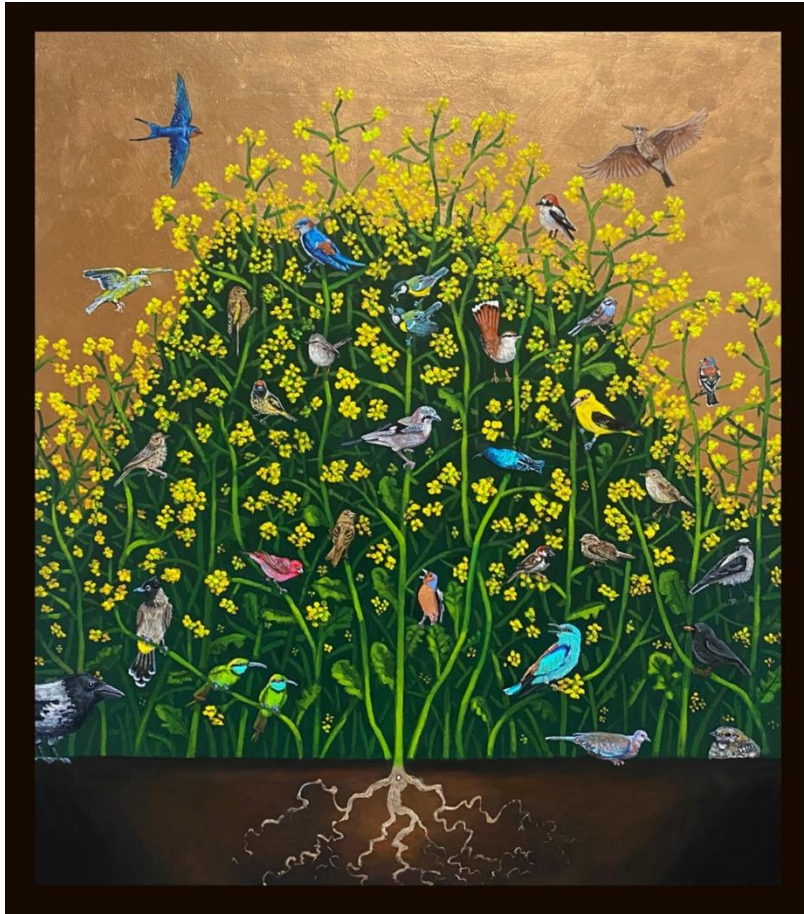


*Growing in Faith, Supporting One Another,
and Sharing Christ's Love*



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PC(USA)

535 North Ewing Street

Helena, MT 59601

Sunday, August 23, 2026 ~ 10 a.m.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Pastor: Rev. Emily Cowser

Liturgist: Ria Caussyn

Organist: Ann Swisher

“Jesus does not await full understanding or admirable discipleship on [the disciples’] part before associating them with himself and his mission. Flawed as they are, he sends them out. How does he dare to send them? How do they dare to go? And why does anything good come of so problematical an operation? Their situation is that of the church in every age.”

-Lamar Williamson, Jr., *Mark*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching

**Please stand if you are able*

PRELUDE

“Prelude and Fugue in G minor”

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Adapted from Joanna Harader

One: Gentle and patient

ALL: Jesus calls us to follow him.

One: Intentional and persistent

ALL: Jesus calls us to follow him.

One: In times of grief and in times of praise

ALL: Jesus calls us to follow him.

One: Through the struggles and through the victories

ALL: Jesus calls us to follow him.

One: Unexpected and planned

ALL: Jesus calls us to follow him.

One: In a still small voice and in power

ALL: Jesus calls us to follow him.

One: Spontaneous and prepared

ALL: Jesus calls us to follow him.

One: In our willingness and in our reluctance

ALL: Jesus calls us to follow him.

One: Jesus is eager to show us the way.

May we enter worship open to his leading.

*HYMN

“All Things Bright and Beautiful”

GtG #20

All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
each little bird that sings,
God made their glowing colors;
God made their tiny wings.

All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.

The purple-headed mountain,
the river running by,
the sunset, and the morning
that brightens up the sky:

All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.

The cold wind in the winter,
the pleasant summer sun,

the ripe fruits in the garden,
God made them every one.

All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.

God gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty,
who has made all things well.

All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

ALL: Forgiving God, we confess that we are conformed to this world. We conform to this world's frantic pace, too hectic to notice all the blessings you provide. We conform to this world's reckless waste, exploiting what you entrust to our care. We conform to this world's shallow values, oblivious to the giftedness of people different from us. We conform to this world's impatient attitudes, preferring the latest instead of the lasting. Forgive our conformity and transform us, O God. We pray in Jesus's name. Amen.

(a moment of silent confession)

***DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

One: If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,

ALL: we would now be lost in sin.

One: But it is the Lord who is on our side.

ALL: And so we are forgiven.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

*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

Exodus 1:8—2:10

Page 88

One: The Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

PSALM READING

Psalms 124

Read Responsively

(The Message)

ALL: If God hadn't been for us

One: —all together now, Israel, sing out!—

ALL: If God hadn't been for us

One: when everyone went against us,

**ALL: We would have been swallowed alive
by their violent anger,**

One: Swept away by the flood of rage,
drowned in the torrent;

**ALL: We would have lost our lives
in the wild, raging water.**

One: Oh, blessed be God!

ALL: He didn't go off and leave us.

One: He didn't abandon us defenseless,
helpless as a rabbit in a pack of snarling dogs.

**ALL: We've flown free from their fangs,
free of their traps, free as a bird.**

One: Their grip is broken;
we're free as a bird in flight.

**ALL: God's strong name is our help,
the same God who made heaven and earth.**

One: The Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

NEW TESTAMENT READING Romans 12:1-8 Page 1763

One: The Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

SPECIAL MUSIC "Down to the River to Pray"
From "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" Les Cramer, baritone
Trad., arr. Sheldon Curry Ann Swisher, piano

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

GOSPEL READING Mark 6:6b-13 Page 1561

One: The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to you, O Christ!

SERMON—The Adventures of the Disciples: The Mission of the Twelve

A TIME OF QUIET REFLECTION

*HYMN "Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness" GtG #314

Longing for light,
we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own,
your holy people,

light for the world to see.

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church
gathered today.

Longing for peace,
our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power
to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church
gathered today.

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread,

broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church
gathered today.

Longing for shelter,
many are homeless.
Longing for warmth,
many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering
others, walls made of living stone.

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church
gathered today.

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn

to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church
gathered today.

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Adapted from The Scots Confession

ALL: We confess and acknowledge one God alone, to whom alone we must cleave, whom alone we must serve, whom only we must worship, and in whom alone we put our trust. Who is eternal, infinite, immeasurable, incomprehensible, omnipotent, invisible; one in substance and yet distinct in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. By whom we confess and believe all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, to have been created, to be retained in their being, and to be ruled and guided by God's inscrutable providence for such end as God's eternal wisdom, goodness, and justice have appointed, and to the manifestation of God's own glory.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE OFFERING

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

"Fantasia in D Major"

Georg P. Telemann (1681-1767)

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

“Go in Grace and Make Disciples”

GtG #296

Go in grace and make disciples.
Baptize in God’s holy name.
Tell of death and resurrection;
Easter’s victory now proclaim.

Christ’s commission sends us forth
to the nations of the earth.
Go in grace and make disciples,
midwives for the world’s rebirth.

Go and follow Christ’s example,
not to vanquish, but to heal.
Mend the wounds

of sin's divisions.
Servant love to all reveal.

Roles and ranks shall be reversed;
justice flow for all who thirst.
Go and follow Christ's example.
Forge a world of last made first.

Go in Pentecostal spirit,
many tongues and many gifts.
Feed the hearts of hungry people.
Spread the gospel that uplifts.

Till the day of Christ's return,
as disciples, teach and learn.
Go in Pentecostal spirit:
let God's flame of witness burn.

*CHARGE

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"
Johann G. Walther (1684-1748)

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.

Spiritual Formation Discussions

As part of our participation in the Synergos Pastoral Residency program, we are engaging in some curriculum around spiritual formation. During fellowship time after worship, you will find a sheet of paper at each table with a brief reading and some discussion questions. You are encouraged to have one person at your table read the paper and then discuss the questions as a group.

Church Picnic Next Sunday!

Next Sunday, Aug. 30, is the date for this year’s summer picnic, which will be held at Kennedy Park in East Helena. Everyone can head that way after the service, instead of meeting for the usual friendship time. Please plan to bring a dish or dessert to share, along with a chair. Unfortunately, seating is limited. The Congregational Life Committee will provide fried chicken and some refreshments. We hope you can make it!

Retreat Registration Closes Aug. 31

Registration for our fall spiritual formation retreat at Glacier Camp closes Aug. 31. Together, we will explore the purpose and nature of prayer, our struggles with prayer, and a variety of ways to pray. The retreat begins with dinner on Thursday, Sept. 10, and will conclude by noon on Saturday, Sept., 12. The cost of the retreat is \$330 per room and \$110 per person for meals. To register, email Pastor Emily at pastor@fpchelena.org and make a check payable to the church. If you need financial assistance to attend, please contact Pastor Emily. Scholarships are available. Come enjoy an opportunity to connect with God and one another!

Pastor Emily On Vacation

Pastor Emily will be on vacation August 24-26. In case of a pastoral care emergency, please contact Commissioned Lay Pastor Dianna Goodman at 406-431-8964.

POET Society Dinners Resume Sept. 2!

We will resume our POET (Presbyterians Out Eating Together) Society dinners Wednesday, Sept. 2! Meet at the Delta Hotel Restaurant, 2301 Colonial Drive, at 5:30 p.m. Contact Barb Leland for details.

Milk Campaign, Carnival Coming in September

In September, FPC will join several local churches in raising money to buy milk for the Helena Food Share Kid Packs. The packs are distributed throughout the school year to students in need, providing food for the weekends. Last year, 41,090 packs were distributed. FPC will be gathering donations throughout the month, and Mission & Outreach invites you to “get in touch with the kid in you” on Sunday, Sept. 13, when you can buy tickets to play carnival games here, with proceeds going to the campaign. Watch for details in the September *Mustard Seed*, or visit with Carol Gneckow.

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!

Sunday, August 30

Worship Service 10 a.m.

Picnic at Kennedy Park after the service

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.

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

John Bryan

(Congregational Life Co-Chair)

Dianna Goodman

(Nominating Chair)

Jim Meyer

(Administration Co-Chair)

Butch Plowman

(Buildings & Grounds Chair)

Carol Gneckow

(Mission & Outreach Chair)

Patti Borsberry

(Congregational Life Co-Chair)

Matthew Richards

(Administration Co-Chair)

Max Oliver, Clerk of Session

FPC Deacons

Bonnie Anderson

Ward Stiles, Vice-Moderator

Vicky Bryan

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.