

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

The First Presbyterian Church
of Howard County

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Akwaaba

September 8, 2024

10:30 a.m. In-person and Livestream Service



GATHER

Let all enter the sanctuary in a spirit of prayer.

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

* Please stand if you are able

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

O Waly, Waly

arr. Dan Forrest

Introit

Sign Up

Converse

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

Leader: Dear Lord, we most humbly beg you to give us grace not only to be hearers of the Word, but doers also of the same;

People: Not only to love, but also to live your gospel;

Leader: Not only to favor, but also to follow your godly doctrine;

People: Not only to profess, but also to practice your blessed commandments,

All: To the honor of your holy name, and the health of our souls. Amen.

* **Hymn 611**

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
(see next page for hymn)

Hymn to Joy

ADORATION

611 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
 2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee; earth and heaven re-lect thy rays;
 3 Mor-tals, join the hap-py cho-rus which the morn-ing stars be-gan.

Hearts un-fold like flowers be-fore thee, o-pening to the sun a-bove.
 stars and an-gels sing a-round thee, cen-ter of un-bro-ken praise.
 Love di-vine is reign-ing o'er us, join-ing all in heav-en's plan.

Melt the clouds of sin and sad-ness; drive the dark of doubt a-way.
 Field and for-est, vale and moun-tain, flower-y mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
 Ev-er sing-ing, march we on-ward, vic-tors in the midst of strife.

Giv-er of im-mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
 chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, call us to re-joice in thee.
 Joy-ful mu-sic leads us sun-ward in the tri-umph song of life.

This well-known melody was created to provide a choral setting for J. C. F. von Schiller's poem, "An die Freude" (To Joy), as the final movement of the composer's *Ninth Symphony*. The author, a prominent Presbyterian pastor and author, wrote the words with this tune in mind.

TEXT: Henry van Dyke, 1907, alt.

MUSIC: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824; adapt. Edward Hodges, 1842, alt.

HYMN TO JOY

8.7.8.7.D

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, time and again you make it clear that the sacrifice you desire from us is a pure and contrite heart, a heart broken by the recognition of our sin. Yet time and again, we find it easier to go through the motions of religiosity rather than humble ourselves before you. It's more comfortable to sit in the pew than respond to your call to love the unlovely. It's easier to complain about differences than work for reconciliation. It's less threatening to put a check in the offering plate than actually serve a meal at the soup kitchen. Forgiveness is hard, and we prefer to hold on to our disappointments and hurts. Forgive us, merciful Savior. Forgive our failures, our pettiness, our fear, our selfishness. Forgive us for choosing the easy way rather than the way of the cross. Hear our desire for mercy, our hope for restoration, our longing to be more like Jesus. Amen.

(A time of silence is kept during which individual confessions may be offered.)

Assurance of Grace

* **Response of Praise 659** *(singing together)*

Know That God Is Good

1 Know that God is good. Know that
Mu - ngu ni mwe - ma. Mu - ngu

God is good. Know that God is good;
ni mwe - ma. Mu - ngu ni mwe - ma,

God is good; God is good.
ni mwe - ma, ni mwe - ma.

*** 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 Praise 692** *(singing together)*

Spirit, Open My Heart

Capo 3: (D) (G) (D) (G) (A7)
F B \flat F B \flat C7

Refrain

Spir - it, o - pen my heart to the joy and pain of

(Bm) (D/A) (G) (A7) (Bm) (D/A) (Em)
Dm F/C B \flat C7 Dm F/C Gm

liv - ing. As you love may I love, in re - ceiv - ing

(D) (G) (Em7) (D) (G) (D)
F B \flat Gm7 F B \flat F

and in giv - ing. Spir - it, o - pen my heart. *Fine*

Words of Welcome

Newcomers please leave us your address and contact information on the Visitor Card in the pew rack! Place the Visitor Card in the offering plate.

ENCOUNTER

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson: Psalm 146

¹Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

²I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

³Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help.

⁴When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish.

⁵Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God,

⁶who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever;

⁷who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free;

⁸the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.

⁹The Lord watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

¹⁰The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord!

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 in Rooms 110 & 113.

Older children, grades 2-5, may go with Ms. Virginia Callegary to The Worship Bridge. They will return to the sanctuary later in the worship service.

(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.

Anthem

How Can I Keep From Singing?

arr. John Coates, Jr.

Second Lesson: James 2:14-26

¹⁴What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? ¹⁵If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, ¹⁶and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? ¹⁷So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. ¹⁸But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. ¹⁹You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder. ²⁰Do you want to be shown, you senseless person, that faith apart from works is barren? ²¹Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²²You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. ²³Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," and he was called the friend of God. ²⁴You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. ²⁵Likewise, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another road? ²⁶For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.

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

What Good Is It?

Kenneth Page

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

RESPOND AND SERVE

*** Affirmation of Faith**

We believe in God --

who brings sunshine after rain and works healing in the midst of pain; who looks into each soul with love, touches each memory with blessing and longs for us to know we are beloved; who splashes the world with springtime color and fills the air with the singing of birds and the roar of the ocean; who meets us at the tomb of our fears and sends us out with hope and joy.

We believe in Jesus --

the risen Christ, the Friend of the forgotten, Savior of the world; who loves us without judgment, yet persuades us to change; who joins us as we walk and work with the poor and oppressed; who befriends us when we feel lonely, surprises us when we feel bored, prods us when we get complacent; who loves all children, dances with the elderly, shows compassion to the dying and blesses the breaking of bread.

We believe in the Holy Spirit --

who weaves us into communities of faith of all ages, nations and races; who is the stillness in every silence, the breath in every deep sigh, the love in every tender embrace.

We believe we are called to be an Easter people --

challenging despair with glowing hope, acting peacefully in the midst of painful Good Fridays and living joyfully even in the midst of harsh realities.

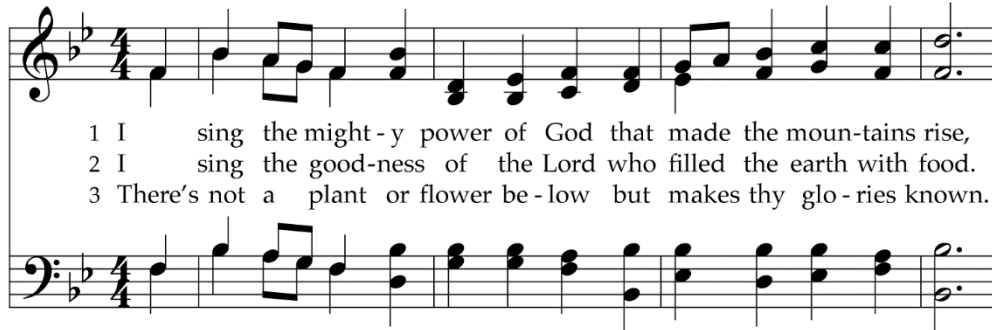
We believe in the church --

the hand-holding, heartily singing and passionate, caring fellowship of seekers and finders.

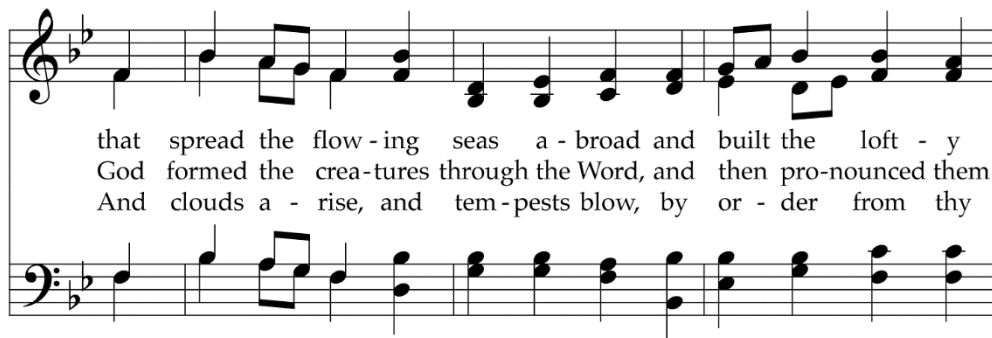
This we believe.

CREATION AND PROVIDENCE

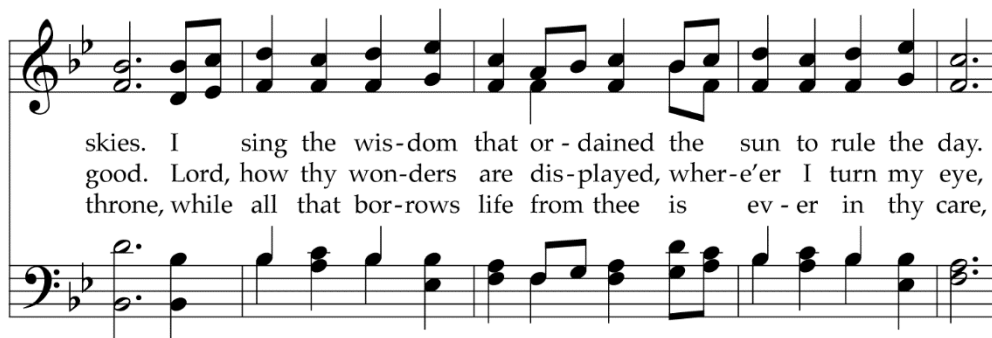
32 I Sing the Mighty Power of God



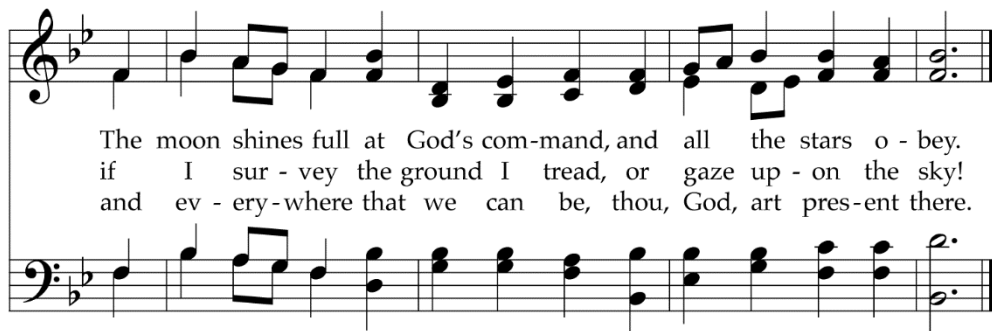
1 I sing the might - y power of God that made the moun-tains rise,
 2 I sing the good-ness of the Lord who filled the earth with food.
 3 There's not a plant or flower be - low but makes thy glo - ries known.



that spread the flow - ing seas a - broad and built the loft - y
 God formed the crea-tures through the Word, and then pro-nounced them
 And clouds a - rise, and tem-pests blow, by or - der from thy



skies. I sing the wis-dom that or - dained the sun to rule the day.
 good. Lord, how thy won-ders are dis-played, wher-e'er I turn my eye,
 throne, while all that bor-rows life from thee is ev - er in thy care,



The moon shines full at God's com-mand, and all the stars o - bey.
 if I sur - vey the ground I tread, or gaze up - on the sky!
 and ev - ery-where that we can be, thou, God, art pres-ent there.

With minimal revision this text brings together six of the eight four-line stanzas in an 18th-century hymn written for children and originally headed "Praise for Creation and Providence." The anonymous German tune provides a fitting sense of breadth and wonder.

Concerns and Remembrances

Prayers of Gratitude and Concern

Concluding Prayer *(together)*

**We thank you for people who are doers of the word and not hearers only.
O God, may we be counted among them.
Help us to hear your word and to find joy in doing what you call us to do.
May we live our lives in thankful obedience. Amen.**

The Offering

Offertory

Crimond

Jessie Irvine/David Grant, arr. L. Shackley

* **Doxology 708** *(singing together)*

We Give Thee but Thine Own

We give thee but thine own,
whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is thine alone,
a trust, O Lord, from thee.

* **Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

SEND AND BLESS

This Week at First Presbyterian Church

Moment for Mission

Brett Sivo

* **Hymn 733**

We All Are One in Mission
(see next page for hymn)

Es Flog Eon Kliens Waldvögelein

733 We All Are One in Mission

1 We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,
 2 We all are called for ser - vice to wit - ness in God's name.
 3 Now let us be u - nit - ed and let our song be heard.

our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.
 Our min - is - tries are dif - ferent; our pur - pose is the same:
 Now let us be a ves - sel for God's re - deem - ing word.

A sin - gle, great com - mis - sion com - pels us from a - bove
 to touch the lives of oth - ers by God's sur - pris - ing grace,
 We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,

to plan and work to - geth - er that all may know Christ's love.
 so ev - ery folk and na - tion may feel God's warm em - brace.
 our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.

A Lutheran pastor wrote this text in response to a bishop's letter that said, "Our mission is to touch the lives of others with Christ's love." This theme is made stronger by recognizing that shared purposes do not require the denial of diversity but are enriched by it.

* **Benediction**

* **Response of Praise 314** (*singing together*)

Christ, Be Our Light

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

* **Postlude**

Postlude on Webb

Gordon Young



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. The nursery is in Room 159. 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 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 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.

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The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County

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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 Office 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

