

WORSHIP



FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH of
RICHARDSON

FEBRUARY 15, 2026 | LONGEST NIGHT

Responding to God's love and grace, we WORSHIP with joy, NURTURE with faith, and SERVE others with love.

At First Presbyterian Church of Richardson, we believe that God's love is for everyone—without exception. We welcome all people to worship, serve, and grow with us, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental ability, marital status, or economic circumstance. We affirm the worth and dignity of every person as a beloved child of God, created in God's image. As a church rooted in God's grace, we seek to live with open hearts and open minds. We commit to being a safe and affirming space for all, especially those who have been hurt or excluded by the church in the past. In our worship, our leadership, our fellowship, and our service—we welcome you. We see you. We honor your full humanity. You are welcome here. You are not alone. You are loved.

We Gather Around the Word

WELCOME

*OPENING PRAYER | *Responsively*

Betsy Gust, Liturgist

Dear God,

There is more suffering, loss, and fear in the world than we can hold all at once.

The news keeps coming. The grief keeps piling up.

The weight of it presses in from every direction.

Help us learn when to listen and when to rest.

Help us stay open to those we love

without being overwhelmed by everything we cannot fix.

Sometimes our hearts struggle to trust love when so much feels fragile and uncertain.

When our hearts begin to fill, slow the anxious thoughts that rush in and drain them again.

Teach us gentler ways of protecting ourselves -

Ways that do not harden us or close us off from one another.

When our hearts are wounded, we are quick to turn inward in fear.

Help us resist seeing threat where there is none

and pushing away what might actually heal us.

It is confusing to live with human hearts in a hurting world.

So remind us that while our hearts may break, expand, ache, heal, close, open, and overflow, none of this diminishes the part of us made in your image.

Nothing can extinguish the life you have placed within us.

Nothing can erase the love you have already planted here.

May we continue to notice small acts of kindness, simple beauty, and unexpected grace.

So that we heal in ways we did not think possible.

So that we grow in compassion we did not know we carried.

And for that, we give thanks. Because you remain with us.

Amen.

OPENING VOLUNTARY

“Sonata Op. 27, No. 2”

I. Adagio sostenuto, Ludwig van Beethoven
Terry Metzger, Piano

**Please stand in body or spirit*

*CALL TO WORSHIP | *Responsively*

In a season marked by constant crisis, by conflict near and far,
by uncertainty that follows us from our homes into the wider world,
we come seeking shelter, honesty, and rest.

We light these candles as signs of God's steady presence
when life feels fractured or overwhelming.
We light a flame for those whose hope feels thin—
for people worn down by relentless news, by repeated loss, by fears that do not let go.

May God meet them with courage and quiet strength.

We light a flame for those living with anxiety—for hearts unsettled by change,
for minds carrying too much at once,
for those navigating uncertain paths at home, at work, or in the world.

May God surround them with peace that does not demand certainty.

We light a flame for those who ache for joy—
for laughter that feels distant, for lightness that seems out of season,
for moments of grace that arrive unexpectedly.

May God remind them that joy can coexist with sorrow.

We light a flame for love that has been strained or broken—
for relationships wounded by betrayal or neglect, for grief that lingers,
for loneliness that feels invisible, and for communities divided by fear and violence.

May God hold them in steadfast love.

As these lights grow among us, may we remember that we do not face this long night alone.
God is here. We are here for one another.

Come, Holy God. Meet us here. Hold us through the darkest night. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN | #796 "We Come To You For Healing, Lord"

CALL TO CONFESSION and PRAYER OF CONFESSION | *Unison*

**Gracious God, when despair and suffering overwhelm us,
we cry out for you and feel abandoned.
We doubt your presence and your promises.
We believe you have turned away from us in anger.
We ask why you have forsaken us.
In these moments, strengthen us in faith and fill our hearts with courage.
We believe, God. Help our unbelief. Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS | *Responsively*

"The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting."

Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

Amen.

Psalm 103:17

*GLORIA PATRI | #649 "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound" (vs. 3-4)

*Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come.
'Tis grace has 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.*

*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The Peace of Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

TIME FOR TINY THEOLOGIANS

Children of all ages are welcome to join us up front for a brief children's lesson. Children between the ages of 0-kindergarten are then welcome to go to the nursery following the lesson, or return to their seats.

ANTHEM

“River”

Leon Bridges

Terry Metzger, Piano and Vocal Solo

Been traveling these wide roads for so long

My heart's been far from you, ten-thousand miles gone

*Oh, I wanna come near and give ya every part of me
But there's blood on my hands and my lips are unclean*

*In my darkness I remember momma's words reoccur to me
"Surrender to the good Lord and he'll wipe your slate clean"*

*Take me to your river, I wanna go, oh, go
Take me to your river I wanna know*

*Dip me in your smooth waters, I go in
As a man with many crimes come up for air
As my sins flow down the Jordan*

We Proclaim the Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 42

NRSV OT Pg. 515

Psalm 30

NRSV OT Pg. 505

Isaiah 43:1-7

NRSV OT Pg. 672

Read responsively after each passage

Restore us, O God

Make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

SILENT REFLECTION

Where is a place of metaphorical darkness in your life?

Where is light in your life?

Who or what are you holding before God in this season of darkness?

What small act of faith, presence, or care could carry light into that darkness?

We Respond to the Word

*HYMN OF RESPONSE | #819 “Be Still, My Soul”

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH | *Unison*

Lamentations 3:22-33

**Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.**

I say to myself, “The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.”

**The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him;
it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.**

It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young.

Let him sit alone in silence, for the Lord has laid it on him.

Let him bury his face in the dust— there may yet be hope.

**Let him offer his cheek to one who would strike him,
and let him be filled with disgrace.**

For no one is cast off by the Lord forever.

Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love.

For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to anyone.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Alice Hernandez

LIGHTING OF CANDLES and HYMN | #39 “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

*As you are comfortable, you may come forward and light a candle.
The candle can be lit as a prayer request for you or someone you love,
as a light to honor someone lost, or as a signal of hope.*

*When you return to your seat, we invite you to draw a paper prayer request
from the basket to pray over throughout the week.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD’S PRAYER | *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.**

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

CALL FOR OFFERING

OFFERTORY

“Sure on This Shining Night”

Morten Lauridson

The Sanctuary Choir, Amanda Hollis, Director

Terry Metzger, Piano

*Sure on this shining night of star made shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me this side the ground.
The late year lies down the north. All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth. hearts all whole.
Sure on this shining night I weep for wonder
Wand’ring far alone of shadows on the stars.*

*DOXOLOGY | #15 “All Creatures of Our God and King (vs. 4)

*All who for love of God forgive,
all who in pain or sorrow grieve,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ bears your burdens and your fears;
so, even in the midst of tears,
sing praises! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

We Are Sent Out to Bear the Word in the World

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*SENDING HYMN | #840 “When Peace Like a River (It is Well With My Soul)”

*BENEDICTION

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

“Clair de lune”

Claude Debussy

Terry Metzger, Piano



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established 1870

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WEEK AT A GLANCE:

Sunday, February 15

Coffee Class: 9 am, A111

Present Word: 9 am, A109

Children's Sunday School: 9-10:15 am, CE Building

Nursery: 9-11:30 am, CE Building

Worship: 10:30 am, In-Person & Online

Book Club: 5 pm, Library

Tuesday, February 17

Prayer Group: 6:30 am, Phone

Tuesday Morning Bible Study: 10 am, Library

Pastor's Bible Study: 1:30 pm, Google Meet

Wednesday, February 18 - Ash Wednesday

Sometimes: 8-11 am

Ash Wednesday Service with UDCC: 12 pm, Chapel

Handbell Rehearsal: 5:45-7:15 pm

Wednesday Night Live: 6 pm, Fellowship Hall

Ash Wednesday Service: 6:45-7:45 pm

Choir Rehearsal: 7:30-9 pm

Thursday, February 19

Art Therapy: 10 am-12 pm, Room A109

Friday, February 20

Friday Faith Sharing and Lunch Bunch: 10:30 am, Library

Saturday, February 21

Taiwanese Ministry Bible Study: 2-4 pm, Library

Sunday, February 22 - First Sunday in Lent

Coffee Class: 9 am, A111

Present Word: 9 am, A109

Children's Sunday School: 9-10:15 am, CE Building

Nursery: 9-11:30 am, CE Building

Worship: 10:30 am, In-Person & Online

Ice Cream with Pastor Sarah: 12 pm, Fellowship Hall

WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE

Monthly Dinner & Fellowship

Dinner will be served from 6-7 pm. Reservations required!

FEBRUARY 18

6:00 PM, FELLOWSHIP HALL

All are welcome!

RSVP in the Friendship Pads. Suggested Donation: \$5/Adult.

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 18

12:00 PM & 6:45 PM

We will be hosting a joint Noon service with our friends from UDCC in the Chapel, and a second service that evening to coincide with Wednesday Night Live.

United Disciples
Christian Church



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Ice Cream Meet & Greet

Sunday, February 22

After Worship / Fellowship Hall

Pastor Sarah and her family will be attending Worship February 22! We would like to invite you all to stay after worship that day and enjoy a meet and greet with Pastor Sarah and her family, and enjoy Braum's ice cream, their favorite!



For the full events calendar that includes our Community Partners, please scan the QR code.





This Week, 2/18:
Ash Wednesday

Grounding
ourselves in
the good news
this Lent

Next Week, 2/22:
First Sunday in Lent



About this Series

Lent was originally a season for new converts to learn and prepare for their baptism on Easter. During that time, they would study what was central to Christianity. As we crafted this series, we studied what was central to Jesus' life and ministry: radical welcome, love for neighbor, care for the vulnerable, nourishment for the hungry, nonviolence in the face of injustice. At the heart of Jesus' teachings, we find liberation, love, mercy, and grace—all of which are meant to be very good news for us all.

Jesus' words are easily distorted and sanitized in our modern world. Following Jesus leads to a richer, more expansive life, but it's not necessarily comfortable. Jesus' ministry can be described as "radical" which comes from the Latin word "radicalis," meaning "root" or "ground."

Therefore, the good news should bring us back to our roots.

Emulating Jesus and embodying his teachings should ground us in who God created us to be. Can we be "good news" people in a world too often burdened by bad news?

This Lent, let us remember that the good news really is good news. It is joyful—like fine wine saved for celebration. It grows like a mustard seed and smells like perfume poured from an alabaster jar. It tastes like bread passed endlessly through a hungry crowd. It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.

The good news is alive in the world.

We hope this series will provide fertile ground for conversation and worship, rooting our hearts and lives in the expansive goodness of God. This Lent, let the teachings of Jesus lead us forward. May the good news inspire us to take action in a world desperate to hear, see, and taste what is good.