

First Presbyterian Church

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP | 9 AM | MARCH 19, 2023
FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT



First Presbyterian
Church of Charlotte

Time of Quiet Meditation and Reflection | Quiet begins in the Chapel at 8:50 a.m.

Words of Welcome | Reverend Mary Henderson Bowman

Invocation | Adapted from *The Pursuit of God* | A. W. Tozer

O Lord, teach us to listen. The times are noisy, and our ears are weary with the thousand raucous sounds which continuously assault them. Give us the spirit of the boy Samuel when he said to You, "Speak, for Your servant is listening." Let us hear You speaking in our hearts. Let us get used to the sound of Your voice, that its tones may be familiar when the sounds of earth die away and the only sound will be the music of Your speaking voice. Amen.

Prayer for Illumination | Katy Cochran

Old Testament Reading | Psalm 27 | *Psalms for Praying* | Nan Merrill

The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? When fears assail me, rising up to accuse me, each one in turn shall be seen in Love's light. Though a multitude of demons rise up within me, my heart shall not fear. Though doubts and guilt do battle, yet shall I remain confident. One thing have I asked of the Lord, that I shall ever seek: That I might dwell in the Heart of Love all the days of my life, to behold the Beauty of my Beloved Lord, and to know Love's Plan. For I shall hide in Love's heart in the day of trouble, as in a tent in the desert, away from the noise of my fears. And I shall rise above my struggles, my pain, shouting blessings of gratitude in Love's Heart and singing melodies of praise to my Beloved. Hear, O my Beloved Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious and answer me! You have said, "Seek my face." My heart responds, "Your face, my Beloved, do I seek; hide not Your face from me." Do not turn from me, You who have been my refuge. Enfold me in Your strong arms, O Blessed One. Though my father and mother may not understand me, You, my Beloved, know me and love me.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Moment of Reflection

New Testament Reading | Luke 22:39-46 | Scott Wallace

Jesus came out and went, as was His custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed Him. When Jesus reached the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial." Then He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from me, yet not my will but Yours be done." Then an angel from heaven appeared to Him and gave Him strength. In His anguish He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. When Jesus got up from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and Jesus said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Meditative Music | Stay with Me Here | Fernando Ortega

Meditation | Following Jesus Through Lent: Prayer at Gethsemane

Moment of Reflection

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession | Adapted from *The Book of Common Worship*

God of mercy, You sent Jesus Christ to seek and save the lost. We confess that we have strayed from You and turned aside from Your way. We are misled by self-reliance and pride, for we see ourselves pure when we are stained, and great when we are small. We have failed in love, neglected justice, and ignored Your truth. Have mercy, O God, and forgive our sin. Return us to paths of righteousness through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Moment of Reflection

O Lord, we ask that You forgive what we have been and done, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy name. We receive Your forgiveness with grateful hearts, and we commit to the work of extending it to others. Amen.

Offering

The Christian life is marked by the offering of one's self to God to be shaped, empowered, directed, and changed by God. In worship, God presents us with the costly self-offering of Jesus Christ. We are claimed by Christ and set free. In response to God's love in Jesus Christ we offer God our lives, our gifts, our abilities, and our material goods, for God's service. The offering plates are located at the back of the chapel if you are interested in giving regularly as a spiritual practice.

Invitation to the Lord's Table**Meditative Music** | How Deep The Father's Love For Us | Selah

*How deep the Father's love for us, how vast beyond all measure; That He should give His only Son to make a wretch His treasure
How great the pain of searing loss; The Father turns His face away As wounds which mar the Chosen One bring many sons to glory.
Behold the Man upon a cross, my sin upon His shoulders; Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there until it was accomplished. His dying breath has brought me life; I know that it is finished. I will not boast in anything: no gifts, no power, no wisdom; But I will boast in Jesus Christ; His death and resurrection. Why should I gain from His reward? I cannot give an answer. But this I know with all my heart: His wounds have paid my ransom.*

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.

Sacrament of Communion

To receive the gluten-free bread and the cup, come forward, take a piece of bread, and then dip the bread into the cup. It is still communion if you prefer to take only the bread. If for any reason you prefer not to come forward, please raise your hand and the officers will be glad to serve you in your pew.

Prayer of Thanksgiving | Adapted from *A Diary of Private Prayer* | John Baillie

Father, You alone know what lies before us this day. Grant that in every hour of it, we may stay close to you. Let us today embark on no undertaking that is not in line with Your will for our lives, nor shrink from any sacrifice which Your will may demand. Suggest, direct, control every movement of our minds; for our Lord Christ's sake. Amen.

Charge and Blessing

Please maintain the silence when you leave. You are welcome to remain in the chapel and enjoy the silence. The minister is available for prayer or conversation after the service. Sunday School begins at 9:45 a.m. If you would like to visit with other members, please greet one another in the overflow area and then move to the Welcome Center.

CHURCHWIDE

Easter Lilies, through March 27 – Purchase a \$10 lily to honor or memorialize someone on Easter Sunday. | Order online: fpc.tiny.us/lily

Kirk Choir Musical, April 2, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

New Member Luncheon - April 2, 12:15 p.m., FBDR - For members who joined First Presbyterian Church May 2022 or after. | RSVP: jives@firstpres-charlotte.org

Palm Sunday Procession, April 2, 10:45 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 6, 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary and Livestream

Community Easter Sunrise Service, April 9, 7 a.m., Romare Bearden Park

Easter worship, April 9, 11 a.m., Sanctuary, livestream, WAXN-Channel-64 – Bring flowers to decorate the Easter cross; there will be no contemplative service on Easter.

CARE

Stephen Ministry – We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation. If you are in a season where you need extra support, contact Anna Dickson. | Contact: adickson@firstpres-charlotte.org

Pastor on call – If you have a pastoral emergency outside of regular church hours, dial 704.927.0256 for the on-call voicemail. Your call will be returned promptly.

OUTREACH & ADVOCACY

Westerly Hills Academy School Store, March 24, 12 p.m., Westerly Hills Academy - Volunteer at the school store, where students redeem Eagle bucks earned for good behavior for prizes and treats. | Register: fpc.tiny.us/WHstore

YOUTH

Youth Council Meeting, March 19, 5 p.m., Youth Corner

Youth Sunday Planning PYC, March 19, 6 p.m., FPC - All youth who are able are needed to begin writing liturgy and planning for Youth Sunday in April! | Contact: twall@firstpres-charlotte.org

Summer Registrations Are Open, through March 31- Visit the Youth Linktree to view all current summer trip registrations and reserve your spot! | linktr.ee/fpcyouth

Will Appleby Award Nominations Open, through April 2 - Click the link to learn more about the award and to nominate a high school youth. | tinyurl.com/applebynom

CHILDREN

Children's Easter Egg Hunt, March 31, 4:30 p.m., Front Lawn | Register: fpc.tiny.us/egghunt

ADULTS

Reading the Bible for Understanding Series, Sundays, through March 26, 9:45 a.m., P206 - This series, for people in their 20s to mid-40s, teaches a six step process to reading the Bible that can facilitate deeper meaning and application. | More info: rgalloway@firstpres-charlotte.org

Passages Class: My Best-Loved Story of Jesus, Sundays through April 2, 9:45 a.m., S203 and Zoom – Join pastors as they share their favorite story about Jesus and why it has meaning for them. | Register: fpc.tiny.us/passagessundayclass

Women's Retreat, April 21-23, Kanuga Conference Center - Join the women of the church for a weekend of intergenerational fellowship, study, spiritual growth, and relaxation. | More info: firstpres-charlotte.org/pw | Register: fpc.tiny.us/pwretreat

20s on Tuesday, March 21, 6:30pm, Lenny Boy Brewery - Young adults in their early-mid 20's will meet for an open discussion based on the podcast, The Bible for Normal People. | More info: rgalloway@firstpres-charlotte.org



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