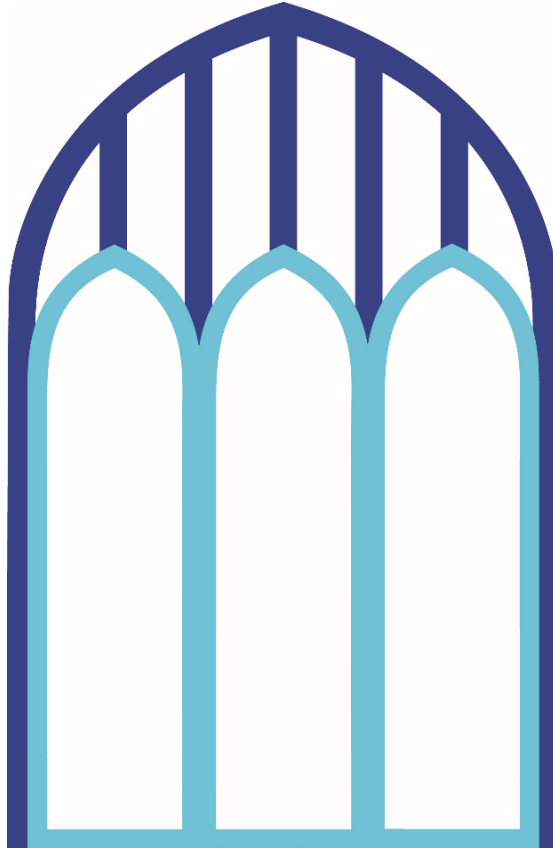


FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 28, 2024



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Servant Church in the City Since 1827

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

SERVICE OF WORSHIP FOR THE LORD'S DAY

11:00 A.M.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

APRIL 28, 2024

"By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things." Galatians 5:22-23

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE

Three Canons on "DIX"

arr. Don Hustad

*CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER OF ADORATION

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

No. 611

Tune: HYMN TO JOY

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

CONFESSION OF SIN

Most Holy God, who calls us to the abundant life, we are shamed by our disobedience and embarrassed by our indifference. We have not loved you with all our heart, mind and strength, nor have we loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have sung our hymns of praise, but our lives have not been true to our music. We have repeated the creeds with our lips, but we have neither searched nor claimed their truth for our daily lives. We have borne your name for all these years, but people observing us see all too little of the marks of our Lord. Forgive us, we pray, that we may not continue in our sin, but begin to live for you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DECLARATION OF PARDON

*HYMN OF PRAISE

No. 371

Joyfully, heartily resounding, let every instrument and voice
peal out the praise of grace abounding, calling the whole world
to rejoice. Trumpets and organs, set in motion such sounds
as make the heavens ring; all things that live in earth and ocean,
sound forth the song; your praises bring.

*WORDS OF PEACE

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

People: And also with you.
(Please greet your neighbors with words of God's peace.)

WELCOME AND CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

(Please sign and pass the Friendship Registers at this time.)

INVITATION TO THE CHILDREN

UNISON PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, who spared not your own Son but delivered him up for us all and who with him has freely given us all things; help us by your Spirit and by your Word to yield ourselves to you, that with body, soul and spirit we may truly serve you, and in your service find our deepest joy. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 35:1-10

Page 663

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

John 15:1-11

Page 109

SERMON

“Are You a Joyful Christian?”

Dr. Williams

“I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.” John 15:11

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from A Brief Statement of Faith, 1991

In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, “Come, Lord Jesus!” Amen.

*HYMN

To God Compose a Song of Joy

Tune: RICHMOND

To God compose a song of joy; to God make melody, whose arm
of strength does wondrous things, whose hand brings victory!

Before the nations God reveals a just and righteous will,
remembering in faithful love the house of Israel.

In every corner of the earth, God comes to save and free;
break forth with shouts of holy joy; all lands, make melody.

With trumpet, with the sound of horns, with strings, yes, with the
lyre, with voices praise the sovereign God, a lusty, joyous choir.

Let seas in all their fullness roar, and people of all lands,
let mountains join and shout for joy, let rivers clap their hands.

The God of justice comes to save; let earth make melody!
For God will judge with righteousness and rule with equity.

THE PRAYERS AND OFFERING

OFFERTORY

In This Very Room

arr. Ron and Carol Harris

The Chancel Choir

*In this very room there's quite enough love for one like me,
and in this very room there's quite enough joy for one like me;*

*and there's quite enough hope and quite enough power to chase away
any gloom, for Jesus, Lord Jesus, is in this very room.*

*In this very room there's quite enough love for all of us,
and in this very room there's quite enough joy for all of us;
and there's quite enough hope and quite enough power to chase away
any gloom, for Jesus, Lord Jesus, is in this very room*

*In this very room there's quite enough love for all the world,
and in this very room there's quite enough joy for all the world;
and there's quite enough hope and quite enough power to chase away
any gloom, for Jesus, Lord Jesus, is in this very room*

***DOXOLOGY**

No. 609

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low. Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known: Creator, Word, and Spirit one.
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER** (debts/debtors)

***HYMN**

No. 804

Tune: MARION

Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**

Sing With All the Sons of Glory

arr. J. Mansfield

*Congregation please stand in body or in spirit.

CHILDREN, KINDERGARTEN AND UNDER Worship bags, designed to help children participate in worship more meaningfully, are available in the narthex. Children in kindergarten and younger may go to the Preschool for Extended Session following the children's sermon.

CHILDREN, 1st – 5th GRADERS are invited to leave the service after the "Invitation to the Children" to attend a worship service led by Allison and Tanner in the Choir Room. Exploring worship through art, music, faith questions, and interactive prayer will be the focus. They will return to sit in the balcony or with their parents during the singing of the second hymn.

THE CHANCEL FLOWERS are given by Sandy Venier to the glory of God and in honor of her son, mother and father.

GUEST ORGANIST is Katy Larson, who has served churches in Virginia and Maryland and is a member of the American Guild of Organists, Savannah chapter.

Welcome to All!

If you are a newcomer, please sign the friendship register at the end of the pew and introduce yourself to the minister. Join us as we grow together in our love for God and neighbor. Ask yourself how you can make a difference in this “Servant Church in the City.”

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - WEEK OF APRIL 28

Sunday, April 28

First Ringers.....	9:30 a.m.
Sunday School.....	9:30 a.m.
Confirmation Class	9:30 a.m.
Chancel Choir	10:00 a.m.
Coffee Fellowship	10:30 a.m.
Worship Service.....	11:00 a.m.
Parents of Youth Focus Group	12:00 p.m.
Worship and Music Committee Meeting	12:15 p.m.
Christian Education Committee Meeting	12:30 p.m.
Youth Dinner	5:00 p.m.
Youth Fellowship	5:30 p.m.
Youth Music	6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 1

Wednesday Dinner and Program	6:00 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal.....	7:30 p.m.

Friday, May 3

Centering Prayer.....	10:00 a.m.
-----------------------	------------

Saturday, May 4

Annual Butler / First Men's Breakfast	8:00 a.m.
---	-----------

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL will be held Monday, July 22 through Thursday, July 25 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at First. We're excited to use the “Scuba: Diving Into Friendship with God” curriculum. Register on the VBS page on the church website. <https://www.savannahfpc.org/vacation-bible-school.html#/>

Notice of Congregational Meeting
Sunday, May 5 at 12:00 p.m. in the sanctuary

The purpose of the meeting is to vote on the motion related to the retirement of Dr. Williams: "To petition Savannah Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship between First Savannah and Stephen Williams effective June 30, 2024. His last day at First will be Sunday, June 2."

WHAT DO YOU THINK? All parents of children and youth are invited! Please join us for the Focus Group today at 12:00 p.m. in Stewart Hall to talk about how our church can journey with your family in faith formation. Childcare will be offered as needed and refreshments will be provided.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE will meet today following the worship service in the John Knox Room.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE meeting is today at 12:30 p.m. following the Youth Focus Group gathering in Stewart Hall..

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY, May 1, will recap the Presbytery's recent Faith Enrichment Conference. "Conviction, Risk, and Creativity" will be led by Judith Crawford, Jenell Griffith, Maggie and Ruth McManus, Bob Morgan, Paul Pressly, Linda and Rich Wittish. Dinner will include lasagna, garlic vegetables, Caesar salad, bread, and dessert. Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m. \$8/adults, \$4/children under 12.

MEN GATHER FOR FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST Annual Men's Breakfast with Butler Memorial Presbyterian Church will be held on Saturday, May 4 at 8:00 a.m. at Butler Church, 603 W. Victory Drive.

CRADLE ROLL DEDICATION PLANNED FOR MAY 12 Mark your calendar for Mother's Day, May 12 to be in worship at 11:00 a.m. as children who have not yet celebrated their third birthday—will be blessed during the service of worship. Call the church office to let us know if your family will be present.

SESSION MEETING with the Confirmands will be on Monday, May 13 at 6:30 p.m. in Stewart Hall.

JUBILEE CIRCLE will gather on Tuesday, May 14 at 10:30 a.m. in the John Knox Room.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, May 15 at 11:00 a.m.

SERVICE OF CONFIRMATION Celebrate the power and might of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost when this year's five confirmands will be confirmed on Sunday, May 19. The class of sixth graders has been meeting weekly since mid-February learning about church history, doctrine, and practice and reflecting on their own faith. They will meet with the Session on Monday, May 13 at 6:30 p.m. in Stewart Hall.. An old tradition on Pentecost is to wear something red on this festive day!



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
A Servant Church in the City Since 1827

PASTOR TRANSITION TIMELINE & INFORMATION

The Session understands that, while we celebrate Stephen's ministry, there will be questions of what lies ahead for the congregation. The Session wants to use this timeline to show a plan is in place to support the interim period and in finding a permanent pastor replacement.

HONOR AND CELEBRATION

It is important for the congregation to have a chance to celebrate Stephen's years of service, look back on his achievements and express our gratitude. Stephen departs with a legacy of love, friendships, scholarship, service, inspired preaching and a solid foundation for his successors.

SOME IMPORTANT DATES

- May 18 – Stephen's Celebration at Tiedeman Park (Drop-In)
- June 2 – Stephen's Last Savannah FPC Sermon

NEAR-TERM TRANSITION

2-3 MONTHS

The Session has formed an Interim Search Committee (ISC) which will identify an Interim Minister, targeting August as a start date. The church is fortunate to have ministers in regular attendance willing to preach until an Interim Minister begins active service.

INTERIM SEARCH COMMITTEE CONTACTS

- Belinda Walters, Chair belindapwalters@gmail.com
- Robert Bennett, Vice Chair g.robert.bennett@gmail.com

INTERIM PERIOD

18-24 MONTHS

The Interim Period is an important time for the congregation, helping members transition from saying goodbye to Stephen to embracing Christ's plans for the future. This period is enhanced by the guidance of an Interim Minister, who is asked to play a role helping the church discern where it is now and where God may be leading it in the future. A recommended interim period spans 18 to 24 months. During this time, a Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC) is elected by the congregation. This committee identifies the candidate to be presented and approved by both the congregation and Savannah Presbytery.

LONG-TERM PASTOR CALL

The goal of this process is to ensure that the congregation and the newly appointed minister are well-aligned with the congregation's vision, and are energized to participate in the worship, mission, and service that Christ has marked out for us.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Pray for Stephen, the Session and nominating committees.
- Gather to celebrate Stephen at upcoming events.
- Support the Session in their decisions and through thoughtful questions that clarify communications.
- Look for opportunities to volunteer when needed.
- Help each other be calm and patient through this transition.

THE SESSION - Class of 2024: G. Robert Bennett, Carol J. Booker, Michael P. Brooks, Allison D. Johnson, Paul M. Pressly, Ellen M. Tate; **Class of 2025:** Natalie F. Chase, Myra P. Hill, Elizabeth H. Longley, Eric J. McManus, Colin A. McRae, William M. Schriefer; **Class of 2026:** Judith G. Crawford, John H. Hinman III, Brett J. Lundy, Emily C. Salzer, Marti Stein, Daniel R. Walters; **Clerk of Session:** Paul M. Pressly. **Elder Emerita:** Rose M. Donnelly.

CHURCH STAFF - Stephen C. Williams, *Minister*; Allison B. Shearouse, *Director of Christian Education*; C. Tanner King, *Associate Director of Music*; Mallory T. Abshire, *Office Administrator*; Barbara G. Roush, *Financial Secretary*; Dorothy S. Bunker, *Preschool Director*; Brent J. Bissell, *Communications Coordinator*; Hope J. Boyd, *Sexton*.

MISSIONARIES - Farsijana and Bernard Adeney, Yogyakarta, Indonesia; Nancy and Shelvis Smith-Mather, Yei, South Sudan; Ellen D. Smith, Warsaw, Poland.

CHIMING OF THE HOUR marks the beginning of the Lord's Day service. The Prelude is a time for quiet preparation and private prayer as the congregation prepares to worship God.

GREETER: Charlotte Keenoy... **USHERS:** Colby Longley, head usher, Matt Chase, Larry Koch, and Jim Ryan... **ACOLYTE:** Ruth McManus... **EXTENDED SESSION TEACHER:** Beth Longley and Emily Salzer.

ONLINE GIVING Please consider making a one-time or recurring gift to First using our secure online portal which can be found at www.savannahFPC.org by clicking on the Give Now tab at the top right corner of the home page or by scanning our QR code using your smartphone's QR reader.



FIRST'S MISSION STATEMENT The life of the church is the response of faith and obedience to the call of God in Christ. Gathered: We worship and sing, study and pray. We enjoy fellowship together. Forgiven by God, we learn to forgive other people. Sent forth: We serve as leaven, salt and light, to be agents of God's love in Savannah and the larger world.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
A Servant Church in the City Since 1827

520 Washington Avenue / Savannah, GA 31405 / 912.354.7615

A Member of the Presbytery of Savannah, the Synod of South Atlantic, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

SavannahFPC.org

