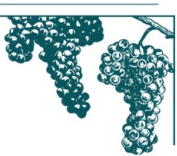




**October 12, 2025**  
*Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost*



**OUR  
GENEROSITY  
STORY**

2026 FPC STEWARDSHIP



**FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**  
COVINGTON, GA

✠ You are invited to stand in body OR in spirit ❖

# Gathering As God's Beloved People

## Gathering Music

*Processional in E-Flat*

David Johnson

*Change My Heart, O God*

Eddie Espinosa

*Solemn Processional from Cello Sonata in F Major*

Benedetto Marcello

## Invitation to Worship

## Chiming of the Hour

## Prelude

*Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy*

Charles Callahan

## Welcome & Announcements

## Stewardship Moment

Laramy & Bethany Wells

## ✠ Call to Worship

Liturgy by Sarah Are Speed

Through Moses, God said,

**"Let my people go."**

In scripture, the law declares:

**"In the seventh year, you must cancel all debts."**

With grace, Jesus said:

**"Give one coat away."**

With honesty, Jesus taught:

**"Sell what you have, give that money to the poor."**

Faith has always involved letting go, releasing, setting free,

Dropping our nets, giving to others, and following.

**So in this hour of worship, may we release that which binds us.**

**May we worship with open, untamed, and porous hearts,**

**so that we can walk freely with God.**

Let it be so.

**Amen.**

## ✠ Hymn of Praise 610

*O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

AZMON

## ✠ Call to Confession

### Personal Silent Confession

*Today we are practicing release. Release literally means: "To relieve from something that confines, burdens, or oppresses." When it comes to money, many of us long to release shame, fear, or past harm. Maybe we need to release what is holding us back from trusting in God wholeheartedly. Using your washable marker, I invite you to write a prayer of confession, naming anything you wish to release to God. We encourage you to fill up your coffee filter with words, doodles, and color.*

*Following worship you will find stations in the narthex, side hallway, and outside where you can dip your coffee filter in a bowl. You will see a place to put your coffee filter so it can dry and then be added to our Stewardship Mosaic.*

### ✠ Assurance of God's Love & Forgiveness

Water: Ruby Wells

Church, we are forgiven!

**We are free to try again.**

✠ **Hymn 582**    *Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me*    GLORY TO GOD (Vasile)  
*We invite our children to come forward and to play shakers during this song!*

***Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,  
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,  
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.***

***World without end, without end. Amen.***

***World without end, without end. Amen.***

***World without end, without end. Amen.***

***As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.***

### ✠ Passing of the Peace

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

**And also with you!**



*Proclaiming the Word*

**Wondering with God's Children**

## **Anthem**

*Cast Your Cares*  
Chancel Choir; Mark Fiddie, soloist

Arr. by Nolan Williams, Jr.

## **Prayer for God's Wisdom & Understanding**

## **Scripture Reading**

*Deuteronomy 15:1-11*

Pew Bible page 171

## **Message**

*Our Generosity Story: Release*

Rev. Neeley Rentz Lane



## *Responding to the Word*

### **✦ Response 692**

*Spirit, Open My Heart*

WILD MOUNTAIN THYME

### **✦ Affirmation of Faith**

We believe that on the first day,  
God released love and creativity over a void;  
and that void became mountains and rivers, sunsets and starry nights.  
We believe God released God's people from the grips of slavery,  
liberating us day in and day out.  
We believe God laid down with death and was released from its grip,  
knowing suffering and freeing us from this fragile life.  
And we believe God invites us—  
day in and day out—  
to release our fears, let go of assumptions, tear down walls,  
throw open the doors, and walk closer to love.  
May it be so. Amen.

## **Prayers of the People & 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: An Invitation to Generosity

*You are invited to "Text to Give" your offering! Text\* FPCCOV followed by your donation amount to: 73256 and follow the link to give online, or scan the QR Code to visit the giving page! Select "2025 Pledge" if you made a pledge during last year's stewardship season. Select "Non-Pledge" for a general offering.*



### Offertory

*Now Thank We All Our God*  
Alice Walker

J.S. Bach

### ✠Response 710

*We Lift Our Voices*

OFFERING

### ✠Prayer of Dedication & Gratitude

Holy God,

It is not always easy to give what we have.

We count pennies.

We weigh the pros and cons.

We calculate what we have given before,

And we remind ourselves what we are giving to now.

We all have our stories of generosity.

And yet,

Even though it can take work for us to practice release,

We trust that you can take these gifts—

However freely or reluctantly given—

And use them to build a more beautiful world.

For that is who you are.

You are forever building castles out of sand,

Disciples out of people, and new life out of cautious gifts.

We believe; help our unbelief.

In Christ's name we pray,

Amen.



*Being the Church in the World*

### ✠Sending Hymn 772

*Live into Hope*

TRURO

## ✦Charge & Benediction

## ✦Postlude

*Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice*

Walter Pelz



# *Our Generosity Story*

**Stewardship**—Generosity makes an impact. Whether we are aware of it or not, generosity changes the lives of others for the better and is a tool that allows us to love our neighbor as ourselves, as we are called to do from Jesus. The best stories captivate and transform us – they change how we live. This stewardship season, we invite you to remember, release, reimagine, and restore your generosity story so that we can all be a part of the story God is calling us to.

You can find Pledge Cards and our Time & Talent survey available in the Narthex, at [fpccov.org/stewardship](http://fpccov.org/stewardship) and in the e-news. We ask that they be returned by Commitment Sunday on October 26th by placing them in the offering plate, mailing or bringing them to the office, or emailing them to [peni@fpccov.org](mailto:peni@fpccov.org). These give us an estimate of what we expect our financial resources to be and allows us to create a responsible and reasonable budget and an action plan for our ministries in 2026. Please join us in creating a generosity story for FPC that will help us return our tithes and talents to God and our neighbors.

**Worship Art**—Throughout the stewardship season we will create simple art elements through worship (no “art skills” required!) which will be pieced together to make a mandala mosaic banner to illustrate our generosity to the Lord, the church, and to each other. This project is designed to help us as a church family tangibly mark our progress throughout our stewardship season. Interweaving art elements into our worship we will create a mandala mosaic. Our hope that through our creative process in bringing this mandala to life it will be a gift to our church family!

**Cover Art**—Today’s worship guide cover art is a digital painting inspired by Deuteronomy 15:1-11 titled *Release* by Lisle Gwynn Garrity. The following is the artist’s statement on the piece:

*The Israelites wandered the desert for forty years. Forty years was just long enough for them to let go of what they used to know, to doubt their purpose, to question*

God’s presence, to cultivate resilience. But it was not long enough for the sting of slavery to recede from their bones. It was not long enough for them to forget the way greed can corrupt the hearts of the powerful, the way economic disparity can bleed into overt racism, the way empire can be built on the backs of forced laborers. And so, near the end of their wilderness chapter, God guides Moses to help them release the harmful systems of their past to reimagine a new way of doing life together.

These instructions in Deuteronomy become a guide for their new economy. The scheduled practice of releasing debts every seven years was designed to be both preventive and restorative. It prevented the wealth gap from growing beyond repair. It prevented systemic poverty from becoming strategic enslavement. It softened hearts turned cold and loosened fists clenched too tight. This practice of release reminds us that net worth is not synonymous with self-worth. It cuts into greed and bondage wherever it has taken root.

How might we adopt practices of financial release in our current economy? When it comes to money, we are hard-wired to fixate on deserving. What did you do to cause this debt? What qualifies you to deserve a forgiveness loan? How did you earn this income? And yet, in God’s story, money—like grace—is released wherever it is needed instead of where it is deserved.

First Presbyterian Church Staff		
Neeley Rentz Lane	Senior Pastor	Nursery Staff
Erin Morgan	Associate Pastor	
Mark Fiddie	Dir. of Music & Worship Arts	Hattie Bellinger
Denise Gabriel	Dir. of Community Preschool	Catrina Crowe
Peni Kehoe	Finance Administrator	Akeelah Fletcher
Catherine Laseter	Dir. of Communications & Operations	Jahniyah Greene
Alice Walker	Organist CAGO, AAGO	Jordyn Williams
		Sylvia Woods

Officers	
Reaching Out	
Sara Chini	Witness (2026)
Stephanie Scarborough	Witness (2027)
Engaging	
Charles Ardis	Faith Formation (2025)
Krista Firkus	Faith Formation (2027)
Nichole Howell	Worship (2025)
Hardy Fortson Sideris	Worship (2027)
Belonging	
Gary Boteler	Finance (2027)
Pam Stillerman	Welcome (2026)
Connecting (Deacons)	
Cathy Dobbs	Pastoral Care (2027)
Denny Dobbs	Pastoral Care (2027)
Dana Hall	Faith & Fellowship (2025)
Darcel Tabb	Faith & Fellowship (2027)
More	
Jodi Atkins	Preschool (2026)
Kenny Compton	Facilities (2026)
Jo Anna Fish	Personnel (2027)
John McCarthy	Clerk of Session
Danny Vining	Personnel (2025)

Emergency Response Team	
In the event of an emergency including tornado, fire, intruder, and medical emergencies, the Emergency Response Team will lead the church’s response and may be identified by wearing yellow visibility vests. If these people are not present for an emergency secondary responders will wear ERT vests. Please follow any directions given by the following people in the event of an emergency:	
Primary Point People—Neeley Rentz Lane (Lead), Erin Morgan (Nursery)	
Medical Response—Nichole Howell, Pam Stillerman	
Facility/Security Response—Kenny Compton, Stan Hall, John McCarthy	





## Worship Practices

**Offering Cards**—The offering is an act of worship! We encourage you to place something in the offering plate as it comes to you. Throughout the pews you will find a selection of “offering cards” which we invite you to use to share how you intend to be a good steward this week. *Connect* with us as a newcomer by sharing about yourself or your family. *Pray* with us by offering a prayer which will be shared with the Pastors. *Serve* with us by telling us how you will use your time and talent this week. Or *Give* with us by placing either a card to represent your online gift or physical cash or check offering. These offering cards are an invitation to generosity!

**Accessibility**—A limited supply of large print worship guides and hymns are available in the narthex. Please return the large print binder to an usher at the end of worship so it may be updated for next week. If you'd like to learn about connecting your Bluetooth hearing aids to our Sanctuary sound system we invite you to talk to our Tech Team.

**Use**—One License #A-728728 authorizes the use of music printed in our worship guide and streamed online. \*Messages and data rates may apply when using Text to Give. Message frequency varies. Text HELP to 73256 for help. Text STOP to 73256 to cancel. Stewardship series adapted from “Our Money Story” | Liturgy by Sarah Are Speed | Graphic design and mandala art template by Lauren Wright Pittman | Mandala art project designed by Lisle Gwynn Garrity | Cover art “Release” by Lisle Gwynn Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



## Serving Today

**Usher Chair** | Gary Boteler

**Tech Team** | Brad Hawley, Jonny Atkins

**Acolytes** | Rose Ralston, Audrey Fullerton



1169 Clark Street SW Covington, GA 30014

fpccov.org 770.786.7321



# MONSTER MASH BASH

OCTOBER 26TH | 5:00PM- 7:00PM

The Monster Mash Bash is both Stewardship's Commitment Sunday Celebration AND a Halloween event with FPCP!

If you'd like to signup for a "Trunk or Treat" parking spot contact Pastor Erin Morgan at [erin@fpccov.org](mailto:erin@fpccov.org) or if you'd like to sign your group or ministry up for a table at the Time & Talent Fair contact Erin Stillerman at [erin.c.stillerman@gmail.com](mailto:erin.c.stillerman@gmail.com) Trunk and Table sign ups are both due by October 19th!



Come dressed to impress in your creepiest, funniest, or most creative Halloween costume. Enjoy a costume contest, bounce house, Kona Ice, Time & Talent Fair, Trunk or Treat, and more!

**Sunday, October 12**  
**Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

9:45am Sunday School  
9:45am Officer Training  
11:00am Worship

**Monday, October 13—**  
**Friday, October 17**

FPCP Fall Break

**Wednesday, October 15**

10:00am Coffee and Conversation  
5:45pm Handbell Choir  
6:30pm Chancel Choir

**Sunday, October 19**  
**Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

Trunk or Treat signup deadline

9:45am Sunday School  
9:45am Officer Training  
11:00am Worship  
11:30am Godly Play following Children's Moment  
12:00pm Cider & Doughnuts on the Lawn  
5:00pm Youth Group

**CIDER AND DOUGHNUTS ON THE LAWN**  
**OCT. 19** FOLLOWING WORSHIP



**FPC KIDS PUMPKIN PAINTING**  
**OCT. 22ND**  
**5:30PM-7:00PM**  
JOIN US IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL  
FOOD PROVIDED



**THREE INSTRUMENT CONCERT**  
**CANCELED**  
TO BE RESCHEDULED  
OCTOBER 12

**NEELEY'S NOOK LEADERSHIP BOOK CLUB**

VISIT [FPCCOV.ORG/ZOOM-LINKS](https://fpccov.org) TO JOIN!  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 20 AT 7:00PM  
ON ZOOM TO DISCUSS  
**GONE FOR GOOD?: NEGOTIATING THE COMING WAVE OF CHURCH PROPERTY TRANSITION** BY MARK ELSDON

**BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS**



**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND**  
**AT 4:30PM ON THE PLAYGROUND**

GRAB YOUR LAWN CHAIR AND BRING ALL YOUR BELOVED PETS FOR A SPECIAL BLESSING

## In Our Thoughts & Prayers

### Most recent prayer requests

*Requests will be moved to "ongoing" after three weeks unless the office is notified.*

- ✦ Ruth Bradshaw, mother of Kim Lindsey - returning home for physical therapy following fall
- ✦ Mr. Mosley, friend of Ruby Wells - seizures
- ✦ Sherri Thomas, friend of Kim Lindsey - recovering from blood clots in lungs
- ✦ Cathy Dobbs - recovering from surgery
- ✦ Pam Stillerman - recovering from surgery
- ✦ Alice Walker - asthma
- ✦ Ken Walker - recovering at home from hospital stay
- ✦ Glenn Hayes, brother of Brenda Howell - third consecutive foot surgery
- ✦ Louly Hay - recovering after hospital stay
- ✦ Vonda Wiebe, daughter of Peggy Stallings - in hospital recovering from accident

### Ongoing prayer requests

*Requests will be removed after six weeks unless the office is notified.*

- ✦ Dale Evans, friend of Billy Wade & former member - recovering from surgery
- ✦ Jill Chandler, sister of Brad Hawley - cancer
- ✦ Katelyn Jackson, niece of Kim McSwain - stage 3 breast cancer
- ✦ Theodosia Wade - recovering from shoulder surgery
- ✦ Peggy Harrison, friend of Miriam Wheeler - recovering from fall & hip surgery
- ✦ Randy Lawrence, friend of Terri Fullerton - recovering from surgery
- ✦ Tom Crews - recovering from fall at home
- ✦ Kayla Legg, friend of Kim Lindsey - praying for a healthy pregnancy
- ✦ Bill Loeble, friend of Billy Wade & former member - cancer

- ✦ Nancy, friend of Mark & Jennifer Fogarty - stage IV pancreatic cancer

- ✦ Dan Walden - chemo

### Condolences

- ✦ Our thoughts and prayers are with the loved ones of Penny Hale Blakeney as they mourn her passing on Saturday, September 27, 2025. A service was held on October 6.

### Independent and Assisted Living

- ✦ Reid Buckelew - Prema at Ashton Hills
- ✦ Jean Elder - Florida with her daughter
- ✦ Dot Fincher - Madison, GA
- ✦ Louly Hay - Presbyterian Village Athens
- ✦ Carol McGiboney - Prema at Ashton Hills
- ✦ Jon Paschal - Annandale Village
- ✦ Louise White - Prema at Ashton Hills

### Military Service

- ✦ Koen Ardis - Navy

Prayer requests and updates may be given to either of our pastors, put in the offering plate, or emailed to [catherine@fpccov.org](mailto:catherine@fpccov.org)

# CHANGE THE WORLD

### Sunday School

Sunday School classes  
are held at 9:45am.  
Children's Class (PreK-4th)  
Youth Class (5th+)  
Foundations Adult Class  
The Wired WORD

Change the World Day is on October 25th  
from 11:00am-2:00pm

***Witness committee is asking for diaper donations to help families in need. Drop your donations into the bin in the narthex by October 19th!***

Our witness team will have a booth at Change the World Day to let us reach out and connect to people in our community of all ages! If you'd like to volunteer ***please reach out to Stephanie Scarborough, Sara Chini, or Erin Morgan!***



**BE A PART OF OUR  
WORSHIP ART  
STORY**  
2026 FPC STEWARDSHIP

*We invite you all to join us  
for a time of prayer and art  
as we create together!*

*Meeting in the Sanctuary  
Dates and Times:*

*October 22nd | 4:00-5:00pm*

*October 29th | 5:00-6:00pm*

*For more information contact:  
[neeley@fpccov.org](mailto:neeley@fpccov.org)*

# Time & Talent

2026 FPC STEWARDSHIP Survey

Filling out your Time & Talent Survey lets us know what ministries our church family is interested in participating in or volunteering with at FPC so we can better focus on those ministries.

Scan the QR code to visit [fpccov.org/stewardship](http://fpccov.org/stewardship) or check the Narthex to find a Time & Talent survey you can fill out TODAY!

