



**First Presbyterian Church  
Portsmouth, Ohio**

**August 31, 2025  
11 o'clock Worship Service**

Rev. Ronald Johnson, Minister of Word and Sacrament  
Elder Betty Kennedy, Liturgist  
Ms. Michele Imes, Choir Director  
Dr. Phillip Roberts, Organist

***We are glad you came...***



# Welcome to Worship

## GATHERING TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY

### ***WELCOMING THE COMMUNITY***

Rev. Ronald Johnson

### ***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

### ***WORDS TO GATHER BY***

### ***CALL TO WORSHIP***

Elder Elizabeth Kennedy

L. With all our hearts, let us praise God.

**P. With all that we are, we will praise God's holy name!**

L. With all our hearts, let us bless God.

**P. We will never forget how kind God has been.**

L. The Lord forgives our sins, heals our weakness, and gives us life everlasting.

**ALL: Let us worship God, who is merciful and patient, whose love never fails.**

### ***\*PRAYER FOR THE DAY***

Elder Kennedy

**\*HYMN OF PRAISE** #761 "Called As Partners in Christ's" **GTG**

### ***\*A CALL TO CONFESSION***

Elder Kennedy

**\*A PRAYER OF CONFESSION** *(spoken in unison)*

Elder Kennedy

***Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.***

***Faithful, fruitful God, you call us to follow you, whatever the circumstance, yet we confess we prefer to remain where we are. You offer us new beginnings, yet we continue to make the same choices, guided by our own desires. We make excuses for avoiding your challenge to change. Forgive us, O God. Cleanse us with your mercy,***

***and energize us to serve you even when the challenge seems great.***

*(Please Take Time to Silently Confess Sin  
and Reflect on God's Love and Call on Your Life)*

**\*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

Rev. Johnson

**\*GLORIA PATRI**

**Glory be to the Father  
and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen, Amen.**

### **THE WORD PROCLAIMED**

***PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING***

Rev. Johnson

***FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON***

2 Kings 2:1-2 NLT

Rev. Johnson

When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were traveling from Gilgal. <sup>2</sup> And Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, for the LORD has told me to go to Bethel."

But Elisha replied, "As surely as the LORD lives and you yourself live, I will never leave you!" So they went down together to Bethel.

***SPECIAL MUSIC***

Dr. Roberts

***SCRIPTURE LESSON CONTINUED***

2 Kings 2:6-14

Elder Kennedy

<sup>6</sup> Then Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, for the LORD has told me to go to the Jordan River."

But again Elisha replied, "As surely as the LORD lives and you yourself live, I will never leave you." So they went on together.

<sup>7</sup> Fifty men from the group of prophets also went and watched from a distance as Elijah and Elisha stopped beside the Jordan River. <sup>8</sup> Then Elijah folded his cloak together and struck the water with it. The river divided, and the two of them went across on dry ground!

<sup>9</sup> When they came to the other side, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I can do for you before I am taken away."

And Elisha replied, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit and become your successor."

<sup>10</sup> “You have asked a difficult thing,” Elijah replied. “If you see me when I am taken from you, then you will get your request. But if not, then you won’t.”

<sup>11</sup> As they were walking along and talking, suddenly a chariot of fire appeared, drawn by horses of fire. It drove between the two men, separating them, and Elijah was carried by a whirlwind into heaven. <sup>12</sup> Elisha saw it and cried out, “My father! My father! I see the chariots and charioteers of Israel!” And as they disappeared from sight, Elisha tore his clothes in distress.

<sup>13</sup> Elisha picked up Elijah’s cloak, which had fallen when he was taken up. Then Elisha returned to the bank of the Jordan River. <sup>14</sup> He struck the water with Elijah’s cloak and cried out, “Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?” Then the river divided, and Elisha went across.

L. The Word of the Lord.

***P. Praise be to God!***

## **THE MESSAGE**

Called to Service

**HYMN OF RESPONSE**    #825 “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” **GTG**

## **\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Rev. Johnson

***We are certain that Jesus lives. He lives as God with us, lives as one of us with God. Because he shares our humanity and has bound us to himself in love, we have an advocate in the innermost life of God. We declare that Jesus is Lord. His resurrection is a decisive victory over the powers that deform and destroy human life. His lordship is hidden. The world appears to be dominated by people and systems that do not acknowledge his rule. But his lordship is real. It demands our loyalty and sets us free from the fear of all lesser lords who threaten us. We maintain that ultimate sovereignty now belongs to Jesus Christ in every sphere of life. Jesus is Lord. He has been Lord from the beginning. He will be Lord at the end. Even now, he is Lord.***

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

...Through their faces, let us see your face, Creator and Sustainer of all that is. We ask this in Jesus’ name who taught to pray together, saying:

***Our Father who art in heaven, hallow 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 our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.***

## **GIVING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS TO THE LORD**

***INVITATION TO THE OFFERING***

Elder Kennedy

***OFFERTORY INSTRUMENTAL***

Dr. Roberts

***\*The Doxology***

**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.**

***\*THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION*** *(spoken in unison)* Elder Kennedy

***On this Labor Day weekend, we offer to God the fruit of our labor to support the redeeming work God has begun in the world. Give in hope and in trust that God will accomplish more than we can ask or imagine through our gifts.***

## **A CALL TO MISSION**

***\* CLOSING HYMN*** #840 "It Is Well with My Soul" **GTG**

***\*CONGREGATIONAL CHARGE AND BENEDICTION*** Rev. Johnson

## **GOD SENDS US OUT TO SERVE**

***\*SENDING SONG*** #541 "God Be with You Till We Meet Again" **GTG**

***ACOLYTE RECESSIONAL***

***POSTLUDE***

Dr. Roberts

***\*The asterisk indicates when we rise to our feet in spirit,  
as we are able in body.***

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## **AN UPDATED PRAYER LIST IS LOCATED ON THE EDUCATION ANNEX BULLETIN BOARD**

### **Our Church and Community Calendar August 2025**

*The Food Pantry is closed every first Thurs. of the month. Open Thurs. 12-2P*

Sept. 1: Celebrate Labor Day-Office Closed

Sept. 3: Mission and Congregational Life (MCL) meets, 4P

Sept 3: Bible Study, History of Christianity Series, with light meal, 5:30P

Sept. 3: The Board of Session is rescheduled for Sept. 17 at 1P.

Sept. 10: Bible Study, The History of Christianity Series, 5:30P

Sept. 11: Pastor participates with the PSV Mediation Team, 2P

Sept. 14: Congregational Update after worship, 12:30 PM

Sept. 15: Armbrust Student Loan Cmte. meets, 5P via Zoom

Sept. 17: The Board of Session Meets for Reg. Stated Meeting, 1P

Sept. 21: Congregational Meeting of FPC Portsmouth, 12:30P

Sept. 22: First Day of Autumn

Sept. 28: Guest Minister, Rev. Kathy Nice, General Presbyter, PSV, 11A

### **Church Contact Information**

Pastor & Church Secretary's Office Hours for the Week

Sunday: Worship and office hours. Mondays:

Home office (worship planning and meetings)

Tuesday thru Thursday: 10 A - 4 P Fridays: Off

Email: [rjohnson.fpc@gmail.com](mailto:rjohnson.fpc@gmail.com) or [rev.ron.johnson@gmail.com](mailto:rev.ron.johnson@gmail.com)

Pas. Study: (740)529-7117 M: (434)770-1052

Virginia M. Stinnett, Admin. Aid/Church Secretary,

[vstinnett.fpcport@gmail.com](mailto:vstinnett.fpcport@gmail.com)

Church Office: (740)353-4259 or (740)529-7117

Office Hours: Sun., Tues -Thurs: 9A-3:35P

EMAIL: [firstpresbyterian.portsmouth@gmail.com](mailto:firstpresbyterian.portsmouth@gmail.com)

<https://www.firstpresportsmouthoh.com>

<https://www.youtube.com/@firstconnections4806>

<https://facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurchportsmouthohio>

## SERMON NOTES

**SERMON TITLE** \_\_\_\_\_

**SCRIPTURE VERSE(S)** \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT DID I HEAR THAT RAISED QUESTIONS?** \_\_\_\_\_

**HOW CAN I APPLY THIS TO MY LIFE?** \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT WOULD I LIKE TO STUDY FURTHER?** \_\_\_\_\_

**MY HEART-FELT PRAYER TO GOD FOR THOSE IN MY LIFE AND MYSELF**