



Traditional Worship Service
The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026

The Service for the Lord's Day

WE GATHER

PRELUDE Master Tallis' Testament

Herbert Howells

WELCOME AND COMMUNITY LIFE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.

God's grace is boundless.

From generation to generation, we sing of your righteousness.

The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Let us worship God!

Alleluia! Amen.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*GATHERING HYMN

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

#376

HYFRYDOL

WE CONFESS

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Almighty God, when fall short of your grace for ourselves and others, you sit next to us and call us back to your way: more mercy, more love, and even more grace. It is one thing to accept these gifts for ourselves; it is another to extend them to those who frustrate us. Forgive us for our anger, resentment, and desire to hoard. We lay these impulses at your feet and ask that you create a new heart within us, one modeled after your steadfast love and limitless grace. Help us to see the world in new ways. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*Please stand if you are able.

WE LISTEN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE

Judith Smullen

Exodus 17:1-7

Matthew 20:1-16

Leader: The word of the Lord;

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. Lindsey Altvater Clifton

“Unexpected Grace”

WE RESPOND

MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION

In what ways has God’s grace surprised you in your own life? In what ways does God’s grace challenge your faith and invite growth?

*SERMON HYMN

#298

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

IN BABILONE

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (from the *PCUSA Brief Statement of Faith, 1983*)

The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the church. In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God’s new heaven and new earth, praying, “Come, Lord Jesus!”

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM Declan Jack Biechy, child of Julie and Scott Biechy

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD’S PRAYER

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.

MINUTE FOR MISSION AND OFFERING

Call to Give

Offertory I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes

Leo Sowerby

Chancel Choir

*Doxology

#592

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

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.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*SENDING HYMN

#356

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

sung to the tune of NETTLETON

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Allegro in D, from *Six Pieces for Organ*

Frank Bridge

You're welcome to stay and enjoy the Postlude or to depart while the music is played.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

COMMUNITY LIFE – ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SEPT. 27, 2026

If you are new to our church, welcome! Please complete a “**Connect Card**,” available in the Narthex.

For next Sunday we will celebrate World Communion Sunday with a **Combined service** at 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary (and livestreamed). We’ll gather after the service for a **potluck picnic**, hopefully outdoors at the front of the church building. Please bring a dish to share – possibly one from your family’s heritage.

Our two classes meet before this service. **Hearts N Minds adult ed** meets from 10-11 a.m. in the Library (Room 210). **Body N Soul intergenerational class** meets from 10:10-11 a.m. in Room 216. All are welcome to join either one.

For tomorrow’s **Hi Neighbors speakers program**: we’ll learn more about “**Pierogies and Other Hand-Held Delights**” from Chef Domenico Lombardo, Director of Culinary Arts at NCC. The social time begins at 9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall, followed by the program at 10 a.m. All are welcome; there is no charge and no pre-registration needed.

Orders are due TODAY for the **Slater Soup Fundraiser**: quarts of homemade chicken noodle soup are available for \$12 each (buy 10, get one free!). Pick-up on Sunday, Oct. 4. Order forms are available in the Narthex.

The **online auction of church items** will open its preview tomorrow. The website, dottaauction.hibid.com, will be available for you to preview the items for sale; you’ll need to register to place bids, which will be finalized on Thursday, Oct. 15.

LEADING WORSHIP TODAY

Rev. Lindsey Altvater Clifton, Associate Pastor for Justice and Community Impact; lclifton@fpc-bethlehem.org
David Macbeth, Director of Music Ministries; dmacbeth@fpc-bethlehem.org

CARE CONCERNS

IF YOU ARE HOSPITALIZED: Please tell the hospital our church code is 724. Also, please call the church office at 610-867-5865 to let us know as the hospitals do not always collect this information. After hours, leave a message or call 610-674-0005 for emergency pastoral messages.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Send to prayer@fpc-bethlehem.org or call 610-867-5865 and leave a message.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Regular Church Office hours are Monday – Thursday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Urgent pastoral need? Call 610-674-0005 for emergency pastoral messages (this is a new number).

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER – STAY CONNECTED!

If you would like to get our email or print newsletter: info@fpc-bethlehem.org or 610-867-5865.

First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem

2344 Center Street, Bethlehem, PA 18017

610-867-5865 · fpc-bethlehem.org

Check our online calendar for all events and activities.

Your attendance at church events constitutes permission to use your image
(photos and video) in church communications.

Questions about our policy: info@fpc-bethlehem.org



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