

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 14, 2021

A SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD WITH THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

(Click [here](#) to connect to today's live worship.)



*In preparation for celebrating communion where you are, **please have your own bread and cup available at the beginning of worship** so that we might partake of the elements at the same time during today's service.*

GATHERING MUSIC *Werde Munter* Percy Whitlock

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, CELEBRATIONS, AND CONCERNS John Weicher

PRELUDE *Paeon* Percy Whitlock

CALL TO WORSHIP Susan Dunlap

Leader: We each have a right to be here,
a right not based on our righteousness
but on God's free grace.

All: **O give thanks to our God who is good,
whose saving love endures forever.**

Leader: Let those who are redeemed by God declare it,
rescued from trouble and gathered from many lands;

All: **From the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south,
give thanks to God who is always good.**

HYMN (Sung to *Herzlich tut mich Verlangen*) Drew Cummings

***Creator, we have wandered and hidden from your face;
In foolishness have squandered your legacy of grace.
But now in exile dwelling, we rise in fear and shame,
as distant but compelling, we hear you call our name.
And now at length discerning the evil that we do,
Behold us, Lord, returning with hope and trust, to you.
In haste you come to meet us and home rejoicing bring,
In gladness there to greet us, with calf and robe and ring.***

Text (c) 1981, Kevin Nichols
Tune: Hans L. Hassler; J. S. Bach

CONFESSION OF SIN
Call to Confession

Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

Prayer of Confession (in unison)

**O Lord, if you held our sin against us,
who could live, who could stand?
We seem to have more faith in death
than hope in your promise of life.
We seek peace through war
and find security in weapons.
We abandon the hungry, sick, and dying,
and pursue wealth by making others poor.
And even so, you love us;
still there is forgiveness with you!
Therefore we worship you;
for you alone, O Lord,
can save us from death
and redeem us from our sin.**

Silent Confession

Declaration of Forgiveness

Response

Sung to *Herzlich tut mich Verlangen*

***O Lord of all the living, both banished and restored,
Compassionate, forgiving, and ever-caring Lord,
Grant now that our transgressing, our faithlessness may cease,
Stretch out your hand of blessing, in pardon and in peace.***

THE COLLECT FOR THE DAY

Jean Cary

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

All: **Merciful God, your Word is our way of truth and life.**

**Create in us hearts that are clean and put your Holy Spirit within us,
so that we may receive your grace and declare your praise forever;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

GOSPEL READING

John 3:14-21

Jean Cary

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

EPISTLE READING

Ephesians 2:1-10

Mindy Douglas

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

"The Love with Which God Loves Us"

Mindy Douglas

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Nicene Creed (Ecumenical)

Susan Dunlap

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,**

eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

INVITATION TO GIVE AND DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING

Susan Dunlap

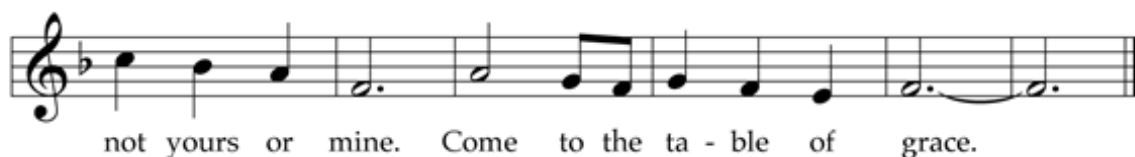
A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

John Weicher

HYMN No. 507

Come to the Table of Grace

Drew Cummings



- 2 Come to the table of peace...
- 3 Come to the table of love...
- 4 Come to the table of hope...
- 5 Come to the table of joy...

Invitation to the Table

The Great Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Leader: We give you thanks and praise, O God,
in this dry and weary land.

You set a table for us in the wilderness
and provide for all our needs.

Even when we complain against you,
you feed us with bread from heaven.

When we quarrel and question your grace,
you give us water from a stone.

How can we keep silent?

Even dry bones in the valley of death
stand to claim your praise:

All: **Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Leader: We give you thanks and praise for Jesus,
our way in the wilderness
our companion in the desert.
He knows our hunger and thirst;
he gives us the bread of life to eat
and living water to drink.
He leads us beside still water
and prepares this table for us,
even in the presence of our enemies.
The cup of blessing overflows!
Now pour out your Holy Spirit
upon this bread, this cup, these people.
By the power of your Spirit
breathe life into our dust
and hope into our bones.
Make us one flesh and one blood,
one in the body of Christ.

Leader: Let us live to sing your praise
and show your love to all,
until our wilderness wandering is over,
and we feast with you forever
in the land that you have promised.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory is yours, O God, now and always. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

**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.**

Words of Institution

Communion of the People

Communion Interlude

Precious Lord
FPC Wind Quintet

arr. by Arnold Sevier

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

Leader: The Lord be with you.
All: **And also with you.**
Leader: Let us pray.
All: **Thank you, gracious God,
for giving us bread for the journey
of these forty days.
As we travel on through the wilderness
help us to share your grace with others
and draw us ever closer to you:
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

CLOSING WORDS

Mindy Douglas, Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

Leader: The Lord be with you.
All: **And also with you.**
Leader: Let us pray.
Even when we were dead, Paul writes.
All: **Even when we turned away from the One who had created us.**
Leader: Even when we lived in the grip of what drew our gaze from God.
All: **Even when we were oblivious.**
Leader: Even when we followed a path fashioned of nothing but our own desires.
All: **Even when we wandered far and willfully away.**

Leader: Even when we forgot to look past our own feet and to see the wonders not of our making.

All: **Even when we failed to stand in awe, to breathe thanks, to lean into the love that had waited long for us.**

Leader: Even when, Paul writes.

All: **Even when, even then: grace.**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Mindy Douglas

POSTLUDE

Children of the Heavenly Father

Traditional Swedish Hymn

arr. by Cathy Moklebust

Brent Curtis, bells; Gordon Campbell, piano

First Presbyterian Church welcomes all who worship with us. We honor and celebrate the human diversity and unity that God gives us in Christ. We welcome individuals of every age, race, nationality, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and economic circumstance to participate fully in the life of the church. On March 7, 78 households tuned in to the 11:00 a.m. broadcast of the NEXT Church National Conference's closing worship service.

The **flowers** are given to the glory of God and in honor of the life and friendship of **Dr. Tara McCarthy** by **Christy and Jim Gudaitis**.

Music Notes:

Special thanks to **Drew Cummings**, **Brent Curtis**, and **Gordon Campbell** for their music leadership during today's worship.

The **Communion Interlude** is adapted for our quintet from Arnold Sevier's choral setting of *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* (No. 834 in our hymnal). The original gospel song, a favorite of the civil rights movement, was written and set to music by Thomas A. Dorsey in 1932, in his grief over the death of his wife and their newborn son. Thanks to the First Presbyterian Wind Quintet (**Christyn Klinck**, **Sheya Wehrman**, **Li-Chen Chin**, **Brent Curtis**, and **David Smith**) for their musical contribution to today's service.

Many thanks to **John Fricks**, **Jody Maxwell**, **Pat Dillon**, **Keith Rokoske**, and **Jay Klinck**, for their behind-the-scenes technical assistance with our live broadcasts of worship on Sunday mornings. We are also grateful to **Jennie Alwood** for the powerful images accompanying our online services.

Portions of today's worship texts are taken from *Book of Common Worship* (2018). The Closing Words are written by Jan L. Richardson and posted on **The Painted Prayerbook** website (<http://paintedprayerbook.com/>). **Hymn texts and music** are reprinted from *Glory to God* under Onelicense.net: A.713926.



These Days devotional books for April - June 2021 have arrived. Free copies in large and regular print are available for pickup at FPC or you can request a copy be sent to you by mail. Simply call the church (919-682-5511 x 217) or email [Sybil King](mailto:Sybil.King@fpc.org) to receive a copy.

~ Our Celebrations and Concerns ~

Birth Announcement: Congratulations to *Megan Champion* on the birth of her first child. *Stephen Davis Champion* was born February 26, 2021. Other happy relatives are *Lenore Champion & Susan Buck* (grandparents), *Kayla Champion* (aunt), and *Alex and Jaxon Buck* (uncles).

Marriage Announcement: We rejoice with *Anna Kasibhatla* and *Ruben Cruz* who were wed on Monday, March 1. Anna is the daughter of the *Rev. Susan Dunlap and Prasad Kasibhatla*. Anna was baptized and ordained as an elder in First Presbyterian Church.

Condolences: The love and concern of the congregation are extended to *Bet Lawson and family* on the death of her husband and FPC member, *Dewey Lawson*. Dewey died March 11 with his family by his side. We also express condolences to *Elizabeth High* on the death of her brother-in-law, *Ronald E. Nettles*, on March 2. Ronald was married to Elizabeth's sister *Esther*, and they lived in Meadville, Mississippi.

Concerns:

Carolyn Bonner, wife of Deborah Momsen-Hudson's co-worker Al Bonner

Chris James' mother, who is suffering from dementia

Grace, great-niece of Chris James, suffering from a rare, degenerative condition

Mary Myers, mother of Christy Gudaitis, recovering following a stroke

Jeanne Somerville, mother of Katharine Whitmore, recovering after a brief hospitalization

Recovering at their homes

Grace Abels

Tom Bloom

Catherine Dumas

Kerry Holbrook

Robin Morey

Margaret Sims

Alfred Tisdale

Carol Wills

Care Communities

Brookdale Durham: *Julian Boswell*

Croasdaile Pavilion: *Bob Rankin*

Dubose Center at The Cedars, Chapel Hill: *Arthur Clark*

Durham Ridge Assisted Living: *Phillip Herndon*

Emerald Pond: *Paul Cornsweet*

Hillcrest Convalescent: *Walter Chambliss*, father of Will Chambliss

The Forest at Duke: *Fran Bryant*

The Laurels of Chatham County: *Ann Prospero*

Family and Friends of the Congregation

Linda Capers, a friend of Li-Chen Chin

Flora Estrella, a relative of Beth Stringfield and Cris Rivera

Phil Goss, a friend of the congregation

Peggy Mordecai, mother of Beth Eisenson

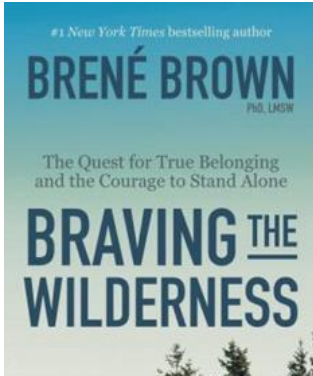
Margaret Nelson, sister of Charlotte Nelson

Shannon Putman, daughter of Mary Putman



Flowers for Worship

Flower donors are needed for Sundays this spring and summer. If you would like to donate flowers for worship, you can [sign up](#) by going to the church's website and clicking "Flowers for Worship" from the home page. No internet access? Contact the church office (919-682-5511) for instructions on how to donate flowers.



Lenten Book Study

Brené Brown's

Braving the Wilderness

Mindy Douglas is leading a study of this seven-chapter book one chapter at a time during the season of Lent. Class meets on Tuesdays at 6:15 p.m. Click [here](#) to join the class via Zoom.



Let's have some fun!

Mark your calendars, practice your stick figures and be ready to laugh! **Deacons will host some Zoom fun and fellowship on Friday, March 19 from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.** Join us for an online version of Pictionary (no artistic skill needed) and some fellowship together. Bring your favorite beverage and game night snack. Click [here](#) to join the fun!



VIRTUAL LILIES

A small number of Easter lilies will grace our sanctuary this year. If you would like to honor or remember someone in the bulletin on Easter Sunday, you can give a virtual lily by completing TWO steps.

ONLINE USERS

STEP 1: Sign up to donate a virtual lily using [this link](#) to complete the Lily donation form.

STEP 2: Go to the church's website to make your corresponding donation. Click [here](#).

FOR THOSE WITHOUT INTERNET, you can request a lily donor card be mailed to you by calling the church office: 919-682-5511 x 215. Return the card by US mail with your donation (any amount) to the Church office by March 29. Make check payable to *First Presbyterian Church*, memo: Lilies.

Funds received in excess, of the amount needed to purchase lilies, will be ADDED to the annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering. The **deadline** to participate in this virtual opportunity is **Palm Sunday, March 28**. The PCUSA annual **One Great Hour of Sharing**

offering provides relief to the hungry, poor, and oppressed, and those affected by natural disasters. The link to give online is now active. Click on the DONATE button from FPC's website home page.



The graphic is a 2x2 grid. Top-left: Red background with 'Virtual Winesdays' in white cursive. Top-right: Purple background with 'WEDNESDAYS, 5:30-6:30 PM' in yellow. Middle-left: Photo of people at a table with wine. Middle-right: Purple circle with two wine glasses on a tan background. Bottom-left: Photo of a charcuterie board. Bottom-right: Purple background with 'Fellowship, Drinks & Noshing' in white cursive and 'SEE THE FPC FACEBOOK GROUP FOR THE ZOOM LINK.' in yellow.

<https://zoom.us/j/97569349009>

Meeting ID: 975 6934 9009

Every other Wednesday: March 17 and 31



Multiplying the Blessings

At the **Iglesia Emanuel Food Pantry**, we see miracles every week. We prepare for 550 families. 590 families show up, and there is enough food for all. Most people come by car. They line up well before the 2 o'clock start time on Wednesday afternoon, waiting patiently for blocks and blocks in the neighborhood behind the church. Many families have 3 or 4 children in the car, and their excited faces tell us how much they look forward to discovering what food awaits them. A few people come by foot. They either live close enough to walk, carrying the heavy bags of food back home with them, or they come by bus. Recently, an older Latina woman came by bus. She mentioned that she comes every week, and shares the food she receives with an even older white couple who live in the apartment next to her. That week, we had received a large number of frozen casseroles. When asked if she would like an extra one to share, she gladly said yes. We gave her a stronger,

reusable bag to carry her sizable load, and she left, praising God and blessing us, as she made her way back to the bus stop.

Come, be part of the miracle at 2504 N Roxboro. Join other volunteers for a 2-hour shift, bag rice and beans from home, donate food, or give a financial donation. Together, we will continue to spread God's love throughout our community in this most tangible way.

- To sign up for a 2-hour shift, click [here](#)
- To bag rice and beans from home, or donate food, click [here](#)
- To make a financial donation, go to www.emaneldurham.org and click on "Donate."

More questions? Contact [Margaret Rubiera](#).

New Series!

Growing thru Grief

**Six-week Introduction to Grief series:
March 23 through April 20**

Offering Help for Those Who Mourn...

Growing thru Grief is a coalition of Triangle area religious and civic organizations to bring ongoing support and comfort to those who mourn. This program features small group discussion.

We meet every Tuesday except holidays from 4-6 pm, for now on zoom. All attendees must have both audion and video available. To register, please contact admin@growingthrugrief.org by 8 am on the Monday before the meeting. All are welcome!



Photo by Leonard Beeghley

New Introduction to Grief Series to Begin

Aaron Klink is Chaplain and Bereavement Coordinator at Pruitt Hospice in Rocky Mount, NC. He is a graduate of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Yale Divinity School and Duke Divinity School. He will discuss the following topics:

- Mar. 16 Grief and the New World after Loss
- Mar. 23 The Geography of Grief — Relearning Spaces
- Mar. 30 Relearning Relationships with the Living
- Apr. 8 Relearning our Relationship to the Dead
- Apr. 13 Relearning Ourselves
- Apr. 20 Relearning the Vision for the Future

This is an open program, with each week standing on its own. Feel free to come when you can.

Tom Bloom, Business Administrator
Lenore Champion, Children's Ministry Director
Mindy Douglas, Pastor/Head of Staff
Susan Dunlap, Parish Associate
Sybil King, Administrative Assistant



Mitzi Leshner-Thomas, Associate Pastor
Valerie McMillian, Parish Administrator
Kathy Parkins, Minister of Music
John Weicher, Associate Pastor

For more information about First Presbyterian Church, email the church office:
info@firstpres-durham.org or visit our website: <https://firstpres-durham.org>.

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