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The Welcome to First Presbyterian Church- Lynchburg, VA

Whether you are at First Presbyterian for the first time, a repeat visitor, or a long-time member...

Whether you are familiar with reformed traditions or find some of it a bit different...

Whether you grew up Presbyterian or Baptist or Episcopalian or Lutheran or Methodist or Jewish or Agnostic...

Whether you are in search of comfort or wanting to be challenged...

Whatever reason brought you to worship today, you are welcome here. As God's children and Jesus' disciples, we believe it is important to take seriously God's commandment and Jesus' teachings to love God, love one another, and love our neighbors. We don't all look alike, act alike, or think alike. We don't all read the Bible the same way. We bring different questions and carry different burdens. Still, every Sunday we are called by God to worship together as one unified community. Our worship style is traditional and true to our Reformed heritage. At the same time, we seek to bring our faith into conversation with the world around us and the events of our lives. We do our best to sing with joy and pray with honesty. Hospitality is important, and friendship is holy. That's why we gather for fellowship, cookies, and lemonade in the Narthex after worship. We hope you will join us in sharing the love, joy, and peace of Christ with one another during this time.

If you're looking for a perfect church, although there are many wonderful things happening in the life and ministries of First Presbyterian, perfect is not in the cards. We're real people. We do the very best we can, but we don't always get it right. We understand how much we all need grace in our lives. And we believe that God's love, which never gives up and never let's go, is for everyone. We truly believe this a place for all God's children to be a part of celebrating God's grace and inspiring the next generation for Christ.

Run the Race, Fight the Fight, Keep the Faith,

Rev. Dr. Peter Thompson

Building Hospitality

Our building is a wonderful resource. It can also feel like a labyrinth when you are learning your way around. A few key locations may be helpful to you: Accessible Restrooms can be located down the main hallway from the Foyer. The Elevator is also located down the main hallway from the Foyer. The Nursery is located on the ground floor just outside the elevator. In addition to locations, there are two supports available to worship participants should they be needed: Hearing-assist devices and Large Print Hymnals can be found in the Narthex. Ushers are available and willing to assist you in finding your way or answering other questions. Wayfinding signs are also posted at all intersections throughout the building.

Welcoming Children

Just as Jesus welcomes the little children to come, so we welcome children of all ages in worship. We believe we are better when all members of God's family are included! In order to make the worship service as welcoming for our littlest ones as possible, we provide worship carts with a variety of resources to make a worship bag. After the children's moment, 4 years to 2nd grade aged children are invited to participate in worship workshop in room 101 or stay for the remainder of worship. It is always a joy to have your children and all the wiggles, giggles, questions, noises, and insights they bring. If you have any questions about how to enhance your child's worship experience, or if you're looking to get involved with our children's ministries, please contact Dr. Marcia Thom-Kaley (marcia@fpcly.org) or Catherine Adams (communications@fpcly.org).

Interested in joining?

If you'd like to be here in a more official capacity, you are invited to join First Presbyterian as a member. Everyone who is part of our community is treated the same. Joining isn't about special treatment, but rather about a commitment you make to following Jesus alongside others trying to do the same. New member gatherings take place throughout the year based on interest. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Rev. Dr. Peter Thompson (peter@fpcly.org) or Alex Collier (alex@fpcly.org).

Service of the Lord's Day

November 26, 2023

*From the beginning of the early church, God's people have met to worship on the first day of the week, the day Christ Jesus rose from the dead. We **gather** to praise the Triune God, confess our sin, and seek God's grace. We **hear** the good news of the gospel and are invited to **respond** to that good news in prayer, mission, offering, and celebrating the Lord's Supper. We are **sent** forth to glorify God through the service of daily living.*

**Those who are able, please stand.*

All are invited to join together in saying liturgy printed in bold.

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Prelude

Andante Religioso

F. Mendelssohn

Cory Whittier, Director of Music and Organist

Welcome and Announcements

***Hymn #150: Come, Christians, Join to Sing**

Madrid

Come, Christians, join to sing Alleluia! Amen!
Loud praise to Christ our King; Alleluia! Amen!
Let all, with heart and voice, Before His throne rejoice;
Praise is His gracious choice; Alleluia! Amen!

Come, lift your hearts on high; Alleluia! Amen!
Let praises fill the sky; Alleluia! Amen!
He is our guide and friend; To us He'll condescend;
His love shall never end; Alleluia! Amen!

Praise yet our Christ again; Alleluia! Amen!
Life shall not end the strain; Alleluia! Amen!
On heaven's blissful shore His goodness we'll adore,
Singing forevermore, "Alleluia! Amen!"

CELEBRATING BAPTISM

Sacrament of Baptism:

John Tyler Douglas Aker and Eva Grace Aker
Parents of Eva: Tyler and Helen Aker
Session Representative: Jenny Osinga

Presentation of Purpose and Promise

Questions to the Candidate and Congregation

Prayer of Thanksgiving over the Water

Act of Baptism: John Tyler Douglas

Questions to Parents, Congregation, and Children

Prayer of Thanksgiving over the Water

Act of Baptism: Eva Grace

Prayer and Welcome

Leader: Tyler and Eva have now been received into the one holy catholic and apostolic church through baptism. God has made them members of the household of God, to share with us in the priesthood of Christ.

All: With joy and thanksgiving, we welcome Tyler and Eva into Christ's church to share with us in his ministry, for we are all one in Christ. We promise to love, encourage, and support Tyler and Eva, to share the good news of the gospel with them, and to help them know and follow Christ.

***Hymn #304: Jesus Loves Me!**

Jesus Loves Me

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

(pew Bible OT, p. 638)

"Experiencing a Sacred Christmas: The Fantastic Four"

Rev. Dr. Peter Thompson

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

Minute for Covenant Giving

Dave Tate

Call to Offering

Offertory Anthem

Cradle Carol

Amy Pugh, Soloist

Pringle/Forrest

*Lord Jesus, Savior, infant weak, Why come to earth as one so meek?
A newborn babe, helpless and small; And yet Creator of us all.*

*Thou hast no beauty, form, nor grace; No fortune, rank, no fame, no place
That men should see Thee and adore A babe so humble and so poor.*

*But to the soul whose eyes are healed, To whom the Truth has been revealed,
Thy glory challenges the sun; Thou art a thousand joys in One.*

*Though strangers see a babe in straw, Thy children see the Lord of all
Who laid aside His rightful reign To take away our sin and shame.*

*This sacrifice of love divine, This condescension to mankind
With beauty robes Thy lowly frame, And sanctifies Thy simple name.*

*O aid my worship, Mighty King, That I might with the angels sing,
"Glory to God on high!" Now crowned again beyond the sky!*

Oh, help me see Thee and adore This little child, my God and Lord

*Doxology

Hymn #592

*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.*

*Prayer of Dedication and Benediction

WE GO OUT IN GOD'S SERVICE

*Hymn #332: Live Into Hope

Truro

Live into hope of captives freed, of sight regained, the end of greed.
The oppressed shall be the first to see the year of God's own jubilee!

Live into hope the blind shall see with insight and with clarity,
Removing shades of pride and fear- a vision of our God brought near.

Live into hope of liberty, the right to speak, the right to be,
The right to have one's daily bread, to hear God's word and thus be fed.

Live into hope of captives freed from chains of fear or want or greed.
God now proclaims our full release to faith and hope and joy and peace.

Congregational Meeting

***Postlude**

Prelude and Fugue in G Minor
Cory Whittier, Director of Music and Organist

J. S. Bach

The Chancel Flowers today are given to the glory of God in celebration of the marriage of Mercer Craighill to Jimmy Sykes on Saturday, October 28, 2023. "It was a beautiful and joyous occasion."

We encourage all to share the love, joy, and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ with one another. All are also encouraged to join in the Narthex for lemonade and cookies.

Two Cents-A-Meal offering for hunger relief in our community will be collected in baskets in the Narthex at the end of worship. All are invited to give to this offering as you are able.



Vision: Draw Near to God

Mission: Celebrate God's Grace and Inspire the Next Generation for Christ
Worship Joyfully. Grow Spiritually. Love Boldly. Serve Faithfully.

This Week at First Presbyterian Church

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For a full calendar listing and more information, please visit our website www.fpclly.org.

Sunday, November 26

9:00 am Nursery Care
9:30 am Worship (baptism)
10:30 am Congregational Meeting
10:45 am Lemonade and Cookies
4:00 pm Walk with God

Monday, November 27

9:00 am FPC Weekday School
2:00 pm Canterbury Crew
6:00 pm Scouts – Cub Pack 7
7:00 pm Scouts – Troop 7

Tuesday, November 28

9:00 am FPC Weekday School
5:00 pm WDS Jersey Mike's Fundraiser
7:00 pm Scouts - Troop 49

Wednesday, November 29

9:00 am FPC Weekday School
10:00 am Immerse Bible Study
12:30 pm Al-Anon Meeting
5:30 pm Potluck Fellowship Dinner

Thursday, November 30

7:00 am Colin Caldwell Men's Bible Study
9:00 am FPC Weekday School
6:30 pm Chancel Ringers Rehearsal
7:15 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Friday, December 1

9:00 am FPC Weekday School

Sunday, December 3

8:45 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
9:00 am Nursery Care
9:30 am Worship (*Lessons and Carols*)
10:45 am Lemonade and Cookies
4:00 pm Walk with God

Notes for Today's Worship

Worship Leader:

Becky Giles

Ushers and Greeters:

Denise McDonald, Nathan Gowen,
Dickie Stowers, Terry Adams, and
Kathryn Overstreet

Worship Workshop Leader:

Barrett Thompson

Sound and Video Technicians:

Will Absher & Catherine Adams

Lemonade and Cookies Host:

Laura Borel

Pastor on Call:

Peter Thompson (336) 269-7270

Members Helping Members

November:

Katy Nunn (434) 229-5289
Trenea Koroneos (434) 944-9014
Diane Stroud (434) 485-3712

Members Helping Members

December:

Elinor Ann Clark (434) 386-3889
Gail Kowalski (434) 384-6058

Prayer Cares and Concerns

If you have a prayer request to share with the pastor or staff, you can write it on the blue prayer card in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate (or the prayer box off the front hallway) or share your request online at fpclly.org/ministries/care-nurture.html.

Connect with us!

Phone: (434) 384-6231

Email: office@fpclly.org

Website: www.fpclly.org



@firstpresoflynchburg



FPC Lynchburg

Partner with God by Giving to FPCLY

1. Place your gift in the offering plate today.
2. Mail checks to FPCLY, 1215 V.E.S. Road, Lynchburg, VA 24503.
3. Use a credit card online at fpclly.org.
4. Download and use the *Vanco Mobile Faith* App on your phone.
5. Set up an automatic bank draft or bill pay.

Worship, Grow, Love, Serve

Called Congregational Meeting – TODAY, immediately following worship

The Session has called this meeting for the purpose of approving the 2024 Terms of Call for Senior Pastor and Head of Staff, Rev. Dr. Peter A. Thompson.

FPC Weekday School Jersey Mike's Fundraiser –THIS Tuesday, November 28th from 5 – 8pm

Support the First Presbyterian Weekday School with an *easy* post-Thanksgiving dinner from *Jersey Mike's* at 3901 Old Forest Road! The restaurant will donate 15% of all sales during the 5 – 8pm time window to the Weekday School. This fundraiser will support the teachers and staff in their efforts to provide a kind, loving, faith-filled educational experience for children to learn and grow!

Potluck Fellowship Dinner – THIS Wednesday, November 29th @ 5:30pm

Come, enjoy a little post-Thanksgiving potluck meal and church community in the Fellowship Hall! Please bring a favorite dish (entrée, side, or dessert) to share, as you are able!

Share the Warmth Coat Drive – November 1 – November 30

During November we're partnering with *One Community, One Voice* to collect winter clothing for neighbors throughout Lynchburg. There is a bin in the foyer for all sizes of *new or gently used* coats, gloves, socks, stocking hats, scarves, and blankets. YOU have donated a total of 151 total items as of 11/20. That was an increase of just under 100 items in one week! Thank you!

Christmas Poinsettias "in honor" or "in memory" of a loved one!

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia "in honor" or "in memory" of someone to help decorate the Sanctuary for worship during Advent, the time is upon us. The cost is \$20 per poinsettia (pot is 6"). You can place your order on the sheet in the front entry or by using the QR code to the left. The order deadline is December 3. You may take your poinsettia home after worship on Dec.17.



Presbyterian Women December Gathering – Monday, December 11 @ 11:15am

All ladies of the church community are invited to gather for a short program in the Chapel featuring FPCLY's new Finance Manager, Susan Hall, followed by brunch around the Officers' Room table. If you're interested in learning more about Presbyterian Women, this gathering is a great opportunity for you! Contact Sue Thornton (434-944-3049) if you'd like to come to this event or if you have any questions!

You're Invited to Host "Lemonade and Cookies!" – Two spots remain for December

We have two more Lemonade and Cookies hosting slots left to fill for the rest of 2023. If you would like to lend a hand as a host one Sunday, sign up using the QR code to the right or contact the church office. If you're interested, but not sure how it works, let us know and we will connect you to a veteran Lemonade and Cookie host!



You are loved! Have a great week!

Experiencing a **SACRED CHRISTMAS** at First Presbyterian Church

Christmas, prefaced by the season of Advent, is nothing short of sacred. God's hope, love, joy, and peace await us in this season and long to serve as the foundation of all our life's experiences. Our *Experiencing a Sacred Christmas* worship sermon series will begin on November 26 (the week before the first Sunday of Advent) and carry us on a week-by-week journey of preparing, praising, remembering, encountering, and celebrating.

Worship – Sundays @ 9:30am

Nursery will be available for all Sunday morning services during this season. It will not be available for either Christmas Eve service. *Worship Workshop* will be on pause throughout the month of December as children will be invited to praise, remember, encounter, and celebrate alongside the adults. Sunday School classes have concluded for the 2023 calendar year.

November 26

Step into this season of **preparing** and getting ready for the greatest gift we've ever received – Jesus Christ – with this pre-Advent service intertwined with hints of Advent including a sermon centered around The Fantastic Four: hope, love, joy, and peace!

December 3 – 1st Sunday of Advent

Praise God in scripture and song as we journey through the Christmas story at our annual *Lessons and Carols* service! The Chancel Choir will sing Vivaldi's *Magnificat*, multiple soloists will share their musical gifts, and the congregation will sing hymns in tandem with scripture readings. All music will be supported by a local string quartet.

December 10 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

Remember the Christmas story, from the angel Gabriel speaking to Mary to the wisemen bringing gifts to baby Jesus, as it is re-enacted by children and adults of this church community. **After worship, all are welcome to join for Christmas brunch in the Fellowship Hall, which will include cookie decorating!**

December 17 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

Dig deeper into what hope, love, joy, and peace look like in the season of Advent and beyond through song and worship, followed by hands-on experiences designed to show us where and how we **encounter** these emotions in our day to day lives.

December 24 – 4th Sunday of Advent

We continue our journey of waiting for Jesus while embracing "the Fantastic Four" in a new light. The anticipation will be high for the King is coming...soon!

Christmas Eve – December 24

4:00pm

Await the light of the world with a kid-friendly service of carols, communion, and candlelight! Pastor Pete will share a special children's moment. Festive attire is encouraged, including your pajamas! Nursery care will **not** be available!

11:00pm

Embrace the coming of the Lord with this special service of carols, communion, and candlelight in the Sanctuary! Nursery care will be **not** be available.



Music

Saturday, December 9 @ 7:00pm

Enjoy this festive holiday concert featuring *The Seven Hills Chorus*. This local, choral group will perform a variety of secular and sacred songs spanning the last 500 years. The concert repertoire will include jazz, pop, Renaissance, and more! Tickets for this concert are \$12.

Saturday, December 16 @ 4:00pm

Fill your spirit with joy and hope as the local handbell ensemble, *Bells of the Blue Ridge*, presents its holiday program "A BBR Christmas-versary: 20 Years of Holiday Cheer." This concert, as part of the *First Pres Presents Fine Arts Series*, will feature 17 Lynchburg-area handbell musicians playing seasonal favorites like *It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year*, *Silent Night*, *Ukrainian Bell Carol*, and many more! This concert is free and open to the public!

Education

Starting December 3, and continuing throughout December, the Education Initiative will provide a series of Advent educational resources, available in the Foyer area. This center will contain a variety of educational offerings for you and your family to experience a deeper Advent together and await the coming of the "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9: 6) in a special way. The resource table will include

- an advent devotional booklet called *A Little Child Shall Lead Them*. This devotional is inspired by the writings of Henri J.M. Nouwen.
- a "Garland of Good Deeds" activity kit (encouraging seasonal good deeds for children)
- a Chrismon ornament resource booklet
- a family-friendly Advent calendar

You're encouraged to stop by anytime during Advent to check the resources out!



Outreach

As we embrace the season of preparing and waiting, we reflect on what the gift of Jesus means to our individual lives and to our greater world – the gift of hope, love, joy, and peace. With those reflections in mind, we often strive to act upon and share "The Fantastic Four" throughout the season. The Outreach Initiative has organized an assortment of opportunities for outreach and engagement with each other and with our community throughout the season. You're invited and encouraged to join in any or all!

Jericho Toy Drive

November 27 – December 17

Donate NEW toys, games, and books for families in our community facing financial difficulties this holiday season. The collection barrel will be in the front entrance foyer. Child-friendly outreach idea!

Christmas Brunch

December 10 @ 10:45am

Immediately following *The Christmas Play* worship service, we will enjoy a time of festive food, holiday music, fellowship, and cookie decorating in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome! No RSVP is needed.

Alternative Giving

December 3, 10, 17, & 24

We will again offer the opportunity for you to give a slightly different gift to loved ones – the gift of supporting our outreach partners in very tangible ways. This year, we will highlight two local partners and two international partners with a very specific need within their work that your gift will go towards. This is a child-friendly outreach idea.