

First Presbyterian Church
August 31, 2025

Welcome

?

**Stranger
Scriptures
Sermon Series**

“Balaam’s Talking Donkey!”

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First Presbyterian Church of Conroe Welcomes You!



Visitors and Guests: We are excited you have chosen to worship with us today! As a small token of our appreciation, we invite you to stop by the Welcome Desk in the narthex to pick up a complimentary FPC Conroe bookmark and a church brochure. We hope to see you again soon!

If you are interested in learning more about our church, or wish to become active in our ministry teams and activities, please visit our website at fpcConroe.org. There you can fill out the visitor form online, or you can do so now by visiting our welcome desk. We appreciate you joining us for services today.

~ Good Things to Know ~

Today's Worship Leader

Carly Hart

Today's Flowers

Today's flowers are given to the glory of God by Henry and Betty Blott, in celebration of their 71st wedding anniversary, and in celebration of Judy Lucas's birthday, from daughters, Lauri and Kim

Last Week's Attendance, August 24

11:00 a.m. Worship Service - 137

Online Worship Attendance - 30

Total Attendance – 167

11:00 A.M. WORSHIP SERVICE

Preparing to Receive God's Word

Opening Music

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

Lord, Help Our Hearts Be Pure

Folts

Call to Worship

The Lord our God overflows with loving kindness and is close to all who call on His holy name!

We praise and bless God's holy name forever.

The Lord our God is glorious beyond our imagination, yet God hears our cries for help!

We praise and bless God's holy name forever.

The Lord our God is worthy to be honored by every generation and by people of every age!

We praise and bless God's holy name forever.

*Hymn

Jesus at the Center

Jesus at the center of it all
Jesus at the center of it all
From beginning to the end
It will always be, it's always been You Jesus, Jesus

Chorus

And nothing else matters
Nothing in this world will do
Jesus You're the center
Everything revolves around You, Jesus, You

Jesus be the center of my life
Jesus be the center of my life
From beginning to the end
It will always be, it's always been you Jesus, Jesus
(Chorus)

*Please stand if able.

Bridge

From my heart to the heavens, Jesus be the enter
It's all about You, yes it's all about you (repeats 4 times)

Jesus be the center of Your Church
Jesus be the center of Your Church
And every knee will bow
Every tongue shall confess you

Jesus (repeats 8 times)

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you call us to be a servant people, but we do not always do what you command. We are often silent when we should speak, loud when we should listen, and useless when we should be useful.

Have mercy on us, O God. In your great mercy, forgive our sin and free us from selfishness and vain desires, that we may be free to choose your will and obey your commandments. Through Jesus Christ our savior, we pray. Amen.

*Silent Prayer of Confession

*Assurance of Pardon

Even though we have made mistakes, Christ calls us into new life and enables us to try again. In Christ, God is making all things new.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

Because of Christ's great love for us, we are forgiven!

*Gloria Patri

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

*Doxology

***Prayer of Dedication and the Lord's Prayer**

*Choral Response

The Word

Children's Time

Anthem

Blest Are They

Haas

Eliot Hernandez-Garcia, James Mitchell and Chloe Folts, Soloists

Scripture Reading

Matthew 23:16-22

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*Hymn #361

How Firm a Foundation

1. How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in God's excellent Word!
What more can be said than to you God hath said,
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?
2. "Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.

Scripture Reading

Numbers 22:21-35

Sermon

"Balaam's Talking Donkey!"

Rev. Seth Saathoff

Responding to God's Word

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

*Hymn #264

When in Our Music God Is Glorified

1. When in our music God is glorified,
And adoration leaves no room for pride,
It is as though the whole creation cried:
Alleluia!
3. So has the church, in liturgy and song,
In faith and love, through centuries of wrong,
Borne witness to the truth in every tongue:
Alleluia!
4. Let every instrument be tuned for praise!
Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise!
And may God give us faith to sing always:
Alleluia! Amen.

*Charge and Benediction

*Choral Response

He Lives

He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!

He walks with me and talks with me

Along life's narrow way.

He lives, He lives, salvation to impart!

You ask me how I know He lives?

He lives within my heart.

*Postlude

Copyright Information



"Jesus at the Center"

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"When in Our Music God Is Glorified"

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"Blest Are They" by David Haas

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This Week's Scripture Readings

Matthew 23:16-22

¹⁶ **"Woe to you, blind guides who say, 'Whoever swears by the sanctuary is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound by the oath.'** ¹⁷ You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that has made the gold sacred? ¹⁸ **And you say, 'Whoever swears by the altar is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gift that is on the altar is bound by the oath.'** ¹⁹ How blind you are! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? ²⁰ So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it, ²¹ and whoever swears by the sanctuary swears by it and by the one who dwells in it, ²² and whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by the one who is seated upon it.

Numbers 22:21-35

²² **God's anger was kindled because he was going, and the angel of the Lord took his stand in the road as his adversary.** Now he was riding on the donkey, and his two servants were with him. ²³ The donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand, so the donkey turned off the road and went into the field, and Balaam struck the donkey, to turn it back onto the road. ²⁴ Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side. ²⁵ When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, it scraped against the **wall and scraped Balaam's foot against the wall, so he struck it** again. ²⁶ Then the angel of the Lord went ahead and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left. ²⁷ When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, it lay down under Balaam, and **Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff.** ²⁸ Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and it said to Balaam, **"What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?"** ²⁹ Balaam said to the donkey, **"Because you have made a fool of me! I wish I had a sword in my hand! I would kill you right now!"** ³⁰ But the donkey said to Balaam, **"Am I not your donkey, which you have ridden all your life to this day? Have I been in the habit of treating you this way?"** And he said, **"No."**

³¹ Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road, with his drawn sword in his hand, and he bowed down, falling on his face. ³² The angel of the Lord **said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? I have come out as an adversary because your way is perverse before me. ³³ The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If it had not turned away from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let it live."** ³⁴ Then Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, **"I have sinned, for I did not know that you were standing in the road to oppose me. Now therefore, if it is displeasing to you, I will return home."** ³⁵ The angel of the Lord **said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but speak only what I tell you to speak."** So Balaam went on with the officials of Balak.

Notes



Returning to Our Regularly Scheduled Programming

As Fall approaches, we want to remind you that we will be returning to our 2-service format on Sunday, September 7th, with worship and communion at 8:30 a.m., and our traditional worship service at 11:00 a.m.



Serve Our Neighbor Day September 27



Our 3rd annual Serve Our Neighbor Day will be taking place **on Saturday, September 27. We'll gather together at the church for a light breakfast at 8:30 a.m. and then disperse to several different local mission sites after a prayer send-off.**

More details about the specific projects will be available this month, and sign-ups in the narthex begin today. Please make plans to **participate in this year's churchwide day of service!**

Members of Armed Services Photos

The Worship Committee is requesting photos of your loved ones that have **served, or who are presently serving, in our nation's armed services. Please** send your photos to Randy Blanton at randyblanton@yahoo.com in .jpeg format, and include the name, branch of service, rank, and years of service. We plan to stream the photos of the men and women who have served, and are still with us, prior to the 11:00 a.m. worship service on November 9, 2025. The photos of the men and women who have served, and have passed, will be streamed on May 24, 2026.

Christmas Boxes for the International Seafarers' Center, Port of Houston

For many years Presbyterian Women of our church, with the help of our entire congregation, have packed 100 shoe boxes a year with non-perishable items (such as hygiene supplies, socks, caps, and Texas souvenirs) and delivered them to the Port of Houston for distribution to ships that come in from mid-November through December. This is a Christmas project for faith communities in the Houston area, and thousands of seafarers are reached in this way. **It is an important opportunity to offer a gesture of "hospitality" to some of those who serve us all year long.**



If you would like to help with monetary support for this project, please make a **donation through the church, marked clearly for the "Seafarer's boxes."** Our shopping is now in progress and will continue during through October, in order to meet a November 6 packing date. Our boxes will be dedicated in Worship **November 9 and delivered to the Seafarers' Center the following week.** If you have questions or need more information about this opportunity, please call the church office (936) 756- 8884 or Liz Kessler (713) 818-1006.

Thanks to the generosity of the Friday Men's Breakfast Group, boxes can be purchased this year, so no donated shoe boxes are needed.

Life Line Screening Event at FPC

Special screening package for \$159 for our members includes:

- Carotid Artery Disease Screening
- Atrial Fibrillation Screening
- Peripheral Artery Disease Screening
- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
- FREE Hypertension Screening

Call to schedule an appointment
near you! 888-814-0466
and use code: HSCA001



September 19, 2025

Calendar of Weekly Events

<p><i>Sunday</i> <i>August 31</i></p>	<p>9:30 a.m. Bereans Sunday School Class with Bob Shepherd (Rm. 105) Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus.</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Fellowship Class (Rm. 204) Studying "More Parables from the Back Side" by J. Ellsworth Kalas, taught by Deborah Geddes, Glenna Lang and Glenn Elms.</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Exploring Our Faith with Susan Buckley (Rm. 206)</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Seekers' Bible Study with Randy Blanton (Library) Paul's Letter to the Romans on Sunday (Contact Randy Blanton to join by Zoom).</p> <p>9:30 a.m. FPC Kids' Sunday School (Rm. 203)</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Fellowship (Narthex)</p> <p>10:40 a.m. Praise Band (Sanctuary)</p> <p>11:00 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary and Facebook Live www.com/fpcConroe or YouTube.com/fpcConroe)</p> <p>5:00 p.m. "A Year Through the Bible" Study (Rm. 105)</p> <p>5:00-7:00 p.m. The Spark (Gym)</p>
<p><i>Monday</i> <i>September 1</i></p>	<p>1:30 p.m. Monday Bible Study (Parlor)</p> <p>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</p>
<p><i>Wednesday</i> <i>September 3</i></p>	<p>9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Mission Sewing (Rm. 105)</p> <p>5:45 p.m. Handbells Practice (Sanctuary)</p> <p>7:00-8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)</p>

<p><i>Sunday September 7</i></p>	<p>8:30 a.m. Worship with Communion (Sanctuary) 9:30 a.m. Bereans Sunday School Class with Bob Shepherd (Rm. 105) Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus. 9:30 a.m. Fellowship Class (Rm. 204) Studying "More Parables from the Back Side" by J. Ellsworth Kalas, taught by Deborah Geddes, Glenna Lang and Glenn Elms. 9:30 a.m. Exploring Our Faith with Susan Buckley (Rm. 206) 9:30 a.m. Seekers' Bible Study with Randy Blanton (Library) Paul's Letter to the Romans on Sunday (Contact Randy Blanton to join by Zoom). 9:30 a.m. FPC Kids' Sunday School (Rm. 203) 10:30 a.m. Fellowship (Narthex) 10:40 a.m. Praise band (Sanctuary) 11:00 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary and Facebook Live www.com/fpcConroe or YouTube.com/fpcConroe) 5:00 p.m. "A Year Through the Bible" Study (Rm. 105) 5:00-7:00 p.m. The Spark (Gym)</p>
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Save the Date

September 1	Labor Day (PDS and church office closed)
September 7	Return to regular service schedule (8:30 & 11:00 a.m.)
September 19	Life Line Screening
September 24	See You at the Pole
September 27	Serve Our Neighbor Day
September 28	Called Meeting of the Congregation

Prayer List

Members: Fred Kate, Penny Bell, Sylvia Dopp, Gordon Juhl, Roy Kessler, John Wright, Ruth Masters, Kyle Walker, Jeannene Wendt, Reed Watson, John Lancaster, Kari Elliott, Tildon Hebert, Ron Bailey, Alice Helms, Jean Ball, Mary Hudson, Paul Ivison, Jeanne Leverette, Virginia Olivier

Members' Relatives & Friends: David W. (Hart), Bret F. (Kasmiersky), Thad M. (West), Dorene D. and Dan S. (B. Hernandez), Siana F. and family (Watson), Jerry W., Lisa W. (Webb), Celia G. (Hernandez- Garcia), Wes K. (Yates), Alicia I., James I., and Ron S. (Bailey), Susie K. (Davis), Stephanie R. & Brooke J., Danielle S. & kids (Riggs-Harpur), Blade B., Judy N. (Dukes), Bonnie L., Michael R. (Dwyer), Tom J. & family, Bill M. (Browder), Tony N. (Spinks), Aimee L. (Amoneno), Buddy H. (Hayter), Amanda N. (Bosse), Brenda H. (Cannon), Scott P. (Peterson), Linda S., Larry B., Janie M. (Harrison), Lindsey W. (Walker), Shannon L. (Diamond), Rick J. (Juhl), Joe T. Sr., Harry S., Jr. and family (Havens), Steve T., Lonnie H. and Vivian M. (Hammonds), John R. (Hethershaw), James M., Patty M., Enrique E. (Moore), Jeffrey H. & Leah H. (Heasley), Wendy S. (Adamson), Sherry M. (Garrison), Lee H. (Helms), Caleb & Michaela W. (Henderson), Gerald H. (Roberts)

Ministry Leaders

Administration	Cheryl Nichols (2025, Chair) Stephan Tibbetts (2025)
Building & Grounds	Bill Harshbarger (2026, Chair)
Care-Prayer	TBA (2027, Chair)
Discipleship	Mark Sowden (2025, Chair) Dena Sowden (2025) Masen Stuntz (2025) Sean Morton (2027)
Fellowship	Debbie Morse (2027, Chair)
Membership	Steve Scheffler (2025)
Missions	Catherine Scheffler (2025, Chair) Kyle Walker (2027)
PDS	Pat Hudson (2025)
Worship	Randy Blanton and Mike Wisda (2026, Co-chairs)
Trustees	Charline Muller (2025) David Nichols (2026) Fred Kate (2027)

Staff and Church Information

Staff

Rev. Seth Saathoff, Senior Pastor
Dena Sowden, Director of Christian Education
Sharon VanSchuyver, Director of Communications
Yvonne Rose, Office Manager
Bonnie Hernandez, Music Director
Rolethial McKelvey, Accompanist
Jackye Cannon and Jane Corbit, Bookkeeping
Shirley Dukes, Parish Nurse



First Presbyterian Church

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Church Office (936) 756-8884 Fax (936) 756-8842
Website: www.fpcConroe.org

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