



*Jesus Welcomes All, unidentified Sudanese artist, ca. 21st Century, from
Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity
Library, Nashville, TN.*

18 July 2021
8th Sunday after Pentecost

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Established 1817

A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Building Community ▪ Transforming Lives ▪ Engaging the World

Trusting that God's grace embraces and makes covenant with all believers, First Presbyterian Church intends to be an inclusive place of spiritual growth for all people. 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.

it is to ponder what benefits us. We have failed to show your love or to do justice in obedience to you. We have no right to be called your children. Have mercy on us, God of grace. Lord, have mercy. Forgive our sins, we humbly pray. Put the mind of Christ within us, O God, so that our lives take the form of a cross. Use us to break down walls of hostility within the church, among the nations, and around the world. Equip us to do your will, giving you glory, honor, and praise together with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

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.’”

Prayer for Illumination

Lesson

Ephesians 2:11-22

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

Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Maren Sonstegard-Spray

***Affirmation of Faith**

from The Confession of 1967

(Inclusive Language Version, 2002) 9.31 and 9.32

To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as God’s reconciling community. This community, the church universal, is entrusted with God’s message of reconciliation and shares God’s labor of healing the enmities which separate people from God and from each other. Christ has called the church to this mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit. The church maintains continuity with the apostles and with Israel by faithful obedience to his call. The life, death, resurrection, and promised coming of Jesus Christ has set the pattern for the church’s mission. His human life involves the church in the common life of all people. His service to men and women commits the church

to work for every form of human well-being. His suffering makes the church sensitive to all human suffering so that it sees the face of Christ in the faces of persons in every kind of need. His crucifixion discloses to the church God’s judgment on the inhumanity that marks human relations, and the awful consequences of the church’s own complicity in injustice. In the power of the risen Christ and the hope of his coming, the church sees the promise of God’s renewal of human life in society and of God’s victory over all wrong.

***Hymn 361** *O Christ, the Great Foundation* Lew/Wesley

Joys and Concerns of the Congregation

The flowers in the Sanctuary this morning are given by Ruth John to the glory of God and in memory of her husband Richard John.

A memorial service for William C. Helms III (Chip) (10/9/59 – 4/28/21), of Stonewall, NC, will be held at Cotten Funeral Home in New Bern on July 24th at 3:00 PM, with Masonic rites. He was the son of Annette Helms and the late William C. Helms, Jr.

Prayers of the People and Lord’s Prayer

Benediction

Postlude *We Come to You for Healing, Lord* Gerike

If you have not already done so, please place your offering in the marked basket nearest the exit you use. We look forward to seeing you again next week.

Liturgist: The Rev. Dr. Anna Straight
Organist: Vance Harper Jones

Ensemble: Members of the Daybreak and Sanctuary Choirs

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nametags

As more and more of the congregation is returning to worship in person after not seeing one another in quite a while AND to help Anna become acquainted with the congregation, we want to encourage everyone to get in the habit of wearing your nametags again! If you have misplaced yours, Marcy, our Office Administrator, is happy to make you another one (marcy@firstpresnb.org). There is a board in the Narthex where you can leave your nametag at the end of the service, and it will be waiting for you the next Sunday.

Welcoming Tip of the Month

In a large congregation like First Presbyterian, it is hard to know everyone. When you attend worship, there are just a few moments, before the service and after the service, when you can connect or chat. It's important to greet your friends, but how about making time to reach out with *more than a nod* to someone you haven't yet met. It's good to remember how Jesus was always on the look-out for the stranger.

First Presbyterian Church identifies itself as a welcoming community of faith and intends to be an inclusive place of spiritual growth for all people. The Welcoming Committee over the months will be offering you tips to strengthen the hospitality of our congregation.

Flower Calendar

The flower calendar is now filled until the end of December! Many thanks to all who have signed up to provide flowers for the church. The calendar for 2022 will now be included in the folder for anyone who wants to save a date for the future!

Nursery Open

The nursery has reopened for the 11am service (from 10:30am-noon) for children, infants through second grade.

Paid Nursery Worker Recruitment

First Presbyterian Church is looking for two paid Nursery Workers and a paid Nursery Coordinator to care for our infant to four-year-old children on Sunday mornings and at special services. Applicants must be at least 18 years old, have experience in caring for young children, complete a background check and complete CPR training for infants and children. Hours for the positions are normally 8:00 am – 12:30 pm. Interested individuals should send a resume to the Office Administrator at church@firstpresnb.org.

Adult Sunday school Class “Read This Book”

JOIN US for Read This Book every Sunday, 9:30-10:30am on Zoom and in person (in the large central classroom on the second floor of the Ministry Center). 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).

Here is the schedule of upcoming presenters:

- **July 18** Anna Straight "Finding God in the Waves: How I Lost My Faith and Found It Again Through Science" by Mike McHargue
- **July 25** Wendy Moeller "Hope In Times of Fear: The Resurrection and the Meaning of Easter" by Timothy Keller

Adult Sunday school class “The Present Word”

George Evans is leading "The Present Word class: Call in the New Testament". The class meets IN PERSON Sunday morning 9:40-10:40am in the Session House Parlor. Please contact George Evans (gkevans4@gmail.com) with questions. The book is available in the church office.

Message from the Paraclete Team

Our First Presbyterian Paraclete team is activated during times of community emergency in order to check on the welfare of members and provide resource suggestions. The team is active now with hurricane season at hand. If there is a disaster you can expect a call from one of our team members. Right now, we have an opening for a couple of new team members. Please call Polly Frank or Margaret Cooper if you would like to help.

African Jewelry Making Workshop

Arts to End Genocide (ATEG) and Faith Connection will have a workshop in African Jewelry Making on Saturday, August 21, in the First Presbyterian Church J. Murphy Smith Center gymnasium. There will be two sessions (limit 125 each); 12:30-2:00 and 2:30-4:00. Reservations are recommended: 252-481-4772. Participants will receive a free packet of beads and materials to make a bracelet and/or earrings. Additional packets and/or individual beads will be available for purchase. This event is a benefit to help fund the relocation of 500 children out of a garbage dump in Bamako, Mali, West Africa, to a safer and healthier location.

Food 4 U

Our Food 4 U program has been restarted and is ready to go. The only thing we need is food FROM you! Food 4 U is (will be) available to be picked up anytime for your family or someone you know who needs it. There is a freezer in the Session House kitchen and containers in the pantry there. Take a container home for the next time you have extra soup, casserole or whatever and bring it in. Labels are also provided. Thank you for thinking of and caring for each other in this way! Questions? Call Polly Frank, 703-927-4626.

Notes: