

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
Communion Sunday

February 2, 2025

10:30 a.m. Worship



"Love never fails"

1 Corinthians 13:8a

First Presbyterian Church

Mailing address: P.O. Box 2729; San Bernardino, California 92406

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www.fpcsb.net

COMMISSIONED LOCAL PASTOR: DR. WENDY L. LAMB

MINISTRY OF PASTORAL SUPPORT: REV. DR. STEPHEN W. SMITH

MINISTRY OF VISITATION: LAURIE STAFFORD

MINISTRY OF MUSIC: CURTISS ALLEN, JR., DIRECTOR OF MUSIC;

WILLIAM ZEITLER, ORGANIST;

AMY GANO, BELLS

PASTOR EMERITUS: REV. JAMES C. HUFFSTUTLER

Welcome to Worship at First Presbyterian Church

This service is being livestreamed and can be viewed on our YouTube channel in real time or as a recording. **Large-print copies** of this order of service, as well as **audio enhancement devices** are available **from the ushers**.

We gather on Sunday for 3 reasons:

- **To seek God**- whom we find in sacred text and sacrament, in music and in song, in prayer, in the beauty of this space, in the stillness where we can hear our hearts. We offer God our thanks and praise, our lament and longing, and our resources. We let go of burdens and receive grace and forgiveness. We see the One our hearts love.
- **To practice Community** – rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. To break bread with those whom we love and those whom we need to love more fully. We practice things our culture does not emphasize: resting, forgiving, sharing. Jesus asked us to love one another as he loved us, and we cannot do so without practice.
- **To listen for our Call**- often an invitation to go out and be or do or remember. God is speaking all the time: through conscience, nature, friends, and certainly scripture. We gather to listen for that Call and to recommit ourselves to discipleship.

Information on our common life can be found on our website **www.fpcsb.net**, along with sermons and newsletters. You can participate in our work by supporting us financially with a one-time or sustaining donation.

Children are welcome in worship. Younger children may go to the Nursery at any time.

OUR NEXT COMMUNION will be Sunday, March 2nd.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Christa Wallis

REFLECTION before the SERVICE

Luke's report brings the starry-eyed Christian down to earth with a thud. It previews something that will take place often in Jesus' lifetime: his words will fall on deaf ears. Nor is rejection of Jesus' message a phenomenon peculiar to his day alone. Many centuries later, Thomas Carlyle wrote: "If Jesus were to come today, people would not crucify him. They would ask him to dinner, hear what he had to say, and make fun of him." *-Mark Link from **Rejection***

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

BELL PRELUDE *Let Us Break Bread Together* arr. Douglas Wagner

INTROIT *O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go* Matheson/Peace
O Love that wilt not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee; I give thee back the life I owe, that in thine ocean depths its flow may richer, fuller be.

*CALL to WORSHIP

Here we are Lord. We come before you bringing with us our needs, and the needs of the world.

✘ **We gather seeking healing and strength and courage.**

Teach us to love as you love.

✘ **Here we are Lord, help us to hear you calling.**

Let us worship God.

***HYMN 401** *Gather Us In* Haugen

PRAYER of CONFESSION *(based on Psalm 71)*

Let us confess our sin and brokenness to the One who loves us:

✘ **In you, O God, we take refuge. Free us from shame.**

Deliver us, rescue us, save us.

For you are Rock and Fortress; the One in whom we Hope.

(Moment for silent reflection and confession)

† The symbols you will see in this order of worship mean:

* Stand if you are able ✘ The congregation will read.

(We remain seated for the kyrie, an ancient song of the church. We will sing it through in Greek first and then in English.)

KYRIE¹

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.
Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Note: Lower voices may hum.

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.
Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

ASSURANCE of FORGIVENESS

Friends, the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting.
Believe the good news of the gospel:

✦ **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and are being made whole.**
Alleluia! Amen!

*ALLELUIA

William Zeitler

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

TIME with the CHILDREN

[Children are always welcome in worship. After the time with Children, our children are encouraged to remain with us in worship. There are children's activity bags available in the Narthex.

Infants through pre-Kindergarten may go to the Nursery at any time.]

MOMENT for MISSION

Rebecca Allen

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ANTHEM

*Here I Am, Lord*²

Dan Schutte

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard My people cry, All who dwell in deepest sin My hand will save. I, who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright. Who will bear My light to them? Whom shall I send? *Here I am, Lord, Is it I, Lord? I have heard You calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if You lead me. I will hold Your people in my heart.* I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne My people's pain. I have wept for love of them. They turn away. I will break their hearts of stone, Give them hearts for love alone, I will speak My word to them, Whom shall I send? *Here I am, Lord, . . .* I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame, I will set a feast for them. My hand will save. Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied. I will give My life to them. Whom shall I send? *Here I am, Lord, . . .* I will hold Your people in my heart. Here I am, Lord, here I am.

SCRIPTURE

Luke 4:(14-20,) 21-24, 28-30

(Last week, we read the first part of this passage. This week we pick up where we left off. We have printed last week's passage.)

(Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.)

Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that

² Music: arr. Craig Courtney ©1993 Oregon Catholic Press. Printed under permission of ONELICENSE #A706254. All rights reserved.

they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

1 Corinthians 13:1-8a

New Testament, pg. 175

This is the word of faith that we proclaim

✘ **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Being Eccentric

Pastor Wendy Lamb

MOMENT for MISSION

PNC Update

Christa Wallis

THE OFFERING of OUR TITHES and GIFTS

(We offer our tithes and gifts to be part of God's purposes in the world, and we invite you to take part. You may place your offering in the basket in front or give it to the usher. You may always send gifts by mail or online.)

OFFERTORY

SACRAMENT of the LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION to the LORD'S TABLE

SURSUM CORDA

The Lord be with you.

✘ **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

✘ **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

✘ **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

GREAT PRAYER of THANKSGIVING

SANCTUS

James C. Huffstutler

✘ **Holy, holy, Lord Almighty,**

God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory,

Glory in the highest!

Blessed! Blessed!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna, hosanna,

hosanna in the highest.

MORNING PRAYER and OUR 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.**

PRAYER of CONSECRATION

THE WORDS of INSTITUTION

WE SHARE GOD'S GIFTS

(Communion will be served by intinction at two stations. As you feel ready, please come up the center aisle to a station, receive a piece of bread, dip it in the cup, eat it, and return to your seat by the side aisle. The cup is non-alcoholic. Gluten-free bread can be found at the station by the pulpit. There will be rovers to bring the elements to you if you do not wish to come forward. We sing as we commune.)

SUNG PRAYERS

As we go forward, as we wait and pray before & after, we sing our prayers together. The refrains are sung over & over as we make them our own.

SUNG REFRAIN 527 *Eat This Bread*³ *Jacques Berthier*

**Eat this bread, drink this cup,
come to me and never be hungry
Eat this bread, drink this cup,
trust in me and you will not thirst**

SUNG REFRAIN 205 *Ubi Caritas*⁴ *Jacques Berthier*

**Ubi caritas et amor,
ubi caritas Deus ibi est.**

SUNG REFRAIN 544 *Bless the Lord, My Soul*⁵ *Jacques Berthier*

**Bless the Lord my soul, and bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord my soul, who leads me into life...**

³ Text: Robert J. Batastini & the Taizé Community. Music: Jacques Berthier. ©1984 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, agent. Printed by permission under ONELICENSE #A-706254. All rights reserved.

⁴ Text & Music: Jacques Berthier & Taizé Community. ©1979 GIA/Taizé, Ateliers et Presses de Taizé, F-71250 Taizé Community. Reprinted by permission under ONELICENSE #A-706254. All rights reserved.

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PRAYER after COMMUNION

✘ Here we have tasted your goodness, felt the nearness of your Spirit and known Community. Help us to share this Bread. Amen.

Friends, has Everyone been fed?

✘ No, not everyone.

Then we know our mission!

✘ Amen.

*HYMN 693

The Gift of Love

GIFT OF LOVE

*MOMENT for REFLECTION

*CHARGE and BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE *O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go Matheson/Peace*

O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee; I lay in dust life's glory dead, and from the ground there blossoms red life that shall endless be.

*POSTLUDE

Hymn

GREETERS: Linda McCarl, Meryll Davis

USHERS: John-Paul Fletcher, *Lead Usher*

Marilyn Kraft, Rick Rodriguez, *Security Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord

LIVESTREAM ENGINEER: James Welte

CAMERA OPERATORS: Kevin Lamb, Lynn Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Robert Saenz, Doris Schiavone, Beverly Snell

Elders: Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis

Deacons: Jim Siegmund, Kyle Smith, Christian Usher

Pastor Nominating Committee

Susan Addington, Mary Bolaños, John-Paul Fletcher

This Weeks' Celebrations

Feb 2 Brian & Amy Gano
Feb 4 Steve Smith
Feb 6 Kiera Everly French
Feb 7 Stephanie Fletcher
Clara Gresham
Frank Thomas
Feb 8 Hannah Huffstutler Bodner
Roy Nix

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held next **Sunday, February 9th**, immediately following worship. The Annual Report will be presented, and any other items of business needing review and/or approval. Copies of the Annual Report have been emailed to you. If you have not received yours, contact the church office. A limited number are available today in paper form.

Super Bowl Bake Sale. **Sunday, February 9th in the Fellowship Hall after worship.** The amazing bakers of PW will tempt you with amazing treats to enhance your Super Bowl Experience! (Or whatever experience you do instead—we're not judging.) Helen will make her special treat, so get there early!

Valentine Brunch! Join us for brunch after worship on Sunday, February 16. This will be a donation-based fundraiser for the Presbyterian Youth Triennium taking place July 28-31, 2025 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Leonard Scholarship Applications. Leonard Scholarship applications for Fall 2025 are available in the church office and on the church website. <https://www.fpcsb.net/leonard> All applications must be in the church office no later than Feb. 28, 2025. Any questions can be emailed to Lynda Savage. Lksavage3@gmail.com

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance - A fund has been set up to facilitate contributions toward recovery efforts for this disaster in Los Angeles. If you feel moved to help, please visit the following link:

<https://pcusa.org/donate/dr000165-us-wildfires>

To designate your gift to go towards this wildfire recovery, in the comment box, write "Wildfires DR000165"

If you prefer, you may make your donation to this church, indicating its designation with the same comment on the memo line.

Companions on the Inner Way, Spring Retreat. First Pres has a long history of supporting and attending ***Companions on the Inner Way*** retreats. This spring (**Sunday, March 23 to Friday, March 28, 2025**), ***Companions*** will once again offer a safe, communal place to explore deep longings for the Holy. This year the retreat leader will be **Diana Butler Bass**. Dr. Bass is an award-winning author, popular speaker, inspiring preacher, and one of America’s most trusted commentators on religion and contemporary spirituality. The retreat is held at Serra Retreat Center in Malibu. Because of Dr. Bass’ popularity, places will be going quickly. **Registration information can be found at www.cotiway.org.** For information about scholarships to help defray the cost of attending, please contact Christa Wallis at chriwallis@aol.com.

We have been given a small pipe organ, built by Ron Kraft. He and Ruby have kindly donated it to our church and it will be installed in Fellowship Hall, enhancing our summer worship, and perhaps leading to some other joyful activities. The cost of installing it has been greatly discounted, but will still require about \$3,500. **If you would like to donate to this, please contact the church office.**

Per Capita Apportionment. The Per Capita Apportionment for 2025 is \$44 per member. The church will be paying this amount to support the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. It would greatly help our budget if you are able to pay this amount in addition to your regular offering.

More News and announcements are available in your Friday *Keeping in Touch* emails. If you are not receiving these, and you would like to, contact Mimi in the church office.

Music Box

Once upon a time there lived a warrior named Kael. Renowned for his skill and courage, Kael had fought in countless battles, earning him both respect and fear. Yet, despite his victories, an emptiness gnawed at him. Every triumph felt hollow, every celebration fleeting.

One evening, a traveling bard arrived in Kael’s village, speaking of a legendary sword—the Blade of Varyon—hidden deep within the Dreadspire Canyons. The sword was said to grant its wielder unmatched power and victory in every battle. Intrigued, Kael approached the bard.

“Tell me more of this blade,” Kael said.

The bard’s eyes sparkled. “The Blade of Varyon is not for the faint of heart. Many have sought it, but few return. They say it lies in a chamber guarded by riddles and shadows, awaiting one worthy enough to claim it.”

Kael felt a pull he couldn’t ignore. Perhaps this blade would fill the void within him.

The next morning, Kael set out. The journey was treacherous, with jagged cliffs, sandstorms and river crossings teeming with dangers. All while encountering broken weapons, abandoned camps, and whispered warnings carried by the wind.

After days of hard travel, Kael reached the mouth of the canyon. The walls rose high, carved with strange symbols that seemed to shift when he wasn’t looking. A chill ran down his spine as he entered.

The air grew colder as he descended. The path twisted and turned, and at times Kael felt as though the canyon itself were alive. Finally, he came to a grand chamber, its walls shimmering with faint blue light. And there it was! The Blade of Varyon, lying on a pedestal of black stone.

Kael approached cautiously. The Blade was breathtaking. Its steel glowed faintly, and strange runes danced along its edge. As Kael reached out to touch it, a voice echoed through the chamber.

“Do you truly know what you seek?”

Kael spun around, his heart pounding. An old man stepped out of the shadows, his robes tattered but his eyes sharp.

“Who are you?” Kael demanded.

“I am the keeper of this blade,” the man said. “And I must warn you: this sword takes more than it gives.”

Kael frowned. “What do you mean?”

The keeper sighed. “The Blade of Varyon grants victory but binds its wielder. You will fight not for honor, not for love, but for the blade’s insatiable hunger. Are you prepared for such a cost?”

Kael hesitated. The keeper’s words were unnerving, but could he turn back now?

The keeper continued. “Let me tell you a story. A young farmer sought this blade to protect his village from raiders. He wielded it well, and the raiders were driven off. But the blade demanded more. It led him to fight battles that were not his, seeking enemies where none existed. In

the end, he became the very thing he sought to defeat. He died alone, a bitter old man with no one to grieve his passing.”

Kael’s grip tightened on the hilt of his sword. He thought of his own life, the battles he had fought, the faces of those he had defeated. How many of those fights had truly mattered?

The keeper stepped closer. “The choice is yours, Kael. Take the blade if you must. But remember: some victories come at too high a price.”

Kael’s mind raced. He imagined himself wielding the Blade of Varyon, unstoppable and feared. But he also saw the emptiness that would follow, the cost he would pay. For the first time in his life, Kael questioned what he truly wanted.

He stepped back from the pedestal. “No,” he said, his voice steady. “I will not take it.”

The keeper smiled. “You are wiser than most who come here. Go, take this wisdom with you instead of The Sword.”

As Kael left the chamber, he felt a weight lift from his shoulders. The journey home was long, but something within him had shifted. He began noticing the beauty of the world around him—the rustle of leaves, the warmth of the sun, the fog brooding over the valley. The emptiness that had once haunted him faded with every step.

Back in his village, Kael hung up his armor. He spent his days teaching others the art of combat, not for conquest but for protection. He found joy in simple things: tending his garden, sharing stories by the fire, and watching the seasons change.

Years later, a young warrior came to Kael, seeking advice. “They say you walked away from the Blade of Varyon,” the warrior said. “Why?”

Kael smiled. “Because sometimes the greatest courage is not in wielding power, but in knowing when to let it go.”

The young warrior frowned. “But doesn’t power bring victory?”

Kael leaned forward. “Victory is not always the goal. Sometimes the greatest triumph is conquering yourself.”

The young warrior left, shaking his head. Kael leaned on his shovel, humming to himself, watching his visitor disappear down the path. Then he returned to his gardening.

--William Zeitler