

Third Sunday in Lent

March 8, 2026

10:30 a.m. Worship



“Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of
water welling up to eternal life.”

—*John 4:14b*

First Presbyterian Church

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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 Thursday, April 2nd.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Helen Babcock

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

Jesus crosses cultural, religious, and societal boundaries by leading his disciples through Samaria. In the heat of midday, he seeks out connection with a Samaritan woman drawing water from the well. His command to her is also a question and an invitation to a new way of life: Will you give me a drink? For the woman, to respond is risky but life-changing. This question creates a dialogue between them in which Jesus sees the woman fully; she leaves the well transformed. This week, we might imagine ourselves at the well. Are we willing to care for our neighbors, seeking to not just quench thirst, but to find living waters that sustain us all? In this season, what are you thirsting for? In what ways are you needing sustenance?

-Rev. Danielle Shroyer

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Fantasia

J. Pachelbel (1653-1706)

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

INTROIT

In the Garden

C. Austin Miles

I come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses; and the voice I hear, falling on my ear, the Son of God discloses. And he walks with me and he talks with me, and he tells me I am his own, and the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather together—

✠ **the seekers, the dreamers, the shooting-star wishers, in hopes of seeing God.**

We gather together—

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

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

✘ the curious, the hungry, the loving, the lonely, in hopes of finding peace.

We gather together—

✘ those who are thirsty and those with water to spare, in hopes of finding justice.

So come to the well,
come to the table.

Come, let us worship God. Amen.

***HYMN 65**

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

CWM RHONDDA

PRAYER of CONFESSION

In today's service we will hear the story of the Samaritan woman. It's a well-known story of a woman who, in the heat of the day, meets Jesus at a well and he asks her for a drink. Every time I read this story, I cannot help but ask myself—when was the last time I drew water for someone? When was the last time I drew water for myself? So with this same open curiosity, we come to the prayer of confession, trusting that even if we forget our bucket, God will still meet us at the well. Friends, with that grace in mind, let us pray:

✘ **Holy God, we have been on every side of this story. We have been the one who is thirsty and in need of compassion, and we have been the one with a bucket and a deep well. So today we wonder: how often have we missed the opportunity to share water with our neighbors? How often have we forgotten that we have a bucket and the power to bring change? How often have we simply decided that justice and compassion were not worth the work? Forgive our fragile hearts and remind us that it was you who sat at that well in Samaria in the heat of the day. It was you. It is still you. With hope we pray, amen.**

Family of faith, as hard as it is to imagine: we could lose the bucket, we could hoard the water for ourselves, we could pretend we do not see all who are thirsty, and we would still belong to God. This is the good news of the gospel:

✘ **God's grace is deeper than any well. We are seen, loved, and forgiven.**

May this realization change and inspire us. Amen.

(We stand and sing the Response)

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.**

TIME with the CHILDREN

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SCRIPTURE Exodus 17:1-7

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me." The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

John 4:5-26, 39-42

So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)

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.

The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

This is the word of faith that we proclaim.

✘ **Thanks be to God.**

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

God of conversation, we come to you today thirsty— thirsty for hope, thirsty for good news, thirsty for a glimpse of you. So today we pray, move in these words like a current. Give us the courage to wade into your story with open eyes and open hearts. Give us the courage to drink this moment in. We are listening. We are grateful. Amen.

SERMON

Seeking: Rev. Brian S. Symonds
Will You Give Me a Drink?

ANTHEM

Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether²

Friedell

Draw us in the Spirit's tether; For when humbly, in thy name, Two or three are met together, Thou art in the midst of them: Alleluya! Alleluya! Touch we now thy garment's hem. As the brethren used to gather In the name of Christ to sup, Then with thanks to God the Father Break the bread and bless the cup, Alleluya! Alleluya! So knit thou our friendship up. All our meals and all our living Make as sacraments of thee. That by caring, helping, giving, We may true disciples be. Alleluya! Alleluya! We will serve thee faithfully, we will serve thee faithfully.

AFFIRMATION of FAITH

We believe that a glass of water given to us by a stranger can taste like justice.

✘ **We believe that honest conversation has the power to change us.**
We believe that all God's children have a voice and something to say.

✘ **We believe that Jesus loves the outcast, the ignored, the shamed, and the abandoned.**

We believe in asking questions.

✘ **We believe in curiosity.**

We believe in giving people a drink.

✘ **May we be brave enough to give people a drink. 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

² Text: B.R. Music: Harold W. Friedell. ©1957 The H. W. Gray Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of OneLicense #A706254. All rights reserved.

***PRAYER OF THANKS**

Holy God, from abundance upon abundance, you have said that we may freely take, and freely share. As we return to you what is already your own, we ask that you would bless these gifts and multiply them. May we, in turn, be blessed, as we see your reign unfolding before us, through Christ our Lord,

✠ 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 401**

Gather Us In

Marty Haugen

***MOMENT for REFLECTION**

***CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

***RESPONSE**

In the Garden

C. Austin Miles

I'd stay in the garden with him, though the night around me be falling, but he bids me go, through the voice of woe his voice to me is calling. And he walks with me and he talks with me, and he tells me I am his own, and the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known.

POSTLUDE

GREETER: Bobbie Terrell

USHERS: Mark Adelson, *Lead Usher*

Rick Rodriguez, 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

Judy Steppins, Lorraine Bishop, Noé Falconi

Elders: Lynda Savage, Amy Smith, Sue Alexander

Deacons: Kristine French, Joyce Lyons, Amy Gano

This Weeks' Celebrations

Mar 9 Sherman Ballard
Brent & Joanna Nord
Mar 12 Richard Rodriguez

Mar 13 Dotti Garcia
Mar 14 Breanna Nord

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 help us be faithful to the journey. In the contemplative space of the Fireside Room, we 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: March 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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Fat Fish! This week we are reminded that many people have to carry buckets of water long distances to their homes every day. Feed your fish for every faucet in your home.

We will take up the **One Great Hour of Sharing Offering** on Palm Sunday.

Palm Saturday! On **Saturday, March 28th**, we will gather in the Library at **8:30 a.m.** for a morning of fellowship and creation, to make palm crosses and **to prepare the sanctuary for Palm Sunday.** Everyone invited! No experience required. (Please bring your own scissors.) Join us!

Maundy Thursday: Join us for an experiential evening in three movements. Beginning with a simple **soup and bread dinner at 5:30pm**, then moving into **contemplative stations** that will guide us into a deeper space of reflecting on the day, and finally concluding with a **Maundy Thursday worship service and communion.** Pastor Brian will be joined by Nancy Weins to lead us through this experience and act of worship. Come ready to embody the beginning of the story of Jesus's final days leading up to the resurrection. **5:30pm-8:00pm - Come for part of or all of this evening's movements.**

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***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.**

***Per Capita Apportionment.*** The annual Per Capita Apportionment 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 Per Capita Apportionment). Thank you so much for being faithful stewards of our denomination!

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Music Box

Dareth stitched the word on after midnight.

SAGE.

He worked the needle through wool in the trembling lamplight.

Each autumn, the village kept its ancient custom: for one week at the Fall Festival, everyone named themselves what they wished to be. Bakers became admirals. Tailors tried on prophet. Children stitched magnificent ambitions onto their sleeves and danced through the streets.

Then, on the eighth night, everyone burned the titles in a grand bonfire.

He had never taken part.

Dareth had always known what he was: a dockworker, smelling of rope and brine, hands hardened by cargo and tide. He had felt no need to pretend otherwise.

But last winter his brother had endured a long, grim illness.

Months of coughing. Fever that would not break. Nights propped upright just to breathe. Their small savings drained away. Work missed. Jobs lost. Meals thinned. Hope rising and falling like a cruel tide.

And then he died.

For months afterward, Dareth lay awake staring into the dark, replaying it all. Why the illness? Why the length of it? Why the suffering? If there was some hidden logic to the world, he meant to find it.

If he understood why things worked the way they did, perhaps there was something he could have done. Something he had failed to see.

That was why, this year, he stitched the word. For one week, instead of a dockworker, he would be a Sage.

The first day brought snickers. By the second, questions.

By the third, people were speaking to him in lowered tones. A fisherman unsure whether to risk deeper waters. A young woman uncertain about a proposal. A horse groomer asking why diligence never seemed to prosper him.

He listened carefully. He asked questions back. He tried to imagine what a wise man might say.

“What do you already know?”

To his surprise, they left steadier than they had arrived.

Which encouraged him — in an unsettling way.

Perhaps there was something to this. Perhaps he had always been meant for more than rope and cargo.

By the seventh night, when others tossed their stitched words into the bonfire, he stood at the edge of the square and did not move.

When someone called him “Sage,” he answered, “At your service.”

Then the stranger arrived.

There was nothing remarkable about him, and yet when he looked at someone, it felt as though their innermost thoughts fell quiet.

“You are the sage,” the stranger said.

“At least I want to be.”

They stood watching the tide press against stone.

“And what price are you willing to pay for Wisdom?” the stranger asked.

“Comfort,” he answered quickly. “Leisure. Sleep. I would give them gladly.”

The stranger shook his head.

“That is the price of mere ambition. Wisdom has a far higher price.”

A flicker of irritation crossed Dareth’s face. “Then what is the price?”

Before the stranger could answer, shouting broke across the quay.

A young laborer slipped while securing a line. His head struck the edge of the dock. The crack echoed, and he slid into the water tangled in ropes.

Men rushed, dove in, and pulled him out.

Too late.

His wife ran to the quay, sobbing. “Why? Why?”

“Ask the Sage,” someone said ruefully.

Dareth felt his chest tighten.

This was what he had wanted — the unveiling of hidden logic, the explanation that would make suffering bearable.

He could speak of negligence. Of caution. Of lessons to be learned. He could shape the event into something that resembled order.

The stranger’s words echoed in his heart.

What price are you willing to pay?

He understood.

To say “I have no answer” would cost him the name.

To stand in the incomprehensible would strip him of the identity he had begun to inhabit.

He swallowed.

“I do not know why this happened,” he said.

A murmur passed through the crowd.

He continued, more quietly, “We can mend our lines. We can watch our footing. Some things are ours to repair. But why one person is lost and another spared – I do not know.”

Later, by the dark water, Dareth found the stranger again.

“I wanted Wisdom to explain my brother’s suffering,” he said.

“And if it did?” the stranger asked gently. “Would it change anything?”

He had no answer.

“Wisdom,” the stranger said, “is not the key to some hidden mechanism. It is the courage to remain faithful when the mechanism does not reveal itself.”

At dawn the stranger was gone.

Dareth took his coat and cut the word free, stitch by stitch. Then he folded it carefully and placed it in a drawer.

Back at the harbor, the ropes were rough. The tide indifferent. The poverty unchanged. He inspected the beams, replaced what was worn, and taught the younger boys to read the water and double their knots.

He did not understand why the world tilted unevenly. He no longer believed that understanding would shield him from it.

Dareth was a dockworker.

And for the first time since his brother’s long dying, he stood there without trying to solve the sea.

He drew a deep breath of salt air, listened to the gulls, and resumed mending his nets.

-- 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.