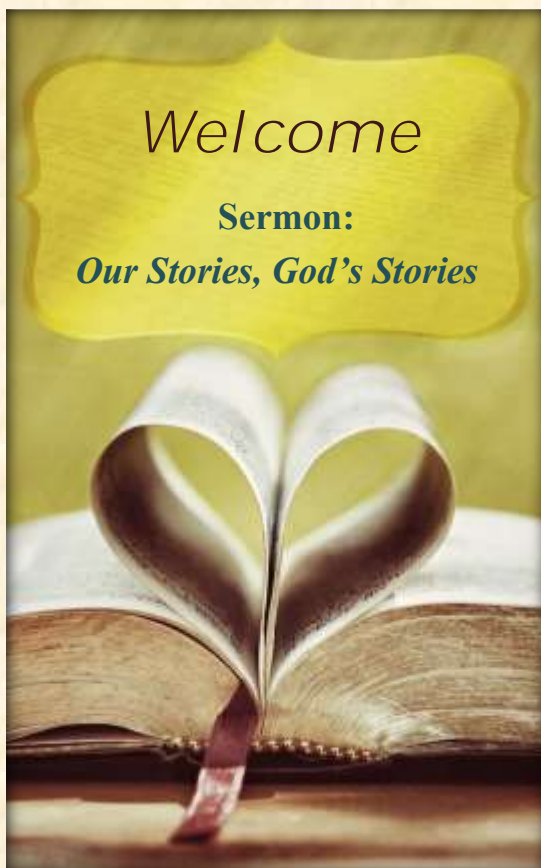


First Presbyterian Church

September 8, 2024



8:30 Worship with Communion	Page 3
11:00 Worship Service	Page 6
Scripture Readings	Page 10
The Connection	Page 12
Calendar of Events	Page 14
Prayer List	Page 15

First Presbyterian Church of Conroe Welcomes You!



If you are interested in learning more about our church, or wish to become active in our ministry teams and activities, please visit our website at fpcConroe.org. There you can fill out the visitor form online, or you can do so now by visiting our welcome desk.

We appreciate you joining us for services today.

Special Thanks...

to Guest Speaker

Rev. Gregory Han

to Today's Worship Leader

Sharon Walker

for Today's Flowers

Today's flowers are given to the glory of God by Jean Heasley, in loving memory of Kellye Lynn and Scott Robert Heasley.

8:30 A.M. WORSHIP WITH COMMUNION

Preparation

Prelude

Adoration

Call to Worship

*Hymn #237

When God Delivered Israel

1. When God delivered Israel
From bondage long ago,
They thought that they were dreaming,
But soon they turned to laughing
And sang the song of joy,
And sang the song of joy.
2. The godless nations round them
Could not deny that power;
They cried, "O see this marvel!"
"God's work," replied the people,
And so they sang for joy,
And so they sang for joy.
3. O God, restore our nation;
Come, irrigate dry souls,
That those who sow in sadness
May reap their sheaves with gladness
And sing the song of joy,
And sing the song of joy.

*Please stand if able.

Confession

*Call to Confession

*Silent Prayer of Confession

*Assurance of Pardon

Our God is a God of profound reversals! While we were yet captive to sin,
Christ died for us.

**We have been brought out of the darkness into God's marvelous
light. So let us keep awake and be vigilant as Christ's faithful
disciples, encouraging one another.**

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel!

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

*Gloria Patri

Welcome and Announcements

Proclamation

Scripture Reading

Matthew 15: 10-28, Genesis 45: 1-15

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"Our Stories, God's Stories"

Rev. Gregory Han

Dedication

The Sacrament of Communion

Invitation to the Table

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Words of Institution

Distribution of the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving

1. Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!
2. Open my ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!
3. Open my mouth, and let me bear
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart, and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

*Charge and Benediction

*Postlude

Copyright Information

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Commissioned by Westminster Choir College for Helen Kemp
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"When God Delivered Israel"

Text and Music: Copyright © 1973 by Hope Publishing Company,
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"Swiftly Pass the Clouds of Glory"

Text: © 1989, Oxford University Press, Inc. By permission.
Music: © 1943, 1961, 1985 Church Pension Fund. Used by permission..

11:00 A.M. WORSHIP SERVICE

Preparation

Opening Music

Welcome and Announcements

Adoration

Introit *Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!*

Call to Worship

Leader: God calls us in the midst of our lives:

People: "Pause a while and know that I am God."

Leader: God calls us from our lofty ambitions, our haughtiness, from our occupations with marvels and matters beyond our scope:

People: "Let be and learn that I am God."

Leader: Come, behold the astounding things God has done in the world.

People: God is our shelter, our strength, ever ready to help in time of trouble.

Leader: People of God, hope in our God.

People: Enough for us to calm and quiet our souls.

Leader: God is with us, now and forevermore!

*Hymn #237

When God Delivered Israel

1. When God delivered Israel
From bondage long ago,
They thought that they were dreaming,
But soon they turned to laughing
And sang the song of joy,
And sang the song of joy.

2. The godless nations round them
Could not deny that power;
They cried, "O see this marvel!"
"God's work," replied the people,
And so they sang for joy,
And so they sang for joy.

*Please stand if able.

3. O God, restore our nation;
Come, irrigate dry souls,
That those who sow in sadness
May reap their sheaves with gladness
And sing the song of joy,
And sing the song of joy.

Confession

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

O God, you give us the gift of your presence, yet we ignore it;
You give us your word, yet we distort it;
You give us your commandments, yet we disregard them.
Jesus did not come to abolish the law;
instead, we abolish it in our own hearts.
We know that forgiveness is found through you, and so we
become complacent.

“Thou shalt not” seems peculiar and quaint in our culture of indulgence.

Forgive us, O God, for our halfhearted discipleship.
Let your commandments thunder in our hearts.
Give us the joy to follow you in word and deed;
Make us new, and prepare us to be servants of you, the living God, in
whose name we pray. Amen.

*Silent Prayer of Confession

*Assurance of Pardon

Our God is a God of profound reversals! While we were yet captive to sin,
Christ died for us.

We have been brought out of the darkness into God’s marvelous light. So let us keep awake and be vigilant as Christ’s faithful disciples, encouraging one another.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel!
In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

*Gloria Patri

Minute for Mission

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

*Doxology

***Prayer of Dedication and the Lord's Prayer**

*Choral Response

Anthem

All Things Bright and Beautiful

Rutter

Proclamation

Scripture Reading

Matthew 15: 10-28

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Time

*Hymn #73

Swiftly Pass the Clouds of Glory

1. Swiftly pass the clouds of glory,
Heaven's voice, the dazzling light;
Moses and Elijah vanish,
Christ alone commands the height!
Peter, James, and John fall silent,
Turning from the summit's rise
Downward toward the shadowed valley
Where their Lord has fixed His eyes.
2. Glimpsed and gone the revelation,
They shall gain and keep its truth,
Not by building on the mountain
Any shrine or sacred booth,
But by following the Savior
Through the valley to the cross
And by testing faith's resilience
Through betrayal, pain, and loss.
3. Lord, transfigure our perception
With the purest light that shines,
And recast our life's intentions
To the shape of Your designs,
Till we seek no other glory
Than what lies past Calvary's hill
And our living and our dying
And our rising by Your will.

Dedication

Prayers of the People

*Hymn #324

Open My Eyes That I May See

1. Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!
2. Open my ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!
3. Open my mouth, and let me bear
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart, and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

*Charge and Benediction

*Closing Response

Holy Spirit, Truth Divine

Holy Spirit, right divine,
Make my conscience wholly Thine;
Be my law, and I shall be
Firmly bound, forever free.

*Postlude

This Week's Scripture Readings

Matthew 15: 10-28

¹⁰ Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand: ¹¹ it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." ¹² Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?" ¹³ He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴ Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. **And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.**" ¹⁵ But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us." ¹⁶ Then he said, "Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸ But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile."

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." ²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." ²⁶ He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." ²⁷ She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that moment.

Genesis 45: 1-15

¹ Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt." ⁵ And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ **Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me; do not delay.** ¹⁰ **You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children,** as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there, since there are five more years of famine to come, so that you and your household and all that you have will not come to poverty." ¹² And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt and all that you have seen. **Hurry and bring my father down here.**" ¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

Reflections from Rev. Greg Han

It is amazing how quickly a year has gone by; my first Sunday preaching at First, Conroe was September 10th, 2023. The length of our time together came as a surprise for all of us; you were anticipating the Rev. Dr. David Green would return from medical leave, and I would be the temporary pulpit preacher until the end of the year.

Not long before that first Sunday, however, Dr. Green announced he would retire from full-time ministry. I continue to give thanks to David for his work with the congregation. We are, to quote the Letter to the Hebrews, surrounded by a great “cloud of witnesses,” and in this case that means our extended spiritual community that continues to grace us with their work and bless us with their prayers. Please continue to keep David, Leigh, and the Green family in your prayers. To quote one of David’s favorite psalms, Psalm 16:

***The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.
The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.***

Over the past year, you, as a community, have done outstanding work in *moving forward*. You have continued to support the church budget. You have continued to gather Sundays for worship and study. You have supported your mission into the community with events like Serve Our Neighbor Day. You are revitalizing your elementary school classes. Presbyterian Day School is thriving. These are all good things. I think the best pastor/congregation relationships are just that: a partnership between pastor and congregation. It is exciting for a pastor to come to a congregation with momentum already in place.

After September 8th, I will continue with the work that I have been doing all along. I am now in the third year of the Ph.D. program in Religion at Rice University. This year my primary task is to prepare for my four comprehensive examinations that I will take in March 2025. Together, the comprehensive exams are designed to give me a broad and solid reading foundation that I can draw on for the rest of my career. I also continue to teach at the Post Oak High School.

Being with you this past year has been a win for me. After being away from full-time preaching since 2008, I have valued the opportunity to remember the joys of preaching and leading worship. You are also a warm and welcoming community, and FPC has reminded me about what’s special about church: it is the beloved community of memory and hope that binds people together not because of shared politics, not because your kids go to the same school, not because you live in the same neighborhood, but you are bound together in our common calling to love God, follow Christ, and serve His people.

I wish you all the best in the coming days! You can find me in my corner of the internet: www.revgregoryhan.com and greg@revgregoryhan.com.

Blessings,
Greg





Line Line Screening Event

We are pleased to host Life Line Screening on Friday, September 13, at First Presbyterian Church. These vital screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. Register by calling toll free 1-844-591-7160, text the word "circle" to 216-279-1607 or online at <https://llsa.social/HC>.

Christmas Boxes for the Houston International Seafarers' Center

Presbyterian Women fill, wrap and deliver shoe boxes with toiletries and **personal items to the Seafarers' Center for ships that visit Houston in the weeks** before Christmas, as part of a city-wide faith community outreach project for (mostly) men who are, by occupation, almost always away from their own homes in the holiday season. Congregation-wide support is what makes it possible for us to meet a goal of 100 boxes. If you would like to make a contribution toward the purchase of items for the boxes, please make checks payable **to the church with a notation that it is for "Seafarer's boxes."** Shopping will be underway through October; with packing day on November 7. Please call the church office (936) 756- 8884 or Susan Buckley (936) 520-6930 for information.

Wear Your Name Badge!

To help Rev. Saathoff and his wife, Katy, get to know us easier, members are encouraged to wear their name badges on Sunday, September 15, and **subsequent Sundays as well. In case you've lost your badge or need a replacement,** new badges with magnetic backings have been printed and are available in the narthex. Please see Pat Hudson if you have any questions.

Potluck Details for The Saathoffs

You are invited, so save the date! On Sunday, September 15 at 12:00 p.m., in the FLC Gym, we will have a potluck for Reverend Seth Saathoff, wife Katy, and children, Reed and Bailey. Get out your favorite recipes for side dishes, salads, and desserts. The Fellowship Committee will provide the entrée. Food items may be brought to the church on Sunday morning. Please refrain from bringing refrigerated or frozen desserts, as they do not hold well. A Meet and Greet area will be set up for you to meet and chat with the family.

September Events

We hope that you can join us for the following important events happening in September at FPC – Conroe:

September 8 – Send-off for Rev. Gregory Han, who has been a guiding light for our church while we searched for our new pastor.

September 15 – **Rev. Seth Saathoff's first Sunday in the pulpit, followed by a "Meet & Greet" Potluck for the Saathoff family.**

September 22 – Staff Recognition to show our appreciation for our church staff, who have done a remarkable job during this time of transition without a permanent pastor.

These events will take place during our church service at 11:00, with receptions (September 8 and 22) and potluck (September 15) after the service.

For any of those who are wondering about Rev. Callie Candee, she will be with **us a little longer to assist with pastoral care. We won't let her get away without** showing our appreciation for her important contribution to our church as well.

A Pounding for the Saathoffs

No, we are not going to beat up on Reverend Saathoff! "Pounding" is a long-standing tradition of sharing and providing pantry items for newlyweds. Today it extends to newcomers, welcoming them to their new home. Let's fill the Saathoff pantry with canned goods, (fruits and vegetables, chicken and beef stock, tuna, soup, beans, etc.), cooking and baking staples (flour, sugar, baking mixes, cake mixes, baking soda, baking powder, etc.), and dry goods (cereal, crackers, pasta, rice, pancake mix, etc.). Bring extras from your pantry or pick up an extra item on your next grocery run. Extra items in your freezer? We will have a cooler to hold them. Bring your items on Sunday, September 15 to the Family Life Center. A collection center will be there. Your participation is appreciated.

For Pastoral Care, Contact Rev. Callie Candee

Greetings from Reverend Callie Candee! I'm so grateful to have been asked to assist with pastoral care duties here at First Presbyterian Church-Conroe. I'll be available for phone and home visits. I'm carrying the church's emergency phone and can be contacted directly at (936) 290-4535.



Calendar of Weekly Events

<i>Sunday September 8</i>	<p>8:30 a.m. Worship with Communion (Sanctuary)</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Bereans Sunday School Class with Bob Shepherd (Rm. 105) Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Fellowship Class with Cara Wood (Rm. 204) Max Lucado study series "What Happens Next-A Traveler's Guide Through the End of This Age."</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Exploring Our Faith with Susan Buckley (Rm. 206)</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Seekers' Bible Study with Randy Blanton (Library) Study of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Philippians</p> <p>9:30 a.m. "The Word" Children's Sunday School (Rm. 203)</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Fellowship (Narthex)</p> <p>10:40 a.m. Praise band (Sanctuary)</p> <p>11:00 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary and Facebook Live www.com/fpcConroe or YouTube.com/fpcConroe)</p> <p>12:00 p.m. Reception Send-off for Rev. Han</p> <p>5:00-7:00 p.m. The Spark (Gym)</p>
<i>Monday September 9</i>	<p>1:30 p.m. Monday Bible Study (Parlor)</p>
<i>Tuesday September 10</i>	<p>10:00 a.m. Ruth Circle (Parlor)</p> <p>5:15 p.m. Lydia Circle (Youth area)</p>
<i>Wednesday September 11</i>	<p>9:30 a.m. Martha Circle (Parlor)</p> <p>5:45 p.m. Handbells Practice (Sanctuary)</p> <p>7:00-8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)</p>

Save the Date

- September 13 Life Line Screenings at FPC
- September 15 Potluck Reception for Rev. Saathoff & family
- September 22 FPC Staff Recognition and Reception
- September 25 See You at the Pole

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sunday</i> <i>September 15</i></p>	<p>8:30 a.m. Worship with Communion (Sanctuary)</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Bereans Sunday School Class with Bob Shepherd (Rm. 105) Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Fellowship Class with Cara Wood (Rm. 204) Max Lucado study series "What Happens Next-A Traveler's Guide Through the End of This Age."</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Exploring Our Faith with Susan Buckley (Rm. 206)</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Seekers' Bible Study with Randy Blanton (Library) Study of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Philippians</p> <p>9:30 a.m. "The Word" Children's Sunday School (Rm. 203)</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Fellowship (Narthex)</p> <p>10:40 a.m. Praise band (Sanctuary)</p> <p>11:00 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary and Facebook Live www.com/fpcConroe or YouTube.com/fpcConroe)</p> <p>12:00 p.m. Potluck for Rev. Saathoff and Family (FLC)</p> <p>5:00-7:00 p.m. The Spark (Gym)</p>
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Prayer List

Members: Jeannene Wendt, Karen Hethershaw, Reed Watson, John Lancaster, Nedra Murphy, Kari Elliott, Tildon Hebert, David Green, Ron Bailey, Joanne Deaver, Alice Helms, Polly Miller, Jean Ball, Roy Kessler, Mary Hudson, Paul Iverson, Don Myer, Virginia Tamborello, Jeanne Leverette, Virginia Olivier

Members' Relatives & Friends: Anna and Wendy C. (Harshbarger), Lynn & Jamie DeGeorge (Barton), Thad M. (West), Kelly D., Stephanie R. (Riggs-Harpur), Blade B., Judy N. (Dukes), Bonnie L., Michael R. (Dwyer), the family of Dorothy P. (Lucas), Marie J. (Das), Tom J. & family, Bill M. (Browder), Lee family (Corbit), Tony N. (Spinks), Aimee L. (Amoneno), Buddy H. (Hayter), Amanda N. (Bosse), Brenda H. (Cannon), Scott P. (Peterson), Linda S., Larry B., Janie M. (Harrison), Lindsey W. (Walker), Karl W. (Watt), Lisa J. (Miller), Shannon L. (Diamond), Rick J., Sydney H. and Martha K. (Juhl), Joe T. Sr and family of caregivers, Harry S., Jr. and family (Havens), Joy D. (Rose), Steve T., Lonnie H. and Vivian M. (Hammonds), Kim H. (Ganek), John R. (Hethershaw), James M., Patty M., Enrique E. (Moore), William W. (Weinburger), Jeffrey H. & Leah H. (Heasley), Katie B. (Pohla), Wendy S. (Adamson), Sherry M. (Garrison), Lee H. (Helms), Caleb & Michaela W. (Henderson), Gerald H. (Roberts), Tucker H. (Hudson)

Staff and Church Information

Staff

Rev. Callie Candee, Pastoral Care
Rev. Greg Han, Temporary Pulpit Pastor
Dena Sowden, Director of Christian Education
Sharon VanSchuyver, Director of Communications
Yvonne Rose, Office Manager
Bonnie Hernandez, Music Director
Rolethial McKelvey, Accompanist
Jackye Cannon and Jane Corbit, Bookkeeping
Shirley Dukes, Parish Nurse



First Presbyterian Church

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Website: www.fpcConroe.org

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

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