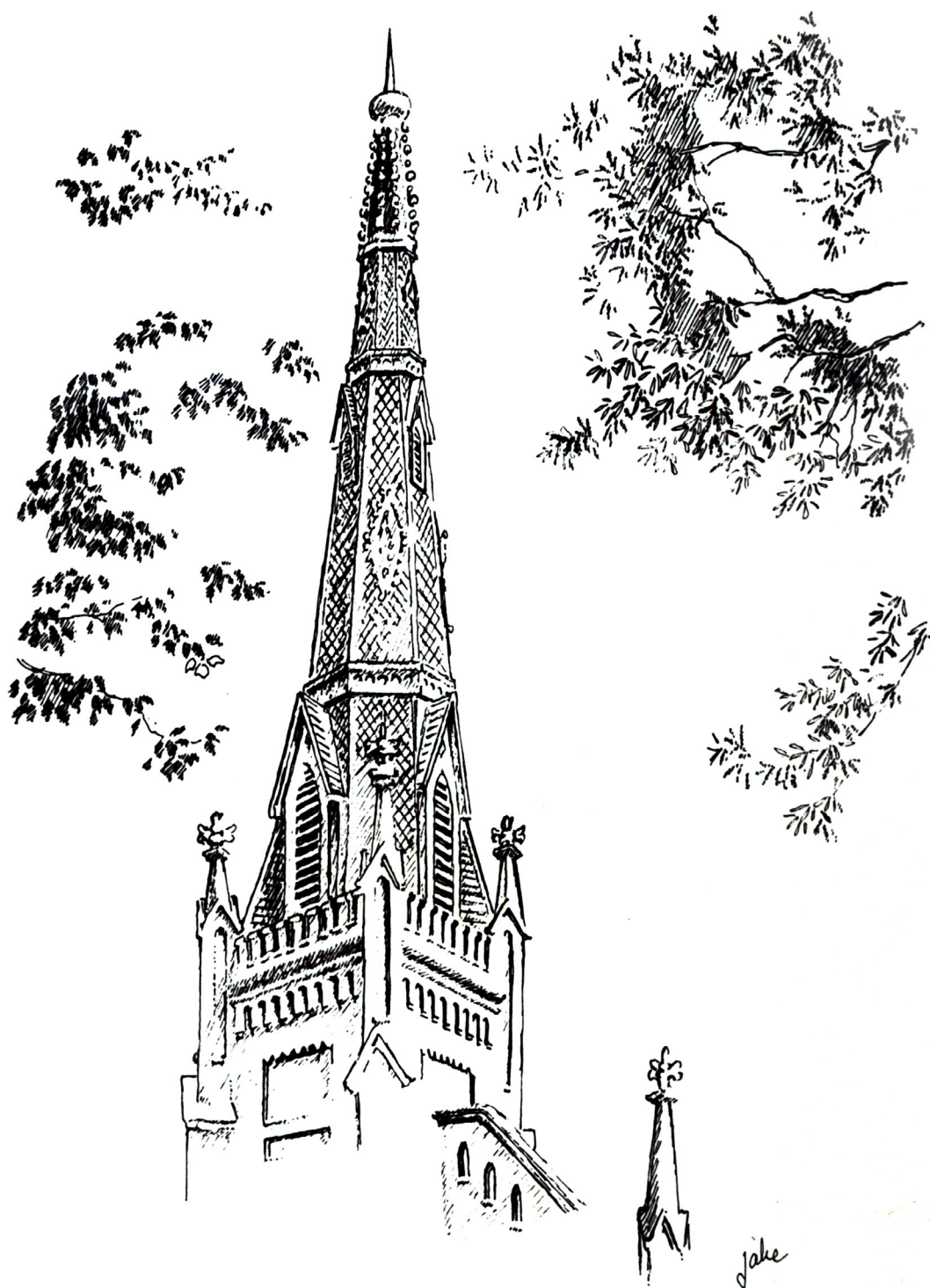


CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP SERVICE

First Presbyterian Church

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA



OCTOBER 4, 2026
9 AM WORSHIP



NINETEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST



Time of Quiet Meditation and Reflection

Silence begins in the Chapel at 8:50 a.m.

Words of Welcome | Reverend Anna Dickson

Opening Prayer

Dear Lord, as we come into this place for worship, open unto us . . .
Open unto us—light for our darkness.
Open unto us—courage for our fear.
Open unto us—hope for our despair.
Open unto us—peace for our turmoil.
Open unto us—joy for our sorrow.
Open unto us—strength for our weakness.
Open unto us—wisdom for our confusion.
Open unto us—forgiveness for our sins.
Open unto us— love for our hates.
Open unto us— hearts for our neighbors.
Open unto us—thy Self for ourselves.

Moment of Reflective Prayer

Lord, Lord, open unto us. Amen.

Meditative Music | "Return to God" | Marty Haugen

Refrain:

*Return to God with all your heart, the source of grace and mercy;
Come seek the tender faithfulness of God.*

*Now the time of grace has come, the day of salvation;
Come and learn now the way of our God. Refrain.*

*I will take your heart of stone and shape a heart within you,
A heart of compassion and love. Refrain*

*If you break the chains of oppression, if you set the pris'ner free;
If you share your bread with the hungry, give protection to the lost;
Give a shelter to the homeless. clothe the naked in your midst.
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn. Refrain.*

Prayer for Illumination and First Reading | Joel 2, selected verses | Lisa Dillard

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near— a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness!

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord, your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy.

Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O Lord, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

Then the Lord became jealous for his land, and had pity on his people.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

**Second Reading** | Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 | David Dillard

Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Moment of Reflection

Meditation | "Wisdom from the Minor Prophets (Joel): Rend Your Hearts"

Moment of Reflection**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 | "Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service" | OCP Session Choir

*Lord, whose love in humble service,
bore the weight of human need,
who upon the cross, forsaken,
worked your mercy's perfect deed:
we, your servants, bring the worship
not of voice alone, but heart;
consecrating to your purpose
every gift which you impart.*

*Called by worship to your service,
forth in your dear name we go,
to the child, the youth, the aged,
love in living deeds to show;
hope and health, good will and comfort,
counsel, aid and peace we give,
that your servants, Lord, in freedom
may your mercy know and live.*



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

All are welcome to participate in 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 officers will be glad to serve you in your pew.

Prayer of Thanksgiving | William Temple

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you, and then use us, we pray, as you will, but always to your glory, and the welfare of your people, through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. 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.

About Today's Service



Welcome

Scan the QR code to fill out our Virtual Connect Card to help us get to know you.

Prayer Requests

Submit a confidential prayer request at fpc.tiny.us/virtualprayer

Digital Offerings

This service is available via livestream on our website. A recording and a written transcript of today's sermon will be available on Monday afternoon at firstpres-charlotte.org/sermons

Ways to Give

In Person

The offering plates are located at the back of the chapel if you are interested in giving regularly as a spiritual practice.

Give Online

fpc.tiny.us/give

Text to Give

Text "givetofpc" to 73256

Venmo 

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