

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1621 E. GARRISON BOULEVARD • GASTONIA, NORTH CAROLINA
704.864.2651 • www.fpcgastonia.org • streaming live

October 18, 2020
9:00 a.m.

For everyone's safety, please practice appropriate physical distancing and wear masks at all times.

Words for Silent Prayer and Reflection before Worship

"It has become cliché to talk about faith as a journey, and yet the metaphor holds.

Scripture doesn't speak of people who found God.

Scripture speaks of people who *walked* with God."

-Rachel Held Evans

WE COME TOGETHER

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOCUS ON STEWARDSHIP

"Our Finest Hour"

Shelby Duncan

CALL TO WORSHIP *(adapted from liturgy by Rev. Sarah Weaver)*

Brothers and sisters, near and far, God is working in our midst.

We give thanks for the ways in which God is working within our midst.

We are blessed by God!

We open our eyes to the ways God is using us to work beyond the walls of our church, our homes, our structured lives.

Dear ones, God has given us so much and is very much alive, at work and still speaking among us.

We are called by God to give back.

We are called to be good stewards; good stewards of our time, of our talents and of our treasures.

Let us give thanks to our God of blessings and affirm our commitment to the ministry into which God is calling us.

Let us give thanks to God! Let us proclaim our faith in God! Let us worship God!

†GATHERING SONG

"Faithful"

SHARED PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Faithful God, we confess that we are not ready, nor do we feel prepared, for your holy realm. You have saved us, yet we make false gods for ourselves in the form of material things, people and doing what feels good at the time. You are the one who has called us, yet we are more interested in responding to a text message, a phone call or a social media post. We make excuses, we resist your mighty claim on our lives, and we fail to invite and inspire others to walk alongside us in faithfulness. Forgive us, merciful God, so that we may return to your way and rejoice in your presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord...

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

WE EMBRACE GOD'S WORD

EPISTLE LESSON

Romans 12:5-8

FIRST TESTAMENT LESSON

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

SERMON

"Our Finest Hour: More than Money"

SPECIAL MUSIC

"In Heavenly Love Abiding"

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

†PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 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.

OFFERING OUR LIVES TO GOD

(Tithes and offerings may be presented at www.fpcgastonia.org/giving.)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

†MUSIC FOR SENDING FORTH #716

"God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending"

†BLESSING

†POSTLUDE

"May the God of Hope Go with Us"

Worship Leaders:

Rev. Fred Lyon, Rev. Lauren Sease Vanacore,
Matt Smith, Bethany Jennings, David Jennings, Bill Joles, Jim Smith

Please keep our PNC members in your prayers as they seek to discern whom God will call as our next Senior Minister: Betty Burrell, Will Current, Ellen Cinq-Mars, Coleman Efird, Trey Robinson, David Rogers and Dick Voorhees.

FAITHFUL

Verse 1

There's no shadow of doubt
When we look to You now
And all that You've done
The covenant made
Fulfilled in Your grace
You've proven Your love

Chorus 1

Faithful faithful
All through the ages
Through joy and through sorrow
Faithful faithful
Grace for today
And my hope for tomorrow
Faithful

Verse 2

Through seasons of change
Lord You will remain steady and true
And day by day Your mercies await
Each morning made new

GOD, WHOSE GIVING KNOWS NO ENDING

Verse 1

God, whose giving knows no ending,
from your rich and endless store,
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom,
costly cross, grave's shattered door:
gifted by you, we turn to you,
offering up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever,
gracious donor of our days.

Verse 2

Skills and time are ours for pressing
toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
all at peace in health and freedom,
races joined, the church made one.
Now direct our daily labor,
lest we strive for self alone.
Born with talents, make us servants
fit to answer at your throne.

Chorus 2

You are faithful faithful
All through the ages
Through joy and through sorrow
Faithful faithful
Grace for today
And my hope for tomorrow
Faithful
You are faithful

Bridge

Great is Your faithfulness
Great is Your faithfulness
Great is Your faithfulness
Great is Your faithfulness

Verse 3

Treasure, too, you have entrusted,
gain through powers your grace conferred:
ours to use for home and kindred,
and to spread the gospel word.
Open wide our hands in sharing,
as we heed Christ's ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming,
serving you by loving all.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL VIDEO LESSON

Please join us online at 10:00 a.m. as Evangelist Dunbar presents this week's Sunday School video lesson titled, "Loving Your Neighbor." You can find this video, along with our pastoral and staff videos, at www.fpcgastonia.org/videos.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Bring your lunch and click on the Zoom link in the Friday E-Blast or register on the church website to join Lauren and Fred for "table fellowship," prayer, and study on Tuesdays at 12:00 p.m. Lasting through November 17, Lauren will teach "You Better Believe It!" a six-week study written by Adam Hamilton focusing on the Apostles' Creed. Following Lauren's Study, Fred will teach "All Marked Up," during the weeks of December 1-15, and January 5-26. Even if you can't Zoom for every lesson, gather when you are able as together we will share "Food for Thought."

FREE COVID-19 TESTING

On Monday, October 19, from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Kintegra Health will offer free drive-up COVID-19 testing in the church parking lot. This is for people who have symptoms that may be consistent with COVID-19, or for those who have been exposed and wish to be tested. A provider referral is not required. Results are typically back within 3-5 days. Make an appointment in advance by calling Kintegra Health at (704) 874-3316.

CHILDREN'S TRIP TO PUMPKIN PATCH

Join us on Sunday, October 25, at the Schiele Museum to explore their Pumpkin Patch, learn all about how pumpkins grow, and then pick your very own pumpkin! We'll meet at the Schiele Museum parking lot at 1:15 p.m. and enjoy the program and the farm until 2:30 p.m. Drop-off and pick-up will be from the Schiele Museum, not from the church! Contact Susannah Bryant at sbryant@fpcgastonia.org to reserve your spot!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ALIVE! SPEAKER SERIES EXPLORING MATTHEW 25

Wednesday Night Alive! continues online this week as we hear from Rev. Dwayne Burks, Executive Director of the Resource Connection Gateway, who will help us explore poverty in Gaston County, particularly in light of COVID-19. This lesson is part of a larger initiative in the PCUSA where congregational vitality, dismantling racism and eradicating poverty are being addressed. (See Matthew 25 Initiative: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/>).

Gather on Zoom (link will appear in the Wednesday E-Blast) at 6:00 p.m. to watch a brief video with other participants and then have Q & A discussion with Rev. Dwayne Burks in real-time.

Future speakers and topics include:

Wednesday, October 28—Rev. Dr. Rebekah Davis, Associate Professor of Christian Education, Union Seminary (Charlotte), will guide us as we examine justice as it impacts children.

Wednesday, November 4—Rev. Dr. Rodney Sadler, Associate Professor of Bible and Director, Center for Social Justice and Reconciliation, Union Seminary (Charlotte) will revisit the topic of "Toxic Charity" with us, a conversation he began last fall.