

 FOURTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 3, 2023



First Presbyterian Church
Covington, GA



✠ *Please stand in body or spirit*



Gathering As God's Beloved People

Gathering Music

Lead Me, Lord/He Leadeth Me

Michael Larkin

This Is My Father's World

Van Denman Thompson

On Jordan's Stormy Banks

Diane Bish

Prelude

I Love to Tell the Story

Michael L. Glasgow

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

✠ Call to Worship

God calls us to take up our cross, and to follow.

**So we come before God this morning with open hearts and open hands,
eager to hear the Living Word.**

Through the power of the Holy Spirit,

We invite God to move within us and among us as we worship.

Open our eyes to God's presence;

open our ears to God's call,

open our hearts to one another.

Let us worship!

Alleluia! Amen.

✠ Hymn of Praise 408

There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit

SWEET, SWEET SPIRIT

✠ Call to Confession

✠ Community Confession

Sometimes it sounds too hard:

deny ourselves, take up our crosses, lose our lives?

Forgive us, Savior, but we'd rather you do it for us.

**Forgive us, Christ, but we are overwhelmed with what you ask of us.
We long to see you come in glory, but fear the road we must take.
Have mercy on our weakness.
Be patient with our stumbling.
Do not leave us behind, even when we are slow to follow,
and lead us in your ways of peace as we sing as one voice:**

✠Response 469

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

CHILDREN PRAYING

***Lord, listen to your children praying.
Lord, send your Spirit in this place.
Lord, listen to your children praying.
Send us love; send us power; send us grace.***

✠Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness

Church, we are forgiven!
We are free to try again.

✠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

Take Up Your Cross

Jamie Cortez
Arr. by Rick Modlin

Prayer for God's Wisdom and Understanding

Scripture Reading

Matthew 16:21-28

Pew Bible page 18

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



Responding to the Word

✦ **Response 726**

Will You Come and Follow Me

KELVINGROVE

Verses 1, 2, 5

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

Additions by Molly Spangler

Hear us as we pray together saying

Our Father, who art in heaven,

You are the first, the last, the everything in between,

we lift our praise and our prayers up to you,

because we know that you have been listening

since the first voice in the garden, and we trust that you listen still.

hallowed be thy name,

Yours is the name that is above every name,

yours is the name spoken in all languages,

yours is the name that echoes across all time and space.

thy kingdom come,

May all of creation look more and more like your heavenly kingdom,

a place of peace,

a place of love,
a place everyone feels at home.

thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Here in this place may love be genuine,
may hospitality be given to strangers,
may we overcome evil with good,
and may we live peaceably with each other.

Give us this day our daily bread

Allow us to taste and see, drink and remember, the goodness you have given us.
Allow us to trust rather than hoard
so that no one goes hungry, and no one thirsts.

and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Give us as many chances as it takes to get it right,
and may we give others just as many chances
as you have given us.

And lead us not into temptation,

Guide us to stay on your good path,
even when it seems easier to curse than to bless,
more satisfying to seek vengeance than to build peace.

but deliver us from evil.

Because we know evil has many forms. It shows up in test results as cancer;
it startles us in harsh words and policies; it arrives at our door as violence;
and it bubbles up inside us as self-destruction.
However and whenever evil shows up, rescue us from it time and time again.

For thine is the kingdom,

Where we hope to live with you,

and the power,

That you showed us by taking on weakness,

and the glory,

That we hope to reflect with our lives out into the world,

forever

and ever.

Amen.

Offering Our Gifts: An Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

Simple Gifts

John S. Dixon

Arr. by Joseph Brackett, Jr. 1848

✦ Response 710

We Lift Our Voices

OFFERING

***We lift our voices; we lift our hands;
we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering.***

***Lord, use our voices; Lord, use our hands; Lord, use our lives;
they are yours: we are an offering.***

***All that we have, all that we are,
all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you.***

***We list our voices; we lift our hands; we lift our lives up to you:
we are an offering; we are an offering.***

✦ 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 743

O God, You Are My God

STEP BY STEP

✦ 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

To God Be the Glory

Douglas E. Wagner



Serving Today

Tech Team | Dan Walden, Jonny Atkins, Brad Hawley
Acolyte | Alexander Whisnant, Mary Lindsey Whisnant
Usher Chair | Pat Harper



Worship Practices

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.

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. Currently we expect to have the equipment by October and have it installed in time for Advent! 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.

Use

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



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

Our Mission Statement

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

First Presbyterian Church Staff

Neeley Rentz Lane	<i>Senior Pastor</i>	
Erin Morgan	<i>Associate Pastor</i>	<i>Nursery Staff</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>	Jahnyiah Greene
Felicia Carson	<i>Seminary Intern</i>	Laina Lalane
Peni Kehoe	<i>Finance Administrator</i>	Anna Merritt

SOUL FEAST

SEPT. 13

ON THE MENU: EL CHARRO TACO BAR



Feed your body and soul in the Fellowship Hall at 5:15pm.
RSVP by Monday, September 11th
to catherine@fpccov.org or 770-786-7321



**PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN**

*2023-2024 Kick-off
Presbyterian Women
Meeting*

September 14, 2023 at 5:00pm
in the Fellowship Hall
and on Zoom!

All women of
the church are
welcome to join
us for dinner as
we gather for a
new year of
circle meetings!

Saturday, September 16th
8:00am at Town House Café
RSVP to Neeley
by September 14th

Men's Prayer Breakfast



WE ARE MAKING A NEW CHURCH PHOTO DIRECTORY!

All in our FPC family
(members & non-members)
are welcome!

Sunday, September 10

12:30-4:30pm

Monday, September 11

3:30-7:30pm

Scan the QR Code
to get a time slot
on SignUpGenius!



Check the e-news for more details!

Signup available in the Narthex TODAY!

You can also call the office to signup

Sunday, September 3

**Fourteenth Sunday
after Pentecost**

9:45am Sunday School

11:00am Worship—Felicia Carson Ph.D.

Monday, September 4

Office CLOSED for Labor Day

Tuesday, September 5

12:00pm Lectio Divina

3:30pm Staff Meeting

4:30pm Welcome Team Meeting

5:00pm Witness Team Meeting

Wednesday, September 6

10:00am Coffee Club

4:30pm Joyful Noise

5:00pm Hallelujah Kids!

5:30pm Confirmation Class

6:00pm Carillon Handbell Choir

7:00pm Chancel Choir

Saturday, September 9

7:45am Fuzz Run Cheering Station

Sunday, September 10

**Fifteenth Sunday
after Pentecost**

Thriving Congregations Visit

9:45am Sunday School

11:00am Worship—Communion

12:30pm Directory Photo Shoot

**Lunch
Bunch**
FPC

*Order Adults Sharing In Service
at FPC*
O.A.S.I.S.

**September
Lunch**

Wednesday, September 13th
11:30AM at Amici Covington

RSVP to FPC by Tuesday, September 12th
770.786.7321 or catherine@fpccov.org

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Illness

- ✦ Wayne Scarborough, Jr., son of Wayne and Eleanor Scarborough - recovering from hip replacement surgery
- ✦ Brenda Howell - rehab from car accident
- ✦ Rosalia Meadors, friend of Tom Crews - three year old with bone marrow failure
- ✦ Gabby Daugherty
- ✦ 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 kidney cancer
- ✦ Bill Loeble - recovering from kidney removal surgery

- ✦ 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
- ✦ Randy Jones, nephew of Faye Kitchens - lung cancer
- ✦ Karen Lein Kaasa, sister-in-law of Julie MacKenzie - home health care

- ✦ Lee Morris, friend of Donna Weesner - meningitis
- ✦ Donald Vining, brother of Danny Vining - vision loss
- ✦ Joyce Williams, sister of Danny Vining - Alzheimer's

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
- ✦ Louise White - Merryvale

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



Lopez Tabor Duo
in Concert
SEPTEMBER 17
AT 3:00PM

Violin Piano Concert
featuring European and Latin American Works

Performance by:
Alfonso Lopez, violin
Michell Tabor, piano

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH COVINGTON
ADMISSION IS FREE AND OPEN TO ALL



PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

25%	25%	50%
of this Offering stays with our congregation to support peacemaking and reconciliation in our own community.	of this Offering goes to our mid council to join with other congregations to support peacemaking work in our region.	of this Offering supports the work being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

On **Sunday, September 17** we will be collecting for the PCUSA Peace & Global Witness Special Offering!
Visit pcusa.org/peace-global to learn more!

Blessing of the ANIMALS
Sunday, September 24th
at 4:00pm on the Playground



You are invited to **"Text to Give"** your offering!
Text* FPCCOV followed by your donation amount to: 73256 and follow the link to give online!

*Messages and data rates may apply when using Text to Give. Message frequency varies. Text HELP to 73256 for help. Text STOP to 73256 to cancel.