

## RECOGNITION OF OUR GRADUATES

### INTRODUCTION OF GRADUATES

Leader: The Lord says, "I know the plans I have for you,  
**People: Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.**

Leader: Call upon me, come and pray to me,  
and I will listen to you.

**People: Seek me and find me, seek me with all your heart and I will be found by you."**

Leader: As we each remember the waters of our baptism,

**People: We affirm that we are one in Christ,**

Leader: Remembering our baptismal promise,

**People: We affirm that you are ours, you belong to us. We have nurtured you and we now send you out into the world to serve God through love.**

Leader: Remembering our baptismal promise,

**People: We go with you by the power of the Holy Spirit, in prayer and full support, never forgetting that you belong to us.**

### PRAYER FOR THE GRADUATES

**CLOSING HYMN**      *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*      12

## CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

**POSTLUDE**      *Good Christians All Rejoice, and Sing!*      Healey Willan  
\*Please stand if you are able.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN....

**The 2023 Spring Softball Season is here!** Wear your purple and support our co-ed softball team, the Fightin' Turnips on Monday evenings. All games are played at Caswell Park, 620 Winona St.  
Game 7, May 15th - 7 pm      Game 8, May 22nd - 7 pm  
For more information, email Preston at [prestonsmith07@gmail.com](mailto:prestonsmith07@gmail.com).

### Upcoming Youth Events:

**Sunday, May 21**, Potential Small & Mighty event, tbd  
**Thursday, May 25**, Virginia Creeper bicycle trail, weather permitting, reservations made with Kallee Pittenger, 865-387-4748.  
**Saturday, May 27-28**, Youth lock-in at FPC

**Our congregation will be hosting Family Promise guests the week of June 11th - 17th.** If you would like to volunteer or learn more about Family Promise, please contact Britton Leitch at [britton.leitch@gmail.com](mailto:britton.leitch@gmail.com) or (865)789-3651.

## WELCOME

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church, Knoxville. We have been part of the downtown Knoxville community since 1792. We embrace people from all walks of life and seek to share our spiritual journey with our community. We are part of the Presbyterian Church (USA). We are delighted that you have joined us in worship today.

To learn more about us, please make a note on the Friendship Pad, sign up for our Thursday newsletter, or connect with us at [fpcknox.org](http://fpcknox.org), via the QR code to the right, or through social media.



Hearing enhancement devices and large print hymnals are available for use during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance.

## OFFERING

You may place your offering in the offering plates when they are passed, or you are invited give securely online at [www.fpcknox.org/donate](http://www.fpcknox.org/donate) or by scanning the QR code to the right with your smart phone.



## STAFF AND LEADERS IN WORSHIP

The Rev. Mark R. Curtis Senior Pastor	Lauren Nunn Director of Parent's Day Out / Childcare Coordinator
The Rev. Dr. Meredith Loftis Associate Pastor	Sandra Robinson Administrative Assistant
Mark Pace Organist/Choirmaster	Victor Lenoir Custodian
Mary Wilson Adult Ministry Coordinator	Paul Seguna Sound Engineer
Katie Norrell Director of Communications	MacKenna Cook Crucifer
Jane Holland Director of Finance/Facilities	Campbell Long Bible Bearer
Laura Harmon Church Administrator	

## WORSHIP MUSIC NOTES

Alleluia      One License #91445  
*Good Christians All Rejoice and Sing*      One License #97116

## FOR OUR YOUNGER WORSHIPPERS

All children are welcome in worship at FPC. Children, Kindergarten through 2nd Grade, are invited to attend Children's Worship in the Children's Area (2nd floor) after Special Time with Young Disciples. Worship Bags are available at each entrance to the sanctuary. A nursery is available for children, in preschool and younger, in the Nursery rooms (2nd floor).



*First Presbyterian Church*  
FOR CHRIST IN THE HEART OF KNOXVILLE

**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**MAY 14, 2023**

Connect With Us



[www.fpcknox.org](http://www.fpcknox.org)

620 State Street  
Knoxville, TN 37902

## THE PREPARATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

**PRELUDE** Canon Pachelbel/Hopson  
Adult Handbells

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

God, we are seeking you:

**Let yourself be found.**

God, we are calling you:

**Listen to our prayers.**

To whom else can we go?

You alone have the words of eternal life.

**You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.**

**We have come to believe and**

**know that you are the Holy One of God**

**\*OPENING HYMN** Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above 645

#### \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of grace, we confess that we have elevated the things of this world above you. We have made idols of possessions and people, and used your name for causes that are not consistent with you and your purposes. We have permitted our schedules to come first and have not taken the time to worship you. We have participated in systems that take life instead of give it. We have yearned for, and sometimes taken, that which is not ours, and we have misrepresented others' intentions. Forgive us, O God, for the many ways we fall short of your glory. Help us to learn to live together according to your ways through Jesus Christ, our Lord...**  
*(a moment for silent confession)*

#### \*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

**\*MUSICAL RESPONSE** Alleluia 586  
**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**  
**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. (2x)**

#### \*PASSING OF THE PEACE

**\*MUSICAL RESPONSE** Thine Is the Glory (v. 2) 238  
**Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;**  
**lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom.**  
**Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,**  
**for the Lord now liveth; death hath lost its sting.**  
**Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son;**  
**endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.**

## THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

**FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON** Acts 17:16-21 Bill Morrow

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. <sup>17</sup> So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and also in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. <sup>18</sup> Also some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers debated with him. Some said, "What does this babbling want to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign divinities." (This was because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) <sup>19</sup> So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus and asked him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? <sup>20</sup> It sounds rather strange to us, so we would like to know what it means." <sup>21</sup> Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new.

**ANTHEM** In Thee Is Gladness Arr. Dale Grotenhuis

*In Thee is gladness Amid all sadness, Jesus, sunshine of my heart. By Thee are given The gifts of heaven, Thou the true Redeemer art. Our souls Thou wakest, Our bonds Thou breakest; Who trusts Thee surely Has built securely; He stands forever: Alleluia! Our hearts are pining To see Thy shining, Dying or living To Thee are cleaving; Naught can us sever: Alleluia!*

*Since He is ours, We fear no powers, Not of earth nor sin nor death. He sees and blesses In worst distresses; He can change them with a breath. Wherefore the story Tell of His glory With hearts and voices; All heav'n Rejoices In Him forever: Alleluia! We shout for gladness, Triumph o'er-sadness, Love Him and praise Him And still shall raise Him Glad hymns forever: Alleluia!*

### SPECIAL TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

**SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON** Acts 17:22-34

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. <sup>23</sup> For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. <sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, <sup>25</sup> nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. <sup>26</sup> From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, <sup>27</sup> so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. <sup>28</sup> For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets

have said, 'For we too are his offspring.' <sup>29</sup> Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. <sup>30</sup> While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, <sup>31</sup> because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." <sup>32</sup> When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed; but others said, "We will hear you again about this." <sup>33</sup> At that point Paul left them. <sup>34</sup> But some of them joined him and became believers, including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

**SERMON** "God of the Unknown" Rev. Mark. R. Curtis

## THE RESPONSE OF GOD'S PEOPLE

**\*HYMN OF RESPONSE** Be Thou My Vision 450

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD'S PRAYER** Rev. Dr. Meredith Loftis  
**Our 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.**

### RECEPTION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

**OFFERTORY** God is Here Kenneth Dake  
*God is here! As we God's 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 your Spirit into open minds and hearts. Here in honesty of preaching, here in silence as in speech, here in newness and renewal God the Spirit comes to each. Here the servants of the Servant seek in worship to explore what it means in daily living to believe and to adore. Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive; we who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!*

**\*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION** Old Hundredth  
**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all**  
**creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host;**  
**praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

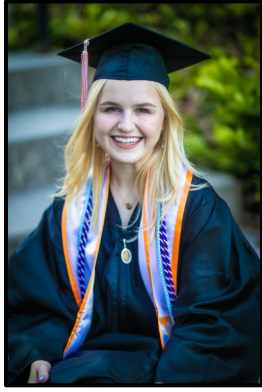
## 2023 GRADUATES



**Gideon Amankwah** is graduating from the University of Tennessee with a Master of Science degree in Communication and Information with a concentration in Journalism and Electronic Media. With his many gifts, he is seeking employment in broadcast journalism as a news producer.



**Henry Barton**, son of Grant and Laura Barton, will graduate from the Webb School of Knoxville on May 14. This fall, he will attend the University of Tennessee Tickle College of Engineering with a major in Aerospace Engineering.



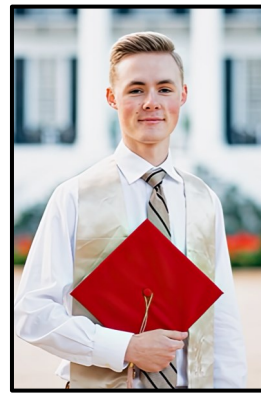
**Claudia Bible**, daughter of Tim and Vicki Bible, is receiving her Master of Science in Environmental Engineering with a concentration in water resources from the University of Tennessee. She will be working for Civil and Environmental Consultants in Knoxville.



**Meredith Loftis** graduated from the Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta with a Doctor of Ministry degree. After rigorous coursework on finding faithful and creative solutions to current issues in church and society, she will continue to share her many gifts with the Knoxville community and the congregation at First Presbyterian Church.



**Warren Morelock**, son of Warren and Kelli Morelock, will graduate on May 19 from the University of Tennessee with a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural and Resource Economics. He has taken a job with Palmer Donavin in Columbus, Ohio.



**Alex Payne**, son of Charles and Melanie Payne and grandson of Jean and Ron Mayer and Lanny and Ann Payne, is graduating summa cum laude from the University of Alabama with a Bachelor of Science in Commerce and Business Administration, with a double major in Management Information Systems and Operations Management and a minor in Supply Chain Management. Following graduation, Alex will be moving to Atlanta, Georgia to begin his career as a Technology Consultant for PwC.



**Jack Christopher Riordan**, son of Colleen and Mike Riordan, will graduate from Central High School on May 19. This summer, Jack will spend a month at Crooked Creek YoungLife camp in Fraser, Colorado as a work crew volunteer. He will be attending the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in the Fall of 2023 to study Biomedical Engineering.



**Andy Skipper**, son of Maria and David Skipper and grandson of Jean and Ron Mayer, will be graduating from the University of Virginia School of Medicine on May 21 with a Doctor of Medicine degree. After a transitional year at the University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville, Andy will be a resident at Duke University School of Medicine's Radiation Oncology Department in Durham, North Carolina.



**Belle Trentham**, daughter of Brent and Rachel Trentham and granddaughter of Paul and Woodie Trentham, will be graduating from Samford University with a Bachelors of Science in Nursing. Immediately after graduation she will begin her job as a Horse Wrangler in Colorado at Cherokee Park Ranch. In October, she will begin her dream job at UAB Medical West Hospital in Birmingham, Alabama as an Emergency Department Nurse.