



# First Presbyterian Church

Las Cruces, New Mexico

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent

March 23, 2025 - 10:30 A.M

*Enter to worship – Leave to serve*

## PRELUDE

“Behold, I Stand at the Door and Knock”

John M. Rasley (1913-1998)

“The Way of the Cross Leads Home” (American gospel hymn)

Lani Smith (1934-2015)

“Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness”

Diane Bish (b. 1941)

**\*\*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

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. (Galatians 5:1,13 NRSV)

## CHORAL INTROIT

“Blest Are They”

Blest Are They

## ASSEMBLE IN GOD’S NAME

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Vicki Kuyper

(Psalm 104)

**Leader:** O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

**People:** **When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground. May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works.**

**Leader:** I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being.

**People:** **May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the Lord. Bless the Lord, O my soul. Praise the Lord!**

## \*PRAYER OF ADORATION (unison)

O Lord, in love, you give us life each new morning. As your chosen people received the manna that sustained them in the desert wilderness, so we receive your blessing of life anew each day. We rejoice that like the manna, the gift of life is not given to be hoarded, but to be used, spent for living each day fully in your service. May we never be tempted to hoard time, energy, or resources for ourselves. Keep us conscious that, as your own, our greatest joy comes in spending our gifts lavishly in prayer and in living out your will. We thank and praise you, Lord, for the confidence of knowing that we, too, are chosen people, chosen to live each day fully in your love and joy... **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

"Stay With Me"  
Chancel Choir

Stay With Me

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole hearts and minds and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. In your mercy, forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

## TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION AND REFLECTION

## ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY

(1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 NRSV)

Leader: May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls us is faithful, and he will do this. Friends, believe the good news, in Jesus Christ all our sins are forgiven.

**People: Thanks be to God, for all our sin is forgiven and gone. May that grace move us closer to Christ and His intended purpose for our lives.**

Leader: What is the foundation upon which we can trust and live in hope?

**People: In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve. We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed**

**the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.<sup>1</sup>**

HYMN OF ASSURANCE	#172 "Blest Are They"	Blest Are They
	Congregation to sing refrain	
	Choral scholars to sing verses	

GOOD NEWS TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES	Erin Taylor
• Children are asked to sit on the carpet squares in the front.	

CALL TO PRAYER	#735 "I Need Thee Every Hour"	Need
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PASTORAL PRAYER

ANTHEM	"Calvary Invitation"	Craig Courtney
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**PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS	Malachi 3:1-6, 18	1 Corinthians 10:1-13	Dr. Janet Loman
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Malachi 3:1-6, 18 (New Revised Standard Version)

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years. Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts. For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, have not perished. Then once more you shall see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

1 Corinthians 10:1-13 (New Revised Standard Version)

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.

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<sup>1</sup> Lines 1-18, "The Brief Statement of Faith", adopted by PC(USA) in 1993.

Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON	"Despite Every Spiritual Advantage"	Rev. Norm Story
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*CLOSING HYMN	#310 "I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord"	St. Thomas
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### **GO IN GOD'S NAME**

#### BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION	#227 "Jesus, Remember Me"	Remember Me
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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
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*Liturgist- Vicki Kuyper*

*Sound System-Max Schroeder*

*Video-Dina Schroeder*

*Greeting Before Worship Service:*

*Rev. Nick Koontz-E Donna Phillipa -W Linda Pearson-S*

*Greeting after Worship Service:*

*Erin Taylor-E Rev. Nick Koontz-W Vicki Kuyper-S*

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Rev. Dr. Norm Story	Pastor	Rev. Pyong San Yu	Korean Congregation
Dr. Janet Loman	Com. Pastor, College Ministry	Dr. Howard A. Smolleck	Organist
Ada Castle	Commissioned Pastor	Veronica Giron	Salt & Light Coord.
Dr. Paul Deason	Commissioned Pastor		Youth Group Sponsor
Beth Borchert-Thomas	Dir. of Music & Bells	Veronica Giron	Secretary
Rev. Nick Koontz	Dir. of Family Ministries	Pang Baker	Bookkeeper

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### *Please Remember in Your Prayers*

- *Praises for the warmth and joy in the church.*
- *All our animal friends who go on before us to God's embrace.*
- *Those who are struggling with illnesses.*
- *Those who are traveling.*
- *Florence Hamilton who is currently at Mt. View.*
- *Sandra Valencia who will be having surgery.*

### *Continued Prayer List*

*Sara Kay; Jack Curry; Jerry Claessen at Grace Village; Arnold McMillan, Millie Conrad, Dorris Hamilton and Joanne Kersting at The Heritage.*



*3/24 Michelle Nganou  
3/24 Amber Nolan  
3/25 Olivia Heubo*

*3/23 Elizabeth Varela  
3/23 Ryan Fellman*

*3/26 Rayma Claessen  
3/27 Chibuzo Chilaka  
3/27 Anna Lowry*



*3/29 Jeanine Krenzer  
3/29 Virginia Kraner*

### *After-Worship Fellowship*

*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 Buildings and Grounds Committee of Session.*



Our Worship services are available:

- 1.) In-person, with Covid19 precautions
- 2.) Live-stream on YouTube, First Presbyterian Church Las Cruces, NM
- 3.) Video archive on the church website, our Facebook site or YouTube

#### CORONAVIRUS PRECAUTIONS:

- Seating in the 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 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.



\*Contributions to support your church can be done in a variety of ways:

1. Cash or check in the purple offering box.
2. Check sent by mail.
3. Online at [fpc.lc/giving](https://fpc.lc/giving) or via the QR code on the right.
4. Using the app "Church Center".
5. Text 84321



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More information can be found on our website [fpc.lc](https://fpc.lc)



**Thank you for your continued generosity and faithful giving.**

200 E. Boutz Rd., Las Cruces, NM 88005  
575.526.5559

Church Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

# *In the Life of the Church*



**WE ARE  
BACK**

## *Salt & Light*

*We hope you all had a wonderful Spring Break! This Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, our theme is "God keeps His Promises." Dinner will be Spaghetti with meat sauce, garden salad, rolls and ice cream for dessert.*

## **In-Betweeners for March**

On Friday evening, March 28<sup>th</sup>, we'll be getting together in Watkins Fellowship Hall at 6 PM. Dinner this time will be a planned potluck. After dinner, David Thomas has agreed to present his latest research, which is about the history of the town of Dona Ana. Please let us know that you plan to come, as well as what category of dish you'd like to bring, by Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. Contact: the Ames at 575.636.0210, or [jkames@q.com](mailto:jkames@q.com)

# March

## Sunday, March 16th

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School with Catie Brewer will be studying "With Jesus in the Upper Room" by Maxine Dunnan, which will include short videos to support the study guide
- 9-11:45 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 Jones Hall Library
- 9:30 AM Choir rehearsal with Beth Thomas in the Sanctuary
- 10:30 AM Worship together in the Sanctuary
- 11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall (see announcement)
- 12:00 PM Sermon Discussion with Rev. Norm Story

## Monday, March 17th

- 12:00 PM Deadline for submissions for The Good News
- 7:00 PM Bells Rehearsal

## Tuesday, March 18th

## Wednesday, March 19th

- 9:30 AM Staff Meeting (office will be closed during this time)
- 12:00 PM Deadline for the Sunday Bulletin
- 4:00 PM Salt & Light (see announcement)
- 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal

## Thursday, March 20th

- 1:30 PM Listening Prayer in Jones Hall Parlor

## Friday, March 21st

- Office Closed
- 6:00 PM In-Betweeners in Watkins Hall (see announcement)

## Saturday, March 22nd

## Sunday, March 23rd

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School with Catie Brewer will be studying "With Jesus in the Upper Room" by Maxine Dunnan, which will include short videos to support the study guide
- 9-11:45 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
- 9:30 AM Choir rehearsal with Beth Thomas in the Sanctuary
- 10:30 AM Worship together in the Sanctuary
- 11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall
- 12:00 PM Sermon Discussion with Rev. Norm Story