



Truly, I say to you,
today you will be with me in Paradise.

Photo Art by Scott Erikson



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Welcome to First Presbyterian Church- Lynchburg, VA

Grace and peace to you from our Lord Jesus Christ!!! Lent is here and I want to encourage and invite you to accompany me on a journey for the next 40 days. As a matter of fact, and more accurately, I want to encourage and invite you to accompany Jesus in a journey. Lent is a season that doesn't make a whole lot of sense to many of us, and it is a season that doesn't appeal to many of us; however, Lent is a season that seeks to celebrate the most authentic and genuine spirit of our faith. We are mortal... we are dust and to dust we shall return... we are going to die. We are sinful... we do mess up. We need to remember, reflect, repent, and reach out to God for grace and mercy as a resolution. We are mortal and sinful, but we are not hopeless.

"Lent is a season in which we remember that we have been claimed by something much larger than ourselves, someone much larger than ourselves. We've been claimed by one who took on this journey long before us. One who journeyed it so that we would not be alone in it. Lent is a season in which we remember that we've been claimed by God and if God lays claim to us, then nothing can change that... not our mistakes, shortcomings, failures, and not even our death. If God lays claim to us nothing can change that, nothing will ever destroy that." (Brian Coulter)

I shared a quote on Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent, that I pray we can all embrace. Emily Heath, a pastor in New England shares, "There is hope rising out of these ashes; new life of which a phoenix could only dream. There is a promise of resurrection that comes only from the one who has been resurrected. Maybe there isn't the rich pageantry of Easter Sunday on Ash Wednesday (during Lent). Maybe there aren't flowers and eggs, but in these ashes, there is hope, hope for our even our darkest nights, and a sign of the joy that is to come."

Happy Lent to you. May you be filled with the courage and strength to mean everything in your heart as you repent and return to God. May you in turn experience the fullness of God's love, grace, mercy, power, and hope, not only in this season, but forevermore.

Run the Race, Fight the Fight, Keep the Faith... Rev. Dr. Peter Thompson

Building Hospitality and Welcoming Children

Just as God's arms are open wide with grace and welcome, so too are the doors of FPCLY open wide with hospitality. We are grateful you are here today and pray you feel at home! The following are a few notes to help be a comfort and guide during your time here:

- Ushers are available and willing to assist you in finding your way or answering other questions.
- All visitors are encouraged to stop by the Hospitality (Welcome) Desk near the main entrance for more information or to share your contact information.
- Hearing-assist devices, Large Print Bulletins, and Large Print Hymnals can be found in the Narthex.
- Accessible Restrooms can be located down the main hallway from the Foyer.
- The Elevator is also located down the main hallway from the Foyer.
- The Nursery (ages 0 to 3) and Nursery Nook are located on this level through the Chapel in Room 101. A Nursery Care Provider is there to help assist you.
- Welcoming Children: Just as Jesus welcomes the little children to come, so we welcome children of all ages in worship. In order to make the worship service as welcoming for our littlest ones as possible, we provide worship carts in the Narthex with a variety of resources to make a worship bag. Following the Children's Moment, children age 4 years to 2nd grade are invited to a Worship Workshop led by Abby Boyle, our Worship Workshop Coordinator. Worship Workshop runs from post Children's Moment to the Benediction, with all participants being led from the Sanctuary to Room 1 (downstairs below Library) for activities and then back to the Narthex for pickup.

Interested in joining?

First Presbyterian would love to welcome YOU as a new member. If you'd like to be here in a more official capacity, you are invited to join First Presbyterian as a member. Everyone who is part of our community is treated the same. Joining isn't about special treatment, but rather about a commitment you make to following Jesus alongside others trying to do the same. New member gatherings take place throughout the year based on interest. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Rev. Dr. Peter Thompson (peter@fpcl.org) or Alex Collier (alex@fpcl.org).

Service of the Lord's Day... First Sunday in Lent

February 22, 2026

From the beginning of the early church, God's people have met to worship on the first day of the week, the day Christ Jesus rose from the dead. We gather to praise the Triune God, confess our sin, and seek God's grace. We hear the good news of the gospel and are invited to respond to that good news in prayer, mission, offering, and celebrating the Lord's Supper. We are sent forth to glorify God through the service of daily living.

**Those who are able, please stand.*

All are invited to join together in saying liturgy printed in bold.

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

*Hymn #83: O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High

Deo Gracias

1. O love, how deep, how broad, how high! It fills the heart with ecstasy,
That God, the Son of God, should take Our mortal form for mortals' sake.
2. He sent no angel to our race Of higher or of lower place,
But wore the robe of human frame Himself, and to this lost world came.
3. For us he was baptized, and bore His holy fast, and hungered sore;
For us temptations sharp he knew; For us the tempter overthrew.
4. For us he prayed, for us he taught, For us his daily works he wrought,
By words, by signs, and actions, thus Still seeking not himself, but us.
5. For us to wickedness betrayed, Scourged, mocked, in purple robe arrayed,
He bore the shameful cross and death; For us at length gave up his breath.
6. For us he rose from death again, For us he went on high to reign,
For us he sent his Spirit here To guide, to strengthen, and to cheer.
7. To him whose boundless love has won Salvation for us through his Son,
To God the Father, glory be Both now and through eternity.

Call to Confession

Prayers of Confession

Most merciful God, you are slow to anger and full of mercy, welcoming sinners who return to you with penitent hearts. We confess to you God that we have not done as you have asked; instead, we have sinned in thoughts, words, and deeds by what we have done and what we have left undone. We have hungered after that which does not satisfy. We have compromised with evil. We have doubted your power to protect us. Forgive our lack of faith; have mercy on our weakness. Restore in us such trust and love that we may walk in your ways and delight in doing your will. (Please take a moment for silent prayer)

Choral Prayer of Repentance: Jesus Remember Me

**Jesus, Remember Me... When you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, Remember Me... When you come into your kingdom.**

Assurance of Pardon

As the water is poured into the baptismal font, and the good news of God is shared, know that anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. God embraces you, forgives you, and strengthens you to live a renewed life. Glory be to God. Alleluia. Amen.

*Choral Response: Great is Thy Faithfulness

**Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

*Sharing the Love, Joy, and Peace of Christ

In response to God's love, grace, and forgiveness given as a gift to us, we are called and encouraged to share those gifts with others. During this time, we invite all to share the love, joy, and peace of Christ you have been given with those around you with a handshake, fist bump, peace sign, or hug. You may also use the words: "May the peace of Christ be with you." And a response would be, "And also with you."

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Children's Moment

All children ages 4 years to 2nd grade are welcome and encouraged to attend Worship Workshop in Room 1. Worship Workshop is led by Abby Boyle, Worship Workshop Coordinator. If children do not wish to go to Worship Workshop, they are welcome to return to their seats for the remainder of worship. Worship carts are available for those who might like an activity to learn more about God and worship.

Prayer for Illumination

New Testament Reading: Luke 23:32-43

"You will be with me in Paradise"

Peter Thompson

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Call to Prayer: Spirit of the Living God

Hymn #322

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me; 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.**

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

Call to Offering

Offertory Anthem

Give Me Jesus

arr. Patterson

*In the morning, when I rise, In the morning, when I rise, In the morning, when I rise, Give me Jesus.
(Chorus) Give me Jesus, give me Jesus, You can have all this world, Just give me Jesus.*

*When I am alone, When I am alone, When I am alone, Give me Jesus.
(Chorus)*

*When I come to die, When I come to die, When I come to die, Give me Jesus.
(Chorus)*

*Doxology

Hymn #592

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

*Prayer of Dedication

WE GO OUT IN GOD'S SERVICE

*Hymn #81: Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

St. Flavian

Lord, who throughout these forty days,
For us did fast and pray,
Teach us with you to mourn our sins,
And close by you to stay.

As thou with Satan didst contend,
And didst the vict'ry win,
O give us strength in Thee to fight,
In Thee to conquer sin.

And through these days of penitence,
And through your Passion-tide,
Yea, evermore, in life and death,
O Lord, with us abide.

Abide with us, that so, this life
Of suffering over past,
An Easter of unending joy
We may attain at last!

*Benediction

*Postlude

*Fed by the Word that has been read, sung, proclaimed, and encountered,
Inspired by the presence of God who is with us in this place and with us wherever it is we are,
Let us all now depart from this time together, empowered and encouraged on the wings of the Holy Spirit who
gives us the courage, strength, and hope we need each and every day.*
