

First Presbyterian Church



309 Lincoln Street, Johnstown, Pennsylvania 15901

Vision Statement ~ We seek to become a Christian people of Spiritual Vitality and Faithfulness embraced by the love of God in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, as we love God and our neighbors, near and far.

Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 17, 2024 Rev. Sylvia Carlson, *Guest Minister* • Charnet Koch, *Liturgist* 10:45 AM

THE PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP Dear ones, welcome to worship as we gather in Jesus' name as one family in God's embrace. Amen. As you listen to the prelude, please read over the service in the bulletin and meditate on the words, so that they may be an inspiration to you as you worship.

*Signifies to please stand if you are able.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

THE PRELUDE

"I Need Thee Every Hour"

Lowry

WELCOME

CENTERING HYMN

"Surely the Presence of the Lord is in This Place"

(Refrain x2) Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place. I can feel God's mighty power and God's grace. I can hear the brush of angel's wings; I see glory on each face. Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***THE CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: The days are surely coming, says our God; The day is here to affirm a new covenant.

People: **We will call on God's steadfast love and mercy.**

We seek a strong and vital relationship with our God.

Leader: God's law will be written on our hearts.

Our creator claims us and forgives our faithlessness.

People: **We are eager to know the God who loves us.**

We are ready to learn God's intention for us.

***THE PRAYER OF APPROACH**

As Jesus offered up prayers and supplications to you, O God, we cry out to you today. You know our losses and our fears. You understand our suffering and pain. We want to hear a reassuring voice. We long to see a new day when evil is overcome and wrong cannot prevail. Lift us up and draw us to yourself as we worship in this hour. Equip us for our daily living as we seek to be true to your covenant with us. Amen.

***THE OPENING HYMN #420**

"God of Grace and God of Glory"

***THE CALL TO CONFESSION**

***THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Begin in silence, reading over the Prayer of Confession and preparing to pray it together.

Merciful God, you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you. We humbly confess our sins and ask your mercy. We have not loved you with a pure heart, nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves. We have not done justice, loved kindness, or walked humbly with you, our God. Have mercy on us, O God, in your loving-kindness. In your great compassion, cleanse us from our sin. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Do not cast us from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from us. Restore to us the joy of your salvation and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit. Amen.

***THE ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

Leader: Friends, hear and believe the Good News of the Gospel.

People: **In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!**

***THE RESPONSE #579 “The Gloria Patri”**

***THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

THE PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Jeremiah 31:31-34

THE GOSPEL LESSON John 12:20-33

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

THE MESSAGE “Finally Comes the Poet”

Rev. Sylvia Carlson

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

***THE HYMN OF RESPONSE #525 “Here I Am, Lord”**

***THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

A Brief Statement of Faith

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God, Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain, and giving his life for the sins of the world.

God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal. With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

***THE OFFERING of our Tithes, Time, and Talents**

THE OFFERTORY

“O Lord, Most Holy”

arr. Hal Hopson

O Lord, most holy, O Lord most mighty, O God of mercy, hear us, hear, O God of love. Help us to know you, know you and love you, Savior, Savior, grant us your truth and grace. Savior, Savior, guide and defend us. Rule all our willful hearts. Guard all our wand’ring thoughts. Lord of the broken hearted, bring your peace and joy. Guide in temptation’s hour. Save through your mighty power. Lord, have mercy, hear our prayer, O God. Show your favor. Lord, we sing and give praise to you.

***THE DOXOLOGY #592 AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Holy God, we trust in the provisions of your love and the abundance of your grace. May the gifts we offer bring glory to you in the ways they bear your love into the world. We ask this in Jesus’ name, Amen.

THE PRAYERS AND PRAISES 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

***THE CLOSING HYMN #285 “God, You Spin the Whirling Planets”**

***THE CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION**

***THE BENEDICTION**

THE POSTLUDE

“Andantino”

Hesse

During the Postlude, you are welcome to stay and pray, simply enjoy the music, or head out into the world to meet the rest of your day, whichever is preferable to you.

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THIS WEEK’S EVENTS

TODAY	12:00 PM	THIRD SUNDAY PROGRAM & LUNCH
MONDAY	6:30 PM	NAR-ANON
TUESDAY	10:30 AM	LENTEN BIBLE STUDY
SATURDAY	7:30 PM	JOHNSTOWN CONCERT SERIES
NEXT SUNDAY	9:30 AM	SUNDAY SCHOOL
	10:45 AM	PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP

PRAYER FAMILIES OF THE WEEK: Huber, Robinson

WE EXTEND a friendly welcome to all who are visiting with us today. If you would like to learn more about First Presbyterian Church, please let the pastor know after the service.

PARISH NURSE Pat Betts will be in the office Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 am to noon. Please feel free to stop by or give her a call!

VISION & HEARING ASSISTANCE Large print hymnals and wireless hearing devices are available from the Deacons.

FOCUS ON PRAYERS “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10, NRSV).

2024 PER CAPITA / PRESBYTERY APPORTIONMENT Our Per Capita offering, which supports the work of the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, has been set at \$44.00.

IF YOU ARE AWARE of anyone who has any health concerns and would appreciate a phone call or visit and prayer, please let Pastor Hyiwot, Pat Betts or the office know. Also, if you are admitted to the hospital and would like a visit, be sure to let the hospital staff know or contact Pat or the office.

PINE SPRINGS CAMP is collecting empty printer ink cartridges, which are recycled for funds which help enhance the camping programs. Place your “empties” in the box under the bulletin board at the top of the Lincoln Street steps. Please note that there has been a change to the program: they do not accept laser/toner cartridges, they’ll accept INKJET cartridges only.

NON-PERISHABLE food items are collected each week and taken to the Food Pantry at Franklin Street U. M. Church. It’s easy to pick up an extra box of macaroni and cheese, jar of peanut butter, or can of vegetables while you’re doing your grocery shopping. The donation basket is by the Lincoln Street entrance.

THE FLOWER CHARTS are up in the hallway to the Parlor and are ready to fill in for 2024. Silk flowers are \$15 (which goes to Saturday’s Kitchen) and the cost for real flowers is \$43.

FROM THE DEACONS If you would like to dedicate the lighting of the Christ Candle in memory or in honor of a loved one, the signup chart is in the hallway by the flower charts. There is no cost.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY Join us Tuesday mornings at 10:30 AM as Pastor Hyiwot leads a six-week session based on Dr. A.J. Levin’s “The Gospel of Mark”.

THANK YOU to Rev. Sylvia Carlson for bringing the message today in Pastor Hyiwot’s absence.

THANK YOU to Charnet Koch for serving as liturgist this morning.

THANK YOU to Gary McClelland for serving as organist for this Sunday and next Sunday.

THE CHRIST CANDLE LIGHTING is dedicated by Pat Betts in honor of her granddaughter Courtney, whose birthday is March 2nd, and in honor of her son Dave, whose birthday is March 19th.

THE FLOWERS this morning are dedicated to the glory of God and have been placed by Bill and Lynne Williams in loving memory of Bill’s dear mother, Leah Williams, who passed on to her heavenly reward 6 years ago on March 19th.

THIRD SUNDAY PROGRAM: Please join us today after worship for lunch and a video presentation: “Don’t Forget Us”

EASTER TREE PROJECT You are invited help local children with clothing and diapers through the Deacons’ Easter Egg Project, coordinated with Children and Youth Services. The Easter Egg Tree has paper eggs which will list a size, gender, and category. Take the top egg, sign your name to the bottom egg & return the signed egg to the tree. Gifts are to be unwrapped and should be returned to the church by Sunday, March 31st. They will be delivered that week to CYS. The Deacons thank you in advance for your generosity!

OGHS OFFERING: we will receive the **One Great Hour of Sharing offering** next week on **Palm Sunday, March 24th**. Envelopes were included with the March Vision and are available at the church entrances. These offerings support the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Self-Development of People. Please see the brochure enclosed in today’s bulletin for more information.

“WORK STOUTLY - PRAY DEVOUTLY”
“ROTO REVIEW” (Reach Out To Others)

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CHURCH:

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Website: www.1stpreshjohnstown.org

Parish Nurse: Mrs. Patricia Betts
Choir Director: Mr. William A. Williams
Organist: Jennifer Kist

Ministers: All members of First Presbyterian Church
Administrative Assistant: Caroline Goller