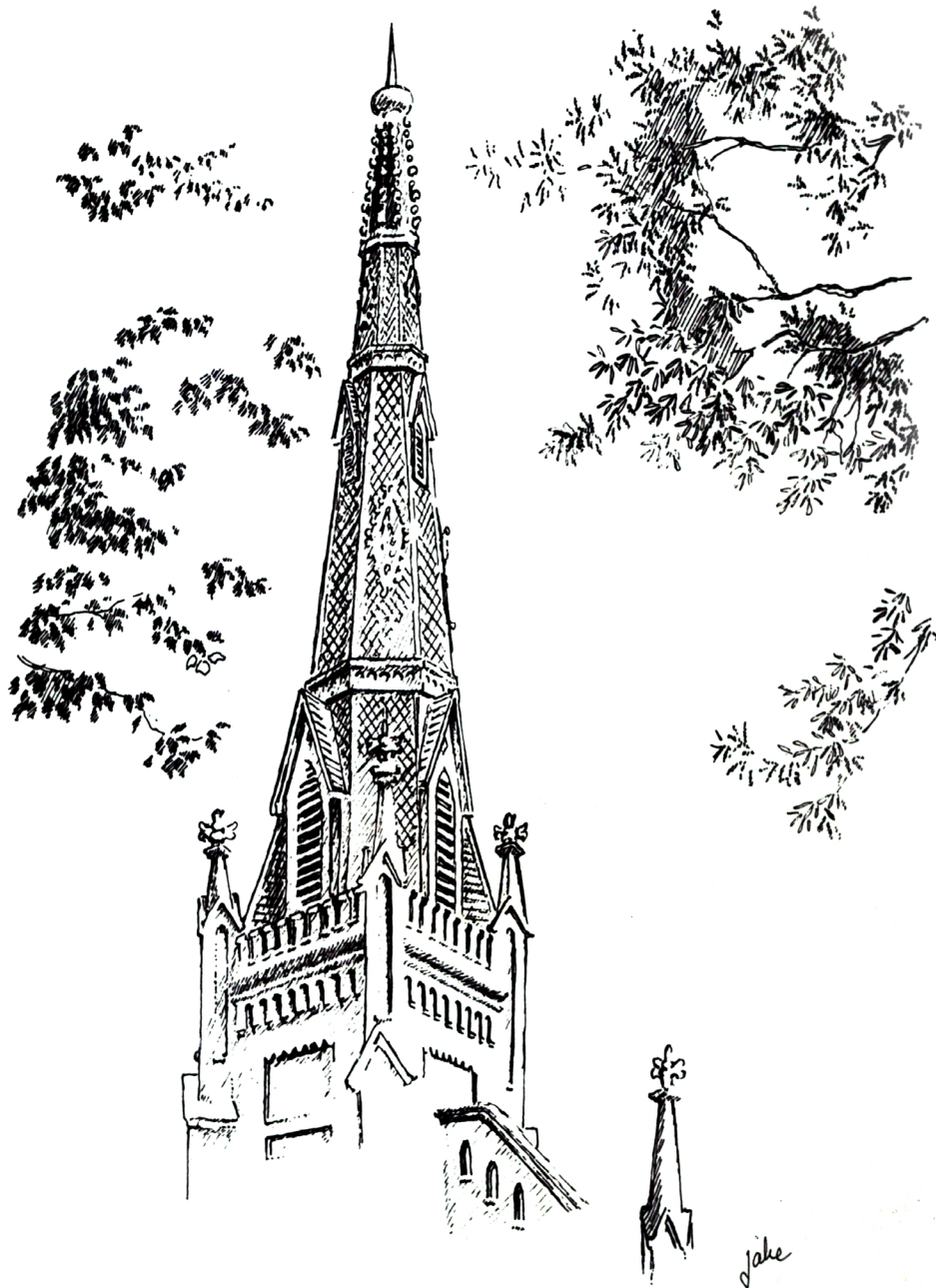


First Presbyterian Church

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP | 9 AM | APRIL 14, 2024
THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER



We invite you, whoever you are and whoever God is helping you to become, to join First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte in our journey of faith. God is love, and that love is for you. You belong as a child of God, and we welcome you. Come experience how that belonging might change you and our world as we seek to be for Christ in the heart of Charlotte.



First Presbyterian
Church of Charlotte

“And the holy city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb.”

Revelation 21:23

Time of Quiet Meditation and Reflection | Silence begins in the Chapel at 8:50 a.m.

Words of Welcome | Reverend Mary Bowman

Invocation | Luke Aleckson

Lord, help us look to the dawn and praise Your Son daily. Give us hope every morning, even when confronted with the often-overwhelming darkness of this world. We do not know the day or the hour He will come again, and yet we can radiate love, peace, and joy in the darkness. We bask in the light of new life, freely given. Thank you for Your endless mercies and let us dwell in them today. Amen.

Meditative Music | Eternal Light, Shine in My Heart | Tapestry Chamber Singers

Eternal Light, shine in my heart,
Eternal Hope, lift up my eyes;
Eternal Power, be my support,
Eternal Wisdom, make me wise.

Eternal Life, raise me from death,
Eternal Brightness, help me see;
Eternal Spirit, give me breath,
Eternal Savior, come to me:

Until by Your most costly grace,
invited by Your holy Word,
at last I come before Your face
to know You, my eternal God.

Prayer for Illumination | Sarah Lockhart

First Scripture Reading | John 1:1-5, 9-14 | The Message

The Word was first, the Word present to God, God present to the Word. The Word was God, in readiness for God from day one. Everything was created through Him; nothing—not one thing!—came into being without Him. What came into existence was Life, and the Life was Light to live by. The Life-Light blazed out of the darkness; the darkness couldn't put it out. The Life-Light was the real thing: Every person entering Life he brings into Light. He was in the world, the world was there through Him, and yet the world didn't even notice. He came to His own people, but they didn't want Him. But whoever did want Him, who believed He was who He claimed and would do what He said, He made to be their true selves, their child-of-God selves. These are the God-begotten, not blood-begotten, not flesh-begotten, not sex-begotten. The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

New Testament Reading | John 8:12-19 | Chris Teigland

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." Then the Pharisees said to him, "You are testifying on your own behalf; your testimony is not valid." Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid because I know where I have come from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. You judge by human standards; I judge no one. Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is valid, for it is not I alone who judge but I and the Father who sent me. In your law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is valid. I testify on my own behalf, and the Father who sent me testifies on my behalf." Then they said to him, "Where is your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Moment of Reflection

Meditation | “Images of Jesus: I Am the Light of the World”

Moment of Reflection

Prayer of Confession | Adapted from *The Book of Common Worship*

Everlasting God, in whom we live and move and have our being, You have made us for Yourself, so that our hearts are restless until they rest in You. Give us purity of heart and strength of purpose, that no selfish desire would hinder us from knowing Your will and no weakness, keep us from doing it. Grant that in Your light, we may see light clearly, and in Your forgiveness find perfect freedom.

Moment of Reflection

O Lord, we ask that You forgive what we have been and done, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy name. We receive Your forgiveness with grateful hearts, and we commit to the work of extending it to others. Amen.

Offering

The Christian life is marked by the offering of one's self to God to be shaped, empowered, directed, and changed by God. In worship, God presents us with the costly self-offering of Jesus Christ. We are claimed by Christ and set free. In response to God's love in Jesus Christ we offer God our lives, our gifts, our abilities, and our material goods, for God's service. The offering plates are located at the back of the chapel if you are interested in giving regularly as a spiritual practice.

Invitation to the Table

Meditative Music | I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light | Kathleen Thomerson | Beverly Hills All Saints' Choir

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus. God sent the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus. In Him, there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike, The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus. I want to see the brightness of God. I want to look at Jesus. Clear sun of righteousness, shine on my path. And show me the way to the Father. In Him, there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike. The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus. I'm looking for the coming of Christ. I want to be with Jesus. When we have run with patience the race. We shall know the joy of Jesus. In Him, there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike. The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

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.

Sacrament of Communion

To receive the gluten-free bread and the cup, come forward, take a piece of bread, and then dip the bread into the cup. It is still communion if you prefer to take only the bread. Please do not drink out of the cup directly. If for any reason you prefer not to come forward, please raise your hand and the officers will be glad to serve you in your pew.

Prayer of Thanksgiving | Rabbi Rami Shapiro

Enveloped in Your Light, may we be a beacon to those in search of Light. Sheltered in Your Peace, may we offer shelter to those in need of Peace. Embraced by Your Presence, so may we be present to others. Amen.

Charge and Blessing

We have been fed by the presence of God in the silence, by the Word, and through communion. Please feel free to greet one another in a warm and quiet way that allows an easing out of the silence. The minister is available for prayer or conversation after the service. Sunday School begins at 9:45 a.m. If you would like to visit longer with other members, you are invited to gather in the Welcome Center.

Announcements

Sunday Readers

The leadership provided by lay members is an important part of the 9 a.m. service. If you are willing to be a reader, please scan the QR code below to sign up. We appreciate your considering leading worship in this way!

Sunday Class: "Climate Change: The Popular Discussion vs. The Scientific Perspective"

April 14, 9:45-10:45 a.m., WFH Overflow and Zoom Dr. Jack Scheff, Assistant Professor in Geography and Earth Sciences at UNC Charlotte, will focus on the science of climate change and the progress being made in addressing it.

Retirement Reception for Wilfred Neal

April 14, 12 p.m., Front Lawn
The congregation is invited to thank our business administrator, Wilfred, for his service to the church.

Passages: Who is Brian McLaren?

April 21, 9:45 a.m., Fellowship Hall Overflow
Join Pen Peery to learn more about our 34th Willard Lecturer and where he finds hope today.

The Willard Lecture: "Wisdom and Courage for a World Falling Apart"

April 28, 5 p.m., Sanctuary
Theologian, author, and speaker Brian McLaren offers new ways of thinking, becoming, and belonging during turbulent times. Scan the QR code for tickets.

Spring Luncheon

May 19, 12 p.m., Front Lawn
Join us for a good old-fashioned church picnic on the lawn. The church will provide fried chicken, rolls, and beverages; therefore, we are asking each family to bring a potluck contribution to share (last names A-I bring a dessert; J-R bring a side; S-Z bring a salad). Please register for this event, as we need a correct head count to order food. There will be tables and chairs, but bring a blanket if you prefer! Register at the QR code below.

IN LOVING MEMORY

The sympathy of the congregation is expressed to Sherry Hall, upon the death of mother, Margaret Suggs; and to Kathy Pressley, upon the death of sister, Anne Cates Buckler; and to Lucy Caldwell upon the death of her brother, Raymond Lewis.



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REQUESTS



ANNOUNCEMENT
LINKS



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