

**Service For the Lord's Day
Sunday, March 15, 2026
The Fourth Sunday in Lent
Liturgist Tom Stone-Erdman**

PRELUDE

Tommy Clay, Jr.

WELCOME

Good morning and welcome to worship. We are glad you are all with us today as we worship together in the historic sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church of Palatka.

We particularly welcome those of you who are joining us online, whether it be today or at sometime during the week. You are part of our worshiping community and we are glad you are with us. Why don't those of us here welcome our online family, by waving to them. The slides are not available this week. You may print out the bulletin from our website, fpcpalatka.com.

After Worship this morning we have a Meet & Greet with our deacons with some refreshments. Please join for this time of fellowship. Finally, coming up this Wednesday at 12:15 will be a Lectio Divina period of meditation led by Steve Crowley and on the 25th we will host an Old-Fashioned Hymn sing curated by pianist extraordinaire Jeannie Brown.

Today is the fourth Sunday in Lent. We continue our journey of reflection, preparation, and contemplation toward the joyful day of resurrection. We are especially happy to welcome our friend Suzie Cornelio to our pulpit today. Suzie is about to be commissioned by the Presbytery of St. Augustine to service as the Church Administrator here at First Presbyterian. Also, in CRE news, our session endorsed the commissioning of ruling elder Rick Mills. Congratulations to these members of our family. Finally, coming up this Wednesday at 12:15 will be a Lectio Divina period of meditation led by Steve Crowley and on the 25th we will host an Old-Fashioned Hymn sing curated by pianist extraordinaire Jeannie Brown.

And now, let us prepare to worship God.

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also, with you.

**RESPONSIVE CALL TO GATHER FROM PSALM 23 vs 1-3
(The Message)**

LEADER:

God, my shepherd!
I don't need a thing.
You have bedded me down in lush meadows,
you find me quiet pools to drink from.

PEOPLE:

**True to your word,
you let me catch my breath
and send me in the right direction.**

ALL: Let us worship God!

**O Lord God, You led your people through the wilderness
and brought them to the promised land. So guide us,
that, following our Savior, we may walk through the
wilderness of this world toward the glory of the world to
come; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, which
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,
now and forever. Amen**

HYMN "Savior, Like a Shephard Lead Us" Hymn #187

Savior, like a shepherd lead us;
much we need your tender care.
In your pleasant pastures feed us;
for our use your fold prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us: we are yours.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us: we are yours.

We are yours: in love befriend us;
be the guardian of our way.
Keep your flock: from sin defend us;
seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear your children when we pray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear your children when we pray.

You have promised to receive us,
poor and sinful though we be;
you have mercy to relieve us,
grace to cleanse, and power to free.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
early let us turn to you.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
early let us turn to you.

Early let us seek your favor;
early let us do your will.
Blessed Lord and only Savior,
with your love our spirits fill.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have loved us; love us still.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have loved us; love us still.

CONFESSION & PARDON

Call to confession (from Psalm 103:8)

ALL: Almighty and merciful God, we continue to want more, blind to the blessings we already possess. We want everything now, blind to the value of patience and hard work. We take so much delight in our own accomplishments that we are blind to people in need. Forgive us! Cleanse us of our entitlement, anxiousness and pride. Help us see the world with your eyes so that we can be people of gratitude, courage and compassion, because of what we see in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Personal confessions)

Amen.

LEADER: Brothers and sisters, hear the good news of the Gospel, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are a forgiven people, we need not carry the guilt of our sins any longer.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Gloria Patri

“Glory Be to the Father”

Hymn #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.”

ANTHEM “Gonna Rise Up Singin’” Chancel Choir

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE	<i>Old Testament Reading</i>	
	1 Samuel 16:1-13	p.203, OT
	<i>Epistle Reading</i>	
	Ephesians 5:8-14	p.150, NT
	<i>Gospel Reading</i>	
	John 9:1-41	p.78, NT

1 Samuel 16:1-13 p.203, OT

16 The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” ² Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the Lord said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’” ³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.” ⁴ Samuel did what the Lord commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, “Do you come peaceably?” ⁵ He said, “Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely his anointed is now before the Lord.” ⁷ But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” ¹⁰ Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.” ¹¹ Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he

said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹² He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him, for this is the one." ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Ephesians 5:8-14 p.150, NT

⁸ for once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, ⁹ for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰ Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, ¹³ but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴ for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

"Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you."

John 9:1-41 p.78, NT

9 As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷ saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹ Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am he." ¹⁰ But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹ He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.'

Then I went and washed and received my sight.”¹² They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. ¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹ and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰ His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, ²¹ but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵ He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶ They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” ²⁷ He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” ²⁸ Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” ³⁰ The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴ They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." ³⁸ He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind." ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

SERMON "Learning to See" Suzie Cornelio

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH Hymnal p.35

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 at 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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (with the Lord's Prayer)
Hymnal p.35

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, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERING MUSIC Tommy Clay, Jr.

DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Hymn #606

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.”

HYMN “Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound” Hymn #649

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my Shield and Portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

BLESSING AND CHARGE

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

“Surely the Presence of the Lord Is in This Place”

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place;
I can feel His mighty power and His grace.
I can hear the brush of angel's wings,
I see glory on each face;
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

POSTLUDE

Tommy Clay, Jr.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: (Details on our website, Facebook, Realm & 386-385-3040.)

Church Activities

Small Groups-Sunday 9:15 am; Tues. 4:00 pm; Wed. 5:00 pm.

Presbyterian Women-Circles meet every 2nd Tuesday, 10:30am & 6:30pm.

Social Connections-Thurs.1pm in Zoom Rm. Contact Shaaron Kohl 864-378-7032.

Quilting Group-Friday's at 10:00 in the Zoom Room, Welcoming new members.

Outreach Ministries

Bread of Life- March needs are Bottled Water, Mild Chili Seasoning packets, Barbeque Sauce, Salad Dressing packets (any flavor).

Shower Ministry-Thurs. from 2-6pm

PC3 Ministry-Monday 2-6pm

Meridian/Grace Market Place-Thurs. 2-4pm in the Bartram Rm a representative for assistance.

CDC (Chemical Dependency Counseling)-Mon. 8-12; Tues. 8-6, Wed. 8-6, Sat. 8-6.

Ascend Music Ministry-contact Felecia Nelson for an interview/audition pinkorchidjfn@aol.com.

Church Calendar

3-15	Deacon Meet & Great	11:30am	WH
3-16	Bunco	6:00pm	WH
3-24	Private Event	9:00am	WH

Lent Noon Service-Music and Meditation Sanctuary
Wed. March 18 - Lectio Divina w/ Steve Crowley

Wed. March 25 Old-Fashioned Hymn sing curated by pianist extraordinaire Jeannie Brown.

Wed. April 1 - Tracey McInnis - Marimba

OTHER EVENTS

Sat. March 21 - Palm Cross Making Fellowship - 10:00 AM.

Thur. April 2 - Simple Maundy Thursday Meal & Communion around the table. 6:00

Kairos Prison Ministry

4-4-26 11-4pm team mtg and lunch

4-17 & 18-26 1-6pm meal prep

4-19-26 10-1pm meal prep

Overnight housing with showers 4-16-18-26 2pm-7am (possible 10 guests)

Financial Report – We received 43,031.06. That is enough to take advantage of the full \$40,000 matching offer. We are just over \$2,000 short of paying off the entire loan balance.

2026 Financial Report

Operating Budget

January

Total Received	Total Spent	Surplus (Deficit)
\$ 22,695	\$ 18,906	\$ 3,789

February

\$ 16,471	\$ 18,873	(2,402)
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Year to Date

\$ 39,166	\$ 37,779	\$ 1,3887
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The Brick Opportunity to build a space rooted in legacy, community, and faith, one brick at a time. (#31) For more details go to our website fpcpalatka.com.