

The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland

October 25, 2026
Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost
Reformation Sunday
10AM Sanctuary Worship

We Gather in the Grace of God

PRELUDE	Michael Crawley, *Bagpiper*	
WELCOME		Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams
STEWARDSHIP MOMENT		Dave Eifert
INTROIT	*Praise The Lord!*	Donald Moore

Praise the Lord! Praise His name!

* Those who are able are requested to stand

Please silence all electronic devices.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Turn from your idols to recognize the One True God;
the Creator of the universe is with us here.

We celebrate the nearness of the Living God,
whom all time and space cannot contain.

God meets you in this place, this hour,
and in all your yesterdays and tomorrows.

We cannot travel beyond the reach of God's love
or escape the intensity of God's wrath.

Widows, orphans, sojourners, and poor folk,
come to meet the Compassionate One.

God meets our needs as a Gentle Nurse
and silences critics with a word of love.

Let us celebrate with joy and gratitude
the deliverance God offers in Jesus Christ.
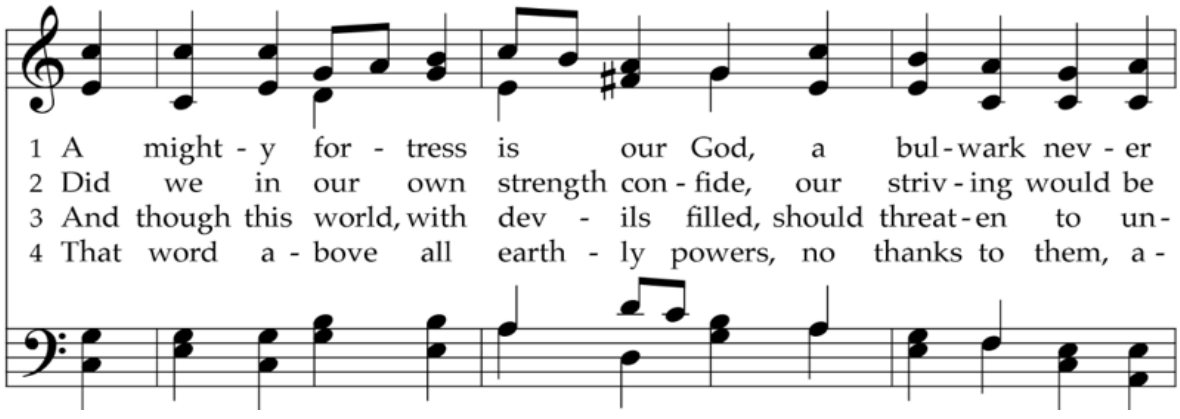
We will lift our voices to declare our faith
and renew our commitment to share ourselves.

* INVOCATION PRAYER
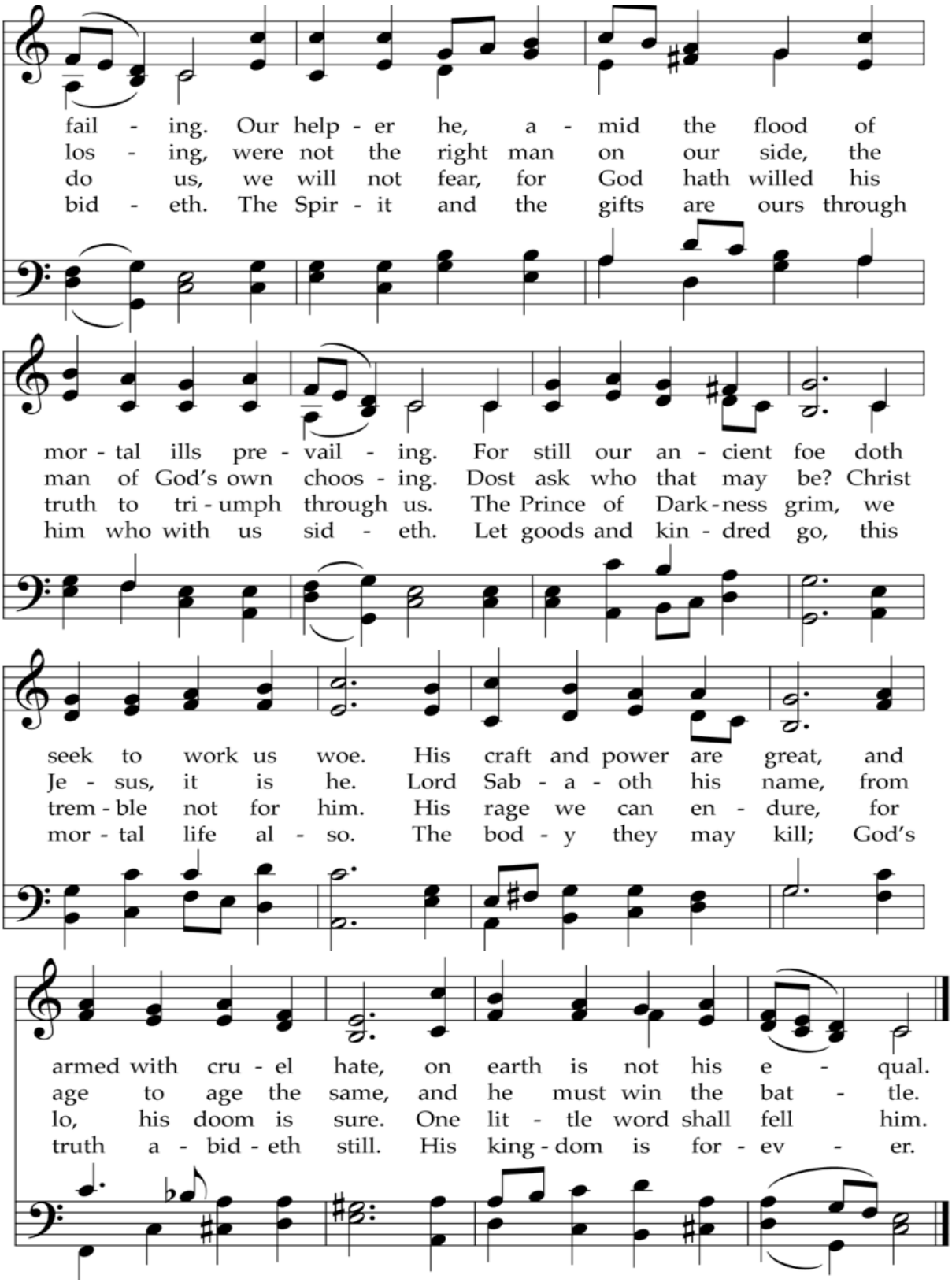
Let us pray together:

As we gather in this place,
we join with all your saints in every time and place,
O God, to celebrate salvation.
You heal the brokenness within and among us.
You rescue us from the cruelty we impose on one another
amid our doubts and fears and frantic scrambling for attention.
Help us in these moments to know your Spirit surrounding us,
to sense your love embracing us, to realize your goodness,
empowering us for joyous service.
Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor, power,
and might be to you, O God, forever and ever.
Amen.

* HYMN #275 *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* EIN' FESTE BURG



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


fail - ing. Our help - er he, a - mid the flood of
los - ing, were not the right man on our side, the
do us, we will not fear, for God hath willed his
bid - eth. The Spir - it and the gifts are ours through
mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing. For still our an - cient foe doth
man of God's own choos - ing. Dost ask who that may be? Christ
truth to tri - umph through us. The Prince of Dark - ness grim, we
him who with us sid - eth. Let goods and kin - dred go, this
seek to work us woe. His craft and power are great, and
Je - sus, it is he. Lord Sab - a - oth his name, from
trem - ble not for him. His rage we can en - dure, for
mor - tal life al - so. The bod - y they may kill; God's
armed with cru - el hate, on earth is not his e - qual.
age to age the same, and he must win the bat - tle.
lo, his doom is sure. One lit - tle word shall fell him.
truth a - bid - eth still. His king - dom is for - ev - er.

* CALL TO CONFESSION Michelle Baron

We, whose hearts, souls, and minds
have dwelt this week on our own survival,
are summoned in these moments to expand the range of our concerns.
We, whose anger is stirred by those who have more
of the world's goods than we-or by those who, in seeming laziness,
waste the substance our hard work has provided them-
all of us jealous and self-protective folk
are invited to recognize our own sinfulness.
Let us join our voices in the corporate prayer of confession,
followed by time for silent personal confession.
Thus, we pray:

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Generous God,
we have been greedy and selfish with the things of this world
and even with the love you have poured out among us.
We have viewed life around us through
the narrow focus of our own immediate self-interest,
without awareness of people who are used and abused
as we grab for what we want.
O God, test our hearts, turn us from our unconscious distortions
and our conscious deceits,
and bring us to fuller acceptance of your life-changing forgiveness.
In Jesus' name.

(*moment of silent confession*)

* KYRIE GUARANI KYRIE

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

* ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Hear and believe the gospel.
Jesus Christ delivers us from the wrath to come.
You are forgiven, approved by God,
and entrusted with the love that restores you
to full communion with your Sovereign.
Blessed is everyone who fears God and walks in God's way.
Share the good news!

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, amen.

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Please be seated.
Our finest offering is our attention,
moment by moment and day by day, to God's purposes for our world.
We join our constant efforts to be faithful with these weekly moments of giving that celebrate the love with which God surrounds us.
We are God's children, committed to caring for all of God's creation.
The offering will now be received.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *I Will Praise Thee, O Lord* Knut Nystedt

I will praise Thee, O Lord, with all my heart
I will show forth all thy marvelous works,
I will be glad and rejoice in thee,
I will sing praise to Thy name
O thou most high!

* DOXOLOGY 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 Courtney Knapp

Let us join our voices in prayer:

With our gifts we proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ,
knowing that the good news we take to the world is muted
not so much by active opposition, as by our passive disregard.
May the act of giving inspire us to invest ourselves anew
in the programs and people you want us to reach with your love.
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

Lord Jesus, your understanding of Scripture
astonished and humbled all around you.
Send your Spirit to illumine this Word
that our understanding and wisdom
may be increased. Amen.

THE READINGS

Torah Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18 (Inclusive Bible)

YHWH told Moses to tell the entire Israelite community these things:
Be holy, for I, YHWH, am holy.
Do not be corrupt in administering justice.
Do not show partiality to the poor or give honor to the great.
Judge your neighbor with fairness. Do not go about slandering others.
Do not profit by the blood of your neighbor. I am YHWH.
Do not nurse hatred for a neighbor.
If you are angry with your neighbor, speak frankly about it,
to avoid storing up ill feelings.
Never seek revenge or hold a grudge toward your relatives.
You must love your neighbor as you love yourself. I am YHWH.

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

With God's help we are listening.

Gospel Matthew 22:34-46 (Inclusive Bible)

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had left the Sadducees speechless,
they gathered together, and one of them, an expert in the Law, attempted to trick
Jesus with this question: “Teacher, which commandment of the Law is greatest?”
Jesus answered: “You must love the Most High God with all your heart,
with all your soul and with all your mind.” That is the greatest and first
commandment. The second is like it: You must love your neighbor as yourself.
On these two commandments the whole Law is based—and the Prophets as well.”
While the Pharisees were gathered around him, Jesus asked them this question:
“What do you think abut the Messiah? Whose descendant is the Messiah?”
They said, “David’s.” Then Jesus asked, “Then how is it that David,
inspired by the Spirit, calls the Messiah ‘Sovereign’?
For he says, ‘The Most High said to my Sovereign, Sit at my right hand until I
place your enemies under your foot.’ If David calls the Messiah ‘Sovereign,’
how can the Messiah be a descendant of David?”
No one could reply, and from that day on no one dared ask him any more
questions.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PASTOR’S MESSAGE Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

“Tear Down the Walls that Divide Us – Reformed and Always Reforming”



A LITANY FOR REFORMATION SUNDAY

This litany for Reformation Sunday is composed of excerpts from the Creeds, Catechisms, and Confessions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church, *Nicene Creed*

the holy catholic Church; *Apostles' Creed*

the communion of saints.

This Kirk is catholic, that is, universal, *Scots Confession*
because it contains the chosen of all ages,
of all realms, nations, and tongues,
be they of the Jews or be they of the Gentiles,
who have communion and society with God the Father,
and with the Son, Christ Jesus,
through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that, *Heidelberg Catechism*
from the beginning to the end of the world,
and from among the whole human race,
the Son of God, by his Spirit and his Word,
gathers, protects, and preserves for himself,
in the unity of the true faith,
a congregation chosen for eternal life.

The Church is an assembly of the faithful *Second Helvetic Confession*
called or gathered out of the world;
a communion of all saints,
namely, of those who truly know
and rightly worship and serve
the true God in Christ the Savior,
by the Word and Holy Spirit,
and who by faith are partakers in all the benefits
which are freely offered through Christ.

The visible Church, *Westminster Confession of Faith*
which is also catholic or universal under the gospel,
consists of all those throughout the world
that profess the true religion,
together with their children;
and is the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ;
the house and family of God.

The visible church has the privilege *Larger Catechism*
of being under God's special care and government;
of being protected and preserved in all ages,
notwithstanding the opposition of all enemies;
and of enjoying the communion of saints,
the ordinary means of salvation,
and offers of grace by Christ, to all members of it,
in the ministry of the gospel,
testifying that whosoever believes in him shall be saved,
and excluding none that will come unto him.

The church's commission, *Theological Declaration of Barmen*
upon which its freedom is founded,
consists in delivering the message
of the free grace of God
to all people in Christ's stead,
and therefore in the ministry
of his own Word and work
through sermon and Sacrament.

The church confesses its faith *Confession of 1967*
when it bears a present witness
to God's grace in Jesus Christ.
The life, death, resurrection,
and promised coming of Jesus Christ
has set the pattern for the church's mission.
The church follows this pattern
in the form of its life
and in the method of its action.
So to live and serve
is to confess Christ as Lord.
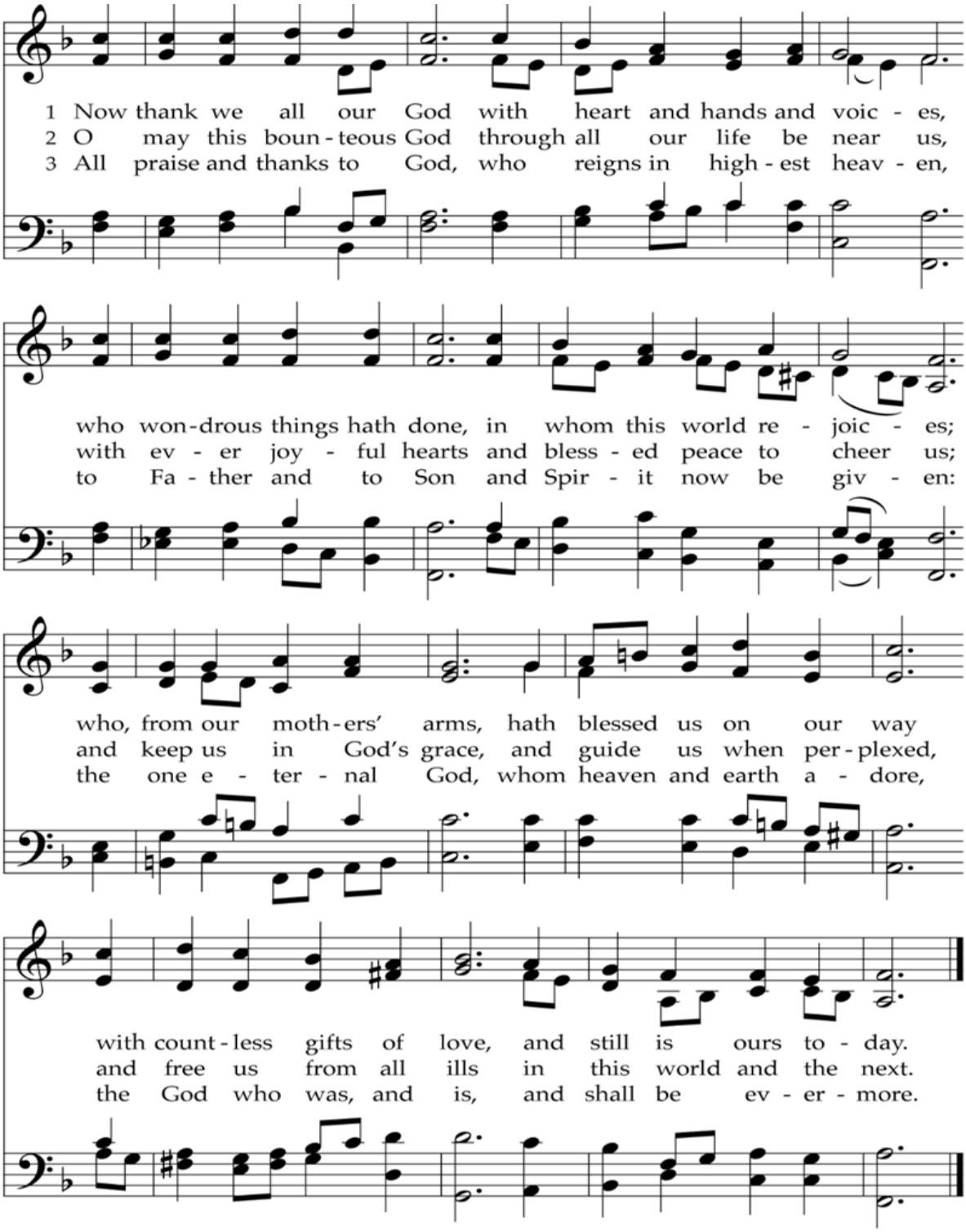
With believers in every time and place *Brief Statement of Faith*
we rejoice that nothing in life or in death
can separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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 #643 *Now Thank We All Our God* NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT



* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

You have heard again the great commandments:
take them with you and live by them.
We will love the Sovereign God
with all our heart, soul, and mind.
Do you mean that? Will you live to please God?
Will the love of God come first in your life?
We will love the Sovereign God
with all our heart, soul, and mind.
When you do that, everything in the world changes.
People will nevermore be confused with things.
We will do no wrong to our sisters and brothers;
we will love our neighbors as ourselves.
Do you mean that? Is it your full intent?
Will love dominate all your thoughts and actions?
We will love God with all our heart, soul, and mind,
and we will love our neighbors as ourselves.

* CHORAL RESPONSE *Amen* Gerrit Smith

POSTLUDE *Highland Cathedral* arr. Christina Harmon

"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 Daly, 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

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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

Cali Jacobs, *soprano*
Zara Smith, *soprano*
Kaya Sparks, *soprano*

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

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

R. Dominic Aragon, *bass*
Job Butcher, *bass*
Adam Whanger, *bass*

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Clerk of Session: Beth Buchanan

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Judy Macuga	Bernard Medie	Don Urban
Melissa Maffia	Bob Reid	
Harriet Niles		
Marty Vassel		

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Alyssa Niepokny		Mark Pichler
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