

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

The First Presbyterian Church
of Howard County

Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 10, 2024

10:30 a.m. In-person & Livestream Service



GATHER

Let all enter the sanctuary in a spirit of prayer.

Words in **bold** are read by the congregation.

**please stand if you are able.*

Please remember to turn your cell phones to silent.

*This worship service is being livestreamed to the internet,
and you may appear on our Facebook page and YouTube channel.*

*For our online congregation - Let us know you are here! Post a greeting!
And remember that you can place a request in the Prayer Journal
in the comments on both You Tube and Facebook Live.*

Prelude

Litany

Myron Robert

Lighting the Christ Candle

Whenever we light this candle, we proclaim:

Christ is the light of the world and the center of our lives.

Call to Worship

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son
that whoever believes in him should not perish
but have eternal life.

Let those who know they are redeemed celebrate it!

Those who have been reclaimed from deep trouble!

*** Hymn 624**

I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art

Toulon

(see hymn on next page)

I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art 624

1 I greet thee, who my sure Re-deem-er art,
 2 Thou art the King of mer-cy and of grace,
 3 Thou art the life, by which a-lone we live,
 4 Thou hast the true and per-fect gen-tle-ness;
 5 Our hope is in no oth-er save in thee;

my on-ly trust and Sav-ior of my heart,
 reign-ing om-ni-po-tent in ev-ery place;
 and all our sub-stance and our strength re-ceive;
 no harsh-ness hast thou and no bit-ter-ness.
 our faith is built up-on thy prom-ise free;

who pain didst un-der-go for my poor sake;
 so come, O King, and our whole be-ing sway;
 sus-tain us by thy faith and by thy power,
 O grant to us the grace we find in thee,
 Lord, give us peace, and make us calm and sure,

I pray thee from our hearts all cares to take.
 shine on us with the light of thy pure day.
 and give us strength in ev-ery try-ing hour.
 that we may dwell in per-fect u-ni-ty.
 that in thy strength we ev-er-more en-dure.

The original French text, sometimes attributed to John Calvin, seems to be a Protestant reworking of a Roman Catholic hymn, not a typical practice for him. Yet this text and tune (adapted from GENEVAN 124) clearly date from the early years of the Reformed tradition.

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, Maker of all:

Have mercy on us.

Jesus Christ, servant of the poor:

Have mercy on us.

Holy Spirit, Breath of life:

Have mercy on us.

**We gaze upon the Crucified One, our victim,
and look our awfulness in the eye
and only there grasp forgiveness,
and only then become truly alive.**

**On the cross is lifted up
our racism, our violence, our materialism,
our deep seated me-first-ism.**

**Posted there is our last text to God,
"I'll let you know when I need you."**

**We look at it, look at it hard,
to get free of the lie that we're just fine,
the lie that keeps us from knowing
how deeply we are forgiven,
how vastly we are blessed,
how infinitely we are loved.**

(A time of silence is kept during which individual confessions may be offered.)

Assurance of Grace

* **Response of Praise 447** *(singing together)*

We Are Forgiven

We are for - giv - en. We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to
God. Thanks be to God. We are for - giv - en.
We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

*** Sharing the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

*(We share peace with a nod or a bow, perhaps with hand on heart
or folded hands, or with the ASL sign for peace. If worshipping from home,
greet each other by sending a text, a wave or comment on Facebook or YouTube.)*

*** Response of Praise 604** *(singing together)*

Lamb of God

604 **Lamb of God**

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace; grant us peace.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

TEXT: Trad. liturgical text
MUSIC: Robert Buckley Farlee, 2006
Music © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

AGNUS DEI (Farlee)

Words of Welcome

*Please fill out the red Friendship Pad in each pew.
Newcomers please leave us your address and contact information!
Then, pass the folder the length of the pew and back.*

ENCOUNTER

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson: Numbers 21:4-9

⁴From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Afterwards, children ages 4-7 may go with Ms. Kathy Moore to Godly Play.

Parents can pick up their children following worship in Rooms 110 & 113.

Older children, grades 2-5, may go with Ms. Virginia Callegary to The Worship Bridge. They will return to the sanctuary later in the worship service.

(It is the church's policy to not put images of children on the livestream.)

**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.**

Anthem

Take My Life and Let it Be

Barbara B. Kinyon

Second Lesson: John 3:14-21

¹⁴“And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

For the Word of God in Scripture,
For the Word of God among us,
For the Word of God within us:

Thanks be to God!

Sermon

Looking at the Snake

Kenneth Page

(after the sermon, we observe a time of silence and prayer)

RESPOND AND SERVE

*** Affirmation of Faith** *(together)*

I believe in God the Creator,
who made me and all things,
who set me on my path in this world.

I believe in God the Savior,
who is one with the Creator,
who rescued me and all creation
from the depredations of our violations
against God and creation.

This man, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ,
walked a path through this world,
taking on human form having been born of a woman
through the power of the Holy Spirit.
He lived and worked in this world among people just like me.
He walked God's path to death on a cross,
and rose from the dead to open our pathway to eternal life.

I believe in God the Holy Spirit, my counselor and guide,
who is one with the Creator and the Christ,
who through the body and blood of Jesus
brings me into communion with all people,
past, present and future;
who calls me to walk a sacred way of life through this world,
caring for creation and the people I meet on the way,
loving them, helping them,
welcoming them without prejudice,
being God's hands and feet in the world.

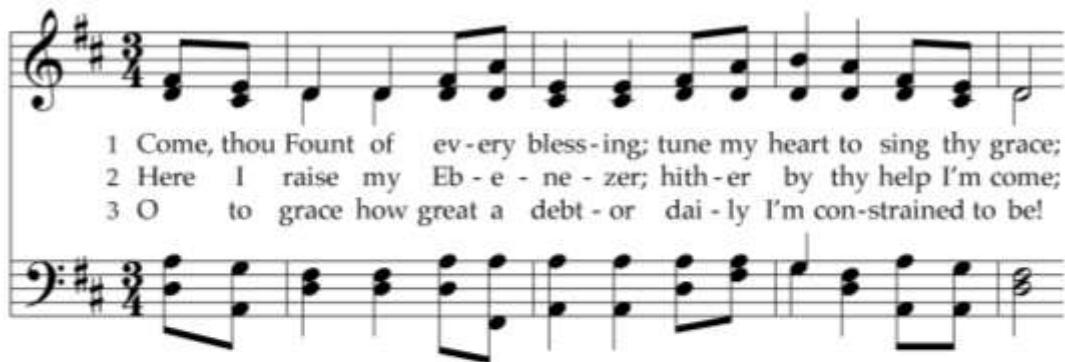
*** Hymn 475**

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Nettleton

(see next page for hymn)

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing 475



1 Come, thou Fount of ev-ery bless-ing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;
 2 Here I raise my Eb - e - ne - zer; hith-er by thy help I'm come;
 3 O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be!



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud-est praise.
 and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe-ly to ar - rive at home.
 Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan-dering heart to thee.



Teach me some me - lo-dious son - net, sung by flam-ing tongues a-bove;
 Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-dering from the fold of God;
 Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;



praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un-chang-ing love!
 he, to res - cue me from dan-ger, in - ter-posed his pre-cious blood.
 here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Written for Pentecost by a British Baptist pastor, this text is full of biblical terms like "Ebenezer" (1 Samuel 7:12), Hebrew for "a stone of help" set up to give thanks for God's assistance. The tune name honors hymnal compiler Asahel Nettleton, who probably did not compose it.

TEXT: Robert Robinson, 1758, alt.

MUSIC: Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part Second, 1813

NETTLETON

8.7.8.7.D

Concerns and Remembrances

Prayers of Gratitude and Concern

Concluding Prayer *(together)*

Most loving God,
please do not allow us to become defeatist and bitter.
Make us more eager for redemption rather than retribution,
and encourage us to employ the tough love of Christ
in the affairs of our neighborhood and nation.
For your name's sake. Amen.

The Offering

Offertory

Chorale Prelude

Dietrich Buxtehude

* Doxology 708, verse 1 *(singing together)* *We Give Thee but Thine Own*



1 We give thee but thine own, what - e'er the gift may be;
all that we have is thine a - lone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.

* Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

SEND AND BLESS

This Week at First Presbyterian Church

Minute for Mission – Coffee Run & Fun

* Hymn 700

I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

I'm Gonna Live

(see next page for hymn)

700 I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

1 I'm gon-na live so (live so)
 2 I'm gon-na work so (work so)
 3 I'm gon-na pray so (pray so)
 4 I'm gon-na sing so (sing so)

God can use me an - y -

where, Lord, an - y - time! (an - y - time!)
 I'm gon-na
 I'm gon-na
 I'm gon-na
 I'm gon-na

live so (live so)
 work so (work so)
 pray so (pray so)
 sing so (sing so)

God can use me an - y -

where, Lord, (my Lord,) an - y - time! (an - y - time!)

This African American spiritual has more depth than may at first appear: for people who are bound in slavery to sing about dedicating themselves to God's use shows a profound awareness of God-given self-worth despite circumstances that would deny their human or spiritual value.

* **Benediction**

* **Response 598** (singing together) English and Swahili

Amen, We Praise Your Name

Sing prais - es! A-men, we praise your name, O God! Sing prais - es!
 Ma - si - thi! A-men si - a - ku - du - mi - sa! Ma - si - thi!

A-men, we praise your name, O God! Sing prais - es! A-men, a-men.
 A-men si - a - ku - du - mi - sa! Ma - si - thi! A-men, ba - wo.

A-men, a-men. A-men, we praise your name, O God! Sing prais - es!
 A-men, ba - wo. A-men si - a - ku - du - mi - sa! Ma - si - thi!

Postlude

Toccata in E minor

Johann Pachelbel



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WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate in the worship, education, mission and common life of First Church.

First Church Cares

To **notify staff** of personal concerns, illness, hospitalization; to pass along a prayer request; or to arrange homebound Communion, contact churchoffice@firstpreshc.org or call 410-730-3545.

Interested in the mission and activities of First Presbyterian Church?

Visit the church's website, www.firstpreshc.org for more info.

Program Staff

If you need to talk with one of the staff, please contact them directly via email.

Rev. Kenneth Page, Interim Pastor, churchoffice@firstpreshc.org

Virginia Callegary, Director of Christian Education, churchoffice@firstpreshc.org

Margaret McGillivray, Director of Music Ministries, churchoffice@firstpreshc.org

For building emergencies contact, Church Sexton, Woody Collins, churchoffice@firstpreshc.org.

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The First Presbyterian Church

of Howard County

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410.730.3545 | www.firstpreshc.org

Ministers: All members of the congregation

Kenneth Page, Interim Pastor

Virginia Callegary, Director of Christian Education

Dr. Margaret McGillivray, Director of Music Ministries

Caroline Smith, Church Administrator

Pat Travers, Bookkeeper

Woodrow Collins, Church Sexton

Kathy Moore, Godly Play Coordinator

Marla Youkers, Nursery Coordinator

Sarah Reinhardt, Nursery Assistant

The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County is a congregation of the Presbytery of Baltimore in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

✠ We are an Earth Care Congregation ✠

✠ We are a Matthew 25 Congregation ✠

Inspirit Counseling Services at First Presbyterian Church

Meredith Barger 410-433-8861 x104 | John Michalczyk 410-433-8861 x115

