

First & Central Q and A

Where is... (continued)

...the nursery?

Child care for infants through age 3 is provided during worship services and Sunday School at the end of the hallway past the office, to the left of the sanctuary.

...children's "enrichment?"

Our children's Sunday School gathers on the third floor and meets throughout the education wing. Sunday School is for children ages 4 through 12, with special activities for our older youths (Jr. High and High School) on Sunday afternoons. Enrichment, for children age 4 through 3rd grade, is offered during the worship service.

...my "pew" Bible?

The Bibles are in slots underneath the pew in front of you (hence "pew" Bible). We use the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

...the DuVal room (and who was DuVal)?

Our general-purpose meeting and reception room is at the end of the hallway next to the nursery. The Rev. DuVal was instrumental in building the Sunday School program at First Church in the 1870s. DuVal, a liberal theologian, later served as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

...Memorial Hall?

Our large gathering space (also where we walk the Labyrinth) is directly below the sanctuary. Level "M" from the elevator.

...the chapel?

This small worship space, with its new open seating plan, is just to the left of the sanctuary off 11th Street.

...the chancel?

This is the large marble platform for the pulpit, lectern, organ, and choir. It was expanded in a church renovation completed in 1993.

...the Pastors' portrait gallery?

Visit the elevator lobby at street level (11th Street).

...the blower for the pipe organ?

The blower for the 1,902 pipes (and bell-star!) is located in the organ case just behind the choir.

Need more information? Visit www.fandc.org

Some simple Questions & Answers about life at First & Central

What does "Presbyterian" mean?

The name for our denomination comes from the Greek word "presbyteros," which means "elder," reflecting the fact that our congregations are governed by elected and ordained elders. The term was probably first applied to a congregation in the early 17th century, with churches founded on the teachings of theologians John Calvin and John Knox.

How does First & Central fit with other Presbyterian churches?

F&C is part of the New Castle Presbytery, an association of 55 congregations in Delaware and eastern Maryland. Ours was the first presbytery in America, formed about 1706. The presbyteries are regional divisions of the Presbyterian Church, USA (www.pcusa.org). The PC(USA) is governed by its General Assembly, a national meeting held every two years to discuss the church mission and to set or revise policies that must be ratified, in turn, by a majority of presbyteries. There are other Presbyterian church denominations in the U.S., but the PC(USA) is by far the largest, with about 2.3 million members.

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What do Presbyterians believe?

Presbyterians are part of the Protestant (reformed) branch of the Christian church. We maintain ties with other PC(USA) churches according to our Book of Confessions (theology) and our Book of Order (polity). Yes, we're very organized!

Our knowledge of God and God's purpose for humanity comes from the Bible, particularly what is revealed in the New Testament through the life of Jesus Christ. It is everyone's job—ministers and lay people alike—to share this Good News with the whole world.

F&C is an officially "welcoming" congregation. We strongly believe that service to the church through membership and ordination is open to all, regardless of gender, race, age, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Who runs a Presbyterian church?

The church is run by its elected Session, with the pastor serving as head of staff and as moderator of the Session, which meets monthly. Session members head Councils to assist the staff in the functions and mission of the church (e.g. Property, Outreach, Finance). There is also a Board of Deacons to minister to the congregation's needs.

Where can I find out about the history, mission, vision, and activities of F&C?

Our main church brochure contains an overview of this information. In addition, look for our "Soul Food Menu" of ways you can volunteer your services at F&C.

How do we worship at F&C on Sunday mornings?

In general we follow a traditional worship style similar to that of many Christian denominations, based on the PC(USA) Book of Common Worship. A service includes a gathering period; the proclamation of the Word through scripture, music, and preaching; an opportunity to respond through giving and through prayer; and a dismissal.

The liturgy (i.e. the order of worship, with selection of readings and hymns) is composed by the preaching pastor, in collaboration with the minister of music who selects other music for the service. We hope you will experience fellowship through responsive readings, robust hymn singing, and our effusive "passing of the peace." We encourage you to be comfortable, and act (or react) as the Spirit moves you.

In addition to Sunday morning worship, we offer other worship opportunities throughout the year, including weekly Labyrinth walks and special services during Lent and Advent.

How is the worship calendar arranged?

Our pastors generally follow a published lectionary of scripture, which is designed to give an overview of Biblical stories and themes over a 3-year period. You will note that special times of the year merit special colors—red, purple, white—for the paraments (altar cloths, etc.) different from the green cloths that denote "Ordinary Time."

How do we recite the Lord's Prayer?

We use the "traditional" Lord's Prayer found on page 16 of the Hymnal, but you may feel free to use whatever language you prefer.

How do we celebrate communion?

The celebration of the Lord's Supper is one of two sacraments in the Presbyterian church (the other is baptism). At F&C we share this sacrament in two ways: the "traditional" method of passing out small pieces of bread followed by small cups of juice (to represent wine); or by the method of "intinction," where we come forward to receive a piece of bread which is then dipped into a goblet of juice. Wine is permitted in Presbyterian churches, but this church elects to serve juice. When trays are passed, some cups contain water for those who prefer to avoid sugar or grape juice. Our celebration of communion is open to all (including children) who profess Jesus Christ as their Savior; no membership in this or any other church is required.

First and Central? Where (or what) is that?

Wilmington has no streets named First or Central, but it did have Presbyterian churches with those names. First Church (founded in 1737) and Central Church (founded in 1835) merged in 1920 and moved to this new building in 1930.

Where is...

...parking?

On First and Central Avenues? Where is that? (see above) But parking on Sundays is permitted in the Wilmington Club lot and DuPont Lot B, both accessible from Orange Street.

...the rest room?

There are rest rooms on each floor, with two handicapped-accessible facilities on the main floor (sanctuary level).

...large print bulletin/hymnal and audio assistance?

These are available by request from an usher or greeter.