

# FALL KICK-OFF ROCKY GAP STATE PARK



**First**  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
of Cumberland, MD

*Empowered to love, serve, care, and give*

## SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY SEPTEMBER 13, 2026 11:00 AM

\*\*\*Worship elements adapted from 'Season of Creation' Worship Toolkit\*\*\*

OPENING VOLUNTARY

AMAZING GRACE  
JUDITH BROWN, KEYBOARD

ARR. CAROL TORNQUIST

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT

I LOVE THE MOUNTAINS  
CAROLYN MATHEWS, GUITAR

### \* CALL TO WORSHIP & PRAYER FOR THE DAY

As the weak realize their strength; as the poor eat and are satisfied,  
God's love abides in us.  
As the stranger finds a friend; as the family offers forgiveness,  
God's love abides in us.  
As the ends of the earth know of Christ's grace,  
God's love abides in us.

Let us pray -

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.  
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek 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, and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life. Amen.

### \* HYMN #623

I'VE GOT PEACE LIKE A RIVER

"PEACE LIKE A RIVER"

1 I've got peace like a riv - er; I've got peace like a  
2 I've got joy like a foun-tain; I've got joy like a  
3 I've got love like an o - cean; I've got love like an

riv - er; I've got peace like a riv - er, in my  
foun-tain; I've got joy like a foun-tain, in my  
o - cean; I've got love like an o - cean, in my

soul. I've got riv - er, in my soul.  
soul. I've got foun-tain, in my soul.  
soul. I've got o - cean, in my soul.

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, you hover over the waters, and we gather, thirsty for grace. We recognize your good gifts that sustain this world, yet we are negligent in caring for your creation. We confess that we have treated these gifts as commodity. We have choked the seas with our waste and watched the warming tides rise in judgment. Melt our frozen hearts and let the waters of repentance flow. Help us to protect the life-giving waters around us and use them responsibly to nourish our neighbors.

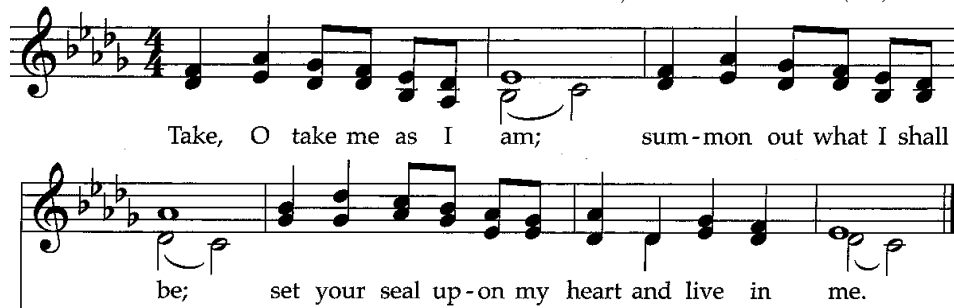
Lord of all Life, you promised that wherever the river flows, everything shall live. Stir in us a calling to care for the waters – to protect the watershed, defend the rights of water, and honor the dignity of the thirsty. May your Word be a spring within us, gushing forth for the healing of the nations. May God our Creator, who brought water from the rock, sustain us in the desert. May Christ our Lord who is Living Water refresh us for the work of restoration. And may the Holy Spirit carry us on currents of grace until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Amen.

*(Silence for personal prayer and reflection.)*

### RESPONSE #698

TAKE, O TAKE ME AS I AM (3x.)

“TAKE ME AS I AM”



### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

### PASSING OF THE PEACE AND CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

*Please stand and greet those in the seats 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.*

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

#### FIRST READING

1 JOHN 4:7-12

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us.

#### SOLO

IF I HAD A HAMMER  
CAROLYN MATHEWS, GUITAR

PETE SEEGER

#### SECOND READING

EZEKIEL 47:1-12

Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple; there water was flowing from below the entryway of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east), and the water was flowing down from below the south side of the temple, south of the altar. <sup>2</sup> Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east, and the water was trickling out on the south side. <sup>3</sup> Going on eastward with a cord in his hand, the man measured one thousand cubits and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep. <sup>4</sup> Again he measured one thousand and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured one thousand and led me through the water, and it was up to the waist. <sup>5</sup> Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed. <sup>6</sup> He said to me, "Mortal, have you seen this?" Then he led me back along the bank of the river. <sup>7</sup> As I came back, I saw on the bank of the river a great many trees on the one side and on the other. <sup>8</sup> He said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and when it enters the sea, the sea of stagnant waters, the water will become fresh. <sup>9</sup> Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish once these waters reach there. It will become fresh, and everything will live where the river goes. <sup>10</sup> People will stand fishing beside the sea from En-gedi to En-eg-laim; it will be a place for the spreading of nets; its fish will be of a great many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. <sup>11</sup> But its swamps and

marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt. <sup>12</sup> On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.”

SERMON

“A RIVER FLOWING”

REV. ALISON PETERS

\* HYMN #375

SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER

“HANSON PLACE”



1 Shall we gath-er at the riv-er, where bright an-gel feet have trod,  
2 On the mar-gin of the riv-er, wash-ing up its sil-ver spray,  
3 Ere we reach the shin-ing riv-er, lay we ev-ery bur-den down;  
4 Soon we'll reach the shin-ing riv-er; soon our pil-grim-age will cease;



with its crys-tal tide for-ev-er flow-ing by the throne of God?  
we will walk and wor-ship ev-er, all the hap-py gold-en day.  
grace our spir-its will de-liv-er, and pro-vide a robe and crown.  
soon our hap-py hearts will quiv-er with the mel-o-dy of peace.

Refrain



Yes, we'll gath-er at the riv-er, the beau-ti-ful, the beau-ti-ful riv-er;



gath-er with the saints at the riv-er that flows by the throne of God.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY SOLO

JOY IS LIKE THE RAIN  
CAROLYN MATHEWS, GUITAR

SISTER MIRIAM THERESA WINTER

\* DOXOLOGY #643

NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD (verse 3)

“NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT”



3 All praise and thanks to God, who reigns in high-est heav-en,



to Fa-ther and to Son and Spir-it now be giv-en:



the one e-ter-nal God, whom heaven and earth a-dore,



the God who was, and is, and shall be ev-er-more.

\* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

COMMUNAL PRAYER

Leader: Our Father in heaven

People: You are also at home in the air, soil, forests and oceans

Leader: Hallowed be your name.

People: By the care we take of your Creation

Leader: Your kingdom come

People: All that you see is good

Leader: Your will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven

People: Your will to till and care

Leader: Give us this day our daily bread

People: That all may have enough to live life in fullness

Leader: Forgive us our trespasses

People: Our greed, our exploitation, our lack of concern for other species and for future generations

Leader: As we forgive those who trespass against us

People: By reconciliation with justice and peace.

Leader: Lead us not into temptation

People: The temptation to equate dominion with exploitation

Leader: And deliver us from evil

People: The evil of destroying your gift of creation

Leader: For yours is the kingdom

People: Yours, Lord, not ours

Leader: The power and the glory

People: In the cross and resurrection

Leader: For ever and ever

People: You are the beginning, and you are the end. So be it. Amen.

\* HYMN# 300

WE ARE ONE IN THE SPIRIT

"THEY'LL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS"



1 We are one in the Spir - it; we are one in the Lord;  
2 We will walk with each oth - er; we will walk hand in hand;  
3 We will work with each oth - er; we will work side by side;  
4 All praise to the Fa - ther, from whom all things come,



we are one in the Spir - it; we are one in the Lord,  
we will walk with each oth - er; we will walk hand in hand,  
we will work with each oth - er; we will work side by side,  
and all praise to Christ Je - sus, God's on - ly Son,



and we pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re - stored:  
and to - geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our land:  
and we'll guard hu - man dig - ni - ty and save hu - man pride:  
and all praise to the Spir - it, who makes us one:

Refrain



And they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love, by our



love; yes, they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love.

\* BENEDICTION

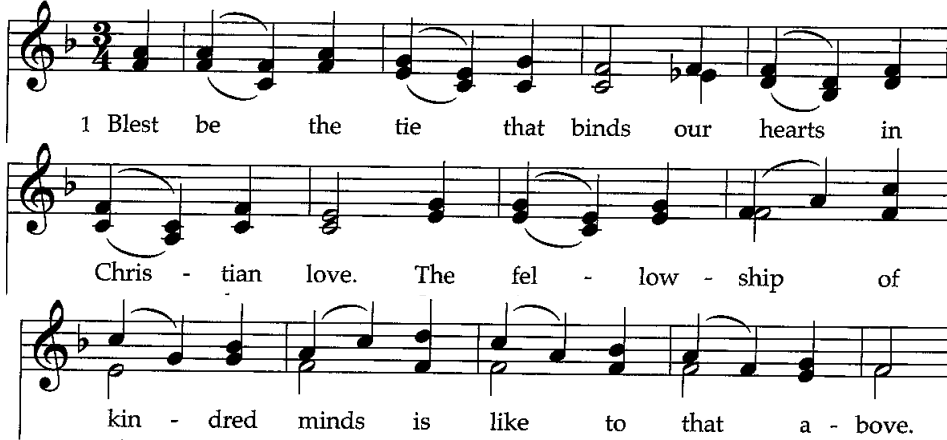
\* RESPONSE AFTER BENEDICTION #306

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!



POSTLUDE

SPIRIT, SPIRIT OF GENTLENESS  
JUDITH BROWN, KEYBOARD

\* 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.....Michael Levitas  
Director of Music Ministries/Organist/Pianist.....Judith Brown  
Musician.....Carolyn Mathews, Guitar  
Audio/Video Technicians.....Joe Aurigemma and Eric Ringler  
Ushers.....Cindy Corley and Cathy Levitas

**FALL WORSHIP SCHEDULE:** Remember, we are now starting our fall worship schedule. Fall worship will be at 11:00 AM each Sunday.



**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](http://www.fpc-cumberland.org) and [www.facebook.com/First.Pres.Cumberland](https://www.facebook.com/First.Pres.Cumberland).



#### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER (14)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN  
4:45 PM ADMIN & FINANCE MEETING  
7:00 PM CHORAL SOCIETY REHEARSAL

#### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER (15)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

#### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER (16)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN  
12:15 PM STAFF MEETING  
6:30 PM JOYBELLS REHEARSAL  
7:00 PM NA MEETING

#### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER (17)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN  
7:00 PM SESSION MEETING

#### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER (18)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

#### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER (19)

#### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER (20)

10:15 AM FAMILY SUNDAY SCHOOL  
11:00 AM SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY  
SANCTUARY CARPET DEDICATION

### ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE RULING ELDERS: CARL BELT & CINDY CORLEY

#### ANNUAL GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE: as of September 6, 2026

|                                      |                     |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Total 2026 Pledges Promised          | \$271,126.00        |
| Pre-paid pledges                     | \$ 70,507.00        |
| <u>2026 Pledge Balance Promised</u>  | <u>\$200,618.00</u> |
| Pledge Balance Received Year-to-Date | \$ 143,096.00       |
| Pledge Balance Promised Year-to-Date | \$ 140,136.00       |
| Over/(Under)                         | \$ 2,959.00         |

#### ONLINE GIVING



**SANCTUARY DEDICATION:** Join us for worship on Sunday, September 20th as we dedicate the new carpet and pews during worship. We will have a moment to share our favorite memories of the sanctuary and bless the future gatherings in our space. We hope you will be there!

**HIKE FOR THE HOMELESS:** The Hike for the Homeless, which will benefit the Union Rescue Mission of Western Maryland, will be held Saturday, September 26, 2026 at the Main Beach at Rocky Gap State Park. The Hike will begin at 9:00 AM followed by a picnic-style lunch and presentation at 12:00 PM. Please use the registration forms in Brittany's office. The registration fee is \$35 per person. Payment may be made online via PayPal or by check to: Union Rescue Mission and reference Hike in the memo. **Pre-registration is due by September 7<sup>th</sup> to guarantee a t-shirt.**

#### ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL: MAKE DISCIPLES

Join us at 9:30 AM on Sunday mornings in the Dakota Room beginning September 27<sup>th</sup>!

**Matthew 28:18-20 is called "The Great Commission,"** and in these words we see Jesus send out his followers to make disciples, to baptize, and to teach people to obey all that Jesus taught them. He promises to be with them no matter what. Since this promise, followers of Jesus have welcomed new disciples into Christian community for almost two thousand years into and helped people come to know Christ and grow in faith.

In this unit, participants will learn that making disciples, at its simplest, is an invitation to others to live as followers of Christ. Although Christian beliefs and practices may vary within the same faith community, disciples of Jesus gather to worship and serve God together. Making disciples is not inviting others to have an identical faith to one's own; it is an invitation to live into a faith that meets a person's spiritual needs and contributes to the goodness of the community. The six dimensions of this practice that are discussed include: live like a disciple, go, be a witness, baptize, teach, and learn about Jesus, and trust in Jesus' presence always.