First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown

101 Bridgeboro Road ● P.O. Box 868 ● Moorestown, NJ 08057
856.235.1688 ● fpcmoorestown.org
Rev. Stuart Spencer, Pastor/Head of Staff
Rev. Wes Allen, Associate Pastor

September 20, 2026 ~ Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost; Bible Sunday
9:00 a.m. Traditional Worship (Sanctuary) *please stand as you are able

Have you checked in *for worship today on the Church Center app? Please remember to also* ***sign*** *the Friendship pads in the pews and greet those seated near you.*

Music in Preparation for Worship — Jean Langlais

Méditation — Sean Baker, organ

Prayer can offer us a moment to step away from the busyness and hurriedness of daily life and become still in the presence of God. Langlais' Méditation, from Suite Médiévale, serves as a quiet and reverent musical prayer, weaving together two ancient chant melodies associated with the Eucharist. Amid the mysterious and sometimes haunting sonorities, these familiar chants gently remind us of God's love and the sweetness found in knowing Christ. Can you identify the two chants Langlais has woven into this meditation?

Welcome & Work of God's People — Rev. Stuart Spencer

* Call to Worship — Rev. Spencer

Pastor: Who is your Maker?
Church: The rich and the poor meet together; the LORD is the Maker of them all. (Proverbs 22:2)
Pastor: What is your Creator like?
Church: Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. (Isaiah 40:28)
Pastor: Can you trust your Maker, even when life is hard?
Church: Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good. (1 Peter 4:19)
Pastor: What does this Creator of yours deserve?
Church: Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. (Psalm 100:3)
Together: Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

* Prayer of Adoration

* Hymn No. 594 *Like a River Glorious*

Call to Confession and Prayer of Confession (unison) Elder Debbie Heller

God of love and mercy, we long for peace within and peace without. We long for harmony in our families, for serenity in the midst of struggle. We long for the day when our homes will be a dwelling place for your love. Yet we confess that we are often anxious, we do not trust each other, and we often harbor bitterness. We are not willing to take the risks and make the sacrifices that love requires. Look upon us with kindness and grace. Rule in our hearts, our homes and in all the world; show us how to walk in your paths, through the mercy of our Savior. Amen.

Silence for our personal prayers of confession

Assurance of Pardon Elder Heller

The Lord God said: I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. Brothers and sisters: In Christ, all God's promises are "Yes."

Hear the good news: Through Christ, our minds and hearts are cleansed, healed, and renewed!

* Gloria Patri No. 805

* Apostles' Creed (inside cover of blue hymnal) Elder Heller

Sharing with our Young Disciples / Bible Sunday Holly Asciutto

Presentation of Bibles to our Third Graders

Anthem John Ness Beck

I Need Thee Every Hour Sean Baker, organ

Lauren Fittipaldi, Mezzo-Soprano

Prayer of Intercession and the Lord's Prayer ('debts') Rev. Spencer

Way of the Week #2: Speak the Truth with Love

2. **SPEAK THE TRUTH WITH LOVE.** Speak honestly and directly in a way that clearly reflects love and support for one another. Be courageous enough to say what needs to be said, even when it's difficult. Address issues directly with those who are involved or affected; speak to, not about, others.

The Way of the Week With Help from The Great Cloud of Witnesses (TGCW):

Encouragement from TGCW: *I am not to belittle, hate, insult, or kill my neighbor—not by my thoughts, my words, my look or gesture, and certainly not by actual deeds—and I am not to be party to this in others; rather, I am to put away all desire for revenge.* - Heidelberg Catechism of Faith, from Q & A 105

Offertory

Thank you for blessing FPC Moorestown with your giving as we Grow God's Kingdom. Your offerings and donations allow us to sustain our church programs year-round. Donate easily from your device via the Church Center app for your tithes, offerings and other fund contributions. If you're watching via live stream, you can give online right now as well! Mail offerings to P.O. Box 868, Moorestown, NJ 08057. ***Special envelopes for the September 12 Fund celebrating our church's 138th Birthday are available in both worship spaces. Online giving is also available (see Sept. 12 Fund dropdown).***

Offertory Music — Josef Rheinberger

Pastorale, Op. 150 No. 4 — Sean Baker, organ

Shelby Camp, cello

Originally written for violin and organ, this arrangement brings the warm tone of the cello into the pleasant, peaceful idyllic imagery this beautiful duet creates.

* Doxology No. 809

Sermon — Rev. Stuart Spencer

"Too Busy"

Scripture: Mark 4: 3-9, 18-19 (Pew Bible NT page 38)

Sermon Series: Soil Test

* Hymn No. 379 — *For the Fruit of All Creation*

* Benediction and Going Forth — Rev. Spencer

If you must leave, please do so with reverence and respect as congregants pray and prepare their hearts to serve.

Music in Preparation for Service — Florence Price

Allegretto — Sean Baker, organ

Florence Price was a composer, pianist, and organist who made history as the first African American woman to have a symphony performed by a major American orchestra. Her organ music reflects a distinctive fusion of African American musical traditions with classical forms and techniques. Her writing was also shaped by her experiences as a church and silent-film organist, as well as her work as a teacher and pedagogue.

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Worship flowers are given by Bob Plant to the glory of God and in loving memory of Rita Plant.

9:00 a.m. Worship Ministry

Beadle: Elder Debbie Heller (Bible Carrier Jim Cole); **Audio Technician:** Harris Ransom; **Live Stream Technician**: Sean Cutillo; **Ushers:** Steve Shaffer, Patrick McIlroy, Kira Fauvell; **Flower Arrangers:** Kristin Zorn and Janine Petersen; **Deacons 3rd Sunday Flower Deliverer:** Sharon Budka; **Trustee Greeter:** Cara Dempster; **Sanctuary Greeter:** Stephen Minister Carol Manion; **Welcome Center Greeter:** Deacon Susan Horn; **Bagel Pick Up:** Paul Grossmann or Jim Cole; **Coffee Hospitality**: Paul Grossmann and Jim Cole; **Nursery Care:** Freh Budka, Ava Gandy-Callahan, and Chelsea Margerum

Work of God's People (See *Connections*, eblast, website and Church Center app for details)

TODAY: Beginning Sept. 20, gather on Sunday mornings this fall for our new Adult Spiritual Formation Class: **Who Do You Say That I Am?** Participants will study the attributes of Christ that impact His followers, and view these characteristics through the lenses of Scripture and "The Chosen" series. Meets 10:15-11:00 AM in Fellowship Hall. Led by a rotating team of teachers.

Parents: Sign your child(ren) up for weekly K-12 youth groups! We're eagerly looking forward to our year together. Middle School youth group began Sept. 16. High School Youth Group begins tonight. Kingdom Kids and Crossing Zone begin **Wednesday, Sept 23**.

NEW: Please pick up a copy of the September 2026 Music Newsletter in the narthex, Miller Commons or Commons Lobby and electronically on the Friday eblast and church Facebook page.

Communion Workshop (3rd Grade and up) -- Sunday, September 27 (10:15-11:00 a.m.), Room 6. Please contact Holly Asciutto or the church office if you are interested or have questions.

Join Us for Family Dinner -- Gather with new and old friends Wednesdays from 5:45-6:45 p.m. in Miller Commons for a delicious catered buffet and time of fellowship. All ages welcome. Donation: $8 per person or $25 per family. Place your donation in the donation box or simply scan the QR code found on the table to easily pay via Venmo. We hope to see you Wednesdays! Started Sept. 16. See sign up to help volunteer please!

NEW: Starting Sept. 23: This interesting six-week Wednesday evening class **"Faith, Freedom and Conscience"** explores these elements through the ideas taught by John Witherspoon, the Presbyterian minister, educator and president of the College of New Jersey - now Princeton University. Witherspoon influenced generations of pastors, educators, judges, and public leaders during America's founding era. Please sign up online.

CREDO Confirmation Class -- Our Confirmation Class is open to high school students in grades 9-12 and is designed to encourage young people to explore their faith and what it means to be both a follower of Jesus Christ and an active participant in our Church. SIGN UP on our Church Center event page. Led by youth director Lauren Fittipaldi.

CONCERT: Keys x3 Concert featuring Sean Baker (Organ and Piano), Layla Joshi (Organ) and Vikram Joshi (Harpsichord). Don't miss this! **Friday, Sept. 25** at 7:00 p.m. (Sanctuary). See our event page.

NEW: Blessing of the Animals – Saturday, Oct. 3 (3:00 PM) -- Members, friends, and the community are invited to bring their furry, feathered or four-legged friends to an outdoor service celebrating God's creation including scripture, prayer, a brief message and individual blessings for the animals. This is a joint event with the Prayer and Discipleship and Membership Committees. Donations of cat or dog food or monetary gifts will be collected for the Animal Welfare Association, **Please register online.** Everyone is welcome — even if you don't have a pet!

Inquirers Class -- Are you interested in learning more about our church and possibly joining the congregation? Great! Please sign up for our two-part Inquirers Class which begins **Saturday, Oct. 17** (8:30 AM-Noon). SIGN UP online or call Pastor Wes Allen in the church office (856) 235-1688, x101.

Ways Round 17 Began Sept. 13 -- For our current round of the Ways of the Week, we are referencing the wisdom of great Christian thinkers and writers. Using these fitting quotes from ***The Great Cloud of Witnesses*** (see Hebrews 12: 1, 2), we hope you are encouraged to put the Way of the Week into practice. The Ways are clearly rooted in Scripture, and Christian writers seem to underscore what these culture statements urge us to do.

"Measuring What Matters" – Consecration Sunday is coming **October 18** (9:30 am combined worship); watch for your 2027 Estimate of Giving cards, return online or mail. Prayer Vigil **Saturday, Oct. 17** – watch for sign up sheet