

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!

January 8, 2023
8:45 and 11:00 a.m.
Baptism of the Lord

GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Welcome to all who are worshipping with us. As we enter a holy space this morning, please silence your cell phone.

Greeting

Psalm 118:24

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

Prelude

O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright Max Drischner

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

*Song of Gathering

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

**O splendor of God's glory bright, from light eternal bringing light;
thou light of life, light's living spring, true day, all days illumining.**

Call to Worship

In baptism God claims us and names us Beloved.

In baptism Christ joins us to himself and to one another.

In baptism the Spirit is poured out upon us.

Remember your baptism and be thankful!

Thanks be to God!

*Hymn 10

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry WINCHESTER NEW

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, you claim us and call us, you support us and uphold us, you save us and free us from our sin. Yet we slip into old habits, worshiping idols that have claimed our hearts, disregarding our impact on the earth and our neighbors. Forgive us. Meet us at the water again, that we might know we belong to you.

*Silent Prayer

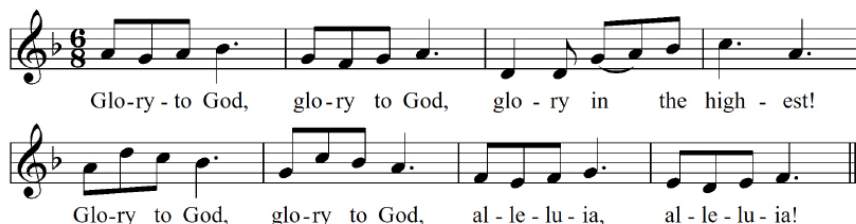
Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

*Assurance of Pardon

*Congregational Response

Alleluia

Jacques Berthier



**Those who are able may stand.*

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad, making note of new and old friends, check in on Facebook, and follow us on Instagram (firstpresathensga).

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry shows how once-unconnected parts can work together. The text about John the Baptist was originally written in Latin in the 18th century, translated into English in the 19th century. The 17th-century tune was adapted to its present form in the 19th century.

At "The Peace," worshipers are invited to greet each other by saying, "The peace of Christ be with you," and responding, "And also with you."

After the Passing of the Peace at the 11:00 a.m. service, children, ages Pre-K - grade 1, are invited to Children's Church held in the Children's Ministry Suite on the first floor.

The text of the anthem is from Albert Schweitzer's *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, set to music by American composer Jane Marshall. It ends with the chorale *O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright*, which is often associated with Epiphany because of the star imagery, but it is really addressed to Christ, the Morning Star (Revelation 22:16), who guides and sustains us in this life and is our hope for the life to come.

Today we observe Baptism of the Lord Sunday, a festival of the Christian year in which we remember Jesus' baptism and give thanks for the baptism we share with Christ. Our service today includes a Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant, and as you depart the sanctuary today you are invited to touch the water and remember the promises of baptism. If you have never been baptized, or would like to know more about our understanding of the Sacrament of Baptism, please speak with one of our pastors.

*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

Psalm 2:7-8, page 479

11:00 Anthem

He Comes to Us

Jane Marshall

He comes to us as one unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside he came to all those who knew him not. He speaks to us, he speaks the same word: "Follow thou me!" and sets us to the task which he has to fulfill for our time. He commands. And to those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple, he will reveal himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in his fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who he is.

O Morning Star, how fair and bright
thou beamest forth in truth and light!

O Sovereign meek and lowly.

Thou Root of Jesse, David's son,
my Lord and Master, thou hast won
my heart to serve thee solely! Thou art holy,
fair and glorious, all victorious, rich in blessing,
rule and might o'er all possessing.

Second Lesson

Matthew 3:1-17, page 880

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

Sermon

Make Way for the King

Dr. Ryan Baer

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

*Hymn 326

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart MORECAMBE

*Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant

Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

**For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body –
Jews of Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to
drink of one Spirit.**

*Profession 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;
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.**

*Thanksgiving for Baptism

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.

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory *Winchester New* Bruce Neswick
***Doxology** Hymn 592

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

SENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

***Hymn 313** *Come Down, O Love Divine* DOWN AMPNEY

***Charge and Benediction**

***Congregational Response** Hymn 68, stanza 4
To God the Father, God the Son, and Holy Spirit, three in one,
may every tongue and nation raise
an endless song of thankful praise.

Postlude *We Christian Folk* Johann Sebastian Bach

You may mail your check,
set up an automatic payment
of your pledge through your
bank, or donate online
using this QR code or at
firstpresathens.org/
give. Thank you for your
generosity.



Come Down, O Love Divine was originally
a vernacular Italian
sacred song called a *lauda spirituale*. The English
translation received little
notice until it was paired
with this tune by Ralph
Vaughan Williams.

*Texts and music for hymns and
sung responses reprinted under
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A special word of welcome to our guests: thank you for joining us for worship this morning. Please fill out the Fellowship Pad so that we may be in touch. We are delighted you are here and look forward to seeing you again.

Nurseries for children 4 years old and younger, available from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., are located next to the Children's Ministry Suite and are accessible down the stairs in the Atrium and through the glass door.

Children, Pre K – 1st Grade, are invited to Children's Church during the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Children's Church will be held downstairs in the Children's Ministry Suite. We will depart for Children's Church following the Passing of the Peace. To pick up your child after the service, please go to the church courtyard entrance of the Children's Ministry Suite.

FPC Faith and Film: *Places in the Heart*
Friday, January 13, 7:00 p.m.

This Friday, January 13, 7:00 p.m., join Kent Burel in the Moses Waddel Room for FPC Faith and Film, featuring the movie *Places in the Heart* (1984). Please plan to stay for the discussion after the movie. Drinks and popcorn will be provided.

Places in the Heart won the Best Actress Oscar in 1985 for Sally Field. This is a story of a widow's struggle to survive following the tragic death of her husband in depression-era Texas. In addition to Sally Field, the film stars Danny Glover, John Malkovich, and Ed Harris. It is a wonderful film of grace and redemption.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor*

The Rev. Leigh Bonner, *Interim Associate Pastor*

Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*

Lay Reader

11:00 a.m. Ella Stewart

USHERS

8:45 a.m. John Simpson (head), Carl Bergmann

11:00 a.m. Jimbo LaBoon (head),
Kemp Gaskill, Keith Oelke

AUDIOVISUAL TECHNICIAN

Bryan Owens

FLOWERS

The flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God and in honor of Orlean Castronis' recent 99th birthday by the entire LaBoon Family.

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Aiden Dowling

TO AID IN WORSHIP

If you need to leave the sanctuary during the service, a live video feed is available in the Atrium, on Facebook, and YouTube.

Available in the Narthex or from an usher:

- **Personal hearing receivers** usable anywhere in the sanctuary
- **Large-print** hymnals, Bibles, bulletins, and hymnsheets
- **Sermons** from the previous six weeks

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Prayer requests can be submitted to the church office, 706-543-4338, by the Prayer Request link on our church website (firstpresathens.org) or on the prayer cards in the Fellowship Pads.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

STEPHEN MINISTRY

In addition to the cold weather outside, many people experience winters in their personal life. Family and personal struggles may leave them with nowhere to turn for support. If you or someone you know is going through a difficult time, our Stephen Ministers can bring God's warm love back into your life. Talk with one of our Stephen Leaders for more information: Margaret Davis: margaret@firstpresathens.org, 706-206-9896

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

2023-24 WEEKDAY SCHOOL

First Pres Weekday School registration for Fall 2023 begins for in-house students on Tuesday, January 17. On Friday, January 20 at noon, community registration begins. Our Weekday School is a half-day church preschool serving 3 months through 5 years. Questions? Call our director, Elaine Johnson, at (706) 206-8180 or e-mail elaine@firstpresathens.org.

Be a part of the 2023 MLK Day of Service in Athens!

Monday, January 16

What a great way to start off 2023 by joining other members of First Presbyterian and the Athens Community by honoring Martin Luther King and helping to make Athens a more beautiful and welcoming place to live! You can see more information about volunteering opportunities and register at tinyurl.com/FPCMLKDay.

This year, as in years past, the Mission & Outreach Commission has identified two worthy projects that we as a church might work on together. The first is at Project Safe Thrift Store to help straighten, sort, etc. It is located at 995 Hawthorne Avenue, Athens and we will be there from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. To volunteer or for questions, please contact Kitty Donnan at kittydavedonnan@gmail.com.

The other option to serve is at the Athens Area Diaper Bank to help count, sort, and wrap diapers that have been donated. To volunteer, please go to tinyurl.com/FPCMLKDay and select the "Fill the Diaper Gap with Athens Area Diaper Bank" project or go to athensareadiaperbank.com/volunteer to select a different day/time to volunteer.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, January 8 - Food Sunday

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Ryan Baer preaching
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School and Godly Play
- 12:00 p.m. Atrium Refreshments, Atrium
- 3:30 p.m. St. Andrews Choir and Cherub Choir Rehearsals, Room 203
- 4:30 p.m. Celebration Singers Rehearsal, Youth Choir Room
- 5:00 p.m. Middle School Youth Group, The PIT
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Group Dinner, Fellowship Hall
- 6:30 p.m. High School Youth Group, The PIT

Monday, January 9

- 2:00 p.m. Circle Two, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Room 205

Tuesday, January 10

- 9:00 a.m. Staff Meeting, Moses Waddel Room

Wednesday, January 11

- 9:30 a.m. Circle 7, Presbyterian Village
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, January 12

- 9:10 a.m. Weekday School Chapel, Children's Ministry Suite
- 11:00 a.m. Congregational Care Commission Meeting via Zoom

Friday, January 13

- 7:00 p.m. FPC Faith and Film: *Places in the Heart*, Moses Waddel Room

Sunday, January 15

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Ryan Baer preaching
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School and Godly Play
- 12:00 p.m. Atrium Refreshments, Atrium

LOOKING AHEAD

January 16 - MLK Day of Service

January 17 - Weekday School Registration for Fall 2023 Begins

January 22 - Matthew 25 Aligning Hearts and Hands Workshop

January 29 - Annual Congregational Meeting

Matthew 25 Aligning Hearts and Hands Workshop

Sunday, January 22, 12:30 p.m.

As we begin a new year, the Matthew 25 Commission invites you to a visioning lunch following worship on January 22. We'll focus on how to live out the Matthew 25 values through adult faith formation and mission and outreach. Please see more information and RSVP on FPC website.

Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 29, 12:15 p.m.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall for our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 29. We will receive the Annual Report and review the pastors' terms of call.

EDUCATION – FAITH FORMATION

SUNDAYS FOR CHILDREN

Director of Children's Ministries: Natalie Bishop

Nursery Coordinator: Rita Raines

Nursery Play, 8:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Children's Playroom • Infants – 4 Year Olds

Little ones are invited to Nursery Play during worship and Sunday school. Children will enjoy playtime, Bible stories, and a light snack with church friends.

Godly Play, 9:45 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

Children's Ministry Suite • Pre-K – 5th Grade

Children are invited to Godly Play during the Sunday School hour. Godly Play is an innovative way of teaching and learning that helps children “discover” who God is rather than being “told” who God is. The structure and routine of Godly Play offer children a safe and nurturing space to explore, connect, wonder, and worship God.

Children and Worship, 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

All children are welcome to remain in worship with their families every Sunday. Children's bulletins, Bibles, and books are available at the children's tables located in the Narthex and on both sides of the choir loft.

Children's Church, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service
Children, Pre-K – 1st Grade are invited to Children's Church to continue worshipping together by listening to God's Word, singing to God, praying to God and giving to God. On the last Sunday of the month, children, Pre-K–5th Grade are invited to a special Children's Church in the Children's Ministry Suite.

****All children are invited to remain in the sanctuary on the 1st Sunday of the month to take part in worship and Communion with family.***

SUNDAYS FOR YOUTH

Director of Youth Ministries: Kim Ness

Middle School Coordinator: Erin Osborne

The PIT (basement level) • 6th – 12th Grade

Sunday School (9:45 a.m.)

Middle School class is using a well-loved curriculum called re:form. With funny videos, creative activities, and lots of time to explore big and small questions of faith, this will be a fun, class for all our 6th–8th graders!

High School youth are encouraged to attend the intergenerational Inquirers Class that meets in the Moses Waddel Room. This semester, we are tackling issues of homelessness and how we can work together on the Matthew 25 goal to eradicate systemic poverty. Once a month, high schoolers will also be invited to worship together followed by lunch and a time of reflection.

Youth Group

Sunday night youth group is a fast hour of games, get-to-know you activities, devotionals and discussion. This year our theme is Justice and Joy. Youth will gather in the PIT to talk about their faith and begin to understand their role in doing justice AND bringing joy to a hurting world.

Middle School meets 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

High School meets 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Combined Youth Dinner (6:00 p.m.)

Between MS and HS youth groups, everyone will gather in Fellowship Hall for a shared meal. If you'd like to help provide a meal for our youth, please sign up here: tinyurl.com/FPCYouthDinnerHosts

For more information about youth ministry at FPC, visit www.fpcathenspit.com.

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

9:45–10:40 a.m.

IN PERSON

Builders • Room 301

This class is an invitation for parents of children and youth to come join for a time of fellowship and support.
*Coordinators: Dr. Ryan Baer (ryan@firstpresathens.org),
The Rev. Leigh Bonner (lbonner@firstpresathens.org)*

College Connections • Room 302

How does your life intersect with the stories we call Holy Scripture? We will take a deep dive into the writings of the New Testament with the goal of journeying from Matthew to Revelation. Grad and undergrad students are welcome to join at any time.
Coordinator: The Rev. Will Norman (will@pscuga.org)

Inquirers • Moses Waddel Room

Thoughtful introspection and lively group discussion covering contemporary issues and daily Christian living.

HYBRID (in person and over Zoom)

Del Dunn Sunday School Class • Room 308

An in-depth study and discussion of scripture – with a chapter-by-chapter reading and discussion of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Zoom and in-person.

Coordinator: Susan Landrum (slandrum@uga.edu)

Zoom ID: 875 216 0708, PW: 634175

New Voices • Room 310

Did John Calvin and Martin Luther get it right? How does the concept of “A Priesthood of Believers” guide our Church life? How does it inform our discussion of critical theological theories and lessons? And, how can the Waymaker (who?) guide us through difficult times?
Led by: Lewis Hudgins (lewisahudgins@gmail.com)

Zoom ID: 674 533 8902

Wayne F. Middendorf Men's Bible Class
Bride's Room, Tinsley Stern

Open and honest discussion in a nonjudgmental atmosphere about various aspects of Christianity.

Contacts: Ian Hardin (ianhardin1@gmail.com), Jim Scanlon (jitscanlon@yahoo.com)

Zoom ID: 883 5159 0923

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

10

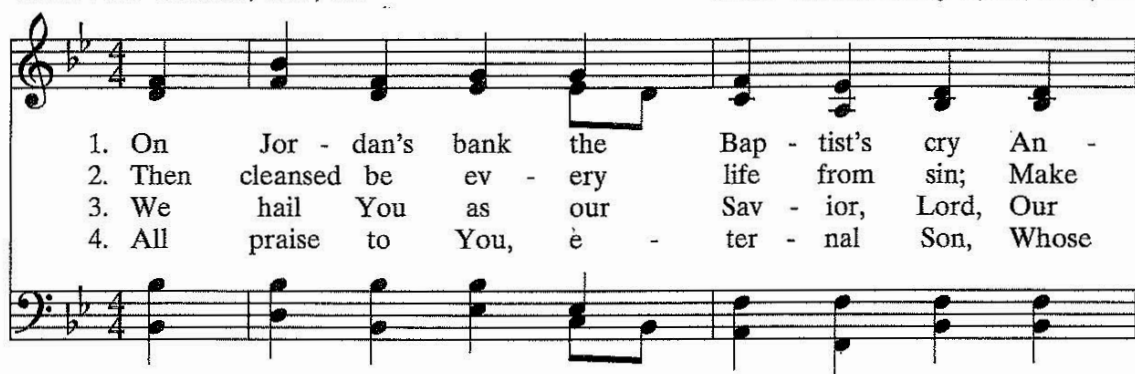
Charles Coffin, 1736

Trans. John Chandler, 1837; alt.

WINCHESTER NEW LM

Musikalisches Handbuch, 1690

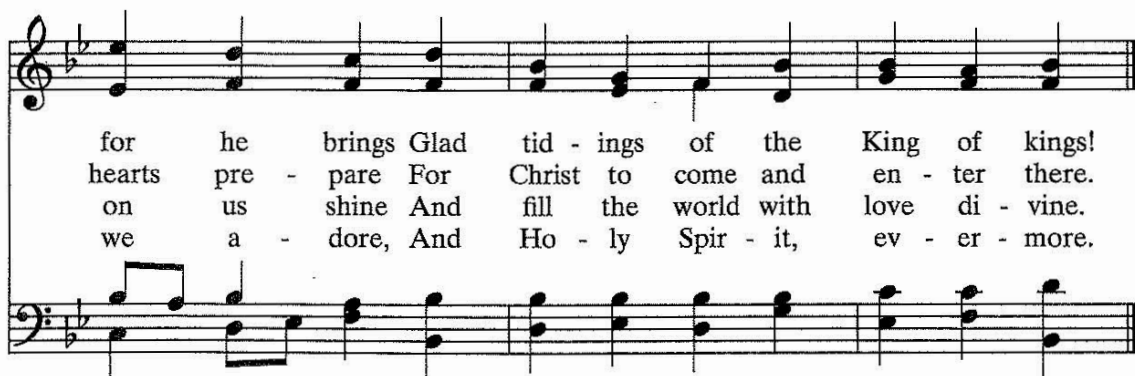
Harm. William Henry Monk, 1847; alt.



1. On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An -
 2. Then cleansed be ev - ery life from sin; Make
 3. We hail You as our Sav - ior, Lord, Our
 4. All praise to You, è - ter - nal Son, Whose



noun - ces that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and heark - en,
 straight the way for God with - in, And let us all our
 ref - uge, and our great re - ward; O let Your face up -
 ad - vent has our free - dom won, Whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings Glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
 hearts pre - pare For Christ to come and en - ter there.
 on us shine And fill the world with love di - vine.
 we a - dore, And Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

326 Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

MORECAMBE 10.10.10.10

George Croly, 1854

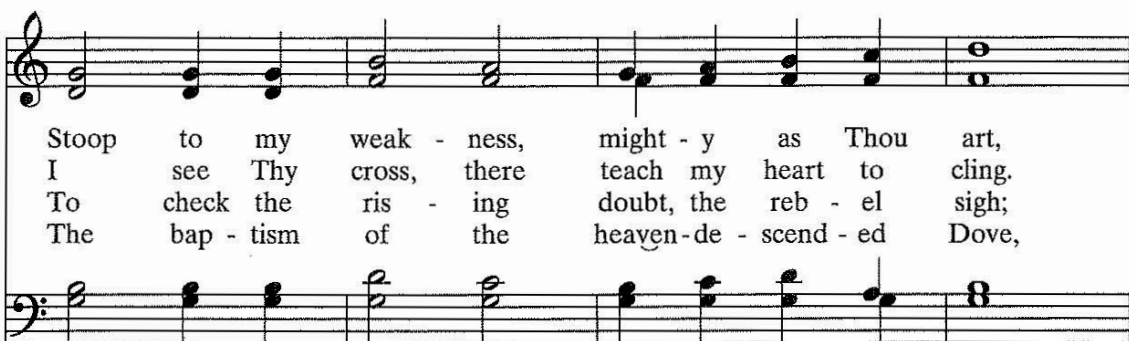
Frederick Cook Atkinson, 1870



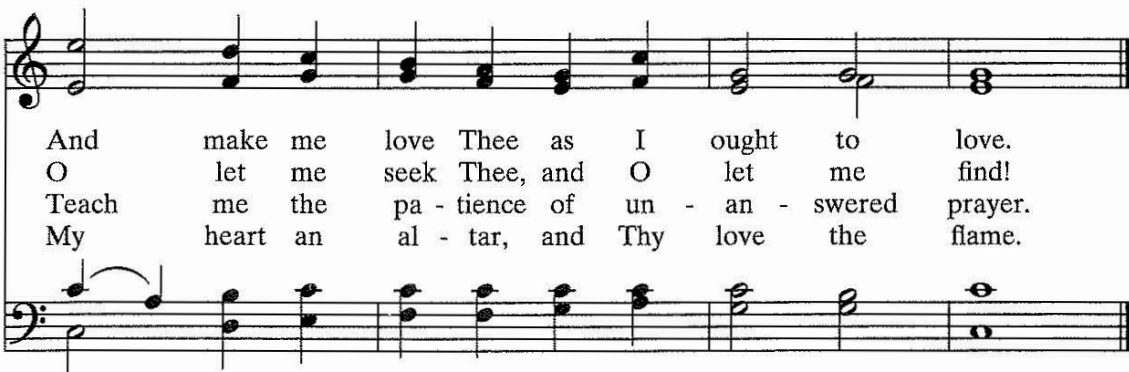
1. Spir - it of God, de - scend up - on my heart;
 2. Hast Thou not bid us love Thee, God and King;
 3. Teach me to feel that Thou art al - ways nigh;
 4. Teach me to love Thee as Thine an - gels love,



Wean it from earth, through all its puls - es move;
 All, all Thine own: soul, heart, and strength, and mind?
 Teach me the strug - gles of the soul to bear,
 One ho - ly pas - sion fill - ing all my frame;



Stoop to my weak - ness, might - y as Thou art,
 I see Thy cross, there teach my heart to cling.
 To check the ris - ing doubt, the reb - el sigh;
 The bap - tism of the heaven - de - scend - ed Dove,



And make me love Thee as I ought to love.
 O let me seek Thee, and O let me find!
 Teach me the pa - tience of un - an - swered prayer.
 My heart an al - tar, and Thy love the flame.

Come Down, O Love Divine

DOWN AMPNEY 6.6.11 D

Bianco da Siena (d. 1434)

Trans. Richard Frederick Littledale, 1867; alt.

Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

1. Come down, O Love di - vine, Seek out this soul of mine
 2. O let it free - ly burn, Till earth - ly pas - sions turn
 3. And so the yearn - ing strong With which the soul will long

And vis - it it with Your own ar - dor glow - ing;
 To dust and ash - es in its heat con - sum - ing;
 Shall far out - pass the power of hu - man tell - ing;

O Com - fort - er, draw near, With - in my heart ap - pear,
 And let Your glo - rious light Shine ev - er on my sight,
 For none can guess God's grace, Till Love cre - ates a place

And kin - dle it, Your ho - ly flame be - stow - ing.
 And clothe me round, the while my path il - lum - ing.
 Where - in the Ho - ly Spir - it makes a dwell - ing.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION

Ryan Baer, Moderator Kitty Donnan, Clerk of Session

CLASS OF 2022

Karen Burg
Michelle Clendenen-Shaw
Kitty Donnan
Rob Haire
Larry Jones
Andy Jordan
Jimbo LaBoon III
Tom Landrum
Beverly Phares
Smith Wilson

CLASS OF 2023

Sarah Bryan
Judy Burch
Kent Burel
Rod Canfield
Melinda DeMaria
Jim Dove
Mark Hopkins
Matt Jones
Robyn McDonald
Keith Oelke

CLASS OF 2024

Shannon Brooks
Phyllis Crowell
Kemp Gaskill
Denise Horton
Paul Lee
Sharon Logan
Bruce Middendorf
Randy Riner
Chuck Toney

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor* (ryan@firstpresathens.org)
The Rev. Leigh Bonner, *Interim Associate Pastor* (lbonner@firstpresathens.org)
The Rev. Margaret Davis, *Parish Associate* (margaret@firstpresathens.org)
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist* (jcoble@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Kim Ness, *Director of Youth Ministries* (kness@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Natalie Bishop, *Director of Children's Ministries* (natalie@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Elaine Johnson, *Director of Weekday School* (elaine@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Lucy Bell Johnson, *Office Administrator* (lbell@firstpresathens.org)
Mr. Paulo Santos, *Communications Specialist* (paulo@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Jennifer Sunderlin, *Receptionist/Administrative Assistant* (frontdesk@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Jennifer Adams, *Church Accountant* (jadams@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Marcy Fabris, *Weekday School Administrative Assistant* (wds@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Rita Raines, *Nursery Coordinator*
Mrs. Charlotte Chromiak, *Children's Music Assistant* (charlotteposs@gmail.com)
Mrs. Madeline Van Dyck, *Parish Nurse*