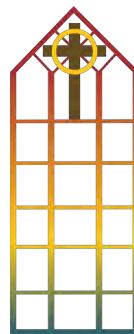


FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 7, 2023



First Presbyterian Church Covington, GA



*a poignant moment.
February 2, 1995.*

✠ *Please stand in body or spirit*



Gathering As God's Beloved People

Gathering Music

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
Concerto II for 2 Manuals and Pedal
Air from "Water Music"

Joel Raney
J.S. Bach
G.F. Handel

Prelude

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

John Hughes

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

✠ **Call to Worship**

We come together as the church;

Not a building built of wood or stone, but a spiritual house.

We will be the living stones that shout praise even when others are silent.

God redeems us, joins us together, and builds us up.

✠ **Hymn of Praise 301**

Let Us Build a House

TWO OAKS

✠ **Call to Confession**

✠ **Community Confession**

Creator God, you created us for community.

You invite us to the table, yet we resist your grace. It is sometimes easier to float around outside of the Christian community than it is to invest fully in it.

You invite others to the table as well—sometimes people whom we do not see as worthy, and sometimes people who make us feel unworthy ourselves.

We put up barriers in places where you long to create circles of love and faith. Have mercy on us. Bring us back to the center. Amen.

✠ Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness

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

Prayer for God's Wisdom and Understanding

New Testament Reading

1 Peter 2:2-10

Pew Bible page 233

Message

Living Stones

Rev. Neeley Rentz Lane



Responding to the Word

✠ Hymn of Response 361

O Christ, the Great Foundation

AURELIA

✠ Affirmation of Faith

excerpt from PCUSA Book of Order F-1.03

The church is the body of Christ. Christ gives the Church all the gifts necessary to be the body. The Church strives to demonstrate these gifts in its life as a community in the world...The Church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down. The Church is to be a community of witness, pointing beyond itself through word and work to the good news of God's transforming grace in Christ Jesus.

Prayers of the People

Offering Our Gifts

Offertory

Litany

Franz Schubert
Arranged by Ron Boud

✠Hymn of Response 606

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

OLD HUNDRETH

***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.***



The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Invitation to the Table

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

**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.**

Words of Institution

Church, you are invited to partake with bread and cup upon hearing the words “The gifts of God for the people of God.” We recognize Christ is present with us as the Body of Christ in our sanctuary and in our homes this day. May the Holy Spirit dwell with you as we participate in the sacrament of communion together. One bread, one body! See our Worship Practices section for more details on communion at FPC.

Communion Anthem

Living Bread
Chancel Choir

Text by Elizabeth H. Shank
Music by Gilbert M. Martin

Prayer After Communion



Being the Church in the World

✠ Sending Hymn 353

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

SOLID ROCK

✠ 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

We’re Marching to Zion

Gordon Young



Worship Practices

Communion

All are invited to come forward to take communion. The ushers will guide you to two stations on either side of the Lord’s table to receive the bread and the cup. You may choose to receive prepackaged communion elements or a gluten-free option which are available at the Lord’s table. If you are not physically able to come forward and would still like to receive communion, please let an usher know and it will be brought to you. Communion elements are taken to the nursery for children to

participate in the sacrament. If you would not like to receive communion, you are welcome to stay in your seat for a time of prayerful reflection.

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! 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. 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.

Serving Today

Tech Team | Dan Walden, Jonny Atkins, Brad Hawley

Usher Chair | Charles Ardis **Acolyte** | Holden Evans



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!



Worship Art

This week's worship guide cover is one of the photos sent to the Church in 1995 for an update on our *Toward 2000* capital campaign. The following text accompanied the "photo album" portion of the update. To see the full selection of photos visit fpccov.org/history and click "*Building the Sanctuary 1995.*"

In the shadow of the courthouse clock the first shovels of dirt were turned and we started to come out of the ground during the summer of 1994. A giant crane appeared on the scene and all the community began to watch as we started to change more than ever before the skyline of our community but ever still in the shadows of important parts of our heritage.

As the framework began to rise in early autumn the size and beauty of our project began to be more apparent. As the front entrance began to take shape it became impossible to drive by from any direction without staring in admiration. A green insulating skin was attached before winter arrived and with the completion of roofing and installation of windows we were "dried in" and soon ready for brick to go up. The lofty ceiling and brilliant glass were viewed up close by members after worship service January 15, 1995.

A "Crowning Moment" was literally that, on February 2, 1995 as Pott's Construction's tall crane hoisted the Cross and anchored it to the apex of the roof over our new sanctuary building. Our oldest member, Donald Stephenson (b. 1911), was there. A large color photo was on the front page of *The Covington News* along with a quote in large bold-face type from Donald Stephenson: "I was born in this town and have lived my whole life here. This is the first time there has ever been a cross on top of a church in [downtown] Covington."



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

First Presbyterian Church Staff

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

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)*

One License #A-728728 authorizes the use of music printed in our worship guide and streamed online.

SOUL FEAST

ON THE MENU:
HAMBURGERS & HOTDOGS



May 10th

Feed your body
and soul with FPC
in the Fellowship
Hall at 5:15pm.



Followed at 6:00pm by
**SOUL FEAST'S
GOT TALENT**

RSVP for dinner by Monday, May 8th at 12:00pm to
catherine@fpccov.org or 770-786-7321

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

Supporting
survivors of
Hurricanes
Florence &
Matthew.



PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER
ASSISTANCE

OUT OF CHAOS, COMES



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

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

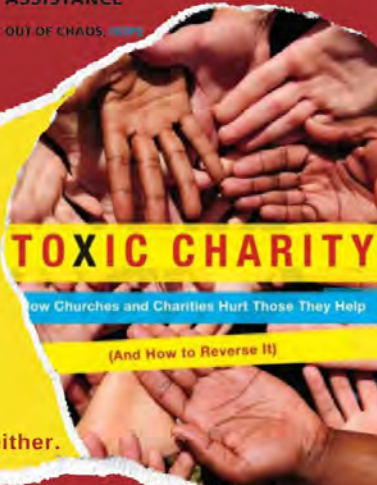
[FPCCOV.ORG/ZOOM-LINKS](https://fpccov.org/zoom-links)

Ask Pastor Erin for more details on either.

TOXIC CHARITY

How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help

(And How to Reverse It)



Sunday, May 7

Fifth Sunday of Easter

9:45am Sunday School

11:00am Worship

7:00pm Jammies & Jesus

Monday, May 8

Submission deadline for Graduates

RSVP deadline for Soul Feast

5:00pm Worship Team Meeting

6:00pm GriefShare

Tuesday, May 9

12:00pm Lectio Divina

2:15pm Staff Meeting

5:00pm Faith Formation Team Meeting

5:30pm Nominating Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 10

10:00am Coffee and Conversation

5:00pm Hallelujah Kids!

5:15pm Soul Feast

6:00pm Soul Feast's Got Talent

Thursday, May 11

2:00pm Ambassador Choir

6:00pm Blossoms & Beans

Sunday, May 14

Sixth Sunday of Easter

9:45pm Sunday School

11:00am Worship - Graduates Sunday

7:00pm Jammies & Jesus

VBS at FPC

READY, SET,

MOVE!



3 y/o - 5th grade
To register, visit
fpccov.org/vbs

9:00AM-12:00PM

JUNE 5TH-8TH

FPC YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY PRESENTS

**BELIEF AND
- BEER -**

DRINKS AND DISCUSSION

MAY 16TH | 5:30PM

AT NEELEY'S HOUSE

CHILDCARE PROVIDED

TEXT "@K74G9K"
TO 810-10 FOR
UPDATES AND
REMINDERS!

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 Anese, mother of Barbara Martin - shingles
- ✦ 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



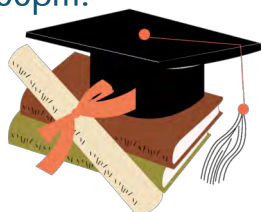
You are invited to **"Text to Give"** your offering.
Text FPCCOV followed by your donation amount to: 73256
Or point your camera at the QR code to give online.

Prayer Requests

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

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 TOMORROW May 8th by 5:00pm.**





Thriving Congregations

Listening Sessions

Session A
May 15 at 5pm
RSVP by May 11

Session B
May 21 at 5pm
RSVP by May 18

We're here to listen to our church.

Come share your hopes, dreams, and passions for our church and our community so we can know what will help us thrive as a congregation.

Held in the Gathering Room, enter through the office doors. Space limited. RSVP to Dan Walden.



Blossoms & Beans

The Ambassador Gardening Club



Meeting on Thursday,
May 11th from 6:00pm
to 7:30pm in the FPC
Fellowship Hall