

# Welcome All to Sunday Worship Service



March 5, 2023

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | 2408 N. NAVARRO ST. | VICTORIA, TEXAS 77901

WWW.FPCOFVICTORIA.ORG | WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FPCOFVICTORIA

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

First Presbyterian Church  
March 5, 2023, 10:30 a.m.  
Second Sunday in Lent

Prelude “Lift Thine Eyes”

*Felix Mendelssohn—Bartholdy, 1805-1847*

### Welcome and Announcements

#### \*Passing of the Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you!**

#### Call to Worship

One: As God set Abram, Sarai, and Lot on a journey,  
God calls us to follow in trust.

All: **God is able to make us more than we have been  
and blesses us on the way.**

One: As Jesus invited Nicodemus to be born again,  
Christ invites us to become a new creation.

All: **Christ calls us out of darkness into his marvelous light,  
and we are saved through him.**

#### Prayer of the Day (*unison*)

God our helper,  
our shade, our protector,  
you are able to give life to the dead,  
to call into being things that do not exist.  
We trust in your power  
to make all things new;  
to keep us in sunlight and moonlight,  
along rocky paths and pathways unknown;  
until all our going and coming brings us at last  
to your kingdom promised in Christ,  
in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

\*Opening Hymn: “The God of Abraham Praise”

No. 488

#### \*Invitation to Confession

We cannot earn God’s grace or favor.  
It comes to us, not as something owed,  
but as a gift freely given.

Confident in God’s love for us,  
even when we are ungodly,  
we confess our sins in faith.

*\*Please stand in body or spirit*

**\*Prayer of Confession** (*unison*)

Gracious God, we come before you  
in need of forgiveness and grace.  
You call us to trust in you completely,  
but we do not.  
We are timid and fearful as we follow your lead.  
We justify our actions and words,  
though we know they are not what you require.  
We struggle to understand the new life Christ offers,  
preferring old habits to risky change.  
Forgive us, we pray.  
Help us to be born anew into the life of Christ,  
trusting that you have included us by grace  
in the family of faith.  
In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

**\*Kyrie Eleison** (*unison*)

Lord, have mercy upon us.  
Christ, have mercy upon us.  
Lord, have mercy upon us.

**\*Assurance of Pardon**

Friends, God is for us and not against us!  
For that very reason,  
God sent the Son into the world  
not to condemn the world,  
but that the world might be saved through him.  
Believe in God, Friends!  
Believe the good news: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

**\*Gloria Patri**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.  
Amen, amen.

**Prayer for Illumination**

God of signs and wonders,  
we come to your word again and again,  
seeking understanding  
and the new life it offers.  
By the power of your Holy Spirit,  
illumine our hearts and minds  
so that we may believe this testimony  
and have eternal life.  
In the name of Jesus Christ,  
our teacher and Savior, we pray. Amen.

**First Scripture Reading:** Psalm 121

P. 571 in the Old Testament

I lift up my eyes to the hills—  
from where will my help come?  
My help comes from the LORD,  
who made heaven and earth.  
He will not let your foot be moved;  
he who keeps you will not slumber.  
He who keeps Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep.

The LORD is your keeper;  
the LORD is your shade at your right hand.  
The sun shall not strike you by day,  
nor the moon by night.  
The LORD will keep you from all evil;  
he will keep your life.  
The LORD will keep  
your going out and your coming in  
from this time on and forevermore.

**Anthem:** Ye Must Be Born Again

*William T. Sleeper, 1819-1904*  
*George C. Stebbins, 1846-1945*

**Second Scripture Reading:** John 3:1-21

P. P. 93-94 in the New Testament

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. 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."

**Sermon:** Nicodemus Christians

Rev. Jim DeMent

John 3:1-12: Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night . . .

*Silence and stillness*

**\*Congregational Hymn:** “My Faith Looks Up to Thee”

No. 383

**Presentation of Tithes and Offerings**

**Offertory:** I to the Hills Will Lift My Eyes

*Scottish Psalter*

**\*Doxology**

**\*Prayer of Thanksgiving** (*unison*)

Gracious God,  
we dedicate to you not only these gifts,  
but also ourselves, in deep gratitude—  
for your call on our lives,  
your guidance in the baptismal journey,  
and for blessing us  
that we may be a blessing to others.  
Accept what we bring  
for your own good purposes.  
In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

**\*Affirmation of Faith** (*unison*)

*From A Brief Statement of Faith*

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life.  
The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles  
rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,  
engages us in the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism,  
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,  
and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.  
In a broken and fearful world  
the 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!”

**Prayers of the People**

**The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper**

**INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is truly right and just to give you thanks  
in every time and in every place, almighty God.

We give you thanks for the gift of creation  
and especially for the gift of our life.

We are grateful that you have made us in your image  
and that you pardon us when we act  
as though you have no authority over our lives.

We are grateful that you sustain us in your great love.

And so, with all your people,  
with angels, archangels,  
and with all the company of heaven  
we praise and magnify your glorious name,  
joining our voices in the eternal hymn:

**SANCTUS: UNISON**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ,  
who was born of Mary  
and shared the joys and sorrows  
of the life that we know.

You anointed Jesus Christ with your Spirit  
to preach good news to the poor,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
to give sight to the blind, and to liberate the oppressed,  
proclaiming the year of the Lord’s favor.

In Christ's baptism, suffering, death, and resurrection  
you gave birth to your Church,  
and made a new covenant with us  
by water and the Spirit.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,  
we take from your creation this bread and this wine,  
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming,  
proclaiming the mystery of faith:

**GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF FAITH: UNISON**

**Christ has died,  
Christ is risen,  
Christ will come again.**

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon your people  
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,  
so that the bread we share and the cup we bless  
will be for us the body and blood of Christ.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ  
and with all who share this feast,  
united in ministry in every place.

As this bread is Christ's body for us,  
send us out to be the body of Christ in the world.

Make us one with Christ,  
one with our neighbors,  
and one in service to all the world.

Keep us faithful in your service  
until Christ comes in final victory,  
and we shall feast with all your saints  
in the joy of your eternal realm.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,  
now and forever. **Amen.**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

**COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**One:** Eternal God,  
we give you thanks for this holy mystery  
in which you have given yourself to us.

**All:** **Grant that we may go into the world  
in the strength of your Spirit  
to give ourselves for others  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**\*Closing Hymn:** "We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight"

No. 399

**\*Charge**

**\*Benediction**

**\*Congregational Response** (*unison*)

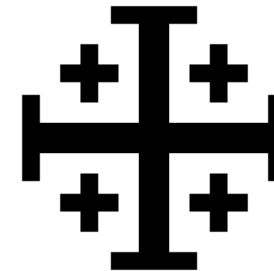
*Jeremiah E. Rankin, 1880/William G Tomer, 1880*

**God be with you until we meet again;  
By His counsels guide, uphold you,  
With his sheep securely fold you;  
God be with you 'till we meet agai**

**'Till we meet, 'till we meet  
'Till we meet at Jesus' feet;  
'Till we meet, till we meet  
God be with you 'till we meet again.**

**Postlude:** Christe Sanctorum

*-1681 French Hymn*



We have reproduced below the lyrics of the hymns selected for this morning's worship service. All the hymns below are either in the public domain or have been reproduced, under license, from *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville: 1990) or from Christian Copywrite Licensing International (*ccli.com*). If you are worshipping with us from home, we encourage you to sing along. Follow the verses in this order:

Verse 1  
Verse 2

Verse 3  
Verse 4

### **The God of Abraham Praise**

The God of Abraham praise,  
Who reigns enthroned above;  
The ancient of eternal days,  
The God of love!  
The Lord, the great I Am,  
By earth and heaven confessed,  
We bow before Your holy name,  
Forever blest.

Your spirit still flows free,  
High surging where it will;  
In prophet's word You spoke of old  
And You speak still.  
Established is Your law,  
And changeless it shall stand,  
Deep writ upon the human heart,  
On sea, or land.

You have eternal life  
Implanted in the soul;  
Your love shall be our strength and stay,  
While ages roll.  
We praise You, living God!  
We praise Your holy name;  
The first, the last, beyond all thought,  
And still the same!

### **My Faith Looks Up to Thee**

My faith looks up to Thee,  
Thou Lamb of Calvary,  
Savior divine:  
Now hear me while I pray,  
Take all my guilt away,  
O let me from this day  
Be wholly Thine!

May Thy rich grace impart  
Strength to my fainting heart,  
My zeal inspire;  
As Thou hast died for me,  
O may my love to Thee  
Pure, warm, and changeless be,  
A living fire!

While life's dark maze I tread,  
And griefs around me spread,  
Be Thou my guide:  
Bid darkness turn to day,  
Wipe sorrow's tears away,  
Nor let me ever stray  
From Thee aside!

When ends life's transient dream,  
When death's cold, sullen stream  
Shall o'er me roll,  
Blest Savior, then, in love,  
Fear and distrust remove;  
O bear me safe above,  
A ransomed soul!

### **We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight**

We walk by faith, and not by sight;  
No gracious words we hear  
From Christ who spoke as none e'er spoke;  
But we believe him near.

We may not touch His hands and side,  
Nor follow where he trod;  
But in His promise we rejoice,  
And cry, "My Lord and God!"

Help then, O Lord, our unbelief;  
And may our faith abound  
To call on You when You are near,  
And seek where You are found.

That, when our life of faith is done,  
In realms of clearer light  
We may behold You as You are  
With full and endless sight.





**Caregiving Concerns and Prayer Requests**

<b>Gloria Aouelle</b>	<b>Bette Austin</b>	<b>Nathan Galvan (Son of Leila Galvan)</b>	<b>Kathleen McCameron</b>
<b>Maria Pezeski (Mother of Leila Galvan)</b>	<b>Mikey Ruddock</b>	<b>Michael Cabrera (Grandson of Martha Tarkington)</b>	<b>Carol Wisdom (Daughter of Lea Lenz)</b>

**For caregiving concerns—please contact:  
Lynn McAuley (979.248.6238)**

**FPC Opportunities for Worship & Service**

**Tuesday March 7**  
12:00 PM PW Coordinating Meeting

**Thursday March 9**  
9:30 AM Adele Carsner Young Circle

**Friday March 10**  
5:00 PM Finance Meeting

**Sunday, March 5**  
9:30 AM “The Prophets Still Speak”  
Nellie Hudson Adult Sunday School Class  
9:30 AM Kingdom Kids– Sunday School for  
children ages 5-12  
10:30 AM Worship Service

**FPC Victoria Servant Leadership  
Session Members**

Jim DeMent, Moderator  
Donald Anderson, Mission & Outreach  
Frances Byrne, Caregiving & Fellowship, Personnel  
Leila Galvan, Christian Education  
John Horadam, Building & Grounds  
Lynn McAuley, Asst. Clerk, Caregiving & Fellowship  
Camille Miller, Worship  
Patrick Patterson, Building & Grounds  
Becky Richter, Christian Education, Mission & Outreach  
Bonnie Wilkinson, Clerk of Session, Membership

**Other**

Dawn Neel, Treasurer & Chair of Finance Committee  
Melissa Samudio, Presbyterian Day School  
Jim Stokes, Assistant Treasure

**Pastor’s Notes**

The painting on our Bulletin cover is entitled, “Christ and Nicodemus on a Rooftop,” and was painted by the renowned Afro-American painter, Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859-1937). John’s account of Nicodemus’s meeting with Jesus does not say it occurred on a rooftop, but in the custom and practice of the age, it might well have happened that way.

Your preacher enjoys studying the origin of words (“etymology”), and our New Testament Scripture lesson this morning gives us an opportunity to consider the origin of the word “Amen.” Pronounced the same way in English, the Hebrew word “אָמֵן” appears frequently in the Old Testament, and it means “certainly” or “truly.” The practice arose among worshipers listening to a rabbi or to scripture being read in the synagogue to respond, in confirmation, agreement, or encouragement, with an “amen” to what was being said or read. This practice continues to this day in many Christian traditions as well.

Twice in our Scripture reading this morning, Jesus says “Very truly, I tell you” (vv. 3 and 11). In Greek, Jesus is beginning his sentences with the words “Amen, amen (ἀμήν, ἀμήν)”! In this sense, the phrase is being used as an emphasis for or confirmation of what is being said. Whenever you read “verily, verily” or “truly, truly” or “very truly” in the New Testament, know that Jesus is not ending a prayer or a hymn; he is speaking God’s truth.

**Clergy, Music, and Administration**

Rev. Jim DeMent, Interim Pastor  
Robert Wyatt, Organist/Choirmaster  
Erica Colding Administrator

**Office Hours**

Monday — Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM  
361.575.2441  
info@fpcofvictoria.org