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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)

Peter shared a quote on Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent, that he encouraged all to 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."

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 (Written February 19, 2026)

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 Alex Collier, Director of Outreach (alex@fpcly.org).

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

March 15, 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 #478: Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

LAUDA ANIMA

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven; to His feet thy tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, evermore His praises sing.
Alleluia, Alleluia! Praise the everlasting King!

Praise Him for His grace and favor to His people in distress.
Praise Him, still the same as ever, slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Alleluia, Alleluia! Glorious in His faithfulness!

Fatherlike He tends and spares us; well our feeble frame He knows.
In His hand He gently bears us, rescues us from all our foes.
Alleluia, Alleluia! Widely yet His mercy flows!

Angels, help us to adore Him; ye behold Him face to face.
Sun and moon, bow down before Him, dwellers all in time and space.
Alleluia, Alleluia! Praise with us the God of grace!

Call to Confession

Prayers of Confession (Psalm 51 – select verses)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. (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: John 19:28 - 29

Pew Bible NT pg.114

"I Thirst"

Rev. Dr. Nancy Dawson

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 the Lord's Prayer

Call to Offering

Offertory Anthem

Hear Me, Redeemer

Mollicone

*Hear me, Redeemer,
Send down your love to cleanse my soul.*

*Lord of Lords, wash away my sinful ways,
Show me the power of your love!
Lord of Lords, shine your light through all my days,
Show me the power of your love!*

*Hear me Redeemer,
Send down your love to cleanse my soul.*

*Mighty God, take my hand and lead the way,
Show me the power of your love!
Mighty God, let me praise you every day,
Show me the power of your love!*

***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 # 85: What Wondrous Love is This**

WONDROUS LOVE

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the heavy cross for my soul!

To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;
While millions join the theme, I will sing!

And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on.
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,
And through eternity, I'll sing on, I'll sing on.
And through eternity I'll sing on.

***Benediction**

***Postlude**