

First Presbyterian Church
Energized by Grace

A SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2024

11:00 AM

A SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Lectionary Texts:

Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

*This church welcomes you no matter who you are, where you come from, or why you are here.
We are Christ's people, and this is Christ's place with its doors open wide. If you are passing through, Godspeed;
if you are looking for a home, stay here; if you need instruction, learn from us as we learn from you.
We invite visitors to join us, but most of all, to return often.*

† Indicates all who are able may stand.



ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

GATHERING — *Andante solemne* from *Six Variations On a Ground Bass*

Margaret Sandresky

SILENT PRAYER OF PREPARATION

We thank you, O God, for calling us into your church to be your people. We have gathered, God of grace and wisdom, because we have heard your call. You have reached out to us in Jesus Christ, you have touched us with your Spirit; and we have turned toward you, seeking to love as we have been loved. We call upon your holy name: empower us to worship and serve you, walking gently on this earth, through the grace of Jesus.

CHIMES OF THE TRINITY

WELCOME AND PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE — *Love to Thee*

arr. Molly Ijames

INTROIT — *How Lovely, Lord, How Lovely*

arr. Roy Hopp

*How lovely, Lord, how lovely is your abiding place; my soul is longing, fainting to feast upon your grace.
The sparrow finds a shelter, a place to build her nest; and so your temple calls us within its walls to rest.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus said, "Follow me."

We don't always know what that means.

We are on a journey of discovery.

We are here because we want to be God's people;

We are here because we are broken and want to be whole again;

We are here to celebrate our lives, and God's presence in this life.

Let us worship God with great thanksgiving.

† HYMN 463 — *How Firm a Foundation*

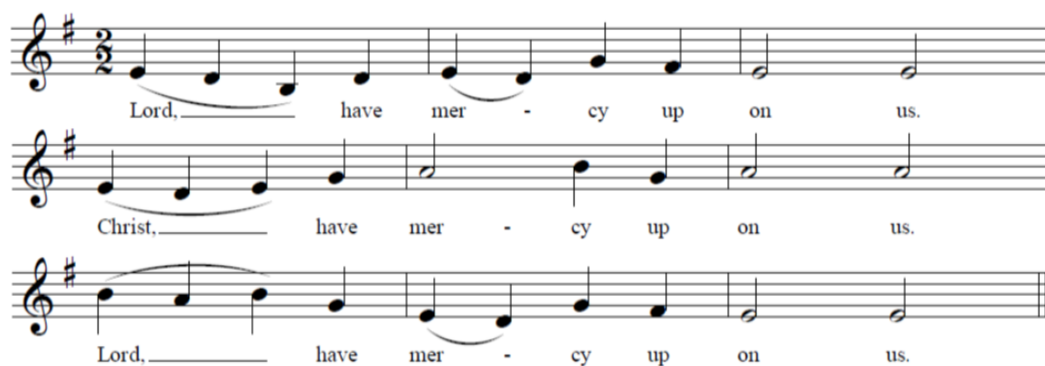
FOUNDATION

† CALL TO CONFESSION

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Wise and wondrous God, we come seeking your guidance and your inspiration. Empower us to be more able bearers of hope, more dedicated doers of your Word, more resourceful enablers of others, more open channels of the faith. We confess that sometimes our lives are more cluttered than committed; then we don't know which way to turn. Help us, when we are most lost, to find you. Forgive our misdeeds, and grant us an awareness of your will so that we might be possessed by a Spirit of freedom and grace. Encourage us always to focus our faith, to act with purpose, to follow your lead, and to answer your call. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

† KYRIE ELEISON



† DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, hear and believe the good news;
In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

† GLORIA PATRI

Hymnal, 581

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

WELCOMING OF NEW MEMBERS

Rebecca Black
Alex and Catherine Lawhorn - Lucy, William, and Molly
Michael and Dani Portner

*At this time, all children (pre-K 4 through third grade) are invited to leave the service to attend "Children's Time."
Children can be picked up on the second floor of the Education building after the worship service.*

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

PSALTER READING: Psalm 65:5-12

p. 647

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

MEDITATION — *Goodness of God*

arr. Jay Rouse

GOSPEL READING: Mark 1:14-20

p. 42

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON — "Follow Me"

Rev. Barrett C. Milner

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

MOMENT FOR SILENT MEDITATION



AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY — *Largo from Six Variations On a Ground Bass*

Margaret Sandresky

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS, TITHES AND OFFERINGS



DOXOLOGY

Hymnal, 606

**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! Amen.**



OFFERTORY PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE 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.

GO AND WITNESS IN GOD'S NAME



HYMN 726 — *Will You Come and Follow Me*

KELVINGROVE



BENEDICTION



CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE — *God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me*

GREEN TYLER

God, be the love to search and keep me: God be the prayer to move my voice:

5
God, be the strength to now up-hold me: O Christ, sur-round me: O Christ, sur-round me.



POSTLUDE — *Postlude on Foundation*

arr. David Lasky

WELCOME!

First Presbyterian Church warmly invites visitors to become a member of our family of faith. You may do so in one of the following ways:

- By Profession of Faith - The act of receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and sincerely promising to live for Him. Previous baptism is accounted as valid, or the Sacrament of Baptism may be administered at the time of profession.
- By Transfer of Membership - Request our minister to contact your former church for a letter of transfer, where applicable.
- By Reaffirmation of Faith - If you have been inactive or separated from the church for some time or wish to rededicate yourself, you may be received by reaffirmation of faith.

Please contact the church office for more information.

Parents of nursery aged children please note: a nursery is provided from **8:45 am - 12:15 pm** for the following ages: Infants (0-1 years), Babies (1-3 years), Preschool (3-5 years). The nursery and pre-school rooms are located in the Education Building, first floor.

The FPC prayer chain is ready if you or someone you know is in need. Please contact Carlisle Wood at carlislewood@gmail.com or 662-832-8606. All requests are held in strict confidence.

The church has two portable defibrillators on site if a cardiac event occurs. One is located in our office hallway by the east stairwell; the other is located in the library of the Education Building.

Office Hours are Monday through Thursday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm and **Friday 8:30 am - 12:00 pm.**

Tithes and Offerings: Thank you for prayerfully supporting the missions and ministries of FPC! Every gift is greatly appreciated. Here are some ways to give:

- Completing the pledge card in the friendship register found in your pew
- Online by choosing the tab titled "Giving" at the top of the church website
(<https://fpcoxford.net/giving/>)
- Enrolling in direct deposit of withdrawal by contacting the church office.
- Scanning the QR Code provided here. Credit Card fees apply.
- Mailing gifts directly to the church office at 924 Van Buren Ave, Oxford, MS 38655

If you need assistance with any specific ways to give, please contact Frances Saralvarez at fsaralvarezfpc@gmail.com, or call the church office.



TODAY'S WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Proclaiming the Word

Liturgist

Organist

Ushers

Rev. Barrett C. Milner

Rev. Andy G. Spaulding

Creighton R. Holder

Bo Elliott

Marty Mauldin

Matt Nielson

CALENDAR

Sunday, January 28

9:00 am Worship Service
 9:45 am Sunday School
 11:00 am Worship Service*
 5:00 pm Presbyterian Youth Fellowship
 6:00 pm Music at First Concert Series:
 Jessica Nelson, organ

Monday, January 29

5:30 pm Session
 6:30 pm Troop 45

Tuesday, January 30

6:00 am Men's Breakfast @ The Beacon
 11:30 am VIP Luncheon

Wednesday, January 31

8:15 am Men's Bible Study
 5:30 pm Chancel Choir

Sunday, February 4

9:00 am Worship Service
 9:45 am Sunday School
 11:00 am Worship Service*
 5:00 pm Arc Benders
 5:00 pm Presbyterian Youth Fellowship

**Nursery Provided*

CHURCH STAFF

The Congregation	Ministers	Ext.
Rev. Barrett C. Milner	<i>Pastor</i> bmilnerfpc@gmail.com	3
Rev. Andy G. Spaulding	<i>Associate Pastor</i> aspauldingfpc@gmail.com	5
Rev. Allison C. Wehrung	<i>Pastor, UKirk Ministry</i> ukirk.olemiss@gmail.com	
Creighton R. Holder	<i>Director of Music</i> cholderfpc@gmail.com	4
Dave Garvey	<i>Director of Faith Formation for</i> <i>Children & Youth</i> dgarveyfpc@gmail.com	9
Frances Saralvarez	<i>Office Administrator</i> fsaralvarezfpc@gmail.com	6
Kate Hill	<i>Communications Director</i> kohillfpc@gmail.com	7
Wade Simpson	<i>Property Manager</i> wsimpson13@yahoo.com	
Wendy Brady	<i>Nursery Director</i> wendybbrady@gmail.com	

THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY . . .

*The flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God and in memory of Louise and Nolan Waller
by Robert and Rosie Cooper.*

VIPs: Our gathering is rescheduled to take place Tuesday, January 30. We will have lunch in the Fellowship Hall at 11:30 am. Lunch will consist of homemade soups, cornbread, and desserts. Ben Griffith will lead a brief discussion about legal documents and information related to end-of-life. Please be sure to email Kate/call the church office to sign up!

Lets Party for the Pantry: Come and celebrate the Pantry on February 9 from 6:00 - 9:00 pm at the Powerhouse, featuring the lively and lovely music of the Curtis Downs Orchestra! There will be a cash bar and hors d'oeuvres by Tallahatchie Gourmet. Tickets at \$100 a person and all proceeds go to the Pantry. Please see Fast Facts for the link to purchase a ticket.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study: Our weekly mid-morning bible study will return on February 7 at 10:00 am. We will be studying the book of Proverbs using *Proverbs: Pathways to Wisdom* as our guide. Books will be available in the church office soon.

Sanctuary Floral Arrangements are available February 4. To provide flowers in honor or in memory of a loved one, contact Margaret Fancher at mfancher42@gmail.com or call 662-234-1359. Contributions to the Flower Fund are greatly appreciated.

Mission Opportunities: FPC seeks to serve "the least of these." See Fast Facts or call the church office for more details on the following outreaches as well as other opportunities.

- **LovePacks** (lovepacksoxford.com) is an in-school pantry that provides food for 250 children in the Oxford and Lafayette county schools who experience hunger in their homes. **For the month of January, donations of GOGO squeezable apple sauce pouches requested.** Drop your contribution by the church office anytime.
- **Memory Makers of Oxford** is a respite day service for those with memory loss. Structured activities provide enrichment for participants while allowing caregivers a much-needed break from the daily responsibility of caring for their loved one. Volunteers and donated supplies are needed to assist in these services.
- Need a helping hand? **In Good Order** is a group of FPC volunteers available to assist members who may need a little extra help with a yard clean-up project or light home repairs.
- **Leap Frog** is an after-school literacy and enrichment program for first through third grade students enrolled in our city and county schools. Students meet with individual tutors at St. Peter's Episcopal Church throughout the semester. Twice a week volunteers from FPC partner with St. Peter's by providing snacks for the sixty students enrolled. The signup for the spring semester is now available. This could be your mission!

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

FPC Members: The Montgomery Family; The Family of Louise Waller; Majorie Selvidge; Becky Murphey; Curtis Wilkie; Ann Dickens; Margaret Fancher; Mrs. Pat Atkinson; The Family of William "Wylie" Coleman; Sarah, Cliff, and Sterlin Smith; Scottye Boone; Jean Blackston; Leon McCullough

Family and Friends: Eileen Cheney and Family; Family of Susan Treas-Ewing; Lynda Torbert Mathers; Kicky Stovall; Thomas Hines; Olivia Flautt; Dr. Gladys Memnon and Friends in Bongnotte, Haiti; Family of Tommy Marshall; Family and Friends of Dr. Jack Davis Brown; Margaret Burnett; Doors of Hope Families; Lafayette County Detention Center inmates; Parchman Prison inmates; Haven House residents

U. S. Military: SSgt Jason Freeland, USAF 17th Special Tactics Squadron

*Please pray, too, for those with unspecified needs.
If you wish to have a name removed or added to this list, please contact the church office.*

MUSIC NOTES

*For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.
Psalm 62:5-7*

Today's Psalter reading reminds us that God is our present help and abides with us always. With enduring and steadfast love, our Creator makes space for all of God's children, surrounding our lives with grace upon grace. May our musical offerings celebrate this refuge and give thanks to God!

Margaret Vardell Sandresky is a prolific musician who continues to compose at the age of 102. She is an award-winning American organist, composer, theorist, and professor emeritus of Salem College in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She was the first woman to present her research at a national music conference, the founding for the Society of Music Theory at Northwestern University (1977). Her interest in theory led to compositions such as *Six Variations on a Ground Bass*. "Ground bass" refers to a pattern of notes that is repeated constantly throughout a work, and in this piece, listeners will hear the bass "climbing" up and down as the movements progress. Each movement contrasts the last allowing the performer to explore a variety of sounds. The movement titles are stylistic markings: Andante solenne means "solemn walking pace," and Largo means "slow and broad." Sandresky regularly includes texts in the beginning of her scores to give context and create a programmatic nature. Her choice for this piece comes from the reading in Exodus in which Moses stumbles upon the burning bush: *Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground."*

Love to Thee is an arrangement by Molly Ijames that combines "More Love to Thee, O Christ," and "My Jesus, I Love Thee." Composed in the style of a lullaby, Ijames sets these two 19th century hymn tunes with care, aware of the prayerful texts:

*More love to Thee, O Christ, more love to Thee!
Hear Thou the prayer I make on bended knee;
This is my earnest plea: more love, O Christ, to Thee,
More love to Thee!*

*My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine;
for thee all the follies of sin I resign;
my gracious Redeemer, my Savior art thou;
if ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.*

I'm so grateful to my dear friend Sylvalia Brown for sharing her gifts with us this day. *Goodness of God* is a modern gospel song by artist CeCe Winans; like today's Psalter reading, it speaks of God's abiding presence with us, guiding and sustaining.

*I love you, Lord, for your mercy never fails me. All my days, I've been held in your hands.
From the moment that I wake up until I lay my head, I will sing of the goodness of God.
'Cause all my life you have been faithful, and all my life you have been so, so good.
With every breath that I am able, I will sing of the goodness of God.
I love your voice. You have led me through the fire. In darkest night you are close like no other.
I've known you as a father, I've known you as a friend, and I have lived in the goodness of God.
Your goodness is running after me. With my life laid down, I'm surrendered now;
I give you everything. Your goodness is running after me.*

As we depart, may we be inspired to greater faithfulness, and may our compassion overflow as we share the goodness of our God with those we meet along the way. Recalling our opening hymn, David Lasky's joyful setting, *Postlude on Foundation*, celebrates this text of assurance: *Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed, for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid; I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.*