



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CLEVELAND

SEPTEMBER 27, 2026
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
10AM Sanctuary Worship

WE GATHER IN THE GRACE OF GOD

PRELUDE *We Pray Now to the Holy Spirit* Dietrich Buxtehude

WELCOME Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

INTROIT *Trust in Him at All Times* C.W. Walton

Trust in Him at all times.
God is a refuge and help in time of trouble.

* Those who are able are requested to stand

Please silence all electronic devices.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

The Eternal One summons us from work to worship,
from dull monotony to high adventure.

**We are called to look beyond life's routines
to their meaning and possibilities.**

God satisfies us in the morning with steadfast love,
that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

**As we participate in the Spirit,
our selfish conceits give way to unity.**

The mind of Christ prompts humility within
and kindly service to those who need us.

**God is at work with us
to accomplish Eternal purposes.**

Then let us worship God with joy and praise,
knowing our salvation is in Christ.

**The turmoil of life's everyday fragmentation
is calmed as we rediscover our wholeness.**

* INVOCATION PRAYER

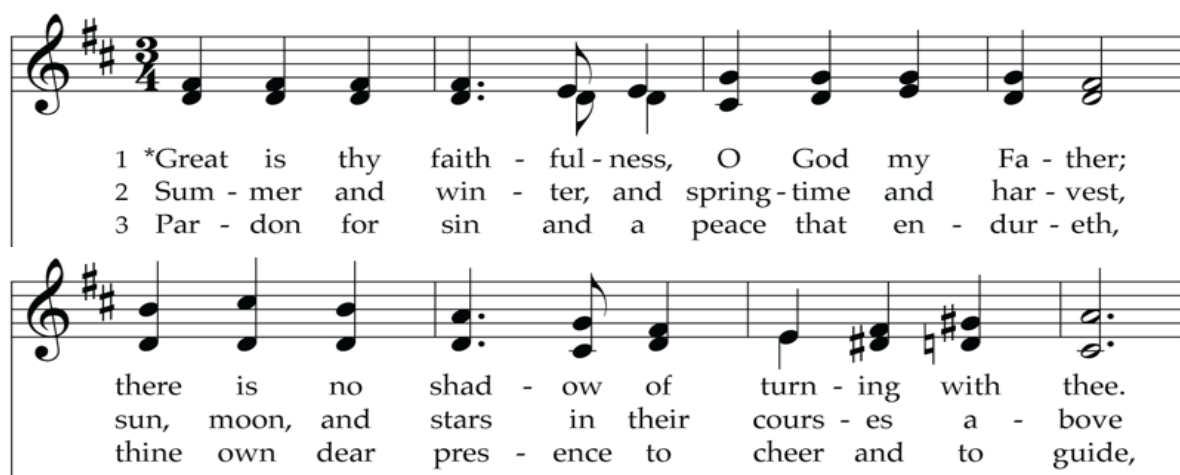
Let us pray together:

**O God, our rock and our redeemer,
enlighten us today through the ancient witness of your faithful people.
Lead us to desire the guidance of your word.
Remind us of your ordinances that are true and righteous altogether.
May they shape our living and warn us when we are in error.
We seek to honor your name, to divest ourselves of idols,
to keep this day of rest and worship.
Work with us to develop right relationships in our families
and with all your children near and far,
we pray in Jesus' name.
Amen.**

* HYMN #39

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

FAITHFULNESS



1 *Great is thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther;
2 Sum - mer and win - ter, and spring - time and har - vest,
3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth,
there is no shad - ow of turn - ing with thee.
sun, moon, and stars in their cours - es a - bove
thine own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide,



Refrain



* CALL TO CONFESSION

Mary Eifert

Many centuries ago the psalmist cried out to God:
"You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
We are consumed by your anger and overwhelmed by your wrath."
When we are feeling guilty,
God may loom over us as a frightening judge.
Yet God invites us to turn back from our sin and be freed from it.
God listens and responds.
God forgives.
Let us seek God in prayer.
Let us join our voices in the corporate prayer of confession,
followed by time for silent personal confession.
Thus, we pray:

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Sovereign God,
just when we think we have buried our wickedness from everyone's
view, you expose it and call us to deal with it openly and courageously.
We have not treated others with the sympathy and kindness you expect.
Instead, we have used them for our own ends.
We have been selfish, conceited, and arrogant,
putting our own interests first.
We play god as we grasp and manipulate things and people.
O God, turn us inside out,
and replace the demons inside us with your own loving spirit.
We pray in Jesus' name.**

(moment of silent confession)

* KYRIE

GUARANI KYRIE

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

* ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

All who turn away from wickedness
and do what is right shall be saved.
I have no pleasure in the death of anyone,
says the Sovereign God, so turn and live.
God is at work in you, both to will and to work for God's good pleasure.
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 has planted a vineyard on this tiny planet we call home.

The earth has been blessed with vast resources entrusted to our care.

What is produced by our caretaking is not our own
but is rightfully claimed by God for the benefit of all.

It is the fruit of God's realm that we share today.

The offering will now be received.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Ubi Caritas - Maurice Duruflé

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
Exsulemus, et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus, et amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.
Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.

* 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 Eifert

Let us join our voices in prayer:

**Put these gifts, and our time and talents,
to work in your vineyard, Sovereign God.
Grant to us the capacity to move beyond good intentions
to give ourselves completely to the purposes of your realm.
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

**O God, fill us with your Spirit
and humble our hearts
so that we can hear your Word.
Amen.**

THE READINGS

Epistle

Philippians 2:1-13 (Inclusive Bible)

If our life in Christ means anything to you—if love, or sympathy can persuade you at all—then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing that would make me completely happy. There must be no competition among you, no conceit, but everybody is to be humble: value others over yourselves, each of you thinking of the interests of others before your own. Your attitude must be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Christ, though in the image of God, didn't deem equality with God something to be clung to—but instead became completely empty and took on the image of oppressed humankind: born into the human condition, found in the likeness of a human being, Jesus was thus humbled—obediently accepting death, even death on a cross! Because of this, God highly exalted Christ and gave to Jesus the name above every other name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee must bend in the heavens, on the earth and under the earth, and every tongue proclaim to the glory of God: Jesus Christ reigns supreme!

Therefore, my dear friends, you who are always obedient to my urging, work out your salvation with fear and trembling, not only when I happen to be with you, but all the more now that I'm absent. It is God at work in you that creates the desire to do God's will.

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

With God's help we are listening.

Jesus entered the Temple precincts and began teaching. The chief priests and the elders of the people came to him and said, “By what authority are you doing what you do? Who gave you this authority?”

“And I,” replied Jesus, “will ask you a single question; if you give me the answer, I will tell you my authority for these actions. What was the origin of John’s right to baptize? Was it divine or was it human?”

They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘divine,’ he will respond, ‘Then why did you refuse to believe him? But if we say ‘human,’ we have the people to fear, for they regard John as a prophet.” So they replied to Jesus, “We don’t know.”

Jesus said in reply, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.” Jesus continued, “What do you think? There was a landowner who had two children. The landowner approached the elder and said, ‘My child, go out and work in the vineyard today.’ This first child replied, ‘No, I won’t,’ but afterwards regretted it and went. The landowner then came to the second child and said the same thing. The second child said in reply, ‘I’m on my way.’ but never went.

Which of the two did what was wanted?”

They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “The truth of the matter is, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you. When John came walking on the road of justice, you didn’t believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you didn’t repent and believe.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PASTOR’S MESSAGE

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

“Humility or Hubris”



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.**

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.**

Capo 1: (D) Refrain

Lead me, guide me, a - long the way, for if you

lead me, I can - not stray. Lord, let me walk each

day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

I am weak and I need your strength and power to help me

o - ver my weak - est hour. Help me through the dark-ness your

face to see. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

Fine

to Refrain

Guitar chords: (D), E^b, (A7) B^b7, (Em) Fm, (A) B^b, (D) E^b, (A7) B^b7, (D) E^b, (A7) B^b7, (B7) C7, (Em) Fm, (D) E^b, (A7) B^b7, (D) E^b, (D) E^b, (B7) C7, (Em) Fm, (A7) B^b7, (Em) Fm, (A) B^b, (D) E^b, (D) E^b, (D7) E^b7, (Em) Fm, (D) E^b, (A7) B^b7, (D) E^b.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This African American gospel hymn can well be understood as an updated adaptation of Psalm 5:8, with the "enemies" of the psalm treated as the pressures and temptations of daily life. As with the psalms, the "I" here is understood to express a shared communal experience.

TEXT: Doris Akers, 1953

MUSIC: Doris Akers, 1953; arr. Richard Smallwood

Text and Music © 1953, ren. Doris Akers (admin. Chappell & Co., Inc./Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.)

LEAD ME, GUIDE ME

Irregular

* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

The Eternal One sends us back to our daily work
with renewed inspiration and motivation.

**We see fresh ways to improve the quality of life
for ourselves and all companions on this earth.**

We are moved by sympathy and affection
to listen and respond more fully.

**We do not need to protect false images
but can be ourselves with other people.**

The strength we find in being together
goes with us as we part to serve.

**We are committed anew to God's purposes
and confident we have something to give.**

The vineyards of life summon us
with much that needs to be done.

**We will go where God sends us
and do the work God equips us to do.**

* CHORAL RESPONSE

Sevenfold Amen

John Stainer

POSTLUDE

Fugue in C major BuxWV 174

Dietrich Buxtehude

*“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, Adam Fiorto,
Richard Lee, Karen McKibben, Tommy Bollinger, Jacob Daley, Jean Rundlett,
Scheem, Jimmy, Linda, Kenny, Emma, Martha, 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 27

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

12:00PM Stated Session Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

1:40PM Browns/Panthers/Huntington Field

Tuesday September 29

12:15PM Tuesday AA Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

Wednesday September 30

11:00AM Stirring Up Hope Soup Pantry

12:15PM Mid-Week Communion/Sanctuary

Sunday October 4

10:00AM Worship with Communion/Sanctuary

11:30AM Deacons Meeting/Conference Room

12:00PM-2PM Blessing of the Animals/Front Steps

Tuesday October 6

12:15PM Tuesday AA Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

Wednesday October 7

11AM-2PM Open Doors/Sanctuary

12:15PM Mid-Week Communion/Sanctuary

6:00PM Welcoming and Fellowship Committee Meeting/ZOOM

Thursday October 8

2:00PM Worship Committee Meeting/ZOOM

Sunday October 11

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

Tuesday October 13

12:15PM Tuesday AA Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

Wednesday October 14

11:00AM Stirring Up Hope Soup Pantry

12:15PM Mid-Week Communion/Sanctuary

Thursday October 15

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

Last Sunday Attendance In-Person:76 Online:302

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

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

Cali Jacobs, *soprano*

Zara Smith, *soprano*

Kaya Sparks, *soprano*

Christian Bush, *tenor*

Anthony Steward, *tenor*

Noah Whitaker, *tenor*

Rayna Brooks, *alto*

Morgan Potts, *alto*

Kalee Bonzio, *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

Church Trustees:

Class of 2027

Dave Eifert

Class of 2027

Bruce Kranicz

Class of 2027

Mike Musson

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