

Third Sunday in Easter

April 19, 2026

10:30 a.m. Worship



Thomas by Rebecca Allen

Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands.
Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but
believe.”

—*John 20:27*

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 Sunday, May 3rd.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Sue Alexander

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

For some reason (we are not told why), Thomas was absent and missed out on this first Sunday evening encounter with the risen Jesus. Although he has gotten a bad rap as “doubting Thomas,” he asks for nothing more than the others have already received: to see Jesus, wounds and all. The wonder of this story is that Jesus shows up again one week later to provide exactly what Thomas needs. And Thomas responds with the highest confession of anyone in the Gospel. His is not simply a doctrinal confession, but a statement of trust and relationship: “My Lord and my God!” (20:28).

--The Working Preacher, *Elisabeth Johnson*

GATHERING MUSIC

PRELUDE

Andante

G. Handel (1685-1757)

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

WELCOME

INTROIT

With a Voice of Singing

Martin Shaw

With a voice of singing declare ye this, and let it be heard, Alleluia. Declare ye this, and let it be heard, Alleluia.

* CALL TO WORSHIP (*from Psalm 116*)

I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the Lord.

✠ I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all God's people,

in the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem.

✠ Praise the Lord!

*HYMN 610

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

AZMON

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

* Stand if you are able

✠ The congregation will read.

PRAYER of CONFESSION

1 Peter 1:21 says, “Through Christ you have come to trust in God, who raised Jesus from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.” It is because of our trust in the resurrection that each week we confess together the ways our faith and hope have not been set on God. When we confess, we name our sins and commit to turn toward the life God calls us into again. With that in mind we join our voices praying together.

✠ **Merciful God, even as we proclaim the saving life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we fail to see the living Christ in our midst. We find ourselves preoccupied with our own well-being and success, forgetting your imperative to love our neighbor as ourselves. We turn away from systems that challenge our way of thinking, choosing to justify our actions instead of examining our intentions. Show us again how to live a resurrection faith, a faith that sees life and hope in the midst of death and destruction. Transform our hearts so that where they are hardened toward you, neighbor, and self, they may once again be filled with love and moved to actions of grace and mercy. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.**

In Acts 2:39, Peter says: “For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” Receive the good news, Children of God, you are forgiven.

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

(We stand and sing the Response)

***SUNG RESPONSE 587**

Alleluia

CELTIC ALLELUIA

TIME with the YOUNG DISCIPLES

*[After Time with the Young Disciples,
There is KidSpace today in Room 10.]*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANTHEM

It Is Well with My Soul¹

John Ness Beck

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll—Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, It is well, it is well with my soul. *It is well with my soul, It is well, It is well with my soul.* My sin—O

¹ Music based on *Ville de Havre* by Philip P. Bliss. Setting by John Ness Beck. Text by Horatio G. Spafford. ©1981 Beckenhorst Press, Inc. Reprinted with permission under ONELICENSE #A706254. All rights reserved.

the joy of this glorious thought – My sin, not in part, but the whole Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more: Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! *It is well . . .* And, Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight, The clouds be rolled back as a scroll: The trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend, “Even so” it is well with my soul! *It is well . . .*

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

Holy Creator, reveal yourself to us in the reading and proclamation of your Word. Give us ears to hear your voice, eyes that see you among us, and hearts that are willing to follow where you lead. In the name of Jesus the Christ, we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

John 20:24-31

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

This is the word of faith that we proclaim.

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON *Close Encounters of the Divine Kind:* Rev. Brian S. Symonds
Wounds Pierced with Doubt (Loving)

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 HUNDREDDTH

- ✠ 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**

Lord, we know that every good and perfect gift comes from you. We pray that the gifts of time, talent and treasure we have offered today will work for the good of the world, so that your love will be known not just in word but in action. In the name of the risen Christ, we pray.

- ✠ Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE 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.

***HYMN 620** *Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven*

LAUDA ANIMA

***MOMENT for REFLECTION**

***CHARGE and BENEDECTION**

***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, God be with you till we meet again.

POSTLUDE

GREETER: Shelby Obershaw

USHERS: Chris Thomas, *Lead Usher*

Mark Adelson, Jim Siegmund, *Hospitality Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord, Brandon Turner

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

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Bob Saenz, Judy Steppins, Lorraine Bishop

Elders: **Pat Morris, Susan Skoglund, Katie Smith**

Deacons: **Rebecca Allen, Brent Nord, Chris Thomas**

This Weeks' Celebrations

Apr 20 Cliff Cummings

Joseph Ramirez

Apr 24 Harlan Leonard Wright

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Pastor Brian will be away for the next week at the CREDO conference, an in-person, weeklong conference focused on ministers' wholeness and well-being. The Reverend Ron DuVall will be preaching for us next Sunday.

DEADLINE for submitting items for the May edition of the **First Press** newsletter is **April 22nd**. Please send your submissions to Wendy at newsletter@fpcsb.net

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

The pond lay just beyond the trees behind his house, near enough that he walked to it in his robe and slippers, coffee in hand. He followed the worn path that curved at the fallen trunk and stood a moment at the bank before sitting on his favorite log.

Most mornings the ducks fed along the near edge, plunging their beaks into the mud, their tails at attention, then righting themselves and feeding a little farther on. They worked that way for a time, plunging, righting, moving a few inches, then again, until, without signal, they spread out across the surface or lifted and went elsewhere.

On some mornings, nothing appeared. He sat just the same. He finished his coffee and went back, ready to face the day.

+ + +

The stakes appeared first.

Thin markers at the edge of the path, each with a strip of color that caught the eye. He stepped around them without thinking much of it. Within a few days there were more, and then the sound began — distant at first, then nearer. The sound of trees being felled. Of saws and hammers. Of workmen shouting to each other.

The pond was still as it had been, though the ducks no longer gathered at the near edge. They landed briefly and moved on.

He found himself watching more closely.

The men arrived not all at once, but in a sequence he came to recognize. One came first and stood for a time before beginning anything. Another arrived later, carrying something over his shoulder. There was one who smoked, always in the same place, looking out over the ground.

They worked without hurry.

He adjusted his timing at first — earlier, then later — then stopped adjusting. The sound became part of the morning. Once, one of them glanced in his direction and waved. He waved back.

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The pond grew shallower.

The ducks stopped coming.

The men continued their work.

+ + +

When his granddaughter's invitation came, he wrote back that of course he would come.

The ceremony unfolded as it was meant to. Vows were spoken and rings exchanged.

He spoke with her afterward.

"It's a long way, grandpa," she said.

"Not too far." He kissed her gently on the cheek.

He remained a few days. There was no hurry.

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When he came back, the path was still there.

He followed it out of habit and stepped into the open space beyond. He noticed the color first — something brighter, fixed shapes set into the ground, movement crossing his field of vision.

The men were gone.

Where the pond had been, the ground was level. A structure stood to one side, painted. Children climbed and descended, again and again. He watched for a time, then sat on the newly placed bench.

+ + +

He came again the next morning.

He watched as the morning unfolded — children arriving, small groups forming and dissolving on their own.

A child paused at a puddle of water. She crouched to look closely, then leapt high into the air and landed in the puddle with both feet. Then ran away laughing.

His coffee gone, he took a deep breath and arose, ready to face the day.

-- 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.