

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.

First Sunday in Lent

February 22, 2026 Denise Todero, ALP, *Guest Minister* • Joyce Gerlach, *Liturgist* 10:45 A.M.

THE PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP We're gathered to praise a faithful God whose promises never fail. Scripture reminds us, "For all the promises of God find their Yes in him" (2 Corinthians 1:20, ESV). May our worship today echo that "Amen," bringing glory to Christ who is always with us. 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

Landon Heptner, *Saxophone*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.*

***THE CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: Everyone who thirsts, come to the water; and everyone who is hungry, come and eat!

P: **Why do we spend our money for that which is not bread and our labor for that which does not satisfy?**

L: Harken diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in being filled. Incline your ear and come to me; hear that your soul may live!

***THE OPENING PRAYER**

Gracious God, you are our way in the wilderness. As we begin this Lenten journey, keep us faithful in times of struggle and testing. Sustain us with your Spirit, strengthen us in our weakness, and turn our hearts toward your righteousness, that we may live in peace and serve you alone; through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

***THE OPENING HYMN #77** "Forty Days and Forty Nights"

***THE CALL TO CONFESSION**

***THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

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

O God, we come to you weary from our daily toil. We confess that we labor in vain for food that perishes, seeking the abundant life through our own efforts and criteria for success. With humility we recognize that in our earthly struggles we lose sight of your eternal truths. Too often we hoard our bread only to find it spoiled and rotten, when we could have shared it whole and fresh with those in need. O God, come to us in the wilderness of our own making. Forgive us, and teach us to labor instead for the food which gives eternal life. Through the Bread of Life, grant that we may find strength unfailing to be about the task of building your kingdom. With hope and joy we thank you, O God, for your son, Jesus, the manna of the New Covenant. In his name we seek your blessing. Amen.

***THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

L: Be glad and rejoice! Give thanks with shouts of joy! Grace abounds for everyone.

P: With glad cries of deliverance, we offer our thanks to God who loves us and forgives us.

L: Friends, believe the Good News.

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen.

***THE RESPONSE #579**

“The Gloria Patri”

***PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you always.

People: And also with you.

A TIME WITH CHILDREN

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

THE PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

THE NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Romans 5:12-19

THE GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 4: 1-11

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

THE MESSAGE “Temptations--Anyone ever have any?” Denise Ann Toderro, ALP

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

***THE HYMN OF RESPONSE #85** “What Wondrous Love Is This”

***THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

The Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

***PRESENTATION OF GOD’S TITHES AND OUR OFFERINGS**

THE OFFERTORY

Landon Heptner, *Saxophone*

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

Too often, we give into the temptation to keep everything for ourselves. But you would have us notice those who hunger for hope, as well as bread; those who are caught in the injustices of the world; those who struggle to find themselves. And in noticing, we become generous and loving, even as we have been graced by our Brother and Savior, Jesus, in whose name we pray. 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 #280 “Amazing Grace”**

***THE CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

L: Jesus said, “I am the Bread of Life; anyone who comes to me shall not hunger;

P: “**And anyone who believes in me shall never thirst.**”

L: Trusting in God’s steadfast love, dare to live the abundant life in the here and now.

P: **Finding sustenance through God, we will dare to live the life God taught.**

L: Go now in peace, and give the Bread of Life to others as Jesus commanded.

***THE POSTLUDE**

Landon Heptner, *Saxophone*

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

MONDAY 6:30 PM NAR-ANON
NEXT SUNDAY 9:30 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:45 AM WORSHIP

PRAYER FAMILY OF THE WEEK: Price, Pudliner

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.

IF YOU ARE AWARE of anyone who has any health concerns and would appreciate a phone call or visit and prayer, please let Rev. Danielle, 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.

FOCUS ON PRAYERS Help us, O Lord, to be still and patient before you as we wait for the touch of your hand upon our hearts. Amen.

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. **There are now 3 donation baskets, one at each of the church entrances.**

THE FLOWER CHARTS are up in the hallway to the parlor for your dedications in 2026. Silk flowers are \$15 (which goes to Saturday's Kitchen) and the cost for real flowers is \$40.

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 sign-up chart is in the hallway by the flower charts. There is no cost.

PLEASE SAVE YOUR PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS from the grocery store or Walmart for the Deacons. They are donated to the Backpack Project to pack lunches for area children.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE Due to being in the midst of cold and flu season, we would like folks to limit their greetings to vocal only and avoid the hugging and handshakes, for the safety of the congregation.

IF YOU HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST: Please fill out the blue "Joys and Concerns" prayer cards. You may place them in the NEW prayer request boxes that are available at each of the church entrances.

THANK YOU to Gary Mapes for serving as liturgist today.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL has resumed. Please join us at 9:30 AM Sunday mornings.

2026 PER CAPITA / PRESBYTERY APPORTIONMENT Our Per Capita offering, which supports the work of the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, has been set at \$55.00 for 2026.

A NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY is being prepared for 2026. Please let the office know of any updates in your address, phone number or email, or if you have information on someone who has moved. Thank you!

LIBRARY CALENDAR - a new calendar for 2026 is posted in the library. Please be sure to add your group meeting dates and times. Thank you.

THE CHURCH building received water damage in the library, Pastor's office, and equipment room from frozen pipes and radiator leak upstairs. We are respectfully asking you to avoid those areas and the back hallway from the library to the parlor while the cleanup effort takes place. Thank you.

OFFICE PHONE ISSUES: We are having an ongoing issue with our phone line. If you call, stay on the line for longer than you would think is necessary and even if you don't hear ringing on your end. It will eventually ring through to the office. Our provider is scheduled to repair the lines this week.

THANK YOU A big thank you to all those who participated in last Sunday's Talent Show and to a special thank you to Pat Betts the Caring Committee for their planning and providing lunch!

PASTOR DANIELLE will be away from February 16 - 27. If you are in need of pastoral care during that time, contact Pat Betts, Charnet Koch, or Caroline Goller in the church office for the Pastor on call.

THANK YOU to Denise Toderro, ALP, for bringing the message today.

THANK YOU to Landon Heptner for providing the special music today.

THANK YOU to Joyce Gerlach for serving as liturgist today.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY The first week of Bible Study will begin on **WEDNESDAY, March 4th** at 10:30 AM. We will be using "An Unlikely Lent" by Rachel Billups. Copies of the study book are available in the church office. Everyone is welcome to join us as we walk this season together!

THE DEACON'S OFFERING will be received next Sunday, March 1st.

"HAPPINESS COMES WHEN SERVING OTHERS"

"ROTO REVIEW" (Reach Out To Others)

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CHURCH:

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Parish Nurse: Mrs. Patricia Betts

Organist: Jennifer Kist

Ministers: All members of First Presbyterian Church

Administrative Assistant: Caroline Goller