



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Established 1817

A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

*Building Community ▪ Transforming Lives ▪ Engaging the World*

**21 May 2023**

**Seventh Sunday of Easter**

## **Prayer of Preparation**

*Light upon Light,*

*Since we do not know what this day will bring, we ask for indications of providence and guidance for our spiritual journey.*

*Open the ear of our souls to hear the calm whisper of your Spirit speaking directly to our hearts and to believe again the ancient promises from above.*

*Open the eyes of our hearts so as to see the certainty of faith in the light of your loving purpose.  
Amen.*

## **Welcome**

**Update from the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee**

Rad Moeller

## **The Chiming of the Trinity**

**Prelude**

*Variations on Foundation*

Austin Lovelace

**Introit**

*All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*

Perronet/Rippon/Ellor

## **Call to Worship**

Sing to God.

**Sing praises to God's name.**

Sing to God O kingdoms of the earth.

**Sing praises to the Lord.**

Let us worship God!

**Hymn 263**

*All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!*

Perronet, Rippon/Holden

## **Psalm of Celebration**

Psalm 150

**Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty firmament!**

**Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness!**

**Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp!**

**Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe!**

## WELCOME VISITORS!

Name tags are available in the narthex and vestibule – we would love to greet you by name!

Members **and** visitors are invited to sign the Worship Register when passed to you during the service. Questions?

Please contact [marcy@firstpresnb.org](mailto:marcy@firstpresnb.org)

**CHILDREN** are welcome at First Presbyterian Church! The nursery is available for infants, toddlers, and preschool children in Rooms 1.23 and 1.24 in the Ministry Center from 8:15 am to 12:15 pm.

**RESTROOMS** are available in the Ministry Center (including a family restroom)

**HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES** are available in the Narthex.

**WHERE IS** the Prayer of Confession and the Summary of the Law? In the season of Easter, the confession section is often replaced with a different kind of proclamation. This year, for the 7 Sundays of the Easter season (April 9 – May 21) we are sharing some of the Psalms that focus on thanksgiving and praise!

**Praise him with clanging cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!**

**Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!**

## Children's Moment

Wendy Moeller

## Hymn 729

*Lord, I Want to Be a Christian* African American spiritual

## Prayer for Illumination

## Scripture Reading

Isaiah 43:15-21, Philippians 3:12-14, Matthew 9:9-17

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## Sermon

*We Can't Go Back*

The Rev. Robert Johnson

## Affirmation of Faith

from A Declaration of Faith

**We are certain that Jesus lives. He lives as God with us, touching all of human life with the presence of God. He lives as one of us with God. Because He shares our humanity and has bound us to Himself in love, we have an advocate in the innermost life of God. We declare that Jesus is Lord. His resurrection is a decisive victory over the powers that deform and destroy human life. His lordship is hidden. The world appears to be dominated by people and systems that do not acknowledge his rule. But his lordship is real. It demands our loyalty and sets us free from the fear of all lesser lords who threaten us. We maintain that ultimate sovereignty now belongs to Jesus Christ in every sphere of life. Jesus is Lord! He has been Lord from the beginning. He will be Lord at the end. Even now he is Lord. Amen.**

## Hymn 846

*Fight the Good Fight*

Monsell/Hatton

## Giving of God's Tithes and Our Offerings

## Offertory

*Praise We Sing to Thee*

arr. Morten J. Luvaas

## Doxology

Hymn 606

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God, above ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

## OUR STAFF

**Anna Pinckney Straight**  
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**Lloyd Griffith**  
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**Louis Foye**  
Sexton

**Richard Colflesh**  
Maintenance

**Vance Harper Jones**  
*Organist Emeritus*

The prayer of preparation is from *Centering Prayers: A One-Year Daily Companion for Going Deeper into the Love of God*, by Peter Traben Haas.

## Joys and Concerns of the Congregation

*The flowers in the Sanctuary this morning are given by Sam and Jane Dail to the glory of God in celebration of 11 years of marriage.*

*We celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of Don Bailey (May 26).*

## 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**

## Benediction

**Response** *Lord, Make Us More Holy* spiritual

**Postlude** *O Zion, Haste* Smith

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Organist: Vance Harper Jones

Ensemble: Daybreak and Sanctuary Choirs

**We welcome to our pulpit this morning, Pastor Robert Johnson**, newly retired minister of Ebenezer Presbyterian Church in New Bern. Robert was Pastor at Ebenezer for 43 years, New Bern's longest-serving minister. Upon retirement on May 7<sup>th</sup>, he received *The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award* bestowed by Governor Roy Cooper and presented by former New Bern Mayor, Dana Outlaw. It is North Carolina's highest civilian award. Pastor Johnson has been a leader and supporter of many ministries in the New Bern community. He played a major role in the founding of Religious Community Services (RCS). Among other involvements, he serves as President of the Duffyfield Phoenix Project, advocating improvements and assisting homeowners in that community of New Bern. Additionally, for nearly 30 years he has served as a Chaplain at CarolinaEast Hospital. Pastor Johnson's wife Martha is a Special Education teacher at NBHS. They have two adult sons. The family plans to remain in New Bern. Please welcome Pastor Johnson to our church this morning!

## Summer Worship! May 28 – September 3, 2023

**From Memorial Day week through Labor Day weekend, there will be one worship service at 10:00 am. The Adult Present Word class will continue throughout the summer and the "Read This Book" class will be from June 4 – August 27.**

THE WEEK AHEAD - [www.firstpresnb.org/calendar](http://www.firstpresnb.org/calendar)

<b>Today</b>	9:40 am	Confirmation Class	<b>Wednesday</b>	1:00 pm	Lunch Wagon
	4:00 pm	Calvin & Hops		3:00 pm	Welcoming Committee
	5:30 pm	End-of-Year Family Party	<b>Thursday</b>	12:00 pm	City Streets & Thin Places
<b>Monday</b>	12:00 pm	Divine Sleep Yoga Class		2:30 pm	Pickleball
	2:00 pm	Nominating Committee		5:15 pm	Choir Rehearsal
	2:00 pm	Knit 4 Others	<b>Saturday</b>	10:00 am	Pickleball
	6:00 pm	Administration Commission	<b>Sunday</b>	8:40-9:40 am	Sunday School
	7:00 pm	Women's Bible Study (Zoom)		10:00 am	Worship and Confirmation
<b>Tuesday</b>	2:30 pm	Pickleball			

**Presbyterian Women's End-of-the-Year Luncheon** will be held at noon on **June 6** at the New Bern Golf and Country Club. Cobb salad with grilled chicken, beverage, dessert, and tip, will be served for \$20 per person. Checks payable to Presbyterian Women, with "luncheon" in the memo line, should be given to Margaret Cooper no later than May 30. All ladies of the church are welcome. The program will include the installation of new officers, the presentation of the Honorary Life Membership, and special praise & worship. We hope you will join us.

**The Rebuilding/Divorce Recovery Group** will resume our formal meetings and book study in September. In May through August, we will meet informally for fellowship, as schedules permit. Together this group provides companionship and support for those engaged in the challenging journey of rebuilding their lives through this season of transition. For additional information, please contact Christin Grady.

**The "Helping Hands" committee of the Care Commission** is seeking additional members to visit our homebound members or those residing in care centers. We especially would love to add some gentleman volunteers to our team. For additional information, please contact Christin Grady. Thank you for your interest!

**An Invitation from Habitat for Humanity to help build with others – Week of June 6-10**

We hope our church members will join others in the New Bern Faith Community to help build homes for hard-working families who have dreamed of the possibility of owning their own homes. Two homes are currently in progress at 1701 and 1703 Aycock Avenue. You may call Buna Cumbie, Volunteer Coordinator for Faith Relations, at 252-633-9599 x 104, or email him at:

[bcumbie@cravencountyhabitat.org](mailto:bcumbie@cravencountyhabitat.org) if you are interested and have questions. Or, new volunteers may apply here: <https://cravencountyhabitat.org/volunteer/> Morning or afternoon shifts are available. ALL skills are needed and appreciated, as well as projects in the ReStore, such as arranging, sorting, and pricing items that have been donated.

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**First Presbyterian Church Session**

Clerk of Session: Karen Reed

**Class of 2023:** Phoebe Briley, Brent Hinckley, Middleton Hinckley, Mark Moeller, Mike Newman, Beth Paul, Margaret Pritchett

**Class of 2024:** James Copland, Christin Grady, Kenneth Holton, Carole Koi, Vaughn Purnell, Helen Robinson, Joyce Weaver

**Class of 2025:** Stephanie Brinson, John Finlayson, Sarah Catherine Gibbs, Rufus McAden, Yvonne Olmstead, Linda Stauch, David Stevick

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*O Zion, Haste (Postlude):* Music: arranged by Lani Smith. © 1992, The Lorenz Publishing Corporation renewed 2009, 70-1674L All rights reserved. Permission by ONE LICENSE #A-701790.