

*Our Vision*  
***God Nourishes All to Grow***

*Our Mission*  
***Inspiring All to Love and Serve with Christ***



***First Presbyterian Church***

**Reverend Katie Estes, Pastor**

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October 17, 2021      “Grow Through Giving” Stewardship Focus

GATHERING MUSIC

Allegro from L’Autunno – Antoni Vivaldi  
Offertoire – César Franck  
Praise for the Morning – Lani Smith

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Prelude on *Ar hyd y nos* – Barry L. Bobb

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (responsive)

It is good to give thanks to God!

Come to make music to our Creator.

**God knows our troubles and remembers our need.**

**Our petitions are answered and our hearts’ desires fulfilled.**

Declare God’s steadfast love and faithfulness.

Seek God’s help in the sanctuary.

**We know that God will help the anointed ones.**

**Our pride is in God alone.**

Listen for the voice of God, speaking to us again.

How great is our God, our rock and defender!

**God will respond when we call.**

**We will bear fruit for God as long as life endures.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY** (unison)

**We turn to you, God of all worlds, knowing we can depend on you when earthly rulers stumble and fall, when other relationships are strained and broken, when we are faced with difficult challenges. It is good to sing your praises, even when we do not feel like singing. It is good to declare your faithfulness when we have been unfaithful. It is good to give thanks, for when we do, we are reminded of the multitude of blessings we so often take for granted. Lead us to gratitude in this time of worship today. Amen.**

**HYMN #714** “God of the Fertile Fields”

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

Each of us has a mandate from God to give our best and bear fruit for God’s realm. We who gather in God’s house are called to be a faithful community in which all humbly bow before God, motivated by the love of Christ. This is a time to examine ourselves before our Creator. Let us confess our sins together:

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (unison)

**Holy God, we bear your holiness. You sowed your love in the depths of our being. You promised to be with us always and to allow us to bear good fruit. But how hesitant we have been. How timid our voice, how doubting our heart. We have hidden your holiness in low self-esteem. We have feared the stranger more than trusted your promise. We have thwarted the growth you plan for us and tamped down growing edges we perceive in others around us. Let your love take deep root this day. Strengthen us to bear your holiness into all the world.**

**SILENT CONFESSION**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (responsive)

Jesus gave the most extravagant gift of all—the offering of himself for each of us.

**Through this selfless gift, we are set free, and our sins are forgiven. Thanks be to God!**

**\*RESPONSE #515 "I Come with Joy" (v.1)**

**I come with joy, a child of God,  
forgiven, loved, and free,  
the life of Jesus to recall,  
in love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.**

PASSING THE PEACE (responsive)

As we have been forgiven in Christ, let us also forgive one another, and God will be glorified.

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.** (*share words of peace*)

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

(*Children excused for Sunday School*)

SPECIAL MUSIC

Simple Gifts – arr. Lloyd Conley  
Bruce Deadman, euphonium

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

**Righteous God, whose works are greater than our wildest imagination and most sophisticated study, plant the seed of your Word among us today, and let each of us welcome the good news you would plant within us. Inspire in us deeper thinking and more generous giving. May our lives be the fertile ground in which your love bursts into life to nourish all whom we meet, in Jesus' name. Amen.**

PROPHET

Ezekiel 17: 22-24

This is the Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 92: 1-8, 12-14 (responsive)

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,  
to sing praises to your name, Most High;  
**to proclaim your loyal love in the morning,  
your faithfulness at nighttime  
with the ten-stringed harp,  
with the melody of the lyre  
because you've made me happy, Lord, by your acts.**

I sing with joy because of your handiwork.

How awesome are your works, Lord!

**Your thoughts are so deep!  
Ignorant people don't know—  
fools don't understand this:  
though the wicked spring up like grass  
and all evildoers seem to blossom,  
they do so only to be destroyed forever.**

But you, Lord, are exalted forever!

**The righteous will spring up like a palm tree.**

**They will grow strong like a cedar of Lebanon.**

Those who have been replanted in the Lord’s house  
will spring up in the courtyards of our God.

**They will bear fruit even when old and gray;  
they will remain lush and fresh in order to proclaim:  
“The Lord is righteous. He’s my rock.  
There’s nothing unrighteous in him.”**

GOSPEL

Mark 4: 26-32

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you O Christ.**

SERMON

"The Automatic Earth"  
Pastor Katie Estes

**HYMN #171....."A Sower Came From Ancient Hills"**

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (unison)

**We believe that God said, “Let the earth grow plant life: plants yielding seeds and fruit trees with seeds inside it.” And it was so. We believe that the earth grew plant life: plants yielding seeds and fruit trees with seeds inside it. And God saw that it was good. And we believe God said “I now give to you all the plants on the earth that yield seeds and all the trees whose fruit produces its seeds within it, you shall have them for food.”**

**We affirm that all tithes from the land, whether the seed from the ground or the fruit from the tree, are the Lord’s; they are holy to God. We believe that the One who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply our seed for sowing and increase the harvest of our righteousness, and that we will be enriched in every way as we cultivate the fruit of the Spirit called generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**STEWARDSHIP MOMENT & INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

Jane Bies

**OFFERTORY**

Flute Piece – George Green

**\*RESPONSE #327 "From All That Dwell Below the Skies" (v.2)**

**In every land begin the song; to every land the strains belong:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
In cheerful sound all voices raise and fill the world with joyful praise.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

**O God, your goodness surrounds us, your grace sustains us, your mercy redeems us; by your love we are saved. We come before you today offering our praise and thanksgiving for your indwelling Spirit and gift of Jesus Christ, who brings us new life. Placing before you the fruits of our labors, we confess anew our trust in your goodness. We rely on your grace; we are in the hands of your mercy as we seek to love others as you command.**

**SENDING**

**HYMN #36    “For the Fruit of All Creation”**

**CHARGE & BLESSING** (responsive)

Depart from this place with singing,  
for God goes with you in your serving.

**All the earth belongs to God;  
we cannot escape from God’s intent.**

Do not be afraid of change and growth that will come;  
ask for what you need and dare the new.

**God’s grace is sufficient for all our desires,  
and God’s mercy abounds for all our needs.**

Rejoice, then, in your work and play,  
serving God with genuine love for all.

**We will share the riches of Christ with all we meet,  
growing in love and gratitude daily.**

POSTLUDE

Fantasia on *Italian Hymn* – Franklin D. Ashdown