



First Presbyterian Church of Athens

In response to God's grace, the mission of First Presbyterian Church is to create a community where people seek the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, rejoice in worship, and go forth sharing the love of Christ with Athens and the world!

May 17, 2020
11:00 a.m. Livestream
Sixth Sunday of Easter

GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Greeting

Psalm 118:24

This is the day the Lord has made; **let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

Prelude

Aria

Craig Phillips

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Song of Gathering

DIX

**Make a joyful noise to God!
All creation sings your praise!
Great your wonders here displayed,
unexcelled throughout our days.
Glorious is your sacred name,
ages old, yet still the same.**

Call to Worship

O people, praise our God – the Artist of creation, the Lord of heaven and earth.

We worship our Maker with resounding praise!

In God we live and move and have our being; it is the Lord who gives us life and breath.

God has kept us among the living and not let our feet slip.

God formed all people to seek the Lord; indeed, our Creator is never far away.

Bless the Lord, who is faithful to us!

Hymn 464

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

HYMN TO JOY

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed. We have sinned by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have sinned by what we have said, and by what we have left unsaid. For not showing our love for you, for not loving one another as you have loved us, forgive us. Help us obey your commandments and keep us ever faithful to your Word by the power of your Spirit who abides among us.

Silent Prayer

Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

A special word of

welcome: thank you for being with us online for worship this morning. We are delighted and hope that you will join us again next Sunday.

The well-known melody HYMN TO JOY was created to provide a choral setting for Schiller's poem, "An die Freude" (To Joy), as the final movement of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. The author of the hymn text, a prominent Presbyterian Pastor and author, wrote the words with this tune in mind.

Assurance of Pardon

Congregational Response

Hymn 579

**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.**

The Peace

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson

Mark 12:28-31, page 926

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Solo

My eyes for beauty pine

Herbert Howells

My eyes for beauty pine, my soul for Goddës grace,
no other care nor hope is mine, to heaven I turn my face.
One splendour thence is shed from all the stars above:
'tis named when God's name is said, 'tis Love, 'tis heavenly Love.
And every gentle heart that burns with true desire,
is lit from eyes that mirror part of that celestial fire.

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 13, page 1049

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

A More Excellent Way

Dr. Ryan Baer

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

Hymn 367

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love

CHERE PONI

Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

**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; (cont.)
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.**

**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.**

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.**

The solo is a text by Robert Bridges (1844-1930), set to music by the English composer Herbert Howells (1892-1983).

Considering *Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love* comes from a part of the world where Christianity is not the primary religion gives these simple but powerful words even more depth and meaning. The tune name recalls the district in the Northern Region of Ghana where this tune was collected.

Next to the Nicene Creed, The Apostles' Creed is the most universally accepted doctrinal statement in Christendom. Although not written by apostles, it reflects the theological formulations of the first century church. Arising from an early baptismal creed, it underwent development, attaining its present form in the eighth century.

Our Daily Bread Seeking Volunteers

Downtown Ministries, the organization that oversees the Our Daily Bread soup kitchen, has expressed a need for individual volunteers to help serve lunch one day per week from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. at the First Baptist Church. This service is not in conjunction with our First Presbyterian serving committees. Volunteers must be at least 17 years of age. If you are interested in helping, please email lsmothers@downtownministries.org.

Caring Hands Offering

This month, a special Caring Hands offering will be collected to benefit the Caring Hands Fund of Presbyterian Homes of Georgia. Presbyterian Homes is a ministry on the front lines of the COVID-19 coronavirus battle, serving our most vulnerable population – our seniors. This annual offering is the largest source of funds for benevolent care for Presbyterian Homes’ five communities in Georgia. Your contribution directly supports the care of residents who have outlived their financial resources. Our congregation joins Presbyterian churches statewide to annually support this vital ministry.

Please mail your check to the church office, or go to our website [firstpresathens.org/home/giving](https://www.firstpresathens.org/home/giving) (please select “Presby Homes/Mother’s Day”). Alternatively, you can click on the button on our website homepage and visit <https://www.phgainc.org/donate/caring-hands-offering/church1/> to make a direct donation. Thank you for your generosity!

Stephen Ministry

In recent weeks our lives have been turned upside down by the coronavirus. The degree of this negative impact varies from person to person. Do you have a friend, neighbor, co-worker or relative who has been struggling with life changes due to the virus, loss of a loved one, loneliness, cancer, a layoff, relocation, divorce, a spiritual crisis, recuperation, single parenthood, or any of countless other life changes? Our Stephen Ministers can provide them with the focused care, encouragement, and support they need to make it through the crisis. If anyone you know is hurting, talk with one of our Stephen Leaders.

Bob Frisch: rpfrisch@aol.com, 914-262-1078

Dawn Frisch: dawnmfrisch@aol.com, 914-255-3447

Lisa Oelke: lisakoelke@gmail.com, 706-540-4251

Carol Strickland: cstrickland@firstpresathens.org, 706-765-7671

Our Stephen Ministers are here to care!

Wed@First Online - Apostles’ Creed

Join Dr. Baer online via Zoom on Wednesday nights as we continue theological conversations, using the Apostles’ Creed as our guide. What do we mean when we say, “He descended into hell?” What do we mean when we say, “I believe in the holy catholic church?” We’ll explore these questions and more from 6:30-7:30 p.m. each Wednesday night.

Shortly before the starting time of the event, please go to <https://zoom.us/j/7065434338>. The meeting ID is the main church number (706-543-4338) and the password is 185185. For more information on how to set up Zoom, please check the website.

Online Sunday School - Book of Job

During the pandemic, online Sunday School continues from 9:45 - 10:30 a.m. every Sunday morning. Join Dr. Baer, Lewis Hudgins, and Drew Marshall as we explore the Book of Job. All are welcome.

Shortly before the starting time of the event, please go to <https://zoom.us/j/7065434338>. The meeting ID is the main church number (706-543-4338) and the password is 185185. For more information on how to set up Zoom, please check the website.

Helping the Local Community During COVID-19 Crisis

Dear Friends in Christ,

The worldwide pandemic calls us to great compassion to meet the great need. Many of you have wondered how you can help.

Of course, social distancing, handwashing, and wearing PPE (personal protective equipment) are crucial to stem the tide of the coronavirus. You can also pray for those whose health and/or livelihood are adversely affected by this crisis as well as those working extra hard to address its many ramifications.

Beyond safety measures and prayer, we encourage you to be generous. Perhaps you don't need any or all of the forthcoming stimulus check or can give out of your own surplus.

Below you will find a list of organizations that our church has vetted and supports with an Outreach Grant. Invariably they are in the business of helping "the least of these, our brothers and sisters," (Matt. 25:40) folks whose lives were

already difficult before COVID-19. They all would welcome an online donation or check in the mail. Some have told us of other specific needs.

However, before making an over-and-above gift to other organizations in these dire times, please be sure you are honoring your 2020 financial commitment to First Presbyterian Church. After all, our entire budget, including the Outreach Grants and other benevolences we have pledged, depends upon the faithful giving of our members. So, assuming you are able*, please keep giving even though you can't come to church. Thank you!

In faith,

Your Outreach and Mission Commission

*Should your financial situation change for better or worse, you are always able to adjust your pledge by contacting Roger Burbage, our Church Administrator, at rburbage@firstpresathens.org.

Athens Nurses Clinic

P.O. Box 1732

Athens, GA 30603

AthensNursesClinic.org

To continue to provide medications and home-health-management kits.

Bethlehem Ministry

P.O. Box 48387

Athens, GA 30604

BethlehemMinistry.org

To buy handwashing soap, which is sorely lacking in Haiti, from the economic development project which makes it from native jatropha trees.

Casa de Amistad

P.O. Box 841

Athens, GA 30603

AthensAmistad.com

To assist those in the underserved Hispanic community who have lost income due to the COVID-19.

Family Promise (formerly IHNA)

P. O. Box 581, Athens, GA 30603

IHNAthens.org

To buy groceries for families to prepare breakfast/lunch (congregations are providing dinners). Also need paper towels, Windex, 409 cleaner, Clorox wipes, hand sanitizer.

Our Daily Bread

Sponsored by Downtown Ministries

165 Pulaski Street, Athens, GA 30601

DowntownMinistries.org

To provide grab-n-go sack lunches M-F at First Baptist Church.

Also need bottled water and "Blessing Bags," which are 1 gallon ziplock bag filled with baby wipes, bar soap, washcloth, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrush, 8 tampons/maxipads, 4 granola bars. Drop off at FBC lobby, Tue or Thurs, 9-10 am.

The Ark United Ministry Outreach Center

640 Barber Street, Athens, GA 30601

AthensArk.org

To pay rent/utilities assistance for workers whose jobs are impacted by Covid 19.

Additionally, many of our members are participating in the Facebook group, **Mask Making for Athens**. You can volunteer to sew, deliver, or donate supplies for protective face masks.

Also, the **Red Cross** needs donors. Go to redcrossblood.org to schedule an appointment.

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

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HYMN TO JOY 8.7.8.7 D

Henry van Dyke, 1907; alt.

Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824
Adapt. Edward Hodges (1796-1867); alt.

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 - flect 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, Open-ing 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 gloom of doubt a - way;
Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, Flower-y mea-dow, 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.

367 Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love

CHEREPONI Irregular with refrain

Ghanaian folk song
Trans. Tom Colvin, 1969

Ghanaian folk melody
Adapt. Tom Colvin, 1963
Arr. Jane Marshall, 1982

Je - su, Je - su, fill us with Your love, Show

us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from You. Fine

1. Kneels at the feet of His friends,	Si - lent - ly wash - es their
2. Neigh-bors are rich and poor,	Var - ied in col - or and
3. These are the ones we should serve,	These are the ones we should
4. Lov - ing puts us on our knees,	Serv - ing as though we are
5. Kneel at the feet of our friends,	Si - lent - ly wash - ing their

D.C.

feet,	Mas - ter who acts as a slave	to them.
race,	Neigh-bors are near and far	a - way.
love.	All are neigh-bors to us	and You.
slaves,	This is the way we should live	with You.
feet,	This is the way we should live	with You.

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We All Are One in Mission

ES FLOG EIN KLEINS WALDVÖGELEIN 7.6.7.6 D

Rusty Edwards, 1986; alt.

Memmingen ms., 17th century
Harm. George Ratcliffe Woodward, 1904

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.