

Connect and Serve

Please see the website (firstpreswc.com) for a complete list of programs and ways to connect.

In Memoriam

Marilyn L. Buckler

Member of First Presbyterian Church

February 22, 1993 – August 15, 2025

Our sympathy and prayers are with her family and friends.

Summer Worship Schedule – Please note that we will hold a single worship service at 10:00 am on Sunday, August 31 due to the Labor Day holiday weekend. 9:00 (Traditional) and 10:45 (Contemporary) services will resume on September 7.

Outdoor Coffee Hour – As weather permits, we are going to continue to have coffee hour out front on the sidewalk instead of Fellowship Hall for the rest of the summer. Please join as you are leaving the service. Grab a cup and connect with longtime friends or meet people for the first time. Special thanks to our deacons for faithfully providing coffee every Sunday - inside or outside.

Clothing Closet Biannual Clothing Drive - We are approaching a new school year, and The First Pres Clothing Closet is in need of appropriate clothing for a child to start the school year. If you are going through your child's closet and find items that are no longer of use, please consider donating them to the church clothing closet. There is a blue bin in Fellowship Hall for donations.

We appreciate suitable items in girls' and boys' sizes 3 through 14/16. Most pressing needs are as follows:

- * solid-colored shirts and pants in girls' size 3, 4, 5 and 6
- * girls 12, 14, 16 long-sleeve shirts and pants
- * boys' size 5 through 16 short and long -sleeve tee shirts, as well as shorts and pants
- * Fall jackets are also appreciated

We are grateful for any items used or new that are donated to our outreach to help those in our community.

Thank you from The Clothing Closet Committee

Church Picnic - First Pres is going to kick-off fall with a church picnic on Sunday, September 7! We'll meet outside (in the "backyard" along the alley) from 11:30 am - 1:30 pm. The main dish (fried chicken) will be provided but we'd love to have contributions of your favorite side dish, salad or dessert. We are also in need of set-up/clean-up volunteers and lawn game loans. Please see the sign-up tab at firstpreswc.com or speak to Elizabeth Hess. We hope you can join the fun!

New Member Class - Save the Date - If you're interested in learning more about becoming a member at First Pres, plan to attend the next New Members Class. We'll meet on Sunday, Sept. 28 at 11:45 in the Chapel, beginning with lunch. Reach out to Elizabeth Hess (ehess@firstpreswc.com).

Red Cross Blood Drive – First Pres is hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, August 26 from 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. While blood donations are always needed, summer is a particularly critical time. Two incentives are being offered:

- Each presenting donor will get a \$15 e-gift card to a merchant of their choice
- A free A1C test will be performed on successful donations

See the weekly E-News for more details.

Women's Fall Bible Study - All women are invited to take part in a seven-week study that will take place on Wednesdays from 9:30-11am, beginning October 1. We'll be doing a workbook and video study by Megan Fate Marshmann called *Relaxed: Letting Go of Self-Reliance and Trusting God*. People describe Jesus in a lot of different ways, but have you ever thought of Him as relaxed? This doesn't mean that Jesus didn't grieve or become angry, but the Gospels portray Him as never in a hurry to be anywhere other than where He was, trusting and obeying His Father. Could the same be said of you? Are you relaxed? You can be. We long to know peace, purpose, and contentment, but life's stresses, the world's discouragements, and our own striving for growth often get in the way. All women are welcome: sign up on the church website, or contact Elizabeth Hess (ehess@firstpreswc.com).

First Presbyterian Church of West Chester

August 24, 2025



Order of Worship for the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude 1st Movement from Horn Concerto in Eb
Richard Strauss

Call to Worship*
God alone is our refuge and hope,
our shelter and protection.

From our very first breath to our last,
God's love and compassion never fails.

So come, lift your voices in praise to God.
Bear witness to God's acts of mercy and love.
Proclaim God's glory to all who will listen.

Hymn 275* A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Welcome

Prayer of Confession
**Almighty God, you have set before us the path
but we wandered away. Sometimes we hear your call
and come back, yet other times we ignore your call
until fear makes us look back. We turn from you
and in turning hurt ourselves and others. (con't)**

**Please rise in body or spirit*

**We see others as a means to an end,
and not as your children. Remind us, loving God,
that we are all your children. Help us to seek you
every day, to acknowledge that we need your wisdom
and guidance, and help us to return to the path
and walk with you. In the name of Christ,
who is our companion on this journey of faith, we pray.
Amen.**

Assurance of Forgiveness
Christ is our savior and our guide.
He calls us home even when we stray.
**In Him we find our strength,
in Him we find forgiveness, and peace.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Response*
**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.**

Passing of the Peace*

Back to School Blessing

First Scripture Reading Hebrews 12:18-29 NT p. 227

Special Music Nocturno Franz Strauss

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.**

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Blessed Assurance

arr. Mark Hayes

Doxology and Prayer of Dedication*
**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Hymn 840* When Peace like a River

Second Scripture Reading Psalm 71:1-6 OT p. 532

Sermon *Strength Finders*

Rev. Andrew Esqueda

Hymn 687* Our God, Our Help in Ages Past

Blessing*

Postlude Menuet Gotique Léon Boëllmann

Today's Back to School Blessing was adapted from
"A Prayer for the First Day of School" from *To Light Their
Way: A Collection of Prayers & Liturgies for Parents*
by Kayla Craig.

Assisting in worship today:
Kerri Hahn, French Horn

*All are welcome in worship. We are a community of people of
all ages who cry, vocalize, stim, fuss, stand, sit,
and come and go as needed.
The sounds of people are the joyful noise of God’s creation.*

*Audio amplifiers are in a basket at the back of the sanctuary.
There are also screens in Fellowship Hall that stream the service if
you need to step out.*

*The nursery is available for children ages 0-3 years. Please ask a
greeter if you would like additional information
about Sunday School or children’s programming.*

First Presbyterian Church Staff
Rev. Andrew Esqueda, Senior Pastor
Rev. Caroline Cupp, Senior Associate Pastor
Sándor Kádár, Director of Music
Sara Pantazes, Director of Faith Formation
Elizabeth Hess, Director of Engagement
Amanda Erno, Children’s Music Director
Ann Ellis, Choir Accompanist
Kiana Rivera, Lead Singer, Contemporary Band
Jennifer Rosenberg, Preschool Director
Greg Ondo, AV Tech
Claire Kramer, Office Administrator
Peter Galloway, Director of Operations
Sara Ford, Facilities Manager

Emails at firstpreswc.com/staff