

Worship of the Living God

† Those who are able are invited to stand

Bold indicates words spoken in unison

Thank you for silencing your electronic devices.

Gathering Around the Word

An order of worship offers a meaningful and reliable structure for the church’s encounter with the living God. Over time, an order of worship helps to shape our faith and faithfulness as the people of God, becoming a pattern for how we live as Christians in the world.

PRELUDE

Blessed Are the Merciful

Roberta Rowland-Rvbold

Teresa de Freitas

GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Josh Musser Gritter

NEW MEMBER WELCOME

Rev. Lara Musser Gritter

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Hannah Ostlund

The Lord has promised good things to us.
God has promised to never leave us.
The Lord has promised good things to us.
The Lord has promised to never forsake us.
The Lord has promised good things to us.
The Lord has promised us a future.

† HYMN #450

Be Thou My Vision

CONFESSION OF SIN

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. In your mercy, forgive what we have been, amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

† RESPONSE #581

Glory Be to the Father

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, amen.

Proclamation of the Word

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Ronnie Church

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:29-39, p. 112

Sara Lee

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 5:33-37, p. 5

SERMON

Rev. Josh Musser Gritter

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Cello Suite No.1 in G major, BWV 1007

J.S. Bach

Responding to the Word

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Rev. Lara Musser Gritter

The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic* church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

*This means universal church, not the Roman Catholic church.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD’S PRAYER

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

O Love

Elaine Hagenberg

Ryan Graebert, Cello

† DOXOLOGY #606

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below; praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

† PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Sending to Share the Word

† HYMN #697

Take My Life

vv.1-4

† BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

God is My Strong Salvation

Gordon Young



The flowers this morning are given to the glory of God by the Julie Steele Flower Fund and in heartfelt thanks to Megan Shaw for her love and dedication to children’s ministry.

Welcome to First Pres

We are so glad you are here!

FRIENDSHIP PADS in your pews are for recording attendance and for visitors to share their information so that we can share about God’s work here. CHILDREN’S ACTIVITIES are in the narthex. CHILDCARE (ages 4 and under) is available in the Nursery in our Family Life Center (see an usher for directions). ASSISTED HEARING DEVICES are available from an usher.

JOYS AND CONCERNS: Harold Mesimer, John Smith, Betty Carli

CONTINUING CONCERNS: Preston and Glenda Askew, Bill Baker, Mary Cameron, Alice Edwards (Tracy Smith’s mother), Richard Franklin, Scott Hay, Rosalie Laughlin, Wib Manuel, Martha Michael, Betty Mohs, Frank Saunders, Caren Steele, Jesse Tart, Jeanette Whitley, Acey Worthy

BIRTHDAYS: Spencer Byrd, Kathy Sang, Patti Glassgow, Jim Carli, Mady Morris, Ellen Whittington, Melanie Sink Bailey, Jennifer Hudson, Acey Worthy, Karen De Graaf, Stephen Bullock, Knox Menees, Blaine Smith, Anne Maxey, Barbara Hudson

ANNIVERSARIES: Jeff and Donna McEnteer, Stewart and Noel Adams, Brantley and Madison Horton, Doug and Kathy Lawrence, David and Kathy Pulliam, Alex and Katelyn Lee

We are deeply rooted

This morning we welcome Kimberly Broadhurst to our First Pres family. Welcome, Kimberly!

GROW: Devotional Drop-In for Young Parents! Are you a parent looking for community at First Pres? Have you ever dropped your child off at Sunday School and been unsure of where to go yourself? Come to the new “Devotional Drop-In” during the Sunday School hour, 9:45-10:45, in the Kirby Library! We will have refreshments, time to connect with other parents, and a chance to reflect on our faith together.

GROW: First Kids has begun, but it’s not too late to join us! Ages: potty-trained 3-4-year-olds through 5th-grade kids. Bible lessons, crafts, science, music, and more. Join us!



GROW: First Parents is NEW! On the 1st Wednesday of each month, beginning in September, parents can join Pastor Lara at Crafty Buffalo for fellowship and food. Drop off your First Kids, then enjoy some time spent with other parents, 5:45-6:45. Next date: October 7!

GROW: First Kids needs shepherds. It takes a village of volunteers to put on programming. Please consider helping by being a shepherd. Sign up now!



GROW: Mom’s Village – A time of dinner, fellowship, sharing, and caring. Mom's Village will meet during First Kids on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month, 5:30-7:00, in the Youth Classroom 223.

GROW: Our Men’s Bible Study with Pastor Josh continues each Tuesday at 6:30 AM in Room 201.

5-WEEK BOOK STUDY: Are we more than machines? Is free will an illusion? Join Trevor Eppehimer on Wednesdays at 11:00, October 7 through November 4, for a book study on *Am I just my brain?* by Sharon Dirckx. Sign up by emailing teppehimer@hoodseminary.edu. Sponsored by the Messinger-Williams Community Education Initiative. Space is limited. Books are available on Amazon.

WE HAVE A HEALTHY CORE

STAFF: Please be aware that your pastors and staff will never text or email you to solicit money, gift cards, or run errands. Other things to watch out for: emails not ending with @firstpresssalisbury.org or emails/texts about ‘a private matter.’ Please do not respond to these phishing emails and texts.

GIVING UPDATE:

2026 Budgeted Pledges through 08-31-26: \$768,311
2026 Year-to-Date Received: \$706,151

WE ARE BRANCHING OUT

RACE AND JUSTICE: 2 Opportunities this fall! Just Pursuit: A Black Prosecutor's *Fight for Fairness* is written by Laura Coates, who is a CNN legal analyst and former federal prosecutor. She shares stories from her legal career, during which she learned that even with the best intentions, “the pursuit of justice creates injustice.” Leaders: Monica Green and Steve Coggin. Dates: Wednesdays, Sept. 16-Oct. 14. Sign up with Monica Green at monica.green1948@gmail.com or Steve Coggin at scoggin@catawba.edu *Worse Than a Lie* is civil rights attorney Ben Crump's first novel. It revolves around the shooting of a Black ex-police officer by four White men on the very night that Barack Obama wins the presidency. The man survives only to find himself being prosecuted, with the public swayed by the police narrative. Enter attorney Beau Lee Cooper, who some say bears a great resemblance to Crump himself. Leaders: Esther Atkins-Smith and Beffie Cook. Dates: Sunday, Sept. 13-Oct. 11. Sign-up contact: estheratkins@gmail.com or egravescook@yahoo.com. Our discussions will take place at 7 pm each night on Zoom. Sign up, and we'll send you the reading schedule and Zoom link. Hope you can join us!

YOUTH:

Sunday School: 9:45 AM
Youth Group: Sundays at 5:00 PM
Youth @ the Porch Bible Study: Wednesdays at 7:30 PM (117 Maupin Ave)

YOUTH: Attention, parents of youth! Help us keep in touch with you and your youth for all of our youth events. Please complete this year’s Information Form asap.



SERVE: Yoga! Certified Yoga Instructor Felicia Stewart Hoyle leads yoga each Wednesday morning, 9:00-10:15, in Lewis Hall for beginners through advanced levels and for all ages. Suggested donation: \$10.

SERVE: Monthly on the 1st Sunday, we collect pantry items to help restock the shelves at Rowan Helping Ministries. Your donations of peanut butter, canned goods, and cereals are always in need and greatly appreciated. Next donation Sunday: October 4.

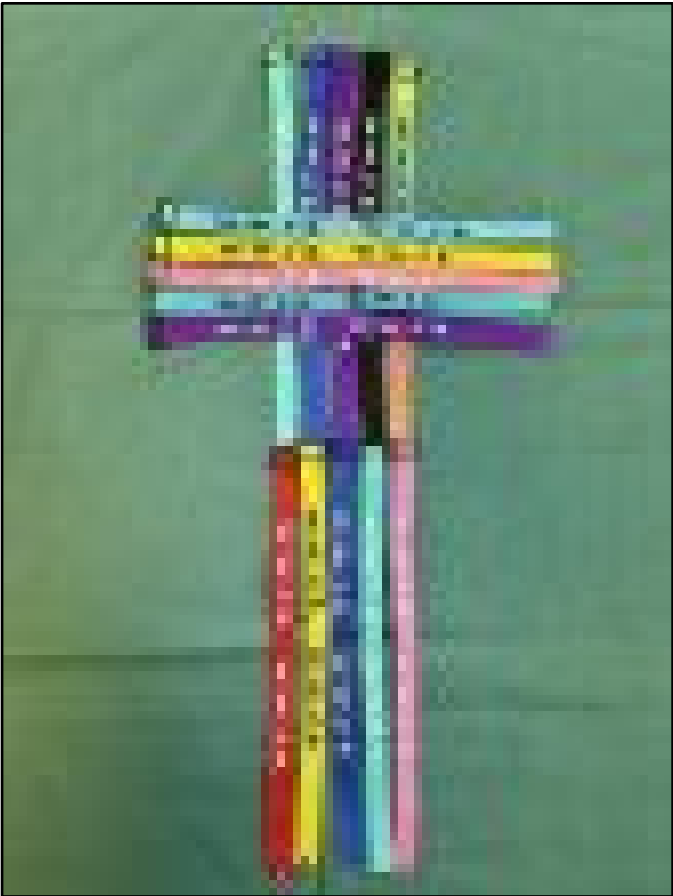
SERVE: Our next quarterly Red Cross Blood Drive is set for Tuesday, October 13, 2:00-6:30, in Fellowship Hall. Sign up now for your appointment.



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Service of the Lord’s Day

WWJD
Sermon on the Mount Series



16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
September 13, 2026
11:00 am | Sanctuary

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Where God’s Love is Alive for Mission