



## First Presbyterian Church of Ridgewood NJ

*We are a welcoming community formed in Christ, committed to sharing his love with others – with feet that carry us out into the world, with hands that serve, and with hearts in fellowship and faith.*  
– First Presbyterian Church Mission Statement, adopted October 2018



### THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY *after* PENTECOST SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2025

Watch live: <https://www.youtube.com/live/cqsiST-AHRQ>

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#### PRELUDE

*How Firm a Foundation (Fidelity)* – Richard Elliott  
Linda Sweetman Waters, Organ

WELCOME *and* ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ Rev. Bruce Ballantine

#### CALL to WORSHIP

Here, in this place,  
we discover the wonderful things God has done.  
**In story and song, in silence and celebration,  
we are reminded that nothing can separate us  
from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Here, among God's people,  
we experience what it means to love one another  
and to be a community of welcome.

**Let us worship God together**

\*HYMN – *Here in This Place* [see attachment]

#### PRAYER of CONFESSION

**Sovereign God, we confess that we have not turned away from sin. We celebrate our achievements and look down on our neighbors. We boast about our virtues and deny the worth of others. Forgive us, God of grace. Be merciful to us, for we are indeed sinners in great need of redemption; through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

#### SILENT CONFESSION

#### ASSURANCE of FORGIVENESS

\*HYMN 579 – *Gloria Patri*

\*PASSING of the PEACE

#### MUSICAL OFFERING

*May Jesus Christ Be Praised!* - Lloyd Larsen

Text from Lamentations 3:22-23

The Chancel Choir

Carol Schmiedecke, Mezzo-Soprano

Dr. Edward Schmiedecke, Conductor

*Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed. His compassions never fail. They are new every morning. Great is God's faithfulness. When morning guilds the skies, my heart awaking cries, may Jesus Christ be praised! Alike at work and prayer, to Jesus I repair, may Jesus Christ be praised! The night becomes as day when from the heart we say, may Jesus Christ be praised! The powers of darkness fear when this sweet chant they hear, may Jesus Christ be praised! Be this, while life is mine, my canticle divine, may Jesus Christ be praised, be praised! Be this the eternal song, my song through all the ages long, we'll sing the one eternal song, may Jesus Christ be praised!*

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

*MaryEllen Castaldo, Director of Children & Family Ministries*  
*Following the Children's Message, children and youth are invited to attend Sunday School.*

PSALTER READING – Psalm 84:1-7

Dawn Murdock

GOSPEL READING – Luke 18:9-14

Dawn Murdock

SERMON ~ Rev. Bruce Ballantine

*Accepted by a Good God*

PRAYERS *of the PEOPLE and* THE LORD'S PRAYER

Trusting in the power of God to deliver us, let us make our prayers of intercession for all, saying:  
God our Savior, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the church. Deliver us from self-righteousness  
and strengthen us to serve you, all for the glory of your eternal realm.

*Silent Prayer*

God our Savior, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the world. Pour out your Spirit on all flesh,  
so that the people of every nation may share visions and dreams of peace.  
And may the visions of peace become a reality.

*Silent Prayer*

God our Savior, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our communities. May we welcome the stranger  
and walk alongside those who are struggling to find their place.  
Teach us to recognize the dignity of each person and advocate for those without a voice.

*Silent Prayer*

God our Savior, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for loved ones. Be merciful to the sick and suffering and those who are grieving.  
Let your peace and goodness be their comfort and strength.

*Silent Prayer*

God our Savior, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful and mighty God, as you are one, make us one with you through Jesus Christ,  
whom you have sent to redeem us, and in whose holy name we pray.

And now we are bold to pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts  
as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

CALL to OFFERING

You may make your offering via Tithe.ly,  
place an offering in the plate as it is passed,  
or mail a check to the church office. Thank you!



OFFERTORY MUSIC  
*Jesus, Lover of My Soul* – Joseph Martin  
Vera Coleman, Soprano

*Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly, while the nearer waters roll, while the tempest still is high. Hide me, O my Savior, hide, till the storm of life is past, safe into the haven guide, O receive my soul at last. Other refuge have I none, hangs my helpless soul on thee. Leave, O leave me not alone, still support and comfort me. All my trust on thee is stayed, all my help from thee I bring. Cover my defenseless head with the shadow of thy wing. Plenteous grace with thee is found, grace to cover all my sin. Let the healing streams abound, make and keep me pure within. Thou of life the fountain art, freely let me take of thee. Spring thou up within my heart, rise to all eternity.*

\*DOXOLOGY – Hymn 592

\*PRAYER of DEDICATION

\*HYMN – 358 - *Help Us Accept Each Other*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* – arr. Diane Bish  
Linda Sweetman Waters, Piano

CHANCEL FLOWERS

*Chancel Flowers are given by Andy Castaldi  
in celebration of Susan Castaldi's special birthday on October 25.*



ROSEBUD IN THE SANCTUARY

*The rose on the chancel this morning is in honor of  
Scarlett Dawn Paz, daughter of Jessica and Steven Paz,  
Scarlett was born on October 18, 2025.*



\*Please stand if you are able.

SCRIPTURE READINGS  
*for SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2025*

PSALTER READING

Psalm 84:1-7

<sup>1</sup> How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! <sup>2</sup> My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. <sup>3</sup> Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. <sup>4</sup> Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise. <sup>5</sup> Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion. <sup>6</sup> As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools. <sup>7</sup> They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 18:9-14

<sup>9</sup> He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: <sup>10</sup> “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup> The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.’ <sup>13</sup> But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ <sup>14</sup> I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.”

## Here in This Place

401

## Gather Us In



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing; now is the dark-ness  
 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-tery. We are the old who  
 3 Here we will take the wine and the wa-ter; here we will take the  
 4 Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,



van-ish-ed a-way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings  
 yearn for your face. We have been sung through-out all of his-tory,  
 bread of new birth. Here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,  
 light years a-way: here in this place the new light is shin-ing;



brought here to you in the light of this day.  
 called to be light to the whole hu-man race.  
 call us a-new to be salt for the earth.  
 now is the king-dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en; gath-er us in, the  
 Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty; gath-er us in, the  
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pas-sion; give us to eat the  
 Gath-er us in and hold us for-ev-er; gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en;  
 proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low-ly;  
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion  
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,



we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.  
 give us the cour-age to en-ter the song.  
 lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.  
 fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

The "you/your" mentioned in every stanza is never identified, but this 1979 hymn is clearly a corporate prayer to God on behalf of the diverse congregation who have assembled for worship, longing to be transformed and used as God's witnesses and for God's purposes.

## Help Us Accept Each Other

BARONITA 7.6.7.6 D

Fred Kaan, 1975

Doreen Potter, 1975

1. Help us ac - cept each oth - er As Christ ac - cept-ed us;  
 2. Teach us, O Lord, Your les - sons, As in our dai - ly life  
 3. Let Your ac - cep - tance change us, So that we may be moved  
 4. Lord, for to - day's en - coun - ters With all who are in need,

Teach us as sis - ter, broth - er, Each per - son to em - brace.  
 We strug - gle to be hu - man And search for hope and faith.  
 In liv - ing sit - u - a - tions To do the truth in love;  
 Who hun - ger for ac - cep - tance, For righ - teous - ness and bread,

Be pres - ent, Lord, a - mong us And bring us to be - lieve  
 Teach us to care for peo - ple, For all, not just for some,  
 To prac - tice Your ac - cep - tance Un - til we know by heart  
 We need new eyes for see - ing, New hands for hold - ing on:

We are our - selves ac - cept - ed And meant to love and live.  
 To love them as we find them Or as they may be - come.  
 The ta - ble of for - give - ness And laugh - ter's heal - ing art.  
 Re - new us with Your Spir - it; Lord, free us, make us one!