



First Presbyterian Church of Athens

In response to God's grace, the mission of First Presbyterian Church is to create a community where people seek the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, rejoice in worship, and go forth sharing the love of Christ with Athens and the world!

September 25, 2016
8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Choir Dedication Sunday

GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

*Welcome to all who are worshipping with us. As we enter a holy space this morning, **please silence your cell phone.** The nursery is available downstairs during both services. Consult an usher if you need a personal hearing device, large-print bulletin or large-print hymnal.*

Greeting

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Prelude

Prelude on OLD 113TH

Gerald Near

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad.

8:45 a.m. Song of Gathering

Hymn 220, Stanza 1

**All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,
come ye before him and rejoice.**

11:00 a.m. Choral Introit *Psalm 98*

Melanie Powers

All the earth will shout to the Lord! Every girl and boy.
Let the whole world loud with music fill the earth with joy.
Praise God with the sound of the harp.
Praise God with the sound of singing!
Praise God with the sound of the trumpet and with bells all ringing!

Call to Worship

Psalm 118:24

O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.
**Sing and give praise to God's name;
tell the glad news of salvation from day to day.**

Children, ages 4 through grade 1, are invited to come forward to lead the Call to Worship at the 11:00 a.m. service. After the choir dedication, they will depart for Children's Church held in the Godly Play Rooms.

11:00 a.m. Dedication of Choirs

*The congregation is invited to speak or sing the liturgy in **bold** type.*

The Choral Introit was composed by Melanie Powers, Children and Youth Music Assistant. It is sung by the Cherub Choir accompanied by Maggie DeMaria, trumpet.

Written to supply this tune with words suitable for occasions celebrating music, the text *When in Our Music God Is Glorified* explores how human song gives voice to creation, how music can convey new insight, how sung faith has kept the church authentic, and how sound can be praise.

***Hymn 264** *When in Our Music God Is Glorified*
****Latecomers may be seated.*

ENGELBERG

***Call to Confession**

***Prayer of Confession**

**How can we look at this world and not sing of your praises,
O God?**

**The beauty and majesty of the world is overpowering!
Yet we have a tendency to take all that you do for us
for granted.**

**We treat the world with callous indifference,
using its resources carelessly and with little regard
to the future.**

**We insist on war as a solution for problems
rather than peaceful striving.**

**We turn our backs on people in need,
always believing that someone else will take care of them.
Forgive us.**

**Make us fully aware of all our blessings and our responsibilities.
Help us be agents of peace and hope.**

***Silent Prayer**

Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Congregational Response**

Hymn 579

**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.**

***Passing of the Peace**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

*Worshippers may greet each other by saying, "The peace of Christ be with you,"
and responding, "And also with you."*

****Latecomers may be seated.*

Today we honor the ministry of our six choirs: Cherub Choir, St. Andrews Choir, Celebration Singers, Chancel Choir, The Mellows, and the Handbell Choir. The anthem is sung by the St. Andrews Choir, Celebration Singers, and Chancel Choir.

11:00 a.m. Anthem *I Will Sing with the Spirit*

John Rutter

I will sing with the spirit: alleluia.

And I will sing with the understanding also: alleluia.

Chancel Choir, Celebration Singers, and St. Andrews Choir

11:00 a.m. Reception of New Members

***Congregational Response**

Hymn 438, Stanza 1

**Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love:
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Congregational Prayer for Illumination

Hymn 339, Stanza 1

**Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
nought be all else to me, save that thou art;
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.**

First Lesson Colossians 3:12-17, page 1076
This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***8:45 a.m. Hymn 430** *Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!* DARWALL'S 148TH

Second Lesson 1 Chronicles 16:8-13, 23-27, page 370
This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon *If You Can't Sing It, You Don't Have to Believe It*
Dr. Bruce Lancaster

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Affirmation of Faith** *The Apostles' Creed* Hymnal, p. 14

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer Hymnal, p. 16
... **forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.** ...

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings
Every worshiper, young and old, is encouraged to offer a gift out of gratitude to God.

8:45 a.m. Offertory *Variations on ENGELBERG* Austin C. Lovelace

11:00 a.m. Offertory *The Chorister's Prayer* K. Lee Scott
Bless, O Lord, us thy servants who minister in thy temple;
grant that what we sing with our lips we may believe in our hearts,
and what we believe in our hearts we may show forth in our lives;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

***Doxology** Hymn 592
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**

SENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

***Hymn 253** *I'll Praise My Maker* OLD 113TH

***Benediction**

***Congregational Response** Hymn 540, Stanza 1
God be with you till we meet again;
loving counsels guide, uphold you,
with a shepherd's care enfold you:
God be with you till we meet again.

***Postlude** *When in Our Music God Is Glorified* William H. Bates

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The text of Hymn 430 was the winner in a hymn competition sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Bicentennial Committee for the 1988-89 observance, which had the theme "Celebrating the Journey." The late 18th-century tune (first used with Psalm 148) is appropriately celebratory.

I'll Praise My Maker is a paraphrase of Psalm 146 and was a great favorite of John Wesley: it appeared in his first hymn collection in 1737 (published in Charleston, South Carolina) and was on his lips when he died. The 16th-century tune to which it is set here is the one Isaac Watts had in mind for it.

Following 11:00 a.m. worship, all are invited for a time of fellowship and refreshments in Fellowship Hall to welcome our new members and celebrate our choirs.