

The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland

October 11, 2026
Twentyth Sunday after Pentecost
Reception of New Members
10AM Sanctuary Worship

We Gather in the Grace of God

PRELUDE	*Fairest Lord Jesus*	Hermann Shroeder
WELCOME		Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams
INTROIT	*God Be In My Head*	John Rutter

God be in my head, and in my understanding,
God be in mine eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at mine end, and at my departing.

* Those who are able are requested to stand

Please silence all electronic devices.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

We have come again to the mountain
where God's presence is made known.
We are here to praise our Creator,
for God has done wonderful things.
God makes clouds, lightning, and rain
and brings forth the wind from God's storehouse.
God sent signs and wonders to save people
from the oppression of the Egyptians.
God's name endures forever
among those on whom God's hand has rested.
We rejoice in gifts of wisdom and truth
and in the compassion God extends to us.
Bring thanksgiving and supplication to God,
who hears and answers our prayers.
God has been our refuge and strength
and will supply everything we need.

* INVOCATION PRAYER

Let us pray together:

Appear to us here, God of all worlds,
for we need your assurance and blessing.
We seek the strength to do what is right and just.
We long to see you,
even though we sense that a god we could see
would be only a tiny part of you whose Spirit fills all time and space.
We want you to have a face like ours,
so we can find your face in Jesus,
and occasionally in one another.
We want to be certain that our decisions and actions are right,
but often it is only long afterwards that we realize you were with us.
O God, we want to be open to all you are revealing to us now.
Amen.

* HYMN #1 *Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!* NICEA



[2] Hearing loop installed. Switch hearing aid to T-coil



* CALL TO CONFESSION John Wheeler

God invites us to the marriage feast of life,
but we put off accepting the invitation.
We are summoned to celebrate the love of Jesus Christ,
but we busy ourselves with other distractions.
Surely, God will judge our unresponsive dalliance.
Let us examine ourselves and seek forgiveness.
Let us join our voices in the corporate prayer of confession,
followed by time for silent personal confession.
Thus, we pray:

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of hosts,
we have made light of your invitation
to participate fully in your family.
We live as if we were not dependent on you
for everything we enjoy and for life itself.
We have treated our brothers and sisters as enemies rather than friends.
Deceit reigns in place of truth, and scandal replaces honor.
Through injustice, uncleanness, ugliness, insolence, and mediocrity
we deny Christ and the witness of generations of Christians.
On our own initiative we are powerless to change.
Help us, O God.
Free us from the sin that weighs us down,
and equip us to do what we have learned from you.

(*moment of silent confession*)

* KYRIE ELEISON GUARANI KYRIE

Kyrie eleison , Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison , Christe eleison.

* ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God judges the sincerity of our prayers.
"Many are called, but few are chosen," Jesus said.
The chosen ones are surely those
who have accepted God's rule in their lives
and have broken with their old destructive willfulness.
All who confess their sin with eagerness to accept God's sovereignty
are freed from their old burdens of guilt.
Rejoice greatly in the renewed strength Christ gives.

Alleluia and Amen!

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer a sign of peace to one another.

* GLORIA #581 *Glory Be to the Father* GLORIA PATRI

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.

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Please be seated.
We are partners with one another in this land and beyond,
seeking to share the benefits of God's creation with all God's children.
We support government efforts to lessen the inequities among us,
but through the church we address spiritual problems
that feed the prejudices and false pride
that result in injustice within God's world.
We join our offerings with our personal efforts to do God's will.
The offering will now be received.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *At Thy Feet* J.S. Bach

At Thy feet we humbly kneel, Lord be near us,
May we know Thy presence feel,
Fill our hearts with love of Thee,
In thy mercy hear us.
Keep us free from all alarms,
In Thine everlasting arms, hold and cheer us.
Bind our souls with bonds of faith,
In Thy mercy hear us.

* DOXOLOGY #606 OLD HUNDREDTH

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.

* OFFERTORY PRAYER John Wheeler

Let us join our voices in prayer:

May our gifts be acceptable and pleasing to you, O God,
for we present ourselves in a partnership of giving and receiving.
We have enjoyed the bounty you provide;
grant us now the depth of commitment we need to sacrifice all else
for the privilege of serving you. In Jesus' name.
Amen.

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE *All Things come of Thee* C.W Walton

All things come of Thee, O Lord
And of Thine own have we given Thee.
Amen.

We Listen for God's Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Your Word, O God, is a feast all its own.
Let your Holy Spirit open our minds to your call to listen,
for we know your holy Word
heals and reconciles your people.
Amen.

THE READINGS

Tanach Isaiah 25:1-9 (Inclusive Bible)

YHWH, you are my God—I exalt you! I praise your Name!
For you do marvelous things, planned long ago with steadfast faithfulness.
You turned cities into dump heaps, fortified cities into rubble; strongholds of foreigners are no more, never to be rebuilt.
It is for this reason that the powerful honor you, and cities of ruthless people fear you. Yet you are a refuge to poor people, refuge to the needy in their distress, shelter in the storm, shade from the heat—for the breath of the ruthless is like an ice storm or a scorching drought. You subdue the roar of the enemy, and the mantra of tyrants is stilled.

On this mountain, YHWH Omnipotent will prepare for all peoples
a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wine, food rich and succulent, and fine, aged wines.
On this mountain God will remove the mourning veil covering all peoples,
the shroud covering all nations, destroying death forever. God will wipe away the tears from every cheek, and will take away the shame of God's people on earth, wherever they live. YHWH has spoken.

On that day it will be said, "This is our God, this is the One for whose liberation we waited, YHWH is the One in whom we had hoped! We rejoice exultantly in our deliverance."

The Holy Spirit has a word for each of us today.

With God's help we are listening.

Gospel Matthew 22:1-14 (Inclusive Bible)

Then Jesus spoke to them again in parables. He said,
"The kindom of heaven is like this: there was a ruler who prepared a feast for the wedding of a family's heir; but when the ruler sent out workers to summon the invited guests; they wouldn't come. The ruler sent out other workers, telling them to say to the guests, 'I have prepared this feast for you. My oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding.'
But they took no notice; one went off to his farm, another to her business, and the rest seized the workers, attacked them brutally and killed them. The ruler was furious and dispatched troops who destroyed those murderers and burned their town.
Then the ruler said to the workers, 'The wedding feast is ready, but the guests I invited don't deserve the honor. Go out to the crossroads in the town and invite everyone you can find.' The workers went out into the streets and collected everyone they met, good and bad alike, until the hall was filled with guests.
The ruler, however, came in to see the company at table, and noticed one guest who was not dressed for a wedding. 'My friend,' said the ruler, 'why are you here without a wedding garment?' But the guest was silent. Then the ruler said to the attendants, 'Bind this guest hand and foot, and throw the individual out into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'
Many are called, but few are chosen."

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PASTOR'S MESSAGE Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams
"The Kindom of Heaven is Like This"



RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

On behalf of the session,
I present Karol Dalton, David Evans, Patricia Evans, and Victoria Littlejohn,
who have been received into the membership of this congregation
by reaffirmation of faith.

In baptism you were claimed by God,
marked as Christ's own forever,
and joined to his body by the Holy Spirit.
You come to us then, not as strangers,
but as friends in Christ and members of the household of God.
We rejoice that you now desire to join with this congregation
in the worship and mission of the church.
Hear these words from scripture:

There is one body and one Spirit,
just as you were called to the one hope of your calling,

one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
one God and Father of all,
who is above all and through all and in all.

As members of the body of Christ, let us reaffirm the faith
into which we were baptized:

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

Karol, David, Patricia, and Victoria,
we have professed our faith as one body.
Will you be a faithful member of this congregation,
share in its worship and mission
through your prayers and gifts,
your study and service,
and so fulfill your calling to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?

I will, with God's help.

Holy God,
thank you for calling us to be your people
and joining us to Christ's body, the church.
We praise you for leading Karol, David, Patricia, and Victoria,
to this congregation.

Empower us by your Spirit,
that we might love one another as Christ loved us,
honoring him in all that we say and do,
giving our lives in service to others,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Karol, David, Patricia, and Victoria,
remember your baptism and be thankful,
and know that the Holy Spirit is at work within you.

Thanks be to God.

Welcome to this ministry that we share in Jesus Christ.

LIGHTING OF CANDLES, PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

We ask all these things in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray...

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.

* HYMN #546 *Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing* SICILIAN MARINERS



This hymn of corporate benediction is one of several using the same first line. It was written by a Baptist pastor who dedicated his entire ministry to a small church in rural Yorkshire. The tune used here was first transcribed from Sicilian sailors in the late 18th century.

TEXT: Attr. John Fawcett, 1773, alt.; stanza 3, alt. Geoffrey Thring, 1880, alt.
MUSIC: Sicilian melody, 18th cent.

SICILIAN MARINERS
8.7.8.7.8.7

* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

Rejoice in the Sovereign always;
again, I will say, rejoice!
God has met us here and blessed us;
we give thanks for God's abundant kindness.
You have been equipped to face life
in all its ambiguities and anguish.
We know how to be abased
and how to abound.
In plenty and hunger, abundance and want,
we are not alone.
We can do all things
through Christ, who strengthens us.
The peace of God, which passes all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
To God, our Mother and Father,
be all glory forever and ever.

* CHORAL RESPONSE *Amen* Gerrit Smith

POSTLUDE Bryn Calfaria *from Three Preludes founded on Welsh Hymn Tunes*
R. Vaughan Williams

"My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."
Psalm 73:26



We continue to keep in our prayers:

Annie and Tony Carlos. Terry Burch, Jerry Capassp, Maida Page, Gavin Morkel, Richard Lee, Jacob Daley, Jean Rundlett, Christa, Dameon, Sonya, Scheem, Linda, Tommy Bollinger, Kenny, Emma, Dorland, Addie Singleton, Rajvinder Kaur, Laken Grames, Richard Szabo, Cheryl Eifert, Mary and Dave Eifert

We pray for those struggling with illness, convalescing, homebound or in need.

Names are generally removed after four weeks unless there is a continuing need.

There are many ways to support The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland

Online Giving:
firstprescle.org/giving

Mail to:
The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland
Attn: Financial Office
91 Public Square
Cleveland, OH 44113
Checks should be made payable to "The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland"

Scan the QR Code with your phone.

All contributions are tax-deductible and will be appropriately acknowledged at year-end.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CLEVELAND

LOVING CHRIST, SERVING CITY—SPIRITUALLY, SOCIALLY, CULTURALLY—SINCE 1820

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Senior Pastor: Rev. Stephen C. Blonder Adams
Parish Associate: Rev. Denise Clark-Jones
Minister of Music: Evan M. Collins

Choir

Kate Scites, soprano
Zara Smith, *soprano*
Kaya Sparks, *soprano*

Rayna Brooks, *alto*
Morgan Potts, *alto*
Val Sibila, *alto*

Christian Bush, *tenor*
Anthony Steward, *tenor*
Noah Whitaker, *tenor*

R. Dominic Aragon, *bass*
Job Butcher, *bass*
Logan Samarin, *bass*

Church Elders:

Clerk of Session: Beth Buchanan

Class of 2026	Class of 2027	Class of 2028
Beth Buchanan	Michelle Baron	Dave Finley
Judy Macuga	Bernard Medie	Don Urban
Melissa Maffia	Bob Reid	
Harriet Niles		
Marty Vassel		

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Class of 2026	Class of 2027	Class of 2028
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Forrest Diehl	Eric Grattan	JoAnn Hood
Pam Daly	Sunny Kunche	Elie Medie
Ruth Finley	John Wheeler	Brad Oglesby
Alyssa Niepokny		Mark Pichler
Charlene Thornton		Lori Montero

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