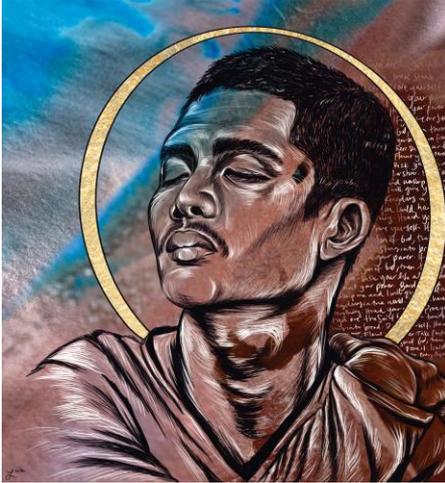


First Sunday in Lent

February 22, 2026

10:30 a.m. Worship



“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be
tempted by the devil.”

—*Matthew 4:1*

First Presbyterian Church

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

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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, March 1st.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Jon Horstmann

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

“If we are to be like Jesus, we also must begin by first listening to the voice of God at our center. This voice tells us, above all and after it all, we are God’s Beloved. When we know this, we filter out so much of the silt and grit that traps us. We release ourselves into the arms of love. We make space for the work of transformation to be born in us.”

--Rev. Danielle Shroyer

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Prelude in Bm

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Allow the music to usher you into sacred space and time.

INTROIT

Spirit of the Living God

Daniel Iverson

Spirit of the living God, Fall afresh on me. Melt me, mold me, Fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, Fall afresh on me.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Listen!

✠ **There is hope to be found here.**

Listen!

✠ **God calls you by name here.**

Listen!

✠ **There is love that abides here.**

This world is full of chatter, so may we do our best to listen.

✠ **God is speaking.**

Let us worship.

✠ **Amen.**

*HYMN 687

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

ST. ANNE

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

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

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Friends, if you are seeking grace, this moment is for you. If you are seeking growth, this moment is for you. If you are seeking honesty, this moment is for you. In the prayer of confession, we admit to ourselves and to God that we do not have it all figured out. And in that vulnerability, we are surrounded by God's grace.

(Take a moment to silently name your longing.)

✘ Holy God, too often we treat your Word like a radio station—something we can tune in and out of when it's convenient. Our minds are full of ads, emails, news updates, and notifications. In the midst of this clutter, we tend to gravitate toward the voices that think like us—easily ignoring the voices being silenced, easily ignoring your voice. Forgive us for failing to listen. Forgive us for getting caught in distractions. Forgive us for forgetting what your voice sounds like. Drain the distractions from our minds and help us turn once again toward you. With earnest hearts we pray, amen.

Friends, even when we tune God out, even when we prioritize other voices, even when we do all the talking and fail to listen, we are still held by God. Our sins are forgiven. Nothing could ever separate us from God's love. So with joy in our hearts, please repeat after me:

I am loved!

✘ I am loved!

I am held in grace!

✘ I am held in grace!

I belong to God.

✘ I belong to God.

Amen.

***SUNG RESPONSE 205** *Live in Charity (Ubi Caritas)*¹

Berthier

Ubi caritas et amor,
Ubi caritas Deus ibi est.

Live in charity and steadfast love.
Live in charity: God will dwell with you.

¹ Text: Taizé Community. Music: Jacques Berthier. ©1979 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, agent. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-7062545. All rights reserved.

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

Grace

arr. Mark Hayes.

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." . . .

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?' The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and make loincloths for themselves."

Matthew 4:1-11

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 is it 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." 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 faith that we proclaim

✘ **Thanks be to God.**

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

Holy God, listening is always easier said than done. We shuffle into this space and try to quiet our minds, but the list of distractions is long. We need your help to listen. So, today we ask that you would marinate us in your Word. Dust the cobwebs from our ears. Stir our souls awake. Crack open our hearts to make room for you. Scoop us up. Put us in your pocket. Carry us with you wherever you go. We want to hear you, really hear you, so speak to us now. With hope we pray, amen.

SERMON

*Seeking:
Who Will You Listen To?*

Rev. Brian S. Symonds

AFFIRMATION of FAITH

In a world full of noise,

✘ **we believe that God is speaking.**

In a world full of chaos,

✘ **we believe that God is singing.**

In a world full of temptation,

✘ **we believe that God is healing.**

Church, who will you listen to?

✘ **We will listen to God—our Creator, Friend, and Guide.**

Church, what will you listen for?

✘ **We will listen for water in the desert,
for the wind of the Spirit,
for the laughter of children,**

for the sound of open doors,
and for God's voice,
who calls us beloved.
Amen.

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

Take these, our gifts, as we offer them today, O God. Use them for your glory and kin-dom's expansion. May these gifts go toward freeing the captives, feeding the hungry, comforting the lonely, and healing the world. As Christ's body, use us too, in service to repairing the breached, broken places in our community.

✠ Amen.

The OFFERING of OUR LIVES

INSTALLING a DEACON *Rebecca Allen*

OPENING STATEMENT

SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY

There are different gifts, But it is the same Spirit who gives them.

There are different ways of serving God,

But it is the same Lord who is served.

God works through different people in different ways, but it is the same God who achieves One purpose through them all.

Each one is given a gift by the Spirit, To use it for the common good.

Together we are the body of Christ, And individually members of him.

QUESTIONS

✦ Of those to be ordained and/or installed

God has called you by the voice of the church to serve Jesus

Christ in a special way. Now will you answer these questions?

Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Do you?

Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you? Do you?

Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God? Do you and will you?

Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions? Will you?

Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit? Will you?

Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world? Will you?

Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church? Do you?

Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love? Will you?

QUESTION for DEACONS

Will you be a faithful deacon, teaching charity, urging concern, and directing the people's help to the friendless and those in need and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

✦ Of the congregation (*and officers: listen as your church family recognizes your gifts and your call*)

Do we, the members of the church, accept **Rebecca** as a deacon, chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ?

Do we agree to pray for her, to encourage her, to respect her decisions, and to follow as she guides us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the church?

✦ **LAYING on of HANDS**

PRAYERS of INSTALLATION

By the Pastor.

Gracious God, in every age you have called men and women to speak your word and lead your people. We thank you for this one you have called from among us to help us do your work. Give her courage and compassion; Give her joy in her work. Fill her with your Spirit, so she may have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus. We offer ourselves to you as you have offered yourself to us.

By those to be ordained or installed:

Gracious God: you have chosen me. Now give me strength, wisdom, and love to preach the gospel at all times.

By the congregation:

✦ **God of grace, you call us all to follow you. Help us to put your call at the center of our lives. Give us courage and discipline to follow where your servants lead us; so that our life together will speak of the love of Jesus. Amen.**

DECLARATION, CHARGE, and WELCOME

You are now installed again as a deacon in the Church of Jesus Christ and for this congregation.

Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

Welcome to this ministry.

[As the congregation sings the response, those laying on hands shall welcome the newly ordained and installed elders and deacons into their fellowship in ministry.]

SUNG RESPONSE 698 ²

John Bell

✦ **Take, O Take me as I am, Summon out what I shall be,
set your seal upon my heart, and live in me.... (Repeat)**

² Text: John L. Bell, 1985. © 1985 Wild Goose Resource Group, Iona Community (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.) Reprinted by permission under ONELICENSE #A706254. All rights reserved.
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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 819**

Be Still, My Soul

FINLANDIA

***MOMENT for REFLECTION**

***CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

***RESPONSE** *May the Blessing of God Almighty* *Unknown*

May the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost
be upon you, and remain with you forever. Amen.

POSTLUDE

GREETER: Lynda Savage

USHERS: Margaret Doane, *Lead Usher*

Al Rueda, Jim Siegmund, *Security Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord, Brandon Turner

LIVESTREAM ENGINEER: Kevin Lamb

CAMERA OPERATOR: Oliver Lamb

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Sandy Garza, Debora Holk

Elders: Susan Skoglund, Katie Smith, Neal Williams

Deacons: Rebecca Allen, Brent Nord, Chris Thomas

This Weeks' Celebrations

Feb 22 Janet McKinster

Feb 23 Martha Pinckney

Feb 26 Christa Wallis

Seeking...and discovering. Our Lenten theme invites us to seek where God is being revealed in our lives. This could be in subtle and quiet revelations, or in loud and significant happenings. It could be something someone has done for or said to you, or something you offered another. It could be in beauty or in chaos. Take a moment before or following the worship service and find the giant map in the Narthex. Write on a post-it where God was revealed to you, and stick it on the map...anywhere. You could do this once or multiple times throughout Lent. The Worship Committee along with Pastor Brian may collect the post-its throughout the season to pray over them and to make room for more revelations. **Blessed discoveries.**

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LENTEN QUIET NIGHTS are planned to help us be faithful to the journey. In the contemplative space of the Fireside Room, we will share prayer, readings and silence centered around the theme:

God, Always Seeking Us.

WHERE: Fireside Room **TIME:** 5:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

DATES: THURSDAY EVENINGS: February 26, March 5, 12, 19, 26

Please enter the Fireside Room in silence.

SIMPLE SOUP SUPPER. Simple, and simply delicious, soup and bread suppers are offered following Quiet Night services.

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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 pouches or pop-top cans of meat, fish, or fruit.**

Winter Camp will take place on the weekend of March 13th-15th. 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.

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***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](http://www.cotiway.org)**  
Please contact Christa Wallis **[chriwallis@aol.com](mailto:chriwallis@aol.com)** if you'd like to apply for a scholarship to help defray the cost of attending.

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Per Capita Apportionment. As we begin the new year, it's time once again to recall our connection to the Presbyterian Church of the USA. We and other Presbyterian congregations all over the country and beyond join together to provide the sustenance for the organization that provides structure, support, education, emergency responses, social justice outreaches, clergy care, and inspiration to us all. The PCUSA is the Mothership, and we are outposts that rely on her goodness to reach our potential!

The annual Per Capita Offering for 2026 requires that we pay \$44 for each member of our congregation to our national organization. This amount is requested from you above and beyond your regular pledge offering.

Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church (please make a note on your check that the donation is for the Per Capita Offering). Thank you so much for being faithful stewards of our denomination!

Music Box

One morning they found her on the cathedral steps, wrapped in a coarse gray blanket, staring at everything as though the world had just begun.

Anne lifted her, cradling her close. “Well,” she said softly, “You’ve come to the right place.”

There was no note. No name.

Someone asked, “What shall we call her?”

Anne’s eyes settled on the cathedral calendar pinned to the wall. This month’s word was ‘Devotion’.

Anne gave a small nod. “That will do.”

Devotion did not speak. They waited for words that never came. Physicians examined. Priests prayed. Devotion remained silent, taking it all in with luminous eyes.

Other children beckoned her into their games. She followed as best she could. But by the time she understood, they had already moved on. Laughter moved too quickly. Words passed before she could catch them. Everyone meant well.

But she did not belong.

Inside the cathedral, time moved differently. Stone waited. Light returned to the same places day after day. The pillars did not interrupt. The floor did not hurry.

She began to walk the nave the way others learn conversation. She traced the worn edges of columns. She pressed her palm against the limestone, cool from the night. She learned which stained-glass windows flared cold at winter dawn, and which ones bloomed softly when the days lengthened again. The building did not require speech. It received her whole in welcoming silence.

Anne watched.

On Devotion’s twelfth birthday, Anne rose before dawn as usual. She found Devotion already in the nave, the early light still gray along the pillars.

“You’re twelve today,” Anne said.

Devotion nodded.

“That’s no small thing.”

From her apron pocket, Anne drew a small medallion on a cord. It was inexpensive, the engraving slightly uneven. The word was simple: Devotion.

She slipped it around Devotion’s neck. “For you,” Anne said quietly, touching her cheek.

Devotion closed her fingers around the disk, tracing its edge.

Anne’s eyes warmed. “Do everything with all your heart.”

She let the words settle. “And I have another gift.”

She placed a broom in Devotion’s hands. “It’s time.”

Devotion closed her fingers around it.

And began.

Years folded quietly into one another.

Priests came and went. Candles were lit and extinguished. Incense rose and thinned in the high air. Music filled the nave on feast days, and fell quiet in the ribs of the vault.

Devotion learned the cathedral as one learns a face. Dust gathered differently beneath the transept than near the altar. The echo shifted when the pews were full. In autumn, light entered low and amber; in spring, it climbed pale and high along the pillars.

Sometimes she paused when a beam of sunlight caught the rising dust. The motes turned slowly in the air, suspended in depths she could not measure. She could not name what she felt. It was simply what happened when she gave herself completely to what was before her.

When Anne died, Devotion stood near the back while prayers were spoken and chants were sung. She watched the light move across the coffin and listened as the final echo dissolved.

Then she took up her broom.

The town was growing. It needed stone.

The incense and music still rose through the nave, but fewer people listened. The pews held more emptiness than people, even on feast days. New walls rose along the square.

There were meetings. Ledgers. Decisions.

The bell was lowered first. What once thundered above the town now lay mute on the ground. Devotion laid her hand on its cool bronze, feeling its weight. Then she turned away.

Walls followed. Statues were removed. The roof beams were taken down. Wind moved freely where stained glass had once restrained it.

Devotion adjusted. When grass crept between the stones, she swept it. When sections of the floor were lifted, she cleared what remained.

At last, even the foundation stones were removed. For the first time in her life, there was nothing left to tend.

She came at dusk. She stood where the altar had been and listened.

Above her, the stars burned in their icy heat.

She drew a long breath. She touched the small disk at her throat – warm from her skin – and let her hand fall.

Then she turned and walked quietly out the gate, slipping into the night.

The road lay open.

– 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.