

closer and closer

**FOURTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER
APRIL 30, 2023**

**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**
COVINGTON, GA



✠ *Please stand in body or spirit*



Gathering As God's Beloved People

Gathering Music

<i>Fanfare in C Major</i>	Henry Purcell
<i>"Holy Is the Lord" with</i>	
<i>"Lord, I Lift Your Name on High"</i>	Schubert/Page
<i>Prelude on "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"</i>	HYFRYDOL

Prelude

<i>The King of Love My Shepherd Is</i>	Emma Lou Diemer
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Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

✠ **Call to Worship**

We come to worship the risen Christ.

Praise to Christ, the good shepherd!

Alleluia, praise to Christ, the gate!

Alleluia, praise to Christ, the lamb!

Alleluia, praise to Christ, our Savior!

Christ is risen still! Alleluia!

✠ **Hymn of Praise 14**

For the Beauty of the Earth

DIX

✠ **Call to Confession**

Christ is the good shepherd, who leads us to safety and peace no matter what we have done. Christ's voice calls us to repent and return; let us heed that voice and go to God in prayer.

✠Community Confession

Savior God, you beckon us, but we do not heed your call. You gather us, but we wander away losing ourselves in false and superficial comforts. You speak truth, but we fail to hear and respond. Good Shepherd, do not give up on us. Redeem us. Restore us. Resurrect us for life in Christ.

✠Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness

Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds we have been healed.

For we were going astray like sheep, but now we have returned to the shepherd and guardian of our souls. Thanks be to God!

Church, we are forgiven!

We are free to try again.

✠Hymn of Response 240

Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks

ALLELUIA NO. 1

Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.

Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to his name.

✠Passing of the Peace



Proclaiming the Word

Wondering with God's Children

Anthem

Jesus Loves Me

William Bradbury

Joyful Noise Choir

Prayer for God's Wisdom and Understanding



Responding to the Word

✦ **Hymn of Response 187**

Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us

BRADBURY

✦ **Affirmation of Faith**

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;

he leads me beside still waters;

he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths

for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,

I fear no evil,

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff,

they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord

my whole life long.

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 Gifts

Offertory

The King of Love My Shepherd Is
Chancel Choir; Aubrey Evans, flute

Kevin Hildebrand

Choir and Congregation

***And so through all the length of days thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise within thy house forever.***

✠Hymn of Response 606

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

OLD HUNREDTH

***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.***

Prayer of Gratitude

All are invited to join in our community Prayer of Gratitude by lifting up a one-word prayer of thanksgiving.



Being the Church in the World

✠Sending Hymn 541

God Be with You Till We Meet Again

RANDOLPH

✠Charge and Benediction

First Presbyterian Church Covington is a Christian community existing to glorify God by welcoming all of God's children. We celebrate through serving, teaching, praying, eating, crying, singing, and dancing with the Holy Spirit. As works in progress, we seek to respond to God's presence in our church, lives, and community.

Postlude

Postlude on JOYFUL SONG

Chester G. Allen



Worship Practices

Music printed in our bulletin and streamed online is covered by One License #A-728738 authorizing their use.

Serving Today

Tech Team | Dan Walden, Jonny Atkins, Brad Hawley

Usher Chair | Curtis Watson

Acolyte | Palmer Wilson

Children in Worship

We have a new "Children in Worship" guiding brochure available in the Narthex! This brochure is intended to serve as an aid to parents and other members of our congregation in welcoming our children to worship.

Children are always welcome to wiggle and giggle in the pews at FPC! There are Worship Bags for children on the rack outside the Sanctuary. During worship children are invited to join us at the front of the Sanctuary for a time of Wondering with God's Children. Afterwards, children planning to go to the nursery will be escorted downstairs by Pastor Neeley or Pastor Erin. They will sign in your children in the nursery so you can sign them out when you pick them up! This is to help you stay in worship and us get them to the nursery safely. If you need help finding the nursery, you are invited to ask an usher to point the way.

Friendship Registers

In each pew there is a pad with a black cover that we invite everyone to fill out. If the Friendship Register is nearest to you, please fill it out and pass it down the pew so it can reach everyone. When you pass it on, we invite you to introduce yourself to your pew friends! We encourage visitors and newcomers to connect with us by filling out the Friendship Register so we can be sure to send you a message to thank you for joining us.

Sound System

Please know we recognize the need for improving our sound system. We have new microphones and we are evaluating new settings while we plan for better solutions. Currently, we encourage congregants who are hearing impaired to move closer to the front near the main speakers.



Sermon Series

"Closer and Closer"

The Resurrection means deeper relationships with God and one another!

At Easter, we celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead, but this is no ghostly apparition. Jesus returns in the flesh to be close once again with his friends and to bring them closer with one another. There is tenderness and physicality highlighted in the resurrection narratives, people coming together to hear and respond to this amazing news. Before Jesus' followers become heroic saints of the church, they are simply a group of friends hearing and telling one another a story for which they can barely find words. Like bedtime stories and old family lore, we share our stories in close and safe relationships so that we will be equipped to boldly share the story of Jesus in the world!

May we grow closer to God and one another as a people of the Resurrection!



1169 Clark Street SW, Covington, GA 30014
fpccov.org | 770.786.7321

Our Mission Statement

First Presbyterian Church Covington is a Christian community existing to glorify God by welcoming all of God’s children. We celebrate through serving, teaching, praying, eating, crying, singing, and dancing with the Holy Spirit. As works in progress, we seek to respond to God’s presence in our church, lives, and community.

Want to Get Involved?

Reach out to become a more involved member of the church! We always have something happening that we would love for you to be a part of. You could be an integrated member of our church by volunteering with witness team, becoming an usher, joining a book club, singing in the choir or many other activities. Contact the office and we'll point you in the right direction!
 Email: catherine@fpccov.org or call: 770-786-7321

Officers

- Reaching Out**
Curtis Watson *Witness (2024)*
- Engaging**
Charles Ardis *Christian Ed (2025)*
Pat Harper *Worship (2024)*
Nichole Howell *Worship (2025)*
Mary Catherine Whisnant *Christian Ed (2024)*
- Belonging**
Doug Bolton *Welcome (2025)*
Louly Hay Kapp *Marketing (2023)*
Bob Tabb *Finance (2023)*
- Connecting (Deacons)**
Tom Crews *Pastoral Care (2025)*
Dana Hall *Faith & Fellowship (2025)*
Eleanor Scarborough *Pastoral Care (2023)*
Darcel Tabb *Faith & Fellowship (2024)*
- More**
Billy Fortson *Personnel (2024)*
Stan Hall *Facilities (2023)*
John McCarthy *Clerk of Session*
Ed Perkerson *Strategic Planning (2023)*

First Presbyterian Church Staff

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|----------------------|
| Neeley Rentz Lane | <i>Senior Pastor</i> | |
| Erin Morgan | <i>Associate Pastor</i> | <i>Nursery Staff</i> |
| Alicia Taylor | <i>Dir. of Music & Worship Arts</i> | Hattie Bellinger |
| Alice Walker | <i>CAGO, AAGO Organist/
Ambassador Choir</i> | Sierra BlackShear |
| Catherine Laseter | <i>Dir. of Communications
& Operations</i> | Laina Lalane |
| Peni Kehoe | <i>Finance Administrator</i> | Amariah Ray |
| | | Kyla White |

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Illness

- ✦ Lee Morris, friend of Donna Weesner - meningitis
- ✦ Joe Milner, brother of Day Kennon
- ✦ Bob and Beverly Beasley, friends of Jean Elder - health concerns and care
- ✦ Bruce Hamilton, brother of Theodosia Wade - immunotherapy cancer treatment
- ✦ Mary Annese, mother of Barbara Martin - shingles
- ✦ Mike Crews, son-in-law of Jack and Miriam Wheeler - awaiting bladder cancer test results
- ✦ Linda Trenthan, friend of congregation
- ✦ Lucas and Morgan, friends of Faye and Joel Kitchens - complicated pregnancy issues
- ✦ Jennifer Idrobo, friend of Jonny Atkins - bone marrow biopsy
- ✦ Brenda Buckelew, mother of Jennifer Buckelew
- ✦ Patrick Carmichael
- ✦ Larry Cox, brother-in-law of Randy Layton - cancer
- ✦ Bob Darby, friend of Jeff MacKenzie - leg amputated, kidney problems
- ✦ Patsy Freeman, sister of Judy Davis - dementia
- ✦ Karen Lein Kaasa, sister-in-law of Julie MacKenzie - home health care
- ✦ Linea Lott, niece of Tricia Hinton - leukemia treatment
- ✦ E.W. Sims, great-uncle of Robert Lane
- ✦ Donald Vining, brother of Danny Vining - vision loss
- ✦ Blair Weaver - health issues
- ✦ Joyce Williams, sister of Danny Vining - Alzheimer's

Military Service

- ✦ Billy Scarborough - Marines
- ✦ Koen Ardis - Navy

Independent and Assisted Living

- ✦ Penny Blakeney - Oaks Assisted Living
- ✦ Homer Borders - Presbyterian Village
- ✦ Jean Elder - Florida with her daughter
- ✦ Dot Fincher - Merryvale
- ✦ Louly Hay - Presbyterian Village Athens
- ✦ Travis Moss - Westbury, Conyers
- ✦ Gene Wallace - Merryvale
- ✦ Louise White - Merryvale

Prayer Requests

All prayer requests should be sent to:
catherine@fpccov.org

MISSION TRIP WITH PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE TO NEW BERN, NC JULY 9-13, 2023.

Supporting survivors of Hurricanes Florence & Matthew.

MISSION TRIP BOOK STUDY: TOXIC CHARITY BY ROBERT D. LUPTON

ON ZOOM from 5:30-6:30PM
 May 17 | June 7 | June 14

FPCCOV.ORG/ZOOM-LINKS

Ask Pastor Erin for more details on either.

Call from the FPC Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is charged with proposing candidates for the offices of Elder (Session) and Deacon to be voted on at a **Congregational meeting on August 27, 2023**, after worship.

If you believe someone might be called to serve, please suggest their names to a member of the committee - *and it is perfectly appropriate to suggest yourself!* In submitting a name, we do kindly ask that you include a summary of why you feel this person has the gifts to be an elder or deacon.

We encourage you to contact us with any name suggestions or questions by May 4, 2023.

To suggest a name (along with summary explanation) you may email Pastor Neeley Lane (neeley@fpccov.org) or Chair of the Nominating Committee, Louly Hay-Kapp (loulyh@ymcaatlanta.org).

Read the Nominating Committee's full letter at fpccov.org/nominations

Do you have a soon-to-be graduate you'd like to celebrate?

As we come to the end of the school year, we'd like to recognize our FPC graduates as they move into a new chapter of life! Let the office know if you or a loved one is graduating and look for the list in the worship guide on May 14th. **The deadline to have your graduate included is May 8th by 5:00pm.**



You are invited to **"Text to Give"** your offering. Text FPCCOV followed by your donation amount to: 73256
 Or point your camera at the QR code to give online.

Kick-off Lunch

FPC Lunch Bunch
EST. 2023

Golden-Age Ministry

Wednesday, May 3rd
at 11:30AM at Tava's Diner

RSVP to the office by Tuesday, May 2nd at 12:00PM.

Lunch Bunch is a new lunch outing that will meet one Wednesday of the month at different local restaurants!

VBS June 5-8

Volunteer and registration forms are in the Narthex and online at fpcov.org/vbs



SOUL FEAST'S GOT TALENT

May 10th Fellowship Hall

Showcase your hidden talent!

Email your name, talent, and the approximate length of your act to darceltabb@yahoo.com **by Friday, May 5th!**



- Sunday, April 30**
Fourth Sunday of Easter
- 11:00am Worship
- 12:00pm Lemonade on the Lawn
- 12:30pm CPR Training for Nursery
- 7:00pm Jammies & Jesus
- Monday, May 1**
- 6:00pm GriefShare
- Tuesday, May 2**
- RSVP Deadline for Lunch Bunch
- 10:00am Elizabeth Ann Circle
- 10:30am Martha Circle
- 12:00pm Lectio Divina
- 2:15pm Staff Meeting
- 5:30pm Welcome Team Meeting
- Wednesday, May 3**
- 10:00am Coffee and Conversation
- 11:30am Lunch Bunch at Tava's
- 4:30pm Faithful Parenting Class
- 4:30pm Joyful Noise
- 5:00pm Hallelujah Kids!
- 6:00pm Carillon Handbell Choir
- 7:00pm Chancel Choir
- Thursday, May 4**
- Nomination submittal deadline
- Friday, May 5**
- Signup deadline for Talent Show
- Saturday, May 6**
- 10:00am CASA Gardening Service Project
- Sunday, May 7**
Fifth Sunday of Easter
- 9:45am Sunday School
- 11:00am Worship
- 7:00pm Jammies & Jesus

Saturday, May 6th at 10:00am
at CASA's main office
8134 Geiger Street, Suite 15, Covington, GA 30014
All are invited to pull out their gardening tools and come on out to help us plant flowers!