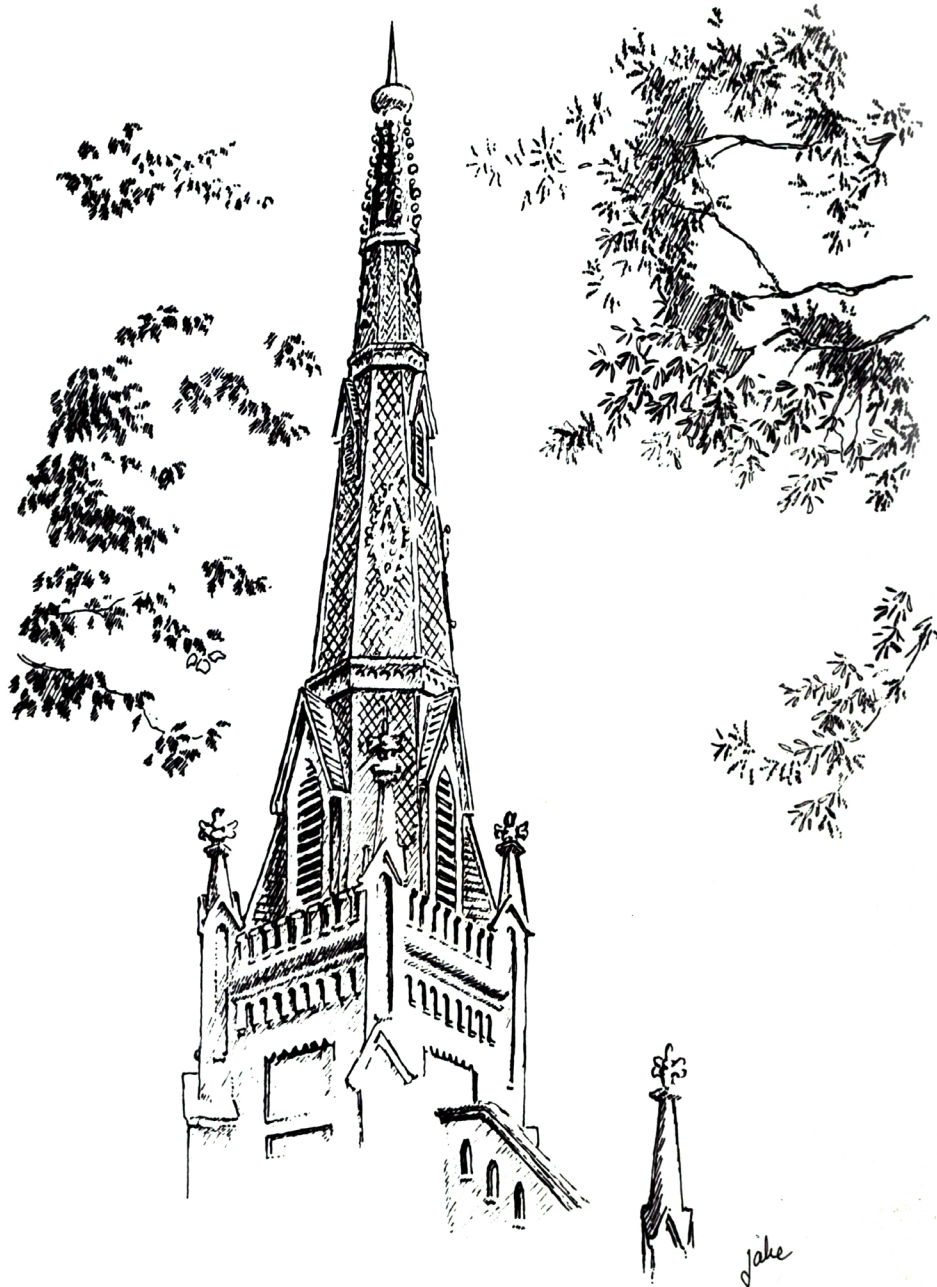


# First Presbyterian Church

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP | 9 AM | JANUARY 19, 2025  
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY



*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

*Draw near to God, and God will draw near to you. - James 4:8*

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

*During our series "Seeking the Sacred Unseen," you may like to begin your worship with this breath prayer as you breathe in and out in the silence. Written by Christine Valters Paintner.*

Breathe in: *What you seek*

Breathe out: *also seeks you.*

Breathe in: *Rest*

Breathe out: *and let it find you.*

**Words of Welcome** | Reverend Mary Bowman

**Opening Prayer** | Adapted from Christine Sine

**O Gracious God, we lift Your name above every other name, and as we move into worship with You, we ask for Your help so we may be fully awake and open to Your loving presence. May You help us to let go of all that distracts us, discourages us, weighs us down, and holds us captive. May You help us attune our ears and hearts to Your words so they may echo in the depths of our being. May we allow You to transform all that we are and all that we do so we can live life freely and to the full in Your resurrection and created world. As we take time to silently name what we are carrying, help us to release them or give them to You so we can be open to what You have for us in this space.**

**Moment of Reflective Prayer**

**Meet us, O Christ, in the stillness of morning worship.**

**Move us, O Spirit, to awaken our hearts.**

**Mend and forgive us, O Father, so we may walk in Your will and follow Your ways.**

**Amen.**

**Meditative Music** | "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" | St. Olaf Choir | Anton Armstrong

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!

All ye who hear, now to His temple draw near;

Join me in glad adoration!

*(Repeated twice)*

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee!

Surely His goodness and mercy here daily attend thee;

Ponder anew what the Almighty can do

If with His love He befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in me adore Him!

All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him!

Let the Amen sound from His people again;

Gladly for aye we adore Him.

**Prayer for Illumination** | Susan Krebs

**Old Testament Reading** | Psalm 95:1-7 | Adapted from *The Message*

Come, let's shout praises to God, raise the roof for the Rock who saved us! Let's march into God's presence singing praises, lifting the rafters with our hymns! And why? Because God is the best, High King over all the gods. In one hand God holds deep caves and caverns, in the other hand grasps the high mountains. God made Ocean—God owns it! God's hands sculpted Earth! So come, let us worship: bow before God, on your knees before God, who made us! Oh yes, God's our God, and we're the people God pastures, the flock God feeds. Drop everything and listen, listen as God speaks.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

**New Testament Reading** | Matthew 21:12-17 | Tom Temple

Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a den of robbers."

The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did and heard the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they became angry and said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise for yourself'?" He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

### **Moment of Reflection**

**Meditation** | "Seeking the Sacred Unseen - Through Worship" | Rev. Mary Bowman

### **Moment of Reflection**

### **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** | "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" | Halifax Choral Society

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,  
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;  
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above  
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all life Thou givest, to both great and small;  
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;  
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,  
And wither and perish, but nought changeth Thee.

Great Father of Glory, pure Father of Light  
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;  
All laud we would render, O help us to see:  
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee.

### **Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer (Centering Prayer Version)**

**Our Father, who is in heaven, Holy is Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our sins, as we forgive the sins of others, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and forever. Amen.**

### Sacrament of Communion

To receive a blessing with water, please come forward to a minister. 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

**Abundant Lord, we lift our hearts in gratitude for the blessings we have received in worshipping You. We thank You for the precious gift of communion, where we have tasted the bread of life and drunk from the cup of salvation. May the nourishment of this holy meal sustain us in the days ahead, reminding us of Your abiding presence and unfailing love. Help us to carry the light of your love into the world, sharing the good news to all. Strengthen us to live as witnesses of Your resurrection and proclaim the real promise of eternal life with you. Guide us now and forever more. 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.

Transcripts for the Contemplative Service can be found here: <https://firstpres-charlotte.org/sermons/>



VIRTUAL  
CONNECT  
CARD



PRAYER  
REQUESTS



TEXT  
TO GIVE



GIVE  
ONLINE