



First Presbyterian Church El Campo, Texas February 1, 2026

First Presbyterian Church seeks to provide a spiritual home that proclaims God's presence and love to all people by creating a welcoming environment for Christian spiritual growth through worship, fellowship, and education, joyfully celebrating God's love as disciples serving the community and the world.

203 W. Calhoun El Campo, Texas 979-543-3658
www.firstpresbyterianelcampo.org Facebook: firstpresbyterianelcampo

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

February 1, 2026

11:00 am

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

All Are Welcome to Worship at First Presbyterian Church!

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE

Toccata on WEDLOCK
God Is My Strong Salvation

Gordon Young, 1982

Toccata on WEDLOCK – Gordon Young transforms the sturdy hymn tune for *God Is My Strong Salvation* into a bright, rhythmic toccata. The piece opens worship with energy and assurance, celebrating God as our refuge and strength. Its sparkling figuration showcases Young's signature American organ style (see #841 in *GtG*).

WELCOME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

All: **The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?**

One: We gather in the presence of God.

All: **Let us open our hearts and minds in worship.**

*HYMN #14 *For the Beauty of the Earth* (stanzas 1, 4, 5)

*CALL TO CONFESSION

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious God,
when despair and suffering overwhelm us,
we cry out for you and feel abandoned.
We doubt your presence and your promises.
We believe you have turned away from us in anger.
We ask why you have forsaken us.
In these moments, strengthen us in faith
and fill our hearts with courage.
We believe, God. Help our unbelief. Amen.**

For the Beauty of the Earth – This beloved hymn invites us to notice the everyday gifts of creation and respond with gratitude. The gentle DIX tune lifts the text into a joyful thanksgiving that prepares our hearts for worship.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON/DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

One: The Psalmist declares,
“The steadfast love of the Lord
is from everlasting to everlasting.”

**Please stand in body or spirit.*

Believe in God, friends!
Believe the good news:
in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

All: Thanks be to God!

*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.**

HEARING OF THE WORD OF GOD

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE CHILDREN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 9:1-4

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish.
In the former time he brought into contempt
the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of
the sea,
the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.
The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day
of Midian.

One: The Word of our Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM

How Beautiful

arr. Benjamin Harlan, 1990

Today's anthem is an inspired choral meditation that weds the traditional hymn, *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*, with Twila Paris' song, *How Beautiful*. It's primary text source is Isaiah 52:7 -- *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace and proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."* In Paris' text, Jesus served the wine and the bread, and then "walked the long dusty road and the hill to the cross."

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

One: God always blesses the reading
and hearing of Holy Scripture.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

Unity

Rev. Jim DeMent

1 Corinthians 1:10: Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose.

*HYMN #826 *Lift High the Cross*

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

CALL TO GIVE

OFFERTORY *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*

arr. Cindy Berry, 2014, (with *The Lord's My Shepherd*)

The King of Love My Shepherd Is
(with *The Lord's My Shepherd*) – Cindy Berry blends two beloved shepherd hymns into a tender, lyrical meditation. The arrangement highlights God's guidance and care, moving gently between themes of trust and comfort. Its reflective character invites us to offer our gifts with gratitude (see #802 in *GtG*).

Lift High the Cross – A processional-style hymn that calls the whole church to gather under the sign of Christ's redeeming love. Its strong, triumphant and steady refrain echoes the unity and hope we share as followers of the risen Lord.

*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.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*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.

PRAYER CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

One: In your mercy, O God
All: **hear our prayers.**

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

THE INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty – A vibrant hymn of praise drawn from Psalm 103 and 150. The sturdy German chorale tune, written in 1665 by an anonymous composer, gives the text a sense of confidence and joy as we bless God for sustaining grace.

SANCTUS

One: You sent Jesus to show us the depth of your love for us, to call us back to faithfulness by the example of his own life, and to welcome us as his siblings and your beloved children. Therefore we praise you, joining the heavenly chorus and the global choir, singing forever to the glory of your name:

All: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.**
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

THE MYSTERY OF FAITH

One: Remembering the grace of your Son Jesus Christ, we take from your creation this bread and this wine, and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming, proclaiming the mystery of faith:

All: **Christ has died,**
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

THE 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.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Musique Royale – Delalande served at the French court, where his music accompanied the 'Soupers du Roi,' the formal evening meals of Louis XIV and XV. Pieces like *Musique Royale* were part of rotating ceremonial suites that filled Versailles with stately brilliance. This postlude carries that same regal energy as it sends us out in joy.

HOLY COMMUNION

The elements used in the Lord's Supper are wine (red) or juice (golden) and bread or gluten-free crackers (in the small dish). When passing the bread to your neighbor, say, "This is the Bread of Life." When passing the wine or juice to your neighbor, say, "This is the Cup of Salvation." You may partake of the elements as you receive them.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

One: We give you thanks, Almighty God,
that you have refreshed us,
through the healing power
of this gift of life.

All: **In your mercy,**
strengthen us through this gift
in faith toward you
and in fervent love toward on another;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

*HYMN #35 *Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty*

*CHARGE

*BENEDICTION

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

**Seek ye first the kingdom of God,
And his righteousness,
And all these things
shall be added unto you,
Allelu, alleluia!**

**Ask and it shall be given unto you.
Seek and ye shall find.
Knock and the door
shall be opened unto you.
Allelu, alleluia!**

POSTLUDE *Musique Royale* Michel-Richard Delalande, 1736

One License A-736067; CCLI #11514120 & 2046772

WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. James DeMent, Interim Pastor

Dr. Karl Paoletti, Choir Director

Ted Lashley, Music Director

Christi and Nancy Beechwood, Ushers

SANCTUARY FLOWERS: Please sign up in the church narthex.

THIS WEEK AT FPC:

Sunday, Feb. 8

11:00 a.m.–Worship and Congregational Meeting

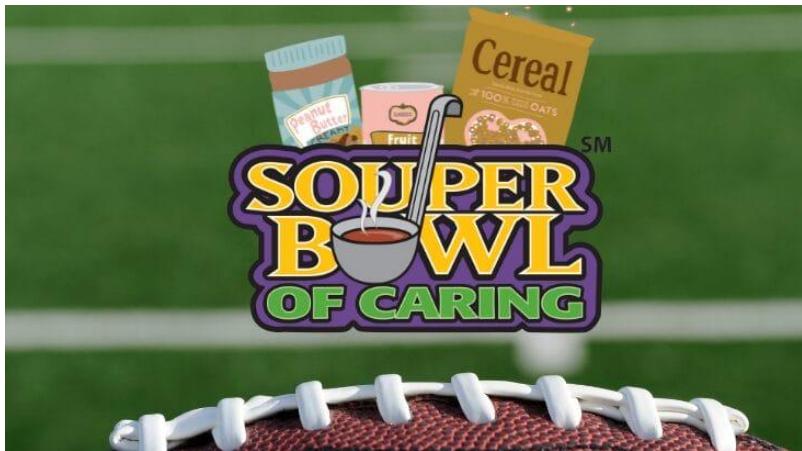
PRAYER LIST

Dr. Bill & Deida Bourne
Steve Porter
Kin & Carol Halamicek
Sue Zanne Urbis
Avely Miller

Charlie Van Eman
Colby Hauser
Suzanne Hauser
Bro. Rick DuBrock
Linda Collins

Esther Bender
Scott Mollnar
Adam Catete





**POW HAS RESUMED AND
THE SOUPER BOWL OF CARING
IS UNDERWAY!**

Our Youth and their leaders have resumed their Wednesday evening gatherings in the New Year. Please pray that not only that everyone will have a good time but also that they will grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

POW's first project this year is to round up canned goods, cereals, and other non-perishable items for Mission Presbytery's 2026 *Souper Bowl of Caring* competition. Help the youth recapture their title as Souper Bowl champions by contributing generously, with gifts in kind or in cash, to their efforts.

And on a final note, we need KP volunteers to procure, serve, and clean up a meal after each meeting. Can you help us out? The church will reimburse you for any purchase of chicken, pizza, tacos, or other food items. Please call Diane at the church office (979.543.3658) to sign up for this important support of our Youth program.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2026
FOLLOWING THE 11:00 A.M. WORSHIP SERVICE

Pursuant to a call by the Session, notice is hereby given of a Congregational Meeting of the members of First Presbyterian Church of El Campo to be held at the conclusion of the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service on Sunday, February 8, 2026.

The purposes of the Meeting will be to consider a report from the Session regarding (a) nominations of two persons, namely, B.J. Swenson and Debra Hamman, to fill vacancies on the church's Nominating Committee (Class of 2027) and nomination of a person, namely, Doug Vackar, to fill a vacancy that has occurred on the Board of Trustees for the Class of 2027, (b) to elect, in accordance with the will of a majority of the Congregation present, persons to serve in the vacancies that have occurred on the Nominating Committee and the Board of Trustees, and (c) to dismiss, with the heartfelt thanks of all the members of our church, the Pastor Nominating Committee.

PASTOR'S NOTE

The painting on our bulletin cover, by an anonymous painter, is a religious icon characteristic of the Christian art found in Eastern Orthodox churches. "We preach Christ crucified" is a theological summation of 1 Corinthians 1:17 ("For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power").

Paul's confession that he is called to "proclaim the gospel," is the great commission of all evangelists who followed in the footsteps of Paul, the Apostles, and all who have preached the word of the Lord through the centuries. The justification for such evangelism, "that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power," directs our attention to the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord.

So often, as was the case with the early church in Corinth, Christian congregations get embroiled in theological, social, and political arguments about what it means to follow in the way of Jesus. Paul admonishes us, however, that the power of God is to be found in the cross and the miracle that it symbolizes. Debates over who should lead the church, who can preach in the church, who shall be welcomed or excluded from the church, create divisions in the church (as was the case in Corinth and in many churches today) which distract us from the central core of our salvation.

Such arguments are ancillary to our faith; such divisions are corrupting distractions from the foundation of our Christian belief. To those of us who seek salvation from our evilness, sin, and folly, the power of God to redeem us is not to be found in charismatic leaders, entertaining preachers, or esoteric theological debates; such power is found exclusively in the mystery and the power of the cross.

CHURCH OFFICERS

Class of 2026

Jimmy Barger

Donnie Kainer

Youth Elder: Porter Beechwood

Donnie Clapp

Mindi Snyder

Class of 2027

John Kalina

Arlette Pustejovsky

Ester Latapie

Elizabeth Rasmussen

Class of 2028

Shawn Beechwood

Melba Clapp

Debra Hamman

B.J. Swenson

CHURCH STAFF

Interim Pastor – Rev. James DeMent

Choir Director – Karl Paoletti

Adult Music Director – Ted Lashley

Financial and Administrative Assistant – Diane Barger

Communications Assistant – Leigh Ann Neel

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