



***Tiny Letter:
Giant Impact***

*Called to make fully-devoted followers of Jesus Christ:
Inwardly Strong
and
Outwardly Focused.*

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September 24, 2023
Stephenson Hall, 11:00 AM

*First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa
Born by grace in 1885*

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Stephenson Hall, 11:00 a.m.

Words of Preparation

The sum of your word is truth and all of your righteous judgements endure forever.

Psalm 119:160

Truth is what happens when we use words to reflect God's wise ordering of the world and shine light into its dark corners, bringing judgment and mercy where it is badly needed. Empires can't cope with this. They make their own 'truth,' creating 'facts on the ground' in the depressingly normal way of violence and injustice."

Tom Wright, *How God Became King*

Prelude

God is on the Throne

Why should I worry? Why should I fear? Why should I run when Jesus is here? I'm safe in His arms, safe in His heart. Nothing can take me away from His love.

God is on the throne. He reigns forevermore. Just think about it. Just think about it. God is always good. He loves like a father should. Just think about it. Just think about it.

When I am anxious, when I'm afraid, I find strength when I call on His Name. I'm safe in His arms, safe in His heart. Nothing can take me away from His love. He's the King of power, the King of kings. He is the Lord over everything. To Him be the glory, the honor and praise, forever and ever, amen, always. *Refrain.*

Hallelujah, He reigns. Hallelujah, He saves. Hallelujah, always! He's never gonna let me down. *Refrain.*

Welcome and Announcements Dr. Miller and Rev. Julia Metcalf

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. *Genesis 2:15*

Stewardship: the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.

Call to Worship

Trust in the Lord with all your heart;
do not depend on your own understanding.

Seek His will in all you do,
and He will show you which path to take.

Don't be impressed with your own wisdom.
Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil.

Then you will have healing for your body
and strength for your bones. Proverbs 3:5-8

Lord, your steadfast love is before our eyes
—let us walk in your faithfulness. Psalm 26:3

Songs of Prayer and Affirmation

Be Thou My Vision

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart. Naught be all else to me,
save that Thou art. Thou my best thought by day or by night.
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my wisdom, Be Thou my true Word. I ever with Thee and
Thou with me Lord. Thou, my great Father, and I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise. Thou mine inheritance,
now and always. Thou and Thou only, first in my heart. High King
of heaven, my treasure Thou art.

High King of heaven, when victory is won. May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun. Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

He Will Hold Me Fast

When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast! When the tempter would prevail, He will hold me fast; I could never keep my hold through life's fearful path, for my love is often cold: He must hold me fast!

He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast! For my Savior loves me so, He will hold me fast!

Those He saves are His delight; Christ will hold me fast! Precious in His holy sight; He will hold me fast! He'll not let my soul be lost, His promises shall last; bought by Him at such a cost, He will hold me fast! *Refrain.*

For my life He bled and died, Christ will hold me fast! Justice has been satisfied, He will hold me fast! Raised with Him to endless life, He will hold me fast; Till our faith is turned to sight when he comes at last! *Refrain.*

The Psalter Reading

Psalm 119:33-41

Elder Eric Olson

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image, through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.... *(in silence)*

Invitation

O Come To The Altar

Are you hurting and broken within, overwhelmed by the weight of your sin? Jesus is calling. Have you come to the end of yourself? Do you thirst for a drink from the well? Jesus is calling.

O come to the altar, the Father's arms are open wide. Forgiveness was bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Leave behind your regrets and mistakes; come today there's no reason to wait. Jesus is calling. Bring your sorrows and trade them for joy; from the ashes a new life is born. Jesus is calling. *Refrain.*

O, what a Savior! Isn't He wonderful? Sing alleluia; Christ is risen! Bow down before him for He is Lord of all. Sing alleluia; Christ is risen!

Bear your cross as you wait for the crown; tell the world of the treasure you've found. *Refrain.*

Assurance of Pardon

Friends, hear and embrace the good news: in Jesus Christ there is forgiveness —for everyone who calls upon Him.

Alleluia, amen!

Affirmation of Faith

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.

Blessing of the Young Disciples *What is Truth?*

Jesus said, *“Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.”* Pilate asked Him, *“What is truth?”* John 18:38

Jesus said, *“I am the Truth...”* John 14:6

Offering Build My Life

Worthy of every song we could ever sing; worthy of all the praise we could ever bring; worthy of every breath we could ever breathe, we live for You.

Jesus, the name above every other name. Jesus, the only one who could ever save, worthy of every breath we could ever breathe, we live for You. We live for You.

Holy, there is no one like You. There is none besides You. Open up my eyes in wonder and show me who You are and fill me with Your heart, and lead me in Your love to those around me.

I will build my life upon Your love, it is a firm foundation. I will put my trust in You alone and I will not be shaken. *Refrain*

Gospel Reading II John (*The Message* translation)

My dear congregation, I, your pastor, love you in very truth. And I'm not alone—everyone who knows the Truth that has taken up permanent residence in you.

Let grace, mercy, and peace be with us in truth and love from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, Son of the Father!

I can't tell you how happy I am to learn that many members of your congregation are diligent in living out the Truth, exactly as commanded by the Father. But permit me a reminder, friends, and this is not a new commandment but simply a repetition of our original and basic charter: that we love each other. Love means following his commandments, and his unifying commandment is that you conduct your lives in love. This is the first thing you heard, and nothing has changed.

There are a lot of smooth-talking con artists loose in the world who refuse to believe that Jesus Christ was truly human, a flesh-and-blood human being. Give them their true title: Deceiver! Antichrist!

And be very careful around them so you don't lose out on what we've worked so diligently on together; I want you to get every reward you have coming to you. Anyone who gets so progressive in his thinking that he walks out on the teaching of Christ, walks out on God. But whoever stays with the teaching, stays faithful to both the Father and the Son.

If anyone shows up who doesn't hold to this teaching, don't invite him in and give him the run of the place. That would just give him a platform to perpetuate his evil ways, making you his partner.

I have a lot more things to tell you but I'd rather not use paper and ink. I hope to be there soon in person and have a heart-to-heart talk. That will be far more satisfying to both you and me. Everyone here in your sister congregation sends greetings.

Sermon Truth Matters —and So Does Love

...this is love, that we walk according to His commandments.

II John 1:6

Sacrament of Communion: Invitation to the Table

Words of Institution

Prayer of Blessing

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

Sending Song

Those Who Trust

Those who trust in the Lord are a strong mountain, they will not, not be moved. Those who trust in the Lord are a strong mountain, they will not, not be moved.

Though the world moves like mad, You alone are faithful. Jesus You, You will not, not be changed.

Christ the King sets my feet on a firm foundation that will not, it will not be moved. Christ the King sets my feet on a firm foundation that will not, it will not be moved. *Refrain*

Those who trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion; they will not, they will not be moved. Those who trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion; they will not, they will not be moved. *Refrain*

Charge and Benediction

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Today

Called to worship –by the Lord of the Church! A heartfelt welcome to each and all as we gather to worship in this House of Prayer. If you're here for the first time, we pray you'll sense the presence of Christ and the warmth of this congregation.

Stewardship: Today begins a season of prayerful and intentional consideration of our blessings –and how we might faithfully “steward” them in ways that serve the Lord's purposes. The Session is already

examining the 2024 FPC budget. Thank you for taking the local church seriously and giving of your very best to the Master. In this transition time, your support in prayer and giving is vital.

Last week's *Helping Hand/FPC Golf Tournament* did more than deepen friendships! Over \$35,000 was raised, every penny of which will go to assist the most impoverished Tulsans through Helping Hand. May the Lord's special blessing rest upon those who prayed, gave, and worked to make this happen!

Our *Letter of Blessing* today goes to Bob Bastemeyer, Joe Land and the many workers who made the *Helping Hand/FPC Golf tournament happen*. We also are sending out a letter of blessing to Rusty and Charlie Gaddy for their longtime faithfulness in serving the Stephenson Hall worshipping congregations.

The flowers that beautify the Sanctuary today are given to the glory of God and in memory of Alma and Nick Robson, Fred N. Davis, Jr. and in loving honor of Marilyn I. Davis by Hannah and Joe Robson and family

Thank you for your faithful support of the ministries of First Church! Weekly tithes and offerings to the Lord may be given electronically at firstchurchtulsa.org, text 405-276-4141 or by using the QR code below.



Thanks for your ongoing prayers in this time of transition. Dr. Miller's retirement is set for Reformation Sunday, October 29. In the month of October, our worship schedule is as follows:

October 1, World Communion Sunday
11:00 a.m. Only one service / sanctuary

October 8, Dr. Jonathan Miller, preaching

8:15 Sanctuary

11:00 Sanctuary

11:00 Great Hall (TIF) sermon simulcast from sanctuary

October 15, 22, and 29

Dr. Jim Miller, offers three “Pastoral Letters” to the flock

October 15 and 22: three services

8:15 sanctuary

11:00 Sanctuary

11:00 Great Hall (TIF) sermon simulcast from sanctuary

October 29: Reformation Sunday

One service, Sanctuary

The Session’s Transition Team, chaired by Jim Diacon, includes Allison Biggs, Brett Crane, Stephanie Madsen, Urbanus Masaku and Gary Mathews. A very helpful look into the future of pastoral leadership here at FPC can be found at firstchurchtulsa.org; look for the highlighted word “transition”. If you have questions, concerns or comments, please don’t hesitate to reach out to any of the members of the team or send an your inquiries to FPCTransition@firstchurchtulsa.org.

The flags hanging throughout the church remind us of mission partnerships around the world. Through these partnerships and faithful congregational giving the sun never sets on the ministries of First Church.

Presbyterian Women’s mission project for September is First Church’s Helping Hand Ministries. This ministry offers assistance to Tulsans in need. They will be collecting full-sized toiletries, small bottles of laundry soap, and toilet paper. You can leave these items in the PW collection bin, in the atrium on Sundays and Wednesdays.

Dr. Miller continues his Pastor's Class next Sunday on Rebecca McLaughlin's book, *Confronting Christianity*: Stephenson Hall, 9:30 a.m. Today's chapter: "Isn't Christianity Homophobic?"

Foundations Class – today at 9:30 a.m. in E104. The class is open to anyone interested in studying the basic foundations of the Bible and the principles of the Christian faith. Rev. Hutchinson will lead the class on a deep dive into the letters of Paul, beginning with the book of Romans.

Kenya Trip Review – Today in the Stephenson Hall at 9:30 a.m. to hear reflections on the recent Kenya mission trip.

Inquirers Class – If you're interested in learning more about First Church, please join us today and on Sundays, October 1, 8 and 15 from 9:15 - 10:40 a.m. in the Miller Library. Registering for the class is very helpful; use the QR code below or contact Patricia Hall at phall@firstchurchtulsa.org or 918-301-1028.



Interested in a Kerr Chapel history tour? Join FPC docent Joan Hoar today, following the 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary service in the Kerr Chapel. For more information contact Patricia Hall 918-301-1028 or phall@firstchurchtulsa.org.

Happening This Week

Wednesday Night Downtown

Dinner at 5:15 p.m. in Stephenson Hall – Class starts at 6:15 p.m.

The Meaning Behind the Marquee meets in Stephenson Hall. The First Church pastors will lead a five-week series on the meaning of orthodox, reformed, and evangelical. These words speak to First Church's identity – who we are and where we come from. But what do they signify? What is it that we are declaring

to be true about this community? This fall, we will be considering each of these words, the history and theology that give them meaning, and how they might shape our life together.

Seekers Sermon Series - led by Rev. Wambugu in E104. Join us as we study and discuss the sermon scriptures from the week.

Mark Your Calendar

Music Lovers! You are invited to the 50th Annual Organ Concert presented by Ron Pearson, on Sunday, October 8, at 4:00, in the Sanctuary. The university of Tulsa Chamber Orchestra will participate; a reception will follow in the Atrium.

Deacons Day of Care: Saturdays, October 7 and 28. On the first Saturday, the team will be at Anderson Elementary School working on the grounds. On Saturday, October 28, teams will deploy to the home of First Church members who have requested help with yard work and light home-maintenance jobs. To offer your help, use the QR code. To request a team to visit your home on October 28, please call Julie Steiner at 918-640-6955.



Fall Festival – Sunday, Oct. 22, 3:30-6:00 p.m., at Camp Loughridge. Come celebrate friends and family with fun activities for all ages. The First Church Pitmasters are preparing barbeque and there are hayrides, music, and trunk or treat. More detailed information to come.

Save the Date!

Come and add to the joy! Mr. Austin Stember and Miss Courtney Miller cordially invite you (and each member of the congregation) to share in the blessing of their wedding, **Saturday, October 7, at 5:30 p.m. in the sanctuary.** A reception follows in the Courtyard.

Ministry Opportunities

Young Adults – First Church is committed to cultivating faith within the next generation, providing a place for young adults to connect with one another and with the larger church. Find us on Facebook, Instagram at *@fpcyoungadults*, or contact Rev. Julia Metcalf at 918-301-1030.

Realm – the church database – Every member of the church has a profile in the church's database. Unfortunately, many members do not have a photo in their profile. Having your photo on file is very helpful to the pastors, staff and other members in your groups. Visit the table in the atrium today and visit with Kathy Wilson who will help you check your profile.

Parish Register

Prayers for Healing: Jane Azlin, Pat Brown, Roy Cail, Randy Corelli, Dwight Creveling, Marilyn Davis, Donna Droege, Cecil Drummond, David Dunning, Mary Ann Elliott, Gaye Graeler, Gena Gray, Cynthia Hill-Meriwether, Meg Hubler, Warren Hubler, Brenda Johnson, Jeannie Dickey Kelsay, Joyce Kunkel, Carmelitti LeFlore, Amy Lesh, Ann McKellar, Jon Mercer, Jan Miller, Jim Miller, David Osterholt, Bill Peacher, Shari Postier, Lyle Proffitt, Helen Quiring, Carly Rivers, Mary Ruddle, Robert Shaw, Asa Smith, Jane Sneed, Cissy Ssettimba, and Susan Waldie.

The Sacrament of Baptism: Mrs. LeaAnn Mungai was baptized on September 10; Colin Brian Curtis, son of Alex and Trey Curtis, was baptized on September 18.

Worship Notes

Services are broadcast on Cox channel 3 (each Sunday) at 11:00 a.m., 5:00 and 10:00 p.m., on the FPC Facebook page, or *FirstChurchTulsa.org/YouTube*.

Please notify the church if you have a pastoral need, change of address/phone number or other important family news. Contact Kathy Wilson at 918-301-1029 or *kwilson@firstchurchtulsa.org*.

For those who need hearing assistance in the Sanctuary or Stephenson Hall, audio headsets are available from the ushers. Also available are large-print hymnals and Bibles.

First Church Cancer List – Do you or a loved one have cancer? Members of the Guild of Intercessors pray every day for those on the Guild's Cancer List. If you would like to add yourself, a loved one, or a friend or colleague to this confidential list, please contact Paula Peterson at 918-296-5548/*mandppeterson@msn.com* or Monte Prater at 918-605-9719/*monteprater@aol.com*.

With gratitude for those whom the Lord has added to our number, we offer a warm and heartfelt welcome!

Certificate of Transfer

Laura Chisholm
Randy Corelli
Teresa Corelli
Lisa Moss
Lynn Stewart

Reaffirmation of Faith

David Ford
Erica Kumar
Audrey Jones

Reinstatement

Lisa Angleton

Affiliation

Jenna Potvin

COME, GROW YOUR FAITH!

TODAY 9/24

- 8:00 am Worship: Kerr Chapel
8:30 am Worship: Stephenson Hall
9:00 am First Church Chorister and Celebration Singers
9:30 am Christian Apologetics, E104
 Cornerstone, Heidelberg Catechism, E102
 Covenanters, E101
 Faith and Family, Heidelberg Catechism, E102
 Forum, Who is This Man, E200
 Harbingers, When the Game is Over, It All Goes Back in the Box, E202
 Morning Glory Class, Prayers and Bible Study, B318
 Young Parents, Parenting Series, E205
 Pastor's Study, Not Meeting
 Foundations, Letters of Paul, E104
 Reflections, The Intertestamental Period, E103
 Shepherds, Bible Study, E203
 Sojourners, Life Together, E204
 The Vine, I John, E100
 Westminster Class, 2 Timothy, Tower Room
 Young Adults and Ukirk, Bible Study, E201
11:00 am Worship: Sanctuary, Stephenson, Great Hall
12:00 pm Congregational Meeting, Sanctuary

Monday 9/25

- 10:00 am Little Lambs, Wiseman Hall
11:30 am Monday School, Kirkland Library
11:45 am Guy's Monday Bible Study, E103
7:00 pm Overtone Rehearsal, Bell Choir

Tuesday 9/26

- 9:30 am Precepts, E100

Wednesday 9/27

- 9:30 am Watercolor the Word – Creative Art Class, E100
11:30 am Pastor's Study, E104
5:15 pm Wednesday Night Dinner, Stephenson Hall
6:00 pm Awana, Children's Area, POW, Amass Exodus, Powerhouse
6:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Choir Room

Saturday 9/30

- 8:45 am Before the Rooster Crows, E103