



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CLEVELAND

AUGUST 16, 2026

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST WITH BAPTISM

10AM Sanctuary Worship

WE GATHER IN THE GRACE OF GOD

PRELUDE

Deep River

African American Spiritual

WELCOME

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

INTROIT

The Lord Is My Light

Lillian Bouknight

The Lord is my Light and my salvation! Whom shall I fear?

* Those who are able are requested to stand

Please silence all electronic devices.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Come to this place of God's visitation and blessing.
Everyone is welcome here.

**We are sons and daughters of the new covenant,
disciples of our Sovereign, Jesus Christ.**

In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek,
slave nor free, male nor female.

**We are one in Christ, who has chosen us
and equips us for our ministry.**

The gifts of God are for no one religion,
and God's family includes all creation.

**God's people are of many races and creeds,
old and young, rich and poor, of every land.**

We gather to celebrate God's revelation in Jesus,
while others worship the same God in other ways.

**We seek to be true to the best we know in Christ,
rejoicing in all faithful service to God.**

* INVOCATION PRAYER

Let us pray together:

**God beyond our knowing,
we believe that you care for humble people
who seek to follow your Word
more than for those who are pretentious and proud in places of power.
You have protected your people when they were surrounded by trouble.
You have provided a way of escape in the midst of oppression.
Your love never fails.
Come, Holy One, to transform us.
Work within and among us to renew our minds and build community.
Nurse us into the health you intend for all your children.
You are our help and our hope.
Amen.**

* HYMN #839

Blessed Assurance

ASSURANCE

1 Bless - ed as - sur - ance, Je - sus is mine! O what a
2 Per - fect sub - mis - sion, per - fect de - light, vi - sions of
3 Per - fect sub - mis - sion, all is at rest; I in my



fore - taste of glo - ry di - vine! Heir of sal - va - tion,
rap - ture now burst on my sight; an - gels de - scend - ing,
Sav - ior am hap - py and blest, watch - ing and wait - ing,

pur - chase of God, born of his Spir - it, washed in his blood.
bring from a - bove ech - oes of mer - cy, whis - pers of love.
look - ing a - bove, filled with his good - ness, lost in his love.

Refrain

This is my sto - ry; this is my song, prais - ing my Sav - ior
all the day long; this is my sto - ry; this is my
song, prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long.

*CALL TO CONFESSION

Steve Willett

Sometimes, we are so busy defending beliefs
that we fail to see break-downs of trust.
Our creeds may blind us to God's inclusiveness
and our own unfairness and ingratitude.
Our time of confession is an opportunity for us
to try to see ourselves as God sees us.
Let us join our voices in the corporate prayer of confession,
followed by time for silent personal confession.
Thus, we pray:

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Forgive us, O God,
for thinking we have you all figured out.
We pretend we know who is in and who is out of your family,
as if your care were not for all of us.
We want people to be like us before we help them,
and we welcome into our company only those who will benefit us.
We have wandered far from your covenant,
overlooked your miracles in our midst,
and refused to walk according to your law.
Grant that we may keep your commandments
because we see their inherent value
in helping us to grow in our love toward you,
our neighbors, and ourselves.
Keep us from treating others as worthless
or from murmuring against leaders who move us out of safe ruts
into the excitement of following you in word and deed.**

(moment of silent confession)

* KYRIE

GUARANI KYRIE

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

* ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

In your disobedience, God's mercy becomes real.
In your jealousy and rejection, reconciliation is more meaningful.
The gifts and call of God are irrevocable.
You have received gifts; you have been chosen for ministry.
Fulfill your call.

Alleluia and Amen!

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Gabriel Bruce Pruchinski

Joseph Victor Pruchinski & Kaliegh Joan Pruchinski (Parents)

Ashley Schiavone & Tom Stankiewicz (Godparents)

* 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.

We are invited to give with generosity,
to minister in caring ways, to lead with diligence, to teach with enthusiasm.

We cannot be all things to all people.

But we can tithe the many gifts God pours out on us
and do our best to live up to God's trust in us.

The offering will now be received.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The Earth Is The Lord's

Carl Nygard Jr.

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof
All creatures who live on the earth are the Lord's
For whom can rightly ascend the hill of the Lord,
And who may enter God's house to hear the word?
The pure in heart and hand,
Such are the people of God, who understand.

* DOXOLOGY

FAIRHILL

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Triune God, Whom we adore.
Amen.**

* OFFERTORY PRAYER

Steve Willett

Let us join our voices in prayer:

**Through our offerings, we reach out to help people,
not because they are "worthy",
but because they are your children,
in need of what we can share.
Thank you for accepting our gifts,
inadequate as they may be,
and granting us the joy of giving.
Amen.**

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Bless Thou The Gifts

Robert Schumann

Bless thou the gifts our hands have brought;
bless thou the work our hearts have planned.
Ours is the faith, the will, the thought; the rest, O God, is in thy Hand.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Merciful Savior, your suffering has saved our lives,
secured our future, and restored us to relationship with God.
Remove the shame and fear that cause us to cower in your presence.
By the power of your Spirit, open our eyes and hearts
to your Word of love, mercy, healing and blessing;
through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

THE READINGS

Torah

Genesis 45:1-15 (Inclusive Bible)

Then Joseph was no longer able to hold back his feelings in front of his attendants, and he cried out to them, "Leave me!" So no one was present when Joseph made himself known to his brothers—but he wept so loudly that all of his Egyptian attendants heard him, and the news of it reached the Pharaoh's palace.

Joseph said to his brothers, "It is I—Joseph! Is my father really still alive?"

The brothers could not answer, so dumbfounded were they.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." When they had come

closer he said to them, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt!

Please don't rebuke yourselves for having sold me here. God sent me here ahead of you so that I could save your lives. There has been famine in the land for two years, and for the next five years there will be no tilling and no harvesting.

But God sent me ahead of you to guarantee that you will have descendants on earth and to keep you alive as a great body of survivors.

So it was not you who sent me here, but God! God has made me Pharaoh's chief counselor, the head of his household and governor of all Egypt. Hurry back to our father and give him this message from Joseph: 'God has made me governor of all of Egypt. Come to me here at once! Do not delay. You will live here near me in the territory of Goshen, you, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all your possessions. I will provide for you here—for the next five years will be years of famine—so that you and your children and all that you own will be spared from destitution.'

You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother, Benjamin, that it is I who speak to you. Report to our father about how I am honored here in Egypt, and about everything you have seen. Go quickly, now, and bring my father to me!"

Joseph threw his arms around Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him and wept too. Then he kissed his other brothers, weeping over them as well, and then he and his brothers talked.

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

With God's help we are listening.

Jesus called the crowds together and said to them, “Hear this and understand: it’s not what enters your mouth that defiles you—it’s what comes out of your mouth that defiles you.”

Then the disciples approached him and said, “Do you realize that the Pharisees were offended by what you said?” Jesus replied, “Every plant that my Abba God in heaven has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. Ignore them—they are blind people leading other blind people. And when the blind lead the blind, they all will fall into a ditch.”

Then Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” Jesus replied, “Do you still not understand? Don’t you realize that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and eventually finds its way into the sewer and is gone?

But what comes out of the mouth comes from the heart. This is what makes a person ‘unclean.’ For from the heart come all sorts of evil intentions—murder, sexual infidelity, promiscuity, stealing, lying, even foul language.

These things make a person unclean—not eating with unwashed hands!”

Jesus left there and departed for the district of Tyre and Sidon. It happened that a Canaanite woman living in that area came and cried out to Jesus. “Heir of the House of David, have pity on me! My daughter is horribly demon-possessed.”

Jesus gave her no word of response. The disciples came up and repeatedly said to him, “Please get rid of her! She keeps calling after us.”

Finally Jesus turned to the woman and said, “My mission is only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.” She then prostrated herself before him with the plea, “Help me, Rabbi!” He answered, “But it isn’t right to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.”

“True Rabbi,” she replied, “but even the dogs get to eat the scraps that fall from the table.” Jesus then said in reply, “Woman, you have great faith!

Your wish will come to pass.” At that very moment her daughter was healed.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



PASTOR’S MESSAGE

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

“Divine Mercy – Reconciled Never Rejected”

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

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.**

1 I'm gon-na live so (live so)
 2 I'm gon-na work so (work so)
 3 I'm gon-na pray so (pray so)
 4 I'm gon-na sing so (sing so)

God can use me an - y -

where, Lord, an - y - time!
 (an - y - time!)
 I'm gon-na
 I'm gon-na
 I'm gon-na
 I'm gon-na

live so (live so)
 work so (work so)
 pray so (pray so)
 sing so (sing so)

God can use me an - y -

where, Lord, an - y - time!
 (my Lord,) (an - y - time!)

This African American spiritual has more depth than may at first appear: for people who are bound in slavery to sing about dedicating themselves to God's use shows a profound awareness of God-given self-worth despite circumstances that would deny their human or spiritual value.

* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

You have received the mercy of God;
now grant mercy to people who wrong you.

**We will try to understand the plight of others
rather than rushing in with judgment.**

Be righteous, living by the best you know,
and just, dealing fairly with others.

**We will honor the covenant and magnify our ministry
in order to improve our human responses.**

Let the world see your great faith
in your humanity and helpfulness.

**We seek to be agents of reconciliation
and carriers of God's peace.**

God's grace, mercy, and peace
equip you for your service in the world.

* CHORAL RESPONSE

Amen

Danish Threefold

POSTLUDE

Excerpt of "August" from *The Seasons*

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

*"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:

JoAnn Hood, Gavin Morkel, Paula Morkel, Bruce Kranicz, Todd St. Clair,
Joyce Sabe, Dorland, Sandy Columbo, Addie Singleton, Rajvinder Kaur,
Dora Berman and family

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.



Please join us for Communion following the service this morning in the Chapel.

Wednesdays at 12:15 PM please join us in the Sanctuary for a Mid-Week Communion Service.

@ The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland

Sunday August 16

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

11:30AM Handbell Practice/Gallery

1:00PM Alzheimer Disease-Dementia Seminar Potluck/Memorial Hall

1:40PM Guardians/Padres/Progressive Field

Tuesday August 18

12:15PM Tuesday AA Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

Wednesday August 19

11:00AM Stirring Up Hope Soup Pantry

12:15PM Mid-Week Communion/Sanctuary

Thursday August 20

7:00PM FPS Directors Meeting/Conference Room/First Floor

Sunday August 23

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

2:30PM Annual Picnic/North Olmsted Community Cabin

Tuesday August 25

12:15PM Tuesday AA Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

Wednesday August 26

11:00AM Stirring Up Hope Soup Pantry

12:15PM Mid-Week Communion/Sanctuary

Sunday August 30

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

12:00PM Stated Session Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

1:40PM Guardians/Royals/Progressive Field

Tuesday September 1

12:15PM Tuesday AA Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

Wednesday September 2

11:00AM Stirring Up Hope Soup Pantry

12:15PM Mid-Week Communion/Sanctuary

6:00PM Welcome and Fellowship Committee Meeting/ZOOM

Last Sunday Attendance In-Person:72Online:203



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
1380 Ontario Street
Cleveland, OH 44113

Scan the QR Code with your phone.



Checks should be made payable to "The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland."

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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Website: www.firstprescle.org **E-Mail:** info@firstprescle.org

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Senior Pastor: Rev. Stephen C. Blonder Adams

Parish Associate: Rev. Denise Clark-Jones

Minister of Music: Evan M. Collins

Choir

Kaya Sparks, *soprano*

Anthony Steward, *tenor*

Morgan Potts, *alto*

Christopher Clark, *bass*

Church Elders:

Clerk of Session: Beth Buchanan

Class of 2026

Beth Buchanan
Judy Macuga
Melissa Maffia
Harriet Niles
Marty Vassel

Class of 2027

Michelle Baron
Bernard Medie
Bob Reid

Class of 2028

Dave Finley
Don Urban

Church Deacons:

Class of 2026

Mark Corey
Forrest Diehl
Pam Daly
Ruth Finley
Alyssa Niepokny
Charlene Thornton

Class of 2027

Anand Bandari
Eric Grattan
Sunny Kunche
Amy Wheeler
John Wheeler

Class of 2028

Valorie Hempstead
JoAnn Hood
Elie Medie
Brad Oglesby
Mark Pichler
Lori Montero

Church Trustees:

Class of 2027

Dave Eifert

Class of 2027

Bruce Kranicz

Class of 2027

Mike Musson

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