

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Stockton, CA

August 16, 2026 - 11:00 a.m.



OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

As God's family through Jesus Christ, we seek:

- *to know God through prayer, worship, and Bible study*
- *to be open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit*
- *to share God's love with each other, our community, and the world*

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 16, 2026

~Gathering the Family of God~

Prelude Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata in D Major K.119 **Diego Bustamante**

(All are invited to enjoy the Prelude as part of our worship service. We request that voices are kept to a whisper to allow for a meditative atmosphere.)

Choral introit

Welcome/Call to Worship

Rev. Ashley Love Skrabec

One: This is the day the Lord has made!

All: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

One: We come to this time of worship not as blank canvases, but as people with real lives and relationships, hopes and sorrows, doubts and certainties.

All: Jesus Christ was born into a world just like ours, and is with us still.

One: Long before we have everything (or anything) figured out, we are seen, loved, and invited to follow our Savior who has come near.

All: Amen, let us lift our voices in wonder and praise!

Opening Hymn

How Very Good and Pleasant #398

How very good and pleasant when we live in unity.

It is like precious oil, like fresh morning dew.

We gather here together with our hearts and voices raised to God,

Who's the center of our unity and praise!

~Bringing our Whole Selves in Worship~

Call to Reconciliation:

Doug and Cheryl Hunt

One: Forgiveness and reconciliation don't accomplish much if we are not willing to first admit what is wrong. Let us bring our honesty to God as we ask for deep healing and peace.

All: God of mercy, you sent Jesus Christ to seek and save the lost. We confess that we have strayed from your way by what we have done and what we have left undone. Rather than embrace humility and welcome our neighbors, we so often fall into prejudice, hypocrisy, and impatience. Rather than follow your example of compassion, we find ourselves numb and indifferent to human need and suffering. We chase that which is temporary and neglect that which is eternal. Have mercy, O God, and forgive our sin. Return us to paths of righteousness that we may truly proclaim good news to this hurting world, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

(Moment of silent reflection)

One: Scripture assures us that nothing in all of creation can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Hear and believe the good news of the gospel.

All: If anyone is in Christ they are a new creation! Let us take hold of this promise and affirm together that we are forgiven and freed.

Passing of the Peace

Doug and Cheryl Hunt

One: The Spirit of God binds us together as a community of faith, to share the love and peace that God so generously bestows on us. May the peace of Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you

One: Amen. Let us greet each other with God's love.

Children's Message and Blessing

Rev. Ashley Love Skrabec

One: As our children head off to Sunday school, we send them with this blessing:

All: May God be with you there.

One: And our children say: Kids: May God Be with you here.

~Listening to Scripture~

Song of Preparation

They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love #300 vs. 1-3

Verse 1

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord;
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord;
And we pray that all unity will one day be restored.

Refrain

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

Verse 2

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand;
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand;
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land.

Repeat Refrain

Verse 3

We Will work with each other, we will work side by side;
We will work with each other, we will work side by side;
And we'll guard human dignity and save each human pride.

Repeat Refrain

Prayer for Understanding God's Word

One: Holy Spirit, we offer this reading of scripture to you. Open our hearts and minds to hear what you are saying to us today.

Reading from the Psalms

Psalm 133 pg 970

Doug and Cheryl Hunt

One: The word of the Lord **All: Thanks be to God.**

Reading from the Gospels

Matthew 15:10-20 pg 1521

Rev. Ashley L. Skrabec

One: The word of the Lord **All: Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

The Practice of Unity

Rev. Ashley L. Skrabec

Prayer Song

Spirit, Open My Heart #692

Refrain

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living,
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving.
Spirit, open my heart.

Verse 1

God, replace my stony heart with a heart that's kind and tender.
All my coldness and fear to your grace I now surrender.

Repeat Refrain

Verse 2

Write your love upon my heart as my law, my goal, my story.
In each thought, word, and deed, may my living bring you glory.

Repeat Refrain

Verse 3

May I weep with those who weep; share the joy of friend and neighbor.
As I live from day to day, love will be my finest labor.

Repeat Refrain

Joys and Concerns

The Lord's Prayer

(Please feel free to pray the words below or use the language of your heart.)

Our Parent(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.

Invitation to the Offering

Doxology

Offertory

Prayer of Dedication

~Going Forth to Love and Serve the Lord~

Sending Hymn

Blest Be the Tie that Binds #306 vs. 1-3, 5

Verse 1

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship our spirit finds
Is like to that above.

Verse 2

Before our Father's throne,
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one
Our comforts and our cares.

Verse 3

We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear..

Verse 5

From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.

Benediction

Choral Amen

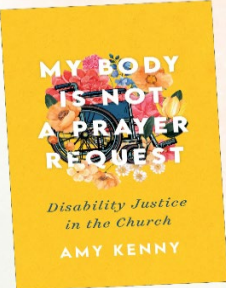
Postlude Peter Tchaikovsky: "Waltz" from Album for the Young

Rev. Ashley Love Skrabec

Diego B.

(All are invited to enjoy the Postlude as part of our worship service. If you choose to leave during the Postlude, please do so quietly.)

Announcements



**BOOK STUDY
MONDAY
EVENINGS AT 7PM
ON ZOOM**

**ALL ARE
WELCOME!**

**CHECK EMAIL FOR
THE ZOOM LINK**

**THURSDAY MORNING
BIBLE
STUDY**

**10 AM IN THE GENEVA
ROOM AT FPCS**

Join us for a time of meditative Bible study, reflection, discussion, music, and fellowship.



**UOP SERVICE DAY!
AUGUST 20TH**

8:30am-12 pm
**Volunteers needed! Come
welcome and assist students as
they work on projects around the
church during UOP's Day of
Service. Sign up so we know
you'll be there!**



Hospitality after Worship Setup/Cleanup

August 16: Jane/Marilyn
August 23: Sylvia/Marilyn
August 30: Jane

Worship Assistants

August 16 – Doug and Cheryl Hunt
August 23 – Gretchen Loudon
August 30 – Kimberlee Roider

Sunday School Volunteers

August 16 – Autumn Alessio
August 23 – Sylvia Cavanaugh
August 30 – Tola Eley

If you are interested in serving with Hospitality, as a Worship Assistant, or as a Sunday School Volunteer, please contact the Office.

Meetings This Month:

August 17 Spiritual Growth Committee 4 pm on Zoom
August 18 Hospitality Committee at 10 am
August 20 UOP Service Day 8:30 am to 12 pm
August 26 Food Pantry Distribution at 2 pm
August 29 Native Core Overdose Awareness Event 11 am to 4 pm
August 31 Session Meeting 10:30 am

Weekly:

Book Study at 7 pm on Zoom
Bible Study at 10 am Thursdays

Prayer Requests

The Church Office and members of the church receive several prayer requests each week. Please pray for:

- Shalise asks for prayers for her son and for herself and also prayers of peace and comfort for the friends and family of the Stockton woman killed doing her job in the mass shooting in Idaho.
- Casey requests prayers following the passing of a community member to cancer. We also lift prayers for her and for all of the staff and faculty welcoming college students, and for the students as they arrive to campus and begin a new school year..
- Dylan asks for prayers of safety and comfort as he travels to a new ADA teaching job in Rancho Cordova. Prayers for all ADA therapists and support staff serving in classrooms and homes.
- Sung-Eun requested prayers for those who are at risk in Korea due to extreme heat.
- Cheryl ask for prayers for Columbia and all those affected by the 7.4 magnitude earthquake that occurred on Monday. She shared a message from the Presbyterian Church of Columbia;
“United in prayer and solidarity.

In the face of the recent earthquake, from the Presbyterian Church of Colombia, we raise our prayers for the affected communities, for the families who live moments of fear and uncertainty and for those who work in the attention of this emergency.

We are in communication with our Presbyteries and communities in the territories to know directly the situation and their needs. Our entire action plan and support initiatives will be articulated with them, seeking an organized, responsible and close response.

We deeply appreciate the prayers and expressions of solidarity of our sister churches and the national and international ecumenical family. We continue to walk together, trusting in God and preparing ourselves to serve where it is most needed.

Soon we will be informing how we can join efforts to support the affected people and families.”

If you have a prayer request, please contact the Church Office or Pastor Ashley. Joys and concerns are added to the prayer list of the people who have signed up to be members of the WE CARE PRAYER TEAM. If you would like to be a part of the WE CARE PRAYER TEAM, contact Cheryl Hunt or call the Church Office.



First Presbyterian Church

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Email: office@fpcstockton.org

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9am -12 pm

www.fpcstockton.org

Board of Elders (Session)

Sylvia Cavanaugh, Cheryl Hunt, Jane Knoop, Gretchen Loudon and Janet Sepiol

Committee Chairs

Gretchen Loudon - Spiritual Growth Co-Chair

Doug Hunt - Finance, Buildings & Grounds

Janet Sepiol - Personnel and Support & Endowment Co-Chair

Cheryl Hunt & Sylvia Cavanaugh - Hospitality Co-Chair

Jane Knoop - Nominating and Support & Endowment Co-Chair

Janet Sepiol - Clerk of Session

Rev. Ashley Love Skrabec - Pastor

Ministers—all the members of the church

First Presbyterian Church is committed to loving and serving all people, including those from diverse generations, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientations, and life experiences. Whatever your story, you are welcomed by Jesus Christ and by this church family.