

The Service of Worship

March 22, 2026

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Chimes

Prelude

When Jesus Wept
Elsie Fetzer

William Billings

Greeting and Announcements

Introit

When Israel Was in Egypt's Land
Chancel Choir

arr. Melva Wilson Costen

***Call to Worship and Opening Prayer (responsive)**

When Jesus came to Nazareth,
he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day,
as was his custom.

He stood up to read,
and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him.

He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

**“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor,
to heal the broken hearted,
to proclaim release to the captives
to set free those who are oppressed.”**

Jesus said,

If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.

**Then you will know the truth,
and the truth will set you free.**

God of the covenant,
in the glory of the cross
your Son embraced the power of death
and broke its hold over your people.

In this time of repentance,
draw all people to yourself,
that we who confess Jesus as Lord
may put aside the deeds of death
and receive the life of your kingdom.

Amen.

Prayer for Illumination (responsive)

Holy Spirit,

**open our ears to hear your Word,
open our eyes to see your truth,
open our hearts to receive your freedom.**

As we listen to scripture today,

**unbind our minds,
call us out of the places where we feel stuck,
and orient us toward Christ,**

that we might walk toward freedom as his disciples.

Amen.

Scripture Reading

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem

Dry Bones
Chancel Choir

arr. Mark Hayes

Scripture Reading

John 11:1-44

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Unbound: Freed by Honesty

Rev. Michelle D. Witherspoon

***Hymn of Response**

O God, Who Gives Us Life

#53

***Call to Confession**

***Prayer of Confession** (responsive)

Merciful God, we confess that we are bound

**by habits we cannot break,
by fears we cannot name,
by systems we feel powerless to change.**

We confess that we have turned away from you and from one another.

We have relied on our own strength and forgotten whose we are.

We have sought our own comfort while others suffer,
closed our minds when you call us to curiosity,
and turned away from the freedom you offer.

Forgive us, we pray.

Renew in us our deepest identity and truest belonging as your beloved ones.

Meet us where we feel stuck.

**Unbind us, and let us go, that we might live as your disciples,
walking toward the freedom of Christ.**

Amen.

***Declaration of Forgiveness (responsive)**

Hear the good news:

Christ enters into the places that hold us.

Christ unravels the forces that bind us.

Christ calls us out of our tombs of defeat and despair
and invites us into new life and hope for a new day.

In Christ, we are forgiven.

In Christ, we are free.

In Christ, we are unbound.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Song of Response

Praise the Lord
Mike Tyson

Brown Bannister & Mike Hudson

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

There Is a Longing in Our Hearts
Darla Korrey Gertner and Congregation

#470

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.

Giving of Ourselves and Our Offerings – A Moment for Grateful Reflection

Christ, the Life of All the Living
Elsie Fetzer

J.S. Bach

***The Doxology**

**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.**

***Prayer of Dedication** (responsive)

Gracious God,
we offer our gifts as an act of freedom.

**We are freed to give generously,
to trust in your provision,
and to participate in your work in the world.**

Receive our offering:

**Use it to unbind this world,
that your kingdom would come
on earth as it is in heaven.**

Amen.

***Sending Hymn**

The Church of Christ Cannot Be Bound (vv. 1, 4 & 5)

#766

***Benediction**

***Benediction Response**

Freedom In You
Chancel Choir

Ken Bible

***Chimes**

Postlude

He Set Me Free
Elsie Fetzer

Albert Brumley

**Indicates those who are able, please stand.*

Worship Notes – Sources Used in Today’s Liturgy

Call to Worship: Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:16-29; John 8:31-32

Opening Prayer: Revised Common Lectionary Prayers © 2002 Augsburg Fortress

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Prayer Concerns March 22, 2026

Military Personnel

Luke Brigham (Randy & Terry's son)
Thomas Gage Snyder (Kim Schlup's son)

Presbytery of Plains & Peaks

Minatare, Community Presbyterian Church
Those with Special Needs or Concerns

Grace Ann (Connie Clark's relative)	Delinda Korrey McDowell
David Balabanis Family	Jim Leh
Joe Baran (in-law of Ted & Penny Propst)	Rose Neblett
Jackie Barton	Dirk Nye and Regine Bendelow (Jackie Barton's step-father & mother)
Sharon Bennett (Neblett's son-in-law's mother)	Mari Paradise (Jim Neblett's sister)
Tye Bennett (Neblett's grandson)	Jeni Porter (In-law of Blackburns)
Clark Bernhardt	David Prince (Tanna's brother)
Norm Blackburn	Emma Rich (Granddaughter of Gary & Kay Rich)
Brenda Boeff	Cadie, Hailey, and Austen Rose (Jason Rose family)
Randy Brigham	Leslie Rudolph (sister of Mike Tyson)
Leah Burt (friend of Judy Rounph)	Betty Scharf
CEDEPCA (Protestant Ministry in Guatemala)	Linda Schoyer (Sister of Connie Sue Clark)
Cooperating Ministry	John Seffens (friend of Mike Tyson)
Sally Craig (friend of Jackie Reynolds)	Darrell Smith and family
Dylan Cranwell — Peace Corps	Montelle Smith
Jeanne Crouch & Family	Becky Stieb, Justin & Torin (friends of Michelle Hawkins)
Dave & Marsha Davis	Roseanne Thompson (friend of Nebletts)
Sarah Davis	Sharon Treacy (mother of Laura Guenzi)
Andrew DeSouza (Michelle Hawkins' son)	Amy & Byron Uhrich (Jill Vollmer's parents)
Gary Espinosa (Arden Fennell's family)	Under the Umbrella
Family Resource Center	Jeff Underhill
Carolee Goldsmith (mother of Brandon Eaton)	Robert Vance (Michelle White's dad)
Meredith Goodwin (friend of Propsts)	Laurie Weskamp Wagner (Jeff's sister)
Mike Hawkins (Michelle Hawkins' brother)	Jeff Weskamp
Highlands Camp	Jean Williamson
Sonja Holden (friend of Arden Fennell)	Michelle Wilson (friend of David Chrisp)
Robert Koehler (friend of Laura Guenzi)	
Debby Korrey (Delinda's & Darla's sister)	

Prayer List Updates:

Do you have an update on anyone listed on our church prayer list? We'd love to hear the good news of recovery, healing, and answered prayer. If you have a joy to report, let us know!

Announcements—March 22, 2026

We invite you to join us in our work and worship at First Presbyterian Church.

At a Glance

March 22	10:30	Worship Service
	11:30	Fellowship Coffee
		Nominating Committee Meeting
March 24	5:00	Zumba
March 26	4:30	Zumba
	5:30	Bells
	6:30	Chancel Choir
March 29	10:30	Worship Service (Palm Sunday)
	11:30	Fellowship Coffee

Church Office hours: Mon/Wed/Fri: 9:00 am—Noon; and Tues/Thurs: 1:00-4:00 pm

Food Pantry Items: Throughout the month of March, we are collecting... **Chunky Soup (preferably with pop-tops) and Canvas Shopping Bags.** You may bring your donations to the church and put them under the table outside the church office, or in the box in the elevator vestibule.

Tithes & Offerings: Thank you... your support makes mission & ministry possible.
Donate online at tinyurl.com/FPCPayPal or tinyurl.com/FPCSterlingGive



First Presbyterian Church

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Church Staff

Pastor	Rev. Michelle D. Witherspoon
Music Coordinator/Organist	Elsie Fetzer
Choir Director	Darla Korrey Gertner
Bell Choir Director	Lindsey Jackson
Office Administrator	Rashell Fritzler
Bookkeeper	Karlee Manuello
Property Manager	Janet Kloberdanz

Serving Today

Liturgists	Michelle D. Witherspoon, preacher Pam Trimble liturgist
Acolyte/Bible Bearer	Dennis & Cheryl Kaan
Ushers	Delinda Korrey McDowell, Ken McDowell
AV	Jeff Christenson (Sound), Callie Jackson (Slides)
Count Offering	Linda Meisner
Fellowship Coffee	Finance Committee
Bulletin Delivery	Sue Weingardt