

# WORSHIP



FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH of  
RICHARDSON

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT | MARCH 22, 2026

*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.*



*“Epilogue” by T. Denise Anderson*

# *We Gather Around the Word*

WELCOME

Rev. Sarah Chancellor-Watson

OPENING VOLUNTARY

“If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee”

*Emma Lou Diemer*  
Terry Metzger, Organ

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Alice Hernandez, Liturgist

Welcome to the weary and the worn.

**Welcome to the wiggly and the eager.**

Welcome to the skeptical and the seeking.

**Welcome to the early risers and those still trying to wake up.**

Welcome to the rule followers and the rule breakers.

**Welcome to those hungry for justice and those desperate for mercy.**

Welcome to the sinners and the saints.

**This is God’s house.**

You can make yourself at home here.

**Let us worship our just, merciful, and faithful God!**

\*OPENING HYMN | #39 “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

CALL TO CONFESSION *and* PRAYER OF CONFESSION | *Unison*

**Holy God, we love to live our lives by the rules.**

**We love clear answers. We love right and wrong. We love swift justice.**

**We love to pick up stones, but you show us another way.**

**You welcome shades of gray and nuanced conversation.**

**You prioritize mercy over legality.**

**You prioritize people over tradition.**

**You prioritize love over everything.**

**Forgive us for losing sight of what truly matters.**

**Forgive us for clinging tighter to laws than to each other or to you.**

**Forgive us. Soften our hearts.**

**Root us in mercy, justice, and love.**

**With hope for a better tomorrow, we pray. Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS | *Responsively*

Church family,

Jesus saw a crowd ready to throw stones and invited them to choose another way.

Jesus offered them grace, mercy, and compassion, and the same can be said for us.

So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

**Our God is a God of mercy.**

**Our God is a God of compassion.**

**Our God is a God of grace.**

**We are forgiven, loved, and invited to choose another way.**

**Thanks be to God for yet another second chance. Amen.**

\*GLORIA PATRI | #581 “Glory Be to the Father”

*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.*

*\*Please stand in body or spirit*

\*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

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

TIME FOR TINY THEOLOGIANS

Julie Houpt

*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.*

## ***We Proclaim the Word***

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 23:23  
John 8:2-11

NRSV NT Pg. 26  
NRSV NT Pgs. 100-101

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word  
**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Rev. Sarah Chancellor-Watson

## ***We Respond to the Word***

\*HYMN OF RESPONSE | #445 "God, How Can We Forgive"

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH | *Unison*

**I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.  
It sounds like welcome and feels like home.  
It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.  
It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table,  
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.  
I have seen it alive in the world.  
And even when my heart aches, even when wars rage,  
even when mercy feels out of reach,  
I remember the one who welcomed the children and led with nonviolence.  
I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable and inspired those around him.  
I remember that the good news really is good news,  
for I have seen it alive in the world.  
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

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 *and* OFFERTORY

“Offertory”

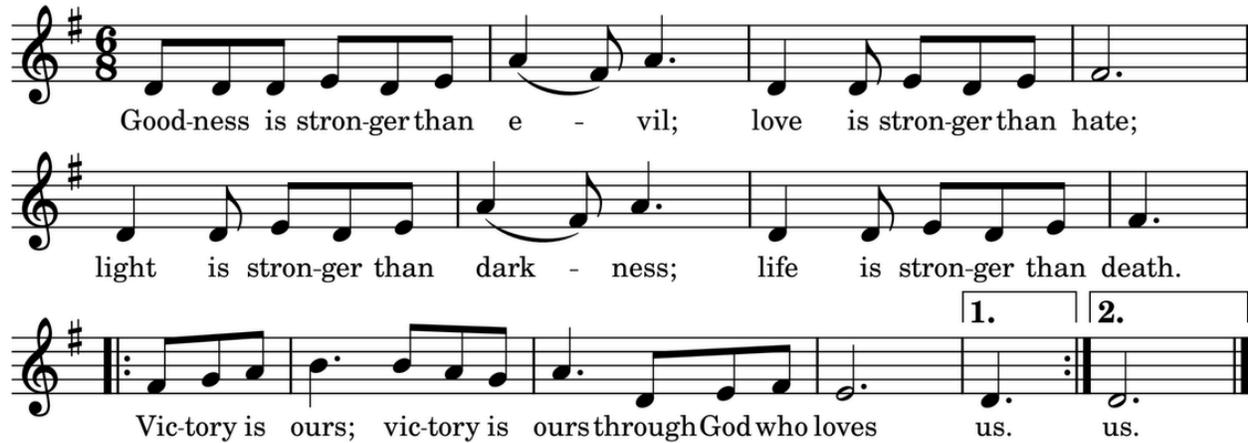
by John Ness Beck

The Sanctuary Choir, Amanda Hollis, Director

Terry Metzger, Organ

Lyrics from Micah 6:6-8

\*DOXOLOGY | #750 “Goodness Is Stronger than Evil”



Good-ness is stron-ger than e - vil; love is stron-ger than hate;  
light is stron-ger than dark - ness; life is stron-ger than death.  
Vic-tory is ours; vic-tory is ours through God who loves us. us.

## *We Are Sent Out to Bear the Word in the World*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

\*SENDING HYMN | #769 “For Everyone Born”

\*BENEDICTION

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

“Our Father in Heaven”

J.S. Bach

Terry Metzger, Organ

Today’s liturgy was adapted from liturgy written by  
Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)



# WEEK AT A GLANCE:

## Sunday, March 22

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, Fellowship Hall

## Monday, March 23

Faith Sharing: 1 pm, Library

## Tuesday, March 24

Prayer Group: 6:30 am, Phone  
Tuesday Morning Bible Study: 10 am, Library  
Pastor's Bible Study: 4 pm, Google Meet

## Wednesday, March 25

Sometimers: 8-11 am  
Handbell Rehearsal: 5:45-7:15 pm  
Choir Rehearsal: 7:30-9 pm

## Saturday, March 28

Taiwanese Ministry Bible Study: 2-4 pm, Library

## Sunday, March 29 - Palm Sunday

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  
Children & Family Lunch & Play: 12 pm, Fellowship Hall

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



# MAUNDY THURSDAY Dinners for 8

APRIL 2 | 6:30 PM

Break bread, pray, and fellowship with other FPCR friends. Hosts will provide a main dish, and others are invited to bring a side or dessert to share.

**RSVP BY  
WEDNESDAY,  
MARCH 25!**



## Easter Flower Dedications

If you would like to dedicate flowers to a loved one for Easter, please fill out a card and drop it in the offering plate.

Dedications due by **Wednesday, April 1.**



# HOLY WEEK

at First Presbyterian Church of Richardsdon



## PALM SUNDAY

March 29

Sunday Worship

10:30 AM | Sanctuary



## MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 2

Dinners for 8

6:30 PM | Assigned Home



## GOOD FRIDAY

April 3

Good Friday Service

6:30 PM | Sanctuary



## EASTER SUNDAY

April 5

Outdoor Service

8 AM | Pavillion

Traditional Service

10:30 AM | Sanctuary

Easter Egg Hunt

12 PM | Fellowship Hall



## Epilogue

by T. Denise Anderson

Inspired by John 8:2-11

14"x18" Acrylic on canvas

I often wonder about the backstory of the woman from John 8:2-11. What were her circumstances? How did they “catch” her in the act of adultery? *In flagrante delicto?*<sup>18</sup> Was it less graphic than that? Was she allowed to explain herself? Did she protest? If she was about to be stoned, what happened to the person with whom she was accused? Was this a loving relationship? Was it even consensual?

Whatever her story, the Pharisees bring her to Jesus expecting him to uphold the law’s punitive prescription. Jesus knows it’s a trap. If he concurs with the law, he initiates and must bear witness to an act of extreme brutality that would traumatize anyone who had to watch. If he counters the law,

he’s a heretic and should probably be stoned himself. But he outsmarts them and turns their self-righteousness and rage back onto them.

In what should have been the end of her life’s story, this woman now finds herself standing. Whole. Alive. Freed to a new future. And through it all, Jesus is just drawing on the ground—like you do!

I wanted to show this woman standing in her wholeness, right after the crowds have dispersed and right before Jesus rises to meet her as an equal. She’s backlit in a way that suggests the sun has set, indicating the end of a saga. What will she do at the end of a nightmare with a new life ahead of her? What decisions do we face at the dawn of a second chance? —Rev. T. Denise Anderson

## Look

*Contemplate the woman in the image. What do you imagine is her backstory? What do you dream for her future?*

<sup>18</sup> This is a Latin phrase often used in legal contexts that can be translated to: “in the very act of committing an offense.”