

First Presbyterian Church

Portsmouth, Ohio

The Rev. Lisa R. Eye, Pastor
Ms. Stephanie Scaggs, Liturgist
Ms. Michele Imes, Director of Music
Dr. Phillip Roberts, Organist/Musician
Ms. Stephanie Scaggs, Media Specialist



*Moses Striking the Rock, Marc Chagall, from Art in the Christian Tradition,
A project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN*

September 27, 2026
18th Sunday after Pentecost

Gathering Around the Word

Welcoming the Community

Ms. Stephanie Scaggs

Announcements & Celebrations

Prelude

Dr. Phillip Roberts

From the beginning, Christians have met to worship on the first day of the week, the day God began creation, bringing light out of darkness, and the day Christ rose from the dead. In worship we gather to praise God, confess our sin and seek God's grace. We hear the good news of the Gospel, and respond in gratitude as we celebrate the inward signs of God's grace through the sacraments, offer our prayers and gifts, and are sent forth to glorify God through the service of daily living. We light the Christ candle as a reminder that we are called together as the body of Christ and that Christ, the light of the world, is present with us as we worship.

***Call to Worship**

Ms. Scaggs

We share the stories of our ancestors
things we have heard and known—
how the Lord divided the sea and let the peoples pass through;
how God split open rocks to give us drink in the desert.
We will not hide these stories from our children;
we will tell the coming generations about the glorious deeds of the Lord.
Let us worship God!

***Prayer of the Day**

***Hymn #81**

Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

GTG

***Call to Confession**

Ms. Scaggs

***Prayer of Confession (unison)**

God our redeemer, we confess that we remain captivated by sin. We promise to serve you, then we fail to do your will. We pretend to follow you, then we go our own way. Forgive us; liberate us! Let us be no longer bound by sin, but released, restored, set free to worship and serve you in freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *(silent prayer)*

***Assurance of Forgiveness**

Rev. Eye

***Response: Hymn# 447**

We Are Forgiven

GTG

*We are forgiven. We are forgiven.
Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.
We are forgiven. We are forgiven.
Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.*

***Sharing the Peace**

The peace of the Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

Presentation of Bibles to Children and Youth

Rev. Eye

What is the church?

We are the church: the people who believe the good news about Jesus, who are baptized, and who share in the Lord's Supper. Through these means of grace, the Spirit renews us so that we may serve God in love.

How do you know this good news?

Through reading the Bible and hearing it taught and preached. The Holy Spirit inspired those who wrote the Bible and helps us rely on its promises today.

Hearing and Proclaiming the Word

Prayer for Understanding

Rev. Eye

Scripture

Exodus Philippians 2:1-13

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Scripture

Exodus 17:1-7

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

“Is the Lord Among Us or Not?”

Rev. Lisa R. Eye

Responding to the Word

**Hymn #53*

O God Who Gives Us Life

GTG

**Affirmation of Faith (unison)*

from A Brief Statement of Faith

Rev. Eye

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image, 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.

With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Prayers of the People & The Lord’s Prayer

Rev. Eye

...Receive all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, as together as the Body of Christ and your covenant community, we pray as Jesus taught us, saying, **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 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, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Invitation to the Offering

Ms. S. Scaggs

Offering Instrumental

Dr. Roberts

**Doxology #717*

For the Life That You Have Given

GTG

***For the life that you have given, for the love in Christ made known,
with these fruits of time and labor, with these gifts that are your own;
here we offer, Lord, our praises; heart and mind and strength we bring;
give us grace to love and serve you, living what we pray and sing.***

***Thanksgiving and Dedication (unison)**

Ms. S. Scaggs

God of overflowing abundance, when your people suffered from thirst, you satisfied their need with water from a rock. Receive our gifts this day, O God, and transform them into blessings that grace the lives of others. Receive our thanks and our praise, our work and our love, that all might share your manifold blessings. Amen.

Following the Word into the World

***Hymn #475**

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

GTG

***Congregational Charge**

Rev. Eye

Who are you?

We are the church! People who believe the good news about Jesus.

Who are you?

We are the church! Gathered by the Holy Spirit, built up in faith, hope, and love.

Who are you?

We are the church! Sent out by God's Spirit to proclaim the gospel in word and deed.

***Benediction**

***Sending Song #724 v. 4**

O Jesus, I Have Promised

GTG

*O Jesus, thou hast promised to all who follow thee
that where thou art in glory there shall thy servant be.
And, Jesus, I have promised to serve thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow, my Master and my friend.*

Acolyte Recessional

The Christ candle is extinguished as we are sent back into the world, but the light of Christ remains and goes before us to guide and strengthen us in our service in Christ's name.

Postlude

(Please be seated for the postlude.)

Dr. Roberts

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(see permission/license on file)

We are glad you are here and want you to feel welcome as you share in worship!

*The asterisk indicates that worshippers are invited to rise in body or in spirit, as able.

Bold text indicates that the congregation is invited to speak.

GTG refers to ***Glory to God***, the hymnal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Visitors are encouraged to sign the guest book near the entrance to the worship space.

If you are looking for a church home, we would love to share more about
the mission and ministry of First Presbyterian Church.

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

Let us pray for our 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, schools, the city of Portsmouth and its leadership, state and national leadership, and those who are incarcerated.

***With confidence in God's love and mercy, we lift our prayers for those in need.
May God hold them and heal them in body, mind, or circumstance,
working in them by grace, wonders beyond all they may dream or hope. Amen.***

To add or remove a name or concern to the Prayer List, please fill out a prayer request form found on the table as you enter the Fellowship Hall or contact the church office.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today we are pleased to welcome Pastor Lisa back from Study Leave and give God Praise for His provision.

Today we are pleased to present new Bibles to our children and youth as a part of our ongoing commitment to guide and nurture them by word and deed, and with love and prayer, encouraging them to know and follow Jesus Christ and to be faithful members of Christ's church.

Next Sunday we will receive the World Communion Offering. This is one of the three Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

In the 8th century before Christ, the humble prophet Micah was deeply in touch with the plight of the people. He envisioned a world where everyone would be free to live into the fullness of the life God intended. Yet the society and the culture in Micah's day did not match his visions of God's reign — there was no justice, kindness or humble living.

The World Communion Offering is a new way for Presbyterians to “love kindness” expressed in action, often involving mercy, faithfulness and steadfast commitment. Racial justice, gender justice, global witness, and ecumenical and interfaith engagement are the important causes supported by this Offering. The prophet Micah is clear: Our love of God moves us to faithful action through justice, kindness and humble living. Participating in the Churchwide Special Offerings is one way Presbyterians show their love for God and help all God's children live into the fullness of Micah's prophecy. Let us prayerfully consider how we may respond to this invitation.



Did you know that there's a simple way you can help spread the word about First Presbyterian Church?

Be sure to “like” and “follow” us on Facebook: <https://facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurchportsmouthohio>. It only takes a minute and will also help you keep up with our latest news.

The FPC Food Bank is open on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Thursdays from 12 to 2 p.m. Volunteers are still needed. Please contact Rachel Collingsworth or the Church Office to learn more about how you can help serve our neighbors.

Armbrust Student Loan Program Applications Are Open! Help spread the word. The Armbrust Student Loan Program is anxious to provide more low-interest loans to help student reach their learning goals. These loans made possible by a generous bequest, can support academic and technical education tuition, fees, books, and other related expenses for traditional and non-traditional students beyond high school. Persons interested may download the application from the church website. ***There are also copies of the new information brochure on the table in the Fellowship Hall to share.*** If you have any questions, please let us know.

Building Update: The careful repair and restoration of our historic sanctuary continues. While we long to return to worship in this beloved space, we are grateful to have the Mary Elizabeth Shwartz Fellowship Hall as an alternate worship and event space until repair work is completed. The second phase of the sanctuary repair — ceiling and plaster restoration, repair and updates to lighting, and preparation of the walls for painting is underway

and expected to be completed by the beginning of October. The repair and repainting of the walls and trim of the upper and lower narthex are also underway to provide a welcoming and safe entrance into the sanctuary. The next phase will include painting, cleaning and restoring flooring, reinstallation of the organ pipes, cleaning and reinstallation of pews, sanctuary furniture, and sound and projection equipment. Once we have a firm completion date, we will share plans for celebrating the return of worship to the sanctuary and the rededication of this space to the glory of God. The Session is also engaging in a visioning process to discern ways that God may be leading this congregation and the resources entrusted to its care into future ministry. Stay tuned for opportunities for congregational participation in this process. Thank you to all who have supported this work through your prayers and financial gifts! Gifts to offset the cost of this project are still being accepted with gratitude. Please contact the church office if you would like more information about how to give.

Church & Community Calendar

Sundays: Church School, 10:00 a.m. on the 3rd floor of the Education Building;

Worship: 11:00 a.m. in the Mary Elizabeth Shwartz Fellowship Hall

Sunday, September 27: Deacons Regular Meeting, following worship

Sunday, October 4: World Communion Offering: this is one of the three Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Wednesday, October 7: MCL Meeting, 1:00 p.m. in the Lounge (new time**)**

Thursday, October 8: Food Pantry, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 8: Armbrust Student Loan Committee, 5:00 p.m. via Zoom

Wednesday, October 14: Session Reg. scheduled meeting, 1:00 p.m. in the Lounge

Thursday, October 15: Food Pantry, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 22: Food Pantry, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

Monday, October 26: Special Session Meeting, 9:00-noon in the Lounge

Thursday, October 29: Food Pantry, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

Church Contact Information

Church Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday, 10:00 am–4:00 pm

Virginia M. Stinnett, Admin. Aid/Church Secretary—Email: vstinnett.fpc@gmail.com; Phone: (740) 353-4259

Bev Phipps, Treasurer—Email: bevhipps1stpres@gmail.com; Phone: (740) 353-4259

Rev. Lisa R. Eye, Pastor—Email: leyefirstpresportsmouth@gmail.com; Pastor's Study: (740) 529-7177

Rev. Eye ordinarily works from her home study on Mondays and observes Fridays as sabbath time.

In case of pastoral emergency, she may be reached at (859) 329-9026.



First Presbyterian Church

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The Synod of the Covenant
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

www.synodofthecovenant.org



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