



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 6, 2026

15th Sunday after Pentecost

We Gather in God's Presence

Gathering Music

Chiming of the Trinity

Welcome and Announcements

The Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger

Introit

Hear, O Israel

David Leroy McIntyre III

Call to Worship

Happy are those who follow the teaching of the Lord,

who walk in the paths of righteousness.

Let us worship our God who loves and leads.

Let us worship God together!

*Hymn 401

Here in This Place

GATHER US IN

Prayer of Confession

The Rev. Dr. Ernie Thompson

Holy God, giver of all good things, we have failed to live in thanksgiving for the earth, for our families, for neighbors, and for strangers; for the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the soil that grows our food. Forgive us, we pray. Teach us to be happy in your steadfast love and to live our lives in gratitude to you.

(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.

The act of assembling in Jesus' name for worship bears witness to the Church's identity and mission as Christ's body in the world.

Every journey begins with a time of figuring out what to take along and what to leave behind. Similarly, the Prayer of Confession is an opportunity to reflect on those things we're carrying around with us (anxiety, guilt, shame) that, with God's grace, we can safely leave behind.

The Lord is God, the Lord alone! Give honor, thanks, and praise to God, the maker of all things and giver of our days.

We Listen and Respond to God's Word

Our church is always grateful to have children in worship with us. Wiggles and giggles will not bother us; tears and fears remind us we're human. The sound of children in worship is the sound of a church that is alive.

Children's Moment | 11:00

Beth Thaxton

Hymn 399 *God Welcomes All*

**God welcomes all, strangers and friends;
God's love is strong and it never ends.**

After the Children's Moment, children ages 4 - 2nd gr. are invited to the Library for Children's Church and will return following the sermon.

Prayer for Illumination

Mary Jo Littlewood (8:30)
Kathie Cheatham (11:00)

Scripture Reading Matthew 16:13-20

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Anthem

If Ye Love Me

Philip Wilby

Scripture Reading Exodus 1:1-14

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Hebrew 101: Mitzrayim

The Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger

Silent Reflection

*Hymn 353

My Hope is Built on Nothing Less

SOLID ROCK

*Affirmation of Faith:

from *A Declaration of Faith*

When Abraham's descendants were slaves in Egypt, God heard their cries and prayers. God remembered his promise and sent Moses to free them from bondage. We declare God's steadfast love and sovereign power. The Lord can be trusted to keep promises. The Lord still acts in the affairs of individuals and nations to set oppressed and persecuted people free. Amen.

There is a time of silent reflection after the sermon. During this time, you might ask yourself, "From what I've heard and experienced during worship today, what do I believe God wants me to do or be? Is God inviting me to change in any way?"

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 601

DANISH AMEN



Moment for Mission

Dan and Elizabeth Turk

An Invitation to Give An Offering

Offertory *Shema Yisrael and The God of Abraham Praise*

*Doxology | Hymn 609

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**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 838 *Standing on the Promises* PROMISES

*Charge and Benediction

*Benediction Response | Hymn 543 stanza 1

**God, be the love to search and guide me;
God, be the prayer to move my voice;
God, be the strength to now uphold me:
O Christ, surround me; O Christ surround me.**

Chiming of the Trinity

Postlude *Postlude on Solid Rock* Craig Phillips

We end the Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession by saying the Lord's Prayer all together as the family of faith.

"And if a relationship with God is to count rather than be a casual affair, there have to be deliberate decisions as regards to the use of time, money, and prayer which will consolidate the relationship and affirm its worth." -- John Bell

Scan here to give an offering online:



As our time of worship comes to an end, our lives of service begin again.

Anthem

If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father,
and He shall give you another Comforter,
That He may abide with you for ever;
E'en the Spirit of Truth.
And ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.
I will not leave your comfortless. I will come to you.

We are grateful to our FPC Choral Scholar Anna Rushing for sharing her musical gifts in
worship today.

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

Staff Directory | 919-821-5750

The Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger	Senior Pastor (Ext. 2206)
The Rev. Laurie Taylor Weicher	Associate Pastor (Ext. 2208)
The Rev. Dr. Ernie Thompson	Parish Associate
The Rev. Judy Pidcock	Parish Associate
Beth Thaxton	Director of Family Ministries & Christian Education
Daniel Caudill	Interim Director of Youth Ministries
Kathy Johnson	Director of Community Outreach
Rita Harris	Outreach Assistant
Mark Woodcock	Director of Music
Lindsay Anne McCall	Director of Children & Youth Music
Dr. Karl Zinsmeister	Organist
Gail Barrett	Church Administrator
Jean Suber	Director of Communications
Melani Harrison	Finance Assistant/Office Manager
Russell Clark	Facilities Manager
Brooke Barrett	Sexton
Tyler Elrod	Audio Visual Lead Tech
Valerie Chassereau	Director of Child Development Center

Scan the QR code
for ways to become
connected to our
ministries.



On the Calendar This Week, September 6 – September 12

Today– Early Worship 8:30 a.m. | Sunday School 9:45 a.m. | Late Worship 11:00 a.m. | Mahjong 12:00 p.m.

Monday, September 7 – Labor Day – Church Offices Closed

Tuesday, September 8 – Enough for Today Podcast 8:00 a.m. | CDC Chapel 10:30 a.m. | Handbell Rehearsal 2:45 p.m. | Strategic Planning Committee Meeting 6:00 p.

Wednesday, September 9 – Early Birds 6:30 a.m. | Midweek Bible Study 12:00 p.m. | Pickleball 1:00 p.m. | Committee Meetings 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, September 10 – Bible Study at Glenaire 2:230 p.m. | Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.

Friday, September 11 – No events or activities scheduled for the day.

Saturday, September 12 – No events or activities scheduled for the day.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

Inquirer's Class

If you've been worshipping with us and want to learn more about the church and our ministries, mark your calendar for Sunday, September 13th and 20th at 9:45 a.m. We'll explore what it means to be a Presbyterian, and what it means to be a member of First Presbyterian, Raleigh. Email Laurie with any questions. lweicher@fpcraleigh.org

Welcome Back Congregational Meal

Sunday, September 13, join us in Memorial Hall after 11:00 a.m. worship for a welcoming congregational meal—a chance to reconnect with familiar faces, meet someone new, catch up on what happened over the summer, and enjoy good food and even better fellowship.

Youth Group Kick-off

Youth Group begins on Sunday, September 13. 6-12th grade youth and their parents are invited to dinner at 5:30pm in Memorial Hall, followed by an important info meeting and Youth vs. Adult Trivia!

FPC Book Club

Our first read of the new program year will be James, by Percival Everett. We'll meet on Monday, September 14 at noon in person, or at 7p.m. via zoom. There are a few copies of the book in our church library. Sign up at fpcraleigh.org/events or email Laurie with any questions at lweicher@fpcraleigh.org

Prayer for our Pilgrims

We have a group of 26 folks from FPC travelling to Spain at the end of September to walk part of the Camino. Would you be willing to pray for them one of the days of their pilgrimage? If so, please email Laurie Taylor Weicher and she'll assign you a day to pray and give you a list of trip participants. Thank you!

FPC All-Church Retreat at Montreat Conference Center

We're headed back to Montreat! Save the date: February 12-14, 2027. All ages are welcome! Go to fpcraleigh.org/events for more information and to register. Contact Beth Thaxton with questions or for help with registration.

FPC Shares Item for September

This month's FPC Shares item is Diapers & 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

Dan and Elizabeth Turk serve with PC(USA)'s partner church, FJKM (Fiangonan'i Jesoa Kristy eto Madagasikara, or the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar), as it ministers to the population in the domains of health, environment, agriculture, and safe drinking water. FJKM believes that Christian witness should include ministry both to the physical and spiritual needs of God's people and care for all of God's creation. Dan and Elizabeth work as advisors to FJKM in the fields of environment and health, respectively. They began service with FJKM in 1996 and raised their children Robert and Frances in Madagascar. They have now been partnering with FPC- Raleigh for over 20 years.

Elizabeth has a Master's in Public Health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Bachelor's degrees in Nursing and Psychology from Indiana Wesley University and Duke University, respectively. Dan has a Ph.D. in Forestry from North Carolina State University, a Master's in Agronomy and Soil Science from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, and an undergraduate degree in Biology from Davidson College.

Dan works with FJKM's Fruits, Vegetables, and Environmental Education Program (FVEE) to help people improve their lives while living more in harmony with creation. With per capita income less than \$250 per year, many Malagasy people have difficulty feeding their families. Less than 25 percent of the country's native forests remain today, the majority having been converted to grasslands. The cutting of native trees for fuelwood and to clear fields for agriculture continues to threaten the island's unique animals and the more than 8,000 plants found only in Madagascar. Climate change is making everything more problematic. FJKM has responded by helping people plant trees for fuelwood and construction wood, by promoting environmental awareness in primary schools and rural communities, and by encouraging more intensive agriculture through growing fruit trees and off-season crops. Dan helps pastoral students grow fruits and vegetables. He also helps FJKM grow native trees for beautification and to increase appreciation for Madagascar's amazing biodiversity. They will use these skills to help their community and families to achieve improved food security and nutrition.

Elizabeth helps the staff of the FJKM health department design and implement a community health program. The program works with rural communities to prevent and treat the major illnesses that threaten health: malaria, measles, diarrhea, and pneumonia. As part of this program, 34 of the 36 FJKM doctors have received training in community health, and community health volunteers from rural areas have received training in health education techniques and basic health messages, including high blood pressure and diabetes, which are growing problems. These volunteers teach others in their communities how they can prevent and treat illnesses before they become life-threatening. Elizabeth also advises the family planning program and serves on FJKM's national AIDS and Epidemics Committee. The concern for AIDS awareness and education is a major focus of FJKM. FJKM trains pastoral students in AIDS prevention and has an active youth peer education program designed to help youth live positively according to Biblical principles. At this time, the HIV rate is climbing alarmingly, and the work of FJKM's AIDS and Epidemics Committee is more important than ever.

Funds from FPC Raleigh's Mission budget this year will be used to help the Turks with salary support, to help support the work Dan is doing with the FJKM, particularly to expand the mango orchards at the Mango Palace to help with sustainability for the FVEE, and to help support the work that Elizabeth is doing with the FJKM. The FPC Foundation awarded \$16,000 to support the work of Dan and Elizabeth Turk in 2022 and 2025. We welcome them in worship today as well as in the Vanguard Sunday School Class. They will also be speaking at Early Birds on Wednesday morning and to PW Circle #s 4 & 6.