

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SPARTANBURG, SC



AUGUST 31, 2025

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

11:00AM TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

WELCOME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH!

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church Spartanburg – we are delighted that you are joining us for worship today! First Presbyterian is a community of believers in the heart of Spartanburg seeking to know and share the transformative love of Jesus Christ with others. Here you will encounter people who come from all walks of life representing diverse beliefs and faith experiences. What binds us together is our common hope in Jesus Christ. Through worship, study, fellowship, and mission we seek to root our lives in scripture, nurture our unity in Christ, and serve our neighbors in faith! No matter who you are or where you are on your spiritual journey, know that you are welcome here.

Peace,

Rev. Alan F. Dyer
Senior Pastor

IF YOU ARE NEW HERE Whether you are searching for a church home or visiting from out of town, we are delighted that you are worshipping with us today. If you are interested in receiving more information about membership or the ministries of our congregation, please be sure to speak with a pastor before or after today's worship or fill out the friendship register. We would love to get to know you better!

PASTORAL CONCERN? Please let us know how we can be praying for you by visiting with a pastor before or after worship. If you need to contact a Minister, call 864-208-2142 day or night.

CHILDREN OF ALL AGES ARE WELCOME IN WORSHIP!

Activity Bags located in the welcoming areas of each worship venue are available for your child to use during worship. After worship, please return the crayons and bags to the baskets. The activity sheet is for your child to keep.

Nursery is available for infants through age 3 in the Clark Building in Room 105.

After *The Word for Children* in the 11:00am Traditional Service, children 3K-1st grade may attend Children's Worship with Ms. Kara. After the service, families are asked to pick their children up from Room 202 of the Clark Building.

TO AID IN WORSHIP Advanced listening technology, large-print hymnals, and large-print bulletins are available upon request for the Chapel and Sanctuary. Please locate an usher for assistance.

WORSHIP ONLINE Livestreaming of the Contemporary and Traditional Worship Services is available at fpcspartanburg.org/worship. Additionally, sermons are on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music, or wherever you find your podcasts!

WAYS TO GIVE There are many ways you can support the missions and ministries of First Presbyterian. During worship, you may place your gift in the Offering Plate or you can scan the QR Codes. The ShelbyNext QR code will direct you to our online giving portal. Additionally, you may give via Venmo or mail a check to the church office (address on back of bulletin). Thank you for your gifts. *Questions? Contact Church Financial Officer Lynise Clarke; 864-208-2130/lclarke@fpcspartanburg.org.*



ShelbyNext



Venmo

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

11:00AM
SANCTUARY

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

WELCOME AND INVITATION

Rev. L. Craig Foster

This is the day that the Lord has made;
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

OPENING VOLUNTARY

Dove of Peace

Gilbert Martin

INTROIT

There is Now a New Creation

STUTT GART

✠CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Rachel N. Klomp maker

Like a tiny seed or a little leaven,
the realm of God grows among us.
Like a hidden treasure or precious pearl,
the realm of God is all we desire.

✠HYMN 401

Here in This Place

GATHER US IN

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Ansley B. Page

**God, your kingdom confounds us.
You challenge our assumptions about right living
and stretch our understanding of what holds worth.
You reverse our expectations and reorder our priorities
until they reflect your vision of well-being for all.
Your kingdom surprises us with grace upon grace.
But we cling to the values of this world,
which favor products over people, success over service,
and competition for resources over the common good.
Open us to new ways of living
that embody your desire for creation
and contribute to a commonwealth
marked by justice and joy.**

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God!

✠RESPONSE

HYMN 447

WE ARE FORGIVEN

*We are forgiven. We are forgiven.
Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.
We are forgiven. We are forgiven.
Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.*

Today's liturgy and New Testament reading reflect on the kingdom of God, a central element in the teaching of Jesus. What images does the phrase "kingdom of God" evoke for you? What images might you use to describe God's kingdom?

✠ Please rise in body or in spirit.

✠PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

THE WORD FOR CHILDREN

Children ages 3 years to 1st grade are invited to dismiss to Children's Worship; those 2nd grade and older will return to the pews.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

I Need Thee Every Hour

NEED

FIRST READING

Genesis 18:1-8

SECOND READING

Luke 13:18-21

SERMON

The Kingdom of God is Like...

Rev. L. Craig Foster

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

✠AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Rev. Alan F. Dyer

FROM THE CONFESSION OF BELHAR

We believe

that God has entrusted the church with the

message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ;

that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world,

that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker,

that the church is witness both by word and by deed

to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells;

that God's life-giving Word and Spirit has

conquered the powers of sin and death, and

therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred,

bitterness and enmity, that God's life-giving

Word and Spirit will enable the church to live

in a new obedience which can open new possibilities

of life for society and the world.

Coming out of the context of apartheid in South Africa, the Confession of Belhar was added to our PC(USA) Book of Confessions in 2016. It speaks powerfully about unity amid diversity as both a gift and a responsibility.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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 TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

What a Fellowship

arr. Gilbert Martin

*What a fellowship, what a joy divine, Leaning on the Everlasting Arms!
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, Leaning on the Everlasting Arms!
Leaning, leaning, Safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, Leaning, Leaning on the Everlasting Arms!*

*O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way, Leaning on the Everlasting Arms!
O how bright the path grows from day to day, Leaning on the Everlasting Arms!*

*What have I to dread, what have I to fear; Leaning on the Everlasting Arms!
I have peace complete with my Lord so near; Leaning on the Everlasting Arms!*

*Leaning on Jesus, Safe and secure from all alarms,
Leaning on Jesus Arms!*

The refrain and music for our offertory were written by Anthony J. Showalter, an elder in the First Presbyterian Church of Dalton, GA. Based on Deuteronomy 33:27 (a text often used at funerals), it was written on the occasion of the death of two of his choral students. The verses were written by Elisha Hoffman, a prolific writer of 19th century hymns.

✦ DOXOLOGY

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures here below. Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise God, above ye heavenly host, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

✦ PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

BEARING THE WORD TO THE WORLD

✦ HYMN 372

O for a World

AZMON

✦ CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

✦ BENEDICTION RESPONSE

HYMN 175, VERSE 1

LAFFERTY

*Seek ye first the kingdom of God
and its righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you.
Allelu, alleluia!*

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

How Firm a Foundation

Edward Boughton

*The Flowers in the Sanctuary
are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of
Margaret Tucker Schoen, Lindy Schoen, and William Clifton Neal
by their families.*

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31, 2025

HELP WITH A WAY HOME

One of our first families has truly found “A Way Home”. Thanks to all who played a part in helping them transition to permanent housing! Our second rotation for A Way Home is **September 14-21**. Our greatest need is Saturday Rotation volunteers. These time slots are easy! Bring a book, sit back, and relax for two hours. Check on our guests on occasion and be there to give them access to FLC if they leave and return. Please prayerfully consider serving this ministry. Sign up at fpcspartanburg.org/awayhome or scan the QR code. If you did not receive training, contact Rhonda Dickerson (rhonda032856@gmail.com or 843-407-8065). She will be happy to send you an A Way Home FPC Manual that will explain the program.



SIGN UP FOR A LISTENING SESSION

This fall, we continue our year-long journey of listening and discernment to discover where God is leading FPC in the next five years. Beginning in September, church-wide listening sessions—small gatherings of 8–10 people offered on weekdays, weekends, and via Zoom—will give every member the chance to share their voice and help shape our future together. **Sign up for one session** at fpcspartanburg.org/listen or scan the QR code. If you're unable to sign up electronically, please call Monteigne Campbell in the church office.



WEDNESDAYS AT FIRST BEGINS 9/10

Wednesdays at First, our mid-week meal and programs, return **September 10!** Pastor Alan will open the season with an FPC *Looking Ahead Report*, followed on September 17 by stories from our youth about their summer mission trip to the Dominican Republic. **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS** to help make these evenings possible. Sign up to serve, reserve your dinner, and view the full program schedule at fpcspartanburg.org/waf or by scanning the QR code.



CHILDREN'S MUSIC STARTS SOON!

Registration is open for both First Steps in Music and Children's Choirs. We hope your little ones will join us this year to make a joyful noise! Children's Choirs (4K-5th grade) start on Wednesday, **September 10** at 5:00pm. First Steps in Music (birth-age 3) begins **September 14 and 17**. Enrollment is limited for First Steps. You can find details about each opportunity and sign up at fpcspartanburg.org/childrensmusic or scan the QR code.



DISCOVER FPC

Discover FPC classes are offered for visitors and new members to learn more and ask questions about our church, values, mission, and programs. The next class will begin **September 14** at 10:00-10:45am in the Large Private Dining Room (Family Life Center). Scan the QR code to learn more or visit fpcspartanburg.org/discoverfpc.



JOY FELLOWSHIP LADIES' TEA

You are invited to join your JOY Fellowship friends for our annual Ladies' Tea on Tuesday, **September 16**, 3:00-5:00pm in the Parlor. Enjoy an afternoon of delectable sweets and savories, and wear your favorite hat if you'd like! Sign up at fpcspartanburg.org/ladiestea by Thursday, September 11.

THIRD THING FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Come join us for “Third Thing”, a monthly gathering in a third space (not work, not home, but somewhere else), and where we will focus on a “third thing” (a question, article, scripture, etc.) for discussion. We will meet the third Tuesday of each month from 5:00-6:30pm at Fretwell. The first half hour is for getting food/drinks and fellowship, and we will start the discussion around 5:30pm. Mark your calendars for the first “Third Thing” **September 16!**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESUMES NEXT WEEK!

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Nursery – Room C105 (Clark Building)
Preschool (3K-5K) – Room C110 (Clark Building)
1st & 2nd Grade - Room C202
3rd & 4th Grade - Room C203
5th Grade - Room C206
Youth - Second Floor of the Family Life Center

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Bible Alive – Room 2215 & Zoom
An extensive book-by-book study of the Bible

Emmaus – Purnell Room (New Location)
A journey with eyes open towards Jesus, with fellowship and a fresh new scripture-based lesson each week.

Faith Forum (New this Fall) - Social Hall
All ages are welcome to the Faith Forum! Each week, we will enjoy about 10 minutes of coffee and fellowship, 20 minutes of teaching, and 15 minutes of small group conversations. We will have a different series each month led by gifted teachers.

September Study: Y'all Are a Temple of the Holy Spirit – Images of the Church in 1 Corinthians, led by Kyle Keefer

BIBLE & BOOK STUDIES THIS FALL

There are many opportunities to share in spiritual development and intelligent faith this fall. *Exodus: God's Covenant Community Begins* **starts this week (Tuesday at 12:30pm or Thursday at 5:30pm in the Purnell Room)**. This study, led by Craig Foster, will explore the depth of the story of exodus in both the Old and New Testaments. Readings of Exodus will be accompanied by Walter Breuggemann's book *Deliver Us: Salvation and the Liberating God of the Bible*.

Check out the several other offerings that begin in early September at fpc-spartanburg.org/studies or scan the QR code.



CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 10

Wednesdays at First Returns

SEPTEMBER 14-21

Host Church for A Way Home

SEPTEMBER 16

JOY Fellowship Ladies' Tea

SEPTEMBER 16

Third Thing for Young Adults

SEPTEMBER 25-28

Philip Stopford Workshop & Concert

LOOKING AHEAD

OCTOBER 15

Healing and Wholeness Service
for Pregnancy and Infant Loss

OCTOBER 25

Winter Warmth

OCTOBER 26

Kirkin' o' the Tartans / Reformation Sunday
Ecumenical Blood Drive

OCTOBER 29

Trunk or Treat

NOVEMBER 2

All Saints' Day

NOVEMBER 16-23

Host Church for A Way Home

NOVEMBER 25

Spartanburg Community Thanksgiving Service

NOVEMBER 30

First Sunday of Advent

Keep up with all Life of the Church events at fpcspartanburg.org.

TODAY'S MUSICIANS

Janet Kuntz, guest director;
Bruce Campbell, guest organist; Summer Choir

Cover Image: Faith by Mike Moyers

Parts of today's liturgy are adapted from *Call to Worship, V47.1, 2013, p.214 and V53.1, 2019-2020, p.143*

TO PONDER PRAYERFULLY

*“Pharaoh introduces the principle of scarcity into the world economy.
For the first time in the Bible, someone says,
‘There’s not enough. Let’s get everything.’”*

- Walter Brueggemann

MINISTERS: ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

We are a community of believers committed to “Glorifying God and Sharing Christ Together through Word and Deed.”

Rev. Alan F. Dyer
Senior Pastor

Rev. Leslie L. Denny
Associate Pastor
Young Adults and Missions

Rev. L. Craig Foster
Associate Pastor
Discipleship

Rev. Rachel N. Klompmaker
Associate Pastor
Congregational Care

Rev. Ansley B. Page
Pastoral Associate for Engagement

Holt Andrews
Pastoral Musician

Marcia Andrews
Associate Director of Music;
Organist

Kara Clark
Director of Children’s Ministries

Carrie Coleman
Youth Ministry Coordinator

Beth Cecil
Parish Nurse

Colleen Darrall
Director of Recreation

Jane Mullins
Director of Hospitality

Pano Stathakis
Kitchen Assistant

Kris Graham
Director of the Weekday School

Lisa Cunningham
Contemporary Worship Music Leader

Lee Raines
Facilities Administrator

Jim Pitts
Campus Safety and Services Manager

Lynise Clarke
Director of Finance

Joanie Shackleton
Assistant Director of Finance
and Mission Support

Montaigne Campbell
Office Manager and
Admin to the Senior Pastor

Cathy Bagwell
Visitor and New Member Coordinator

Caroline Goodman
Communications Director

Ian Ritchings
Communications Coordinator

Shannon Hutcheson
Administrative Assistant
Weekday School, Children’s and
Adult Discipleship

Cathy Rush
Receptionist and
Admin to Music

Kerri Bell
Administrative Assistant
Congregational Care and Deacons

Andy Mayfield
Grounds Manager

Judith Holbert
Tiffany Long
William Massey
Custodians



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393 East Main Street
Spartanburg, SC 29302
(864) 583-4531
www.fpcspartanburg.org