



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.

September 7, 2025

13th Sunday after Pentecost

We Gather in God's Presence

Gathering Music

Chiming of the Trinity

Welcome and Announcements

Introit *O God, Thou Faithful God* Max Reger (1873-1916)

Call to Worship

Jesus beckons us to come close
and offer our worship to God.

Let us lay aside our worries and cares,
and enter fully into God's presence.

With honesty and humility,
let us worship together.

*Hymn 20 *All Things Bright and Beautiful* ROYAL OAK

Prayer of Confession The Rev. Laurie Taylor Weicher

Gracious god, you call us to lives of service, but often our only concern is ourselves. We are grateful that Jesus loves us, forgives us, and cares for us, but we are unwilling to do the same for others.

Forgive us, we pray, and lead us back into the way of Jesus.

(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!
Some notes about the service:

*An asterisk denotes standing, in body or spirit.

Words in bold are read aloud by the congregation.

In worship, a congregation is called to listen to God and to respond in faith and prayer. The Call to Worship states our intention to make this worship time solely about the Lord God.

Worship is a time to remember who God is: loving, gracious, and merciful. It is also a time to remember who we are: sinners in need of the forgiveness only God can give.

No matter what we bring before God, through the work of Jesus Christ, we have the assurance of pardon,

The proper response to the pardon of our sins is always one of gratitude. Therefore, we sing our praise.

During our time of Silent Reflection ask yourself, “Given what I have heard and experienced today, is God calling me to change or grow in any way?”

We respond to God’s word of forgiveness and love by affirming our faith, praying for the world, and offering our resources to God’s work in the world.

*Response of Gratitude | Hymn 581 GLORIA PATRI (Greatest)
**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.**

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.

Teacher/Leader Commissioning (11:00)

Receiving New Members
We welcome Valerie McHugh and Dorothy Williams into membership today.

Prayer for Illumination Laura Hensey (8:30) and Jenifer Bean (11:00)

Scripture Reading Psalm 19

Anthem O Radiant Light, O Sun Divine CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM

Scripture Reading Acts 6:1-7
This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon The Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger

Silent Reflection

*Hymn 690 God’s Glory Fills the Heavens ST. PATRICK

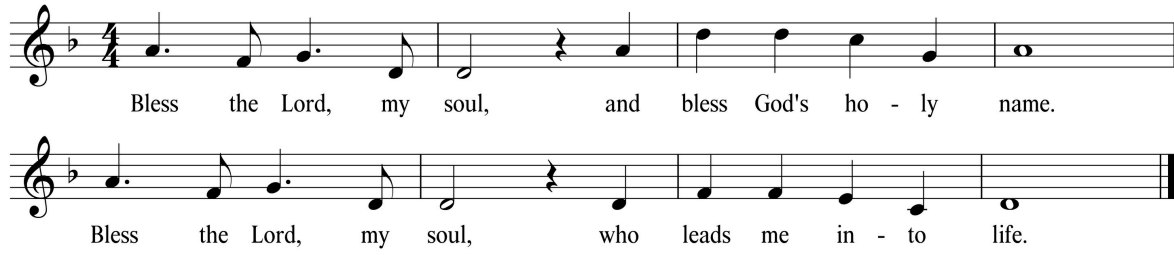
*Affirmation of Faith from a Declaration of Faith
We are certain that Jesus lives. He lives as God with us, touching all of human life with the presence of God. He lives as one of us with God. We declare that Jesus is Lord. Amen.

Joys and Concerns of the Church Family

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.

Response to Prayer | Hymn 544

BLESS THE LORD (Taize)



An Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

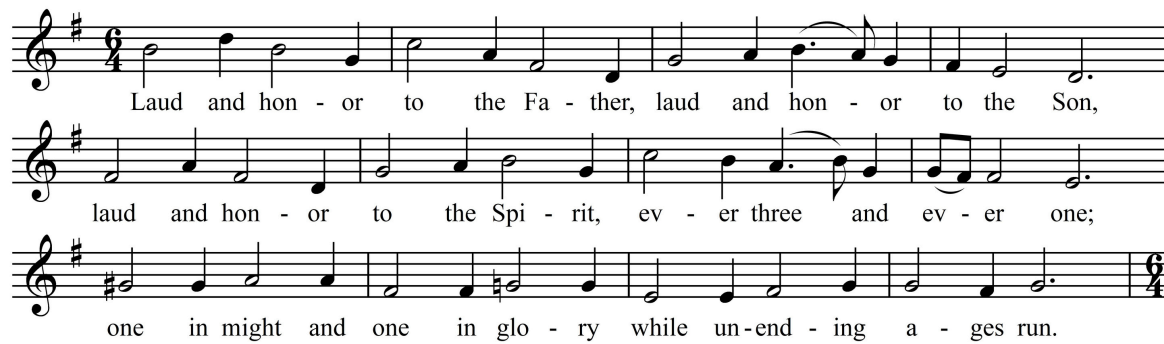
Hal H. Hopson

(8:30) Kathy Hopkins and Mark Woodcock (11:00) Chancel Choir

The Offertory lyrics may be found on the back page of the bulletin.

*Doxology | Hymn 394, stanza 4

WESTMINSTER ABBEY



*Prayer of Dedication

We Carry God's Word into the World

*Hymn 821

My Life Flows On

HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING

*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

Postlude

CWM RHONDDA

Arr. J. Bert Carlson (b. 1937)

Hal H. Hopson (1933-2025), church musician, organist, and composer, had over 3,000 published works to his credit. While his work and ministry touched all facets of sacred music, he was particularly a strong advocate for music in the small church and championed the renewed interest of the PC(USA) in Psalm singing, a return to our Reformed Tradition (see hymns 639, 782, and 798).

Today's anthem was composed by Hal H. Hopson, commissioned by FPC to celebrate the church's 175th Anniversary.

As the service comes to an end, please be mindful of those who wish to remain to hear the Postlude.

Offertory

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
God, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for a blest abode.
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

See, the streams of living waters,
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters,
Fear and dread of want remove.
Who can faint, while such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?
Grace which, like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age..

Round each habitation hov'ring,
See the clouds and fire appear.
For a glory and a cov'ring,
Showing that the Lord is near.
Thus deriving from their banner
Light by night and shade by day,
Safe they feed upon the manna
Which God gives them when they pray.



The Chancel flowers are dedicated to the glory of God and are given in loving
memory of Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Cassilly and Thomas C. Cassilly by Dr. Joan P. Cassilly.

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ways to become
connected to our
ministries.



On the Calendar This Week September 7 – September 13

Today – Kickoff Sunday – Early Worship 8:30am

Church-Wide Potluck Breakfast Sunday School to Follow 9:45am | Confirmation Orientation 10:15am

Late Worship 11:00am | Sunday Night Program Kickoff 5:00pm

Monday, September 8 – Circle 4 10:30am | Staff Meeting 1:00pm

Tuesday, September 9 – Enough for Today Podcast 8:00am | CDC Chapel 10:30am | Glenaire Lunch 12pm

Wednesday, September 10 – Early Birds 6:30am | Committee Meetings 6-9:00pm

Thursday, September 11 – Bible Study at Glenaire 2:30pm | Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm

Friday, September 12 – No activities or events scheduled.

Saturday, September 13 – No activities or events scheduled.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

Fall Kickoff Potluck Breakfast

Join us this morning at 9:45 in Memorial Hall 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!

Bible Presentations for Kindergarten, Third Grade, and Confirmation Bibles for Eighth Grade

Kindergarten and Third Graders will be presented with Children's Bibles and Eighth Graders will be presented with Confirmation Bibles this morning at 9:45am during our Potluck Breakfast. We look forward to welcoming your families on this special occasion!

2025-2026 Youth Group (MS/HS) & Pathfinders (K-2nd Gr.) and ROCK Stars (3rd-5th Gr.) Kickoff

Youth, children, and parents - join us for Kickoff this evening at 5:00pm! We'll begin with Open Gym at 5pm and a parent meeting for elementary parents. We'll share dinner together at 5:30pm before youth parents gather for an important meeting, and youth and children split off for a night of FUN! Parents will receive information about our calendar, meal support sign-ups, retreat registration, and more. Be sure to RSVP with Beth and Betsy!

Thursday Bible Study with The Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger

Join us on Thursdays starting on September 4 at 2:30 p.m. at Glenaire. We will discuss the sermon text for the following Sunday. We will meet in Focus Room C at 6000 Glenview Garden Place, Cary. All are welcome.

Enough for Today Podcast with The Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger & The Rev. Laurie Taylor Weicher

Listen as Tara and Laurie discuss Mark's Gospel. This podcast will be your mid-week Bible study that you can listen to at your convenience. A new episode will be released each Tuesday morning at 8:00 a.m. starting Tuesday, September 9. Podcast will be available on our social media platforms, Apple Podcasts, and Google Play Store.

Guest Preacher, The Rev. Ik Bai Moon and Congregational Meal

Help us welcome Rev. Ik Bai Moon, next Sunday, September 14 as our guest preacher. Rev. Moon is retiring after 40 years of service as a Presbyterian Missionary and 25 years of partnership with First Presbyterian Church and the Bolivian Eden School. Following the 11:00am worship service, join us in Memorial Hall for a Congregational lunch. All are welcome. There is no charge and reservations are not required.

Save the Date!

Please join us on Sunday, September 28, at the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service, for the Installation Service of The Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger. Guest preacher is The Rev. Alan Dyer, Senior Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Spartanburg, SC. Reception to follow.

FPC Shares Item for September

This month's FPC Shares item is Diapers and Toilet Paper! 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

For more than 30 years, The Caring Place (TCP) has served the Triangle community by teaching and empowering homeless working families with children. They provide families with individualized life skills lessons, short-term housing, and support services preparing them for independent living. Since their inception in 1993, TCP has served over 540 families with 1,500 children, and upon program completion, approximately 80% of the enrolled families have acquired self-sustained housing.

The "Journey Home" program begins with stabilizing a working family experiencing homelessness. They provide 16 weeks of no-cost transitional housing while teaching life skills and financial literacy. Each family is required to save a portion of their income while also paying off debts that keep them from being housed. Families receive guidance in managing personal finances, setting attainable goals, seeking permanent affordable housing, and maintaining their employment. Over a 16-week period, families learn skills required for self-sufficiency through mandatory weekly meetings, followed by twelve months of workforce development and home ownership preparation.

Candidate families are referred from various local agencies: Dorcas Ministries, Wake County Public Schools, Wake County Human Services, and others. Sometimes, families call TCP through personal contact with other families or graduates of the program. Qualifications – Families are carefully screened to determine their motivation and readiness to make changes to improve their situation.

Accepted families sign an agreement with TCP to enter the 16-week life-skills training program designed to provide counseling in financial management, budgeting, goal-setting, time management, and self-sufficiency. The contract confirms their commitment to adequately care for the housing provided and affirms mandatory attendance at the Thursday evening sessions. With acceptance into the program, an apartment is provided to the family for their 16-week participation in the program. The environment is intended to be similar to permanent housing except rent and utilities are paid by TCP.

FPC's Rev. Dr. Tara Bulger delivered the opening prayer at The Caring Place's Friday evening gala. And, the FPC Foundation recently awarded TCP a grant award to help provide housing, childcare, financial literacy education, and family services — all on a single, purpose-driven campus. Located on the grounds of Greenwood Forest Baptist Church in Cary, the future Carr Center will provide a coordinated system for economic advancement. The First Presbyterian Mission budget supports the wonderful work of The Caring Place.