ORDER OF WORSHIP

Pastor: Rev. Emily Cowser
Liturgist: Jim Meyer
Organist: Ann Swisher

"Hope, on one hand, is an absurdity too embarrassing to speak about, for it flies in the face of all those claims we have been told are facts. Hope is the refusal to accept the reading of reality which is the majority opinion; and one does that only at great political and existential risk. On the other hand, hope is subversive, for it limits the grandiose pretension of the present, daring to announce that the present to which we have all made commitments is now called into question."
-Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*

**Please stand if you are able*

PRELUDE "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"
Jan Bender (1909-1994)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
Our mission statement: Shaped by the grace of our sovereign God, we follow Jesus Christ by growing in faith, supporting one another, and sharing Christ's love in our community and the wider world.

*CALL TO WORSHIP *Adapted from Joan Stott*
One: We gather to worship our great and glorious God.
We lift our eyes to God, in reverent awe before God's majesty.
ALL: Great is the Lord our God, and greatly to be praised!
One: We come to worship our generous and merciful God.
We lift our eyes to God, giving thanks for God's compassion.
ALL: Gracious is the Lord our God, and greatly to be praised!
One: We worship our welcoming and empowering God.
We lift our eyes to God, and we celebrate God's faithfulness.
ALL: Holy is the Lord our God, and greatly to be praised!
We lift our eyes, seeking to worship and praise our God.

*HYMN "As the Deer" GtG #626

As the deer panteth for the water,
So my soul longeth after Thee.
You alone are my heart's desire,
And I long to worship Thee.

You alone are my strength, my shield;
To You alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire,
And I long to worship Thee.

You're my friend and You are my brother,
Even though You are a King.
I love You more than any other,
So much more than anything.

You alone are my strength, my shield;
To You alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire,
And I long to worship Thee.

I want You more than gold or silver,
Only You can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy giver,
And the apple of my eye.

You alone are my strength, my shield;
To You alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire,
And I long to worship Thee.

*CALL TO CONFESSION

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ALL: Almighty God, you have shown us the ways of justice and nurtured us with love. Even so, we have not lived according to your will. When we are oppressed or unjustly accused, we cling to fear and forget to trust in your deliverance. When we are giddy with power and abuse the rights of others, we hold tightly to our privilege and forget your laws. Have mercy on us, Lord, for we are weak and prone to disobedience. Hear our confession, and respond to us with kindness, that we might turn to you again, walk in the light, and live in equity and peace; through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.
(*a moment of silent confession)*

*DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS
One: Children of light, because we belong to our Lord Jesus Christ, we need not fear – for he lived for us, he died for us, he was raised for us and prays for us. Believe the promise of your baptism: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
ALL: Thanks be to God!

*THE PEACE

*"Gloria Patri" GtG #581

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.

OLD TESTAMENT READING Judges 4:1-24 Page 376
One: The Word of the Lord.
ALL: Thanks be to God.

NEW TESTAMENT READING 1 Thessalonians 4:13—5:11 Page 1840
One: The Word of the Lord.
ALL: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING Matthew 25:14-30 Page 1541

One: The Gospel of the Lord.
ALL: Praise to you, O Christ.

CHOIR ANTHEM "To Everything There Is a Season"
Ed Harris

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

PSALM READING Psalm 123 Page 966
One: The Word of the Lord.
ALL: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

A TIME OF QUIET REFLECTION

*HYMN "To You, O Lord, We Lift Our Eyes" GtG #788

To you, O Lord, we lift our eyes,
to you enthroned in heaven above;
as servants wait for those
they serve,
so we look up and wait God's love.

Have mercy on us now, O Lord;
contempt has been our lot
too long.
Too long have we been mocked
and scorned,
derided by the proud and strong.

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *Adapted from The Confession of 1967*
ALL: Biblical visions and images of the rule of Christ, such as a heavenly city, a father's house, a new heaven and earth, a marriage feast, and an unending day culminate in the image of the kingdom. The kingdom represents the triumph of God over all that resists God's will and disrupts

God's creation. Already God's reign is present as a ferment in the world, stirring hope in us and preparing the world to receive its ultimate judgment and redemption. With an urgency born of this hope, the church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, the church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE OFFERING

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Now Thank We All Our God"
Wilbur Held (1914-2015)

Offering plates are located in the back of the sanctuary. You may also give online at fpchelena.org/giving or by mailing a check to First Presbyterian Church, 535 N. Ewing St., Helena, MT 59601.

*DOXOLOGY "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" GtG #606

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.

*OFFERING PRAYER

*HYMN "God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me" GtG #543

God, be the love
to search and keep 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.

Bind to myself
the Name of Holy,
great cloud
of witnesses enfold;

Prophets, apostles,
angels witness:
O Christ, surround me;
O Christ, surround me.

Brightness of sun
and glow of moonlight,
flashing of lightning,
strength of wind,

Depth of the sea
to soil of planet:
O Christ, surround me;
O Christ, surround me.

Walking behind
to hem my journey,
going ahead
to light my way,

And from beneath,

above, and all ways:
O Christ, surround me;
O Christ, surround me.

Christ in the eyes
of all who see me,
Christ in the ears
that hear my voice,

Christ in the hearts
of all who know me:
O Christ, surround me;
O Christ, surround me.

*CHARGE

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE "Now Thank We All Our God"
Charles Callahan (1951-2023)

Announcements

Welcome!

A special welcome to visitors joining us for worship today! If you have children with you, feel free to hand them one of the cloth bags hanging in the back of the sanctuary — they are filled with books and toys! Hymns are found in the "Glory to God" (GtG) hymnal in the pews, as well as on the screen. Please sign the red fellowship pad in your pew and pass it to your neighbor. It is our tradition to remain seated during the Postlude at the conclusion of the service. After the service, please join us for refreshments and conversation.

Retirement Party Today!

Our Church Choir is hosting a "Retirement Celebration" for Merle Korizek today after the service in the coffee area. Plan to stay after Church for a few minutes to join us in thanking her for years of dedication as our Assistant Pianist!

Invitation From Your PNC and Strategic Planning Team

You are invited to share in choosing FPC's next pastor! Share your thoughts, hopes, and must haves with the Pastor Nominating Committee and Strategic Planning Team at our weekly Focus Group. Signup sheets will be available, simply choose the week and time that is convenient for you and attend to make your input known for us to use in the call. The Focus Group sessions will be on-going through December so please sign up.

Sign Up To Help With Thanksgiving Dinner

We will be hosting a free Community Thanksgiving Day Dinner Thursday, Nov. 26, from 1-3 p.m., in Richardson Hall. Help is needed in providing food, and for set up, clean up, and serving. Please check the signup sheets in the fellowship area to see where you can help. Thank you!

Coffee for Vets Drive Wraps Up Today

We are wrapping up our Coffee for Vets drive today. The collected items will be delivered to the VA. Thanks to everyone who will participate in this wonderful event!

Doors Locked During Service

Session decided to lock the main entrance doors during the worship service. The doors are locked from 10:15 to 11 a.m., and unlocked again between 11 a.m. and noon.

You're Invited!

Tuesday, Nov. 17	Session 1:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Nov. 18	Choir Rehearsal 2 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal 3:30 p.m.
Friday, Nov. 20	Friday Bible Study 12/noon Hand & Foot Cards 1:30 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 22	Worship Service 10 a.m. Social Time 11 a.m.

Staff

Ministers—Every Member
Pastor—Rev. Emily Cowser
Director of Music & Media—Les Cramer
Organist—Ann Swisher
Treasurer—Leo Potter
Office Coordinator—Julie Young

FPC Elders

Dianna Goodman
(Nominating Chair)

Jim Meyer
(Administration Co-Chair)

Butch Plowman
(Buildings & Grounds Chair)

Carol Gneckow
(Mission & Outreach Chair)

Patti Borsberry
(Congregational Life Chair)

Matthew Richards
(Administration Co-Chair)

Max Oliver, Clerk of Session

FPC Deacons

Bonnie Anderson
Ward Stiles, Vice-Moderator
Art Bumgardner, Moderator
Rena Bumgardner
Ria Caussyn
Carole Massman
Wanda Jewell
Alysia Ryan

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PC(USA)

535 North Ewing Street ~ Helena, MT 59601

Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Phone: 406-442-4775 **Email:** admin@fpchelena.org **Website:** www.fpchelena.org

Pastor Emily Cowser
Phone: 406-442-4775 **Email:** pastor@fpchelena.org

Weekly Sermon on HCTV Cable Channel 189, Wednesdays 6 p.m. & Saturdays 9 a.m.