

Welcome to  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WORLD COMMUNION AND  
HOMECOMING SUNDAY  
October 5, 2025

DOUBTING THOMAS

UNRAVELED

SEEKING GOD WHEN OUR PLANS FALL APART



Welcome to this sanctuary.  
Welcome to this time of worship and wonder.  
Welcome to this family of faith.

We're glad you're here today and pray that your experience  
with us in worship is both challenging and uplifting!

*Our ushers are available to assist you as needed.*

For more information about First Presbyterian Church, we invite you  
to visit our website. There you will find out the ways to keep in touch,  
how we live our faith, our different partnerships and so much more.

Our website address is: [www.firstpresracine.org](http://www.firstpresracine.org)

If you're interested in receiving news about the church,  
please call 262.632.1686 or email: [shelley@firstpresracine.org](mailto:shelley@firstpresracine.org)

**Rev. Darren Utley—Church Pastor**  
[pastordarren@firstpresracine.org](mailto:pastordarren@firstpresracine.org)

## TODAY'S SERVICE

PASTOR—Rev. Darren Utley

LITURGIST—Ken Schacht

MUSICIANS—Alejandro Alumbremos, Mark Paffrath, Pat Badger, Dave Titus, Chancel Choir

BULLETIN & GRAPHICS—Shelley Maurer

MEDIA TECH SPECIALIST—Steve Comeau

\*Please stand as you are able.

**[Bold type]** indicates text to be spoken by the congregation.

***[Bold italic type]*** indicates song to be sung by the congregation.



## WE GATHER TO WORSHIP

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Ken Schacht*

Family of faith, welcome to worship on this World Communion and Homecoming Sunday. Whether this is your first time here, or your hundredth time with us, we are delighted to see you on this special day.

You may notice that our Communion Table today is laden with a wide array of delicious breads originating from different parts of the globe. That is because on World Communion Sunday, Christians all over the globe come to Christ's Table to remember that we are united as the body of Christ. Therefore, as a reminder of this good news, we have bread from around the world. Our bread basket overflows! Today is a joyful day, a holy day, and we are thrilled to share it with you.

Friends, let us now prepare our hearts for worship. I invite you to take a deep breath in. Feel your feet below you on the floor. Release the tension in your jaw and roll your shoulders back. This is God's house. You are welcome here. All are welcome here. So let us worship our holy God together. Please rise in body or in spirit to join me in the call to worship.

### PRELUDE

**All Are Welcome** | *Gaelic Tune, Kathleen Henson  
Alejandro Alumbros*

### CALL TO WORSHIP

So much in life is unpredictable.

**Life begins and ends.**

The weather changes.

**Love surprises us.**

Doors close.

**Others open.**

Life is unpredictable,

But what we can count on is finding God in this space;

**For this is God's house, and all are welcome.**

So bring your questions and concerns, your doubts and wonderings,

For in the midst of this unpredictable life, we can predict this:

**Love lives here.**

**Let us worship God.**

\*OPENING HYMN

**Thine Is the Glory**

[GtG Hymn #238]

A PRAYER FOR WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

*New Zealand Prayer Book 2005*

**Eternal Spirit,  
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,  
Source of all that is and shall be,  
Mother and Father of us all,  
Loving God in whom is heaven –  
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe;  
The way of your justice be followed by all peoples on Earth;  
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings;  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on Earth.  
With the bread we need for today, feed us;  
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us;  
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us;  
From trials too great to endure, spare us;  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
For you reign in the glory of the power that is Love,  
Now and forever.  
Amen!**

\*ACT OF PRAISE

**Arise, Your Light Is Come!**

[GtG Hymn #744, v. 4]

***Arise, your light has come!  
The mountains burst in song!  
Rise up like eagles on the wing,  
God's power will make us strong.***

\*PASSING THE PEACE

As Christ welcomed everyone, no matter what their background or social standing;  
as Christ welcomed enemies & friends, outcasts & leaders,  
foreigners & neighbors, let us open our hearts and homes and lives.  
Let us be like Christ to everyone we meet.  
Peace be with you.  
**And also with you.**

CHORAL ANTHEM

**“Hello” from around the World** | *Greg Gilpin, Karen Crane*  
*Chancel Choir, directed by Alejandro Alumbrosos*

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE

**John 20:19-29**

[NT 115]

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

**We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight**

\*SONG OF RESPONSE

**Dona Nobis Pacem**  
[GtG Hymn #752, 3 times]

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**I believe in God, the Great Sewer—  
Who weaves us together in community,  
Collecting our loose ends and turning them into belonging.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit—  
Who hems us in before and behind,  
Catching us when we fall and writing us into God's holy narrative.**

**And I believe in Jesus Christ—  
Who loved and claimed the people society had thrown out,  
refusing to disregard anyone as scrap.**

**I believe God has woven part of God's self into the fiber of our being,  
Making us inherently worthy of love and belonging.**

**I believe the fabric of my life is weak,  
That I am prone to error and need God's handiwork to remind me of love.**

**I believe in the Church, and that like a quilt of different fabrics,  
She is designed to be as diverse and beautiful as God's creation.**

**And I believe that when life unravels,  
God is there to stitch my wounds together,  
To hold me in the palm of God's hand, to tell me of love,  
And to invite me into a new journey.  
Amen.**

OFFERING/OFFERTORY

**Coming Home to Me** | *Patti Griffin*

\*DOXOLOGY

***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.***

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord be with you,

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts,

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God,

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

**O Day of Rest and Gladness**

*Please be assured that the communion bread will always be gluten-free.*

GOING FORTH TO MINISTER

\*CLOSING HYMN

**Womb of Life and Source of Being**

[GtG Hymn #3]

\*BENEDICTION

\*SUNG BLESSING

**Weave Us Together** | Rosemary Crow

[Refrain, v. 3, refrain]

*Weave, weave, weave us together,  
Weave us together in unity and love,  
Weave, weave, weave us together,  
Weave us together, together in love.*

*A moment ago, still we did not know  
Our unity, only diversity.  
Now Christ in me greets the Christ in thee  
In one great family....*

*Weave, weave, weave us together,  
Weave us together in unity and love,  
Weave, weave, weave us together,  
Weave us together, together in love.*

POSTLUDE

**Con moto** | Christian H. Rinck

*Prayers by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)*





## **Grieving Thomas** | *Lauren Wright Pittman*

As a courtesy to everyone, please mute your mobile device.



## UNRAVELED

DOUBTING THOMAS

*When the Unimaginable Has Happened*

READ // JOHN 20:19-29

FROM THE ARTIST // LAUREN WRIGHT PITTMAN

When the unimaginable happens, we can find ourselves drowning in doubt. We flail, reaching for something to bolster our faith in a sovereign, living God. Here we see Thomas needing tangibility: “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.” Thomas has just experienced the death of his teacher, close companion, and the long-awaited Messiah. Reeling in grief, Thomas needs a buoy to keep him afloat. Jesus offers Thomas peace, meeting him where he is instead of offering condemnation or a condescending nickname. He welcomes Thomas to do what he needs to find footing, but we aren’t told that Thomas actually acts upon the invitation. Instead, he says, “My Lord and my God!” Thomas is separated from Christ in death and all he asks is to be close to him again. Instead of poking Christ’s wounds in doubt, he reclaims relationship with Jesus.

When I visited India, I learned of “St. Thomas Christians.” It is said that during Thomas’ extensive travels he began several churches in southern India. To this day people proudly identify with his name. These Indian Christians do not define Thomas by his doubt; they define their own faith by his ministry. They know Christ because of Thomas. Thomas moved forward from that place of doubt, and his impact stretched to the far southern tip of India.

I chose to depict Thomas rubbing his eyes as he awakens from his grief to the reality that Christ has not left him. Lotus flowers (a symbol for India) swirl around his head in the waters that image the depth of his mourning. His ministry blooms out of this raw, authentic moment of appropriate doubt.





## RESPOND

DOUBTING THOMAS

*When the Unimaginable Has Happened*



## LOOK

Take a few moments to gaze upon the artwork. Breathe deeply in quiet meditation as you observe the visual qualities of what you see: color, line, texture, movement, shape, form.

Now take a deeper look. What parts of the image are your eyes most drawn to? What parts of the image did you overlook?

Now engage your imagination. What story do you imagine for the figure?



## REFLECT

- What has unraveled and/or is unraveling in this story?
- Why is Thomas isolated from the other disciples when Jesus appears? Where is he? What is he doing and why?
- In verses 21 and 26, the Greek word for “peace” is *eirene*, stemming from the verb, *eiro*, which means to join or bind together that which has been separated. How does this definition for peace impact your reading of this story? What is being bound together?



## PRAY

When I am unraveled by brokenness, breathe your peace into my lungs so I might feel and know you are near. Amen.

## PRAYERS ARE POWERFUL

Heartfelt thoughts & prayers for all who have recently experienced the loss of a friend or family member. May they know peace and comfort during these difficult times.

Prayers of comfort & healing for Peggy Wanger, Ed Lehmann, Carter Nitz, Sandra Hopkins, Kay Mahl, Peggy Taylor, Kathy Wortley, Ellen Easley, Mac & Marilyn MacCaughey, Mary Johnson, Leah Fisher, Barb Stevenson, Evelyn Vanderheyden, Louise Shapley.

As they deal with physical, emotional and/or spiritual issues, please pray for the family of Ruby Seeton, Autumn Eifert's paternal grandmother; Carol—sister of Ginny Holle; Bob—friend of Sharon Campbell; Dan & Joyce—parents and Jeff—husband of Shelley Maurer; Richard—brother of Steve Comeau; Elena & Ezequiel Romero—parents of Deb Utley; Masako—mother of Fumi Nakayama; John—husband of Sandy Hawley; Mary Ann—mother of Cheryl Nitz; John—son of Mac & Marilyn MacCaughey; Laurel - niece of the Vollmans; Rudy—Nancy Lechner's brother; the Moes' family and Scott Mohn—friends of the Paffrath family; Steve, Susan, Sandra, John, Liz and Gabby—friends & family of the Galles; Chuck Pehlivanian—Sue's husband; Nancy—mother of Gloria Zember; Meyer Schaal; Linda—daughter of Louise Shapley; Tim—family member of Sheila Lawrence; and friends & family of the Lehmanns.

Prayers for those in the service — Col. Jay Brooke, Evan Humphreys, Jared Smith, Jordan Smith, Nicholas Hansen.

*Thank you for your continued prayers for everyone. They are powerful!*



The Mission Initiative is sponsoring their apple fundraiser **TODAY**, directly following the World Communion Sunday service. Enjoy freshly picked apples from Ela Orchard in Rochester, WI.

There will be a free-will offering to benefit the food banks at First Presbyterian Church.

To make a secure, online donation, please visit our website at <https://firstpresracine.org/donate>. Click on "Secure Giving Through PayPal" and select Apple Fundraiser from the dropdown menu.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING?

## **Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>**

9:30<sup>AM</sup>—World Communion and Homecoming  
Sunday Worship

10:40<sup>AM</sup>—Homecoming Celebration—*Family, Fun & Fall Favorites*

## **Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup>**

9:00<sup>AM</sup>—Staff Meeting via Zoom

## **Tuesday, October 7<sup>th</sup>**

10:00<sup>AM</sup>—Delivery for the Food Pantry

## **Wednesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>**

4:00<sup>PM</sup>—Food Pantry

## **Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup>**

7:30<sup>PM</sup>—*Racine Symphony Orchestra Concert (Sanctuary)*

## **Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup>**

9:30<sup>AM</sup>—Sunday Worship

10:40<sup>AM</sup>—Fellowship



Save the date for Music & More!

## **A CANDLELIGHT CONCERT**

*The Choral Arts Society and Music & More Collaboration*

Saturday, December 6, 2025 at 7:00<sup>PM</sup>

Tickets \$20 (adult) - \$10 (youth) purchase from CAS



To learn about the **First Pres Food Pantry**, and the many ways you can help, please visit our webpage at: <https://firstpresracine.org/living-our-faith/first-pres-food-pantry>.

We encourage any vegetable gardeners with an over-abundance of fresh produce to drop them off on Wednesdays by 3:30<sup>PM</sup>. This is a wonderful seasonal extra which is greatly appreciated by food pantry guests.

*What's needed?*

We have a hard time keeping in stock are boxed dinners that include pasta (e.g., macaroni & cheese); shelf-stable proteins—including canned or foil pouches of tuna, chicken or ham; cans of hearty soups & stews.

*Don't like to shop? Consider making a monetary donation!*

- Drop a check in the offering basket. On the memo line, please indicate that it is for the food pantry.
- You can also make a secure, online donation, make a secure online donation at: <https://firstpresracine.org/donate>. Click on SECURE GIVING THROUGH PAYPAL. From the dropdown list, please select Food Pantry.
- Scan the QR code.



**WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY AND CONTINUED SUPPORT!**