



The Ascension, Part of Rembrandt's Passion Cycle for Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange, 1636.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Established 1817

29 May 2022

The Seventh Sunday of Easter/Ascension of the Lord

10:00 AM Worship

Building Community ▪ Transforming Lives ▪ Engaging the World

WELCOME VISITORS!

Name tags are available in the narthex and vestibule – we would love to greet you by name! Along with our members, we invite you to sign the Friendship Pad when passed to you during the service. If you need a new, updated, or replacement nametag, please contact marcy@firstpresnb.org

CHILDREN are welcome at First Presbyterian Church! The nursery is available for infants, toddlers, and preschool children in Room 1.23 and 1.24 in the Ministry Center from 8:30 am to 11:15 pm.

RESTROOMS are available in the Ministry Center (including a family restroom), the Session House, and the Fellowship Center.

Prayer of Preparation

Lord Jesus Christ, your followers need you. Let whatever is ugly in us become small. Let whatever is beautiful become large. Let our fears become small. Let our confidence in you become large. Shrink our pride; enlarge our humility. Shrink our envy; enlarge our gratitude. Rise above our pettiness, O Lord Christ. Rise above our sorrows and fears and let us rise with you. Amen.

adapted from An Ascension Day prayer during COVID-19
written by Cornelius Plantinga, Jr.

Welcome

The Chiming of the Trinity

Prelude

Steal Away

Utterback

Introit

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

Smith/1744

Please join in singing verse 1 of Hymn 337

*Call to Worship

from Psalm 93 (CEB)

The Lord rules! He is robed in majesty—
the Lord is robed, clothed with strength.
**Yes, he set the world firmly in place;
it won't be shaken.**

Your throne is set firm for a very long time.
You are eternal!

**Lord, the floods have raised up—
the floods have raised up their voices;
the floods raise up a roar!**

But mightier than the sound of much water,
mightier than the sea's waves,
mighty on high is the Lord!

Your laws are so faithful.

Holiness decorates your house, Lord, for all time.

***Hymn 338** *O Beautiful for Spacious Skies* Bates/Ward

Litany of Affirmation adapted from Ephesians 1:11-23
We have also received an inheritance in Christ. We were destined by the plan of God, who accomplishes everything according to his design. We are called to be an honor to God's glory because we were the first to hope in Christ.

You too heard the word of truth in Christ, which is the good news of your salvation. You were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit because you believed in Christ. The Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance, which is applied toward our redemption as God's own people, resulting in the honor of God's glory.

God's power was at work in Christ when God raised him from the dead and sat him at God's right side in the heavens, far above every ruler and authority and power and angelic power, any power that might be named not only now but in the future.

God put everything under Christ's feet and made him head of everything in the church, which is his body. His body, the church, is the fullness of Christ, who fills everything in every way.

Summary of the Law

Matthew 22:37-39

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and the first commandment. And a second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Baptism of Abigail Wellness Kpuih

Parents: Noan Kpuih and Ayiu Puih

Elder: Carol Doty

MASKS are now optional for worship and church activities.

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS and **HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES** with ear coverings are available in the Narthex. Please ask an usher for assistance.

Have an **OFFERING**? You can place it in the wooden boxes found in the narthex and the vestibule. Thank you!

If you would like to receive **CHURCH EMAILS** containing news, announcements, and/or the newsletter, please contact cathy@firstpresnb.org.

Visit the website!
www.firstpresnb.org



Following the **CHILDREN'S MOMENT**, those in the 2nd grade or younger may depart for Children's Worship and Wonder in the Ministry Center across the hall from the nursery. For all children in worship, there are worship bags available at the front and back of the Sanctuary.

If you have questions about children, youth, or family ministry, please contact catherine@firstpresnb.org

If you would like to **FIND OUT MORE** about First Presbyterian Church, please contact anna@firstpresnb.org Our next new member classes will be on June 12 and 19.

Hymn *Child of Blessing, Child of Promise* Cole-Turner

**Child of blessing, child of promise,
baptized with the Spirit's sign,
with this water God has sealed you
unto love and grace divine**

**Child of joy, our dearest treasure,
God's you are, from God you came.
Back to God we humbly give you:
live as one who bears Christ's name.**

Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer Hymnal p. 3

...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.

2nd-grade children or younger may depart for Children's Worship and Wonder in the Ministry Center

Anthem *He Is King of Kings* spiritual

Prayer for Illumination

Gospel Reading Acts 1:1-11 and Hebrews 4:14-16
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon The Rev. Dr. Maren Sonstegard-Spray

***Affirmation of Faith** The Apostles' Creed

Let us confess the faith of our Baptism.

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.

*Hymn 267 *Come, Christians, Join to Sing* Bateman/Carr

Joys and Concerns of the Congregation

*The flowers in the Sanctuary this morning are given
by Pat Rowlett to the glory of God and
in loving memory of Pete Rowlett.*

Response *Eternal Father, Strong to Save* Whiting/Dykes

Benediction

Postlude *Eternal Father, Strong to Save* Lovelace

Liturgist: The Rev. Dr. Anna Pinckney Straight

Organist: Vance Harper Jones

Ensemble: members of the Daybreak and
Sanctuary Choirs

OUR STAFF

Anna Pinckney Straight
Pastor, Head of Staff
anna@firstpresnb.org

Maren Sonstegard-Spray
Associate Pastor
maren@firstpresnb.org

Lloyd Griffith
Parish Associate
lloyd@firstpresnb.org

Catherine Campbell
Director of Children, Youth
and Family Ministry
catherine@firstpresnb.org

Pat K. Rowlett
Director of Music
pat@firstpresnb.org

Vance Harper Jones
Organist

Mike Wildauer
Facilities Supervisor
mike@firstpresnb.org

Marcy Latteman
Office Administrator
marcy@firstpresnb.org

Kerri Wheeler
Director of Preschool
kerri@firstpresnb.org

Cathy Wingfield
Communications Facilitator
cathy@firstpresnb.org

Summer Hough
Financial Administrator
summer@firstpresnb.org

Louis Foye
Sexton

Ascension: Forty days after the Resurrection of the Lord (Easter Sunday), we remember and celebrate the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ into heaven. (See Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:1-11; see also Mark 16:19-20.) On this day, the church gives thanks for Christ's sovereign rule over all the earth, as well as his priestly intercession for us at the throne of mercy (Hebrews 4:14-16).

The Rev. Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, a Presbyterian pastor and hymn writer, has published a new hymn lamenting gun violence and remembering "the beloved children of God who died in the school shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas" on Tuesday:

God, our nation feels the loss
as our children pay the cost
for the violence we accept,
for the silence, we have kept.
Rachel weeps for children gone;
God of love, this can't go on!

Jesus, Lord, we hear you say,
"Don't turn little ones away!"
May we build a kinder land
where our children understand:
Every child here matters more
that the guns we clamor for.

Holy Spirit, wind and flame,
send us out in Jesus' name.
May we shout and say, "Enough!"
May we build a world of love —
till the sounds of weapons cease,
till our young can grow in peace.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Summer Worship! May 29 – September 4, 2022

From Memorial Day week through Labor Day weekend, there will be one worship service at 10:00 am. Sunday School classes will be from 8:40 – 9:40 am.

Fellowship Meal – Wednesday, June 1, 5:30 pm – Summer Kickoff!

Held on the Session House lawn from 5:30 through early evening. (Rain location- JM Smith Fellowship Center). There will be a bouncy house and other activities for the youth. The meal will include hamburgers and hot dogs, vegetable salad, macaroni and cheese, and chips. (Grilled chicken can be requested when you RSVP). And... a "make your own" sundae bar for dessert. Please contact the church office to sign up no later than **Monday, May 30th at 5 pm**. See you there!

Presbyterian Women Luncheon – Tuesday, June 7, 12:00

Presbyterian Women circles will be celebrating with a year-end luncheon at New Bern Golf and Country Club. The cost for the luncheon is \$20, paid in advance, **deadline of June 1**. Checks can be made out to Presbyterian Women and given to your circle leader or left in the PW box in the workroom of the Ministry Center. Our luncheon is the time we install new officers and present an Honorary Life Membership to one of our members. All women of the church are invited, and we always have a good time.

“From Many Voices – One Community”: A Conversation About Racism and Racial Inequality – Tuesday, June 7

Sponsored by Faith Connection of New Bern – an in-person gathering on Tuesday, June 7 at 6 pm at St. Paul Catholic Church. The conversation will include the “25 rules of considerate conduct” from the book “Choosing Civility” by P.M. Forni.

Red Cross Blood Drive – June 9, 2022, 9:00 am to 1:30 pm

The Blood Drive will be held in the Session House.

Church Membership Class – June 12 and 19

Rev. Dr. Anna Pinckney Straight - Ministry Center Conference Room (in the Staff Office Suite) Would you like to know more about what it means to become a member of First Presbyterian? On June 12 and 19 we will be offering an introduction to church membership with the opportunity to become a member and be welcomed at the 10:00 worship service on June 19. If you have questions or would like to know more, please contact Anna Pinckney Straight (anna@firstpresnb.org or 252-637-3270).

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Children and Youth Sunday School is taking a break this summer. That said, children and youth are welcome in the "Read this Book" class meeting in Room 2.21 from 8:40 am-9:40 am through September 4.

Nursery will continue to be available, birth to Pre-K, 8:30 am-11:15 am. We encourage our Pre-K graduates to continue to use the nursery; you can also bring your kiddo into worship through the Children's Moment to transition for the fall.

Children's Church will also meet for grades rising grades K-2 after the Children's Moment. ****If your child has completed grade 2, it is time to graduate to staying the entire hour in worship.** This is meant to be an exciting milestone!** Please be sure to thank Ms. Kerri, Children's Church teacher, for all her love and wisdom.

Vacation Bible School

VBS will be happening **Monday, June 13 - Friday, June 17 this summer from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm for kids who have completed grades K-5.** Come explore how God's creation is a gift we all share! Registration is available on our website.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND FORMATION

Sunday Mornings, 8:40 am-9:40 am

The Present Word/George Evans – Session House Parlor

The “God Frees and Redeems” series examines the nature of God through the lenses of liberation and Christian freedom. Contact George Evans (gkevans4@gmail.com) with questions. The class will begin a new study “Partners in a New Creation” on June 5.

Starting in June: Read This Book Adult Sunday School Offering – Ministry Center Room 2.21 and on Zoom

Join us for Read This Book every Sunday in June and July. Each week a different person will present a book that informed, challenged, or inspired them, and connected with their faith. You don't have to attend every week to participate in the class, and friends and family are welcome to attend! To be included on the email list for the class, contact Maren (maren@firstpresnb.org).

Schedule of presenters:

- June 5 Stacey Griffith, “Living the Sabbath” by Norman Wirzba – Reflections on living in community within God's creation
- June 12 Wendy Moeller, “Where the Light Fell: A Memoir” by Philip Yancey
- June 19 Gayle Hardy, "David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants" by Malcolm Gladwell
- June 26 Jeanette Avery, "Hell of a Book: A Novel" by Jason Mott
- July 3 Jim Copland, "John Witherspoon's American Revolution" by Gideon Mailer
- July 10 Nancy McAden, Gilead Series by Marilynne Robinson
- July 17 Lynn Gorges, "Teach a Woman to Fish: Overcoming Poverty Around the Globe" by Ritu Sharma
- July 24 Anna Pinckney Straight, "Womanist Midrash: A Reintroduction to The Women of The Torah and The Throne" by Wil Gafney
- July 31 Jessica Skinner, "Final Gifts: Understanding the Special Awareness, Needs, and Communications of the Dying" by Maggie Callahan

Special Sunday School Offering: Interfaith Refugee Ministry Presentation – June 12 – Session House Main Room

Amanda Norwood, the Volunteer/Outreach Coordinator for Interfaith Refugee Ministry, will present the important work of IRM in New Bern. Interfaith Refugee Ministry is dedicated to helping refugees rebuild their lives in eastern North Carolina. Our task is to assist refugees with the basic necessities when they first arrive in New Bern and surrounding areas. This includes, but is not limited to, assistance with housing, food, clothing, employment, learning English, and cultural orientation. The ultimate goal is to help refugees become self-reliant, emotionally secure, and culturally adjusted in their new homes. Each year, Interfaith Refugee Ministry resettles new refugee families from around the world. Our staff, working with volunteers, civic groups, and faith communities, ensures each refugee will receive basic initial support as they begin a new life in a strange land. We try to provide a bridge for these persecuted people who are coming out of the darkness of a shattered life into the bright hope of a better future.

Midweek Opportunities

Tuesday Afternoon Grief Support

The group meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 12:00 to 1:00 pm in the Chapel. This ongoing group provides its members with understanding and support after someone they love dies. All are welcome. Come and bring a friend.

Rebuilding – Divorce Recovery Group. This new group hopes to be just the right balance of a shoulder-to-cry-on and a kick-in-the-pants to support your getting through this confusing and often painful process and putting your life back together. Our next meeting is Monday, June 20, from noon to 1 pm in the Chapel. All are welcome. For more information contact Anna or Maren.

Calvin and Hops (Men's Beer and Theology)

The next gathering of Men's Beer and Theology ("Calvin and Hops") will meet at Brewery 99 (1014 Pollock St) at 4:00 pm, **June 19**, led by Ken Wilkins. This is a casual men's gathering for fellowship and conversation around topics of theology and faith.

SERVICE AND GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

RCS Donations Needed

RCS is looking for toiletry items: shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, shaving cream, razors, Q-tips, small Kleenex packs, small feminine hygiene packs, shower poofs, and hairbrushes. You can take donations to RCS or bring them to First Pres!

Flowers

If you would like to provide flowers for the church to honor an anniversary, birthday, or memorial date coming up this summer, please see the Flower Calendar in the pink folder in the Narthex.

Looking for Reception Volunteers

If you enjoy working with friendly people in a terrific environment and can volunteer your time on weekdays from either 9 am to 1 pm or 1-5 pm, please contact the church office (252-637-3270). We are looking for a few more smiling faces to join our awesome group of volunteers!

HELP WANTED

First Presbyterian is looking for a part-time Sexton (approximately 20 hours a week) to work on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays the (schedule may change depending on special meetings or activities). We are looking for someone with knowledge of and skill in cleaning, maintenance, and basic repairs with the ability to work independently and be proactive with moderate supervision. Please contact David Taylor, chair of the Personnel Committee, at cdtaylor695@gmail.com if you have a good candidate in mind.

First Presbyterian Church Session

Clerk of Session: Karen Reed

Class of 2022

Kevin Avolis
Margaret Cooper
Madison Crum
Marc Finlayson
Patti Fleming
Julia Speight
Hal Vandersea

Class of 2023

Phoebe Briley
Brent Hinckley
Middleton Hinckley
Mark Moeller
Micajah Newman
Elizabeth Paul
Margaret Pritchett

Class of 2024

James Copland
Christin Grady
Kenneth Holton
Carole Koi
Vaughn Purnell
Helen Robinson
Joyce Weaver



**First
Presbyterian
Church**

New Bern, North Carolina

Physical Address:
400 New Street
New Bern, NC 28560

Mailing Address:
PO Box 1069
New Bern, NC 28563

252.637.3270
www.firstpresnb.org
church@firstpresnb.org

*Trusting that God's grace embraces and makes a covenant with all believers,
First Presbyterian Church intends to be an inclusive place of spiritual growth for all.
All persons are welcomed into this fellowship and membership regardless of
age, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic or racial identity,
economic or educational status, or political affiliation.*