



**DID JESUS
REALLY
SAY THAT?**



**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
COVINGTON, GA**

**NINTH
SUNDAY
AFTER
PENTECOST**

JULY 30, 2023

✠ *Please stand in body or spirit*



Gathering As God's Beloved People

Gathering Music

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
Cantilena
Trumpet Tune

Robert Hebble
Josef Rheinburger
Charles Callahan

Prelude

The Day Thou Gavest

ST. CLEMENT

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

✠ **Call to Worship**

Jesus, Prince of Peace, asked us to love our enemies.

We ask, how do we do this?

And pray for those who persecute us.

We ask, what does this look like?

Pray for our enemies and those who oppose us.

We ask, what do we pray, Lord?

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Move in our offering of worship.

Show us the way!

Let us worship the living God!

✠ **Hymn of Praise 772**

Live into Hope

TRURO

✠ **Call to Confession**

✠Community Confession

Dear God,

You call us into a life that others have told us is easy, but it is not.

You challenge us to forgive, to love our enemies,

to bless those who curse us.

We want the easy way. This is hard.

Forgive us for stumbling and not paying attention

to how you would invite us to live in community with one another.

Grant us the patience and endurance for the journey

so that we may become a people full of love and grace

and forgiving others.

In Your name we pray. Amen.

✠Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness

Church, we are forgiven!

We are free to try again.

✠Hymn of Response 581

Glory Be to the Father

GLORIA PATRI (Greatorex)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen, amen.

✠Passing of the Peace

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you!



Proclaiming the Word

Wondering with God's Children

Anthem

Love Never Fails

J.A.C. Redford

Jodi Atkins, soprano; Aubrey Evans, alto

Prayer for God's Wisdom and Understanding

Scripture Reading

Matthew 5:43-48

Pew Bible page 5

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Message

Love your Enemies!

Seminarian Felicia Carson, Ph.D.



Responding to the Word

✦ Hymn of Response 753

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS

✦ Affirmation of Faith

excerpt from *A Brief Statement of Faith*

PCUSA

We trust in Jesus Christ,

Fully human, fully God.

Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:

preaching good news to the poor

and release to the captives,

teaching by word and deed

and blessing the children,

healing the sick

and binding up the brokenhearted,

eating with outcasts,

forgiving sinners,

**and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.
Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition,
Jesus was crucified,
suffering the depths of human pain
and giving his life for the sins of the world.
God raised this Jesus from the dead,
vindicating his sinless life,
breaking the power of sin and evil,
delivering us from death to life eternal.**

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.**

Offering Our Gifts

Offertory

Pianosong

Paul Halley

✠Response 606

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

OLD HUNREDTH

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

Prayer of Gratitude

*All are invited to join in our community Prayer of Gratitude by lifting up a one-word
prayer of thanksgiving.*



Being the Church in the World

✦ **Sending Hymn 300** *We Are One in the Spirit* THEY'LL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS

✦ **Charge and Benediction**

First Presbyterian Church Covington is a Christian community existing to glorify God by welcoming all of God's children. We celebrate through serving, teaching, praying, eating, crying, singing, and dancing with the Holy Spirit. As works in progress, we seek to respond to God's presence in our church, lives, and community.

Postlude

Prelude in G

J.S. Bach



Worship Practices

Sound System

We are excited to announce that Session has approved updating the sound system in our Sanctuary! Our sound system has not been updated in several years and we believe this is a valuable way to make our church welcoming and accessible for all of God's people. The new system is designed to improve the sound in the space, not only in volume but in clarity and it will include a Bluetooth hearing aid connectivity option.

Due to supply chain delays we do not have a firm timeline for installation, so we still encourage congregants who are hearing impaired to sit close to the front near the main speakers. Know that you have been heard and you are loved!

Friendship Registers

In each pew there is a pad with a black cover that we invite everyone to fill out. If the Friendship Register is nearest to you, please fill it out and pass it down the pew so it can reach everyone. When you pass it on, we invite you to introduce yourself to your pew friends!

We encourage visitors and newcomers to connect with us by filling out the Friendship Register so we can be sure to send you a message to thank you for joining us.

Children in Worship

We have a "Children in Worship" guiding brochure available in the Narthex! This brochure is intended to serve as an aid to parents and other members of our congregation in welcoming our children to worship.

Children are always welcome to wiggle and giggle in the pews at FPC! During worship children are invited to join us at the front of the Sanctuary for a time of Wondering with God's Children. Afterwards, children planning to go to the nursery will be escorted downstairs by Pastor Neeley or Pastor Erin. This is to help you stay in worship and us get them to the nursery safely. If you need help finding the nursery, you are invited to ask an usher to point the way.

Use

One License #A-728728 authorizes the use of music printed in our worship guide and streamed online.



Serving Today

Tech Team | Dan Walden, Jonny Atkins, Brad Hawley
Usher Chair | Bob Tabb
Acolyte | Paisley Lane



1169 Clark Street SW, Covington, GA 30014 | fpccov.org | 770.786.7321

Our Mission Statement

First Presbyterian Church Covington is a Christian community existing to glorify God by welcoming all of God’s children. We celebrate through serving, teaching, praying, eating, crying, singing, and dancing with the Holy Spirit. As works in progress, we seek to respond to God’s presence in our church, lives, and community.

Want to Get Involved?

Reach out to become a more involved member of the church! We always have something happening that we would love for you to be a part of. You could be an integrated member of our church by volunteering with witness team, becoming an usher, joining a book club, singing in the choir or many other activities. Contact the office and we’ll point you in the right direction! Email: catherine@fpccov.org or call: 770-786-7321

Officers

- Reaching Out**
Curtis Watson *Witness (2024)*
- Engaging**
Charles Ardis *Christian Ed (2025)*
Pat Harper *Worship (2024)*
Nichole Howell *Worship (2025)*
Mary Catherine Whisnant *Christian Ed (2024)*
- Belonging**
Doug Bolton *Welcome (2025)*
Louly Hay Kapp *Marketing (2023)*
Bob Tabb *Finance (2023)*
- Connecting (Deacons)**
Tom Crews *Pastoral Care (2025)*
Dana Hall *Faith & Fellowship (2025)*
Eleanor Scarborough *Pastoral Care (2023)*
Darcel Tabb *Faith & Fellowship (2024)*
- More**
Billy Fortson *Personnel (2024)*
Stan Hall *Facilities (2023)*
John McCarthy *Clerk of Session*
Ed Perkerson *Strategic Planning (2023)*

First Presbyterian Church Staff

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Neeley Rentz Lane | <i>Senior Pastor</i> | <i>Nursery Staff</i> |
| Erin Morgan | <i>Associate Pastor</i> | |
| Alicia Taylor | <i>Dir. of Music & Worship Arts</i> | Hattie Bellinger |
| Alice Walker | <i>CAGO, AAGO Organist</i> | Sierra BlackShear |
| Catherine Laseter | <i>Dir. of Communications & Operations</i> | Jahniyah Greene |
| Felicia Carson | <i>Seminary Intern</i> | Laina Lalane |
| Peni Kehoe | <i>Finance Administrator</i> | Kyla White |

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Illness

- ✦ Caroline Harper, daughter of Pat Harper - cervical cancer
- ✦ Ken Walker - upcoming surgery
- ✦ Doris Deadwyler, friend of Judy Davis - hip replacement
- ✦ Meredith Nash, friend of Barbara Martin - four year old with stage IV liver cancer
- ✦ Bill Loeble - recovering from kidney removal surgery
- ✦ Randy Jones, nephew of Faye Kitchens - lung cancer
- ✦ Lucas, Morgan, and baby Nate, friends of Faye and Joel Kitchens - baby going through dialysis
- ✦ Taylor Waters, great-niece of Gene Wallace
- ✦ Bob and Beverly Beasley, friends of Jean Elder - health concerns and care
- ✦ Brenda Buckelew, mother of Jennifer Buckelew
- ✦ Patrick Carmichael
- ✦ Larry Cox, brother-in-law of Randy Layton - cancer
- ✦ Bob Darby, friend of Jeff MacKenzie - leg amputated, kidney problems
- ✦ Patsy Freeman, sister of Judy Davis - dementia
- ✦ Bruce Hamilton, brother of Theodosia Wade - immunotherapy cancer treatment
- ✦ Karen Lein Kaasa, sister-in-law of Julie MacKenzie - home health care
- ✦ Lee Morris, friend of Donna Weesner - meningitis
- ✦ E.W. Sims, great-uncle of Robert Lane
- ✦ Linda Trenthan, friend of the congregation
- ✦ Donald Vining, brother of Danny Vining - vision loss
- ✦ Joyce Williams, sister of Danny Vining - Alzheimer's

Condolences

- ✦ Our prayers are with the loved ones of Gene Wallace who passed away on July 26, 2023
- ✦ Our prayers are with the loved ones of Angela Gilmer who passed away on July 26, 2023

Military Service

- ✦ Billy Scarborough - Marines
- ✦ Koen Ardis - Navy

Independent and Assisted Living

- ✦ Penny Blakeney - Oaks Assisted Living
- ✦ Homer Borders - Presbyterian Village
- ✦ Jean Elder - Florida with her daughter
- ✦ Dot Fincher - Merryvale
- ✦ Louly Hay - Presbyterian Village Athens
- ✦ Travis Moss - Westbury, Conyers
- ✦ Gene Wallace - Merryvale
- ✦ Louise White - Merryvale

Prayer Requests

All prayer requests should be sent to:
catherine@fpccov.org Requests may be removed
after three weeks if not updated.



F P C C O V I N G T O N 2 0 2 3

Rally Day

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6TH
START OFF THE SCHOOL YEAR
WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY!

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6TH

NAMETAGS & BREAKFAST
FELLOWSHIP HALL | 9:45AM

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS
SANCTUARY | 11:00AM



You are invited to
"Text to Give" your offering.
Text FPCCOV followed by your
donation amount to: 73256



Kirkin' o' the Tartan

August 27

Celebrate the Presbyterian Church's roots in the Church of Scotland!

The service will include bagpipes, field drum, and a processional of tartans!

If you didn't get a chance to order a tartan in your family name last year and you'd like to participate, please contact Alicia Taylor as soon as possible at alicia@fpccov.org or 770-656-6848 for pricing, questions, and to order a tartan.

Check the e-news for more details!

Life at FPC

Sunday, August 13th
4:00pm-5:30pm
for 1st-3rd Graders

KIDS' WORSHIP CLASS!

BAPTISM
COMMUNION
PRAYER
LEADERSHIP
...AND MORE

Come explore elements of worship and help plan a real service for...

Youth & Children Sunday

August 20th
11:00am

Our FPC Kids will lead worship and we will hear from our Youth about their time at the **Montreat Middle Conference**

Sunday, July 30
Nineth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00am Donuts & Devo
11:00am Worship
4:00pm-6:00pm Summer Party at River Cove

Tuesday, August 1
RSVP for Youth Lunch & Boost
12:00pm Lectio Divina
3:30pm Staff Meeting

Wednesday, August 2
10:00am Coffee Club

Thursday, August 3
5:30pm Witness Team Meeting

Sunday, August 6
Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:45am Rally Day Breakfast
11:00am Worship - Blessing of the Backpacks
12:30pm Youth Lunch & Boost

Sunday, August 13th we will be welcoming **NEW MEMBERS** to FPC! Talk to Neeley if you are interested in joining or learning more about what membership means!

We welcome everyone into our church family!

We'd LOVE to have you become an official MEMBER!

Sunday, August 13th
after worship
Talk to Neeley if you are interested!

Becoming a member is a valuable way to say

"I have chosen FPC Covington as my home to trust in our Lord, Jesus Christ!"

MEET AT THE CHURCH FOR DROP OFF & PICK UP

INVITE A FRIEND!

FPC YOUTH LUNCH & BOOST

AUGUST 6TH 12-2:30PM

RSVP BY AUG. 1 | \$15
PERMISSION FORM REQUIRED

EMAIL ERIN@FPCCOV.ORG TO RSVP TO PASTOR ERIN

Presbyterian Women is supporting Fairview Elementary School as a Partner in Education again this year!



You are invited to bring bookbags and clinic supplies to the narthex before the Blessing of the Backpacks on August 6th!

FPC

Lunch Bunch

EST. 2023

August Lunch

Wednesday, August 9th at 11:30AM

The Village Grille at Ashton Hills

RSVP to FPC by Tuesday, August 8th at 12:00PM
770.786.7321 or catherine@fpccov.org

Golden-Age Ministry

Congregational Meeting Sunday, August 20

Immediately following worship on Sunday, August 20, we will host a congregational meeting with the purpose of hearing and voting on the Nominating Committee's selection of proposed Elders and Deacons for the Class of 2026.

What is a Deacon?

A Deacon is a Servant Leader who desires to serve the church of Jesus Christ with compassion, empathy, and love! Deacons are representative of the congregation and model faithful discipleship. Deacons are called to serve for three years. Deacons shall participate in Officer Training.

Responsibilities of Deacon:

- ◆ Responsible for care and compassion of church family
- ◆ Serve on Diaconate (quarterly meetings with our deacons and Pastor)
- ◆ Chair Faith and Fellowship or Pastoral Care Committee (a Pastor serves as staff liaison; committee consists of 6-8 people)
- ◆ Oversee hospitality and care for funerals
- ◆ Serve as Deacon on Call when Pastor is out of town

DEFINITION OF A PRESBYTERIAN DEACON

The office of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of sympathy, witness, and service after the example of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, of exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, warm sympathies, and sound judgment should be chosen for this office. It is the duty of deacons, first of all, to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress both within and beyond the community of faith. They shall assume such other duties as may be delegated to them from time to time by the session, such as leading the people in worship through prayers of intercession, reading the Scriptures, presenting the gifts of the people and assisting with the Lord's Supper.

What is an Elder?

An Elder is a Servant Leader who desires to serve the church of Jesus Christ with intelligence, imagination, truth, and love! Elders are representative of the congregation and model faithful discipleship. Elders are called to serve for three years. Elders shall participate in Officer Training.

Responsibilities of Elder:

- ◆ Participate in monthly Session meetings (no more than one hour and 15 minutes long; meeting times are set by vote preference of elders)
- ◆ Serve as Usher chair for one month out of the year (you are not required to be present if you have a team prepared to serve)
- ◆ Chair or Co-Chair a committee (you will have a staff liaison and serve alongside a committee of 6-8 people)
- ◆ Participate in administering Communion (this is done on a first come first serve sign up)
- ◆ Participate in called meetings once a quarter following worship to receive new members (30 minute time commitment)

DEFINITION OF A RULING ELDER

FROM THE BOOK OF ORDER (G-2.0301)

As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in discernment of God's Spirit and governance of God's people. Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. Ruling elders are so named not because they "lord it over" the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with ministers of word and sacrament, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church.