



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!

September 10, 2023
8:45 and 11:00 a.m.
Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

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

Bunessan

Alan Bullard

Words of Welcome

Song of Gathering

AZMON

**This is the day the Lord hath made;
the hours are all God's own.**

**Let heaven rejoice; let earth be glad,
and praise surround the throne.**

Call to Worship

God has created us in God's image,

To care for all that God has made.

We are rooted and grounded in God's love.

Let us live in love for one another.

*Hymn 267

All Things Bright and Beautiful

ROYAL OAK

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Beautiful Savior, you have made your law clear: Love. Love one another. Owe one another nothing but love. Do no wrong to a neighbor. But we have not mastered what it is to love. We have fallen short, causing harm to others through careless action and thoughtless lack of action. Forgive us. Teach us how to love more fully, more perfectly, as generously as you love, following your law and fulfilling your will.

*Silent Prayer

Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

*Assurance of Pardon

**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).

All Things Bright and Beautiful (originally in seven stanzas), is one of a series of hymns the author wrote for children on the Apostles' Creed. It expands "Maker of heaven and earth." The tune was popular from the age of King Charles II.

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.”

Beginning today and following through Christmas, we’ll be reading and preaching from stories in the Hebrew Scriptures. Our story begins today in Genesis, which means “beginning.” The six panels of art representing days of creation and were made by the children of FPC during Week of Wonder 2023. The music is based on the tune Royal Oak (“All Things Bright and Beautiful”). Each movement in the piece reflects a day of creation.

Lack of punctuation makes *God of the Sparrow* appear freeform, and the flowing tune enhances a sense of movement. But each stanza is anchored by a final weighty word, a sign of God’s eternal presence in an ever-changing world.

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.

*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

Congregational Prayer for Illumination

PROSPECT



Lesson

Genesis 1:1-2:4a, page 1

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

Proclamation of the Word in Story and Song

Art: Children of FPC Week of Wonder 2023

Music: *The Creation: A Biblical Sonata* by Larry Visser

Narration: Selections from Genesis and the Godly Play Creation Story

Sermon

And God Said It Was Very Good

Dr. Ryan Baer

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

*Hymn 272

God of the Sparrow

ROEDER

*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;
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.**

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

8:45 Offertory Improvisation on *Lasst uns erfreuenn* John Coble

11:00 Offertory *Now is the Cool of the Day* Jean Ritchie

My Lord, he said unto me: do you like my garden so fair?
You may live in this garden if you keep the grasses green,
and I'll return in the cool of the day.

*Refrain: Now is the cool of the day, now is the cool of the day;
O this earth is a garden, the garden of my Lord;
and he walks in his garden in the cool of the day.*

Then my Lord, he said unto me: do you like my garden so pure?
You may live in this garden if you keep the waters clean,
and I'll return in the cool of the day. *Refrain*

Then my Lord, he said unto me: do you like my pastures of green?
You may live in this garden if you will feed my lambs;
and I'll return in the cool of the day. *Refrain*

***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 455** *All Creatures of Our God and King* LASST UNSERFREUEN
St. 1&2 – all; St. 3 – high voices; St. 4 – low voices; St. 5&6 – all

***Charge and Benediction**

Song of Sending insert *This Pretty Planet* Tom Chapin

Postlude Improvisation on *Lasst uns erfreuenn* John Coble



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

All Creatures of Our God and King, attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, is a cosmic roll call allowing humans to give voice to all creation.

Texts and music for hymns and sung responses reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-714861

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.

Nursery Play for children 4 years old and younger is available from 9:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m., are located in our Children's Playroom area next to the Children's Ministry Suite and are accessible down the stairs in the Atrium and through the glass door.

Dot's Closet

Dear friends, we are in need of the following items for Dot's Closet: **lightweight wheelchairs, shower chairs, bedside commode, walkers.** Please bring them to church office during business hours (Mon-Thu 8:30-4:30 p.m.; Fri 8:30-2:00 p.m.). For more information and questions, please contact Jennifer Sunderlin at frontdesk@firstpresathens.org.

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*
First Presbyterian Church Children

USHERS

8:45 a.m. John Simpson (head),
Terry Nestor, Mary Peace
11:00 a.m. Don DeMaria (head),
Melinda DeMaria, Chuck Toney

GREETER

8:45 a.m. Faye Marshall

AUDIOVISUAL TECHNICIAN

Bryan Owens

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Aiden Dowling

FLOWERS

The Sanctuary flowers are given to the glory of God.

SEPTEMBER FLOWER TEAM

Betsy Bushnell (chair), Eve Morris,
Lois Neighbors, Beverly Phares,
Jennifer Poole, Gail Wilfong

TO AID IN WORSHIP

If you need to leave the sanctuary during the service, a live video feed is available in the Atrium and at 10:00 a.m. is 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

WED@FIRST BEGINS SEPTEMBER 20

Wed@First provides an opportunity to experience Christian fellowship and growth in a relaxed atmosphere. It includes dinner, children's' choirs, and Shakespeare and Friends, beginning at 4:30 p.m. and ending at 8:00 p.m. Dinner opens at 5:30 p.m. Our after-dinner program, from 6:30-7:30 p.m., will have a study led by Dr. Ryan Baer:

“Bumper Sticker Theology”

Join us after our Wed@First dinners in Moses Waddel Room for a series of conversations with Dr. Baer titled, “Bumper Sticker Theology.” We’ll explore phrases like, “God only gives you as much as you can handle,” and “In case of rapture, this car will be unmanned.” We’ll ponder the origins of these phrases, consider their usefulness, and put them in conversation with biblical texts. All are welcome, and no advance preparation is required.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

We are brought up to be strong, self-sufficient, independent people. We tend to think that if we ask for help, it is a sign of weakness. So we try to keep our struggles hidden, stuffed deep inside. However, that’s not God’s plan. Galatians 6:2 says, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” God wants us to care for others – and allow others to care for us in our time of need.

If you are sad or struggling inside, don’t suffer alone. Ask for help. We’ve got a team of Stephen Ministers who are ready to listen, care, encourage, pray, and help you through a tough time. (It’s confidential too!) Find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking with one of our Stephen Leaders:

Susan Boatwright: boatwrightsusan@gmail.com
706-255-2250

Margaret Davis: margaret@firstpresathens.org,
706-206-9896

Becky Hartman: hartmanbecky494@gmail.com
706-254-4504

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

THIS WEEK

Sunday, September 10 - Food Sunday, Sunday School Begins

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Ryan Baer preaching
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School and Godly Play
- 9:45 a.m. *God's Mission Today* Small Group, Room 309
- 11:00 a.m. Atrium Refreshments, Atrium
- 3:30 p.m. St. Andrews Choir Rehearsal, Room 202
- 3:30 p.m. Cherub Choir Rehearsal, Room 203
- 5:00 p.m. Middle School Youth Group, The PIT
- 6:30 p.m. High School Youth Group, The PIT

Monday, September 11

- 10:00 a.m. Congregational Care Commission Meeting via Zoom
- 2:00 p.m. Circle Two, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Room 205

Tuesday, September 12

- 7:00 a.m. Our Daily Bread Breakfast, First Baptist Church
- 12:15 p.m. Women's Small Group, Brides Room
- 1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Parlor

Wednesday, September 13

- 9:15 a.m. Circle 7, Presbyterian Village
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, September 14

- 2:00 p.m. Mellows, Adult Day Health Center@ACCA
- 5:00 p.m. Administration Commission Meeting, Staff Conference Room

Sunday, September 17

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Ryan Baer preaching
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School and Godly Play
- 11:00 a.m. Atrium Refreshments, Atrium
- 3:30 p.m. St. Andrews Choir Rehearsal, Room 202
- 3:30 p.m. Cherub Choir Rehearsal, Room 203
- 5:00 p.m. Middle School Youth Group, The PIT
- 6:30 p.m. High School Youth Group, The PIT

LOOKING AHEAD

September 20 – Wed@First Begins

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 the Sparkhouse curriculum called Echo: The Story. Each class begins with a video, then we delve into the Bible. In just 36 weeks, we'll travel from Genesis to Revelation, through stories, games and activities!

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 Pieces of Faith. Youth will gather in the PIT to talk about different aspects of faith and the spiritual practices we need to help our faith grow stronger.

Middle School meets 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

High School meets 6:30 – 8:00 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 email Kim at kness@firstpresathens.org.

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. This fall, the Builders will study the Hebrew Bible – commonly called the Old Testament – by engaging with the *DISCIPLE Fast Track* Bible study.

Coordinator: Dr. Ryan Baer (ryan@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)

HYBRID (in person and over Zoom)

Del Dunn Sunday School Class • Room 308

An in-depth study and discussion of scripture, offering a collegial environment and welcoming all who seek to enrich their understanding of the Bible and its application to our daily lives. This fall, we will continue a chapter-by-chapter reading and discussion of the Gospel of Matthew.

Coordinator: Susan Landrum (slandrum@uga.edu)

Zoom ID: 875 216 0708, PW: 634175

New Voices • Room 310

This class explores theological and church issues. Class leaders engage participants by inviting them to share their stories and perspectives on the topics being discussed. This fall, we will get to know some similar Biblical women (and some evangelically maligned men) through the discussion of the book *The Making of Biblical Womanhood* by Beth Allison Barr.

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. This fall, we will be watching and discussing the series *From Jesus to Constantine: A History of Early Christianity* by UNC-Chapel Hill professor Bart D. Ehrman.

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

Zoom ID: 883 5159 0923

All Things Bright and Beautiful

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ROYAL OAK 7.6.7.6 with refrain

English melody, 17th century

Adapt. Martin Shaw, 1915

Harm. for *The Hymnbook*, 1953

Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848

Refrain

All things bright and beau-ti - ful, All crea-tures great and small,

Fine

All things wise and won - der - ful: The Lord God made them all.

1. Each lit - tle flower that o - pens, Each lit - tle bird that sings:
2. The pur - ple-head - ed moun-tain, The riv - er run-ning by,
3. The cold wind in the win - ter, The pleas-ant sum-mer sun,
4. God gave us eyes to see them, And lips that we might tell

God made their glow-ing col - ors, God made their ti - ny wings.
 The sun - set, and the morn - ing That bright-ens up the sky,
 The ripe fruits in the gar - den: God made them ev - ery one.
 How great is God Al - might - y, Who has made all things well.*

*Repeat Refrain.

God of the Sparrow

ROEDER 5.4.6.7.7

Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1983

Carl F. Schalk, 1983

1. God of the spar - row God of the whale
3. God of the rain - bow God of the cross
5. God of the neigh - bor God of the foe

God of the swirl - ing stars How does the crea-ture say
God of the emp - ty grave How does the crea-ture say
God of the prun - ing hook How does the crea-ture say

Awe How does the crea-ture say Praise
Grace How does the crea-ture say Thanks
Love How does the crea-ture say Peace

Descant on stanzas 2, 4, 6

2. God of the earth-quake God of the storm God of the trum - pet
 4. God of the hun - gry God of the sick God of the prod - i -
 6. God of the a - ges God near at hand God of the lov - ing

blast
 gal
 heart
 How does the crea-ture cry Woe
 How does the crea-ture say Care
 How do your chil-dren say Joy

How does the crea-ture cry Save
 How does the crea-ture say Life
 How do your chil-dren say Home

All Creatures of Our God and King

LASST UNS ERFREUEN LM with alleluias

Francis of Assisi, 1225

Trans. and para. William Henry Draper, c. 1910; alt.

Geistliche Kirchengesäng, 1623; alt.

Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

Unison

1. All crea-tures of our God and King, Lift up your voice
 2. Thou rush-ing wind that art so strong, Ye clouds that sail
 3. Thou flow-ing wa - ter, pure and clear, Make mu - sic for
 4. Thou fer - tile earth, that day by day Un - fold - est bless -

Harmony

and with us sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
 in heaven a - long, O sing ye! Al - le - lu - ia!
 thy Lord to hear, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
 ings on your way, O sing ye! Al - le - lu - ia!

Unison

Thou burn - ing sun with gold - en beam, Thou sil - ver moon with
 Thou ris - ing morn, in praise re - joice, Ye lights of eve - ning,
 Thou fire so mas - ter - ful and bright, That giv - est us both
 The flowers and fruits that in thee grow, Let them God's glo - ry

Harmony

soft - er gleam,
 find a voice!
 warmth and light, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
 al - so show!



5. And everyone of tender heart,
Forgiving others, take your part.
O sing ye! Alleluia!
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
Praise God and cast on God your care!
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

6. All creatures, your Creator bless,
And worship God in humbleness.
O sing ye! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION

Ryan Baer, Moderator Pat Waldrip, Clerk of Session

CLASS OF 2023

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

CLASS OF 2024

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

CLASS OF 2025

Lindsay Griffeth
Angela Hunt
Dan Nadenicek
Karen Phillips
Ethelyn Simpson
Jeffrey Trapnell
Pat Tritt
John Turner
Pat Waldrip

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, *Director of Communications* (paulo@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Jennifer Sunderlin, *Receptionist/Accounting 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*
Mr. Wayne Brock, *Sexton*