

Connect and Serve

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

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.

Domestic Violence Center of Chester Country Gift Card Campaign - Presbyterian Women of First Pres has supported the Domestic Violence Center of Chester County for many years and will be running a gift card campaign until October 15. If interested in supporting these families, please see this week's e-news for more information.

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 meet on Wednesdays at 5:15pm. Please register online on the church website. We can't wait to see you!

Thursday Evening Men's Study - All men of the church are invited to participate in a new 7-part study of the Lord's Prayer entitled *The Sacred Thread* beginning this Thursday, September 24 on Zoom from 7 - 9pm. The study's host states: "Through cinematic storytelling and accessible scholarship, *The Sacred Thread* invites viewers into the world of the Biblical text. The series cuts to the heart of Scripture, exploring the historical, cultural, geographical, and literary contexts behind the Bible's most iconic stories." The study materials will be available online at no cost. Contact Phil Heaver with any questions via email at Fivormor59@aol.com or via cell at 610-310-0388.

Bibles for Third Grade Students - Every fall, First Pres gifts a Bible to the church's 3rd graders to encourage them to continue growing in their faith. If you would like a 3rd grader in your life to receive a Bible, please contact Sara Pantazes by calling the church office or emailing Sara (spantazes@firstpreswc.com) by October 4. The Bibles will be presented in worship on October 18, but children do not need to be present in worship to receive one.

Moms Group Returns - Moms Group is back for its first meeting of the year on Sunday, September 27 from 4 - 5:30pm. Whether you are parenting a newborn, college kid, or any age in between, this is the place for you to find friendship, encouragement and fun. We'll spend this time catching up, having some fun together, and discussing the start of our slow read for the year *Love like a Mother: How the Sacred Work of Motherhood Reveals the Maternal Heart of God* by Elizabeth Berget. Moms are encouraged to reach Chapter 1 before coming but don't let that stop you if you're not a reader! If you have any questions or need a list of babysitters, contact the church office to reach group leaders Mary Hambleton and Liz Single.

Fall Stewardship Project for Kids & Youth - This October, First Pres kids and youth are invited to participate in a new program that will encourage them to serve and love others! Participants in the Sight Squad will be responsible for completing tasks at home that contribute to family life. In exchange for their completed tasks, kids will earn money that they can bring into church to contribute to a meaningful fundraising goal - paying for a surgery that will restore someone's eyesight. Packets with more information are being shared in Sunday School today. Talk to Sara Pantazes with any questions.

Nursery Families Play Date - First Pres is excited to invite all families with Nursery aged kids (preschool and under) to get together for a play date! Hosted by Pastor Andrew, his wife Megan, and their preschooler, we'll be gathering at Marshall Square Park on Saturday, October 10 from 9 -10:30am. A nut-free snack will be provided. If it rains, our back-up location is Fellowship Hall at church. We hope to see many of our young families there for a fun time of playing and fellowship!

Nominating Committee - As we look ahead, we invite you to think about those in our congregation who might be called to serve as ruling elders or deacons. Who comes to mind as someone with a caring heart, a spirit of service, and gifts to share? Please share their names with the Nominating Committee by October 18.

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 20, 2026



Order of Worship for Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost

**Please rise in body or spirit*

Prelude Let the Bright Seraphim
G. F. Handel

Call to Worship*
In Christ, the Suffering Servant is revealed as the great healer.
The stone that was rejected is shown to be hope's cornerstone.

The Crucified One is raised to new life, the God of healing, hope, and life.
Let us worship our Lord!

Hymn 33* Praise the Lord! God's Glories Show

Welcome

Prayer of Confession
**We love in word and speech
but not in truth or action.
We value most highly those who agree with us
and focus on our own needs first.
Too often we fail to declare Jesus lord of life
and to bring his Good News to all people.
Our Lord Jesus gives us the greatest gift:
he lays down his life for us, yet we seek and serve
lesser things. Lord, you know the truth in our hearts.
Forgive us for the sins we can name, save us from the
sins we hide. In your Son's name we ask this, Amen.**

Assurance of Forgiveness
This is the good news: God will walk with us in every moment, God will fill us with goodness and mercy, God will bring us home to live forever.
**Anointed with grace and forgiveness,
our lives overflow with love for all people.
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*

Children’s Message
During the singing of the following response, children may join their teachers for Sunday School. Families can pick up their children after the service in their classrooms on the 2nd floor.

Response God of Great and God of Small Hymn 19

First Scripture Reading Psalm 144 OT p. 580

Special Music Eternal Source of Light Divine
G. F. Handel

*Eternal source of light divine, with double warmth
thy beams display.
And with distinguish’d glory shine, to add a lustre to this day.*

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 The Heavens Are Telling
Joseph Haydn

*The Heavens are telling the glory of God,
The wonder of his work displays the firmament.*

*Today that is coming speaks it the day,
The night that is gone to following night.
The Heavens are telling the glory of God,
The wonder of his work displays the firmament.*

*In all the lands resounds the word,
Never unperceived, ever understood.
The Heavens are telling the glory of God,
The wonder of his work displays the firmament.*

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 353* My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

Second Scripture Reading Acts 4:1-22 NT p. 121

Sermon *The Story: A Journey Through the Book of Acts –
The Cornerstone*
Rev. Caroline Cupp

Hymn 438* Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

Benediction*

Postlude Toccata Giovanni Martini

Assisting in worship today:
Kiana Rivera, Liturgist
Lyndsay Spaziani, Soprano
Barbara Prugh, Trumpet
The Chancel Choir

*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

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