

Baptism of the Lord

January 11, 2026

10:30 a.m. Worship



**“And a voice from the heavens said, “this is my Son, the Beloved,
with whom I am well pleased.”**

—Matthew 3:17

First Presbyterian Church

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

909.882.3308

www.fpcsb.net

MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT: REV. BRIAN S. SYMONDS

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

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.

OUR NEXT COMMUNION will be Sunday, February 1st.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Kathy Showman

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

The Baptism of the Lord is a moment of profound revelation — the heavens open, the Spirit descends like a dove, and the Holy One's voice declares Jesus as the beloved Son. This event marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, not because He needed cleansing, but to fully identify with humanity in our need for grace. It is a reminder that baptism is not just a ritual, but a calling — a commissioning into a life of faith, service, and love. Just as Jesus stepped into the waters in humility, we too are invited to live out our baptism by walking in obedience, bringing light to others, and trusting in the Holy One's affirmation over our lives.

It's a celebration of identity, mission, and the unbreakable bond between God and God's children. *(Generated by Microsoft AI)*

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE *Axiom und Drift* A. Schlitzmann (1898-1954)
Allow the music to usher you into sacred space and time.

INTROIT *Spirit of the Living God* Daniel Iverson

*** CALL TO WORSHIP** *(based on Psalm 29)*

Give to God, O heavenly beings; Give to God glory and strength.

✠ **Give to God glory in the name of the Holy One; worship God in holy splendor.**

The voice of God is over the waters; the voice of God is full of majesty.

✠ **May God give strength to God's people! May God bless the people with peace.**

Let us worship God!

***HYMN 630** *Fairest Lord Jesus* CRUSADERS' HYMN

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

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

PRAYER of CONFESSION

The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord! Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

(Take a moment to silently name your longing.)

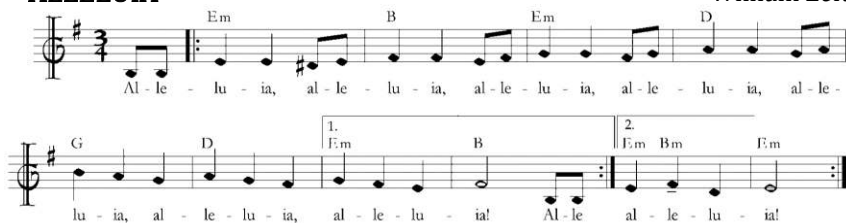
✠ You have given Christ as a covenant to all people, O God, yet your people continue to live at war. Your prophets proclaim justice and peace, yet we dwell amid hostility and oppression. You judge your people with fairness; we implore you to have mercy upon us. Give sight to eyes that are blind to your truth. Light our paths, that we may behold you even in the midst of our enemies. Free us from seeking our own ego, so that in humility we may live at peace with your people. Amen.

The promises of God are with us still. As the prophet foretold, a Servant is sent. A bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench. The Holy One knows our weakness. Trust the promises of God in Jesus Christ: we are forgiven.

(We stand and sing Alleluia)

*ALLELUIA

William Zeitler



TIME with the CHILDREN

[Children are always welcome in worship. There is KidSpace today in Room 10 following the Time with the Children.]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANTHEM

Come to the Water¹

John B. Foley, S. J.

O let all who thirst, let them come to the water. And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord: without money, without price. Why should you pay the

¹ Text: based on Isaiah 55.1-2, Matthew 11.28-30. Text & Music ©1978 John B. Foley, S.J. and Oregon Catholic Press. Reprinted with permission under ONELICENSE #A706254. All rights reserved.

price, except for the Lord? And let all who seek, let them come to the water. And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord: without money, without strife. Why should you spend your life, except for the Lord? And let all who toil, let them come to the water. And let all who are weary, let them come to the Lord: all who labor, who labor without rest. How can your soul find rest, except for the Lord, except for the Lord, the Lord? And let all the poor, let them come to the water. Bring the ones who are laden, bring them all to the Lord: bring the children without might. Easy the load and light: come to the Lord, the Lord. Come to the water; come to the Lord.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 42:1-9

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.
He will not cry out or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;
a bruised reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
He will not grow faint or be crushed
until he has established justice in the earth,
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.
Thus says God, the Lord,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
and spirit to those who walk in it;
I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness;
I have taken you by the hand and have kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
a light to the nations,
to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
I am the Lord; that is my name;
My glory I give to no other;
nor my praise to idols.
See, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
I tell you of them.

Matthew 3:13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from the heavens said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

This is the word of faith that we proclaim

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Beloved: You Are Enough *Rev. Brian S. Symonds*

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

***DOXOLOGY**

OLD HUNDREDTH

✠ **Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost, Amen.**

***PRAYER OF THANKS**

We remember our baptism, O God, and the call to become members of Christ's body. Accept our gifts, that others may be fed by you. Help us to better know our priorities that we may seek first your will for us and prepare ourselves to follow where Christ may lead us. May the offering we bring be a sign and symbol of our commitment to answer Christ's call to "come, follow me."

✠ **Amen.**

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE, 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.

***HYMN 488** *I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry*

WATERLIFE

***MOMENT for REFLECTION**

***CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

***RESPONSE** *God Be with You till We Meet Again* William G. Tomer

God be with you till we meet again, by His counsels guide, uphold you, With His sheep securely fold you, God be with you till we meet again. God be with you till we meet again, Keep love's banner floating o'er you, Smite death's threat'ning wave before you, God be with you till we meet again. Till we meet, till we meet, Till we meet at Jesus' feet; Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet again. Amen.

POSTLUDE

GREETERS: Robin Edwards

USHERS: Margaret Doane, *Lead Usher*

Al Rueda, Chris Thomas, *Security Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord, Brandon Turner

LIVESTREAM ENGINEER: James Welte

CAMERA OPERATORS: Kevin Lamb, Lynn Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Ron & Ruby Kraft, Bob Saenz

Elders: Robin Edwards, John-Paul Fletcher, Jon Horstmann

Deacons: Dave Thomas, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda

This Weeks' Celebrations

Jan 11 Jean-Luc Nicks
Dawn Morris
Jan 13 Zane Preciado
Stephani Congdon
Jan 14 Patrick Morris
Jan 16 Esther Olsen
Deon & Patrick Garcia
Jan 17 Lynette DuClos-Adelson
Mark Munz

The Celebration of Life for Curtis Webster was held on Saturday, January 3rd, not the 23rd as we had announced. Please accept our apologies if you were misled and had intended to attend.

Many thanks to all who donated to Vincent's surgery! We are just \$500.00 short of paying it off. If anyone would like to donate, we would be very grateful. Vincent is currently recovering well at James' house, but hopes to be around to snub everyone in the next few weeks.

Annual Reports. Committee Chairs, project leaders, and all others who serve and lead our congregation: It is that time again, when we ask you to write a (brief!) report on where you saw God at work in your organization in 2025. **All reports must be submitted to Amy Smith amyms952@aol.com and/or Mimi Lange pres.first@gmail.com NO LATER THAN Friday, January 16th, so they can be included in the Annual Report to the Congregation.** Presbyterian Women must include a financial report. If you have any questions or need help, contact Amy or Mimi.

Leonard Scholarship Applications for Fall 2026 are available in the church office and on the church website. All applications must be in the church office by February 28, 2026. Any questions can be emailed to Lynda Savage. **LKSavage3@gmail.com**

Thank you for your generous support of our food participants. Thank you for your generous donations of shelf-stable foods. A suggestion list is available at reception, and on our website. We encourage bargain shopping since all donations can be put to good use. **Currently we would especially appreciate cans or bags of beans (pinto, navy, red, etc.).**

2026 Companions on the Inner Way Retreat Opportunity.

This spring, *Companions on the Inner Way* will once again offer a safe communal place to explore deep longings for the Holy. Grounded in the Christian tradition, the guided retreats incorporate body, mind, and soul through presentations, dialogue, spiritual practices, art, music, movement, and worship with Eucharist. The retreats strive to create an environment that is theologically curious, radically welcoming, and liturgically vibrant.

The retreat will take place from Sunday, March 8, 2026 to Friday, March 13, 2026 at Serra Retreat Center in Malibu, California.

Registration information can be accessed at **www.cotiway.org**
Please contact Christa Wallis **chriwallis@aol.com** if you'd like to apply for a scholarship to help defray the cost of attending.

Winter Camp will take place on the weekend of March 13th-15th. Registration begins now. We're inviting you to an awesome winter camp weekend designed just for 6th thru 12th graders! Our theme this year is ***Warm Hearts, Renewed Spirits***, and it's all about experiencing God's life-giving warmth in the middle of a cold, crazy season. You can look forward to powerful worship & messages, winter fun & chill time, real community and so much more. Call (877)285-0199 or email **registration@bblccc.com** for more information. Cost is \$165 per camper. Financial help is available.

Music Box

Elpha kept a quiet ledger of everything that had gone wrong.

The bell that cracked in the frost year. The music in the cathedral that smeared every note across too much space. The marketplace that had grown too loud. The new footpath by the river that was too long.

She recorded dates for every offense. Her memory was exact. Her anger, immaculate.

Each morning the broken bell rang from the high tower above the square. Its tone was warped now — no longer round, no longer pure. It wavered as it fell through the air, as if the sound itself were limping.

The sound offended her. It reminded her of a wheel knocked off center — still turning, never smoothly.

She called her anger honesty. Others called it crabbiness. She privately called it integrity. Someone had to remember what had been damaged. Someone had to refuse to let it be.

From her window she could see the lower market — steam from bread ovens, children darting between stalls, the jostling dance of people attending to their day. She rarely watched for long. The noise felt like an insult to the precision of her remembering.

It was near dusk when she noticed the Stranger.

He stood beneath the bell tower, alone in the cooling square, listening. Not grimacing. Not bracing. Listening.

She leaned out from her window. “How can you stand that sound?” she called. “It’s wrong.”

“Yes,” he said.

She waited.

“Still wrong,” he said.

“And you’re listening to it anyway,” she said.

He looked up at the tower. “Why do birds fly?”

That answer angered her.

She descended the stairs as if summoned by her own fury and confronted him in the square. She told him everything — what the bell had once been, how far the city had fallen, how negligence and carelessness and forgetting had piled ruin upon ruin. She told him about the music in the Grail Cathedral, the marketplace that had grown too loud, the new footpath by the river that was too long. She spoke as one speaks when memory has become a duty.

He did not interrupt.

When she finished, he asked one question. “If the bell were repaired tomorrow,” he said, “who would you still refuse to be?”

She felt the question as a throb behind her eyes. “That isn’t the point,” she said.

"Exactly."

She turned away mid-breath and returned to her room, her anger ringing louder than the broken bell ever had.

Months passed.

Work began on the tower. The old bell was lowered with ceremony. The city collected metal. People donated what they could spare — tools, fragments, ornaments without history. The foundry fires were stoked through the night. She watched all of it without pleasure.

When the new bell was raised and mounted, the whole city gathered. The rope was pulled.

The sound was flawless. Pure. Complete. Perfect.

And somehow — empty.

The note filled the square without friction. It slid cleanly through the air and vanished without leaving a trace in the body.

For the first time in years, Elpha noticed the sound beneath the bell: laughter, footsteps, the soft percussion of eating utensils, the musical noise of daily life.

Children were chasing one another through the crowd. The baker had burned the second batch of bread, and everyone was laughing about it. Someone was singing badly — maybe on purpose, maybe not.

The city had not been waiting.

The broken bell had never been the wound.

Her listening had been.

She searched the crowd for the Stranger, but he was gone.

That night she did not update her ledger. For the first time, the column beneath 'what was wrong' remained empty. — *William Zeidler*



The seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a symbolic statement of the church's heritage, identity, and mission in contemporary form. Its power depends on both its simplicity and complexity, as well as its traditional and enduring qualities.

The basic symbols in the seal are the cross, Scripture, the dove, and flames.

As a church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), our congregational life is governed by the Ruling Elders of our current Session:

Sue Alexander, Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis,
Pat Morris, Susan Skoglund, Katie Smith, Neal Williams,
Robin Edwards, John-Paul Fletcher, Jon Horstmann, Lynda Savage,
and Clerk of Session Amy Smith

and supported by our Board of Deacons:

Kristine French, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda,
Amy Gano, Rick Rodriguez, Jim Siegmund, Kyle Smith,
Rebecca Allen, Brent Nord, Dave Thomas, and Chris Wright-Thomas.