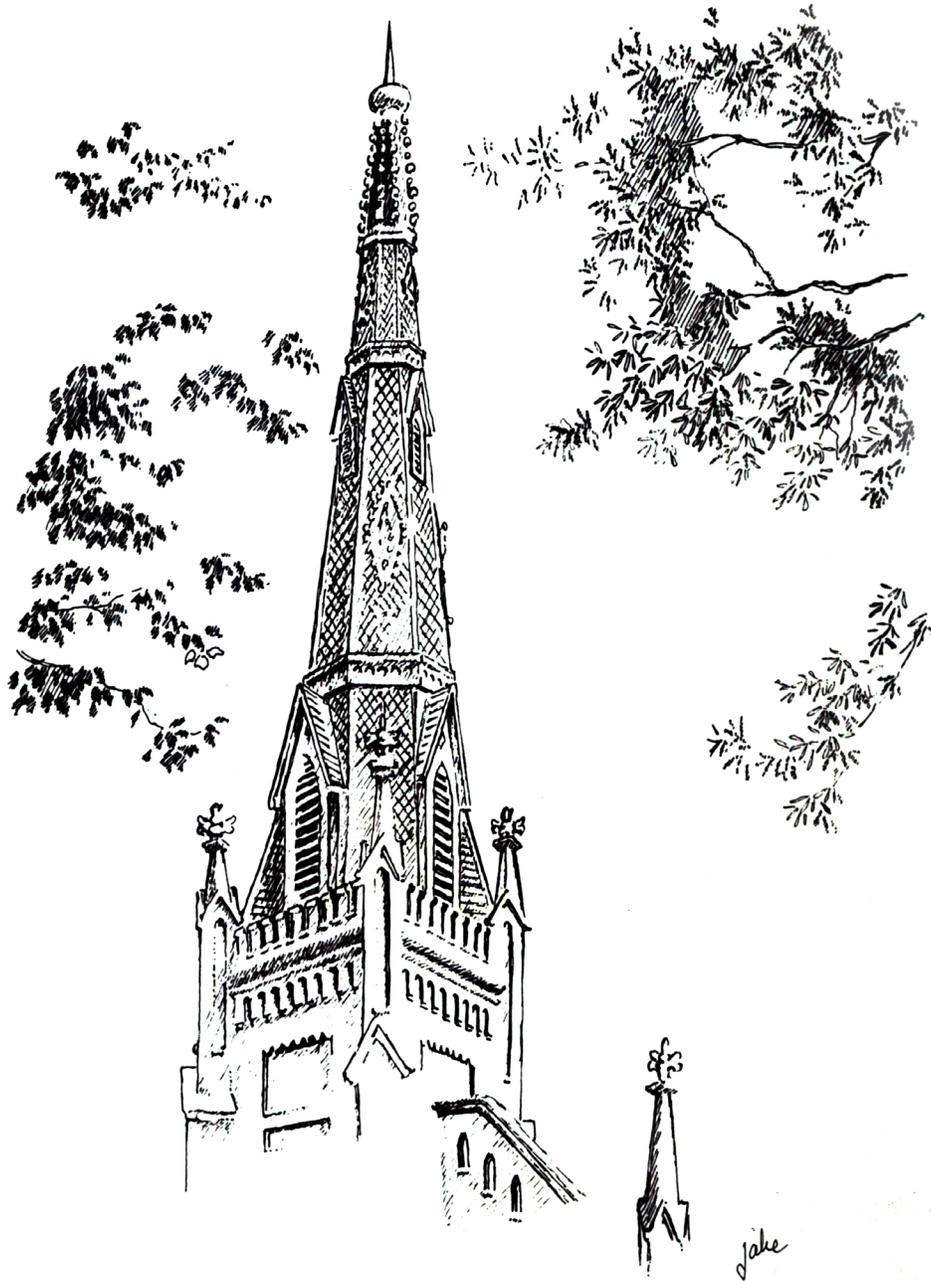


# First Presbyterian Church

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP | 9 AM | MARCH 9, 2025  
FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT



*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

### Opening Prayer

**O Gracious and Holy God,**

**Our annual pilgrimage has begun.**

**We choose to walk with you along the forty-day journey through Lent to the cross in Jerusalem, knowing that it will not be easy.**

**We are vulnerable to faithless fears. We are assaulted by temptations. We can succumb to worldly anxieties. We are prone to wander.**

**This morning, we slip our hand again into yours. We commit ourselves in trust to you as our guide through this pilgrimage and the deserts of life. You - the one who knows both our weaknesses and our gifts.**

**We trust that you will reveal things about us and about yourself that will bring us into fuller life as your beloved.**

**In this time of prayer, may we be open to you about what we need from you for the journey.**

### Moment of Reflective Prayer

**O God, may you forgive our sins and help us to forgive those who have hurt us.**

**O Christ, may you quench our thirst with the living waters and satisfy our hunger with the bread of heaven.**

**O Spirit, may you heal us and make us whole for your service. Amen.**

### Meditative Music | “Savior, Redeemer of My Soul” | BYU Vocal Point

Savior, Redeemer of my soul,  
Whose mighty hand hath made me whole,  
Whose wondrous pow'r hath raised me up  
And filled with sweet my bitter cup!  
What tongue my gratitude can tell,  
O gracious God of Israel.

Never can I repay Thee, Lord,  
But I can love Thee. Thy pure word,  
Hath it not been my one delight,  
My joy by day, my dream by night?  
Then let my lips proclaim it still,  
And all my life reflect Thy will.

O'errule mine acts to serve Thine ends.  
Change frowning foes to smiling friends.  
Chasten my soul till I shall be  
In perfect harmony with Thee.  
Make me more worthy of Thy love,  
And fit me for the life above.

### Prayer for Illumination | Sally Billington

#### First Scripture Reading | 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 11-14 | The Message

Remember our history, friends, and be warned. All our ancestors were led by the providential Cloud and taken miraculously through the Sea. They went through the waters, in a baptism like ours, as Moses led them from enslaving death to salvation life. They all ate and drank identical food and drink, meals provided daily by God. They drank from the Rock, God's fountain for them that stayed with them wherever they were. And the Rock was Christ. But just experiencing God's wonder and grace didn't seem to mean much—most of them were defeated by temptation during the hard times in the desert, and God was not pleased. The same thing could happen to us. We must be on guard so that we never get caught up in wanting our own way as they did.

These are all warning markers—danger!—in our history books, written down so that we don't repeat their mistakes. Our positions in the story are parallel—they at the beginning, we at the end—and we are just as capable of messing it up as they were. Don't be so naive and self-confident. You're not exempt. You could fall flat on your face as easily as anyone

else. Forget about self-confidence; it's useless. Cultivate God-confidence. No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it. So, my very dear friends, when you see people reducing God to something they can use or control, get out of their company as fast as you can.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

### **Second Scripture Reading** | Matthew 4:1-11 | Addison Ayer

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' "

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.' "

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

### **Moment of Reflection**

**Meditation** | "The Cost of Following Jesus: Baptism and Temptation" | Reverend Mary Bowman

### **Moment of Reflection**

**Sacrament of Baptism** | Reverend Pen Peery | Elder Sally Billington

Baptism of Rosemary Cobb Morgan

Baptism of Wren Jackson Williams

**+Affirmation of Faith** | Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **Congregational Welcome**

**With joy and thanksgiving, we welcome you, Rosemary and Wren, into Christ's church to share with us in his ministry, for we are all one in Christ.**

### **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

### 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 | *The Divine Hours*

**Most loving Father, whose will it is for us to give thanks for all things, to fear nothing but the loss of you, and to cast all our cares on you who cares for us: preserve us from faithless fears, and worldly anxieties, that no clouds of this mortal life may hide from us the light of your love, which is immortal, and which you have manifested to us in your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. 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.

Transcripts for the Contemplative Service can be found here: <https://firstpres-charlotte.org/sermons/>



VIRTUAL  
CONNECT  
CARD



PRAYER  
REQUESTS



TEXT  
TO GIVE



GIVE  
ONLINE