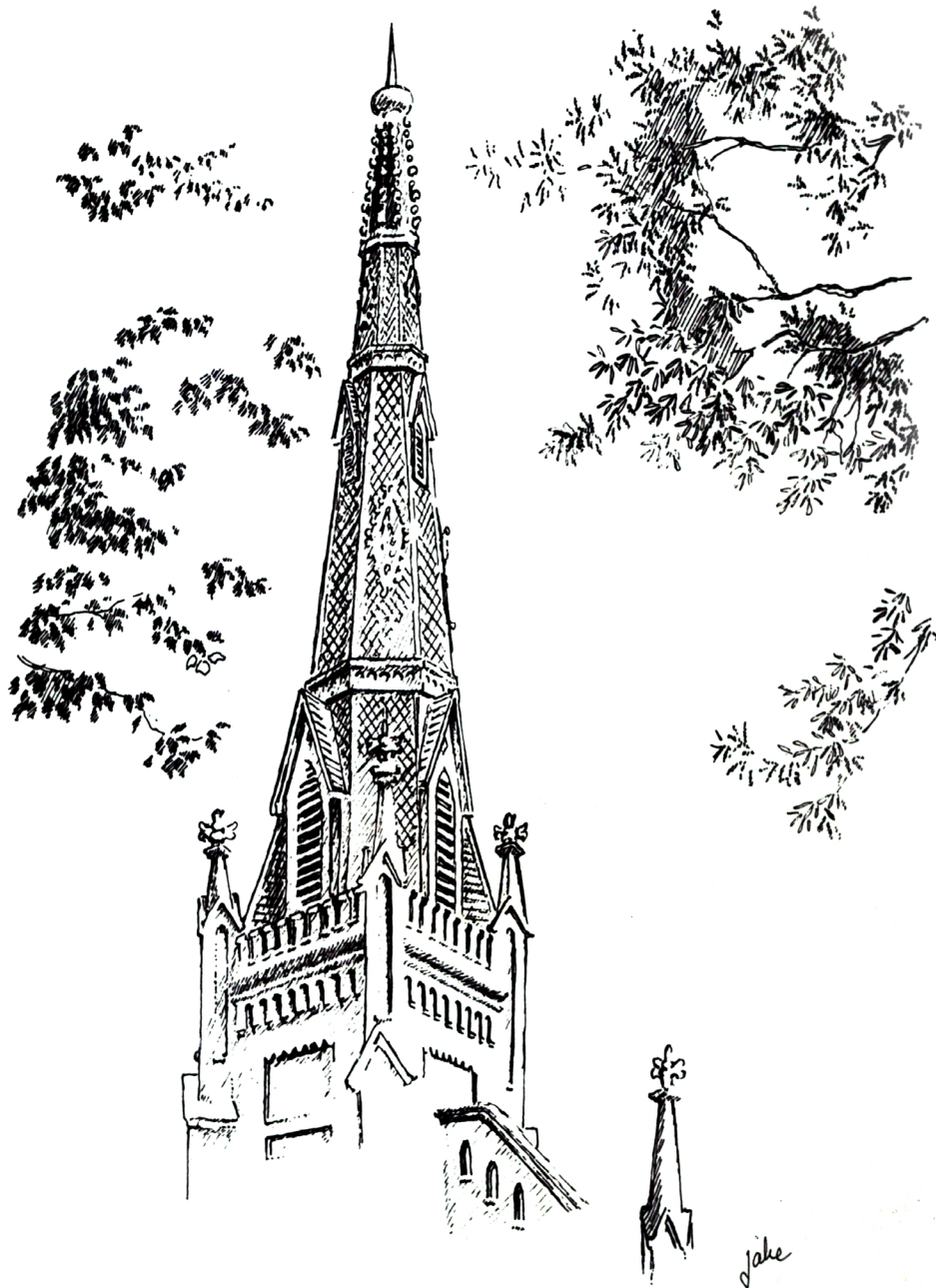


First Presbyterian Church

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP | 9 AM | APRIL 7, 2024
SECOND 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

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

Words of Welcome | Reverend Mary Bowman

Invocation

O Bread of Life, come and feed us in our hunger for goodness, for grace, for peace, for mercy, for love, for justice, and for healing. As we walk in this broken world, reset our distracted selves and help us to trust You to satisfy the deepest longings of our hearts, through life more deeply lived with You. Through our Risen Lord. Amen.

Meditative Music | I am the Bread of Life | Jaime Thietten

I am the bread of life;
You who come to Me shall not hunger
And who believes in Me shall not thirst
No one can come to Me unless the Father beckons.

Refrain

And I will raise you up; And I will raise you up
And I will raise you up on the last day.

The bread that I will give
Is My flesh for the life of the world
And if you eat of this bread
You shall live forever; You shall live forever. *Refrain*

I am the resurrection; I am the life
If you believe in Me; Even though you die, you shall live forever. *Refrain*

Yes Lord I believe; That You are the Christ
The Son of God Who has come; Into the world. *Refrain repeated*

Prayer for Illumination | Claire Tate

Old Testament Reading | Isaiah 55:1-13

Hear, everyone who thirsts; come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread and your earnings for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. Now you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for He has glorified you. Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake their way and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that He may have mercy on them, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle, and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

New Testament Reading | John 6:29-51 | Linda McKnight

Then the crowd said to Jesus, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom God has sent." So they said to Jesus, "What sign are You going to give us, then, so that we may see it and believe You? What work are You performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, 'God gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses

who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." They said to Him, "Sir, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away, for I have come down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the One who sent me. And this is the will of the One who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that God has given me but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in Him may have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day." Then the Jews began to complain about Jesus because He said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" Jesus answered them, "Do not complain among yourselves. No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me, and I will raise that person up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; He has seen the Father. Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever, and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Moment of Reflection

Meditation | "Images of Jesus: I Am the Bread of Life"

Moment of Reflection

Prayer of Confession

God of tender mercies, forgive us. We have been pursuing things that we think will satisfy our hunger and thirst, but they don't. We have been distracting ourselves with things not of You, because we have not wanted to acknowledge our shortcomings. Help us to hunger and thirst for You and Your kingdom, rather than building our own.

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 | At This Table | Elyse O'Kane

Refrain

At this table is the bread of life

At this table is the blood of Christ

At this table is our heavenly meal

At this table, we are healed.

Our souls are longing for real food and thirsting for what satisfies

Jesus comes to fill our need with this feast before our eyes. *Refrain*

In our weakness and our failure, in our sorrow and our pain,
we come now with open hands to receive our hope again. *Refrain*

Jesus gives Himself to us; His presence strengthens our souls
When we receive His flesh and blood, we are then made whole. *Refrain*

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

We thank You for meeting us at the table and nourishing each of us according to our needs. Allow the bread of life to nourish us and strengthen us so we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly anew with You. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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.

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.

PW Birthday Dinner

May 9, 5:30 p.m., Courtyard & Fellowship Hall

Join PW for dinner to celebrate the past year and anticipate the year to come. The guest speaker will be Lisa Saunders, Associate Rector at Christ Episcopal. Honorary Life Memberships will be recognized, and new officers will be installed.



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