

# First Presbyterian Church

---



*Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost*  
*September 17, 2023*



700 Wood Street, Clarion, PA 16214

814-226-8145

[churchoffice@clarionfirstpresby.org](mailto:churchoffice@clarionfirstpresby.org)

[www.clarionfirstpresby.org](http://www.clarionfirstpresby.org)

We come together to worship, grow, and serve as disciples of Christ.

# We Gather in God's Name

(Tune your car radio to 88.7 FM)

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

## Welcome and Announcements

Lector, John Joy

We silently shift our focus to God and prepare to worship.

## Prelude

*Blessed Assurance*

Phoebe P. Knapp, arr. Sarah Douglas

## Chiming of the Trinity

## Introit

*What Is the World Like*

Adam Tice/ Sally Ann Morris

Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in **bold**.

## Call to Worship

The Psalmist has written: I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

**Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.**

Let us worship God!

✦ When this symbol precedes an element of the service, please rise in body or spirit.

## ✦ Hymn No. 611

*Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*

Text: van Dyke, 1907, alt.

Music: van Beethoven, 1824; adapt. Hodges, 1842, alt.

## ✦ Call to Confession

The psalmist testifies: Come and hear, all you who fear God, and truly God has listened. He has given heed to the words of prayer. Blessed be God, because he will not reject our prayer or remove his steadfast love from us. In the strength of this assurance, let us confess our sins to God.

## ✦ Prayer of Confession (Unison)

**Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; remind us of the seeds of faith and love that you planted in us at our baptism, that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name, Amen.**

**(A time of silence for personal confession.)**

Enfold us by your grace, and give us real life, and real meaning to life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

## ✦ Declaration of Forgiveness

As Jesus healed the afflicted, so also through him our sins are forgiven and we are given new life. Therefore, awaken to the assurance of our pardon, walk renewed in the love of God, and arise to the promise of Christ's redeeming grace.

## ✦ Passing of the Peace — Amahoro Abe Muri Mwe — Peace be with you

(Rough pronunciation in Kinyarwanda—Ahmahoroe ahbay murey mwe—translated literally—Peace be among you)

## ✦ Gloria Patri

**GLORIA PATRI**  
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

# We Share God's Word

## Time with the Children

Rev. Rebecca Mihm

## Prayer of Illumination

John Joy

## First Scripture

Isaiah 40:28-31

(p. 668)

The words of scripture, inspired by God.  
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

“The Parable of the Mustard Seed”

Rev. Rebecca Mihm

Organ Interlude

✦Hymn No. 658

*Imana Ni Nziza (God Is So Good)*

Text & Music: Anon.

✦Affirmation of Faith

2.1-2.3 *The Apostles’ Creed*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Call for the Offering

Offering and Offertory

*They Shall Soar Like Eagles*

Laura Manzo

✦Doxology

✦Prayer of Dedication

Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.  
And also with you.  
Lift up your hearts.  
We lift them up to the Lord.  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
It is right to give our thanks and praise.  
It is right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, Loving God, creator and sustainer of all life. You planted the first fields—wheat, barley, rice, and maize—and mad us in your image to care for your creation. You fed your people in the wilderness with manna from heaven, leading them to the land of milk and honey.

Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer

We Go Forth to Serve

✦Hymn No. 748

*Go With Us, Lord*

Text: Cathey, 1986  
Music: Tallis; adapt. Parker’s *Whole Psalter*, c. 1561

✦Charge and Benediction

Postlude

*Lead On, O King Eternal!*

Henry T. Smart,  
Arr. Robert W. Thygerson

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.

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.

POSTLUDE  
Please remember at the close of the service, the Postlude is a time to silently reflect on God and the mission to which we are called. We ask that you please remain silent and seated until the music has ended.

## WELCOME VISITORS

**Welcome to First Presbyterian Church. We are glad to provide hybrid and virtual worship services for this Sunday.** Services are currently livestreamed on our Facebook page (First Presbyterian Church of Clarion) in real time, then archived to our website and Facebook page.

At First Presbyterian Church our mission is to worship, grow, and serve as followers of Jesus. From our youngest to our oldest, we seek to worship God in our actions, grow in God's love, and serve God's people in our community and around the world. We hope that you will come join us so we may personally extend a warm welcome. If you have any questions or particular prayer needs, please feel free to contact the church office at 226-8145 between 9 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday.

**For more information** visit our website at [www.clarionfirstpresby.org](http://www.clarionfirstpresby.org).

**Find us on Facebook!** (First Presbyterian Church of Clarion)

**Radio Broadcast**-WWCH 1300AM and 94.1 FM every third Sunday of the month at 11:00 a.m.

**Video recordings** of past sermons may be viewed by clicking the "Worship" link on our home page at [www.clarionfirstpresby.org](http://www.clarionfirstpresby.org) or a phone app is available at [sermon.net](http://sermon.net) (look for First Presbyterian Church—Clarion.) You can also choose to listen to an audio version. Simply pick the option that works best for you. Videos of Sunday worship are also posted on our Facebook page (see above).

All rights reserved. All sheet music uploaded to our website ([clarionfirstpresby.org](http://clarionfirstpresby.org)) for use with this worship service has been reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-727612.

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE License #A-727612. All rights reserved.

## CHURCH STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

**Pastor:** Rev. Rebecca Mihm  
**Organist:** Jean Mitrosky  
**Director of Music:** Bonnie Champion  
**Treasurer:** Brenda Nesbitt  
**Secretary:** Debra Owens  
**Sexton:** Mike Hetrick  
**Sound Engineer:** Josh Deitz  
**Video Engineer:** Dan Willy

### Ruling Elders:

<u>Class of 2023:</u>	<u>Class of 2024:</u>	<u>Class of 2025:</u>
John Joy	Kathy Larimer	Jeff Deitz
Bert Louder	Elaine Matticks	Jeff Kapp
Jim McConnell	Pam Reid	Kurt Nesbitt

### Deacons:

<u>Class of 2023:</u>	<u>Class of 2024:</u>	<u>Class of 2025:</u>
Suellen Gourley	Bonnie Champion	Kim Lewis
Cindy Kapp	Marianne Reynolds	Lee Seitz
Norma Kooman	Mary Swanger	Lori Smith

## WORSHIP NOTES

**Pastor:** Rev. Rebecca Mihm  
**Lector:** Jeff Deitz  
**Time with Children:** Rev. Rebecca Mihm  
**Director of Music:** Bonnie Champion  
**Organist:** Jean Mitrosky  
**Sound Engineer:** Josh Deitz/Jeff Kapp  
**Video Engineer:** Dan Willy/Kurt Nesbitt  
**Acolytes:** Ruby Collett, Gavin Kunselman, Aubrie Scovel, Emma Willy  
**Ushers in Charge:** Lee Seitz, Mary Swanger

**The Sanctuary flowers today are given to the glory of God, and in memory of Earl Zerfoss, by Lee Seitz.**

## TODAY'S SCHEDULE

10:00 a.m.	Worship
11:00 a.m.	Radio Broadcast—WWCH 1300AM & 94.1FM
11:00 a.m.	Sunday School
11:00 a.m.	Choir Practice

## WEEKLY DEPOSIT SUMMARY

**9/10/2023**

### Weekly Contributions

Envelope Contributions	\$2,100.00
Miscellaneous Cash Contributions	<u>\$150.00</u>
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$2,250.00</b>

### Weekly Donations

PMEF Distribution	\$17,702.17
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	\$100.00
Men's Fellowship	<u>\$20.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$20,072.17</b>

### Online Donations Aug. 2023, Deposit Sept. 2023

Offering Contributions	\$819.43
Men's Fellowship	\$25.00
Food Bag	<u>\$75.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$20,991.60</b>

## NOTES:

## THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBY

### Monday, September 18

6:00 p.m. Community Committee, Sisterhood Room  
7:00 p.m. Session, Chapel

### Tuesday, September 19

6:00 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous, Step Down Room

### Wednesday, September 20

8:00 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous, Step Down Room

### Thursday, September 21

2:00 p.m. Food Bag Distribution  
5:00 p.m. Echoes of Joy Practice, Choir Room  
6:00 p.m. Joyful Bells Practice, Choir Room  
7:00 p.m. Property Team, Pavilion

### Next Sunday, September 24

10:00 a.m. Worship  
11:00 a.m. Rwanda Presentation, Sanctuary  
Picnic immediately after, Aharrah Pavilion

## ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED

cookies and cinnamon rolls, two popular items! Contact Bill Champion at 814-764-3886 as soon as possible to indicate how you can help.

### ALF Parking Passes for Craft Day and Parade Day are on sale!!

Parking is still \$10 for the entire day. Craft Day is October 6th and Parade Day is October 7th. Passes will be available for purchase in the Church Office for both days.

### Adult Sunday School will resume on October 1st.

**Peacemaking Offering** As Presbyterians, we view peace as a core part of our identity and calling as believers. It is a central declaration of the gospel, calling us to model our lives in the pattern of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. This special PC USA offering will be collected until Oct. 1; envelopes are available on the Usher's table in the Ramp Room. Together, we can transform cultures of violence into communities of peace.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mission Needs Help:** Presbytery Disaster Assistance is once again requesting disaster cleanup buckets. The need increased this year due to the large number of disasters: wildfires, flooding, tornadoes, and hurricanes this year in both Canada and the United States. Members of the Mission Team will be purchasing the supplies, filling 50 buckets, and delivering them within the next few weeks. If you wish to donate towards the cost of supplies to fill the buckets, note "PDA Buckets" on the memo line of your check or the outside of your envelope.

**Property Team meeting this Thursday.** Property will meet at the Pavilion at 7 p.m. on Thursday, September 21st. In case of inclement weather, the meeting will be in the Chapel.

**Rwanda Partnership Presentation and Cookout, September 24th:** Immediately after Worship, Mark Phoebus, who went on the mission trip to Rwanda, will give a presentation about his trip. After Mark's talk, we'll move outside to the Aharrah Pavilion for the cookout. Watch for more details in your bulletin. (The Steeler's game is not until 8:20 p.m., so plan to be with us!) A preview of the folks in Rwanda is in the September/October newsletter.

**ALF (Autumn Leaf Festival)** is fast approaching. Men's Fellowship seeks your help to work the concession stand Saturday, October 7th. They also need volunteers to make

## MEMBER CARE

### Please pray for:

- *Members with known health concerns:* Ruth Ann Minich, Randy Cable, Pat McConnell, Tam Goble and those who are homebound.
- *Our family and friends in need of prayer:* Shirley & John McKinley's relatives: Mary Biser, Charlotte Hartman, Kenneth Daugherty Jr., Ben McKinley, and David Mahle; Carolyn McFarland's relatives: Rick & Janelle Moore; Kristen Maze's neighbor, Laurie Dickey; Beverly Wentling's daughter, Rebecca Irwin; Bert Louder's grandson, Anthony Louder; Jim & Pat McConnell's friend, Pat Hargest; Marianne Reynolds' mother, Alice Davis; Jeff Deitz's friend, Alexandra Sharrar; Peggy, Dee Wenner's sister-in-law; Dana Solida's friend, Scotty; Jeff Kapp's friend, Chuck; Bill Champion's acquaintance, Dr. Shannon Penland, Bill's friends Tammy & Charles; the family and friends of Herb Thrush; and Maui.
- *Everyone serving in the US Military.*
- *Our faith partners: Gitwe Congregation in Rwanda.*

**Homebound Member of the Week:** Please remember Alice Davis, 29 Enlow Road, Imperial, PA 15126. Her birthday is September 30th. She is Marianne Reynolds' mother.

SEPTEMBER 17, 2023  
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST

taking  
faith  
home

*God is merciful and gracious, full of love.*

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 18:21-35	A parable about forgiveness
Monday	Genesis 50:15-21	Joseph forgives his brothers
Tuesday	Romans 14:1-12	Do not judge one another
Wednesday	2 John 1:1-6	Truth and love
Thursday	Lamentations 3:18-24	There is still hope
Friday	2 Peter 1:1-11	Do all you can to show God's love
Saturday	Psalms 103:1-13	Thanksgiving for God's goodness
Sunday	Matthew 20:1-16	Parable of the vineyard workers

## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Psalm 103:8 (NRSV)*

## PRAYERS AND BLESSING

### A Prayer for the Week:

God of mercy and grace, give us hearts full of compassion, ready to forgive others as you have forgiven us through Christ Jesus, who died that we may live. Amen.

### Mealtime Prayer:

God of abundant love, we thank you for this food that you give to us and to all. Help us to share your goodness and mercy with others through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

### A Blessing to Give:

May the God of mercy and grace who sustains you, give you joy.

SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*The Numberless Gifts of  
God's Mercies*

taking  
faith  
home

## WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

## CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- How do you respond when you are in conflict with a particular person or group?
- Jesus sets us free to love others. What does this mean to you?

## DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Romans 14:1-12.

The world is divided in many ways. Countries are divided into parties and loyalties. Families can be divided by strong and diverse views. Even congregations can be divided by different viewpoints. Paul gives us a word that we need to hear today. We are to keep the main thing the main thing, and that is this: Christ died to be the Lord of all. Therefore, why pass judgment and despise those for whom Christ died? As the saying goes, "When you look into the eyes of another, you are looking at someone God loves." Be careful not to judge and condemn. As Psalm 103:8 reminds us, "*The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*" Our God who is slow to anger should be a strong caution to us not to be quick to judge. Whether it is over diet, piety, political or economic convictions, our judgments will all pass away, but God's judgment is eternal, and that judgment is most clearly seen from the cross of Christ. Jesus died for us that we may be set free to love others, in spite of our differences.

*Discuss:* What relationship do you have with someone where you could use a kinder word to reconcile that relationship through Christ our Lord?

*Pray:* Almighty and living God, help us to see beyond our self-righteous judgments of others and to receive your forgiveness with joy and gladness through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

## SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, who in your life can you reach out to with a word or action that expresses forgiveness?

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Genesis 50:15-21 is the story of Joseph forgiving his brothers for throwing him in a pit and selling him into slavery. Forgiving someone who has hurt you is not easy. Think or talk about a time when you forgave someone or someone forgave you and how it may have changed your relationship.

*Pray:* Dear Lord, help me to open my heart and mind to know when to forgive and when to ask for forgiveness for my words or actions towards another. In Jesus' name, amen.