



**FAITH / & FAVORITISM**  
don't mix

**Mark 7:24-37 NLT**  
**James 2:1-13 NIV**

**First Presbyterian Church**  
Portsmouth, Ohio

**September 8, 2024**  
*Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

**Rev. Ronald Johnson, Minister of Word and Sacrament**  
**Deacon Stephanie Scaggs, Liturgist**  
**Ms. Michele Imes, Director of Music**  
**Dr. Phillip Roberts, Organist/Musician**

***We are glad you came...***



# Welcome to First Presbyterian Church GATHERING TOGETHER AS COMMUNITY

## *ANNOUNCEMENTS*

Pastor Ron Johnson

## *WELCOME*

## *THE COMMUNITY GATHERS*

## *PRELUDE*

Dr. Phillip Roberts

## *\*CALL TO WORSHIP*

Deacon Stephanie Scaggs

L. Put your confidence in God.

**P. We have God as our helper and so we rejoice.**

L. God gives justice to the oppressed and food to the hungry.

**P. God frees the prisoners and opens the eyes of the blind.**

L. So put your trust in God's goodness.

**P. May God's goodness endure forever! Let us worship God.**

## *PRAYER FOR THE DAY*

*\*HYMN OF PRAISE #316 "Where Charity and Love Prevail" **GTG***

## *CALL TO CONFESSION*

### *PRAYER OF CONFESSION (spoken in unison)*

*God of mercy, you keep an eye out for those who dwell on the margins of life. We confess we fail to keep our eyes open for those on the margins. We have been silent when we should have spoken up in the face of injustice. Our generosity to others does not match what you offer us. Forgive us for thinking of ourselves first. Renew our commitment to show others the kindness we meet in Jesus Christ. (Invitation to silent confession and reflection)*

## *ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS*

Rev. Johnson

***\*THE GLORIA PATRI (sung in unison)***

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 WORD PROCLAIMED**

***PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING***

Rev. Johnson

***FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON***

Mark 7:24-37 NLT

*The Faith of a Gentile Woman*

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. <sup>25</sup> Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, <sup>26</sup> and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, <sup>27</sup> Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

<sup>28</sup> She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

<sup>29</sup> "Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." <sup>30</sup> And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

*Jesus Heals a Deaf Man*

<sup>31</sup> Jesus left Tyre and went up to Sidon before going back to the Sea of Galilee and the region of the Ten Towns. <sup>32</sup> A deaf man with a speech impediment was brought to him, and the people begged Jesus to lay his hands on the man to heal him.

<sup>33</sup> Jesus led him away from the crowd so they could be alone. He put his fingers into the man's ears. Then, spitting on his own fingers, he touched the man's tongue. <sup>34</sup> Looking up to heaven, he sighed and said, "Ephphatha," which means, "Be opened!" <sup>35</sup> Instantly the man could hear perfectly, and his tongue was freed so he could speak plainly!

<sup>36</sup> Jesus told the crowd not to tell anyone, but the more he told them not to, the more they spread the news.

<sup>37</sup> They were completely amazed and said again and again, "Everything he does is wonderful. He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who cannot speak."

## ***SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON***

James 2:1-13 NIV

Deacon Scaggs

### ***Favoritism Forbidden***

<sup>1</sup> My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. <sup>2</sup> Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. <sup>3</sup> If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," <sup>4</sup> have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

<sup>5</sup> Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? <sup>6</sup> But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? <sup>7</sup> Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

<sup>8</sup> If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. <sup>9</sup> But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. <sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. <sup>11</sup> For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

<sup>12</sup> Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, <sup>13</sup> because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

L: The Word of the Lord

***P: Praise be to God!***

***SPECIAL MUSIC***

Dr. Roberts

***THE MESSAGE***

**Faith and Favoritism Don't Mix**

Rev. Johnson

**AFFIRMATION of FAITH** (*Book of Common Worship; Romans 8:1, 28, 38, 39*)  
*We believe there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus; for we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to God's purpose. We are convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

**HYMN OF RESPONSE** #762 "When A Poor One" GTG

**PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE**

Rev. Johnson

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.*

## **GIVING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS TO THE LORD**

**INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

Deacon Scaggs

**OFFERTORY INSTRUMENTAL**

Dr. Roberts

**\*THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION** (*spoken in unison*) Deacon Scaggs  
*Holy God, how often we take for granted all that we have. How often we fail to recognize how blessed we are. Take these gifts we give in response to your generosity and use them to further Christ's mission and ministry in a hurting world. Amen.*

*\*The Doxology*

**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.**

**CALL TO MISSION**

- \* CLOSING HYMN* #203 "Jesu, Jesu" **GTG**
- \* CONGREGATIONAL CHARGE* Rev. Johnson
- \* THE BLESSING* Rev. Johnson
- ACOLYTE RECESSIONAL* Miss Abby & Family
- \* SENDING SONG* #541 "God Be with You Till We Meet Again" **GTG**
- POSTLUDE* (*Please be seated for the postlude*) Dr. Roberts

**\*The asterisk indicates when we rise to our feet in spirit,  
as we are able in body.**



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Aim your camera at the UPC code  
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Look for: "First Presbyterian1- Guest in your WiFi settings  
Enter the password: "neweverymorning!221" and accept the conditions.

## THE PRAYER LIST IS POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE EDUCATION ANNEX

Please pray for your ability to be faithful disciples, family, and friends; our church, pastor, the session, deacons, committees, lay leadership, our ministry, outreach, and stewardship, the Boney Fiddle community and its churches, public schools, city of Portsmouth and its leadership, state and national leadership, and those incarcerated.



### Our Church and Community Calendar for September

- Sept. 10: Rescheduled meeting for Armbrust Student Loan Cmte, 5:30 P  
Sept. 11: Board of Session meets, Schwartz Conf. Rm., 1P  
Sept. 13: SCM (out of bldg.) 11 A.  
Sept. 23-30: Pastor away.  
Sept. 29: FPC welcomes Rev. Emily Corzine, Presbyter for Congregational Life and Transitions, PSV  
Oct. 2: Ministry and Congregational Care (MCL) meets, 4P  
Oct. 2: Armbrust Student Loan Cmte meets, (tentative), 5:30P, Hybrid  
Oct. 6: Pastor at Hillview Nursing Home, Worship Service, 3P  
Oct. 9: Board of Session meets, Schwartz Conf. Rm., 1P  
Oct. 19: PSV Presbytery meets, London PC, 3:30P, Hybrid  
Oct. 26-Nov. 1: Pastor on Study Leave.

The FPC Food Pantry will be open every Thursday except the first Thursday.

### Church Contact Information

Pastor & Church Secretary's Office Hours for the Week

Sunday: Worship and office hours. Mondays:

Home office (worship planning, prep, and meetings)

Tuesday thru Thursday: 10 A - 4 P Fridays: Off

Email: [rjohnson.fpc@gmail.com](mailto:rjohnson.fpc@gmail.com) or [rev.ron.johnson@gmail.com](mailto:rev.ron.johnson@gmail.com)

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Office Hrs. Tues-Thurs: 9A-3:35P

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**<https://www.firstpresportsmouthoh.com>**

**<https://www.youtube.com/@firstconnections4806>**

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# SERMON NOTES

SERMON TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

SCRIPTURE VERSE(S) \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT DID I HEAR THAT RAISED QUESTIONS? \_\_\_\_\_

HOW CAN I APPLY THIS TO MY LIFE? \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT WOULD I LIKE TO STUDY FURTHER? \_\_\_\_\_

MY HEART-FELT PRAYER TO GOD FOR THOSE IN MY LIFE AND MYSELF