

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
11 WASHINGTON STREET CUMBERLAND, MD 21502



SERVICE OF WORD & SACRAMENT: HOLY COMMUNION
BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSING

SEPTEMBER 7, 2025 11:00 AM

GATHERING

OPENING VOLUNTARY

LOVE LIFTED ME
NANCY HODGES, PIANO

HOWARD E. SMITH, ARR. BY JINA PARK.

11:00 AM

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

YOUNG DISCIPLES

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

* CALL TO WORSHIP & PRAYER FOR THE DAY

There is good and there is wicked in the world.

Lord, help us find the good.

The wicked are perishing. Like chaff, they will not stand before the Lord.

Lord, drive wickedness away with the wind.

The good is like a tree, planted by streams of sweet water.

Lord, let goodness yield its fruit in every season.

Our delight is in the law of the Lord.

Let us meditate upon God's promises from morning into night.

Let us pray -

God our Judge, we meditate upon your promises from morning into night. Our delight is in your law. Let goodness yield its fruit in every season that, like a tree planted by streams of sweet water, we might find the good and live how you intended: free, flourishing, and in peace. Amen.

* HYMN #664

MORNING HAS BROKEN

"BUNESSAN"

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Creator God, you are the Potter and we are the clay. Yet too often we resist your shaping. We harden our hearts, we crack under pressure, and we turn away from the purpose you intend. Forgive us, Lord. Soften us with your mercy, reshape us with your grace, and mold us once again into vessels that carry your love into the world. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

(Silence for personal prayer and reflection.)

RESPONSE #551

LORD, HAVE MERCY

"LAND OF REST"

Lord, have mercy; Christ have mercy; Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy; Christ have mercy; Lord, have mercy upon us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

THE BLESSING OF VOLUNTEERS, TEACHERS, AND STUDENTS

CHILDCARE VOLUNTEER

Let us pray...

Bless our childcare volunteers, O God, that they may share faith in You by words, stories, crafts and examples, as they care for our youngest disciples.

TEACHERS

Let us pray...

Bless our teachers, O God, that they may lead with love and teach with compassion.

STUDENTS

Let us pray...

Bless our students, O God, that they may learn with joy and grow in wisdom.

CLOSING PRAYER

God of wisdom and love, bless all who seek to learn and all who teach. Bless all who care for the little ones and all who strive to grow in knowledge and grace. May this year be filled with your guidance, protection, and peace. In all we do, may we honor you with our hearts, minds, and actions. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE AND CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

Please stand and greet those in the pews near you. Send a wave to the camera for those joining online.

We recognize how important we are to each other; we belong to each other and are stronger together.

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

PSALM 139:1-6, 13-18

- ¹ O Lord, you have searched me and known me. ² You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. ³ You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. ⁴ Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. ⁵ You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. ⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. ¹³ For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed. ¹⁷ How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! ¹⁸ I try to count them—they are more than the sand; I come to the end—I am still with you.

SOLO

PIANO SONG
NANCY HODGES, PIANO

PAUL HALLEY

SECOND READING

JEREMIAH 18:1-11

¹⁸ The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ² "Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." ³ So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. ⁴ The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him. ⁵ Then the word of the Lord came to me: ⁶ Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the Lord. Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. ⁷ At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, ⁸ but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. ⁹ And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, ¹⁰ but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. ¹¹ Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the Lord: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you, from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.

SERMON

"A TRIP TO THE POTTER'S HOUSE"

REV. ALISON PETERS

* HYMN #157

I DANCED IN THE MORNING

"LORD OF THE DANCE"

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

INVITATION TO OFFERING

(Please place all tithes and offerings as well as any orange prayer request cards in the offering plate.)

OFFERTORY SOLO

A PRAYER FOR RENEWAL
NANCY HODGES, PIANO

FRANKLIN RITTER

* DOXOLOGY #606

PRaise GOD, FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW

"OLD HUNDRETH"

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

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

THE LORD’S PRAYER- ECUMENICAL VERSION (*You are welcome to pray the Lord’s Prayer with the version most familiar to you.*)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

*You are invited to come forward and receive the elements by Intinction (take the bread and dip it in the cup).
There are also individual cups as well as gluten-free crackers available.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy Potter, at this table you have taken us in your hands, filling us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation. As we rise from this meal, continue to shape us into vessels of your grace. Where we are fragile, strengthen us. Where we are misshapen, remake us. Send us out, renewed by your Spirit, to bear your love into the world until all creation is made whole in you. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

* HYMN #354 MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE GLORY “BATTLE HYMN”

* BENEDICTION

* RESPONSE AFTER BENEDICTION #306 BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS (Verse 1) “DENNIS”

*At FPC there is a tradition of joining hands while singing “Blest Be the Tie That Binds” to close our service.
You are welcome to do whatever feels comfortable during this time. There is no wrong way to participate in worship!*

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

POSTLUDE HYMN TO JOY
JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

* When this symbol precedes an element of the service, if you are able, please stand.
Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in **bold**.

This Morning’s Worship Leaders

Preacher.....	Rev. Alison Peters
Liturgist.....	Wesley Mason
Director of Music Ministries/Organist/Pianist.....	Judith Brown
Musician.....	Nancy Hodges, Piano
Audio/Video Technicians.....	Joe Aurigemma and Eric Ringler
Ushers.....	Michael and Cathy Levitas
Nursery.....	Kathy Dowell and Julie Courtney

FALL KICK-OFF PICNIC: Join us next Sunday, September 14th at Rocky Gap State Park for our Fall Kick-off worship service. The service will begin at 11:00 AM at the White Pine Pavilion on the left-hand side of Pleasant Valley Road. Attendees should wear comfortable clothes suitable for the weather. Bring chairs for personal comfort. Plan to stay for a picnic potluck lunch and social time together. The Congregational Care & Outreach Committee will be providing fried chicken and pulled pork. There is a sheet on the table outside of Brittany’s office to sign up to bring a dish. Lawn games and board games will be provided. We invite you to bring your favorite games to share! In the event that the forecast for that Sunday morning is for steady rain/wind, the service, potluck and picnic fun will be held inside the church. Announcement of the decision to move indoors will be made on Saturday through the various methods we have of notifying members of a change in plans.



WELCOME: A very warm welcome to everyone who comes to worship with us here at First Presbyterian Church! We are proud to be a "Big Tent Church" where everyone is welcome to join us in worshiping and serving our Lord, Jesus Christ. We welcome and encourage worshipers of all races, all women, men, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, all political parties, and all walks of life to join us. We welcome you to worship with us.

WELCOME VISITORS: We are glad you found your way to First Presbyterian Church of Cumberland. For more information about opportunities to worship, learn and serve with us, we encourage you to visit the table outside the church office. You can also learn more about us at www.fpc-cumberland.org and www.facebook.com/First.Pres.Cumberland.

FRIENDSHIP PADS: Please locate and sign the red pad in your pew, tear off the sheet and place it in the collection plate during the offering. This important practice allows us to be mindful of new folks and long-time members as well, and is a good way to learn (or remember) the names of those with whom you are seated. **If you are visitor, please fill out the "Welcome to First Presbyterian Church" card in the pew rack and put it in the offering plate when it comes by during the service.**

PERSONAL LISTENING DEVICES: (amplifiers) are available in the back of the church for use during worship. Please see an usher for assistance.

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS: Please use the orange prayer request cards, which are located in the back of the sanctuary by the bulletins to share any joys or concerns. Place the card in the offering plate once you have completed your request. The ushers will bring them to the pastor during the offering. The orange prayer request cards are also available in the pew racks.



CHILDREN IN WORSHIP: You are welcome to bring your child with you to worship. We have "worship bags" in the back of the sanctuary that include materials for drawing and coloring, as well as Bible stories and Bible word-find games. Our "To Families with Young Children" pew card contains information about why young children should be encouraged to come to worship and how parents and others can

engage them more fully in worship. **Childcare is provided during worship as needed! Please see an usher if you have any questions.**

THE PRAY-GROUND is a special space in the sanctuary for our youngest children and their families. All families are welcome to come and sit in the right front pews with their children seated on the rug. This front row seat will allow God's youngest children to participate in the service in a place where they can see and hear best. There will be activities provided so that their little hands are kept busy while participating in worship. "Jesus said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it'" (Mark 10:14-15).

SANCTUARY FLOWERS: Please contact Michael Levitas or the church office if you would like to sponsor flowers for a special occasion such as a birthday or anniversary or in memory or honor of a friend or loved one. You may specify live or silk flowers.



The flowers in the sanctuary this morning are given to the Glory of God in loving memory of Eugene D. Munro and Bernice L. Munro, by their family.

PASTOR'S SCHEDULE

Pastor Alison is available when requested or informed of a need. If you are aware of someone in need of a visit or phone call, please call or text her to let her know. *[Fridays are generally her day off and she will respond when she is available.]*

Ways to contact Pastor Alison: 814-715-
1681/revalisonpeters@gmail.com

To help with scheduling,
please reach out to the Church Office:
301-777-3700/ firstpresbyteriansecretary@gmail.com



MONDAY, SEPTEMBER (8)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
4:45 PM ADMIN AND FINANCE MEETING
6:30 PM CHORAL SOCIETY REHEARSAL

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER (9)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
11:00 AM STAFF MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER (10)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
6:30 PM JOYBELLS REHEARSAL
7:00 PM NA MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER (11)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER (12)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
12:30 PM RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER (13)

HERITAGE DAYS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER (14)

HERITAGE DAYS

11:00 AM FALL KICK OFF- ROCKY GAP

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE RULING ELDERS: CARL BELT & CINDY CORLEY

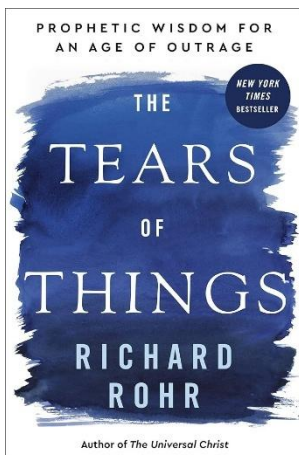
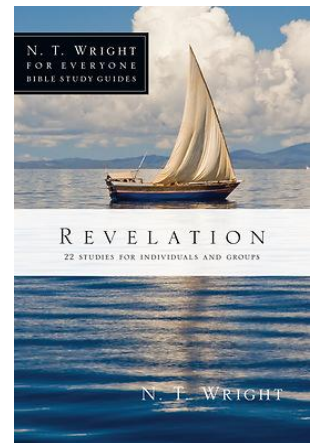
ANNUAL GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE: as of August 31, 2025

Total 2025 Pledges Promised	\$237,796.00
Pre-paid pledges	\$ 48,578.00
2025 Pledge Balance Promised	\$189,217.00
Pledge Balance Received Year-to-Date	\$ 121,697.00
Pledge Balance Promised Year-to-Date	\$ 127,761.00
Over/(Under)	\$ (6,064.00)

ONLINE GIVING



Adult Sunday School resumes on September 21st and we will be continuing our study from September until Advent. We will be using N.T. Wright's, *Revelation* to get a "remarkably clear glimpse into God's ultimate design for the entire creation. We will be looking into how Jesus the Messiah's triumph and the resulting costly victory of his followers overcome the powerful evil forces at work, particularly with idolatrous and oppressive political systems." Class will begin at 10:00 AM in the Dakota Room, but fellowship is always welcome, beginning at 9:45 AM! Sign up and pick up your book in Brittany's office.



Join us this fall for an adult Bible Study. We will meet on Thursday evenings in the Gathering Space, beginning Thursday, October 9th and ending on Thursday, November 13th.

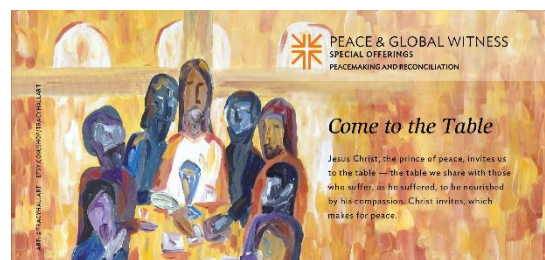
How do we live compassionately in a time of violence and despair? How do we manage conflict and suffering in our lives and in the world? Holy Scripture gives us wisdom and practice, particularly through the lives and writings of the Hebrew prophets. Using Richard Rohr's new book *The Tears of Things: Prophetic Wisdom for An Age of Outrage* as a guide, we will study the writings of the prophets—particularly, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel.

Rev Martha and Pastor Alison will facilitate and lead this six-week course. We will begin at 5:00 PM with a light supper and fellowship. Then we will proceed with our study from 5:30 to 6:30 PM.

Please RSVP to Brittany, (301) 777-3700, or firstpresbyteriansecretary@gmail.com by September 28th.

Books will be provided and can be picked up in the church office beginning October 5th, or at our first class. A sign-up sheet to volunteer to provide a meal during one of the classes will also be available on October 9th.

PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERINGS: The arrival of the Fall season also marks the time for The Peace and Global Witness Offering. This offering draws Presbyterians together. It provides education and exposure to those who show us how to do peacemaking well. It allows us to create resources for dealing with conflict and helps us to provide nurturing reconciliation and to stand in support of our global sisters and brothers because the peace of Christ belongs to people everywhere.



A gift to this Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice across the world. Individual congregations are encouraged to utilize up to 25% of this Offering locally. Our portion of the monies collected will go to help support a program here in Cumberland, to be determined and announced after prayerful discussion. Our Baltimore Presbytery retains an additional 25% for ministries of peace and reconciliation. The remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice in cultures of violence, here and abroad through collaborative projects of education and Christian witness.

Please consider giving generously to this Offering on World Communion Sunday, October 5, 2025. Write your check to First Presbyterian Church, and in the memo line, note Special Offering.



WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY: The Worship and Music Committee will be setting the communion table on October 5th for World Communion Sunday complete with breads of the world set on cloth from around the globe.

Please look through your linen closets and cedar chests for fabrics you have collected from other countries and lend them to us for that day. We will layer the communion table with them. Plexiglass will protect them from spills and crumbs. Label your fabric with your name so we can be sure to return them to you the following week.

If you have any interesting baskets that we can use to hold various breads please lend them to us for a few days and again label them with your name. Please drop off your fabrics and baskets in the volunteer office by Thursday, October 2nd. Thank you.

Hike for the Homeless

We are excited to announce the date for the Fourth Annual Hike for the Homeless, sponsored by the Union Rescue Mission. This year's event will be held on Saturday, September 27, 2025. As was the case last year, the beginning and ending of the hike will be at the main beach area in Rocky Gap State Park. Lakeside Loop Trail of Rocky Gap will be the main trail; however, participants are encouraged to hike and explore any trail in the park that day. Guided hikes will be provided by URM staff.

The official hike will begin at 9:00 AM, with a picnic planned for 12:00 PM at the beach as an official wrap-up of the event. Registration tables will open at 8:30 AM for those who choose to register at the hike itself. Hydration and snack tables will be along the Lakeside Loop Trail for your convenience. The hope is to encourage families, teams, and individuals of all ages to participate in this outdoor activity while bringing awareness to the needs of the homeless and impoverished community.

Hike for the Homeless Registration

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

IN Person Hike _____ Virtual Hike _____

Shirt Size: No Shirt _____ XS _____ S _____ M _____ Large _____ XL _____ 2XL _____

Please place this in the offering plate or return it to Brittany. Thanks to all who participate!