



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CLEVELAND

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
10AM Sanctuary Worship

WE GATHER IN THE GRACE OF GOD

PRELUDE

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
Lobe den Herren

Johann Walther

WELCOME

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Edie Horvat

INTROIT

Let The Words Of My Mouth

Eric Thiman

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart,
be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, O Lord,
my strength and my redeemer.

* Those who are able are requested to stand

Please silence all electronic devices.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

This is the day of our Sovereign God:
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

**All our days belong to our Creator,
and we honor Christ in our thanks for them.**

Let us observe the day in communion with God
and with all our sisters and brothers.

**We open our hearts and lives to our Sovereign
and to those who worship with us.**

None of us live to ourselves,
and none of us die to ourselves.

**If we live, we live to Christ,
and if we die, we die to Christ.**

Jesus reigns over the dead and over the living,
and we must account for ourselves through Christ.

**Let every tongue give praise to God
and every knee bow before God's judgment.**

* INVOCATION PRAYER

Let us pray together:

**Glory to your name, holy God.
We rejoice in your wonderful works,
in miracles you have caused among us,
and in the wealth you have entrusted to our stewardship.
You have called us to important work in your vineyard.
Wherever we go, we represent your church and interpret your ways
to those who observe our words and deeds.
Enfold us in your presence and give us strength and courage
to pass on the light you have sent to illuminate our journey through life.
We are eager to be fed by your Word today.
Amen.**

* HYMN #35

Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty

LOBE DEN HERREN

1 Praise ye the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -
2 Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so won-drous - ly
3 Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me a -

a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for he is thy
 reign - eth, shel - ters thee un - der his wings, yea, so
 dore him! All that hath life and breath, come now with

health and sal - va - tion! All ye who hear, now to his
 gen - tly sus - tain - eth! Hast thou not seen how thy de -
 prais - es be - fore him! Let the a - men sound from his

tem - ple draw near; join me in glad ad - o - ra - tion!
 sires e'er have been grant - ed in what he or - dain - eth?
 peo - ple a - gain; glad - ly for aye we a - dore him.

This very strong 17th-century German hymn employs many phrases from the psalms, especially Psalms 150 and 103:1-6. It did not receive an effective English translation until the mid-19th century, but has remained popular ever since, thanks in part to its stirring tune.

TEXT: Joachim Neander, 1680; trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, alt.
 MUSIC: Stralsund *Erneueren Gesangbuch*, 1665; harm. *The Chorale Book for England*, 1863

LOBE DEN HERREN
 14.14.4.7.8

* CALL TO CONFESSION

Mary Musson

Some of us are haunted by the evil we have done to others.
 Some harbor hatred against a sister or brother.
 Some of us fear any whose ways are strange to us.
 Some are tired of forgiving again and again.
 All of us are in debt to a loving God who never gives up on us.
 Let us seek to make things right once more
 in our relationship with God and all humankind.
 Let us join our voices in the corporate prayer of confession,
 followed by time for silent personal confession.
 Thus, we pray:

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Good and Patient God,
we are back again with the same problem.
We are cut off from full communion with you and one another
because of our evil thoughts and deeds.
We have spoken harshly and judged unfairly
those sisters and brothers who need our love.
We have inflicted hurt and made unfair demands.
Forgive, we pray, the transgressions of your servants,
and move us to appreciate your generosity.
In thanksgiving for your mercy
we offer full pardon and acceptance to those who have wronged us.**

(moment of silent confession)

* KYRIE

GUARANI KYRIE

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

* ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

We have this reassurance from God
that even our wickedness can be turned to good ends.
Those we despise can become friends.
When you forgive your brother or sister from the heart,
the channels of your own pardon are opened wide.
Accept God's gift and live!

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.
God provides generously for all of us.
We are blessed with pure water and nourishing food.
We have found joy in the faith that sustains our spirits.
Let us now expand the circle of opportunity
as we share what God has promised.
The offering will now be received.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

I Believe This Is Jesus

Undine Smith Moore

I believe this is Jesus;
Come and see, oh, come and see.
The light of God shines in his face,
He offers all his pard'ning grace;
Come and see, oh, come and see.
Yes, yes, yes Lord!
Oh, I believe this is Jesus;
Come and see, come and see

* 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

Mary Musson

Let us join our voices in prayer:

**God of all good gifts,
we have been all too eager, in our lives,
to pay back evil for evil, and slow to pay back your goodness to us.
We are so far in debt to you that we can never give enough
or do enough to deserve any further consideration from you.
Yet you continue to care for us and comfort us,
showing mercy and kindness day after day.
Receive these offerings as an outpouring of our gratitude.
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

**Awaken our hearts and minds to your Word, O God.
Give us understanding so that,
by the power of your Holy Spirit,
we are able to do all that you command for love's sake.
Gathered in Christ's name,
gathered around the Word, we pray. Amen.**

THE READINGS

Epistle

Romans 14:1-12 (Inclusive Bible)

Welcome those whose faith is weak, and don't argue with them. The opinions of people range from those who believe they may eat any sort of meat, to those whose faith is so weak they eat only vegetables. Those who eat everything must not despise those who abstain. The ones who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. Who are you to judge someone else's worker? It's for the employer to decide if the worker has succeeded or failed—and the worker will succeed, for our God has the power to make it so. One person considers one day more sacred than another, another considers all days equally sacred—and both are equally certain of their own opinions. The person who observes special days does it for our God. Whoever eats meat does it for our God and gives thanks to God. Whoever abstains does it for our God and gives thanks to God.

We don't live for ourselves, nor do we die for ourselves. While we live, we live for Christ Jesus, and when we die, we die for Christ Jesus. Both in life and in death we belong to Christ. That's why Christ died and came to life again—in order to reign supreme over both the living and the dead.

But you, how can you sit in judgment of your sisters and brothers? Or you, how can you look down on your sisters and brothers? We will all have to appear before the judgment seat of God. Scripture says, "As surely as I live"—it is our God who speaks—"every knee will bend before me and every tongue will give praise to God." We will all have to give account of ourselves before God.

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

With God's help we are listening.

Peter came up and asked Jesus, “When a sister or brother wrongs me, how many times must I forgive? Seven times?” “No,” Jesus replied, “not seven times; I tell you seventy times seven. And here’s why.

The kingdom of heaven is like a ruler who decided to settle accounts with the royal officials. When the audit was begun, one was brought in who owed tens of millions of dollars. As the debtor had no way of paying, the ruler ordered this official to be sold, along with family and property, in payment of the debt.

At this, the official bowed down in homage and said, ‘I beg you, your highness, be patient with me and I will pay you back in full!’

Moved with pity, the ruler let the official go and wrote off the debt.

Then that same official went out and met a colleague who owed the official twenty dollars. The official seized and throttled this debtor with the demand, ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ The debtor dropped to the ground and began to plead, ‘Just give me time and I will pay you back in full!’ But the official would hear none of it, and instead had the colleague put in debtor’s prison until the money was paid.

When the other officials saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and went to the ruler, reporting the entire incident. The ruler sent for the official and said, ‘You worthless wretch! I cancelled your entire debt when you pleaded with me. Should you not have dealt mercifully with your colleague, as I dealt with you?’

Then in anger, the ruler handed the official over to be tortured until the debt had been paid in full.

My Abba in heaven will treat you exactly the same way unless you truly forgive your sisters and brothers from your hearts.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PASTOR’S MESSAGE

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

“Final Judgment”



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.**

C Am Dm G Dm G C



1 Christ be be - side me; Christ be be - fore me; Christ be be -
2 Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left hand, Christ all a -
3 Christ be in all hearts think - ing a - bout me; Christ be on

Em Am Em F G C Am F C



hind me, King of my heart. Christ be with - in me; Christ be be -
round me, shield in the strife. Christ in my sleep - ing, Christ in my
all tongues tell - ing of me. Christ be the vi - sion in eyes that

Am G C G Am G7 C



low me; Christ be a - bove me, nev - er to part.
sit - ting, Christ in my ris - ing, Light of my life.
see me; in ears that hear me Christ ev - er be.

This text adapts part of a traditional Irish prayer associated with St. Patrick (see also no. 6). Such a prayer for protection is known as a *lorica*, from a Latin word for “breastplate” or “armor.” It is set to a Gaelic melody that gained wide popularity in the 1970s.

TEXT: James Quinn, SJ, 1969

MUSIC: Gaelic melody; arr. Dale Grotenhuis, 1985

Music Arr. © 1987 Faith Alive Christian Resources

BUNESSAN

5.5.5.4.D

* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

The week ahead holds hours and days
that are gifts from God's hand.

**They are given to each of us alike
to enjoy and invest or to hate and destroy.**

When we encounter human need
let us remember how God has met our needs.

**In our sisters and brothers in distress
we meet Christ, who identifies with each one.**

We are called to forgive and build up,
to offer mercy in place of harsh judgment.

**In all things God works together for good
with those who receive and extend love.**

Let us go forth rejoicing
and giving ourselves for others.

**We will love in grateful response
to God's forgiving love.**

* CHORAL RESPONSE

Amen

Danish Amen

POSTLUDE

Praeludium in A minor (BWV 559)

J.S. Bach

*"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:

Ingrid Naylor, JoAnn Hood, Bruce Kranicz, Jean Marie Leathers, Patsy Buchanan,
Adam Fiortto, Karen McKibben, Denise Sarago, Tommy Bollinger, Scheem, Jimmy,
Conrad, Jerome, Dorland, Addie Singleton, Rajvinder Kaur

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 September 13

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

12:00PM New Member Class/Chapel/Gallery

Tuesday September 15

12:15PM Tuesday AA Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

Wednesday September 16

11:00AM Stirring Up Hope Soup Pantry

12:15PM Mid-Week Communion/Sanctuary

Thursday September 17

7:00PM FPS Directors Meeting/Conference Room

Sunday September 20

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

11:30AM MUW Committee Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

11:45AM Handbell Rehearsal/Gallery

1:40PM Guardians/Athletics/Progressive Field

2:00PM Welcoming and Fellowship Committee

Cleveland Art Museum Tour

Tuesday September 22

12:15PM Tuesday AA Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

Wednesday September 23

11:00AM Stirring Up Hope Soup Pantry

12:15PM Mid-Week Communion/Sanctuary

Sunday September 27

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

12:00PM Stated Session Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

1:40PM Browns/Panthers/Huntington Field

Last Sunday Attendance In-Person:73 Online:220

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

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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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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*

J.R Fralick, *tenor*

Noah Whitaker, *tenor*

Rayna Brooks, *alto*

Morgan Potts, *alto*

Val Sibila, *alto*

R. Dominic Aragon, *bass*

Job Butcher, *bass*

Adam Whanger, *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

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Class of 2027

Dave Eifert

Class of 2027

Bruce Kranicz

Class of 2027

Mike Musson

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