

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

The First Presbyterian Church
of Howard County

*Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 17, 2025*

8:30 a.m. In-person

10:00 a.m. In-person & Livestream Service



GATHER

*Let all enter Branch Hall in a spirit of prayer.
Words in **bold** are read by the congregation.*

**Those who are able may stand*

Please remember to turn your cell phones to silent.

*This worship service is being livestreamed to the internet,
and you may appear on our Facebook page and YouTube channel.*

*For our online congregation - Let us know you are here! Post a greeting!
And remember that you can place a request in the Prayer Journal
in the comments on both You Tube and Facebook Live.*

Prelude

How Beautiful

Twila Paris, arr. L. Larson

Lighting the Christ Candle

Whenever we light this candle, we proclaim:

Christ is the light of the world and the center of our lives.

Call to Worship

Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
**let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with
perseverance the race that is set before us,**
looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith,
**who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame,
and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.**

* Hymn 30

O God, in a Mysterious Way
(see next page for hymn)

Dundee

CREATION AND PROVIDENCE

30 O God, in a Mysterious Way

1 O God, in a mys - te - rious way great won - ders you per - form.
2 Deep in un - fath - om - a - ble mines of nev - er - fail - ing skill,
3 O fear - ful saints, fresh cour - age take. The clouds you so much dread
4 Our un - be - lief is sure to err and scan your work in vain.

You plant your foot-steps in the sea and ride up - on the storm.
you trea - sure up your bright de - signs and work your sov - ereign will.
are big with mer - cy and shall break in bless - ings on your head.
You are your own in - ter - pret - er, and you will make it plain.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a treble and a bass staff. The treble staff contains the melody, and the bass staff contains the accompaniment. The music is in a key with three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and a common time signature. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff. The first system contains four lines of lyrics, and the second system contains four lines of lyrics. The music is written in a clear, legible font.

This classic text gains renewed energy and focus from its recasting here: despite our fear and confusion, we can trust that God's providential purposes will eventually be revealed. In its original source the tune printed here is one of twelve not assigned to a specific hymn.

TEXT: William Cowper, 1773, alt.
MUSIC: Scottish Psalter, 1615

DUNDEE
CM
(alternate harmonization, 45)

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Forgiving God,

In our imperfection, we have prioritized the absence of conflict over the presence of justice.

We have stayed silent when we have had the opportunity to speak out, fearing disagreement more than sin.

The prophets of the Old Testament criticized those who cried “‘peace, peace!’ When there is no peace.’ We know we can be tempted to do the same – favoring the comfortable status quo over the disturbance of the Holy Spirit.

Too often, we have robbed your message of its transforming power – quick to present it as one of niceness, rather than one which comforts the disturbed and disturbs the comfortable.

Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.

Help us to live in the tension of the now and the not yet – safe in the promise of ultimate peace and rest, while learning to live with conflict in the present.

Amen.

Assurance of Grace

* **Response of Praise 605** (*singing together*)

Da N’ase



Praise to God the Fa - ther; praise to God the Son;
Da n’a - se! Da n’a - se! Da On - ya - me a - se!



praise to God the Spir - it: praise to the Three - in - One.
Da n’a - se! Da n’a - se! Da On - ya - me a - se!



Sing praise, sing praise to the Lord on high.
Ef - ia - se o - ye n’a n’a - do - e do - e so.



Praise to God Al - might - y; praise to the Ho - ly One.
Da n’a - se! Da n’a - se! Da On - ya - me a - se!

*** Sharing the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

*(We share peace with a nod or a bow, perhaps with hand on heart
or folded hands, or with the ASL sign for peace. If worshipping from home,
greet each other by sending a text, a wave or comment on Facebook or YouTube.)*

*** Response of Peace** *(singing together)*

John Bell

The peace of the earth be with you, the
peace of the heav - ens, too. The peace of the riv - ers
be with you, the peace of the o - ceans, too:
deep peace fall - ing o - ver you,
God's peace grow - ing in you.

Words of Welcome

*Newcomers please leave us your address and contact information on the
Visitor Card. These are available on a table at the entrance
Place the Visitor Card in the offering plate.*

ENCOUNTER

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson: Hebrews 11:29-12:2

²⁹By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. ³⁰By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. ³¹By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

³²And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - ³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

³⁵Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented - ³⁸of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. ³⁹Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ²looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Afterwards, children ages 4-7 may go with Ms. Kathy Moore to Godly Play.

Parents can pick up their children following worship.

(It is the church's policy to not put images of children on the livestream.)

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.

Second Lesson: Luke 12:49-56

⁴⁹"I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! ⁵¹Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! ⁵²From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; ⁵³they will be divided: father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

⁵⁴He also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, 'It is going to rain'; and so it happens. ⁵⁵And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat'; and it happens. ⁵⁶You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

For the Word of God in Scripture,

For the Word of God among us,

For the Word of God within us,

Thanks be to God!

Sermon

I Came to Bring Fire

Kenneth Page

(after the sermon, we observe a time of silence and prayer)

RESPOND AND SERVE

* **Affirmation of Faith** *(together)*

We believe in Jesus Christ, who came not to bring false peace, but to set the world ablaze with God's justice and love.

We believe the gospel disturbs complacency and calls us into the costly work of discipleship.

Christ compels us to take sides for truth, to confront sin in ourselves and the world, and to live as signs of God's coming kingdom.

We believe the Holy Spirit gives us courage to read the signs of the times, to speak the truth in love, and to follow Jesus even when the way is hard.

We believe God is at work in the fire and the storm, purifying, renewing, and reconciling all creation.

Until that day when peace and justice embrace, we will watch, we will work, and we will hope—for Christ is Lord of all.

Amen.

* **Hymn 29**

O God, You Search Me

O God, You Search Me

(see next page for hymn)

O God, You Search Me

(Psalm 139)

29



1 O God, you search me and you know me. All my
 2 You know my rest - ing and my ris - ing. You dis -
 3 Be - fore a word is on my tongue, Lord, you have
 4 Al - though your Spir - it is up - on me, still I
 5 For you cre - at - ed me and shaped me, gave me



thoughts lie o - pen to your gaze. When I
 cern my pur - pose from a - far, and with
 known its mean - ing through and through. You are
 search for shel - ter from your light. There is
 life with - in my moth - er's womb. For the



walk or lie down you are be - fore me: ev - er the
 love ev - er - last - ing you be - siege me: in ev - ery
 with me be - yond my un - der - stand - ing: God of my
 no - where on earth I can es - cape you: e - ven the
 won - der of who I am, I praise you: safe in your



mak - er and keep - er of my days.
 mo - ment of life or death, you are.
 pres - ent, my past, and fu - ture, too.
 dark - ness is ra - diant in your sight.
 hands, all cre - a - tion is made new.

Psalm 139 is one of the most introspective and most intimate of all the psalms, showing an acute mindfulness of God's presence in all aspects of one's life. Sometimes resisted, this omnipresence ultimately becomes a ground of hope, a promise that we never stray beyond God's care.

TEXT and MUSIC: Bernadette Farrell, 1992
 Text and Music © 1992 Bernadette Farrell (Published by OCP)

O GOD, YOU SEARCH ME
 9.9.11.11

Concerns and Remembrances

Prayers of Gratitude and Concern

Concluding Prayer *(together)*

God of Christ Jesus,
we submit these prayers to your refining fire.
Purify all that pleases you for the service of your kingdom of grace,
where no good thing is discarded, and no loving deed wasted.
For your love's sake.
Amen!

The Offering

8:30 Offertory

Nicaea

John B. Dykes, arr. L Shackley

10:00 Offertory Anthem

Canticle of Praise

Victor C. Johnson

* **Doxology 710** *(singing together)*

We Lift Our Voices

We lift our voices; we lift our hands; we lift our
lives up to you: we are an of-fer-ing. Lord, use our
voices; Lord, use our hands; Lord, use our
lives; they are yours: we are an of-fer-ing.
All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be, we
give to you, we give to you. We lift our
voices; we lift our hands; we lift our lives up to you:
we are an of-fer-ing; we are an of-fer-ing.

* Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

SEND AND BLESS

This Week at First Presbyterian Church

* Hymn 817

We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight

Dunlap's Creek

LIVING AND DYING IN CHRIST

817 We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight

1 We walk by faith and not by sight; with
2 We may not touch your hands and side, nor
3 Help then, O Lord, our un - be - lief; and
4 And when our life of faith is done, in

gra - cious words draw near, O Christ, who spoke as
fol - low where you trod; but in your prom - ise
may our faith a - bound to call on you when
realms of clear - er light may we be - hold you

none e'er spoke: "My peace be with you here."
we re - joice and cry, "My Lord and God!"
you are near and seek where you are found.
as you are, with full and end - less sight.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

The opening line here is essentially a quotation of 2 Corinthians 5:7, but that affirmation is fleshed out by references to the appearance of the risen Christ to Thomas (John 20:19–29). The shape note tune, named for a stream in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, adds resolution to the words.

TEXT: Henry Alford, 1844, alt.

MUSIC: Samuel McFarland, c. 1814; harm. Richard Proulx, 1986

Music Harm. © 1986 GIA Publications, Inc.

DUNLAP'S CREEK

CM

* **Benediction**

* **Response #568** *(singing together)*

Amen (Haugen)

568 Amen

Capo 3: (Em) (D) (G) (Am) (Em) (B) (C) (D) (A)
 Gm F B^b Cm Gm D E^b F C

A - men, a - men, a - men!

(Em) (D) (G) (Am) (Em) (B) (C) (Bm7) (E)
 Gm F B^b Cm Gm D E^b Dm7 G

A - men, a - men, a - men!

TEXT: Trad. liturgical text
 MUSIC: Marty Haugen, 1984
 Music © 1984 GIA Publications, Inc.

AMEN (Haugen)

Postlude

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

Arr. John Carter



WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate in the worship, education, mission and common life of First Church.

During Today's Worship

If your infant or child needs care during the worship service, you may leave the Sanctuary and return as you wish. Child care for infants and children under four years old is available all morning. We have a texting system to alert you if you are needed while in the worship service. The ushers will be glad to help you.

Flash photography during worship is not permitted. Please, no food or drink in the Sanctuary.

If you are new to First Presbyterian Church

Communion is served on the first Sunday of each month.

Disabled persons entrance is through the Main Entrance in the rear of the building.

We invite you to become a member of First Presbyterian Church. Please speak with Pastor Ken or call the church office to set a time to meet.

Interested in the mission and activities of First Presbyterian Church?

Visit the church's website, www.firstpreshc.org for more info.

Permission to podcast / stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license # A-712246. All rights reserved.

Music performing rights for livestream provided by Christian Copyright Solutions License #12803.

Permission to livestream the music during this service obtained from CCLI License No. 21392482. All rights reserved.

Permission to reprint music in this service obtained from CCLI License No. 21392499. All rights reserved.



The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County

9325 Presbyterian Circle, Columbia, MD 21045

410.730.3545 | www.firstpreshc.org

Ministers: All members of the congregation

Kenneth Page, Interim Pastor
Virginia Callegary, Director of Christian Education
Dr. Margaret McGillivray, Director of Music Ministries
Megan Bondhus, Church Administrator
Pat Travers, Bookkeeper
Woodrow Collins, Church Sexton
Kathy Moore, Godly Play Coordinator
Marla Youkers, Nursery Coordinator
Sarah Reinhardt, Nursery Assistant

The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County is a congregation of
the Presbytery of Baltimore in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

✦ We are an Earth Care Congregation ✦

✦ We are a Matthew 25 Congregation ✦

Inspirit Counseling Services at First Presbyterian Church

Meredith Barger 410-433-8861 x104 | John Michalczyk 410-433-8861 x115

