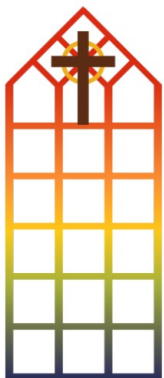


# First Presbyterian Church Covington



**NOVEMBER 16, 2025**  
**TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

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

# Gathering As God's Beloved People

## Gathering Music

|                                         |                     |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>It Is Well with My Soul</i>          | Philip P. Bliss     |
| <i>Children of the Heavenly Father</i>  | SWEDISH FOLK MELODY |
| <i>O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing</i> | Marilyn Arison      |

## Invitation to Worship

## Chiming of the Hour

## Prelude

*We Will Glorify* by Twila Paris

## Welcome & Announcements

### ✠ Call to Worship

*excerpt from Amelia Evans' statement of faith*

God made the world and loves everybody no matter what.

**I see God's love in my family, friends, and church.**

Jesus is God's Son who teaches us to love and forgive.

**Jesus shows me how to care for others and do what is right.**

**The Holy Spirit is with us every day.**

**Helping me make good choices and reminding me that I'm never alone.**

**The Church is my faith family.**

I feel close to God when we help others

like passing out cocoa at the Christmas parade and serving on MLK day.

**I want to follow Jesus, be kind, and use my gift to help people.**

**Nothing can separate us from God's love.**

Let us worship God!

### ✠ Praise Hymn 409

*God Is Here!*

ABBOT'S LEIGH

### ✠ Call to Confession

### ✠ Personal Silent Confession

✠ **Community Confession** *For courage when you don't feel very brave* by Kate Bowler

**God, I have no idea what courage is**

**Or how to muster it,**

**But I know I need it.**

**Fear is taking up too much space**

**And I have so little bandwidth left.**

**God, if courage is a gift, then please give it.**

**And if it is a thing for me to learn, then show me how.**

**For blessed are the brave.**

**Those who perform big courageous acts of sacrifice.**

**Those who move toward fear and danger**

**So the rest of us feel a little more safe.**

**May we also learn bravery in small acts of great love.**

**So bless us, God.**

**In our fear. In our shaky hope.**

**Because brave looks like that too, sometimes. Amen**

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

Water: Braden Woodham

**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

### The Sacrament of Baptism

Beatrice Nola Briggs  
Lily Faith Wells

Greer Morgan Holder  
Ruby Lela Wells

✠ **Baptismal Response 488**    *I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry*    WATERLIFE  
*I was there to hear your borning cry; I'll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized to see your life unfold.  
I was there when you were but a child with a faith to suit your well;  
in a blaze of light you wandered off to find where demons dwell.  
I was there to hear your borning cry; I'll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized to see your life unfold.*

### Anthem

Deep River  
Mark Fiddie, solo

Arr. by Harry T. Burleigh

### Prayer for God's Wisdom & Understanding

### Scripture Reading

Joshua 2:1-24

Pew Bible page 194

### Reflection

Guess Who? Rahab

Rev. Neeley Rentz Lane



# Responding to the Word

### ✠ Response 76

Do Not Be Afraid

ISAIAH 43

### Affirmation of Faith

excerpt from Beatrice Briggs' statement of faith

What is faith?

**Faith is your favorite song being on the radio after a hard day.**

**Faith is a compliment from a stranger when you are really wondering if you looked as good as you thought you did when you left the house.  
Faith is your favorite food from your favorite restaurant tasting better than it usually does.**

**Faith is you and your friend looking at each other in the most boring part of class and bursting out loud laughing.**

**Faith is rewatching your favorite films and episodes and rereading that one book.**

**Faith is rain when your garden really needs it.**

**Faith is the bass sounding perfect when you plug it into the amp.**

**Faith is everything that makes you smile and look up and just say,  
Thanks, God. Thank you.**

## **Recognition of Confirmands**

*Beatrice Nola Briggs*

*Amelia Ann Evans*

*Audrey Anne Fullerton*

*Greer Morgan Holder*

*Paisley Sims Lane*

*Kali Jordan Smith*

*Ruby Lela Wells*

## **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**

*Father I Adore You*  
Chancel Choir

by Terry Coehlo

## **✠Response 606**

*Doxology*

OLD HUNDREDTH

***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 Dedication & Gratitude**



# *Being the Church in the World*

✦ **Sending Hymn 69**

*I, the Lord of Sea and Sky*

HERE I AM (Schutte)

**Congregational Meeting**

✦ **Charge & Benediction**

✦ **Postlude**

*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*

by William G. Chisholm



## *Worship Practices*

**Confirmation**—The word confirm, from the Latin confirmare, means “to strengthen.” At Confirmation, the Holy Spirit and the church’s prayers strengthen those who are being confirmed. This strengthening includes preparing individuals who were baptized in infancy to 1) profess their personal faith and the faith of the church and 2) declare their intent to take part actively and responsibly in the church’s worship and mission. For those not baptized as children, Confirmation includes both Baptism and a profession of faith.

Confirmation is an act of covenant renewal that includes 3 parties:

God confirms a youth’s baptismal identity as a child of God, whether baptism occurred in childhood or will happen at Confirmation worship

The youth confirms their faith in Jesus and the teachings of the church

The congregation confirms the youth’s spiritual gifts for ministry & active church membership

**Baptism**—Baptism is one of two sacraments practiced by Presbyterians; Communion is the other. The act of baptism is deceptively simple—but in a handful of water, there is a deep well of mystery and meaning.

In baptism, we are called to a new way of life as Christ’s disciples, sharing the good news of the gospel with all the world. Presbyterians describe baptism as a sign and seal of the covenant of grace made by God through Jesus and extended to us.

In baptism, God claims us as beloved children and members of Christ's body, the church, washing us clean from sin as we renounce the power of evil and seek the will and way of God.

All four Gospels report the baptism of Jesus by John in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:29–34). When we are baptized with water in the name of the Trinity, we share in Christ's own baptism.

Presbyterians celebrate baptism as a communal act of public worship! Today we, as the body of Christ, will say "YES" to walking alongside Beatrice, Greer, Lily, and Ruby as we seek to nurture and love them as their family of faith!

We invite you to speak to Pastor Neeley if you are interested in baptism for yourself or your child.

**Congregational Meeting**—A congregational meeting will be held today, Sunday, November 16, 2025 following worship for the purpose of voting on the Dissolution of the Terms of Call for Reverend Erin Morgan.

**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 pastor. *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. Cover art: "Rahab" by Cody F. Miller, (codyfmiller.com) retrieved from 2021-2022 Presbyterian Women/ Horizons Bible Study *What My Grandmothers Taught Me*.



# Serving Today

**Baptismal Edlers** | Jodi Atkins, Aubrey Evans, Pam Stillerman

**Usher Chair** | Sara Chini

**Tech Team** | Kenny Compton, Kraig Howell

**Acolytes** | Thornton Holder



**1169 Clark Street SW Covington, GA 30014**

**fpccov.org 770.786.7321**

## First Presbyterian Church Staff

|                   |                                         |                      |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Neeley Rentz Lane | <i>Senior Pastor</i>                    | <i>Nursery Staff</i> |
| Mark Fiddie       | <i>Dir. of Music &amp; Worship Arts</i> | Hattie Bellinger     |
| Denise Gabriel    | <i>Dir. of Community Preschool</i>      | Catrina Crowe        |
| Peni Kehoe        | <i>Finance Administrator</i>            | Akeelah Fletcher     |
| Catherine Laseter | <i>Dir. of Communications</i>           | Jahniyah Greene      |
|                   | <i>&amp; Operations</i>                 | Jordyn Williams      |
| Alice Walker      | <i>Organist CAGO, AAGO</i>              | Sylvia Woods         |

## 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 Person—Neeley Rentz Lane  
Facility/Security Response—Kenny Compton, Stan Hall, John McCarthy  
Medical Response—Nichole Howell, Pam Stillerman

## Officers

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



## In Our Thoughts & Prayers

### Most recent prayer requests

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

- ✦ Dan Walden - bone marrow transplant
- ✦ Berklee, family of Kim McSwain
- ✦ Donald Vining, brother of Danny Vining
- ✦ Virginia, mother of FPCP teacher Tammi Welch
- ✦ Those mourning the loss of Jane Parker
- ✦ Terri Fullerton
- ✦ James Eason, grandfather of Hannah Freeman
- ✦ Ricky, friend of John Leavitt - colon cancer

### Ongoing prayer requests

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

- ✦ Jill Chandler, sister of Brad Hawley - cancer

- ✦ Katelyn Jackson, niece of Kim McSwain - stage 3 breast cancer
- ✦ Sherri Thomas, friend of Kim Lindsey - recovering from blood clot removal
- ✦ Patrick Carmichael
- ✦ Austin Belknap, friend of Angie Woodham - breast cancer
- ✦ Parker Ford, friend of Angie Woodham - cancer
- ✦ Ruth Bradshaw, mother of Kim Lindsey - home for physical therapy after fall
- ✦ Mr. Mosley, friend of Ruby Wells - seizures
- ✦ Pam Stillerman - recovering from surgery
- ✦ Glenn Hayes, brother of Brenda Howell - third consecutive foot surgery
- ✦ Kayla Legg, friend of Kim Lindsey - praying for a healthy pregnancy
- ✦ Bill Loeble, friend of Billy Wade - cancer

- ✦ Nancy, friend of Mark & Jennifer Fogarty - stage IV pancreatic cancer
- ✦ Vonda Wiebe, daughter of Peggy Stallings - recovering from accident
- ✦ Dale Evans, friend of Billy Wade & former member - recovering from surgery

### 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 the pastor, put in the offering plate, or emailed to [catherine@fpccov.org](mailto:catherine@fpccov.org)

**First Presbyterian Church Covington, GA**  
**American Red Cross Blood Drive**  
**Thursday, November 20th 12:00PM-5:00PM**  
**Fellowship Hall**

For an appointment, please visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)  
 Or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).  
 You may also use the Red Cross Donor App  
 and enter sponsor code: **firstprescov**.

*Be the change.*  
**Help change a life. Give blood.**



### Introducing our 2025 Advent Theme: **What Do You Fear?** **Insisting on Hope This Advent**

Jesus entered a fearful world, one filled with rampant oppression, economic disparity, uncertainty, and instability. A world not so unlike our own. And yet, throughout the stories of Christ's birth, we hear the whispers of angels delivering a surprising message: "Do not fear."

As we journey through this season, may your hope become gritty and resilient. May you remember: hope that trembles is still hope. **This season, let us insist on hope and trust that good news is greater than fear.**



### Donations to Alcovy CASA Holiday Help directly benefits children and teens experiencing foster care!

Help us collect gift cards to ensure families can afford food, gasoline, and more for the holiday season. CASA is asking for gift cards in increments of \$25 or more to places like Kroger, Walmart, ALDI, and Publix.

**Donations are due by December 7th!**

Send questions to Neeley!



### Sunday School

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

### **Join us in creating the FPC "All Are Welcome" Tree for Lights at Legion!**

Help make "I am loved" paper dolls before and after worship on Nov. 16, 23, and 30.

Then help decorate the tree at Legion Field on December 4th at Noon or 5:15 PM. For more details, contact Neeley.



Join us as we gather our congregations in worship.

# Community Thanksgiving Worship

**Tuesday, November 18th at 6:00pm with Communion**

Donations will support **Family Promise of NewRock**

Hosted by  
The Church of the Good Shepherd Episcopal  
4140 Clark St.

**Childcare will be available.**  
A meal will follow worship.

### **Sunday, November 16** **Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost**

Thornwell Special Offering

- 9:45am Sunday School
- 11:00am Worship—Confirmation
- 11:30am Godly Play following Children's Moment
- 12:00pm Congregational Meeting
- 5:00pm Club 234

### **Monday, November 17**

- 5:30pm FPCP Board Meeting
- 7:00pm Endowment Team Meeting

### **Tuesday, November 18**

- 12:00pm Lectio Divina—Pastor's Bible Study
- 6:00pm Community Thanksgiving Worship at Good Shepherd Episcopal

### **Wednesday, November 19**

- 10:00am Coffee & Conversation
- 4:30pm— Thank You Gathering for Erin
- 6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall
- 5:45pm Handbell Choir
- 6:30pm Chancel Choir

### **Thursday, November 20**

- 10:00am FPCP Chapel
- 12:00pm— Blood Drive
- 5:00pm

### **Sunday, November 23** **Christ the King Sunday**

- 9:45am Sunday School
- 11:00am Worship
- 12:30pm Session Meeting
- 12:45pm Decorate for Advent
- 3:00pm Retreat Planning Team Meeting



### **Come help decorate the church!**

We'll be decorating for Advent and Christmas on **Sunday, November 23rd starting at 12:45pm!**  
Contact Neeley with any questions!



# ROOTED IN **FAITH**



*Join us in celebrating*

**EMPHASIS MONTH**



**Thornwell**  
BUILDING TOMORROW'S FAMILIES

## ROOTED IN FAITH FOR 150 YEARS

Since 1875, Thornwell has been rooted in faith! It is through our faith that God calls us to care for the most vulnerable and know that He will provide. Thornwell began as dream of a young Presbyterian minister, Dr. William Plumer Jacobs, and the faithful gift of fifty cents from a 10-year-old boy named Willie Anderson. That seed of hope grew into a ministry that has served thousands of children and families with love, healing, and support.

Now, 150 years later, Thornwell continues to serve children and families through a Christ-centered continuum of care, supporting children, teens, young adults, and parents through programs across Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina.

Each November, churches like yours join in Thornwell Emphasis Month to celebrate this legacy and continue the work Dr. Jacobs began, helping families grow strong and stay rooted in faith. Whether through a prayer, a post on social media, or coins dropped into a beloved Tom the Turkey bank, your gifts make a lasting difference.

Let's continue the legacy, ***rooted in faith and growing in love.***

*Check out the suggestions below for some ideas on how your family can be involved! We can't build tomorrow's families without you.*

### ROOTED IN YOUR FAMILY

- Read the bible and pray together as a family.
- Show kindness and appreciation to each other.
- Set aside "phone-free" time to enjoy each other's company.

### ROOTED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Serve a neighbor: mow a lawn, drop off a meal, or run an errand.
- Organize a neighborhood cleanup.
- Support foster families with meals, childcare, or prayer.

### ROOTED IN MISSION WITH THORNWELL

- Pray for the children and families Thornwell serves.
- Encourage your children to return a full Tom the Turkey this month.
- Share Thornwell's mission and impact on social media.
- Make a financial gift, volunteer, or learn more at **thornwell.org**.