



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!

October 11, 2026
11:00 a.m.

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

If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee

Craig Phillips

Words of Welcome

Moment for Mission

Bethlehem Ministry

Song of Gathering

Hymn 489, stanza 1

Open now thy gates of beauty, Zion, let me enter there.

Where my soul in joyful duty waits for God who answers prayer;

O how blessed is this place, filled with solace, light, and grace.

Call to Worship

Our God has freed us from bondage to sin.

We will worship and praise our God.

We shall have no other gods before our God.

We will turn away from the idols of this world.

Our God has freed us from sin and death.

Thanks be to God!

*Hymn 334

When Israel Was in Egypt's Land

GO DOWN MOSES

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Creating and renewing God, you have made us in your image to carry your life-giving love as a blessing to all the world. Yet we fail again and again to live out your call. We place our trust in money and possessions, in flawed people and broken relationships, in the things that cannot sustain us. We do the things we do not want to do, and we fail to do the things we know you would have us do. Forgive us for all the ways we fall short. Open our eyes, hearts, and minds to your presence, and re-create us in your image each day, for the good of all that you have made.

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

Today we welcome
Rennae Henry,
Executive Director of
Bethlehem Ministry.

Nothing in Hebrew scripture resonated more with early African Americans than Israel's slavery in Egypt. The spiritual *When Israel Was in Egypt's Land* uses the recurring line "let my people go," in which past and present became one, as they still do for all who are oppressed.

**Those who are able please stand.*

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 Passing of the Peace at the 11:00 a.m. service, children, ages Pre-K - grade 2, are invited to Children’s Church held in the Children’s Ministry Suite on the first floor.

Lay Reader:
11:00: Anne Marie Miller

The anthem is a portion of Psalm 119, set to music by contemporary American composer David Hurd.

Be Thou My Vision is part of 20th-century poetic version of an Irish monastic prayer from the 10th century or before, set to a Irish folk tune which has remained popular despite its lack of repetition and wide range.

*Silent Prayer

Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

*Assurance of Pardon

*Congregational Response

David Ogden



*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.

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Congregational Prayer for Illumination

Hymn 327, stanza 1

**O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky;
we praise you for the radiance that from the hallowed page,
a lantern to our footsteps, shines on from age to age.**

First Lesson

John 15:9-12, page 985

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

Anthem

Teach Me, O Lord

David Hurd

*Refrain: Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes;
and I shall keep it to the end.*
Give me understanding, and I shall keep your law;
I shall keep it with all my heart.
Make me go in the path of your commandments,
for that is my desire. *Refrain*
Incline my heart to your decrees and not to unjust gain.
Turn my eyes from watching what is worthless;
give me life in your ways. *Refrain*
Fulfill your promise to your servant,
which you make to all who fear you.
Behold, I long for your commandments;
in your righteousness preserve my life. *Refrain*

Second Lesson

Exodus 19:1-9, 20:1-17, page 64

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

Sermon

The Ten Best Ways

Ms. Hannah Knight

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

*Hymn 339

Be Thou My Vision

SLANE

*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.

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.

Moment for Generosity James Dantzler

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory *Be Thou My Vision* Dale Wood
***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.

***Prayer of Dedication**

SENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

***Hymn 282** *If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee*
WER NUR DEN LIEBEN GOTT

***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 *Prelude and Fugue in G* Bach circle

Texts and music for hymns and sung responses reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-714861

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.



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

If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee was originally a German text based on Psalm 55. The author/composer wrote it in thanksgiving for finding work weeks after being robbed and left almost penniless.

Nurseries for children 4 years old and younger, available from 9:30 a.m. to 12:10 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 – 2nd 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 Passing of the Peace. 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

Ms. Hannah Knight, *Director of Children & Youth Ministries*
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*
Mr. Chuck Toney, *Liturgist*

Lay Reader

Anne Marie Miller

USHERS

Jimbo LaBoon (head), Laura Toney

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Justin Winstanley

AUDIOVISUAL TECHNICIAN

Bryan Owens

FLOWERS

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

OCTOBER FLOWER TEAM

Greta Covington (chair), Judy Burch, Sydney Jackson, Wanda Neislar, Leslye Queen

TO AID IN WORSHIP

If you need to leave the sanctuary during the service, a live video feed is available in the Atrium, 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.

New Members First Things Class

Join us for our next First Things gathering on **Sunday, October 18** from **12:15 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.** This will be a time to get better acquainted, meet the church staff, and talk about what makes First Presbyterian Church of Athens unique.

On **Sunday, October 25**, new members will meet with the Session (our governing board) at **10:00 a.m.** to be received into membership and will be introduced to the congregation at the 11:00 a.m. service. To RSVP, please call the church office (706-543-4338) or e-mail Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard at whitney@firstpresathens.org by **Tuesday, October 13.**

Family Promise Host Weeks October 18-31

FPC will be the host church for Family Promise from October 18 - 31. Volunteers directly impact and assist the families by helping provide a meal, giving a \$25 donation (to First Pres with Family Promise in memo) to purchase groceries or rideshare gift cards, driving the families to job interviews or medical appointments (using the Family Promise van), or helping on Saturday with a children’s activity at the Day Center (located at 205 Bray St.) as part of our Go Forth volunteer initiative.

To volunteer, please sign up at tinyurl.com/FPAVolunteer. If you have questions, please contact the Family Promise Coordinators, Susan Boatwright at boatwright.susan@gmail.com or Jean Bock at bockjean@gmail.com.

Sign Up for the New Church App, Realm

Have you signed up for Realm Connect? If you haven’t, please scan the QR code and click “Sign Up” or go to onrealm.org/FirstPresAthensGA. More information about Realm can be found on the church website or on our bulletin boards.



THIS WEEK

Sunday, October 11 - AthHalf Pre-Race Worship Service, One Service at 11:00 a.m.

- 6:30 a.m. AthHalf Pre-Race Service, Atrium
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School
- 11:00 a.m. Worship Service, Ms. Hannah Knight preaching
- 4:00 p.m. St. Andrews Choir Rehearsal, Room 202
- 4:45 p.m. Youth Choir Rehearsal, Room 202
- 5:30 p.m. Youth Group, The PIT

Monday, October 12

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

Tuesday, October 13

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

Wednesday, October 14

- 9:15 a.m. Circle 7, Presbyterian Village
- 4:30 p.m. Shakespeare and Friends Class, Staff Conference Room
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, October 15 - Weekday School Closed for Fall Break

- 4:30 p.m. Matthew 25 Resource Pantry, The PIT
- 5:30 p.m. Session Worship, Sanctuary
- 6:00 p.m. Stated Session Meeting, Moses Waddel Room

Friday, October 16 - Weekday School Closed for Fall Break

Sunday, October 18 - Family Promise Host Weeks Begin

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Ryan Baer preaching
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School
- 12:15 p.m. First Things New Member Class, Staff Conference Room
- 12:15 p.m. Mission and Outreach Commission Meeting, Moses Waddel Room

Go Forth - FPC Day of Service

Saturday, October 24

Join us for a morning of church-wide service to and with our neighbors all around Athens! We'll have a few different work sites with projects for children, youth, and adults at all ability levels. Sign up at tinyurl.com/goforth26 and please reach out to Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard (whitney@firstpresathens.org) with any questions.

We will gather in the FPC Fellowship Hall at 9:00 a.m. for breakfast and prayer together before breaking into our groups to "go forth" to share the love of Christ with our neighbors, partnering with our neighbors to serve all over town!

Volunteers Needed for the FPC Resource Pantry!

The M25 Commission still has Resource Pantry volunteer spots open! Each Thursday from **October 15 through November 19** from **4:00 to 6:00 p.m.** help is needed to 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.

We are excited to hold those pantry distributions again this year and welcome all to join us.

Recommendations for Elders

The Nominations and Elections Committee encourages your participation in the process for nominating Elders. Elders should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian Gospel, both within the church and in the world at large.

Please e-mail your suggestions to Jay Holloway, Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee, at jaytholloway@gmail.com. You can also fill out the form in the website (www.firstpresathens.org).

Current Elders:
(Not eligible for recommendation)

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 Griffeth
Anne Marie Miller
Mike Morris
Leslye Queen
Laura Toney
Gail Wilfong

I prayerfully recommend the following for Elder:

Name	Reasons	<div></div> <div></div>
Name	Reasons	<div></div> <div></div>
Name	Reasons	<div></div> <div></div>
Name	Reasons	<div></div> <div></div>
Name	Reasons	<div></div> <div></div>

Members of the Nominations and Elections Committee are Jay Holloway (Chair), Matt Jones, Jimbo LaBoon, and Beverly Phares.

EDUCATION – FAITH FORMATION

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES

Director of Children and Youth Ministries: Hannah Knight

Interns: Morgan Cassidy

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.*

Contact Hannah Knight (hannah@firstpresathens.org), Director of Children and Youth Ministries, with any questions.

Children's Sunday School meets in the Children's Ministry Suite each Sunday starting at 9:45am. Our younger children participate in **Godly Play** (4 years to 2nd grade), an interactive, hands-on, reflective method of learning and wondering about God's great story. Our **Explorers Class** (3rd – 5th grade) also learn the stories of God's people, through acting out stories, worship and prayer practices, designing and playing games, and more!

Youth Sunday School (6th – 12th grade) meets in the PIT (youth space on basement level) kicking off each Sunday with donuts & fellowship at 9:45am. This class studies scripture that follows the texts of that morning's worship service, engaging these sacred stories alongside games and fun conversation. Middle and high school small groups will meet together sometimes, as well as in separate small groups.

Youth Group (5:30-7:00 p.m.)

This Sunday evening gathering is a safe space for both middle school (6th–8th grades) and high school youth (9th–12th grades) to come as they are to enjoy fellowship, dinner, games, Bible study, and prayer-- a great way to begin the week! The theme for this year is "Fruit of the Spirit" (as found in Galatians 5), so we will learn about love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control — and how those fruits help us to follow Christ in our daily lives. All are welcome — bring a friend!

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

9:45-10:45 a.m.

Bible Basics • Moses Waddel Room

This fall, we will explore the beginning and early years of Israel's monarchy as recounted in the books of 1 & 2 Samuel. Just as the early Israelites did in ancient times, we will wrestle with the questions of: Who is God? Who are we as God's people? What is God's plan for us and God's creation? If you are interested in learning how these issues are addressed in these Old Testament texts, please join us. *Contacts: David Dantzler (jdaviddantzler@gmail.com) and Elaine Johnson (elaine@firstpresathens.org)*

Del Dunn Sunday School Class • Room 308

We offer an in-depth study of scripture in a collegial environment and welcome all who seek to enrich their understanding of the Bible and its application to our daily lives. Several teachers rotate in leading the class in thought-provoking discussions. Our study for the fall is 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus in the LifeGuide Bible Studies series published by InterVarsity Press. *Coordinator: Jerry Rogers: jrogerswtw@aol.com.* Zoom ID: 380 330 5940, PW: 245449

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)*

New Voices • Room 310

Our goal is to create joy through art, food, music, prayer, scripture, class-led discussion, community, open-mindedness, and inclusion. This year, we hope to discuss a variety of topics and texts: darkness and light, *Christian Doctrine* (Shirley Guthrie), and *Ecclesiastes for You and Me* (John Iles). *Contact: Lewis Hudgins (lewisahudgins@gmail.com)* Zoom ID: 674 533 8902

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

Rev. Will Norman will lead us in discussion on books of the New Testament. On other weeks, we watch and discuss the "Great Churches of Christianity", a DVD series led by Professor William Cook. All are welcome, as are all viewpoints. *Contact: Ian Hardin (ianhardin1@gmail.com)* Zoom ID: 883 5159 0923

When Israel Was in Egypt's Land

334

GO DOWN MOSES 8.5.8.5 with refrain

African-American spiritual
Arr. Melva W. Costen, 1989

African-American spiritual

1. When Is - rael was in E - gypt's land, Let my peo-ple go!
2. "Thus saith the Lord," bold Mo - ses said: Let my peo-ple go!
3. "No more shall they in bond-age toil," Let my peo-ple go!

Op - pressed so hard they could not stand, Let my peo-ple go!
"If not, I'll smite your first-born dead," Let my peo-ple go!
"Let them come out with E - gypt's spoil," Let my peo-ple go!

Refrain
Go down, Mo - ses, Mo - ses, Way down in E - gypt's land,
Go down, go down, Mo - ses,

Tell old Phar - aoh, Let my peo-ple go!

Ancient Irish poem

Trans. Mary E. Byrne, 1905

Vers. Eleanor Hull, 1912; alt.

Irish ballad

Harm. David Evans, 1927

1. Be Thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2. Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 3. Be Thou my wis - dom, and Thou my true word;

Nought be all else to me, save that Thou art—
 Thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 I ev - er with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;

Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
 Thou and Thou on - ly, first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

Wak - ing or sleep - ing, Thy pres - ence my light.
 Great God of heav - en, my trea - sure Thou art.
 Still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee 282

WER NUR DEN LIEBEN GOTT 9.8.9.8.8.8

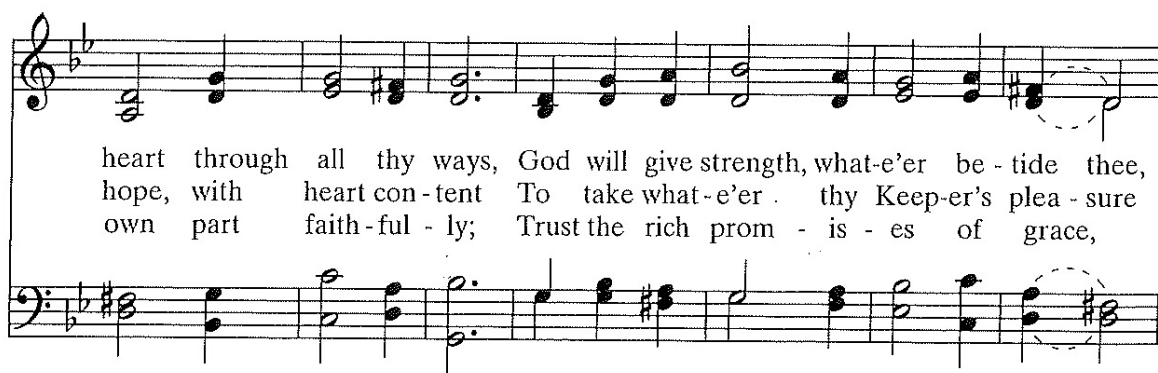
Georg Neumark, 1657

Trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1855, 1863; alt. 1987

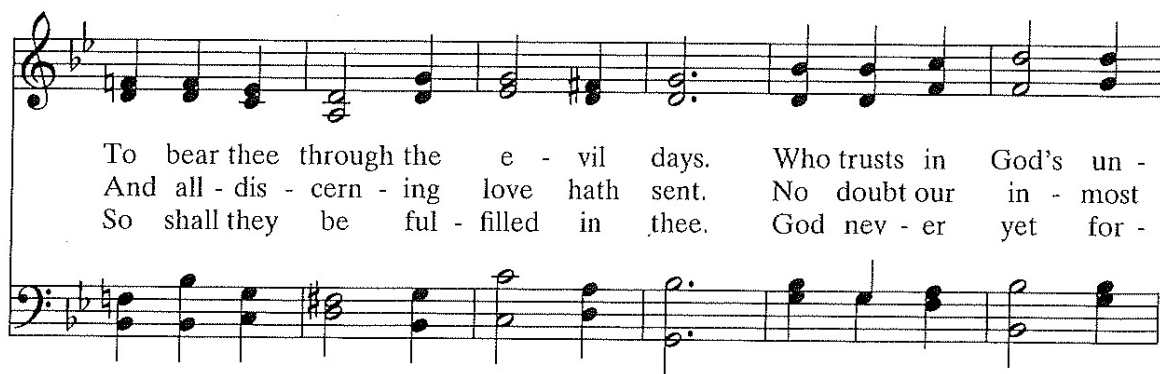
Georg Neumark, 1657



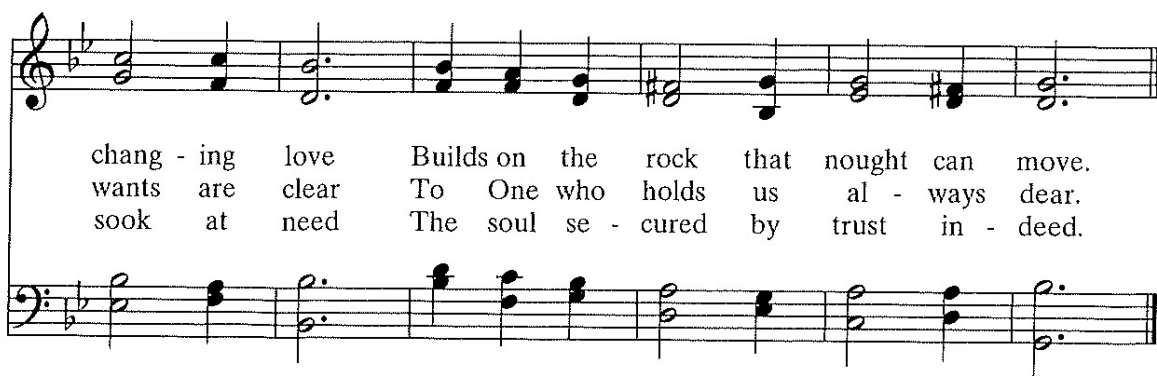
1. If thou but trust in God to guide thee, With hope-ful
 2. On - ly be still, and wait God's lei - sure In cheer-ful
 3. Sing, pray, and swerve not from God's ways, But do thine



heart through all thy ways, God will give strength, what-e'er be - tide thee,
 hope, with heart con - tent To take what-e'er thy Keeper's plea - sure
 own part faith - ful - ly; Trust the rich prom - is - es of grace,



To bear thee through the e - vil days. Who trusts in God's un -
 And all - dis - cern - ing love hath sent. No doubt our in - most
 So shall they be ful - filled in thee. God nev - er yet for -



chang - ing love Builds on the rock that nought can move.
 wants are clear To One who holds us al - ways dear.
 sook at need The soul se - cured by trust in - deed.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION

Ryan Baer, Senior Pastor Pat Waldrip, Clerk of Session
Whitney Booth Lockard, Associate Pastor

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 Dantzer
Shannon Ferguson
Edward W. (Ned) Phares
Holly Sheats
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Madeline Van Dyck
John Webster

CLASS OF 2029

Meghan Bawcum
Stephen Covington
Andrew Griffeth
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. Mikel Williams, *Director of Weekday School* (mikel@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*