

First Presbyterian Church

Las Cruces, New Mexico

3rd Sunday of Easter

April 23, 2023 - 10:30 AM

Enter to worship – Leave to serve

Prayer Before a Burning Bush

Holy, holy, holy
Lord, God of heaven and earth:

What is this crackling sound I hear,
This sudden warmth I feel?
and now, a small flame
I do not understand!

O God of splendor
You are feeding me mysteries again
You are creating a new fire
another burning bush, unconsumed
and this one is in my heart.

Yes Lord,
You have my attention
I am standing in wonder and fear
The burning bush has gotten too close.
Speak to me out of this new, fiery sign.

Holy, holy, holy
Lord, God of heaven and earth.

*Makrina Wiederkehr, O.S.B.
from "Seasons of Your Heart:
Prayers and Reflections"*

PRELUDE

“Strong Son of God” (Hymn Tune of 1862)
to Jesus”

Carson P. Cooman (b. 1982)

Matthew Pascazio (b. 1996) "Alleluia! Sing

Ruth Elaine Schram (b. 1956) “Christ Is Alive”

**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

Augustine said: "My soul is restless until it rests in you, O God," but when I examine the tortuous story of our own salvation, I see not only that we are yearning to belong to God, but that God also is yearning to belong to us. It seems as if God is crying out to us: "My heart is restless until I may rest in you, my beloved creation." Henri M. Nouwen

CHORAL INTROIT "We Are Standing on Holy Ground" HOLY GROUND
Beth Thomas, Solo

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

*CALL TO WORSHIP Bill Kuyper
(Psalm 139)

Leader: O LORD, where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely.

People: You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. Leader: If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

People: If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.

*HYMN OF PRAISE #49 "The God of Abraham Praise" LEONI

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

How boundless is your love for us, O God! You have blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing, and by his grace, have promised to make us whole and holy. It is in Christ that we learn who we are and what we are living for, so that we may know everything you have hoped for us by the immeasurable greatness of your power. You have raised Christ from death and set him on a throne in heaven forever, ruling over the church, in which he speaks and acts, and fills with his presence. You, O Lord, have called the church to a life of peace, centered on the love of your Son and the glory of your presence. We are filled with thanks and praise as we pray together the prayer Jesus taught us, **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 "Lord, Who May Dwell within Your House" RIDGEMOOR

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

O LORD, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if

there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION AND REFLECTION

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY

(2 Corinthians 5:17)

Leader: So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

People: **All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ. We forgive, as we have been forgiven.**

Leader: Thanks be to God for this incomparable gift of grace!

People: **Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen.**

HYMN OF ASSURANCE #252 "Day of Arising"

RAABE

- Chancel Choir will sing verse 1
- Congregation to join on verses 2-4

GOOD NEWS TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Debra Smith

- 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

"Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus" (refrain)

Lemmel

PASTORAL PRAYER

ANTHEM

"When the Poor Ones"

EL CAMINO

- To follow the text see #762 in the Hymnal

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Dr. Janet Loman

Exodus 3:1-6

Luke 24:13-35

Exodus 3:1-6 (New Revised Standard Version)

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God

Luke 24:13-35 (New Revised Standard Version)

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from

Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON "The Transforming Fire of God's Presence" Dr. Janet Loman

*CLOSING HYMN #702 "Christ Be Beside Me" BUNESSAN

GO IN GOD'S NAME

BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION

"God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me" GREEN TYLER

*POSTLUDE Hymn Tune Improvisation Howard A. Smolleck

Liturgist – Bill Kuyper Deacon Captain – Patricia Adu-Mensah

Sound System – Jonathan West Video – Dina Schroeder



Join us for a time of fellowship and refreshments immediately following Worship this morning in the Jones Hall Fellowship area. This is a time to welcome and greet new friends and old friends alike. Fellowship this morning is hosted by the Montgomery family.

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:

Dennis Thomas – E Lucy Eyong – W Sandy Abernathy - S

Greeting after Worship Service:

Bill Kuyper – E Dr. Janet Loman – W Debra Smith – S

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

Please turn off all cell phones

Please remember in your prayers: A.B. and Millie Conrad; Virginia Haynes and daughter Shannon; Jessica Borchert Stout, daughter of Beth Thomas; Joyce Hill; Rev. Jay Bishop; Johanna Miller, Dorris Hamilton, Clyde Treat, and Norma Klein at the Heritage; Rev. Marcus Burr; all who feel isolated in these troubled times; Presbyterian Church (USA); Deacons' Ministries; St. Luke's Health Care Clinic; Casa de Peregrinos; Missionaries Doug and Sherry Barron, CRU headquarters in Orlando, Florida.

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.

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



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

4/25 – Greg Temple, Dot Otto

4/26 – Will Mattiace, Rebekah West

4/28 – Dominic Candusso

4/29 – Diana Howard

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

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, April 23, 2023

9:00 AM Adult Sunday School in Jones Hall Library with Larry Hicks entitled “Early Christian Worship.”

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

Monday, April 24, 2023

Office closed, Linda Ramirez on vacation

Tuesday, April 25, 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, April 26, 2023

Thursday, April 27, 2023

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

Friday, April 28, 2023

6:00 PM In-Betweeners (see announcement)

Saturday, April 29, 2023

Sunday, April 30, 2023

9:00 AM Adult Sunday School in Jones Hall Library with Larry Hicks entitled “Early Christian Worship.”

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

CCLI License No. 540727

In-Betweeners Coming Up!

On Friday evening, **April 28th**, at 6:00 PM we'll get together for a catered dinner of pasta from Lorenzo's (cost, \$10/person). As always, you're welcome to bring your own dinner and enjoy it in good company, if you prefer. After dinner, David Thomas, local historian and author, will be speaking on his latest book, *Dirty Dave Rudabaugh, Billy the Kid's Most Feared Companion*. Please let us know you plan to come by Monday, **April 24th**. Contact: the Ames at 575-526-3247, or jkames@q.com

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



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.



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 lwardps@gmail.com

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

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.

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.

Jennie Curry Bible Study will be meeting on Thursday May 4th at 6:30pm in the library. We are starting “*The Faithful*” which is a study of 5 Heroes of the Old Testament. If you have questions contact me, Kathy Story 575 202 2667 storyk@comcast.net