

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Stockton, CA

October 18, 2026 - 10:30 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*

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 18, 2026

~Gathering the Family of God~

Prelude J.S. Bach: Prelude in C Major, WTC Book I **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: We will rejoice and be glad in it

One: Jesus said: Come, all who are weary and carrying heavy burdens

All: And I will give you rest.

One: Beloved of God, let us remember the source of our hope

All: We are seen, loved, forgiven, and called by our Redeemer Jesus Christ

One: Amen, let us worship together.

Opening Hymn

God is Here! #409 vs. 1,2,4

Verse 1

God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer,
may we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share.

Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts
wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.

Verse 2

Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace.
Here are table, font, and pulpit; here the cross has central place.
Here, in honesty of preaching, here, in silence, as in speech,
here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.

Verse 4

Lord of all, of Church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt,
keep us faithful to the gospel; help us work your purpose out.

Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive;
we, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!

~Bringing our Whole Selves in Worship~

Call to Reconciliation:

Gretchen Louden

One: While we come from many different backgrounds and diverse life stories,
we all have this in common: we all need God's grace.

All: Lord, have mercy on us. Too often we talk about love but neglect to put it into action. We demand love from others, but don't offer it to those most in need of compassion. We love the beauty and resources of your creation, but the scars and destruction of the natural world bear witness to our carelessness and greed. You shower us with welcome and forgiveness in Jesus Christ and yet we often find ourselves turning inward, away from our neighbors. Fear and resentment can cause us to live as if our relationships with people, nature, and even our God are only about what we can acquire. Teach us again what it means to live in love. Heal our hearts and show us a better way, we pray through Jesus Christ who makes all things new.

(Moment of silent reflection)

Assurance of Forgiveness:**Gretchen Louden**

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**Gretchen Louden**

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 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**

I Need Thee Every Hour #735 vs. 1-3

Verse 1

I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord;
no tender voice like thine can peace afford.

Refrain

I need thee, O I need thee; every hour I need thee!
O bless me now, my Savior, I come to thee!

Verse 2

I need thee every hour; stay thou near by;
temptations lose their power when Thou art nigh.

Repeat Refrain**Verse 3**

I need thee every hour; teach me thy will,
and thy rich promises in me fulfill.

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 99 pg 936****Gretchen Louden**

Reading from the Gospels Matthew 22:15-22 pg 1535 **Rev. Ashley Love**

Sermon **God and Caesar** **Rev. Ashley Love Skrabec**

Prayer Song We Fall Down #368

We fall down; we lay our crowns at the feet of Jesus:
The greatness of mercy and love, at the feet of Jesus.
 And we cry holy, holy, holy.
 And we cry holy, holy, holy.
 And we cry holy, holy, holy is the Lamb.

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

This is My Song #340 vs. 1-2

Verse 1

This is my song, Oh God of all the nations,
A song of peace for lands afar and mine.
This is my home, the country where my heart is;
Here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine.
But other hearts in other lands are beating,
With hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.

Verse 2

My country's skies are bluer than the ocean,
And sunlight beams on cloverleaf and pine.
But other lands have sunlight too and clover,
And skies are everywhere as blue as mine.
So hear my song, O God of all the nations,
A song of peace for their land and for mine.

Benediction
Choral Amen

Rev. Ashley Love Skrabec

Postlude Rodgers and Hammerstein: You'll Never Walk Alone from Carousel
Diego Bustamante

(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.)

Meetings This Month:

October 11-25 Hosting Family Promise
October 19 Spiritual Growth Committee 4 pm on Zoom
October 20 Hospitality Committee 10:30am
October 21 Finance, Building and Grounds Committee 9:30am
October 24 Trunk or Treat 4-6pm
October 26 Session Meeting 9:30am
October 28 Food Pantry Distribution at 2 pm

Weekly:

Bible Study at 10 am Thursdays
Evening Bible Study Every 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 5 pm

Hospitality after Worship Setup/Cleanup

October 18 -- Jane
October 25 -- Sylvia

Worship Assistants

October 18 – Gretchen Loudon
October 25 — Doug and Cheryl Hunt

Sunday School Volunteers

October 18 – Yeji Cha
October 25 – Cynthia Allison
If you are interested in serving with Hospitality, as a Worship Assistant, or as a Sunday School Volunteer, please contact the Office.

STARTING IN SEPTEMBER!

New Bible Study!

1st and 3rd Wednesdays
5-6:15 pm at Charlie's home
(contact office for address and gate instructions)

Pastor Ashley will lead with a similar format to our Thursday morning Bible study, featuring a meditative style of reading scripture called lectio divina, music, and prayer. All are welcome!



THURSDAY MORNING

BIBLE STUDY

10 AM IN THE GENEVA ROOM AT FPCCS

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



Announcements

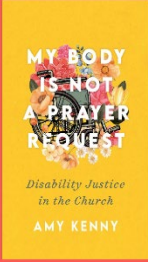


Launching into Our Future!
Stewardship Season 2026

Please return your pledge card to help us plan for 2027!



Book Discussion and Brainstorming



OCT 25 FOLLOWING WORSHIP

In response to our recent reading of Amy Kenny's book *My Body is Not a Prayer Request*, we will reflect as a church family on Disability Justice and discuss ideas and goals related to accessibility. No reading required- just come with an open mind, courageous heart, and a creative spirit!

TRUNK OR TREAT

AT
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF STOCKTON

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24 4-6 PM

CANDY, SNACKS, GAMES, HOT DRINKS, AND FUN FOR KIDS OF ALL AGES!

**31 E VINE ST.
STOCKTON 95202
CENTER STREET PARKING LOT**



NCCP 2026 Mission Emphasis Event

Are you curious about the life and work of a PCUSA Global Ecumenical Liaison? Would you like to know more about what congregations in the Sacramento area are doing to support refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants? Are you intrigued by the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship's *Guns to Gardens* initiative? Are you seeking to connect the dots between mission and New Worshipping Communities?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you will want to attend the North Central California Presbytery Mission Emphasis Event sponsored by our Mission Support Committee. The event is on Saturday, October 24th at Carmichael Presbyterian Church. If interested in attending please talk to Doug or Cheryl.

Prayer Requests

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

- Shalise asked for prayers to help resolve some financial issues and to find a better job. She also asked for prayers for harmony for the women in her house.
- Charlie was released from the hospital on Wednesday and is adjusting to being back home. He asks for prayers that his follow-up care can finally provide some answers and that his Bi-pap machine is approved quickly so he can get more constant assistance with his breathing.
- Gail reported that the 2027 pledge cards will come in the mail this week and asked all to prayerfully consider how they can help support our church.. You can return the cards in the offering plate, in the office or bring them to the dedication service November 22nd.

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

31 E. Vine St.

Stockton, CA 95202

209-465-2653

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 Louden and Janet Sepiol

Committee Chairs

Gretchen Louden - 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.