



All are welcome, because God is Welcome! We hope you feel the warmth of God's presence and a genuine welcome here. If this is your first time with us, we are honored to have you and look forward to seeing you again soon!

Announcements, our weekly calendar, and scripture readings are available to view by scanning the QR code.

Connect with First Church by scanning the QR code or visiting our website. There are wonderful things happening here, and we would love for you to find your place in our community of faith!

ABOUT THE SERVICE

Worship services are recorded and available on Facebook and our church website.

*Indicates that the congregation may rise in body or spirit. Words we all say are in **bold print**.

We generally celebrate Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month and on special occasions.

Offering plates are available in the Narthex (sanctuary entrance) before and after worship, or you may give online by scanning the QR code. Thank you for helping to make Christ's love shown within our community and beyond. We are "blessed to be a blessing!"

CONNECTION, LEADERSHIP, AND STAFF

WE ARE A CONGREGATION IN CONNECTION WITH

The Presbytery of Florida
The Synod of South Atlantic
The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

THE SESSION

The Rev. Julie Thompson, Moderator, Bob Plank, Clerk of Session

Elected spiritual leaders of this congregation:

Ann Fyfe ('26), Jennifer Hodges ('27), Steven McPherson ('28),
Julian Wells ('26), Kathy Welsh ('27)

CHURCH STAFF AND CONTACT INFORMATION

The Rev. Julie Thompson
Transitional Pastor
(610) 570-3820
julie@firstchurchlh.org

Bradley Thoreson
Music Director, Organist
(850) 832-4745
brad@firstchurchlh.org

Terri Boardway
Administrative Assistant

Church Office:
810 Georgia Avenue
Lynn Haven, FL 32444
850.265.2051
office@firstchurchlh.org

Hours:
Monday-Thursday, 8 AM-12 pm,
or by appointment.

www.firstchurchlh.org

GOD WELCOMES US IN LOVE

Chiming the Trinity

Prelude *Hail Thee, Festival Day* SALVE FESTA DIES

Words of Welcome and Community News Julian Wells

This is the day the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!

Gathering Song (Hymn 452) *Open the Eyes of My Heart*

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart;

I want to see you; I want to see you.

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart;

I want to see you; I want to see you;

to see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory.

Pour out your power and love as we sing "Holy, holy, holy."

(repeat)

Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy.

Holy, holy, holy, I want to see you.

***Call to Worship** Rev. Julie Thompson

Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome, a great ruler over all the earth.

God chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom God loves.

Sing praises to God, sing praises!

Sing praises to our ruler, sing praises!

For God is the ruler of all the earth; let us worship God!

***Hymn 263** *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!* CORONATION

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Christ who was and is and is to come,
we stand looking up at the heavens,
looking for you there.

Forgive us for believing that you have left us.

Forgive us for failing to recognize you around us.

Forgive us for waiting idly for your return,
instead of doing the work you have called us to do.

You are above us, around us, before us, and within us;
help us to embody you in our time and place,
today, tomorrow, and forevermore. Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness

Hear this astounding truth:

Christ is the one who reigns on high,

Christ is the one with the power to judge us,

and Christ is the one who offers us eternal love, forgiveness,
and mercy.

All praise to Christ who lived, died, and lives again! Alleluia!

***Joyful Response (Hymn 253, refrain, sung twice)**

Alleluia! Christ is Arisen!

SANTO DOMINGO

Alleluia! Christ is arisen!

Bright is the dawning of the Lord's day.

GOD INVITES US TO LISTEN

Old Testament Psalm 93 hardback, p 481, softback OT, p. 734

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise arr. AnnMarie Murdock

New Testament Acts 1:1-11 hardback, p.881, softback NT, p. 158

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Message "Where Are You Looking?" Rev. Julie Thompson

GOD MOVES US TO RESPOND

***Hymn 662** *Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies* RATISBON

Moment of Generosity *Recognition of Graduates*

Jason Stanley, AA, Gulf Coast State College,
North Bay Haven Charter Academy

Kelley Wells, Mosley High School, MAPPS - Mosley Advance Placement

Eric Stanley, BS, University of Central Florida

A Litany for Graduates

We are gathered together to celebrate the accomplishments of members of our community.

We give blessings to you for all that you have achieved and many more achievements yet to come.

One part of your life's journey is complete. You are preparing to begin another phase that will take you to unimaginable places. As you prepare for your next journey, we hope that you remember the ones you leave behind, who have loved and supported you throughout the years.

We give you blessings of goodwill and love as you journey forth into the world. We thank you for the laughter and fellowship that you have shared with us and pray that as you begin your next journey, remember the times that we all have shared with you.

Use those memories as a beacon to guide you on your way as you continue moving forward.

We pray that God will give you strength and determination to develop new relationships that will help to strengthen and sustain your faith.

We pray that you make wise and rational decisions, always turning to God for help.

Always keep in mind that God is with you and will guide you, and remember that you are always held in love, by God and by this community.

***Doxology (Hymn 606)**

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.

Prayers of the People and 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.

GOD SENDS US TO LIVE THE LOVE OF THE RISEN CHRIST

***Hymn 192** *Lord, the Light of Your Love is Shining* SHINE JESUS SHINE

***Benediction and Three-fold Amen**

Postlude Festive Voluntary on "Diademata" *Phil Lehenbauer*



Stay connected! Sign up for This Week @ First Church, the Friday e-Alert, worship links, prayer updates, and more by scanning the QR code.

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GOD CALLS US INTO COMMUNITY

On this Ascension Sunday, we gather between memory and promise – remembering Christ's ascent into heaven while listening for where God is leading us next. As the apostles stepped into new roles and a new future, we too are invited to consider where we focus our attention: on what has been, or on what God is doing now and preparing still to come. Whether you are a long-time member or a first-time guest, we are glad you are here. **Following worship, we invite everyone to stay for our May Fellowship Lunch.** There is always enough food – loaves-and-fishes style – and there is always room at the table. All are welcome.

Today during worship, we will celebrate our high school graduates, Jason Stanley and Kelley Wells, and University of Central Florida graduate, Eric Stanley. We give thanks for their accomplishments and mark this important milestone in their lives as they prepare for what comes next.

The Session has called for a congregational meeting to be held at the close of worship on Sunday, May 31. The purpose of this meeting is to elect an elder to fill an unexpired term on the Session. We encourage all members to be present as we participate together in the leadership and life of the church.

Summer Choir - All are welcome! Our Summer Choir returns this year, meeting on the first Sunday of each month beginning Sunday, June 7, 2026. We'll gather in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00 AM to rehearse and prepare a piece for that morning's worship service.

On May 25, we celebrate the 90th birthday of Rev. Fred Keith, who served this congregation as pastor from 1993-2003. During his ministry, the church experienced a season of growth and renewal, including the renovation of our sanctuary. Rev. Keith's daughter, Anna, is hosting a "Card Party" in his honor. If you would like to send birthday greetings, cards may be mailed to:

Rev. Fred Keith
c/o Anna Keith
6336 Letson Farm Trail
Bessemer, AL 35022

LEADING WORSHIP TODAY:

The Chancel Choir
Bradley Thoreson, *Organist, Music Director*
Julian Wells, *Lay Leader*
Rev. Julie Thompson, *Transitional Pastor*

ASSISTING TODAY:

Maxie Hooper and Rich Filippi, *Greeters*
Fox Hodges, *Church Safety Volunteer*

ASSISTING NEXT WEEK:

Carol Oakley and Larry Hammond, *Greeters*
Chris Stanley, *Church Safety Volunteer*



THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

MORNING WORSHIP

May 17, 2026
10 AM

ADVENT | CHRISTMAS | EPIPHANY
LENT | **EASTER** | PENTECOST