



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 18, 2026
8:45 and 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

Hanover

Charles Callahan

Words of Welcome

Moment for Mission

Athens Wellness Clinic

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

Choose this day whom you will serve.

We will serve God, who made us.

Choose this day whom you will serve.

We will serve God, who frees us.

Choose this day whom you will serve.

We will serve God, who calls us to love.

***Hymn 477** *Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim* HANOVER

*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 Stephanie Witt, Executive Director of Athens Wellness Clinic.

Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim resembles many 18th-century artworks that show parallel between worship on earth and worship in heaven as described in Revelation. The tune has had many names and the one here honors British monarchs from 1714-1901.

**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: David Dantzler

O Jesus, I Have Promised was written to highlight promises made by the author's daughter and sons at their confirmation, recalling promises made in Baptism and in the Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant.

***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 Matthew 4:8-10, page 881
This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

11:00 Anthem *With a Voice of Singing* Martin Shaw
With a voice of singing declare yet this, and let it be heard, Alleluia.
Utter it evern unto the ends of the earth.
The Lord hath delivered his people, Alleluia.
O be joyful in God, all ye lands,
O sing praises to the honor of his name,
make his praise to be glorious.

Second Lesson Joshua 24:1-26, page 213
This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon *Choose Ye This Day* Dr. Ryan Baer

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn 388** *O Jesus, I Have Promised* ANGEL'S STORY

***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 Becky Hartman

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Finlandia Robert J. Powell

*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 insert Be Still, My Soul FINLANDIA

*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 Grand Chœur Théodore Dubois

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Be Still, My Soul is a meditative text that seems rooted in Psalm 46, “Be still and know that I am God,” and also 1 Thessalonians 4, “we will be with the Lord forever.” The hymn tune name comes from the tone poem by Jean Sibelius, *Finlandia*, on which it is based.

Nurseries for children 4 years old and younger, available from 8:30 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

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor*

The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard, *Associate Pastor*

Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*

Lay Reader

David Dantzler

USHERS

8:45 a.m. John Simpson (head),
Michelle Clendenen-Shaw

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

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Justin Winstanley

AUDIOVISUAL TECHNICIAN

Bryan Owens

FLOWERS

The Sanctuary flowers are given to the glory of God
and in memory of Arthur Robinson McKay, Jr. and
Max Louis Wendler give by Carol McKay.

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.

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!

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.

All Saints' Concert on November 1, 4:00 p.m.

The First Presbyterian Church Chancel Choir will perform Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem*, with guest instrumentalists Rachael Fischer, violin, and Elizabeth Bennett Veal, harp. This concert is free and open to the public.

THIS WEEK

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

Monday, October 19

- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Handbell Choir Room
- 5:30 p.m. Campus Kitchen, Main Kitchen

Tuesday, October 20

- 5:30 p.m. Campus Kitchen, Main Kitchen

Wednesday, October 21

- 8:30 a.m. Weekday School Muffins with Mom, Fellowship Hall
- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 4:30 p.m. Shakespeare and Friends Class, Staff Conference Room
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, October 22

- 8:30 a.m. Weekday School Muffins with Mom, Fellowship Hall
- 9:05 a.m. Weekday School Chapel, Children's Ministry Suite
- 4:30 p.m. Matthew 25 Resource Pantry, The PIT

Saturday, October 24

- 9:00 a.m. Go Forth! – FPC Day of Service, Fellowship Hall

Sunday, October 25

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard preaching
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School
- 10:00 a.m. First Things New Member Coffee with Session, Parlor
- 12:00 p.m. Reception to Welcome New Members, Atrium
- 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

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.



“Footsteps of Paul” Trip

As a result of their study of Acts last Spring, members of the Bible Basics class are exploring the possibility of a group trip to Greece and possibly Ephesus in the Fall of 2027 or Spring of 2028. If you are interested in learning more about how this trip is coming together, please join us for a light lunch and an opportunity for discussion and exchange of ideas at **12:15 p.m. on November 8th** in the Moses Waddel Room. Please RSVP to Elaine Johnson (Elaine@firstpresathens.org) by **November 3rd** so that we can have lunch for you! If you are interested but cannot attend, please email Elaine by the same date, so that you can be included in informational updates as we move forward.

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>
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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: jrogersutw@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

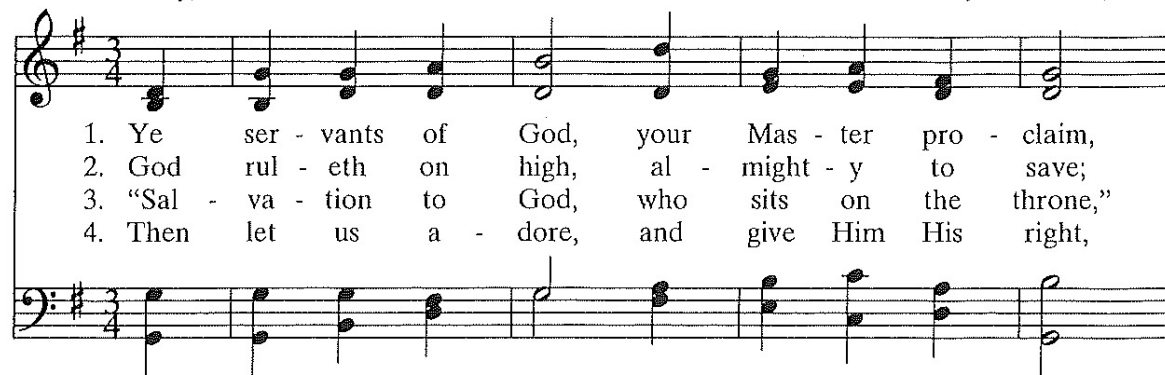
Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim 477

HANOVER 10.10.11.11

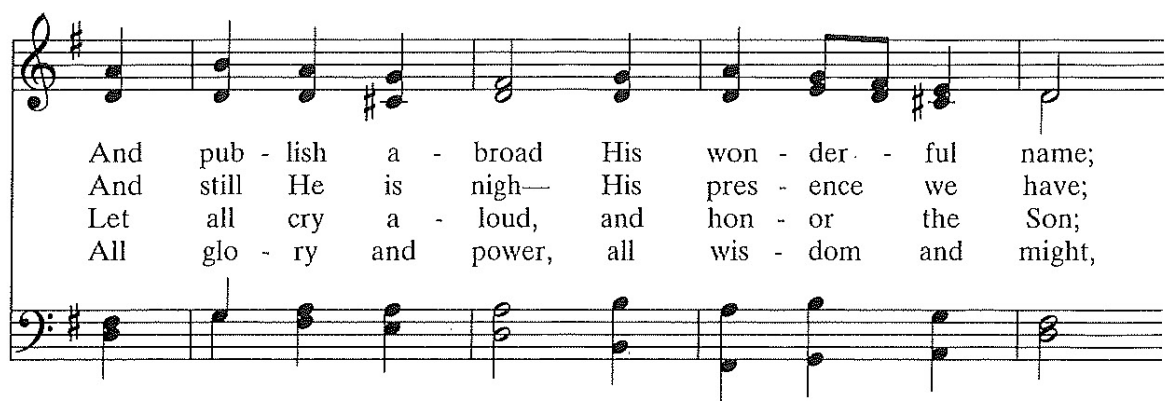
Attr. William Croft, 1708

Charles Wesley, 1744

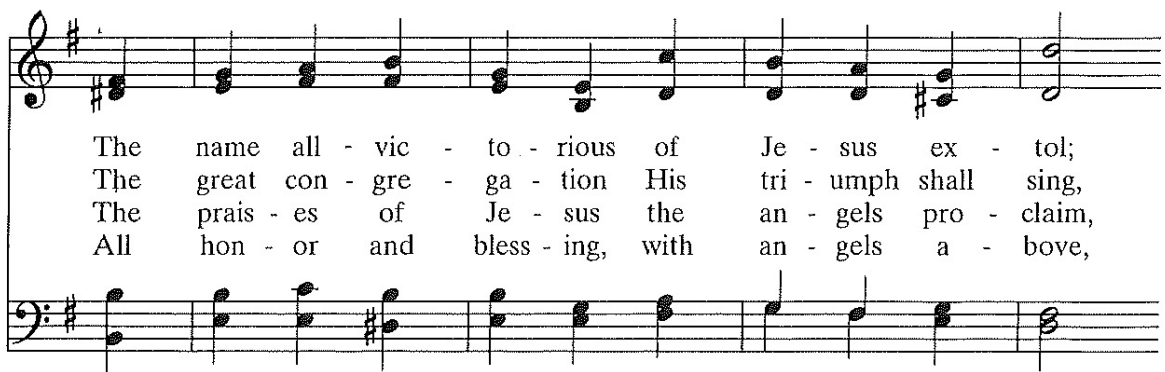
A Supplement to the New Version of the Psalms, 1708



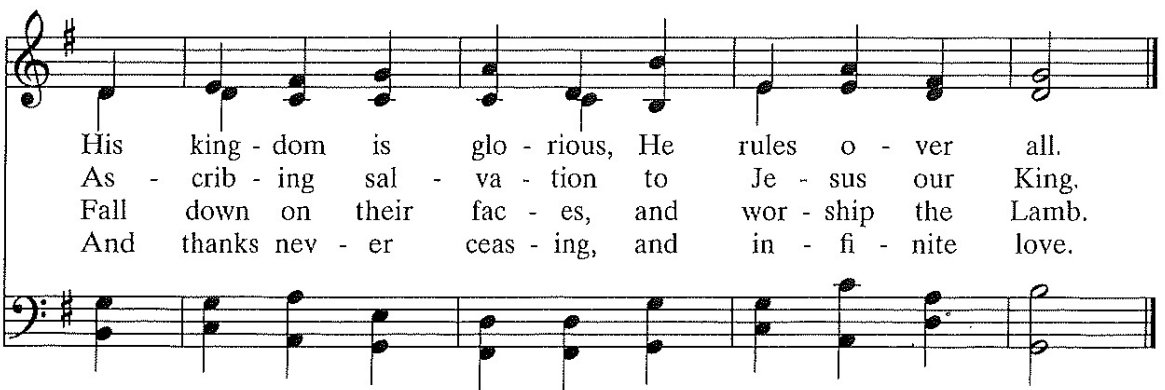
1. Ye ser - vants of God, your Mas - ter pro - claim,
2. God rul - eth on high, al - might - y to save;
3. "Sal - va - tion to God, who sits on the throne,"
4. Then let us a - dore, and give Him His right,



And pub - lish a - broad His won - der - ful name;
And still He is nigh— His pres - ence we have;
Let all cry a - loud, and hon - or the Son;
All glo - ry and power, all wis - dom and might,



The name all - vic - to - rious of Je - sus ex - tol;
The great con - gre - ga - tion His tri - umph shall sing,
The prais - es of Je - sus the an - gels pro - claim,
All hon - or and bless - ing, with an - gels a - bove,



His king - dom is glo - rious, He rules o - ver all.
As - crib - ing sal - va - tion to Je - sus our King.
Fall down on their fac - es, and wor - ship the Lamb.
And thanks nev - er ceas - ing, and in - fi - nite love.

O Jesus, I Have Promised

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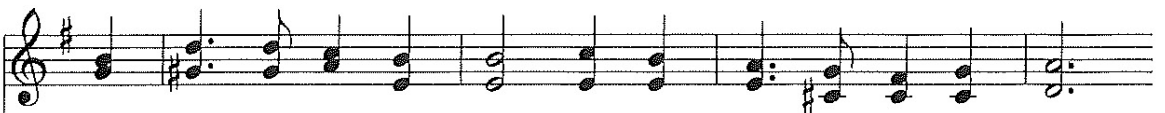
ANGEL'S STORY 7.6.7.6 D

John Ernest Bode, 1868

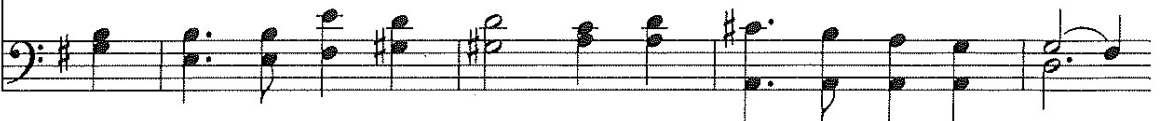
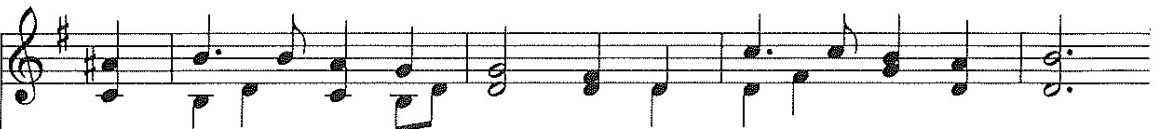
Arthur Henry Mann, 1881



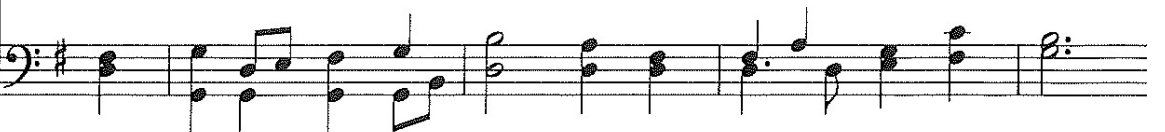
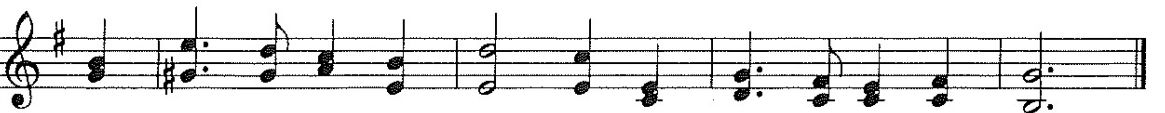
1. O Je - sus, I have prom - ised To serve Thee to the end;
2. O let me feel Thee near me! The world is ev - er near;
3. O let me hear Thee speak - ing In ac - cents clear and still,
4. O Je - sus, Thou hast prom - ised To all who fol - low Thee



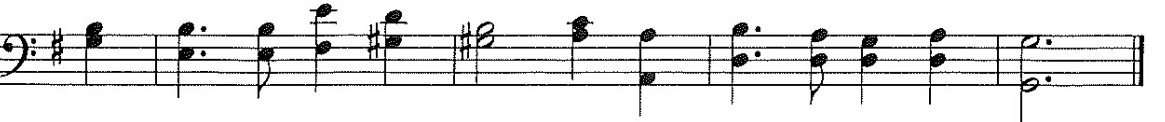
Be Thou for - ev - er near me, My Mas - ter and my friend;
I see the sights that daz - zle, The tempt - ing sounds I hear;
A - bove the storms of pas - sion, The mur - murs of self - will;
That where Thou art in glo - ry There shall Thy ser - vant be;



I shall not fear the bat - tle If Thou art by my side,
My foes are ev - er near me, A - round me and with - in;
O speak to re - as - sure me, To has - ten or con - trol;
And, Je - sus, I have prom - ised To serve Thee to the end;

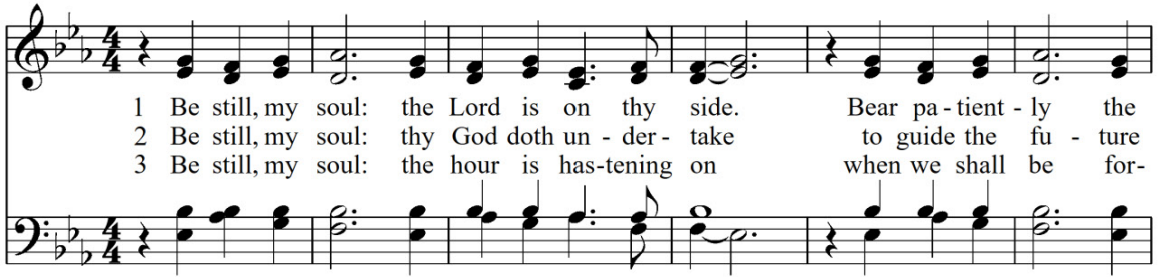


Nor wan - der from the path - way If Thou wilt be my guide.
But, Je - sus, draw Thou near - er And shield my soul from sin.
O speak, and make me lis - ten, Thou guard - ian of my soul.
O give me grace to fol - low, My Mas - ter and my friend.

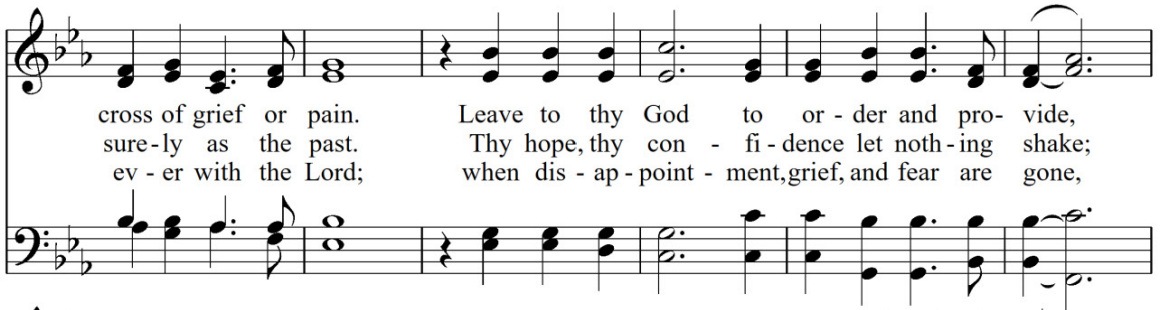


Be Still, My Soul

FINLANDIA



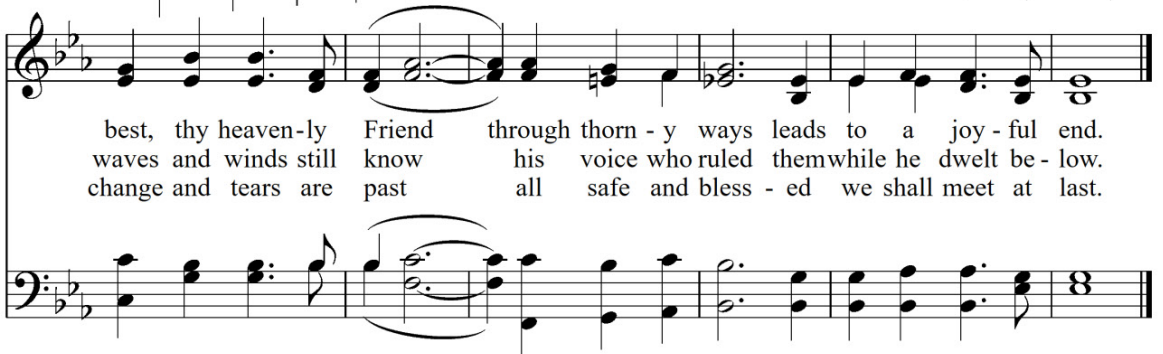
1 Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side. Bear pa-tient-ly the
2 Be still, my soul: thy God doth un-der-take to guide the fu-ture
3 Be still, my soul: the hour is has-tening on when we shall be for-



cross of grief or pain. Leave to thy God to or-der and pro-vide,
sure-ly as the past. Thy hope, thy con-fi-dence let noth-ing shake;
ev-er with the Lord; when dis-ap-point-ment, grief, and fear are gone,



who through all chang-es faith-ful will re-main. Be still, my soul: thy
all now mys-te-rious shall be bright at last. Be still, my soul: the
sor-ow for-got, love's pur-est joys re-stored. Be still, my soul: when



best, thy heav-en-ly Friend through thorn-y ways leads to a joy-ful end.
waves and winds still know his voice who ruled them while he dwelt be-low.
change and tears are past all safe and bless-ed we shall meet at last.

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 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

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*