

First Presbyterian Church

Las Cruces, New Mexico

4th Sunday in Lent

Annual Luncheon and Reports

March 19, 2023 - 10:30 AM

Enter to worship – Leave to serve



PRELUDE

“Blessed Redeemer”

Harry Dixon Loes (1892-1965)

“As the Dark Awaits the Dawn” (Hymn Tune of 1997)

David Lasky (b. 1959)

“Forty Days and Forty Nights” (A Meditation on Christ’s Passion) Peter Niedmann (b. 1960)

**The Prelude functions like a curtain that separates our world from the worship place of peace and sanctuary. We enter prayerfully. We wait expectantly, listening for God’s Spirit and truth, which challenges us to return to the world equipped for faithful and useful Christian service.

* *Those who are able, please stand*

Please turn off all cell phones

WELCOME, GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEDITATION IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God. (John 3:19-21 NRSV)

CHORAL INTROIT

“Depth of Mercy”

David Rasbach

ASSEMBLE IN GOD’S NAME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Alonzo Brewer

Leader: Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.

(Genesis 1:3-4)

People: **The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness -- on them light has shined.**

(Isaiah 9:2)

Leader: For you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:9)

People: **Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness." (John 8:12, 8:12)**

*HYMN OF PRAISE

#744 "Arise, Your Light Is Come!"

FESTAL SONG

*PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

We come before you today, O Lord, our hearts filled with gratitude for the bounty of your love toward us. May the power of your Holy Spirit fill this Sanctuary and our lives with your presence and grace. Help us to leave behind this world's distractions so that we may truly hear your voice. Trusting in your love and mercy, we come with hope and expectation that you will change how we see ourselves and our place as your servants in this world. We pray, Holy God, for this congregation, your followers who gather in your name. In your goodness and mercy, fill us afresh with your presence and peace. **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**

PLEASE BE SEATED

CALL TO CONFESSION #795 "Healer of Our Every Ill" HEALER OF OUR EVERY ILL

- Congregation to sing refrain
- Choral Scholars to sing verses

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Merciful God, forgive us for proclaiming such great things and living such tiny lives. Forgive us for being so sensitive to personal hurts, so eager to express our opinions, so slow to listen to others. Forgive us for emphasizing differences and forgetting the faith we share. We have not always walked together as we ought. Help us to be more aware of the bond that draws us together, and may we learn the joy of day-by-day walking with you in the company of your other children. Help us move ahead with confidence, with joy, with expectation, with thankfulness, knowing that tomorrow holds goodness and glory, for we walk together with our Lord. Help us be all that we ought, all that we can be.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION AND REFLECTION

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY

Leader: Having confessed our sin before God, who loves us and who saves us, let us walk anew. God calls us with a holy calling, not because of our good works, but because of God's own gracious love through Christ Jesus. Friends, believe the Good News, all our sins are forgiven.

People: **In accord with the gracious mercy and purpose of God, through Jesus Christ, all our sins are forgiven and gone. Thanks be to God, Amen.**

Leader: Now cleansed from our sin, how should we live in faithful response?

People: **Jesus said, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.**

HYMN OF ASSURANCE

#192 "Lord, the Light of Your Love Is Shining" SHINE, JESUS, SHINE

GOOD NEWS TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Amon Taylor

- Children are asked to sit on the carpet squares in the front, and masks are optional for those who have been vaccinated.

CALL TO PRAYER

"Just As I Am, Without One Plea"

WOODWORTH

PASTORAL PRAYER

ANTHEM

"Depth of Mercy"

David Rasbach

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Dr. Janet Loman

Isaiah 42:1, 5-7

John 9:1, 5-11, 14-16, 24-25

Isaiah 42:1, 5-7 (New Revised Standard Version)

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

John 9:1, 5-11, 14-16, 24-25 (New Revised Standard Version)

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and

washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"Choosing Not to See"

Rev. Norm Story

*CLOSING HYMN #451 "Open My Eyes, That I May See"

OPEN MY EYES

GO IN GOD'S NAME

BENEDICTION

*CONGREGATIONAL BENEDICTION

#227 "Jesus, Remember Me"

REMEMBER ME

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

*POSTLUDE

Hymn Tune Improvisation

Howard A. Smolleck

Liturgist – Alonzo Brewer

Deacon Captain – Patricia Adu-Mensah

Sound System – Max Schroeder

Video – Dina Schroeder

Join Us!

Annual Gathering and Luncheon TODAY in Watkins Fellowship Hall, following our Worship Service. All are invited. It will be a time to celebrate what has happened over this past year and share some exciting ideas for 2023 for First Presbyterian Church.

Donations will be accepted for the Youth and Children's Ministry

Rev. Dr. Norm Story	Pastor	Rev. Pyong San Yu	Korean Congregation
Dr. Janet Loman, CP	College Ministry	Dr. Howard A. Smolleck	Organist
Karen Candusso	Youth Group Sponsor	Karen Candusso	Salt & Light Coord.
Beth Borchert-Thomas	Dir. of Music & Bells		

Greeting before Worship Service:

Thomas Korang – E Sandy Abernathy – W Chibuzo Chilaka - S

Greeting after Worship Service:

Amon Taylor – E Rev. Norm Story – W Alonzo Brewer – S

***Those who are able, please stand**

Please turn off all cell phones

Please remember in your prayers: Sara Kay; Patrice Gabriel; Gary and Charlotte Brockway; Virginia Haynes and daughter Shannon; Jessica Borchert Stout, daughter of Beth Thomas; Joyce Hill; Rev. Jay Bishop; Johanna Miller, Dorris Hamilton, Genevieve Ariege, Clyde Treat, and Norma Klein at the Heritage; Rev. Marcus Burr; all who feel isolated in these troubled times; Presbyterian Church (USA); Deacons' Ministries; prayers for all the homeless, in this cold weather; Gospel Rescue Mission; "El Caldito" Soup; Community Action Agency; Missionary Cesar Carhuachin, Presbyterian Minister, Columbia, South America.

Welcome!

We come together as a community at worship to experience the grace of God, who is present in our midst. This is a time to open ourselves to Him and to each other. Expect great things of God and His grace will come to you! Thank you for coming to First Presbyterian Church; we are glad that you are here. If you are not active in a church home in this community, we invite you to consider joining our fellowship and sharing in this ministry of Christ.

Our sacred space is not this building or this Sanctuary, but it is the fellowship we share, the hospitality we live, and the presence of God we see in each other.

For prayer requests during the week, call the church office to get your request on the Church-wide Prayer Chain, or e-mail Linda Ramirez at linda@fpc.lc

Our Vision: A place where Christian love is modeled

Our Mission: To be a place where Christian love is modeled through:

1. Understanding, celebrating, and sharing God's Word.
2. Following obediently where God is leading us.
3. Leading, nurturing, and serving our community for Christ.

The **Mary Martha Circle** is collecting books for ages 4 months through 8-9 years old to be given away by the Children's Reading Alliance non-profit. This group was founded in 2010, has given away many thousands of books, and has trained parents on the importance of reading to and with their children. We have a large, blue plastic bin in Jones fellowship area for collecting books. If you need more information, please call Helen Moser, 575-647-3365 or Cheri McMillan, 575-526-2395.

Church Office Hours

Monday – Friday
9:00 am – 2:00 pm

CHURCH CALENDAR

Call the church office 575-526-5559 for information on any events, or by the net: www.fpc.lc or by e-mail:

linda@fpc.lc

Rev. Norm Story e-mail: revstory@fpc.lc

Facebook: Look up First Presbyterian Church of Las Cruces

Sunday, March 19, 2023 4th Sunday in Lent

9:00 AM Adult Sunday School in Jones Hall Library with Catie Brewer. We are viewing and discussing a 12-session series by Sandra Richter, “The Epic of Eden,” which is designed to help Christians understand and engage with the Old Testament. This series should take the class up to Easter.

9:00 – 11:45 AM Childcare in Branigan Hall

9:00 AM Sunday School for grades K-5 in Branigan Hall

9:00 AM Sunday School for grades 6-12 in Reeves Hall

9:15 AM Choir rehearsal with Beth Thomas in the Sanctuary

10:30 AM Worship Service

11:45 AM Annual Luncheon and report in Watkins Fellowship Hall

Monday, March 20, 2023

6:00 PM Bells rehearsal with Beth Thomas

7:00 PM Bells rehearsal with Beth Thomas

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

3:00 PM Listening Prayer, a reflection on Scripture in Jones Hall. Contact Mary Maley with questions at 269-209-4357

7:00 PM Session meeting in Jones Hall Library

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

9:30 AM Staff meeting, office will be closed during meeting.

12:00 PM DEADLINE for submissions for the Sunday bulletin

NO Salt & Light (Spring Break)

Thursday, March 23, 2023

The Good News Newsletter will be published on Fridays. Please send submissions by Thursday evenings to: scotty.benaway@sbcglobal.net

Friday, March 24, 2023

Saturday, March 25, 2023

Sunday, March 26, 2023 5th Sunday in Lent

9:00 AM Adult Sunday School in Jones Hall Library with Catie Brewer. We are viewing and discussing a 12-session series by Sandra Richter, “The Epic of Eden,” which is designed to help Christians understand and engage with the Old Testament. This series should take the class up to Easter.

9:00 – 11:45 AM Childcare in Branigan Hall

9:00 AM Sunday School for grades K-5 in Branigan Hall

9:00 AM Sunday School for grades 6-12 in Reeves Hall

9:15 AM Choir rehearsal with Beth Thomas in the Sanctuary

10:30 AM Worship Service

11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall

12:00 PM Sermon discussion in the Jones Hall Library with Rev. Story



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

3/24 – Michelle Nganou, Helen Rogers

3/25 – Olivia Heubo

3/26 – Rayma Claessen

(If we missed your birthday, please call the office at 575-526-5559 or email Linda at linda@fpc.lc)

Donations to support your church can be done in a variety of ways. Thank you for your continued generosity and faithful giving.

- Cash or check in the offering (purple boxes in the Sanctuary)
- Check sent by mail
- Church website: fpc.lc and click on the “heart” icon or fpc.lc/giving or scan QR code
- Smartphone App: Church Center
- Text 84321



How can I help?

The Deacons are in need of van drivers on Sundays. We need your help to be able to once again get some of our members to church. Please contact Linda Ward if you can drive at least one Sunday a month. Thank you! 619-417-6912 or lrwardps@gmail.com

If you need a ride or know someone who does, please call the church office at 575-526-5559 between 9am - 2pm.

No Salt & Light *till Wednesday March 29th*

Greetings! Our worship services are now available

- 1) in-person, with Covid19 precautions
- 2) live-stream on YouTube search for: First Presbyterian Church Las Cruces, NM)
- 3) video archive on the church website, our Facebook site or YouTube

Covid19 precautions:

- **Seating in West and South sections of the Sanctuary is unrestricted. The East section is reserved for those wishing to wear masks and social-distance.**

- Hand-sanitizer and wipes are located at each door.
 - A purple box with slots for depositing your offering is located in each aisle. Please register your presence with contact information and any prayer requests on the small slip of paper in your bulletin and place it in the purple offering box in the aisle, so that if we need to do contact tracing later, we can contact those who were present.
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Food Baskets: Please bring a nonperishable food item every Sunday for Casa de Peregrinos, the emergency food bank. Baskets are located at each of the entrances to the Sanctuary.



Church Work Day on Saturday, April 1st

It's time to clean up our church home! There is a job for absolutely everybody. Come prepare our church for Easter. Projects big and small, short and long!

Everyone is invited to join us from 8am-Noon



Candy Donations for Easter Eggs

The Congregational Life and Outreach Support ministry team is collecting candy donations for our Easter egg hunt. Please make sure that candy is individually wrapped and small sized so that it can fit in a plastic egg. Non-melting type candy is preferred. Please drop the candy off at the entrance to the Sanctuary or at the church office no later than Palm Sunday, April 2. Thank you!

One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be collected on Easter Sunday April 9.

Join with Presbyterians worldwide in sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot! To learn more about how your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing makes a difference, visit pcusa.orgt/oghs