



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is Firebird Spirit a church?

A: No. We are not a church. Firebird Spirit is a *spiritual* movement where the sacred meets the *real*—an expanding network of individuals from churches, non-profits, and judicatories doing what we can to help congregations thrive in these difficult and often confusing times of change.

We grew out of an innovative PC(USA) congregation in Rochester, NY, whose story is told in *The Church Has Left the Building: A Case Study of One Church's Story of Transformation, Redefinition & New Life*.

Firebird became a 501(c)(3) non-profit in 2018 and remains interfaith-friendly and independent.

Our goal is simple: to support, not replace, your congregation. We're here to help you continue to gather, worship, and grow when pastoral leadership isn't available—never to compete, but to accompany.

Q: What's with the name Firebird? It doesn't sound very Presbyterian.

A: The name evokes both Pentecost's "tongues of fire" and the ancient image of the phoenix—spirits and communities rising from the ashes of what was into new life and possibility.

Though Presbyterian in origin, Firebird Spirit honors the movement of God's Spirit beyond any single denomination. The Spirit speaks many languages, and we're here to listen and respond.

Q: Why is Firebird Spirit doing this?

A: We've lived and loved church life for decades, and we believe in the power of shared

worship. This ministry emerged naturally as others began using our online services. We didn't go out seeking this ministry; it simply grew out of what God was already doing through us. With more than 80,000 worship views in our first year, we sensed a clear calling—to share what God is doing through us with those facing clergy shortages or financial strain.

We invite congregations to pay your standard supply rate. Those able to give more help offset costs for churches that cannot. Your support sustains not only your own worship life but also the preparation of future services for others—a true *church-to-church linkage of grace*.

Q: How exactly does the Video Supply Preacher (VSP) program work?

A: 1. **Contact Firebird Spirit** (by phone or email) no later than **Wednesday of the week you need coverage**, and provide:

- Church name
- Contact person and email
- Service date(s)
- Standard supply fee amount

1. On the **Thursday** before your service, **you'll receive:**

- A downloadable video link (no ads or Wi-Fi needed)
- Bulletin materials (responses, hymns, readings)
- A short service note and an invoice

2. **On Sunday**, simply project the video in your sanctuary or fellowship hall using a laptop or tablet and speakers.

3. **After worship**, pay by check or online within ten days. If worship is canceled, let us know and we'll void the invoice.

That's it—easy-peasy. Worship without worry.

Q: Do we need special equipment?

A: Just a computer or tablet, a projector or large screen, and speakers. A liaison with internet access will need to download the file before Sunday. All responses and readings appear on screen, so printed bulletins are optional. No livestreaming required.

Q: If the service is already on YouTube, why not just play it directly for free?

A: Our YouTube services are designed for individuals. The VSP Program is built for your gathered community—downloadable, ad-free, and customizable.

We know some sanctuaries have spotty Wi-Fi—or none at all—and nothing breaks the spirit of worship like an unexpected ad in the middle of prayer. That’s why each downloadable file is **secure, ad-free, and ready to go.**

You can:

- Invite someone to lead the Call to Worship or other readings.
- Use your own Prelude, hymns, or special music.
- Pause, skip, or blend your musicians with ours.

It’s your worship, with our resources behind you.

Q: Can we purchase a single service without a subscription?

A: Yes. There are **NO subscriptions.** Every service is a stand-alone order. You can also request multiple Sundays in advance and receive a single invoice to make it easier for your Treasurer.

Q: Can we change which Sundays we receive Firebird Worship?

A: Absolutely. Many churches follow a pattern (for example, 2nd and 4th Sundays) but you can shift weeks as needed—just let us know by Wednesday before the service you want to use.

Q: We currently have no pastor. Could this be used every week?

A: Yes. For ongoing needs, we can arrange adjusted payment schedules. Firebird offers original services year-round except August, when our most-watched services are replayed to give our office team time to prepare for the new program year.

Because we exist to serve congregations most in need, priority always goes to those without on-site pastoral leadership.

For churches without consistent clergy, our team **can also assist with leadership development, Bible study, administration, or web presence**—for a separate, negotiated fee.

Q: Are there discounts for paying ahead?

A: No prepayment discounts, but we can invoice for multiple Sundays at once for your Treasurer’s convenience.

Q: How do we know the services are worth watching?

A: We encourage you to watch a service or two to be sure our style and theology fit your congregation's spirit. Visit our YouTube channel **@FirebirdSpiritHOPE** to preview.

As of October 2025, Firebird Spirit has nearly **250,000 total views**, with **worship services alone reaching 80,000 in 30+ different countries**. Some individual services have more than 8,000 views.

Q: What about hymns and music?

A: Whenever possible, we encourage you to **use your own local musicians**. However, we are happy to provide ours. Each packet includes printed hymns from the *Glory to God* hymnal. You can sing along with the video, perform live, or substitute hymns from your own hymnal if you choose. (Firebird Spirit pays all necessary copyright and broadcast fees—it's a matter of justice for us.)

Q: Do you celebrate communion?

A: Yes—typically on the first Sunday of the month with the exception of November where we wait until the beginning of Advent. Our communion liturgies are rooted in Reformed theology. The video includes a time for quiet reflection during distribution; simply pause the video as needed for your own musicians to share their gifts and to accommodate the time needed for distribution to your congregation.

Q: Do you follow the Common Lectionary and liturgical calendar?

A: Generally, yes, though our Messengers (preachers) are free to follow the Spirit's leading as a matter of conscience—just as supply preachers often do.

Q: I've noticed that not all of your Messengers are ordained clergy.

A: Firebird Spirit values the *communion of saints* and believes all have gifts to share. Still, we know some prefer ordained leadership. Whenever a Messenger is not a Minister of Word & Sacrament, we include a sermon written by an ordained minister that can easily be read aloud in place of the video message.

Q: What if we don't agree with the sermon or theology?

A: That's what the coffee hour is for after worship—to rehash, question, and share thoughts

together! 😊 We welcome honest dialogue and feedback. Our language strives to be inclusive and grounded in Reformed faith, always reflecting God's expansive love and abiding Spirit.

Q: What if we need technical support?

A: Each packet includes clear download instructions so you're never dependent on Wi-Fi. If questions arise, contact our Director of Operations Monday–Friday, 9–5 ET by phone or email.

You are not alone in this—we walk beside you.

Q: What if someone in our congregation wants to participate in Firebird videos?

A: Wonderful! Firebird is growing in the Spirit, and we love weaving new voices into our global circle. Just reach out—we'd be delighted to include you.

*Rooted in the inclusive Jesus tradition,
growing outward in the Spirit for today's world.*