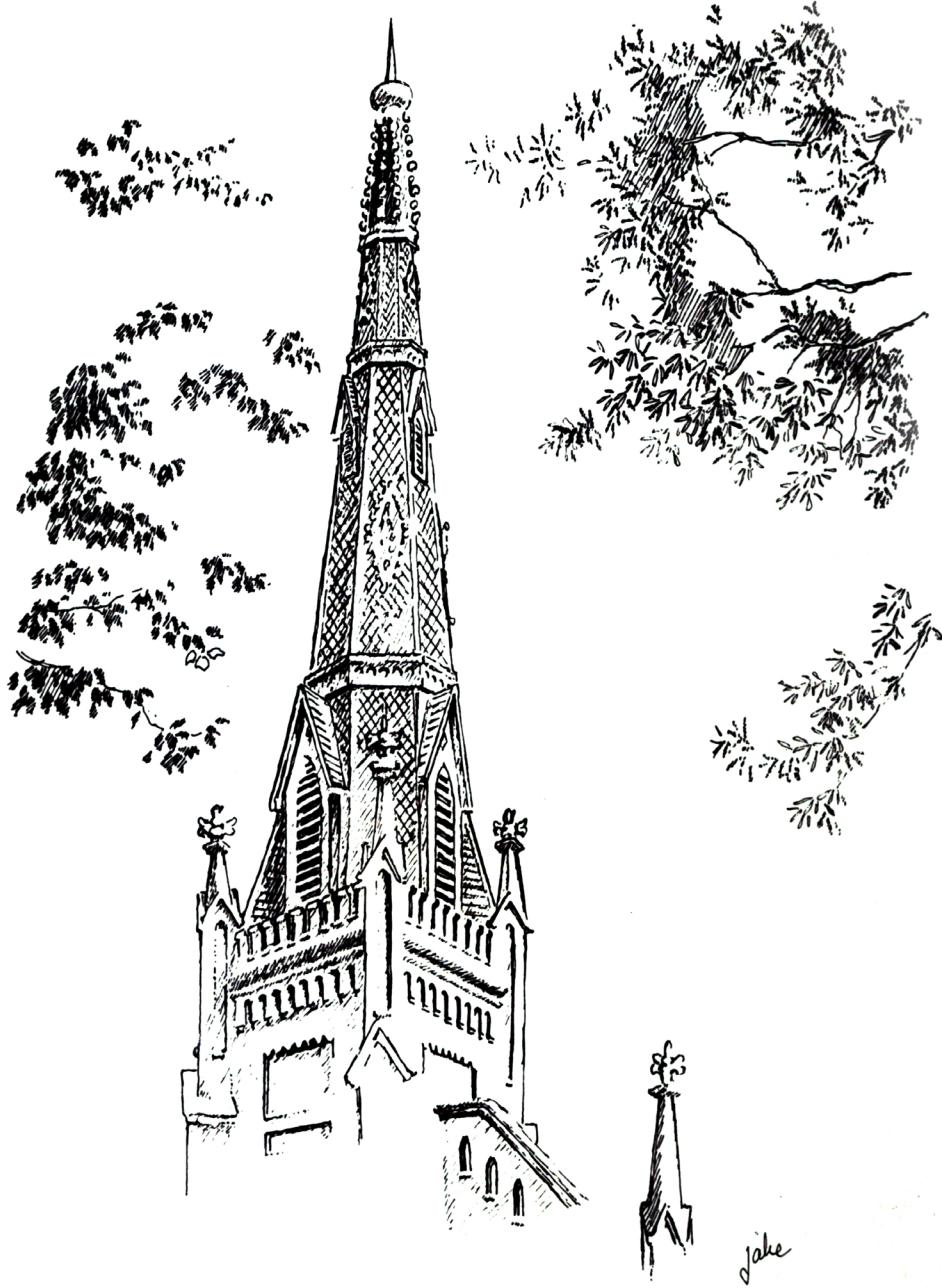


# First Presbyterian Church

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP | 9 AM | MARCH 24, 2024  
PALM/PASSION SUNDAY



*We invite you, whoever you are and whoever God is helping you to become, to join First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte in our journey of faith. God is love, and that love is for you. You belong as a child of God, and we welcome you. Come experience how that belonging might change you and our world as we seek to be for Christ in the heart of Charlotte.*



First Presbyterian  
Church of Charlotte

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

**Words of Welcome** | Reverend Mary Bowman

**Invocation** | Adapted from *The Book of Common Prayer*

**Merciful God, as we enter Holy Week and gather at Your house of prayer, turn our hearts again to Jerusalem and to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, that we may walk with Christ throughout the week, gaining a deeper understanding of His sacrifice and love for us. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He who came in the name of the Lord. Amen.**

**Meditative Music** | Lamb of God | The Kantorei of Concordia Theological Seminary

Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world;  
Have mercy on us, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world;  
Have mercy on us, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world;  
Grant us peace.

**Prayer for Illumination** | Scott Wallace

**First Scripture Reading** | John 18:28-38a

Then the Jewish leaders took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed Him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and judge Him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when He indicated the kind of death He was to die.) Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked Him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked Him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked Him, "What is truth?" After Pilate had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against Him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Second Scripture Reading** | John 18:38b-40; 19:1-16a | Susan Krebs

Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" After Pilate had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against Him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a rebel. Then Pilate took Jesus and had Him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they dressed Him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking Him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing Him out to you to let you know that I find no case against Him." So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw Him, they shouted, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him; I find no case against Him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law He ought to die because He has claimed to be the Son of God." Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. Pilate entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to Jesus, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on Pilate tried to release Him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against Caesar." When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone

Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover, and it was about noon. Pilate said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

### Moment of Reflection

**Meditation** | "Conversations on the Way to the Cross: Pontius Pilate"

### Moment of Reflection

### Prayer of Confession

**Gracious Lord, how do we find the words to adequately express our gratitude for the supreme gift of Your life for us, that we might be forgiven, freed from the tangle of sin, and embraced wholly as God's beloved children. Give us a deeper sense of these gifts and help us to turn more readily to You for the forgiveness and love that we need.**

### 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 Table

**Meditative Music** | What Wondrous Love is This | Keith and Kristyn Getty

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul.

When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down  
When I was sinking down, sinking down  
When I was sinking down beneath God righteous frown  
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul, for my soul  
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul.

To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing  
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing  
To God and to the Lamb who is the Great I Am  
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing  
While millions join the theme, I will sing.

And when from death I free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on  
And when from death I free, I'll sing on  
And when from death I free, I'll sing His love for me  
And through eternity, I'll sing on, I'll sing on  
And through eternity, I'll sing on.

## 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. Please do not drink out of the cup directly. 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 | Richard of Chichester

**Thanks to You, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits, which You have won for us, for all the pains and insults, which You have borne for us, most merciful Redeemer, Friend, and Brother, may we know You more clearly, love You more dearly, and follow You more dearly, day by day. Amen.**

## Charge and Blessing

We have been fed by the presence of God in the silence, by the Word, and through communion. Please feel free to greet one another in a warm and quiet way that allows an easing out of 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 longer with other members, you are invited to gather in the Welcome Center.

## Announcements

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### Sunday Readers

The leadership provided by lay members is an important part of the 9 a.m. service. If you are willing to be a reader, please scan the QR code below to sign up. We appreciate your considering leading worship in this way!

### Kirk Choir Musical

*March 24, 10 a.m., Wood Fellowship Hall*

The congregation is invited to attend the children's musical, "Adam's Apple," in lieu of Sunday School.

### Maundy Thursday Service of Tenebrae

*March 28, 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary*

The Service of Tenebrae recreates aspects of the passion story with Scripture, communion, solemn hymns, and the darkening of the room as candles are extinguished.

### No Sunday School

*March 24 and 31*



VIRTUAL  
CONNECT  
CARD



PRAYER  
REQUESTS



TEXT  
TO GIVE



GIVE  
ONLINE