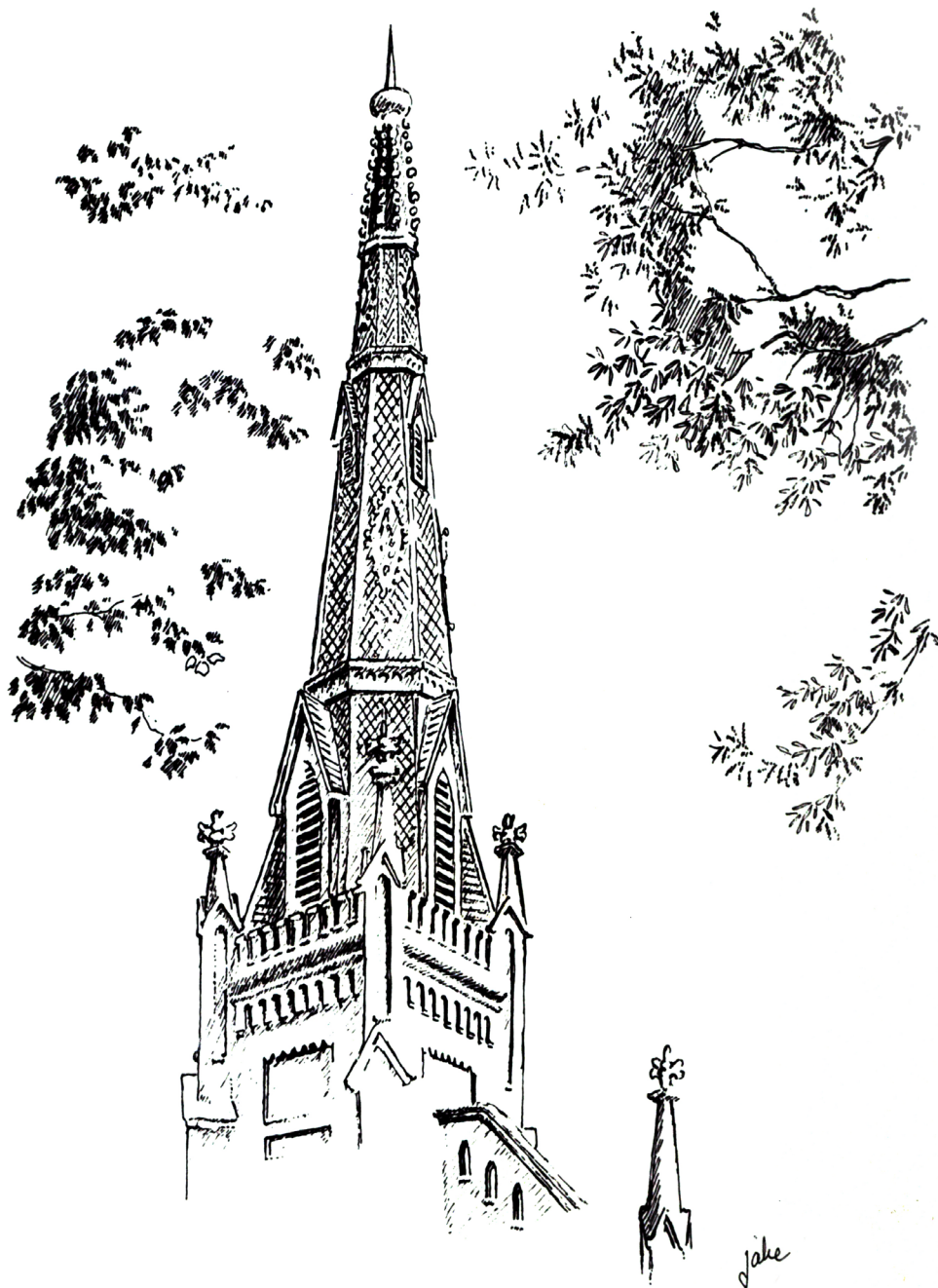


# First Presbyterian Church

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP | 9 AM | NOVEMBER 12, 2023  
TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



*We invite you, whoever you are and whoever God is helping you to become, to join First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte in our journey of faith. God is love, and that love is for you. You belong as a child of God, and we welcome you. Come experience how that belonging might change you and our world as we seek to be for Christ in the heart of Charlotte.*



First Presbyterian  
Church of Charlotte

**Time of Quiet Meditation and Reflection** | Silence begins in the Chapel at 8:50 a.m.

**Words of Welcome** | Reverend Mary Bowman

**Invocation** | Adapted from *The Book of Common Worship*

**O God, Who has ordered this wondrous world, and Who knows all things in earth and heaven. So fill our hearts with trust in You that by night and day, at all times and in all seasons, we may without fear commit all that we have and hope to be to Your never-failing love, for this life and the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Meditative Music** | How Firm A Foundation | Steve and Danny Thompson

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
is laid for your faith in His excellent word!  
What more can He say than to you He hath said,  
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?  
Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,  
for I am thy God and will still give thee aid;  
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand  
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.  
When through the deep waters I call thee to go,  
the rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;  
for I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,  
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.  
When through fiery trials thy pathways shall lie,  
my grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;  
the flame shall not hurt thee; I only design  
thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.  
The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to His foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake!

**Prayer for Illumination** | Martin Hull

**First Reading** | Mark 12:28-34

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that Jesus answered them well the scribe asked Jesus, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Then the scribe said to Jesus, "You are right, Teacher; You have truly said that 'He is one, and besides Him there is no other'; and 'to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." When Jesus saw that the scribe answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask Jesus any question.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Moment of Reflection**

**Second Reading** | 1 John 4:14-21

And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent His Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because He first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate a brother or sister are liars, for those who do not love a brother or sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from Him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Moment of Reflection**

**Meditation** | "The Two Great Commandments: Loving Ourselves"

**Moment of Reflection****Call to Confession**

**Prayer of Confession** | Adapted from *The Book of Common Worship*

**Almighty God, You always love us, but we have not always loved You. You call, but we have not always listened. We too often walk away from neighbors in need, wrapped in our own concerns. We too often condone evil, prejudice, warfare, and greed out of inattentiveness and neglect. God of grace, help us to admit our sin, so that as You come to us in mercy, we may repent, turn to You, and receive forgiveness.**

**Moment of Reflection**

**O Lord, we ask that You forgive what we have been and done, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy name. We receive Your forgiveness with grateful hearts, and we commit to the work of extending it to others. Amen.**

**Offering**

The Christian life is marked by the offering of one's self to God to be shaped, empowered, directed, and changed by God. In worship, God presents us with the costly self-offering of Jesus Christ. We are claimed by Christ and set free. In response to God's love in Jesus Christ we offer God our lives, our gifts, our abilities, and our material goods, for God's service. The offering plates are located at the back of the chapel if you are interested in giving regularly as a spiritual practice.

**Invitation to the Table**

**Meditative Music** | Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing | BYU Vocal Point

Come Thou fount of every blessing  
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace  
Streams of mercy never ceasing  
Call for songs of loudest praise.  
Here I raise my Ebenezer  
Hither by Thy great help I've come  
And I hope by Thy good pleasure  
Safely to arrive at home.

Jesus sought me when a stranger  
 Wandering from the fold of God  
 He to rescue me from danger.  
 Oh, to grace how great a debtor  
 Daily I'm constrained to be  
 Let Thy goodness like a fetter  
 Bind my wandering heart to Thee  
 Prone to wander, Lord I feel it  
 Prone to leave the God I love.  
 Here's my heart, oh take and seal it  
 Seal it for Thy courts above  
 Here's my heart; Oh take and seal it  
 Seal it for Thy courts above

### Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

### Sacrament of Communion

To receive the gluten-free bread and the cup, come forward, take a piece of bread, and then dip the bread into the cup. It is still communion if you prefer to take only the bread. Please do not drink out of the cup directly. If for any reason you prefer not to come forward, please raise your hand and the officers will be glad to serve you in your pew.

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Gracious God, we thank You for the gift of this time in Your loving presence. We are grateful for the ways that You fill us and restore us with Your love. May we walk in the truth of Your love for us so we can share Your love with the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

### Charge and Blessing

We have been fed by the presence of God in the silence, by the Word, and through communion. Please feel free to greet one another in a warm and quiet way that allows an easing out of the silence. The minister is available for prayer or conversation after the service. Sunday School begins at 9:45 a.m. If you would like to visit longer with other members, you are invited to gather in the Welcome Center.



VIRTUAL  
CONNECT  
CARD



PRAYER  
REQUESTS



ANNOUNCEMENT  
LINKS



TEXT  
TO GIVE



GIVE  
ONLINE