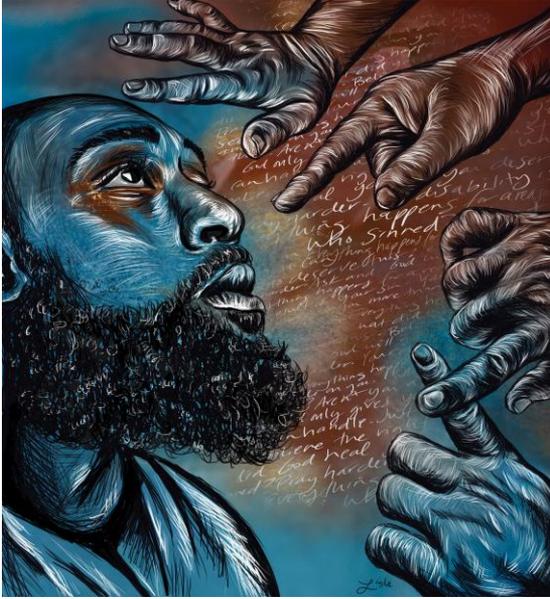


## Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 15, 2026

10:30 a.m. Worship



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“Teacher, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

—*John 9:2*

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### 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](http://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 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

# Morning Worship†

Lector: Irene Sandoval-Suverkrup

## REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

When it comes to faith, sometimes there are bad questions—questions that are formed by assumptions, questions that lead us to judgment or isolation. When Jesus and the disciples encounter a blind man along the way, the disciples immediately ask, “Teacher, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” (John 9:2). They ask a bad question. Their question assumes that illness and disability are the result of sin; it assumes that the man deserved to be born blind; it assumes that physical blindness is a form of failure. Unfortunately, the crowd continues to interrogate the man and dissect the miracle of what happens to him. This week, let us pay attention to the questions we ask. What assumptions do we carry? What is our intent? When seeking clarity or understanding, what are better questions we can ask? -Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow

*The Reverend Samuel Roberts will preach for us today.  
He is a chaplain and a member of the Presbytery of Riverside.*

## GATHERING MUSIC

### WELCOME

### PRELUDE

*The Disciple's Resolve*

*W. Zeitler*

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

### INTROIT

*The Old Rugged Cross*

*George Bennard*

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame; and I love that old cross, where the dearest and best for a world of lost sinners was slain. So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, till my trophies at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross, and exchange it some day for a crown.

### \* CALL TO WORSHIP

Scripture is full of questions...

✠ Where are you?

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

\* Stand if you are able

✠ The congregation will read.

Am I my brother's keeper?

✘ **Whom shall I send?**

Who do you say that I am?

✘ **Who sinned?**

How many times shall I forgive?

✘ **If God is for us, who can be against us?**

Scripture is full of questions, so just like those in our scriptures, may we bring our full curiosity and wonder into this space.

✘ **Let us ask and seek after our merciful God.**

**\*HYMN 39**

*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*

FAITHFULNESS

### **PRAYER of CONFESSION**

In today's text, the disciples ask Jesus, "Who sinned?" They want to know who around them could be blamed for suffering. The disciples want to identify who around them had done wrong. In the prayer of confession, we stop pointing fingers at others. In confession, we turn our attention toward ourselves and invite God into that honest and vulnerable space. So do this counter-cultural thing with me today. Let us pray together using the prayer of confession, printed in your bulletin. Let us pray:

Who here has sinned?

✘ **We have sinned. We put our heads in the sand. We ignored people in need. We make false assumptions and fail to be kind. We are in need of forgiveness.**

Good news! Our God is a merciful God. God does not punish, hold grudges, or keep score. When you suffer, God weeps. When you sin, God forgives. When you lose your way, God comes running.

✘ **Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

✘ **Have you sinned?**

I have sinned. I put my head in the sand. I ignore people in need. I make false assumptions and fail to be kind. I, too, am in need of forgiveness.

✘ **Good news! Our God is a merciful God. God does not punish, hold grudges, or keep score. When you suffer, God weeps. When you sin, God forgives. When you lose your way, God comes running.**

Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

*(We stand and sing the Response)*

**\*SUNG RESPONSE 205 *Live in Charity (Ubi Caritas)***<sup>1</sup>

*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.]*

## **SCRIPTURE**

### **John 9:1-7**

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

This is the word of faith that we proclaim.

✘ **Thanks be to God.**

## **PRAYER for ILLUMINATION**

God of Good news, there is reading your Word, there is hearing your Word, and then there is tunneling ourselves into your Word—harvesting your Word, building a home in your Word, laying your Word over us like a blanket, wrapping ourselves in your Word, knowing your Word like the back of our hand, singing your Word, planting ourselves like a garden in your Word. God, we could listen to scripture like we listen to the news, or we could cocoon ourselves in your Word and it could change us entirely. So bundle us up. Give us the latter. We want to know you. With hopeful hearts we pray, amen.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

## SERMON

### *Seeking: Who Sinned?*

*Rev. Samuel Roberts*

## ANTHEM

### *Jesus Is a Rock in a Weary Land<sup>2</sup>*

*Mark Hayes*

*Jesus is a rock in a weary land, a weary land, a weary land; my Jesus is a rock in a weary land, a shelter in the time of storm. Stop and let me tell you 'bout the chapel of one. The Lord God's work has just begun. Stop and let me tell you 'bout the chapel of two. The Lord God's written his Bible, too. Stop and let me tell you 'bout the chapel of three. My God died on Calvary. Stop and let me tell you 'bout the chapel of four. The devil's power is no more. Stop and let tell you 'bout the chapel of five. The Lord God's bought us so stand alive. Stop and let me tell you 'bout the chapel of six. He readied Jerusalem and healed the sick. My *Jesus is a rock in a weary land, ...* Stop and let me tell you 'bout the chapel of sev'n. The Lord God's risen, and He went to heav'n. Children, stop and let me tell you 'bout the chapel of eight. I see Him standing at the Golden Gate. Stop and let me tell you 'bout the chapel of nine. The Lord God's turning that water to wine. Stop and let me tell you 'bout the chapel of ten. Children, John said He's coming to the world again! *Jesus is a rock in a weary land, ...**

## AFFIRMATION of FAITH

We believe in a merciful God,

✠ **a God who does not keep score, a God who wants good for us.**

We believe in a creative God,

✠ **a God who would heal with mud, a God capable of seeing what we cannot.**

We believe in a saving God,

✠ **a God who heals, a God who greets our questions with patience, a God who sends us out with hope in our step.**

What wondrous love is this? 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 HUNDRETH

✠ **Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below;**

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<sup>2</sup> Text & Music: Mark Hayes, based on a Traditional Spiritual. ©2016 Lorenz Publishing Corporation. Reprinted by permission of OneLicense #A706254. All rights reserved.

Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost, Amen.

**\*PRAYER OF THANKS**

What language can we borrow to thank you, dearest Friend? Accept the gifts we give today to be for your glory and the good of your people, because of Jesus Christ, our Savior and 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 314**                      *Christ, Be Our Light*                      *Bernadette Farrell*

**\*MOMENT for REFLECTION**

**\*CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

**\*RESPONSE**                      *The Old Rugged Cross*                      *George Bennard*

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true, its shame and reproach gladly bear;  
then he'll call me some day to my home far away, where his glory forever I'll share.  
So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, till my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross, and exchange it some day for a crown.

**POSTLUDE**

**GREETER:** Jeanne Clark

**USHERS:** Brad Smith, *Lead Usher*

Marilyn Kraft, Dave Thomas, *Security Ushers*

**SOUND ENGINEERS:** Dan Direen, Brent Nord, Brandon Turner

**LIVESTREAM TEAM:** James Welte, Kevin Lamb,  
Oliver Lamb, Tim Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Marianna Fowles, Sandy Garza, Deborah Holk

*Elders:* Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis

*Deacons:* Rick Rodriguez, Jim Siegmund, Kyle Smith

This Weeks' Celebrations

*Mar 18* Rebecca Nelligan

Todd & Elizabeth Wright

*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 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 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!*** In some places, people walk for hours to go to church, where they find support and encouragement from friends and family. Give a gift for every time you went to church this month.

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

***Palm Saturday!*** On **Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>**, 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 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!

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## *Music Box*

Carven had not spoken to Halric in years.

The quarrel had begun with timber and coin — some small matter of a trade that had gone awry. Halric had shrugged it off. Carven had felt cheated, and pride did the rest. From that day forward the two men lived along the same harbor as though separated by an ocean.

Carven told himself some people simply could not be trusted. And small things kept happening.

One morning Carven arrived at the quay and found his fishing net hanging from a post, rinsed clean and drying in the wind. He scowled. He had left the net soaking overnight to loosen the knots. Now it hung stiff in the sun. Halric must have pulled it out. Carven muttered to himself the whole morning while he worked.

The following week he found a heavy cargo line untied and retied to a different post. The knot was Halric's work — he recognized the turn of it at once. Carven felt his jaw tighten. So now Halric thought his knots were not good enough.

And then, one evening, a lantern appeared near the edge of the quay where Carven often worked after dusk. Carven stared at it with a sour expression. A warning, no doubt. A quiet insult. As though he could not see where he was walking.

That did it. Carven carried the grievance for two days, letting it simmer and harden until he could bear it no longer.

On the third morning the harbor bustled with its usual noise — ropes creaking, gulls calling, men shouting across the water. Carven stepped into the open space of the quay.

“Halric,” he called, loudly enough for all the dockworkers to hear.

“Yes?” he said, still coiling a rope.

“All you ever do is try to harass and embarrass me.”

Halric blinked in surprise.

“How so?”

Carven spread his hands sharply.

“For example, you dragged my nets out of the water last week.”

Halric answered calmly.

“They had come loose and were scraping barnacles in the low tide. In another hour they would have been ruined.”

A few of the men nearby nodded.

Carven felt heat rise in his face but pressed on.

“And you untied the cargo line I secured.”

One of the dockhands spoke up from behind him.

“That was the night that rush shipment came in for the king. Your crate had to be moved right quick. Halric helped shift it.”

Carven hesitated.

Then he pointed toward the lantern.

“And what about the lantern you hung there? As if I can’t see where I’m walking.”

An older fisherman chuckled softly.

“That wasn’t about you. Old Brenn ain’t seeing so well anymore. Nearly fell off the dock there two nights ago. I mentioned it to Halric. He said he’d do something about it.”

The harbor grew quiet.

Carven stood in the middle of the quay, the words he had prepared, suddenly sand in his mouth.

Halric studied him for a moment – not angrily, not triumphantly, simply with a kind of puzzled patience.

At last he said,

“I never meant you any harm.”

*– 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.