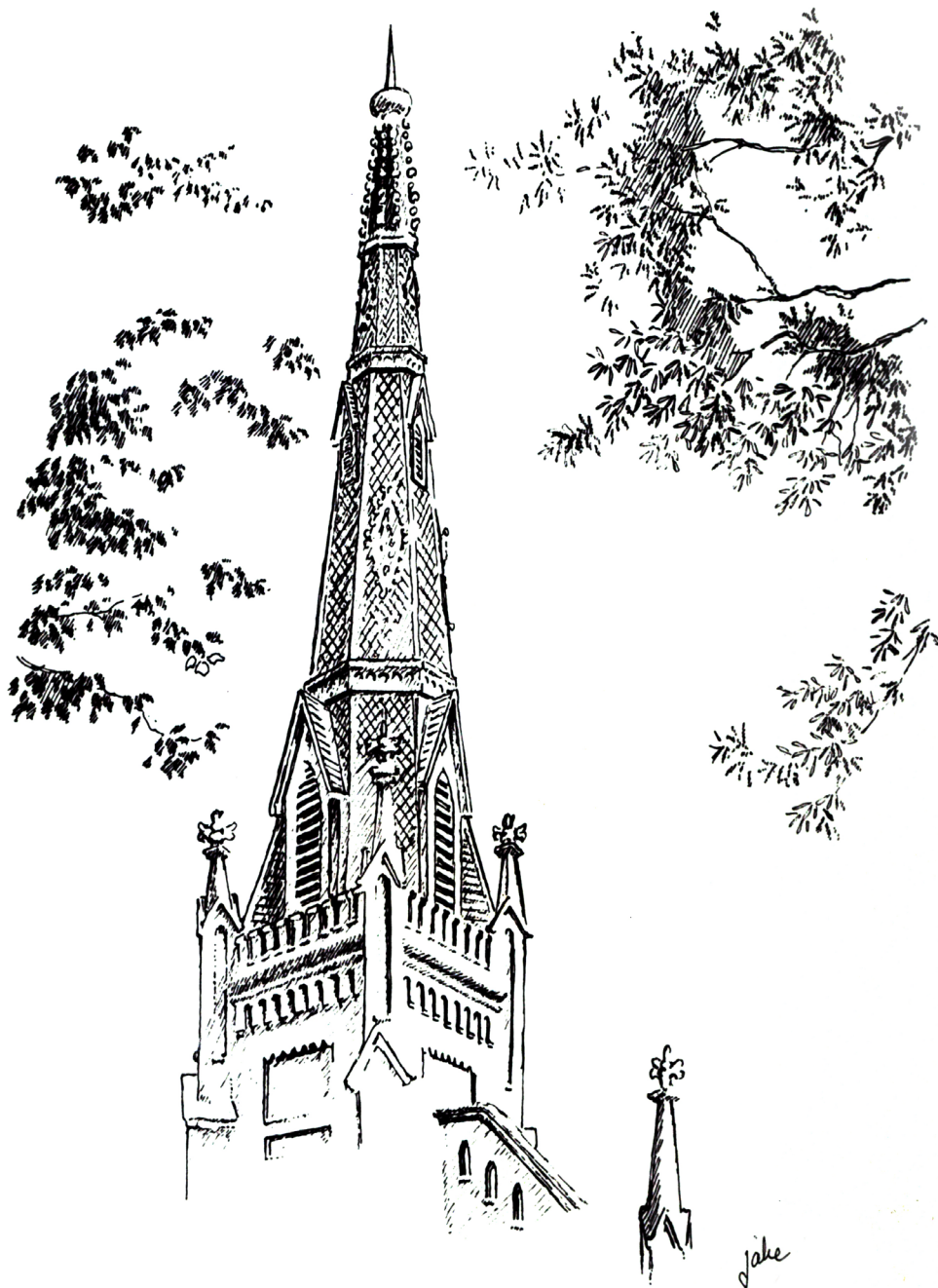


First Presbyterian Church

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP | 9 AM | NOVEMBER 5, 2023
TWENTY-THIRD 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 | *A Guide to Prayer for All Who Walk with God*

Holy God, grant us peace in this noisy world, that all our attention may be directed towards You. May Your ways be known to us through the calming of our hearts, the quieting of our minds, and the restoration of our souls. In the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Meditative Music | “Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven” | The American Boychoir

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven; to His feet thy tribute bring.
 Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, evermore His praises sing.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Praise the everlasting King!
 Praise Him for His grace and favor to His people in distress.
 Praise Him, still the same as ever, slow to chide, and swift to bless.
 Fatherlike He tends and spares us; well our feeble frame He knows.
 In His hand He gently bears us, rescues us from all our foes.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Widely yet His mercy flows!
 Angels, help us to adore Him; you behold Him face to face.
 Sun and moon, bow down before Him, dwellers all in time and space.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Praise with us the God of grace!

Prayer for Illumination | Tom Wright

Old Testament Reading | Adapted from Psalm 103:1-8

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God’s holy name.
 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all God’s benefits—who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.

The Lord works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.
 God made known his ways to Moses, God acts to the people of Israel.
 The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Moment of Reflection

New Testament 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

Meditation | “The Two Great Commandments: Loving with All of Our Souls”

Moment of Reflection

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, You have given us souls that we might commune with You and know Your presence, and yet we confess that You are not the voice we always turn to, or the voice we have tuned ourselves to. We long to live in right and loving relationship with You. As we confess to You how we have fallen short, we trust that You will meet us and forgive us. For the psalmist reminds us that You “do not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.”

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 | “It is Well with My Soul” | Caleb and Kelsey Grimm

When peace, like a river, Attendeth my way,
 When sorrows like sea billows roll; Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say,
 It is well, it is well with my soul.
 It is well, it is well, with my soul, with my soul.
 It is well, it is well with my soul.
 My sin, oh, the bliss Of this glorious thought!
 My sin, not in part but the whole, Is nailed to the cross,
 And I bear it no more, Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!
 It is well, it is well, with my soul, with my soul
 It is well, it is well, with my soul.
 And Lord, haste the day When my faith shall be sight,
 The clouds be rolled back as a scroll; The trump shall resound,
 And the Lord shall descend, Even so, it is well with my soul.
 It is well, it is well, with my soul, with my soul.
 It is well, it is well, with my soul.
 It is well, it is well, with my soul.

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 are grateful for Your many gifts — the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the restoration that comes from worship and the nourishment that comes from Your table. May this time of worship be our fuel for our week and Your presence our ever-present Guide. 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.

Announcements

Sunday Readers

The leadership provided by lay members is an important part of the 9 a.m. service. If you are willing to be a reader, please scan the QR code below to sign up. We appreciate your considering leading worship in this way!

Have you made your 2024 Pledge?

Scan the QR code below to pledge. Email Jan at jgaddis@firstpres-charlotte.org if you have questions or need assistance. Thank you for supporting your church and our ministry!

Global Missions Sunday

November 12

Rev. Dr. Hunter Farrell, Director of World Mission Initiative at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, will be our Sunday School leader (9:45 a.m.) and guest preacher (11 a.m.). The children will share a special piece of music from our friends in Haiti, a special offering will be collected to

provide clean water in the Yucatan, and representatives from EWO Haiti will be available after worship with information about sponsoring a student in Bayonnais. At 4 p.m., you're invited to attend a drop-in happy hour reception with Hunter Farrell. Scan QR code to RSVP.

Thanksgiving Meal Distribution

November 18, 1 p.m. The Core Church

Serve alongside our partners at Core Church as they distribute 400 free Thanksgiving meals to residents of the Westerly Hills community. Scan the QR code to sign up.

Adopt a Christmas Tree

November 27 - December 1, Fellowship Hall

We have Christmas trees that need decorating to get the church ready for Singing in the Season! You can decorate your tree any time between November 27 and December 1. Feeling competitive? At Singing in the Season, we'll vote on the favorite tree! Scan the QR code to adopt your tree.



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LINKS



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TO GIVE



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