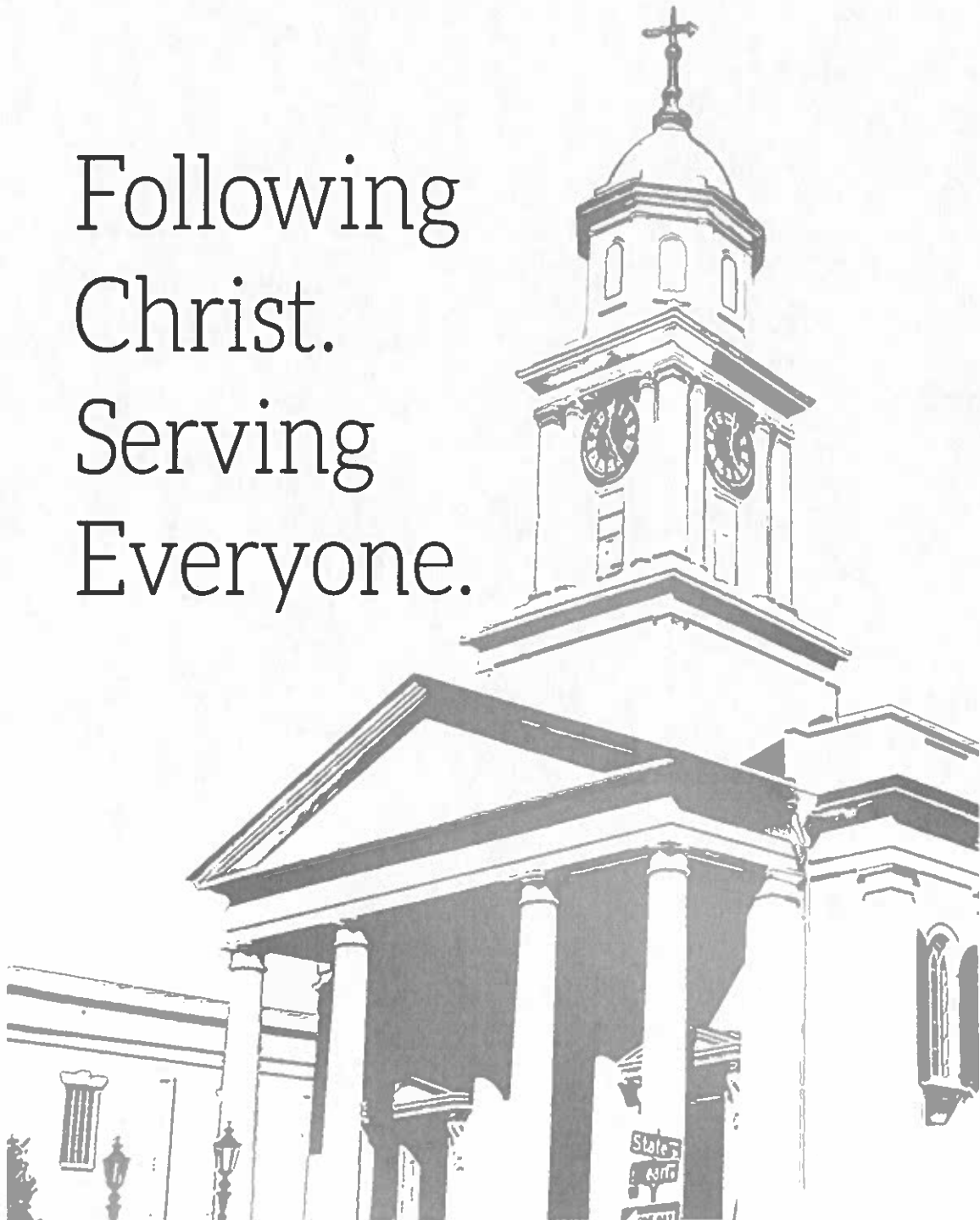




First Presbyterian Church of Natchez

Following
Christ.
Serving
Everyone.



First Presbyterian Church Natchez
Morning Worship
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 19
September 17, 2023 ~ 10:30 a.m.
The Rev. Dr. Joan W. Gandy, Minister
Mr. Vincent Bache III, Director of Music and Organist

THE GATHERING

Westminster Chimes

The chiming of the hour signals to us that it is time to be seated.
Now let us direct our hearts to the One who calls us here!

Prelude *Reverie* Martin How

Welcome Rev. Dr. Gandy

Call to Worship Psalm 118:19-24

Open to me the gates of righteousness

That I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Praise the Lord!

The Lord's name be praised!

*Processional Hymn 15, verses 1-4:

All Creatures of Our God and King

LAAST UNS ERFREUEN

15 All Creatures of Our God and King

Unison

1 All crea-tures of our God and King, lift up your voice
 2 O broth - er wind with clouds and rain, you nur - ture gifts
 3 O broth - er fire, so warm and bright, chase off the shad -
 4 All who for love of - God for - give, all who in pain

Harmony

and with us sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
 of fruit and grain. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
 ows of the night. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
 or sor - row grieve, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Unison

O broth - er sun with gold - en beam, O sis - ter moon
 O sis - ter wa - ter, flow - ing clear, make mu - sic for
 Dear moth - er earth, who day by day un - folds such bless -
 Christ bears your bur - dens and your fears; so, e - ven in

Sometimes called "The Canticle of the Sun," this cosmic roll call allows human beings to give voice to all creation. One of the earliest religious poems in the Italian language, it is made even more expansive by this broad, repetitive melody with interspersed "Alleluias."

Harmony

with sil - ver gleam, sing prais - es! Al - le - lu - ia!
 your Lord to hear. Sing prais - es! Al - le - lu - ia!
 ings on our way, sing prais - es! Al - le - lu - ia!
 the midst of tears, sing prais - es! Al - le - lu - ia!

Unison

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

5 And you, most gentle sister death,
 waiting to hush our final breath:
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Since Christ our light has pierced your gloom,
 fair is the night that leads us home.
 Sing praises! Alleluia!
 Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

6 O sisters, brothers, take your part,
 and worship God with humble heart.
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 All creatures, bless the Father, Son,
 and Holy Spirit, Three in One!
 Sing praises! Alleluia!
 Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Offering our lives in the life of Christ's church
Join in the ministries of your church as God calls you!

Confession of Sin

The congregation joins in Call to Confession and Unison Prayer of Confession.
After silent prayer, all sing the *Kyrie (Lord, Have Mercy)*

Call to Confession

Attributed to Francis of Assisi (1181-1226)

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that we may not seek so much to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned.

It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

In penitence and faith, let us confess our sins to almighty God.

Unison Prayer of Confession

Holy and merciful God, we confess our sinfulness and our offenses against you. You alone know how often we have sinned in wandering from your ways, in wasting your gifts, in forgetting your love. Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we are ashamed and sorry for all we have done to displease you. Forgive our sins, and help us to live in your light and walk in your ways, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior.

Time for Silent Confession

Lord, Have Mercy upon Us
(Choir and congregation sing.)

Kyrie

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us; Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us; Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in a treble clef with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.

Declaration of Forgiveness

Rev. Dr. Gandy

*Response Hymn 581

Gloria Patri

GREATOREX

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
And to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning,
Is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

* Greeting and the Peace

Leader: The peace of Christ be with all of you today.

All: **And also with you.**

THE WORD

Story and Prayers for Young Disciples
(Children then will go to children's class.)

Prayer for Illumination

Debbie Germany, Reader

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 50:15-21

Pew Bible Page 60

A reading from Psalms: Psalm 103:1-13

Pew Bible Page 681

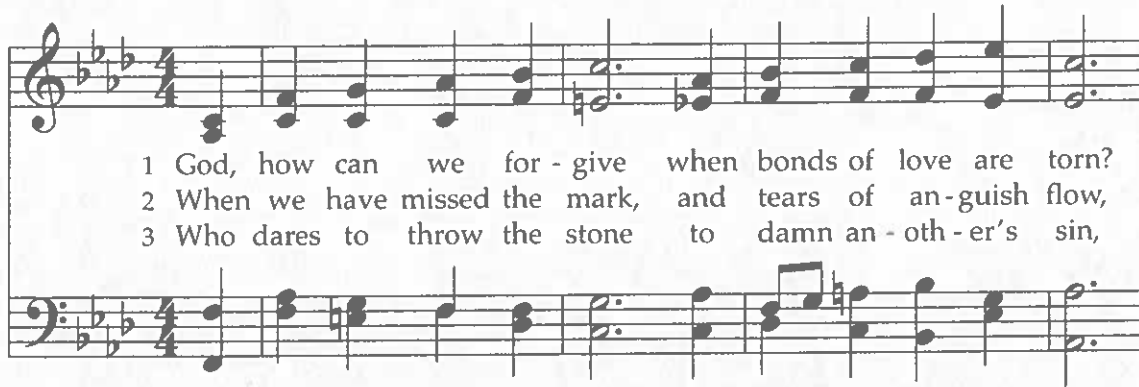
A Reading from the Epistles: Romans 14:1-12

Pew Bible Page 198

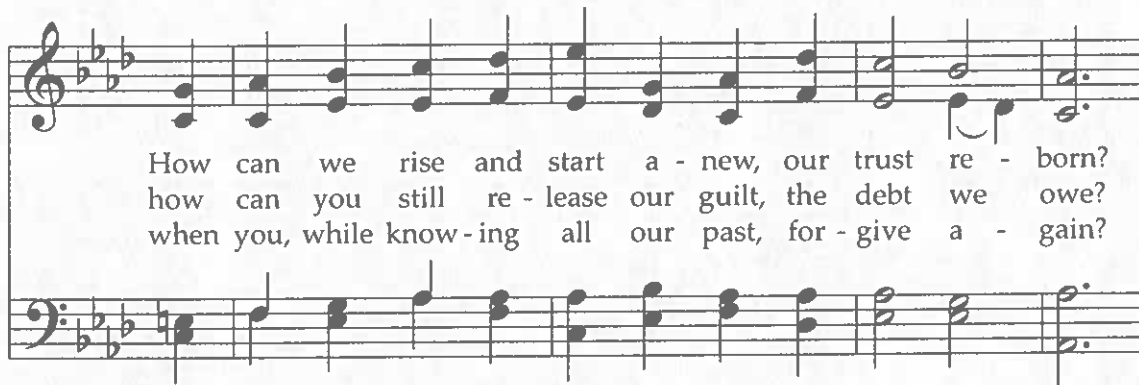
*Gospel Hymn 445: *God, How Can We Forgive*

LEONI

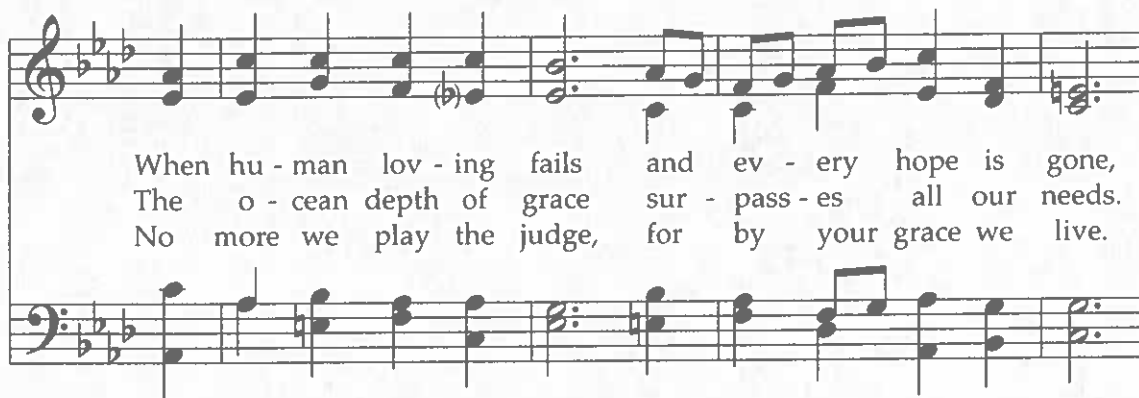
445 God, How Can We Forgive



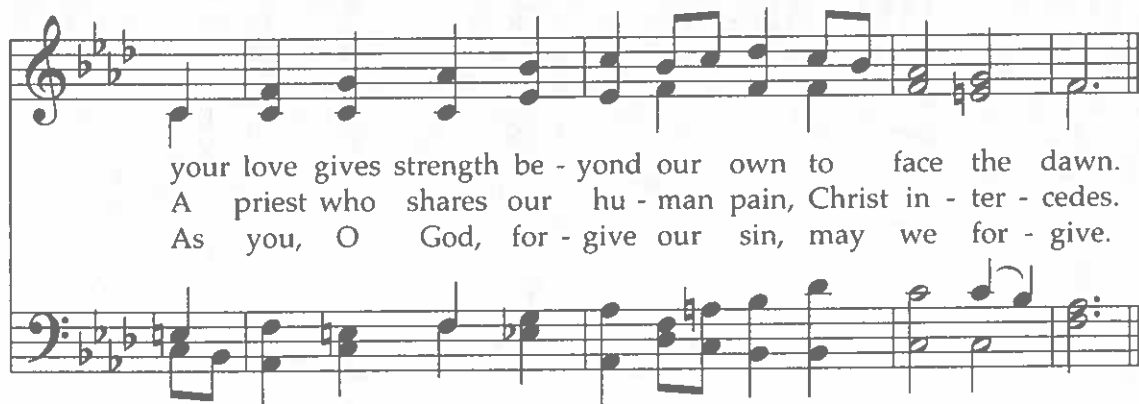
1 God, how can we for - give when bonds of love are torn?
 2 When we have missed the mark, and tears of an - guish flow,
 3 Who dares to throw the stone to damn an - oth - er's sin,



How can we rise and start a - new, our trust re - born?
 how can you still re - lease our guilt, the debt we owe?
 when you, while know - ing all our past, for - give a - gain?



When hu - man lov - ing fails and ev - ery hope is gone,
 The o - cean depth of grace sur - pass - es all our needs.
 No more we play the judge, for by your grace we live.



your love gives strength be - yond our own to face the dawn.
 A priest who shares our hu - man pain, Christ in - ter - cedes.
 As you, O God, for - give our sin, may we for - give.

This text reflects both the struggle to deal with a deep personal hurt and a keen awareness of biblical language and content. The opening line of stanza two, for example, draws on the root meaning of the Greek word for sin, and the beginning of stanza three alludes to John 8:3-8.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 18:21-35

Pew Bible Page 24

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Sermon

"God's Reverse Card"

Rev. Chase Caldwell

Affirmation of Our Faith

*Apostles' Creed

Traditional

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer (*debts/debtors*)

Traditional

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.

THE THANKSGIVING

Call for the Offering

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it. Psalm 24:1

With gladness, let us present the offering of our life and labor to the Lord.

Offertory

Yours, Lord, is the Greatness

Text: from *Common Worship*

Music: Martin How

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendor, and the majesty;
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.

All things come from you, and of your own do we give you.

*Response Hymn 606

Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye Heavenly Host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*Prayer of Dedication

THE SENDING

*Hymn 620: *Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven*

LAUDA ANIMA

Please be seated for the brief congregational meeting.

*Benediction

*Postlude

Pasticcio

Jean Langlais

The flowers in the sanctuary are given to the Glory of God and in honor of Vincent Bache III by Ann O'Bryant.

620 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

(Psalm 103)

1 Praise, my soul, the King of heav - en; to his
 2 Praise him for his grace and fa - vor to his
 3 Fa - ther - like, he tends and spares us; well our
 4 An - gels, help us to a - dore him; you be -

feet your trib - ute bring; ran - somed, healed, re - stored, for -
 peo - ple in dis - tress; praise him still the same as
 fee - ble frame he knows; in his hands he gent - ly
 hold him face to face. Sun and moon, bow down be -

giv - en, ev - er - more his prais - es sing: Al - le - lu - ia!
 ev - er, slow to chide, and swift to bless: Al - le - lu - ia!
 bears us, res - cues us from all our foes. Al - le - lu - ia!
 fore him, dwell - ers all in time and space: Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the ev - er - last - ing King.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious in his faith - ful - ness.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Wide - ly yet his mer - cy flows.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace.

This free paraphrase of Psalm 103 gains much energy and conviction by including the double "Alleluia!" before the final line of text. That repeated four-note figure descending from the tune's highest note gives voice to the praise that the rest of the hymn evokes.

Music Notes: The Prelude this morning is *Reverie*, taken from a set of pieces for organ by British composer and organist Martin How (1931-2022). The Anthem at the Offertory is *Yours, Lord, is the Greatness* also by Martin How. The Postlude is a contemporary piece for organ by Jean Langlais (1907-1991). Langlais was stricken blind from glaucoma early in his youth, but still went on to be one of the most sought-after concert organists in the world—making several trips to the United States. He followed in the footsteps of the great César Franck and Charles Tournemire as *organiste titulaire* at the Basilica of Sainte-Clotilde in Parish, 1945-1988.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome: Please welcome the Rev. Chase Caldwell to the pulpit today. Chase is serving First Presbyterian as ministry assistant during a time of transition in his ministry into the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We give thanks to God for his presence among us.

Congregational Meeting: The Congregation will meet today following the worship service to elect an officer nominating committee. This committee will nominate elders and deacons for the Class of 2026.

Pastor's Bible Study: Join the Bible study Tuesday, September 19, at 11 a.m. in Stratton Chapel parlor. Scriptures for study are Jonah 3:10-4:11; Psalm 145:1-8; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16.

Youth Choir and Together Time: Children gather with Katie at 4:15 p.m. on Wednesdays for choir, food, and fun. Families, please get the children to this excellent time for our children to grow and learn together.

PW Luncheon: The Presbyterian Women's luncheon will be Wednesday, September 20, at 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. *Please bring a brown bag lunch.* Dessert, tea, and water will be provided. The program includes the Thank Offering and installation of officers.

Wonderful Wednesday: Come for a delicious supper at 5:15 p.m. and stay for the showing and discussion of *The Chosen*. This video chronicles the gospel story. Many in the First Presbyterian congregation, along with people everywhere, have enjoyed the production and have requested a time for group viewing and discussion. Charles Hall leads these classes.

C. S. Lewis Study: Beginning Thursday, October 5, from 5:30-6:30 p.m. FPC will host a weekly study in Stratton Chapel. This ecumenical gathering will feature a study of *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis, taught by Kathleen Bond, parishioner at Trinity Episcopal Church and Lay Eucharistic Minister. *The Screwtape Letters* is a satire, using a group of short instructive messages about temptation that is at once wildly comic, deadly serious, and strikingly original. It is, perhaps, is the most engaging account of temptation—and triumph over it—ever written. All are welcome!

Handbell Rehearsal: The FPC Handbell choir rehearses at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, upstairs in the sanctuary. Whether you have rung handbells before or you want to learn how to play handbells, we would love for you to join us. Just contact the church office or Becky Jones (601-660-1812).

Sanctuary Choir: The Sanctuary Choir meets on Wednesdays, at 5:30 p.m. in the choir room.

Monday Prayer: Community prayer in the Prayer Room, located adjacent to the sanctuary, is held Mondays at 11:30 a.m. This prayer time is informal and offers opportunity to pray with and for others.

Pastoral Visits: Rev. Gandy is available for you when you have needs! Call the church for an appointment or just stop by the church office if it is an emergency. When there are burdens on your heart, problems you are trying to solve, questions about your faith you want to resolve, or any other reasons for your wanting support from the pastor, do not hesitate to call and seek that help. You are important! You are welcome!

New Members Welcomed: If you are interested in becoming a member of First Presbyterian, you will be warmly welcomed. The first step is to let Rev. Gandy know of your interest. You may see her before or after worship; or call the church at 601-442-2581 to speak with her.

AA Meetings: Open Gates AA Meeting meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 12 noon in the downstairs meeting room in Stratton Chapel. These are open discussion meetings.

Photo Gallery: Please consider donating a couple of hours to the museum as a docent. The exhibit is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. You may call Rosemary Hall or the church office to sign up.

Church Staff

The Rev. Dr. Joan W. Gandy, Pastor
The Rev. Chase Caldwell, Ministry Assistant
Mr. Vincent Bache III, Director of Music and Organist
Katie Borum, Director of Youth Activities
Aretha Davis, Playschool Director
Pam McNeil, Office Administrator
Mary Ann Peoples, Financial Secretary
Deon Buford, Sexton

Officers of the Church

ELDERS

Class of 2023: Lane Feltus, Mary Lessley, Catherine Ratcliffe
Class of 2024: George Bates, Stratton Bull, Bobby Meason, Cara Moody
Class of 2025: Chuck Borum, Sandra Burkes, Marc Doyle, Jay Fitch, Sammy Gore

DEACONS

Class of 2023: Ken Price, Ryan Sharp
Class of 2024: Kristen Abney, Everette Ratcliffe, Hubert Smith
Class of 2025: Edie Christian, Rusty Jenkins, and Randy Smith

Thank you to Charles Hall (Director), Lance Harris, Ryan Sharp, and
Jon Borum for livestreaming and video services.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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