



***Embracing the Mystery:  
And Your Role in  
God's Drama***

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

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SEPTEMBER 26, 2021  
8:00 AM  
KERR CHAPEL

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

# ***Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost***

*Kerr Chapel, 8:00 a.m.*

## **The Words of Preparation**

A crucial eccentricity of the Christian faith is the assertion that people are saved by grace...The grace of God means something like: "Here is your life. You might never have been, but you *are*, because the party wouldn't have been complete without you. Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don't be afraid. I am with you. Nothing can ever separate us. It's for you I created the universe. I love you." Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking*

## **The Welcome**

Dr. Jim Miller

## **The Solo**

I Will Sing of Thy Great Mercies, from *St. Paul*

Felix Mendelssohn

*Brad Morgan, soloist*

I will sing of thy great mercies, O Lord, my Savior, and of thy faithfulness evermore.

*Psalm 89:1*

## **◆ The Call to Worship**

I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever;  
**with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.**

I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;  
**your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**

Let the heavens praise your wonders, O Lord,  
**your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones.**

Blessed be the Lord forever.

**Amen and Amen.**

Psalm 89:1-2, 5, 52

## **◆ The Hymn 276**

Great is Thy Faithfulness

FAITHFULNESS

## ◆ **The Prayer of Adoration**

Janine Burlin

### **The Old Testament Reading** Psalm 14:1-7

### **The Prayer of Confession**

Lord of all truth, beauty, and goodness, we acknowledge that even our greatest wisdom fails to grasp your truth. Even our purest desires are divided and we search elsewhere for beauty. Even our best actions fall short of your good and perfect will. By your grace, forgive us. By your power, deliver us. By your love, restore us. In your mercy, hear our prayers... *(in silence)*

### **The Assurance of Pardon**

Friends, hear and receive the good news with all of your hearts: in Jesus Christ there is forgiveness –for all who call upon Him!  
**Alleluia! Amen!**

## ◆ **The 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.

### **The New Testament Reading** Ephesians 2:1-10

**The Sermon**                      The Poetry of God's Grace                      Dr. Wes Vander Lugt

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.    Ephesians 2:8-10*

**The Invitation to the Table**

Words of Institution  
Prayer of Blessing  
Sharing of the Bread and Cup  
Prayer of Thanksgiving

**The Joys and Concerns of the Church**

**The Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer**

- ◆ **The Hymn**      356 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing                      NETTLETON
- ◆ **The Charge and Benediction**
- ◆ **The Postlude**      Improvisation on the tune NETTLETON

***Worship Notes***

**Welcome to worship!** We gather today to exalt Jesus, open our hearts to His presence, and pray for the Holy Spirit's awakening! A special and heartfelt welcome to guests who are new here. We pray you might sense the presence of Christ and the warm welcome of this congregation!

**World Communion Sunday! Next Sunday, October 3,** we join with congregations around the world to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Our 8:00 o'clock and 8:30 services will gather as per normal. All three of our 11:00 o'clock services will be together in the sanctuary.

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

**The flowers in today's Sanctuary worship** are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Jeffrey Scott Steen, given by Frank and Leigh Ann Fore, Jerry and Shirley Steen, and Whitney and Tucker Steen.

**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* or text 405-276-4141. You will also find offering plates located at the back of each worship space.

**For those who need hearing assistance** in the Sanctuary, audio headsets are available from the ushers.

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

**In this continuing season of the COVID virus**, we yearn to do whatever we can to diminish the risk for those who gather here. The Session has recommended the wearing of masks during the worship services. Thanks to each for your efforts in this regard.

### **Parish Register**

**Prayers for Healing:** Jane Azlin, Billy Boyd, Pat Brown, Dwight Creveling, Marilyn Davis, Terry Diacon, Donna Droege, Wandie and Mary Fitzpatrick, Pat Ford, Luke Fravel, Caroline Fravel Jones, Glenda Goodwin, Gaye Graeler, Cynthia Hill-Meriwether, Mike Hopkins, Meg Hubler, Harvey Hunt, Maggie Jones, Joyce Kunkel, Annelle Lanford, Amy Lesh, Laurence Mansur, Bob Matthews, Jan Miller, Rosemary Priest, David Osterholt, Carly Rivers, Zach Rivers, Mary Ruddle, Susan Shults, Robert Shaw, Helen Marie Sisler, Cissy Ssettimba, Sally Stewart, Bob Swofford, Quendy Veatch, Bill Weinrich, and Jack Williams.

**The Sacrament of Baptism:** George Robert DeShurley, and Hallie Kay Bryant, daughter of Amanda and Luke Bryant, were baptized on September 19.

**Sympathy and Prayers to:** Adelia Farris on the death of her son, Mark, on September 11.

## Sermon Notes

How do we grow up into Christ?  
What does Christian maturity look like?

Paul begins his letter to the Ephesians with three high-octane chapters describing what we do first: *We sit —and simply marvel at what God has done in Jesus Christ —by His Spirit!*

Key words in Ephesians:

Sit, Walk, Stand

1. Our position in Christ: SIT (chapters 1-3)
2. Our life in the world. WALK (chapters 4-5)
3. Our attitude to the Enemy STAND (chapter 6)  
(Watchman Nee)

After presenting the glorious good news of Jesus in Ephesians 1 and God's plan to bring us to new life in Christ, Paul begins to explain how that new life becomes ours in Ephesians 2. It happens, in a word, by **grace**.

Grace is uncontrollable, arbitrary to our senses, apparently unmerited. It's utterly free, ferociously strong, and about as mysterious a thing as you could imagine. (Brian Doyle)

In unpacking the mystery and poetry of God's grace, Paul emphasizes:

- Our desperate need for grace (2:1-3)
- The amazing gift of grace (2:4-9)
- The beautiful work of grace (2:10)

## First Church Updates

**We're glad to welcome each of you** in worship this morning! If you're new to First Church, please feel free to participate in any of the events offered below.

**Communion Elements Available for Pick Up** - First Church members who would like to participate at home with World Communion Sunday on October 3 may pick up Communion elements Monday, September 27 through Friday, October 1 at the church's reception desk. Members will need to call Cathy Mitchell at 918-584-4701 to let her know how many packets are needed and when they will be coming.

**First Family Dinner** next Sunday, October 3 at 12:15 p.m. in Stephenson Hall and the Courtyard. Join us to hear Dr. Miller's highlights from his sabbatical. For more information and to pay in advance, visit [FirstChurchTulsa.org/FFDinner21](http://FirstChurchTulsa.org/FFDinner21).

**Our Fall teaching ministry** continues this week, with *Monday School*, *Precepts*, *Wednesday Night Downtown* dinner and classes, and *Awana*. Dr. Miller's *Pastor's Study* is offered today at 9:30 a.m. and Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. Pastor Dan Hutchinson begins a year-long Survey of the Bible at 9:30 a.m. this morning.

**Little Lambs!** Every Monday at 10:00 a.m. Bring your children (birth to pre-school) to share in Bible stories, singing and prayer –while playing and getting to know other families. Contact Phillip Bowman with questions at 918-630-1786 or [pbowman@firstchurchtulsa.org](mailto:pbowman@firstchurchtulsa.org).

**Monday School! Every Monday: 11:30 lunch, class, noon. Led by Dr. Wes Vander Lugt**, our Theologian-in-Residence this fall. The Bible is one story, a story of relationships formed, deformed, and transformed with God, each other, and the world. Over fourteen weeks, we'll explore this theme of transformed, mutual relationships—what we're calling “kinship”—throughout the Bible and how it relates to our own lives and discipleship today. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m.; to reserve lunch, contact Hannah Elliott at 918-301-1019.

**Interested in theological discussions?** Join the **Downtown Theological Roundtable** for a discussion of Martin Luther's *On the Bondage of the Will*. Held on Wednesdays from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. in room 206. To register, or with questions, please call or email Phillip Bowman at 918-630-1786 or [pbowman@firstchurchtulsa.org](mailto:pbowman@firstchurchtulsa.org).

**The Pastor's Class**, led by Dr. Miller, today, at 9:30 a.m., in Stephenson Hall – studying C.S. Lewis' *Mere Christianity*. The same class meet each Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. in Stephenson Hall. To RSVP for lunch at the Wednesday class contact Hannah Elliott at [helliott@firstchurchtulsa.org](mailto:helliott@firstchurchtulsa.org).

**Old Testament Survey: Today**, and each Sunday morning at 9:30, Rev. Dan Hutchinson leads a class through the Old Testament. Join us if you are looking for a place to connect or interested in diving into the larger story of scripture. The class is held on Sundays, 9:30 a.m. in room E104. All ages are welcome.

**Grow your spiritual life** this fall by joining a small group to discuss the book *The Good and Beautiful God: Falling in Love with the God Jesus Knows* by James Bryan Smith. Groups begin the week of September 20 for nine weeks. Interested in joining, hosting or leading a group? Please contact Phillip Bowman at 918-630-1786 or [pbowman@firstchurchtulsa.org](mailto:pbowman@firstchurchtulsa.org) for more information.

**Wednesday Night Downtown**

*dinner at 5:15 p.m. (Stephenson Hall)*

*and class at 6:15 p.m.*

To reserve dinner, call or email Hannah Elliott at 918-301-1019 or [helliott@firstchurchtulsa.org](mailto:helliott@firstchurchtulsa.org).

***Beauty is Oxygen: How the Arts Help Our Souls Breathe*** taught by Dr. Wes Vander Lugt, our new Theologian-in-residence is in Stephenson Hall. Beauty is everywhere, but what does it have to do with becoming fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ? In this study, we will explore the pivotal role of beauty and the arts in knowing God, flourishing in our full humanity, and following Jesus with vibrant wisdom in a grayscale world.

**Seekers** taught by Rev. Wambugu Gachungi will be in room E104. Join us each Wednesday night for a verse by verse study of the fall sermon series.

**Young Adults (20s and 30s):** Whether you are single, married, or anywhere in between; new to faith or looking for deeper theological engagement, we are committed to helping young adults discover their place in Christ and the local church. There are lots of ways to get involved through Sunday School, small groups, community nights, and service. If you are interested in learning more, contact Dan Hutchinson at [dhutchinson@firstchurchtulsa.org](mailto:dhutchinson@firstchurchtulsa.org) or Elizabeth DeVore at [eldevore7@gmail.com](mailto:eldevore7@gmail.com).

**Join the Deacons Saturday mornings in October for Days of Care!** We will be serving members that need help on outside home projects. See the QR code below or the church website for the signup link. If you or someone you know needs assistance contact Elizabeth DeVore at [eldevore7@gmail.com/918-728-5327](mailto:eldevore7@gmail.com/918-728-5327) or Joe Land at [dogfaceboy@aol.com/918-232-1306](mailto:dogfaceboy@aol.com/918-232-1306).



**People grieve for many reasons:** the loss of a loved one, losing a job or career, the end of a marriage or relationship, etc. **Pathways to Hope** is a five-week class, led by Rev. Wally Johnson, that utilizes the Psalms of Lament to explore ways to cope with grief. It will be held in the Miller Library on Wednesdays from noon to 1:00 p.m. starting on October 6 and continuing through November 3. Participants may bring a lunch with them or order a boxed lunch (\$6) when registering for the class. Class size is limited to allow for social distancing. Online registration is available using the QR code below or by contacting\_Kathy Wilson at 918-301-1029.



**C. S. Lewis' The Great Divorce tickets are on sale now!** FPC has purchased a block of tickets to attend the Sunday, October 10 performance. It will be at 4:00 p.m. at the Tulsa PAC in the Chapman Music Hall. There are limited tickets so call to purchase yours today! If you purchased a ticket or had requested a ticket, please contact Dionna Schooley at 918-301-1015.

**Music lovers! You are invited to the 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Organ Concert** presented by Ron Pearson, on Sunday, October 17 at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The program will also include the University of Tulsa Chamber Orchestra.

## COME, GROW YOUR FAITH!

*Adult Classes for NEXT Sunday, 9:30 a.m.*

### On Site:

Bible Walk	Soul Keeping	E101
Covenanters	<i>Lies My Preacher Told Me</i>	E205
Faith and Family	<i>Symbol or Substance?</i>	Prayer Room
Forum	<i>Eschatology</i>	E200
The Niche 2.0	Bible Study	207
Pastor's Study	<i>Mere Christianity</i>	Stephenson Hall
Reflections	<i>Biblical Characters</i>	E103
Shepherds	<i>Creeds and Confession</i>	E203
Sojourners (All Ages)	<i>The Knowledge of Good and Evil</i>	E204
Young Adults (20's and 30's)	Old Testament Survey	E104

### On Site and Zoom:

The Vine (Singles/couples)	<i>The Good and Beautiful God</i>	E100
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## **EVENTS THIS WEEK**

### Today 9/26/21

- 8:30 a.m. Worship, Stephenson Hall
- 9:30 a.m. Gatherings and Classes
- 11:00 a.m. Worship, Sanctuary and Great Hall
- 5:00 p.m. Vespers, Courtyard

### Monday 9/27/21

- Guy's Monday Bible Study 11:45 a.m., Room E103
- Monday School 12:00 p.m., KRC
- Little Lambs 10:00 a.m., Outside Playground

### Tuesday 9/28/21

- Precept Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Room E100

### Wednesday 9/29/21

- Pastor's Study 11:30 a.m., Stephenson Hall
- Youth Praise Band 5:00 p.m., Powerhouse
- WNDT Dinner 5:15 p.m., Stephenson Hall
- Gloria Choir 5:45 p.m.
- Awana 6:00 p.m.
- POW and Amass Exodus 6:00 p.m., Powerhouse
- Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m., Choir Room

### Saturday 10/2/21

- Before the Rooster Crows 8:45 a.m., E103



# SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, October 17	Ron Pearson Organ Concert
Sunday, October 24	Fall Festival

**September 26, 2021**

**Chapel**

Please help us with contact tracing and attendance by filling out the information below and leave this page on the pew as you leave.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Member \_\_\_\_\_ or Guest \_\_\_\_\_

Seating Location: (Please circle where you are sitting.)

Front Left - Front Right

Back Left - Back Right

or

going to the link: [bit.ly/fpcregister](https://bit.ly/fpcregister);

or

using the QR code below.



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