



First Presbyterian Church

of Raleigh, North Carolina

Serving Christ from the heart of the city to the ends of the earth with love, faith and action.

August 17, 2025

10th Sunday after Pentecost

We Gather in God's Presence

Gathering Music

Chiming of the Trinity

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

Be Ye Glad

Michael Kelly Blanchard

Scott Sommerfeld

Call to Worship

(Psalm 80: 18-19)

Restore us, God Almighty.

Make your face to shine upon us, that we might be saved.

Then we will not turn away from you;

Revive us, and we will call upon your name.

Let us worship the God of our salvation.

*Hymn 100

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

STAR OF THE

COUNTY DOWN

Prayer of Confession

Betsy Williams

God, we confess that we are tempted to cry, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. We ignore the needs of our neighbors. We neglect our own spiritual health. We look for simple solutions to complicated problems. God help us to read the signs of the times, to see clearly what is going on around us and within us. And then give us the courage and the wisdom and the humility to work for healing, for us and for the world. Hear us as we confess our sin and our need for healing in silence ...

(Let us continue our confession in silence)

Assurance of Pardon

Response to Pardon

Friends in Christ, in response to this gift of God's grace, how then shall we live?

With gratitude, following after the Lord Jesus Christ, who calls us to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves.

This is the way of Jesus, in whom we find life!

Welcome to worship!

We are so glad you are here. A couple of things to keep in mind:

*An asterisk denotes standing, in body or spirit.

Words in bold are read aloud by the congregation together.

This paraphrase of Mary's Magnificat set to an Irish folk tune fervently reminds us what it means for the mighty to be put down from their thrones and for the lowly to be lifted up.

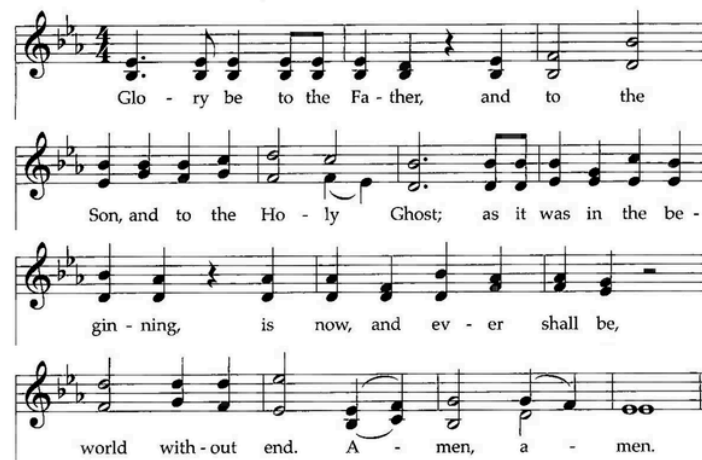
Confession acknowledges the brokenness of the world and the brokenness of our lives. It also looks to God for forgiveness and healing and new life which are possible through God's great love made known in Jesus Christ.

The gift of pardon is always met with gratitude. Our gratitude should embolden us to grow in our faith.

*Response of Gratitude

SERVICE MUSIC

Glory Be to the Father 581



We Listen and Respond to God's Word

Children's Moment

Beth Thaxton

Children ages 4 - 2nd gr. are invited to the library for Children's Church and will return to their pews during the hymn following the sermon.

Prayer for Illumination

Dan Roebuck

Scripture Readings Jeremiah 6:13-19; Luke 12:49-57

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"I Was Blind But Now I See"

The Rev. Dr. Ernie Thompson

*Hymn 724

O Jesus, I Have Promised

ANGEL'S STORY

*Affirmation of Faith

From A Brief Statement of Faith

In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God's commandments, we violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care. We deserve God's condemnation. Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage. Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession 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.

AMEN

Response to Prayer | Hymn 600

Amen, amen. Amen, amen, amen.

Moment for Mission | The Green Chair Project

Rae Marie Czuhai

An Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight
(see Hymn 817)

DUNLAP'S CREEK

*Doxology | Hymn 609

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God, all creatures high and low.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise God, in Jesus fully known: Creator, Word, and Spirit one.

Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

*Prayer of Dedication

We Carry God's Word into the World

*Hymn 756

O God of Every Nation

LLANGLOFFAN

*Charge and Benediction

*Benediction Response | Hymn 541, stanza 1

RANDOLPH

God be with you till we meet again;

loving counsels guide, uphold you,

with a shepherd's care enfold you:

God be with you till we meet again.

*Chiming of the Trinity

Please be mindful of those who wish to remain to hear the Postlude.

Postlude

Toccata

Johann Gottfried Walter (1684-1748)

In response to the Word, prayers are offered. Our prayers should be as wide as God's love and as specific as God's tender compassion for the least among us.

This hymn text marks the significant journey of individual believers moving from doubt to faith. The tune, DUNLAP'S CREEK, comes from the American shape-note singing tradition, so called for the different shaped note heads used in its notation.

The tune of our benediction response is RANDOLPH. It was composed by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958). Much of the charm of this tune lies in its simplicity and balance.



The Chancel flowers are dedicated to the glory of God and
are given in loving memory of Clarence Frizzell by his wife,
Janice Frizzell.

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to our ministries.



On the Calendar This Week August 17 – August 23

Today – Sunday School 9:00am | Worship Service 10:00am | Community Building Activity 11:00am

Monday, August 18 – Staff Meeting 1:00pm

Tuesday, August 19 – CDC Chapel 10:30am

Wednesday, August 20 – Early Birds 6:30am | CDC Board 7:00pm

Thursday, August 21 – No activities or events scheduled.

Friday, August 22 – No activities or events scheduled.

Saturday, August 23 – No activities or events scheduled.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

New Member Class

There will be a New Member Class on Sunday, August 24, 2025, at 9:40 a.m. in the church parlor. If you are interested in becoming a member of the church or just want to learn more about the church, please join us. The class will be led by the Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger.

PW Horizons Bible Study Books and Yearbooks 2025-2026 Distribution

Finding Resilience, Joy and Our Identity in Jesus Christ by Rashell D. Hunter

This morning and Sunday, August 24, Bible Study Books and Yearbooks will be available in the Edge Lobby from 9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. for distribution to Circle members who requested printed copies. Bible Study Books are \$12 for regular print and \$18 for large print. Please pay only by cash or check payable to First Presbyterian Church with Circle number and "Study Book" in the memo line. Remaining books will be distributed to Circle leaders at the PWCT August 24 luncheon meeting for leadership. Further distribution and payment will be made at Circle meetings. FPC PW Yearbooks (printed) are available for no charge, if you ordered one. Also available digitally.

One Book One Church | Wonder by RJ Palacio

The Christian Education committee is going to sponsor a 2nd all church read for this summer with the book Wonder by RJ Palacio. Join us for a discussion this morning at 11:00 a.m.

This novel, which is geared toward young adults, is the story of a boy born with facial deformities who goes to school for the first time. Although it is not a true story, it was inspired by the author's interaction with a young girl in an ice cream shop, and the title was inspired by the Natalie Merchant song "Wonder."

We hope that you will join us to discuss this uplifting story of kindness, acceptance, and humanity.

There are five copies of the novel in the library for those who might be interested.

Adult Fellowship: Coffee & Donuts

Join us Thursday, August 28 at 10:00 a.m. in the Edge Lobby for a sweet treat of coffee, donuts, and fellowship. This is a great opportunity to enjoy conversation and reconnect at the end of the summer season. All are welcome, so please bring a friend! We hope to see you!

Return to Regular Sunday Schedule | Fall Kickoff Potluck Breakfast

We return to our regular Sunday schedule on September 7. Early Service at 8:30 a.m., Sunday School at 9:45 a.m., and Late Service at 11:00 a.m. Join us as we kick off the fall season together with a joyful time of food, fellowship, and community! All are welcome—friends, neighbors, newcomers, and family. Please bring your favorite breakfast dish to share!

FPC Shares Item for August

This month's FPC Shares item is Condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, salad dressing, etc.)! Bring this item and/or your favorite non-perishable food donations to the church. There are FPC Shares receptacles on both sides of the Edge Lobby and in two places in the Lisa Ham Gathering Space outside the sanctuary.

Mission Highlight

The Green Chair Project

Real estate home stagers Jackie Craig and Beth Smoot found that homeowners had too much stuff in their homes—stuff that no one wanted to waste, but was no longer needed. Jackie and Beth were also aware of the thousands of families struggling to move out of homelessness who could not afford furniture and basic household items without assistance. With this in mind, the pair founded The Green Chair Project in 2010 to collect and reuse essential furnishings, benefiting their Wake County neighbors in need. The Green Chair Project is a non-profit organization that collects donated furnishings for individuals transitioning from homelessness, crisis, or disaster. For a small fee, clients working with case managers from over 100 partner agencies can select furniture, linens, cookware, and accessories to outfit their new homes. The Green Chair experience promotes the idea of choice and empowers clients as they begin to rebuild. There are 95,200 Wake County households living below the federal poverty line, who cannot afford essential household needs, such as furnishings for their homes or beds for their children. Since its founding in 2010, The Green Chair Project has helped over 10,000 families start anew. By partnering with referring human services agencies, The Green Chair Project strengthens relationships with its partner agencies, builds new relationships with other prospective agencies, and works with their clients during their personalized shopping experience. The Green Chair Project partners with the Wake County Public School System through the “Sweeter Dreams” program, in which children are referred by school social workers and provided with twin bed frames, box springs, mattresses, sheets, pillows, and blankets. 1 in 30 Wake County Public School Children are sleeping on floors or sharing crowded beds with others and not getting the sleep they need to learn online or at school. In 2024, over 1,700 children received a bed of their own. To date, over 8,000 children have received new beds! The Green Chair Project is on a mission to provide a bed for EVERY child in need! In 2024, 1,142 tons of furniture and household items were donated to The Green Chair Project, reused, and diverted from landfills. Please consider donating your no longer needed household items and furniture. You can help a family in need and the environment simultaneously. The Green Chair Project is working toward a future where every child has a bed and every home is stocked with essentials.

FPC's Mission budget provides funding for the organization's operational needs, and in past years, we've sent volunteers on our FPC Serves Day of Service. In our January 2021 Month of Service, we assembled cleaning buckets for households they serve. In 2023, the FPC Foundation awarded The Green Chair Project a grant for the “Sweeter Dreams” program.

Today in worship, we welcome Rae Marie Czuhai, the CEO of The Green Chair Project.

As a back-to-school service project, we will collect new pillows and twin sheet sets to donate to their “Sweeter Dreams” program. If you don't like to shop, you can send a donation to the church with “The Green Chair Project” in the memo line.