



**First Presbyterian Church
El Campo, Texas
September 22, 2024**

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](https://www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianelcampo)**

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

September 22, 2024

11:00 am

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

All Are Welcome to Worship at First Presbyterian Church!

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE

Blessed Jesus, at Your Word
arr. Theo Meurs, 2016

WELCOME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Happy are the people

**All: who do not follow the advice of the wicked
or take the path that they follow,**

One: Their delight is in the law of the Lord,

All: and they meditate on God's law day and night.

One: The Lord watches over the way of the righteous,

All: but the way of the wicked will perish.

*HYMN #250 *Hymn of Promise*

*CALL TO CONFESSION

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of wisdom,
forgive our foolishness.**

**We desire what we do not need
and corrupt our relationships with envy.**

**You urge us to gentleness,
but we stir up conflict.**

**Give us your grace,
that we may harvest righteousness and peace,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Teacher, we pray. Amen.**

Essentially a prayer asking for illumination by the Holy Spirit as the Christian community gathers around the Lord's Word, "Blessed Jesus, at Your Word" is a hymn by Tobias Clausnitzer (1619–1684), a Lutheran pastor and hymn writer. Johann Rudolph Ahle (1625–1673), a German composer, organist, and Protestant church musician, composed the tune LIEBSTER JESU, which was adapted for Clausnitzer's text in 1665. See #395 in *GtG*.

**Please stand in body or spirit*

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON/DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

One: Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain,
but the people who fear the Lord are to be praised
for they shall be forgiven and redeemed.
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

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 1

Happy are those
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or take the path that sinners tread,
or sit in the seat of scoffers;
but their delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law they meditate day and night.
They are like trees
planted by streams of water,
which yield their fruit in its season,
and their leaves do not wither.
In all that they do, they prosper.
The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

One: The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM

River in Judea

Jack Feldman; arr. John Leavitt, 1989

SECOND SCRIPTURE

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. ... Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

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

All: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

Wisdom

Rev. Jim DeMent

James 3:17: But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.

*HYMN #12

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

CALL TO GIVE

OFFERTORY *Just a Closer Walkk with Thee*
arr. Melody Bober, 2008

*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 *From A Brief Statement of Faith*

**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!"
With believers in every time and place,
we rejoice that nothing in life or in death
can separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

PRAYER CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

One: Lord in your mercy,
All: hear our prayer.

No one knows when or where the song was written, or who composed its tune, but "*Just a Closer Walk with Thee*" became popular in the 1930s and 1940s in the southern United States among African Americans, and spread from there. Its first publication was in 1942. The chromatic first phrase of the melody is notable, and the refrain utilizes the same tune to which the stanzas are sung. The text acknowledges the frailty of human life and willpower and asks for Jesus's companionship throughout our daily life. See #835 in *GtG*.

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.

*HYMN #269 *Lead On, O King Eternal*

*CHARGE

*BENEDICTION

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

**God be with you till we meet again;
by His counsels guide, uphold you,
with His sheep securely fold you;
God be with you till we meet again.**

**Till we meet, till we meet,
till we meet at Jesus' feet.
Till we meet, till we meet,
God be with you till we meet again.**

POSTLUDE *Come, We That Love the Lord*
Robert Lowry, 1867

"Come, We that Love the Lord" (also known as "We're Marching to Zion") is a gospel hymn written by Isaac Watts and first published in his Hymns and Spiritual Songs of 1707. Watts was an English Congregational minister, hymn writer, and theologian. The tune most commonly associated with the hymn today was written by American preacher and composer Robert Lowry in 1867. Based on the Biblical passage of Jeremiah 31:6 which speaks of going to Zion, the city of God the hymn reflects a joyful and hopeful journey towards the heavenly city.

Prayer List
Steve Porter
Esther Bender

One License A-736067; CCLI #11514120 & 2046772

CHURCH OFFICERS

Class of 2024

Suzanne Hauser
Dick Ramsey

Mary Johnson, Clerk
Lynn Reed

Class of 2025

Jessica Erwin
Kim Mickelson

Lance Lurker

Class of 2026

Jimmy Barger
Ava Fernandez
Mindi Snyder

Donnie Clapp
Donnie Kainer

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. James DeMent, Interim Pastor

Choir Director – Dr. Karl Paoletti

Music Director – Ted Lashley

Financial and Administrative Assistant – Diane Barger

Communications Assistant – Leigh Ann Neel

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