

March 14, 2021
Fourth Sunday in Lent
Laetare Sunday

SCRIPTURE READING FOR MEDITATION

Numbers 21:4-9
Ephesians 2:1-10

Psalm 107
John 3:14-21

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*“Laetare” means “Rejoice!”
In medieval times, the fourth Sunday in Lent
allowed a break from Lenten spiritual disciplines.
On this day midway through Lent, the liturgical color is rose,
a mixture of purple (for Lent) and white (for Easter).*

The Church Gathers To...

Welcome and Announcements

Preparation for Worship

Worshippers are invited to meditate silently during the following prelude.

Prelude

Unto Thee I Cry, O Lord Jesus

Marcel Dupré

Praise Almighty God

Call to Worship

based on Psalm 107, NRSV

O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good;
God's steadfast love endures forever!
God satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things;
We gather to tell of God's deeds with songs of joy!
Let us worship God.

1. There's a wide - ness in God's mer - cy, Like the wide - ness
2. For the love of God is broad - er Than the mea - sures

of the sea; There's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice, Which is more than
of the mind; And the heart of the E - ter - nal Is most won - der -

lib - er - ty. There is no place where earth's sor - rows
- ful - ly kind. If our love were but more faith - ful;

Are more felt than up trust in heav'n; There is no place
We would glad - ly trust God's Word; And our lives re -

where earth's fail - ings Have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
flect thanks - giv - ing For the good - ness of our Lord.

Children's Message

Sarah Greim

Confess to a Forgiving Creator

Call to Confession

based on John 3: 19-21, the Message translation

“God’s light streamed into the world, but [we] ran for the shadows Everyone who makes a practice of doing evil ... hates God’s light and won’t come near it But if [we] work and live in truth and reality, [we] welcome God’s light” Let us bring our sin into the light:

Prayer of Confession

adapted from Call to Worship, PC(USA)

God of all journeys, your people complained in the wilderness. We confess that we, too, have restless complaints; we are weary of trudging through the wasteland of pandemic. Forgive our impatience; restore us; and turn us again to Jesus, our guide in the wilderness, that we might look upon him and live; Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

based on John 3:16-17 NRSV

God loved the world enough to give the Son so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

God did not send the Son to condemn the world, but to save the world.

Sisters and brothers I declare to you in the name of Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven!

Thanks be to God!

Listen for God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

adapted from Feasting on the Word Lenten Companion

Revealing God, by the power of your Spirit open your Word and illumine our darkness that we might see clearly and live faithfully in the light of Christ; Amen.

Scripture Readings

Ephesians 2: 1-10

Numbers 21: 4-9

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Moses and the Moaning Myrtles

Rev. Dr. Kathy Stoner-Lasala

Respond to God's Word

Affirmation of Faith

Selected from the Brief Statement of Faith, PC(USA)

In a broken and fearful world, God's Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Offering Our Gifts and Lives to God

based on Psalm 107

Let us bring our sacrifice of thanksgiving and tell of God's deeds with joy!

We offer our life and labor to the Lord.

To donate, please visit the church website, fpedavenport.org, and click on "Donate Now,"
use the link: <https://bit.ly/2V8nEgm>, or mail your check in to the church office

Father in Heaven

Camille Saint-Saëns

David Bowles Edwards, tenor; Alex Gilson, piano

Presentation of Our Gifts and Lives to God

Please sing the Doxology.

Prayer of Dedication

adapted from Feasting on the Word Lenten Companion

Generous God, we thank you for your wonderful works among us. Accept this offering, together with our lives, that we might be an emblem of your steadfast love and faithfulness; Amen.

Prayers of the People

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The Lord's Prayer (debts)

Go To Serve With God's Blessing

Hymn

I'm Gonna Live

I'M GONNA LIVE



1. I'm gon-na live so _____ God can use me _____ an-y - where, Lord, _____ an-y -
2. I'm gon-na work so _____ God can use me _____ an-y - where, Lord, _____ an-y -
3. I'm gon-na pray so _____ God can use me _____ an-y - where, Lord, _____ an-y -
4. I'm gon-na sing so _____ God can use me _____ an-y - where, Lord, _____ an-y -



time! _____ I'm gon-na live so _____ God can use me _____
time! _____ I'm gon-na work so _____ God can use me _____
time! _____ I'm gon-na pray so _____ God can use me _____
time! _____ I'm gon-na sing so _____ God can use me _____



_____ an - y - where, Lord, _____ an - y - time! _____
_____ an - y - where, Lord, _____ an - y - time! _____
_____ an - y - where, Lord, _____ an - y - time! _____
_____ an - y - where, Lord, _____ an - y - time! _____

Charge and Benediction

Rev. Dr. Kathy Stoner-Lasala

We have received the immeasurable riches of God's grace; share this gift with others!

Worship God with songs of joy;

Follow Jesus our teacher;

And live by the grace (and patience!) of God's Spirit.

adapted from Call to Worship PC(USA)

Postlude

Joshua Fit De Battle of Jericho

Arr. Fela Sowande

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Marcel Dupré, "Unto Thee I Cry, O Lord Jesus" (©1932 H.W. Gray, controlled by Alfred Publishing Co.)

Fela Sowande, arr., "Joshua Fit de Battle of Jericho (©1955 Chappell Music Ltd., reprinted by GIA Publications, Inc.)

Closing Hymn: *Glory to God* #700, "I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me" (arrangement ©1984 Estate of Wendell P. Whalum)

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JOYS AND CONCERNS

Death: Philip Schwister, March 4, 2021

Mary Ann Van Houten, March 4, 2021

Arno Hilbert, March 7, 2021

Prayers are Welcome for: Terry Hilbert (*death of father, Arno*); Jamie Johnson, Scott and Bonnie Johnson (*death of husband and son Nic*); Jolene Keeney and family (*death of mother*); Bev Koos; Rebecca Koos; Lasala family (*loss of Frank's father, Felice*); Ann Schwister and the Grothusen family (*death of Philip, husband, father, and grandfather*); families and victims of abuse, addiction, violence, loss, suicide, COVID-19, and all recent natural disasters; FPC members and all others receiving the COVID vaccine.

BECAUSE WE SEE

One Great Hour of Sharing Leaders' Guide
Presbyterian Mission Agency, PC(USA)

The pandemic has stretched the Church in many ways — but we are still very much ... here. Although it was surely hard at first, we have expanded our thinking, and our doing, in new and innovative ways to close the distance, and be together. We have continued to worship. We have continued to build and shape community; we have continued to take care of one another. And on top of all that, we have continued to come together to serve those in need; both here in our own community and all over the world through our participation in special offerings and in the spirit of shared mission.

Despite difficulty, struggle and loss, the Church continues to declare its presence in the world, through different means, certainly, but toward the same purpose. The Church has found life and vitality in a bevy of different places, too: online, in parking lots, on social media, and even on the phone. This reminds us that the Church has always existed beyond the doors of our own, and all buildings. Although we value our community and time together, and we surely miss those bonds when we are physically apart, the plain fact is the Church is not the building.

Scripture reminds us time and again that God's people belong with those in need, releasing people from the bonds of injustice and with the hungry whom we are to welcome into our homes, as Isaiah's 58th chapter puts it. The Church finds itself with those who are thirsty, imprisoned, and suffering illness, as Jesus says in Matthew 25. "When did we see you?" "When did we see you?" — in a time of need, in a time of weakness? In a time of hunger, in a time of thirst? Even without a pandemic, it is a truth, a reminder, that in every time and season, the Church finds itself and its Savior through relationships with those in need. We belong in this place, not just to help address those needs, though that is surely part of it. We belong there, also, because it is through relationships with those whom we see experiencing hunger, oppression, thirst, imprisonment, or illness, we might be transformed, too, as we become/experience/create/live the Church, together.

One Great Hour of Sharing is the largest way Presbyterians come together to do mission and ministry with those whom we see are in need. Through these gifts, we declare that the Church belongs with people whom we see suffering from the terrors of howling winds and natural disasters; those from whom we see COVID-19 took futures and livelihoods, and whole cultures threatened as a result. The Church finds itself with those whom we see are thirsty because of too few water wells, and with those who are thirsty because of a lack of political will and the failure of powers and principalities to act in order to secure safe water for everyone. The Church belongs always, and forever, with those struggling for justice, righteousness and peace.

We give to **One Great Hour of Sharing** because of where the Church belongs, of who the church is. Please give generously to **One Great Hour of Sharing** so that our Church will continue to become, as Isaiah said, "repairers of the breach" alongside those experiencing great need. For when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

Performing Arts Series: Hannah Holman Concert

The 2021 PAS season began last night with a concert featuring QCSO Principal Cellist Hannah Holman, accompanied by Director of Music Matt Bishop. Due to COVID restrictions, this concert is virtual-only. Ticket purchasers will receive a private link to the pre-recorded concert video, which is available now until March 27. *If you prefer, a DVD of the concert can be sent to your home as well. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students and may be purchased online:* <https://fpc.betterworld.org/events/pas-virtual-concert-hannah-holman>

This concert features works by Antonio Vivaldi, Marin Marais, J.S. Bach, Gabriel Fauré, David Popper, and Sergei Rachmaninoff. To learn more about Hannah Holman, visit <https://www.hannahholmancello.com>.

Adult Christian Education (ACE): *Self-Development of People* Panel – Today, 10:45-11:45 AM

Join us for a panel presentation and Q&A all about the PC(USA)'s *Self-Development of People* program! SDOP partners with community groups to provide change by, for, and with low-income people. Presenters will be Margaret Mwale, PC(USA) Associate for Community Development and Constituent Relations, Mandy Adams Henderson, Chair for the National SDOP Community & Church-Wide Relations Committee, and Rev. Dr. Bec Davis, SDOP Committee Member.

Join us on Zoom at 10:45 AM:

<https://zoom.us/j/91539050753?pwd=b2JYN0VyOW52N0ZESHQ2YUhyelhtUT09>

Meeting ID: 915 3905 0753, Passcode: ACE

Easter Flowers 2021



The chancel will reflect the joy of the season with many beautiful spring plants in memory or honor of loved ones. If you wish to order a plant, complete this form indicating how you would like to be listed in the Easter bulletin, and place the slip, with your donation check, in the offering plate, or deliver it to the church office, no later than Sunday, April 14

Easter Flowers 2021

In memory or in honor of: (circle one)

Given by:

Virtual Silent Auction for Ireland Trip, Ends March 17 - Support Our Music Mission Outreach

During these short cold days of winter a team of FPC musical leprechauns have been building a Virtual Auction site (<http://fpc.betterworld.org/auctions/st-patricks-day-silent-auction>) where church members and visitors can bid on new items, collectibles, and services from the comfort of their homes beginning March 1 with the finale day being (of course) St. Patrick's Day, March 17. The finale event will take place on March 17 at 7:00 PM via Facebook Live (from the church's Facebook page), and will include Irish music and information about auction items and the 2022 choir tour; bidding ends at 8:00 pm on that day.

Here is a wee samplin' of auction items!

Private pool party complete with margaritas
\$100 Biaggi's gift card
Handmade hardwood snack table
Hawthorne and Halverson original artwork

John Deere collectibles gift basket
Handy Man for a Day
Signed and framed photography
And so much more!

Continued

All funds raised during this 17-day virtual auction will support our Sanctuary Choir's Music Mission Outreach in Ireland in July 2022. Mission projects taking place in Ireland will be shared in future Broadcasters and pre-trip programs. It's Easy to navigate, check your items, and pay online (<http://fpc.betterworld.org/auctions/st-patricks-day-silent-auction>); It's Fun to learn what your church friends are donating; It's for a Good Cause — music and mission!

85th Birthday Card Shower for Dennis Johns, Cards Due Monday, March 22!

Long time FPC member Dennis Johns is turning 85 this month and his family would like to throw him a card shower. If you would like to send him a birthday card, please mail or drop off your card to the church office. We will put the cards together and send them to him. We must receive cards no later than Monday, March 22 in order for them to be included in the mailing.

Easter Candy Needed, Please Bring Donations By Wednesday, March 24!

The church is holding its first ever Drive-Thru Easter Bag Dash! Sunday March 28 from 1:00-2:00 PM, kids ages one through sixth grade can dash across the lawn for a bag of Easter treats! Church members can help by donating Easter candy. Please bring donations to the church office by Wednesday, March 24. Our youth thank you!

Deacons' Toilet Paper Drive, Through Wednesday, March 31

It's toilet paper time! Once again, the Deacons are sponsoring a toilet paper drive. From now until March 31 you may bring donations to the church, which will be given to the Humility of Mary Shelter services. Not shopping during the pandemic? Send your monetary donations to the church office. Deacons await to do your toilet paper shopping for you! Let's demonstrate love in action and support this worthy cause.

Food Pantry Donations Needed!

Remember when church was in person? How you walked into the narthex and saw ushers with bulletins? Maybe a bulletin board with information about an upcoming event? And then you put your canned goods in the Food Pantry basket? Friends, the need for those Food Pantry donations is still with our community. Please know you may drop off goods in the church office during the week. Monetary donations are also accepted. All donations go to The Center on Brady St.

Christian Education for Youth (CEFY) Spring 2021

Kirkwood Choir Schedule – Wednesdays, 6:00-6:30 PM

The tentative Kirkwood Choir Early Spring 2021 schedule is listed below. The Club meets on scheduled Wednesdays from 6:00-6:30 PM via Zoom. Please contact Linda Bengfort for further information.

March 17 – IN RECESS

To get youth group updates, email Sarah Greim (sgreim@gmail.com), or text @612thgra to 81010 (or add @612thgra on the Remind app).

Kirkwood Club - Grades 1-5

Save the dates for our upcoming Kirkwood Club activities! We'll meet on Wednesdays from 6:00-6:45 PM on March 24, and April 28. Hope to see you there! To get Kirkwood Club updates, email Sarah Greim (sgreim@gmail.com), or text @fpcdkids to 81010.

Youth Events - Grades 6-12

Until COVID rates go down, Youth Group will be meeting monthly for games and activities. Save the dates for youth group fellowship activities! Everyone is welcome. We'll also have service activities, time and date *To Be Announced* depending on the project. We'll meet Sundays from 1:00 - 1:45 PM on March 28 and April 18.

Calling all kids! Drive-Thru Easter Basket Dash – Sunday, March 28, 1:00-2:00 PM

Easter egg hunts may be cancelled, but don't despair -- the church is holding its first ever drive-thru Easter Basket Dash! Sunday March 28, kids ages 2-6th grade are welcome between 1:00-2:00 PM. Parents enter the east lot on Iowa St. Your child will be directed to an area where they can grab an Easter bag off the lawn and then return to their vehicle. Social distancing measures will be followed.

Sunday School packets for April can also be picked up during this time for those who need them.

Mark your calendars! Don't miss the fun!

Confirmation Class – Postponed Until Fall 2021

This intensive class will include service activities, worship leadership, and learning about other faiths. Our fantastic teachers this year will be Sarah Greim, Al Frohlich, and Amy and Mike Saskowski! More details to come!

Sunday School is Online!

Attention parents! Join us on Zoom for Sunday School! We meet from 10:30-11:00 AM every Sunday for Bible stories, sharing, and learning together. For security, the Zoom link is being emailed - please be sure to register for Sunday school (or contact Paula Hartmann; ppelhartmann@aol.com) so we can get your kids involved!

Cherubs and MusikGarten – Sundays, 10:30 AM and 11:00 AM

Cherubs and MusikGarten meet on Zoom to coincide with our Sunday School schedule. MusikGarten will meet from 10:30-11:00 AM. Infants through three year-olds and their parents are invited to come to MusikGarten. Cherubs will meet from 11:00-11:15 AM following their Sunday School class that begins at 10:30 AM. Cherubs are in pre-school and Kindergarten. If you have questions about either group, contact Kathy Middleton (kathrynbl5@gmail.com; 563-505-0471.)

Join Online: Worship Watch Party - Sundays, 9:30 AM

For more information, see the e-news, church website or Facebook.

Bible Basics 101 - Wednesdays, 6:45 PM

This 9-week class is designed for those wanting to revisit many of favorite childhood Sunday school stories or even hear about them for the first time. All are welcome. Join in anytime. Here are some up-coming lessons. Contact Mark Jones for additional information or handout material (mkjones@mchsi.com).

March 17 – The story of Samson and Delilah, Judges, Chapters 13-16.

March 24 – The gospel stories of the last supper, Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26, Luke 22:7-39, John 13: 1-38.

Zoom information for Bible Basics 101:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93804817828?pwd=S1R3ZlB2Ly9zeGh3YnJoNEhDaVBjQT09>

Meeting ID: 938 0481 7828 Passcode: Jonah

Bible Basics 201 - Tuesdays, 6:15 PM

On March 16, we are going to learn about St. Patrick. Then, we begin a series reading through the Minor Prophets. Please contact Mark Jones (mkjones@mchsi.com) for more information. Join us anytime. We are a friendly bunch!

March 16: St. Patrick

March 23: Dominant Powers in the Middle East at the time of the Prophets

March 30: Joel

April 6: Amos

The Zoom address will stay the same. Join online:

<https://zoom.us/j/98965381440?pwd=TUdyMXltRTMrRXdFWnBEZ0NEKzBYUT09>

Meeting ID: 989 6538 1440 Passcode: 240979

Presbytery Mission and Social Justice Team Lenten Discussion Series - You're Invited!

The Mission and Social Justice Team will be offering a five-week online Lenten video and discussion series entitled, “America’s Unholy Ghosts: An Examination of Christianity, White Supremacy, and Racism.” Using short videos produced by The Work of the People, Rev. Trey Hegar and Marta Pumroy will facilitate meaningful dialogue with participants after viewing the films during each session. All Presbyterians in East Iowa are invited to participate. Registration will be required in order to receive the ZOOM invitation. The series will be offered on both Sunday nights at 6:00 PM – led by Trey and then repeated on Wednesday afternoons at 4:00 PM – led by Marta.

The series began on Sunday, February 21 and Wednesday, February 24, 2021.

To watch a trailer and to register for the event, please go to <https://peia.org/unholy-ghosts/>