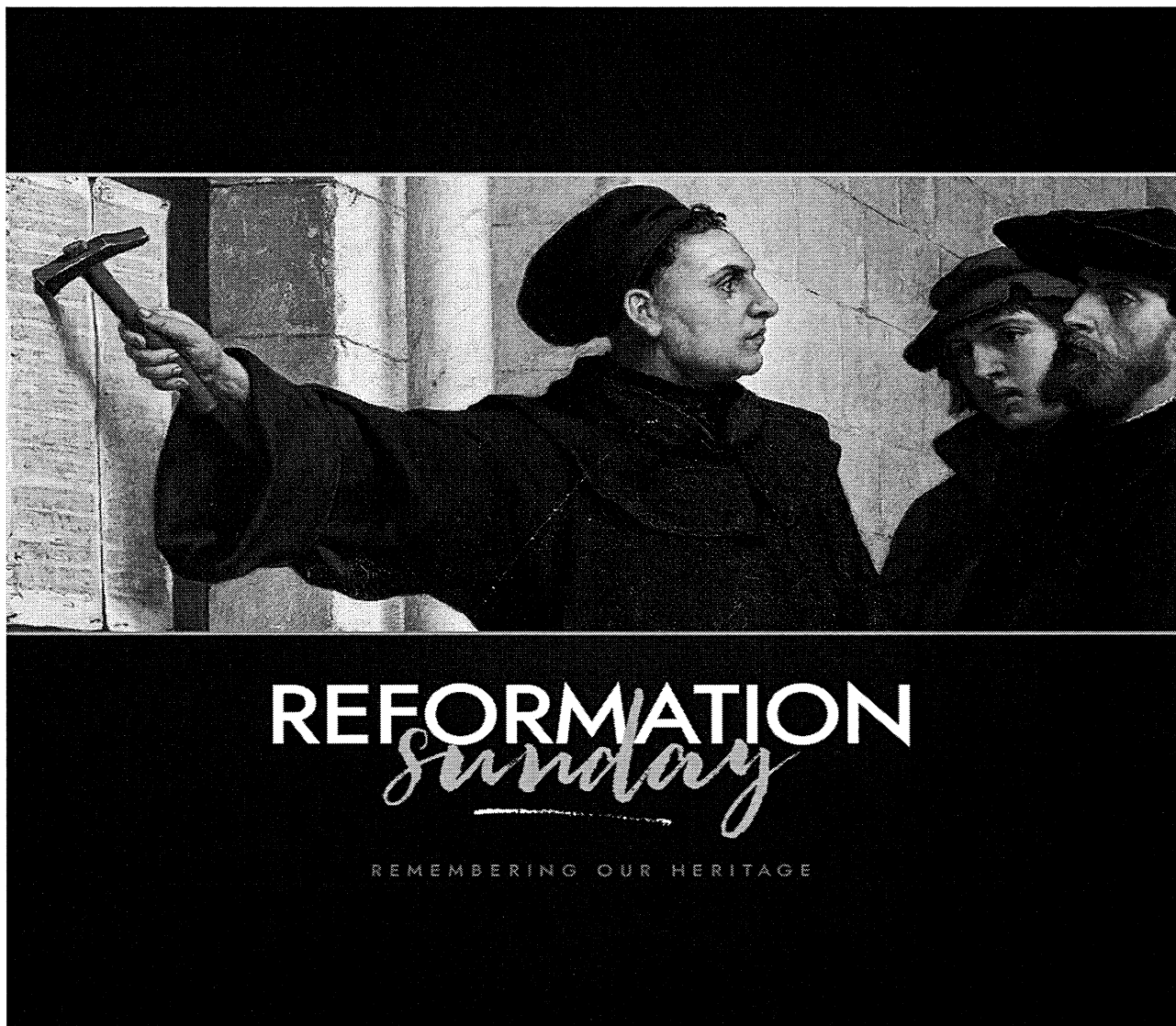


# First Presbyterian Church

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*Twenty-Second Sunday After Pentecost*  
*October 29, 2023*



700 Wood Street, Clarion, PA 16214

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[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)

Twenty-Second Sunday After Pentecost  
Reformation Sunday

## Welcome and Announcements

Lector, Jeff Deitz

## Banner Procession

*Scotland the Brave, Amazing Grace*  
(Bagpiper: Sean McCarthy)

McClurg/Hanley, Newton

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

## Chiming of the Trinity

## Introit

*The First Song of Isaiah*

Jack Noble White

## Call to Worship

God, speak to us even today, saying:

**You shall be holy for I am holy.**

You shall not hate,

**But love your neighbor as yourself.**

Let us take these words to heart as we come before God to worship.

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

## ✠ Hymn No. 12

*Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*

Text: Smith, 1867, alt.

Music: Welsh folk melody;  
arr. *Caniadau y Cyssegr*, 1839

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

## ✠ Call to Confession

God watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. We have righteousness within us, but we also have wickedness. Therefore, let us confess.

## ✠ Prayer of Confession (Unison)

God of love, your commandments are so simple: love God and love neighbor. Yet we cannot always muster that love. Love for you seems too abstract and distant. Love for our neighbors seems too impractical and draining. But you are truly the God of love; if there is anyone who can help us love, it is you. Shower us with your love so we might have the greatest example, and help us learn from you. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

## ✠ Declaration of Forgiveness

It is true: we are beloved of God. The God who loves us does not condemn us.

Friends, believe the Good News:

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

## ✠ 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

Jeff Deitz

## First Scripture

Matthew 22:34-46

(p. 25)

## THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBY

### Tuesday, October 31

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

### Wednesday, November 1

1:00 p.m. Caring Callers, Ministry Central

6:00 p.m. CE Team, Ministry Central

7:00 p.m. Deacons Meeting, Ministry Central

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

### Thursday, November 2

5:00 p.m. Echoes of Joy Practice

6:00 p.m. Joyful Bells Practice

### Next Sunday, November 5

10:00 a.m. Worship

11:00 a.m. Sunday School, Children and Adults

11:00 a.m. Confirmation Class

11:00 a.m. Choir Practice

11:30 a.m. Cantata Practice

## ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED

**the time when we prepare for the birth of Jesus.** If there is interest, we plan to offer an adult Bible study program during the lunch hour on Wednesdays. The purpose of the program is to help participants expand and apply their understanding of Advent. The program is entitled Illumination Advent. It will begin on November 29th and end on January 3rd. Each session will begin at 11:30 a.m. and finish at 12:00 p.m. We can eat our lunch while participating. Sessions as follows:

- |                 |                |                     |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1: Advent Hope  | 3: Advent Joy  | 5: Christmas Savior |
| 2: Advent Peace | 4: Advent Love | 6: Epiphany Light   |

To properly plan, we need those who are interested in participating to call the Church Office as soon as possible.

**Fall Back! Don't forget clocks go back one hour next weekend.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Today is Reformation Sunday!** It is the time when we celebrate the tradition that grounds our faith, the occasion in 1517 when Martin Luther posted his 95 theses on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany. We will be processing the banners that represent the confessions of the PC(USA).

**A Congregational Meeting** will be held following the worship service today for the purpose of electing new officers of the church.

**We will release the November/December 2023 edition of First Press (our newsletter) later this month.** If your ministry or group has news or happenings during November and December, and you have not turned in a write-up, please call the Office.

**The choir will present a cantata at the evening Christmas Eve service.** Bonnie will be handing out books and rehearsal CDs today, October 29. There is a congregational meeting after worship, but we will have rehearsal after that meeting. The weekly rehearsals will begin on November 5th. IF you are unable to attend October 29, please let Bonnie know that you are interested in singing with the choir so a book and CD are set aside for you. Even though we would love to have you sing on a weekly basis with the choir, you are welcome to sing the cantata without making a long term commitment.

**During the weeks before Christmas, we celebrate Advent,**

## MEMBER CARE

### Please pray for:

- *Members with known health concerns:* Ruth Ann Minich, Randy Cable, Pat McConnell, 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 friend Valerie & 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; Jeff Kapp's friend, Chuck; Dr. Shannon Penland, Bill's friends Tammy & Charles; Larry McFadden who has gone into the hospital; the family and friends of Jean Stroup; the family and friends of Dennis Raybuck; the family and friends of Donna Campbell; Dawn Reed and family; and Mason Martin's family.
- *Everyone serving in the US Military.*
- *Our faith partners: Gitwe Congregation in Rwanda.*

**Homebound Member of the Week:** Please remember Marsha Spencer, Shippenville Health Care & Rehab, Rm. 205, 512 S. Paint Blvd., Shippenville, PA 16254. Her birthday is November 10th.

OCTOBER 29, 2023

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY

AFTER PENTECOST

taking  
faith  
home

*The challenge of loving one's neighbor.*

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 22:34-46	Loving God and neighbor
Monday	Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18	Love your neighbor as yourself
Tuesday	1 Thessalonians 2:1-8	Paul's life and work
Wednesday	Deuteronomy 10:12-22	The essence of the law
Thursday	Romans 15:1-6	Please others, not yourself
Friday	1 Peter 4:7-11	Good stewards of God's grace
Saturday	Psalms 1	The way to happiness
Sunday	Matthew 23:1-12	Humble yourselves

## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.*  
Leviticus 19:18 (NRSV)

## PRAYERS AND BLESSING

### **A Prayer for the Week:**

Loving God, it is impossible to love as you love; give us hearts that can be changed so we may love others as you love us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, we thank you for this gift of food; may it give us strength and courage to care for others for the sake of Jesus Christ, who cares for us all. Amen.

### **A Blessing to Give:**

Through God's love, may you be freed to love your neighbor as yourself.

OCTOBER 29, 2023

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with  
Your Love*

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 show someone that you love them?
- In the Bible love is an action that cares for one's neighbor. Why are actions and not just words important to communicate love?

## DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Leviticus 19.

Reading chapter 19 in its entirety gives a powerful context to the words, "love your neighbor as yourself" (v. 18). We are to be holy because God is holy. Holiness is not something we earn or create; it is our life lived reflecting the holiness of God. That holiness is best understood as God's power and steadfast love. Humans express God's love for a neighbor through just judgments and by not slandering, not profiting from the violation of another, and not hating or taking vengeance. In verses 33-34 the neighbor was first a fellow Hebrew. That same commitment to love the neighbor is given to foreigners also, for God's people know what it is like to be a foreigner. Because we are not up to the task of our own holiness, we are to correct one another when we miss the mark of reflecting God's steadfast love. Love is active and dares to correct when hate, slander, violence, and more detract from God's goodness and mercy. God's holiness and love extends to all through Jesus, the Son of God.

*Discuss:* Through what actions or words have you extended God's love to a neighbor?

*Pray:* **God of love and justice, remind us daily of your holiness that heals and cares for all people and creation through Christ. Amen.**

## SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how can you reach out to a neighbor or friend with an act of kindness?

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

In Matthew 22:37-39, Jesus points out to the religious leaders that the greatest of the Ten Commandments are about loving the Lord your God and your neighbor as yourself. These laws are at the heart of the Old Testament message. God's law is about loving relationships. Write a list of words that you feel describe a loving relationship. Think or talk about why you chose those words.

*Pray:* **Lord God, may I delight in your law and meditate on your law both day and night that your love be seen in all relationships I have with others. Amen. (Psalm 1:2)**

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

Sermon“Liberation”Rev. Rebecca Mihm

Organ Interlude

✦Hymn No. 687Our God, Our Help in Ages PastText: Watts, 1719, alt.  
Music: Attr. Croft, 1708

We Give Thanks to God

✦Affirmation of Faith6.011 The Westminster Confession of Faith

There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory, most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; and withal most just and terrible in his judgments; hating all sin; and who will by no means clear the guilty.

Call for the Offering

Offering and OffertoryTrust In The Lord With All Your HeartMartin, Martin & Nix

✦Doxology

✦Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer

We Go Forth to Serve

✦Hymn No. 275A Mighty Fortress Is Our GodText & Music: Luther, 1529

✦Charge and Benediction

PostludeFoundationBonnie Barrett

**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).

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## 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:** Gavin Kunselman, Clara Stants, Jeremy Willy  
**Ushers in Charge:** Bill Champion, Doug Bills, Monta Rader

**The Sanctuary flowers today are given to the glory of God, and in memory of Jubal Wills Owens, Jr., by his wife Debra Owens.**

**Thank you to this morning's banner carriers:** Barbara Beggs, Michelle Deitz, Zack Deitz, Cindy Kapp, Jeff Kapp, Bert Louder, Elaine Matticks, Pastor Rebecca Mihm, and Kara Willy.

## TODAY'S SCHEDULE

10:00 a.m. Worship  
 —Congregational Meeting Immediately Following  
 11:00 a.m. Sunday School  
 11:00 a.m. Confirmation Class  
 11:00 a.m. Choir Practice

## WEEKLY DEPOSIT SUMMARY

10/23/2023

### Weekly Contributions

Envelope Contributions	\$2,005.00
Miscellaneous Cash Contributions	\$60.00
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$2,065.00</b>

### Weekly Donations

Rental Income, Nov.—Head Start	\$1,245.00
Food Bag	\$200.00
Men's Fellowship	\$92.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,602.00</b>

## NOTES: