

Connect and Serve

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

Return to Regular Hours – Please note that the church office will be closed on September 7 in observance of the Labor Day holiday. On September 8, the church office will return to regular office hours and will be open 9am-4pm on Monday-Thursday, and 9am-12pm on Fridays.

Church Picnic - Fall Kick-Off is just around the corner on September 13. Come at noon for our annual picnic (in the “backyard” along the alley). We’ll have fried chicken, a bounce house, golf putting and face painting! Sign up to bring a side dish on the website. And bring a friend!

Youth Group Kick-Off Party - On Sunday, September 13 from 4-6pm, First Pres will celebrate a new year of Youth Group with a Kick-Off Party! We will have snacks, play video games, board games, live-action Among Us, and discuss our mission and core values for the year. Youth Group will be every Sunday from 4-5:30pm.

Youth Bible Study - After our Youth Group Kick-Off Party, the following Wednesday we will have our All-Grades Bible Study, from 7-8:30pm. We will be working our way through the Gospel of John.

Youth Beach Retreat - From September 18-20, First Pres Youth will be going to Bethany Beach Retreat Center for a weekend retreat! We will use the calming beach atmosphere to have fun and learn devotional practices, which are spiritual disciplines that will last a lifetime. Registration and info online.

Children’s Choir Registration - Come sing, learn and have fun this Fall! Our Children’s Choir welcomes young singers to grow in confidence, make new friends, and discover the joy of making music while praising God. We start on Wednesday, September 16 at 5:15pm. Please register online on the church website. We can’t wait to see you!

New Fall Study on King David - Over 9 weeks this fall, the Midweek Journeys study group will do a deep dive into the life of King David, exploring the accounts of David’s life and considering what his story teaches about the responsibilities and expectations for living as God’s people. Midweek Journeys meets on Wednesday nights from 6:30 - 7:30pm on Zoom, beginning Wednesday, September 16. Contact Sara Pantazes at spantazes@firstpreswc.com to be added to the email list.

Women’s Fall Bible Study - From the opening chapters of Genesis through the final verses of Revelation, God is known by many names; names that reveal who He is, what He does, and how He relates to His children. All women are invited to an 8-week video and workbook study called *The Names of God*, led by six different Bible study authors. This study will meet on Wednesdays from 9:30-11am, and will run for 8 weeks, from Sept. 23-Nov. 11. Sign up online.

Connection Groups – We're excited to announce that Connection Groups are launching this fall at First Pres! These groups will meet monthly from October through May, with the option to continue on afterward. Finding community is an important part of our faith journey, and these groups are a great way to build genuine relationships within our church family. There’s a variety to choose from, so visit the sign-up link on our website to learn more about each one and discover the group that’s right for you. If you have questions or you’re not sure what would be a good fit, reach out to Elizabeth Hess or Sara Pantazes.

First Pres Travelers – Join the Travelers to see Joshua at the Sight & Sound Theater, Nov. 12 at 11 am. Show ticket price is \$71.70 (fees included). Optional Smorgasbord Lunch at the adjacent Hershey Farm Restaurant. Cost for the lunch is \$30.95 (food, fees, and tip). For additional information or to register, please contact Thom & Irene at psuthom@verizon.net.

First Presbyterian Church of West Chester
September 6, 2026



Order of Worship for the Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Please rise in body or spirit*

Prelude Simple Gifts arr. Mark Hayes

Call to Worship*

We have come to worship God, the living God,
who calls prophets and teachers to bear witness.

We have come to praise God, the almighty God,
who answers the forces of hatred and hurt with the power of grace.

We have come to worship God, the all-gracious God,
who chooses even you and me, to receive and carry the word of life and hope. All glory to God!

Hymn 36* For the Fruit of All Creation

Welcome

Prayer of Confession

Too often, Lord God, we are hesitant in our faith; seeking safe and suitable opportunities to live it out. We are half-hearted in our service and reluctant to stand out from the crowd. We live as if we're dependent wholly on our own resources; relying on our own skills and insights. We look to the clouds for our inspiration, in the hope of finding you there. Forgive the frailty of our faith and open wide our hearts and minds to your presence in our lives, in our church, and in the world. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness
We are witnesses to the everlasting love of God,
who in Christ offers us our salvation.
In Christ we are forgiven and at peace. 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*

Sacrament of Baptism
Anna Aleta Quain
Child of Julie and Kevin Quain
Born May 14, 2026

Response God of Great and God of Small Hymn 19

First Scripture Reading Isaiah 43:9-15 OT p. 672

Special Music Arise, My Soul, Arise
arr. Dan Forrest

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Peace Hymn Audrey Assad

Please join the soloist in singing the refrain

**Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah! Your peace will make us one!**

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.**

Second Scripture Reading Acts 1:1-11 NT p. 118

Sermon *The Story: A Journey Through the Book of Acts
The Witnesses*
Rev. Andrew Esqueda

Hymn 498* Loaves Were Broken, Words Were Spoken

Invitation to the Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord’s Prayer
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise!...

**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.**

Communion of The Lord’s Supper
*Communion will be served using the ancient practice of intinction.
Beginning with those in the front rows,
please come down the center aisle to receive the bread and cup.
If you would prefer to be served where you are seated,
please notify a server
and the elements will be brought to you.
The bread is free of gluten, nuts, egg, and dairy.*

Prayer After Communion

Affirmation of Faith
**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven
and earth,**

**And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was
conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of
God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to
judge the quick and the dead. (cont’d)**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic Church;
The communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Hymn 727* Will You Let Me Be Your Servant

Blessing*

Postlude Our Refuge and Strength
Donald Callender

*Assisting in worship today:
Kiana Rivera, Alto soloist*

*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 is
also a screen in the lounge that streams 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
Nathan Preuhs, Director of Youth Ministry
Elizabeth Hess, Director of Engagement
Karin Khan, Ministry Administrator
Claire Kramer, Finance Manager
Peter Galloway, Director of Operations
Sara Ford, Facilities Manager
Laura Moreschi, Children’s Music Director
Ann Ellis, Choir Accompanist
Kiana Rivera, Worship Band Leader
Jennifer Rosenberg, Preschool Director
Greg Ondo, AV Tech
Haley Phares, Music & AV Associate*