



# First Presbyterian Church

of Raleigh, North Carolina

*Serving Christ from the Heart of the City to the Ends of the Earth with Love, Faith and Action.*

August 2, 2026

10th Sunday after Pentecost

## We Gather in God's Presence

Gathering Music

Chiming of the Trinity

Welcome and Announcements

The Rev. Laurie Taylor Weicher

Introit

*Be Thou My Vision*

arr. Joel Taney

Call to Worship

By day the Lord commands us in steadfast love,

**And by night, God's song is with us.**

As the deer longs for flowing streams, our souls long for God.

**Our hope is in the Lord, we again shall praise God, for God is our help and our hope. Let us worship the Lord.**

\*Hymn 35

*Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty*

LOBE DEN HERREN

Prayer of Confession

The Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger

**Gracious God, it is easy to choose fear instead of faith. We are easily tempted to grasp for control or forget your mighty power. Remind us again of the freedom that comes by placing our trust in you. Show us the way back to abiding faith and loving care. We pray in the name of Jesus, the one who even the wind and the waves obey.**

*(Let us continue our confession in silence)*

Assurance of Pardon

Response to Pardon

Friends in Christ, in response to this gift of God's grace, how then shall we live?

**With gratitude, following after the Lord Jesus Christ, who calls us to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves.**

This is the way of Jesus, in whom we find life!

Welcome to Worship!

Some notes about the service:

\*An asterisk denotes standing, in body or spirit.

**Words in bold are read aloud by the congregation.**

"Faith isn't about having everything figured out ahead of time; faith is about following the quiet voice of God without having everything figured out ahead of time."

-Rachel Held Evans

We are grateful to Diane Covington, Ann Poisson, and Owen Beal for sharing their musical gifts in today's service.

**The Lord is God, the Lord alone! Give honor, thanks, and praise to God, the maker of all things and giver of our days.**

## We Listen and Respond to God's Word

When Jesus welcomed the children, it was an audacious act of inclusion. When we welcome the children, we show them our care for them, and our belief that they are a valuable part of the life of the church.

### Children's Moment

Beth Thaxton

Hymn 399 *God Welcomes All*

**God welcomes all, strangers and friends;  
God's love is strong and it never ends.**

*After the Children's Moment, children ages 4 - 2nd gr. are invited to the Library for Children's Church and will return following the sermon.*

### Prayer for Illumination

Becky Glendy

### Scripture Reading

Psalm 42

This is the Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### Anthem

*God of Grace and God of Laughter*

K. Lee Scott

### Scripture Reading

Luke 8:22-25

This is the Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Our sermon series, *Tell Me a Story: Children's Stories of the Bible*, continues today with the story of Jesus calming the storm.

### Sermon

*Misplaced Faith*

The Rev. Laurie Taylor Weicher

### Silent Reflection

### \*Hymn 778

*As Pants the Deer for Living Streams*

SEACHRIST

### \*Affirmation of Faith:

from *A Brief Statement of Faith*

**In a broken and fearful world, the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom and peace. Amen.**

# Joys and Concerns of the Church Family

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession 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.**

Response to Prayer | Hymn 601

DANISH AMEN



An Invitation to Give An Offering

Offertory

*Elegie*

Josef Rheinberger

\*Doxology | Hymn 609

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures high and low;  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
Praise God in Jesus fully known:  
Creator, Word, and Spirit one.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

\*Prayer of Dedication

## We Carry God's Word into the World

\*Hymn 819

*Be Still, My Soul*

FINLANDIA

\*Charge and Benediction

\*Benediction Response | Hymn 543 stanza 1

**God, be the love to search and guide me;  
God, be the prayer to move my voice;  
God, be the strength to now uphold me:  
O Christ, surround me; O Christ surround me.**

Chiming of the Trinity

Postlude

*LOBE DEN HERREN*

arr. Paul Manz

Our offering is a faithful response. God has given us all we have. God has given us more than enough. So in response to God's generosity, we are invited to be generous as well.

Scan here to give an offering online:



This hymn is based on the verse in Psalm 46 that says, "Be still and know that I am God." It's an invitation to rest in the Lord and trust in God's neverending presence.

# Anthem

God of grace and God of laughter, singing worlds from naught to be -  
sun and stars and all thereafter joined in cosmic harmony:  
give us songs of joy and wonder, music making hearts rejoice;  
let our praises swell like thunder, echoing our Maker's voice.

When our lives are torn by sadness, heal our wounds with tuneful balm;  
when all seems discordant madness, help us find a measured calm.  
Steady us with music's anchor when the storms of life increase:  
in the midst of hurt and rancor, make us instruments of peace.

Turn our sighing into singing, music born of hope restored:  
set our souls and voices ringing, tune our hearts in true accord:  
till we form a mighty chorus joining angel choirs above,  
with all those who went before us, in eternal hymns of love.

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The Chancel flowers are given by Dan and Kathy Roebuck to the glory of God, and in  
appreciation of our Church Congregation.

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## Staff Directory | 919-821-5750

|                                |                                                     |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| The Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger    | Senior Pastor (Ext. 2206)                           |
| The Rev. Laurie Taylor Weicher | Associate Pastor (Ext. 2208)                        |
| The Rev. Dr. Ernie Thompson    | Parish Associate                                    |
| The Rev. Judy Pidcock          | Parish Associate                                    |
| Beth Thaxton                   | Director of Family Ministries & Christian Education |
| Betsy Williams                 | Director of Youth Ministries                        |
| Kathy Johnson                  | Director of Community Outreach                      |
| Rita Harris                    | Outreach Assistant                                  |
| Mark Woodcock                  | Director of Music                                   |
| Lindsay Anne McCall            | Director of Children & Youth Music                  |
| Dr. Karl Zinsmeister           | Organist                                            |
| Gail Barrett                   | Church Administrator                                |
| Jean Suber                     | Director of Communications                          |
| Melani Harrison                | Finance Assistant/Office Manager                    |
| Russell Clark                  | Facilities Manager                                  |
| Brooke Barrett                 | Sexton                                              |
| Tyler Elrod                    | Audio Visual Lead Tech                              |
| Valerie Chassereau             | Director of Child Development Center                |

Scan the QR code  
for ways to become  
connected to our  
ministries.



On the Calendar This Week, August 2 – August 8

**Today**– Sunday School 9:30a | Worship 10:30a | Community Building Activity 11:30a | Mahjong 12:00p

**Monday, August 3** – Pickleball 1:00a | Staff Meeting 1:00p

**Tuesday, August 4** – Enough for Today Podcast 8:00a | CDC Chapel 10:30a

**Wednesday, August 5** – Early Birds 6:30a | Pickleball 1:00p

**Thursday, August 6** – Knitting Group 10:00a | Shower Ministry 11:00a | Bible Study at Glenaire 2:30p

**Friday, August 7** – No Events or activities scheduled for the day.

**Saturday, August 8** – No events or activities scheduled for the day.

### **Announcements and Upcoming Events**

#### **Mahjong Sunday**

Join the trend and enjoy great conversation too. You're invited to play mahjong today after worship in the Edge Lobby. Bring tiles if you have them, and your 2026 card. All are welcome!

#### **Grandparent Camp | August 10-14**

Do you have a grandchild age 3-5th grade who you'd like to bring to Grandparent Camp? Do you have a grandparent that you'd like to bring? We'd love to have you as we explore our theme "This is Our Story" as we look at stories of families in the Bible and explore our own family stories. Register online or contact Beth Thaxton to get signed up! \$25 per family; scholarships available!

#### **FPC Summer Read**

Join the CE committee as we read *Miracles and Other Reasonable Things* by Sarah Bessey together. This book explores the presence of miracles, the changing shape of faith, and different ways to think about prayer. Join us after worship today in the Vanguard Room for a book discussion.

#### **Red Cross Blood Drive**

Our next Blood Drive will be Wednesday, August 12 from 12-5pm in Memorial Hall. Please consider donating blood- it literally saves lives! You can sign up at [fpcraleigh.org/events](https://fpcraleigh.org/events) or on the Red Cross website.

#### **Youth Mega Day**

Join us for Youth Mega Day August 29-30! We'll spend the day participating in service projects with church mission partners before heading out for some fun adventures. Back at the church for the night, we'll play all-over games, have late-night worship, arts, crafts, and movies before spending the night in the youth rooms. We'll wrap up Sunday morning with biscuits before heading home! Cost is \$85. Registration period: Now - August 7. Sign up at [fpcraleigh.org/events](https://fpcraleigh.org/events), on the Realm app, call the church office or sign up in the registration book at the reception desk. Questions? Please contact Betsy Williams at [bwilliams@fpcraleigh.org](mailto:bwilliams@fpcraleigh.org).

#### **FPC All-Church Retreat at Montreat Conference Center**

We're headed back to Montreat! Save the date: February 12-14, 2027. All ages are welcome! Go to [fpcraleigh.org/events](https://fpcraleigh.org/events) for more information and to register. Contact Beth Thaxton with questions or for help with registration.

#### **FPC Shares Item for August**

This month's FPC Shares item is condiments! Bring this item and/or your favorite non-perishable food donations to the church. There are FPC Shares receptacles on both sides of the Edge Lobby and in two places in the Lisa Ham Gathering Space outside the sanctuary.

## **StepUP Ministry Mission Project**

On Tuesday, August 4th, from 5-6 pm, we will provide dinner to the StepUP ministry program participants, youth, and children at White Memorial Presbyterian Church. If you would like to help out with this wonderful event, please contact Kathy Johnson at [kjohnson@fpcraleigh.org](mailto:kjohnson@fpcraleigh.org).

### **Mission Highlight**

Founded in 1988 by White Memorial Presbyterian Church, **StepUp Ministry** is a nonprofit organization that helps hundreds of individuals each year in Wake County transform their lives through employment and life-skills training.

Their mission is to provide pathways for people to overcome barriers and transform their lives in a safe community where people have stability, equal opportunities, and purpose.

StepUp Ministries believes that the first step in creating stability in one's life begins with steady and consistent employment. Their Employment Academy helps participants improve their resume, interviewing, and networking skills so that they can find a job they like and keep it.

The second step in the StepUp program is to create and maintain stability. Through a 48-week program, the Life Skills Program teaches participants how to budget, set goals, restore credit, manage emotions, and improve relationships so they can create the life they really want. The Life Skills Program is divided into four twelve-week segments.

The third step in the program is the Alumni Program, which offers continued professional development so graduates of the Life Skills Program can stay supported and connected throughout their journey.

Classes and activities take place every Tuesday evening at White Memorial Presbyterian Church. Dinner and childcare are provided to all participants. There is a required nominal weekly fee, which participants get back in full once they complete the program.

To be eligible for all StepUp Ministry programs, participants must have a valid ID and Social Security Card, have no pending charges, be 30 days clean and sober, and be 45 days removed from domestic violence and NOT listed on the Sex Offender Registry.

For over 35 years, StepUP has been helping individuals transform their lives by working across generations to provide pathways to stability and success. StepUP Ministries is a Mission partner of First Presbyterian Church and is supported in our annual FPC Mission Budget. Additionally, in 2023, the FPC Foundation awarded a \$15,000 grant to StepUP to help with technology upgrades to better store, track, report on, and improve outcomes across all of their programs.

They have launched a campaign, entitled Rooted and Rising, to raise money to replace their Oberlin Road offices with more programming space for participants. The increased space will allow them to serve 25% more individuals, and 72% of the space will be dedicated to programs.

On August 4th, we will provide dinner to StepUP participants. White Memorial provides dinner to participants for the majority of the weeks. During the summer, their kitchen staff takes several weeks off, and other churches and organizations are invited to provide dinner. This will be our third Summer helping serve dinner. It really is a great program, and many of our Friendship Fund clients are encouraged to enroll.

To learn more visit their website at <https://www.stepupministry.org/>