



First Presbyterian Church of Athens

In response to God's grace, the mission of First Presbyterian Church is to create a community where people seek the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, rejoice in worship, and go forth sharing the love of Christ with Athens and the world!

May 10, 2026
8:45 and 11:00 a.m.
Sixth Sunday of Easter

GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Welcome to all who are worshipping with us. As we enter a holy space this morning, please silence your cell phone.

Greeting

Psalm 118:24

This is the day the Lord has made; **let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

Prelude

Hyfrydol

Craig Phillips

Words of Welcome

Song of Gathering

Hymn 454, stanza 1

**All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,
come ye before him and rejoice.**

Call to Worship

We gather in this place to hear God's word.

We are like eager children, ready to learn.

Let us sing and pray and rejoice in God.

We come with the enthusiasm of the young.

Welcome in the name of Jesus.

Welcome, Jesus, into our midst!

*Hymn 473

For the Beauty of the Earth

DIX

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, give us the willingness to be honest with ourselves, with one another, and with you about the ways in which we have caused harm in this world. Give us the openness to see where our actions or failures to act have led to pain in those closest to us and in those far away. Do not let us sink further into self-harm through self-blame and hatred, but give us the courage to set right our wrongs, and to return to you again and again for forgiveness.

*Silent Prayer

Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

*Assurance of Pardon

**Those who are able may stand.*

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad, making note of new and old friends, check in on Facebook, and follow us on Instagram (firstpresathensga).

For the Beauty of the Earth has gone through many revisions, from a eucharistic (communion) text to a hymn of thanksgiving for a wide range of human experience. It is set to the tune customary in North American, though not elsewhere.

At "The Peace," worshipers are invited to greet each other by saying, "The peace of Christ be with you," and responding, "And also with you."

After the Sacrament of Baptism at the 11:00 a.m. service, children, ages Pre-K - grade 5, are invited to Children's Church held in the Children's Ministry Suite on the first floor.

Next to the Nicene Creed, The Apostles' Creed is the most universally accepted doctrinal statement in Christendom. Although not written by apostles, it reflects the theological formulations of the first century church. Arising from an early baptismal creed, it underwent development, attaining its present form in the eighth century.

Lay Reader:
8:45 a.m. Karen Bung

The anthem is a text by Robert Bridges, after Isaac Watts, set to an English folk song, in an arrangement by American composer and church musician Gerald Near.

*Congregational Response

CELTIC ALLELUIA



*The Peace

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

11:00 a.m. Sacrament of Baptism

Through baptism, we welcome Lilly Owens into the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

*Question to the Congregation

Do we, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture Lilly, by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging her to know and follow Christ? If so, please stand.

Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of
God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Hymn 492

Baptized in Water

BUNESSAN

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Congregational Prayer for Illumination

Hymn 339, stanza 1

**Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
nought be al else to me, save that thou art –
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.**

First Lesson

Luke 9:46-48, page 947

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

11:00 a.m. Anthem

Christ Hath a Garden

Gerald Near

Christ hath a garden walled around, a paradise of fruitful ground,
chosen by love and fenced by grace from out the world's wide wilderness.
Like trees of spice his servants stand, there planted by his mighty hand;
by Eden's gracious streams, that flow to feed their beauty where they grow.
Awake, O wind of heaven, and bear their sweetest perfume through the air:
stir up, O south, the boughs that bloom, till the beloved Master come:
that he may come and linger yet among the trees that he hath set;
that he may evermore be seen to walk amid the springing green.

Second Lesson Philippians 1:1-18a, page 1070
This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon *Thank You for Being a Friend* Dr. Ryan Baer

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn 438** *Blest Be the Tie That Binds* DENNIS

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.

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory *Adagio* Antonio Vivaldi
trans. J.S. Bach

***Doxology** Hymn 592

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

ENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

***Hymn 376** *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* HYFRYDOL

***Charge and Benediction**

***Congregational Response** Hymn 535
Go with us, Lord, and guide the way
through this and every coming day,
that in your Spirit strong and true
our lives may be our gift to you.

Postlude *Improvisation on Hyfrydol* John Coble
Texts and music for hymns and sung responses reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-714861

Blest Be the Tie That Binds was written to express as pastor’s unwillingness to leave a beloved congregation. It is now used as an expression of Christian fellowship. The tune is attributed to an influential Swiss musician and publisher.



You may mail your check, set up an automatic gift through your bank, or donate online using this QR code or at firstpresathens.org/giving. Thank you for your generosity.

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling and the tune *Hyfrydol* are both found in most English-language hymnals, though not always together. The transforming power of love motivates the unending praise of the life to come, and the strong Welsh tune, whose name means “delightful,” gives us a foretaste of endless song..

Nurseries for children 4 years old and younger, available from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., are located next to the Children’s Ministry Suite and are accessible down the stairs in the Atrium and through the glass door.

A special word of welcome to our guests: thank you for joining us for worship this morning. Please fill out the Fellowship Pad so that we may be in touch. We are delighted you are here and look forward to seeing you again.

Children, Pre K – 5th Grade, are invited to Children’s Church during the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Children’s Church will be held downstairs in the Children’s Ministry Suite. We will depart for Children’s Church following the Sacrament of Baptism. To pick up your child after the service, please go to the church courtyard entrance of the Children’s Ministry Suite.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor*
The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard, *Associate Pastor*
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*

Baptism Elder

Shannon Brooks

USHERS

8:45 a.m. John Simpson (head),
Carl Bergmann

11:00 a.m. Jimbo LaBoon III (head),
Emily LaBoon, Larry Baer

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Justin Winstanley

AUDIOVISUAL TECHNICIAN

Bryan Owens

FLOWERS

The flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God and in memory of Gwen Griffin by her family.

MAY FLOWER TEAM

Paige Simmons (chair),
Mary Attaway, Elaine Johnson, Gail Wilfong

TO AID IN WORSHIP

If you need to leave the sanctuary during the service, a live video feed is available in the Atrium and online on Facebook and YouTube.

Available in the Narthex or from an usher:

- **Personal hearing receivers** usable anywhere in the sanctuary
- **Large-print** hymnals, Bibles, bulletins, and hymnsheets
- **Sermons** from the previous six weeks

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Prayer requests can be submitted to the church office, 706-543-4338, by the Prayer Request link on our church website (firstpresathens.org) or on the prayer cards in the Fellowship Pads.

Retirement Reception for Elaine Johnson

Join us in Fellowship Hall on **Sunday, May 17**, after the 11:00 a.m. service for a reception in honor of Elaine Johnson on the occasion of her retirement. Expressions of congratulations and thanksgiving may be mailed to her home address, 1080 Beverly Dr., Athens, 30606.

Youth Sunday

Join us on **May 17** as our youth help lead worship! The liturgy and elements are based on Philippians 2:1-13, teaching us how to live and love as Christ does, and reminding us that we never walk the journey of faith alone. I am grateful for a church that encourages youth leadership each week, and supports our wonderful youth kiddos and their families! We hope May 17 is a vibrant, joyful day of worship and a chance for intergenerational fellowship!

-Hannah Knight, Director of Children and Youth Ministries

Summer Schedule

May 17 will be our last Sunday with two services. Over the Memorial Day weekend, **May 24, we will go to our summer schedule** of one service at 10:00 a.m. Regular Sunday School classes will not meet over the summer. In June, you are invited to join us for a "FPC History Book Club" More information about it will be published in the coming weeks.

Books for Keeps

Help make sure no child in our community goes a summer without great books to read. Please bring your used books to the bins in the Atrium or church office between Sunday, April 19, and Sunday, May 24. Books for Keeps can accept books of all kinds except textbooks and encyclopedias. To learn more about the organization, please go to booksforkeeps.org. Thank you!

THIS WEEK

Sunday, May 10 - Mother's Day

8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Ryan Baer preaching
9:45 a.m. Sunday School

Monday, May 11

10:00 a.m. Congregational Care Commission Meeting, Staff Conference Room
5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Room 205
5:30 p.m. UGA Campus Kitchen

Tuesday, May 12

7:00 a.m. Our Daily Bread Breakfast, First Baptist Church
1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
5:30 p.m. UGA Campus Kitchen

Wednesday, May 13

9:15 a.m. Circle 7, Presbyterian Village
10:30 a.m. WDS Graduation Rehearsal, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, May 14

10:30 a.m. WDS Graduation, Sanctuary
11:00 a.m. WDS Graduation Reception, Fellowship Hall
2:00 p.m. Mellows, Bentley Adult Day Care
4:30 p.m. M25 Resource Pantry
5:00 p.m. Administration Commission Meeting, Staff Conference Room

Sunday, May 17 - Youth Sunday

8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Ms. Hannah Knight preaching
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
12:00 p.m. Reception for Elaine Johnson, Fellowship Hall
5:00 p.m. Youth Group End of Year Celebration Party, Fellowship Hall

Matthew 25 Pantry Volunteers Needed

The Matthew 25 (M25) Commission will hold spring 2026 pantry distributions of such items as toilet paper, paper towels, batteries, lotion, cleaning products, aluminum foil, laundry soap etc., from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on eight consecutive Thursdays from May 7 to June 25. The M25 Commission seeks three volunteers for each of those Thursdays from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. to help with set up, clean up, and to assist with the distribution of the pantry items. Please access the sign up at tinyurl.com/FPCResourcePantry2026 if you would like to volunteer.

Come to the Party: God's Love For Us is a Reason to Celebrate!

Save the date for our intergenerational VBS! All ages are welcome - there will be activities for kids, youth, and adults! Dates are **July 12-15, 5:00-7:30 p.m.** Dinner is provided. The cost is \$30 per person to help provide materials and resources for our mission projects throughout the week. Payment can be made via our website (firstpresathens.org/giving, please select "General Fund" under "select a fund", and write "VBS 2026" in the memo line) or mailed to the church office. You are invited to come join the party - all are welcome!

Please register at tinyurl.com/vbsparty2026. Questions? Contact Hannah Knight, Director of Children and Youth Ministries, at hannah@firstpresathens.org.

EDUCATION – FAITH FORMATION

SUNDAYS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Director of Children and Youth Ministries: Hannah Knight

Interns: Morgan Cassidy, Devon Smith

Nursery Coordinator: Rita Raines

Children and Worship, 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

All children are welcome to remain in worship with their families every Sunday. Children's bulletins, Bibles, Busy Bags, and books are available at the children's tables located in the Narthex and on both sides of the choir loft.

Nursery Play, 8:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Children's Playroom • Infants – 4 Year Olds

Little ones are invited to Nursery Play during worship and Sunday school. Children will enjoy playtime, Bible stories, and a light snack with church friends.

Children's Church, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service

Children, Pre-K – 2nd Grade are invited to Children's Church after the passing of The Peace. We will continue worshipping together in the Children's Ministry Suite by listening to God's Word, praying to God, and responding through art and worship.

**No Children's Church on the first Sunday of the month, Communion Sunday. All children are invited to remain in the sanctuary on this special Sunday to take part in worship and Communion with family.*

**For any questions, please contact Hannah Knight
at hannah@firstpresathens.org.**

**Children and Youth Ministries – Sunday School
Godly Play (4 years–2nd grade)
Explorers (3rd–5th grade)
Youth (6th–12th grade)**

Children's Sunday School meets in the Children's Ministry Suite each Sunday starting at 9:45am. Our younger kiddos will be participating in **Godly Play**– an interactive, hands-on, reflective method of learning about God by modeling Bible stories and responding. Our **Explorers Class** is for our 3rd–5th graders and is new this year! This group will spend time learning more about Bible basics and hear the stories of God's people, following the Narrative Lectionary text.

Youth Sunday School meets in the PIT and kicks off each Sunday with donuts & fellowship at 9:45am! We use the Living the Word curriculum from Spirit & Truth Publishing– it directly follows the Narrative Lectionary Text each week. There is time for games, intentional discussion, and hearing the sacred stories of old!

Youth Group (5:30–7:00 p.m.)

Sunday night youth group is a safe space for youth to come as they are! We will split into middle and high school groups, eat a yummy meal, and finish the evening as a large group. There will be games, Bible study, creative response time, and lots of laughs as we spend intentional time together. The theme for this year is “Back to Basics”– we will spend time learning more about key Biblical figures, hearing the stories of old, and diving deeper into prayer. As Jesus reminds us– He is the vine and we are the branches (John 15)! There is value in abiding in the One who knows and loves us fully. Come join us– all are welcome!

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

9:45–10:40 a.m.

IN PERSON

Bible Basics • Moses Waddel Room
(class will resume on January 18)

Bible Basics is an intergenerational class that, as the name suggests, focuses on the Bible. In the Spring semester, the class is studying the book of Acts. If you are interested in studying how the early Christian movement began and laid the foundation for the emergence of the church, please join us at 9:50 a.m. in the Moses Waddel Room. *Contacts: David Dantzler (jdaviddantzler@gmail.com) and Elaine Johnson (elaine@firstpresathens.org)*

Builders • Room 301

This class is a space for anyone navigating the complexities of family life, relationships with children and youth, or careers. Our time together will offer a blend of fellowship, mutual support, Bible study, and service.

Contacts: Dr. Ryan Baer (ryan@firstpresathens.org) or Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard (whitney@firstpresathens.org)

HYBRID (in person and over Zoom)

Del Dunn Sunday School Class • Room 308

An in–depth study and discussion of scripture, offering a collegial environment and welcoming all who seek to

enrich their understanding of the Bible and its application to our daily lives. Currently we are studying *John's Letters* which focuses on the core values of living a Christian life. *Coordinator: Jerry Rogers (jrogersutw@aol.com)*
Zoom ID: 380 330 5940, PW: 245449

New Voices • Room 310

The New Voices class is a discussion based class. Our goal is to create joy through art– come visit our New Voices Art Studio– music, prayer, scripture, class led discussion and community. We're currently reading and discussing “The Tears Of Things– Prophetic Wisdom For An Age of Outrage.” By Richard Rohr. Our discussions are open minded, respectful, topical and fun.

Contact: Lewis Hudgins (lewisahudgins@gmail.com)

Zoom ID: 674 533 8902

Wayne F. Middendorf Men's Bible Class
Bride's Room, Tinsley Stern

The class features open and honest discussion in a nonjudgmental atmosphere about various aspects of Christianity. This year Rev. Will Norman is leading us in a study of the New Testament books.

Contact: Ian Hardin (ianhardin1@gmail.com)

Zoom ID: 883 5159 0923

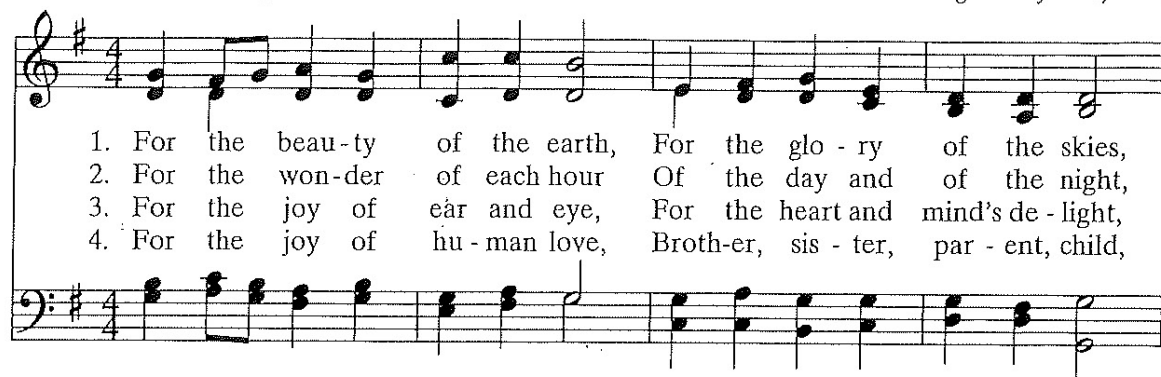
For the Beauty of the Earth

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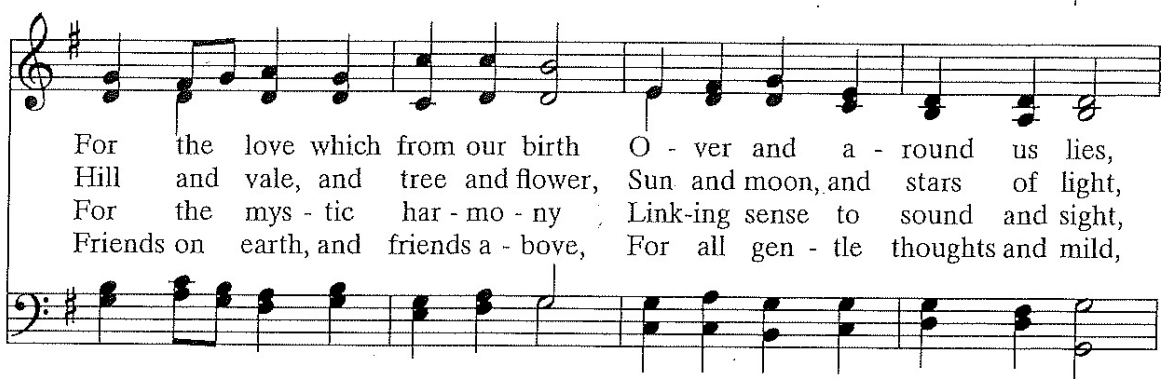
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Folliott Sandford Pierpoint, 1864

Conrad Kocher, 1838
Abr. William Henry Monk, 1861
Harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

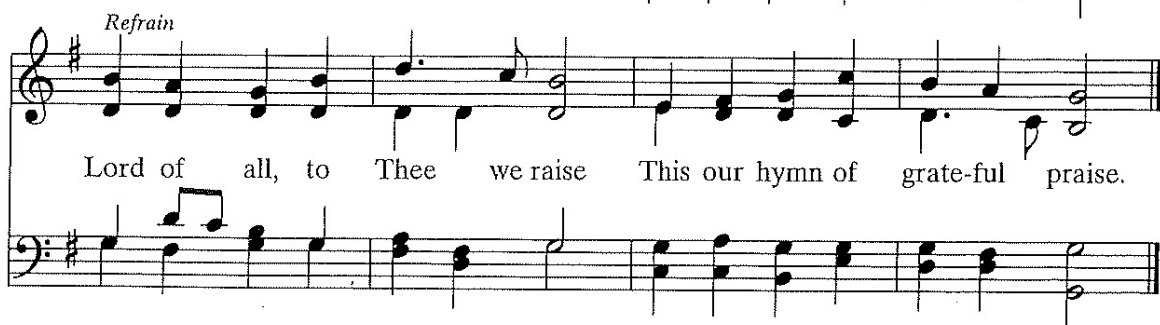


1. For the beau-ty of the earth, For the glo - ry of the skies,
2. For the won-der of each hour Of the day and of the night,
3. For the joy of ear and eye, For the heart and mind's de - light,
4. For the joy of hu - man love, Broth-er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,



For the love which from our birth O - ver and a - round us lies,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower, Sun and moon, and stars of light,
For the mys - tic har - mo - ny Link-ing sense to sound and sight,
Friends on earth, and friends a - bove, For all gen - tle thoughts and mild,

Refrain



Lord of all, to Thee we raise This our hymn of grate-ful praise.

5. For Thy church that evermore
Lifteth holy hands above,
Offering up on every shore

Her pure sacrifice of love,
Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

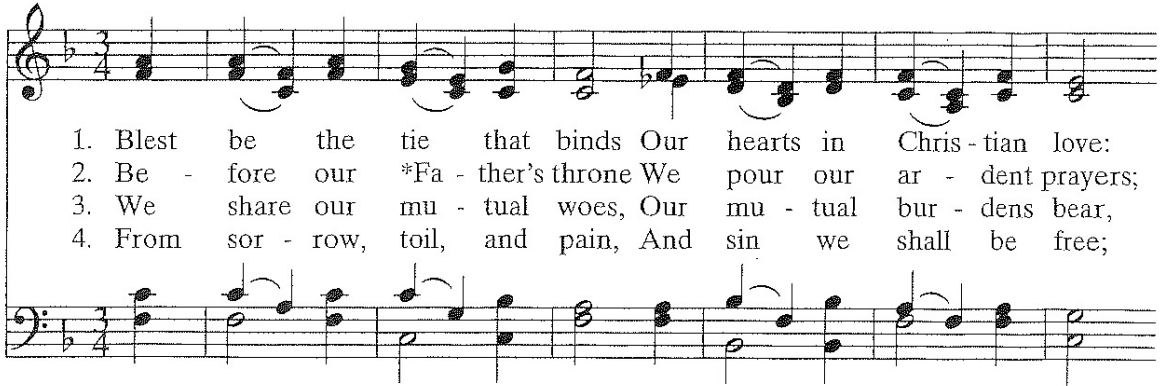
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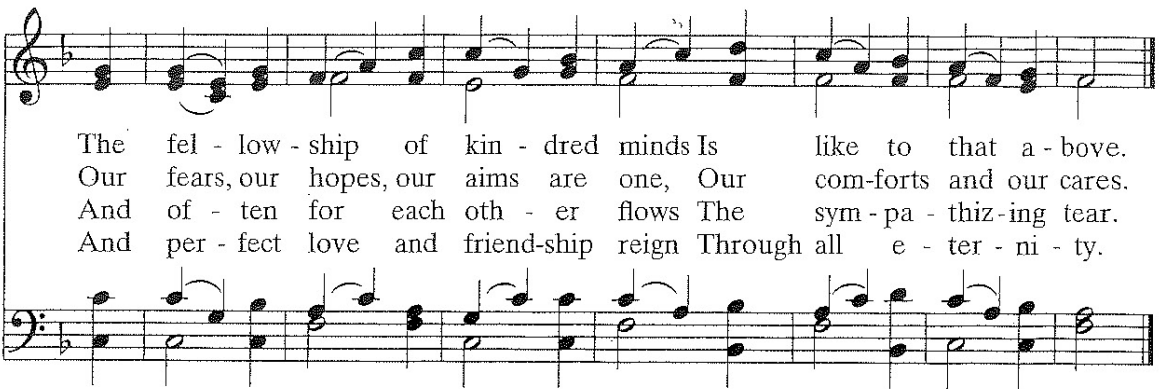
John Fawcett, 1782

Johann Georg Nägeli (1773–1836)

Arr. Lowell Mason, 1845



1. Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Chris-tian love:
2. Be - fore our *Fa - ther's throne We pour our ar - dent prayers;
3. We share our mu - tual woes, Our mu - tual bur - dens bear,
4. From sor - row, toil, and pain, And sin we shall be free;



The fel - low - ship of kin - dred minds Is like to that a - bove.
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, Our com-forts and our cares.
And of - ten for each oth - er flows The sym - pa - thiz-ing tear.
And per - fect love and friend-ship reign Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

*Or "Maker's."

Charles Wesley, 1747

Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831

1. Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heaven, to
 2. Breathe, O breathe Thy lov - ing Spir - it In - to ev - ery
 3. Come, Al - might - y to de - liv - er, Let us all Thy
 4. Fin - ish, then, Thy new cre - a - tion; Pure and spot - less

earth come down, Fix in us Thy hum - ble dwell - ing,
 trou - bled breast! Let us all in Thee in - her - it,
 life re - ceive; Sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er,
 let us be; Let us see Thy great sal - va - tion

All Thy faith - ful mer - cies crown! Je - sus, Thou art all com -
 Let us find the prom - ised rest; Take a - way the love of
 Nev - er - more Thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways
 Per - fect - ly re - stored in Thee; Changed from glo - ry in - to

pas - sion, Pure, un - bound - ed love Thou art; Vis - it us with
 sin - ning; Al - pha and O - me - ga be; End of faith, as
 bless - ing, Serve Thee as Thy hosts a - bove; Pray, and praise Thee
 glo - ry, Till in heaven we take our place, Till we cast our

Thy sal - va - tion, En - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, Set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, Glo - ry in Thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore Thee, Lost in won - der, love, and praise.

LIFE IN CHRIST

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION

Ryan Baer, Moderator Pat Waldrup, Clerk of Session

CLASS OF 2027

Susan Baldwin
Bill Bushnell
Amy Cowsert
Matt Crim
Jay Holloway
Tom Lane
Joan Pinson
Paige Simmons

CLASS OF 2028

Steven Brooks
Courtney Dantzler
Shannon Ferguson
Edward W. (Ned) Phares
Holly Sheats
Lawton Stephens
Madeline Van Dyck
John Webster

CLASS OF 2029

Meghan Bawcum
Stephen Covington
Andrew Griffith
Anne Marie Miller
Mike Morris
Leslye Queen
Laura Toney
Gail Wilfong

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor* (ryan@firstpresathens.org)
The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard, *Associate Pastor* (whitney@firstpresathens.org)
The Rev. Margaret Davis, *Parish Associate* (margaret@firstpresathens.org)
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist* (jcoble@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Hannah Knight, *Director of Children and Youth Ministries* (hannah@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Elaine Johnson, *Director of Weekday School* (elaine@firstpresathens.org)
Mr. Paulo Santos, *Office Administrator* (paulo@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Jennifer Adams, *Church Accountant* (jadams@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Joli Winstanley, *Administrative & Communications Assistant* (frontdesk@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Deanna Rollins, *Weekday School Administrative Assistant* (wds@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Charlotte Chromiak, *Children's Music Assistant* (charlotte@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Rita Raines, *Nursery Coordinator*
Mrs. Madeline Van Dyck, *Parish Nurse*
Mr. Wayne Brock, *Sexton*
Mr. Justin Winstanley, *Sunday Morning Manager*
Ms. Morgan Cassidy, *Children and Youth Ministries Intern*
Mr. Devon Smith, *Children and Youth Ministries Intern*