

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church- Lynchburg, VA

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior Jesus! I pray this note of welcome finds you well and filled with the joy of God's spirit. And if, for some reason, it does not, I pray you may feel and know of God's good gifts of love and peace and hope in this time and season of your life.

Today, I hope you will join me in welcoming The Reverend Vernie Bolden back to First Presbyterian for worship. Vernie is the pastor of 5th Avenue Presbyterian Church in Roanoke and serves as the Justice and Mercy Advocate for the Presbytery of the Peaks. Vernie is no stranger to First Presbyterian, as he filled in for me for four total weeks during my sabbatical in 2023. Vernie carries with him a passion to serve and teach and his ability to connect with the heart of the matter is undeniable. Our Presbytery has been and continues to be blessed by Vernie's leadership in a multitude of ways, and I am certain the blessing will continue for our time of worship today.

Just a note to recognize today, October 26th, as Reformation Sunday. Reformation Day is October 31 of every year. That is the day in 1517 when Dr. Martin Luther nailed his *95 Theses* to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. It was Luther's act that caused the initial furor that resulted in the Reformation. Luther had earned his Doctor of Theology degree in Wittenberg and was a respected professor there, as well as the assistant pastor of the Castle Church. Luther chose October 31 because it was the day before All Saints' Day. The Castle Church's front door opened on a main street of the city, and it was a good place to post a notice for public viewing. Luther knew that on the next day, November 1 — All Saints' Day — the church would be filled with worshipers, many of whom were educated and literate. His act of posting his *95 Theses* on the door was the equivalent of publishing a journal article, taking out a newspaper ad, or putting up an Internet website today. Reformation Day is most often observed today on the Sunday prior to October 31.

Run the Race, Fight the Fight, Keep the Faith,
Rev. Dr. Peter Thompson

Building Hospitality and Welcoming Children

Just as God's arms are open wide with grace and welcome, so too are the doors of FPCLY open wide with hospitality. We are grateful you are here today and pray you feel at home! The following are a few notes to help be a comfort and guide during your time here:

- Ushers are available and willing to assist you in finding your way or answering other questions.
- All visitors are encouraged to stop by the Hospitality (Welcome) Desk near the main entrance for more information or to share your contact information.
- Hearing-assist devices, Large Print Bulletins, and Large Print Hymnals can be found in the Narthex.
- 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 (ages 0 to 3) and Nursery Nook are located on this level through the Chapel in Room 101. A Nursery Care Provider is there to help assist you.
- Welcoming Children: Just as Jesus welcomes the little children to come, so we welcome children of all ages in worship. In order to make the worship service as welcoming for our littlest ones as possible, we provide worship carts in the Narthex with a variety of resources to make a worship bag. Following the Children's Moment, children age 4 years to 2nd grade are invited to a Worship Workshop led by Abby Boyle, our new Worship Workshop Coordinator. Worship Workshop runs from post Children's Moment to the Benediction, with all participants being led from the Sanctuary to Room 1 (downstairs below Library) for activities and then back to the Narthex for pickup.

Interested in joining?

First Presbyterian would love to welcome YOU as a new member. 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

October 26, 2025

*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

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship: based on Ephesians 1:3-8

Leader: All glorious God, we give you thanks:

All: in your Son, Jesus Christ, you have given us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms.

Leader: All glorious God, we give you thanks:

All: You chose us, before the world was made, to be your holy people, without fault in your sight. You adopted us as your children in Christ.

Leader: All glorious God, we give you thanks:

All: You have made known to us your secret purpose, to bring heaven and earth into unity in Christ.

Leader: All glorious God, we give you thanks:

All: You have given us your Holy Spirit, the seal and pledge of our inheritance.

Leader: All glorious God, we give you thanks:

All: All praise and glory be yours, O God, for the richness of your grace, for the splendor of your gifts, for the wonder of your love.

*Hymn #276: Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Faithfulness

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
there is no shadow of turning with Thee.
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
as Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be.

Refrain: Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!

Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed Thy hand hath provided.
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. [Refrain]

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! [Refrain]

Call to Confession and Prayer of Confession

Awesome and compassionate God, you have loved us with unfailing, self-giving mercy, but we have not always loved you. You constantly call us, but we do not always listen. You ask us to love, but we sometimes walk away from neighbors in need, wrapped in our own concerns. We often condone evil, prejudice, warfare, and greed. God of grace, as you come to us in mercy, we repent now in spirit and in truth, admit our sin, and gratefully receive your forgiveness through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

(Please take a moment for Silent Prayer)

***Assurance of Pardon**

As the water is poured into the baptismal font, and the good news of God is shared, know that anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. God embraces you, forgives you, and strengthens you to live a renewed life. Glory be to God. Alleluia. Amen.

***Gloria Patri**

Hymn #579

*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.*

***Affirmation of Faith: Psalm 46**

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns. The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Come, behold the works of the Lord; see what desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire. "Be still and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth."

***Sharing the Love, Joy, and Peace of Christ**

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Children's Moment

All children ages 4 years to 2nd grade are welcome and encouraged to attend Worship Workshop in Room 1. Worship Workshop is led by Abby Boyle, Worship Workshop Coordinator. If children do not wish to go to Worship Workshop, they are welcome to return to their seats for the remainder of worship. Worship carts are available for those who might like an activity to learn more about God and worship.

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading: Micah 6:6-8

Gospel Reading: Matthew 25:41-46

"Shirt and Shoes Required"

Vernie Bolden

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Call to Prayer: Spirit of the Living God

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me; Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

Call to Offering

Offertory Anthem

Borning Cry

Kadidlo

***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**

WE GO OUT IN GOD'S SERVICE

***Hymn #383: My Faith Looks Up to Thee**

Olivet

My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Savior divine!

Now hear me while I pray, take all my guilt away;
O let me from this day be wholly Thine.

May Thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart,
my zeal inspire;
as Thou hast died for me, O may my love to Thee
pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire!

While life's dark maze I tread, and griefs around me spread,
be Thou my guide;
bid darkness turn to day, wipe sorrow's tears away,
nor let me ever stray from Thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream, when death's cold, sullen stream
shall o'er me roll,
blest Savior, then in love, fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above, a ransomed soul!

***Benediction**

***Postlude**
