



Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives in 2019

14 November 2021
25th Sunday after Pentecost

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Established 1817

A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
Building Community ▪ Transforming Lives ▪ Engaging the World

Trusting that God's grace embraces and makes a covenant with all believers, First Presbyterian Church intends to be an inclusive place of spiritual growth for all people. All persons are welcomed into this fellowship and membership regardless of age, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic or racial identity, economic or educational status, or political affiliation.

Assurance of Pardon

Summary of the Law

Matthew 22:37-39

“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 the first commandment. And a second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

(11am) Children’s Moment

Maren Sonstegard-Spray

Hymn 175, verse 1

**Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness,
And all these things shall be added unto you.**

Allelu, alleluia!

Lord’s Prayer

Hymnal p. 35

*2nd-grade children or younger may depart for Children’s
Worship and Wonder in the Ministry Center*

Hymn 175, verse 2

**Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and you shall find;
Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you.**

Allelu, alleluia!

Anthem

My Lord! What a Morning

spiritual/Costen

Prayer for Illumination

Lesson

Mark 13:1-8

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Anna Pinckney Straight

*Affirmation of Faith

A Declaration of Faith, 1977

Jesus announced the coming of God's kingdom and its hidden presence in the midst of the world's kingdoms. He taught his disciples to seek God's kingdom first. We believe Christ gives us and demands of us lives in pilgrimage toward God's kingdom. Like Christ we may enjoy on our journey all that sustains life and makes it pleasant and beautiful. No more than Christ are we

spared the darkness, ambiguity, and threat of life in the world. We are in the world, but not of the world. Our confidence and hope for ourselves and other people do not rest in the powers and achievements of this world, but in the coming and hidden presence of God's kingdom. Christ calls each of us to a life appropriate to that kingdom: to serve as he has served us; to take up our cross, risking the consequences of faithful discipleship; to walk by faith, not by sight, to hope for what we have not seen.

***Hymn 837** *What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine* Hoffman/
Showalter

(11am) **Introduction of New Members**

Joys and Concerns of the Congregation

The flowers in the Sanctuary this morning are given by Mary Silver to the glory of God and in memory of her parents, Sidney & Edith Watson, and her brother, Glen Watson.

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

Benediction

Postlude *Come, Ye Thankful People Come* arr. M. Hayes

If you have not already done so, please place your offering in the wooden collection boxes nearest the exit you use. We look forward to seeing you again next week.

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Liturgist: The Rev. Dr. Maren Sonstegard-Spray

Organist/Pianist: Cindy Sutton

Ensemble: Members of the Resurrection Singers

WELCOME VISITORS! Please write your name on a visitor's badge for your blouse or lapel. Along with our members, please sign the Friendship Pad when passed to you during the service.

CHILDREN are welcome at First Presbyterian Church. The nursery is available for infants and preschool children in Room 1.23 in the Ministry Center from 8:15am-12:15pm. Following the Children's Moment, those in the 2nd grade or younger may depart for Children's Worship and Wonder in the Ministry Center. For all children in worship, there are worship bags available at the front and back of the Sanctuary.

RESTROOMS are available in the Ministry Center, (including a family restroom), the Session House, and the Fellowship Center.

HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES with ear coverings are available. Please ask an usher if you have need.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY is provided by ramps between the Ministry Center and the Sanctuary, in the back of the Ministry Center, along the side of the Session house, and at the front and side entrances of the J. Murphy Smith Fellowship Center.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Confirmation Choir (grades 6-12) will NOT meet this afternoon. We will rehearse next Sunday, November 21, at 5:00 pm in the Choir Room.

Children's Choirs have begun

We are learning some songs for the Candlelight Service Dec. 12 and the Christmas Eve Service, both to be held outside.

Covenant Choir (grades 2-5) will meet each Monday from 4:00-5:00 pm in the Choir Room.

Kinderchoir (Kindergarten and First Grade) will meet each Tuesday from 4:00 to 5:00 pm in the Choir Room.

You may register online on our website, or by filling out registration cards available in the Narthex and Vestibule.

Youth Fellowship

JOY (Just Older Youth), our youth fellowship for middle and high schoolers, meets tonight 5:30-7:30 pm in the Session house. SALT (Serving and Learning Together) for 3-5th graders will meet next Sunday, November 21!

Christmas Wreath Fundraiser

We are partnering with Vermont Wreath Center, Inc. again this year to purchase live wreaths as a fundraiser for our youth ministry! We are using their online purchasing option again this year, and therefore will not be having a bulk order shipped to the church. You can access the online ordering site through the church website or by going to www.vermontcenterwreaths.com/?ref=first OR you can still order through one of our JOY youth group members! **Ordering is open now until Dec. 1st**, and wreaths will be shipped directly to your home.

Sock Tree

During December, the Sock Tree will be in the narthex. Church members and friends are encouraged to donate new socks for men, women, and children. The socks do not need to be Christmas socks. After the holiday season the socks are donated to the homeless shelter at RCS. The staff at the shelter appreciates new socks as socks are seldom ever donated. Questions--please phone Norma Morra 636-1010.

Operation Jammies for Coastal Women's Shelter

Each year we collect “new” pajamas for every mother and child receiving services from the Coastal Women's Shelter. For the children, size 6 months to 16 for both boys and girls are needed. The sizes needed for women range from small to XXL. There is a collection bin inside the main entrance to the Ministry Center. You can also drop off the pajamas on Sunday morning. Pajamas will be collected until **December 20, 2021**. Also, remember that you can always donate to Coastal Women's Shelter through Gifts of the Heart.

2021 Thank Offering of Presbyterian Women

In 1888, when Eliza Clokey of Springfield, Ohio, urged each woman to give one dollar over and above her usual contribution to the Women's General Missionary Society of the United Presbyterian Church of North America as a “thank offering to her Lord,” women responded, and the Thank Offering was born. Women gave sacrificially and were credited with saving the worldwide missionary movement of the church at that time. Over the last 33 years, Presbyterian Women has granted \$27 million to more than 1,600 different projects at home and around the world through the PW Thank Offering. You do not have to be a woman or a member of Presbyterian Women to contribute. At least 40 percent of the offering funds health ministries. First Presbyterian Church of New Bern has received grants from these offerings for Backpack Blessings and ESL lab equipment! We welcome contributions from anyone in the congregation who wishes to do so! Please make your checks payable to “Presbyterian Women” and write “Thank offering” in the notation line. You may drop off your contribution at the front desk of the church office. Many thanks!

New Hope Volunteer Village – Donation Needed

The New Hope Volunteer Village (located at Neuse Forrest Presbyterian Church in James City) has begun hosting work teams from across the United States to repair homes damaged in Hurricane Florence. The Village is looking for two used or new stand mixers for use in the two kitchens at the village so that teams can prepare

meals. Contact Maren (maren@firstpresnb.org) with questions or to learn more about the work of the Village.

Donations of Teacups and Saucers Needed

Habitat for Humanity of Craven County is hosting a Women's Tea Fundraiser for International Women's Day on March 8, 2022. Currently, they are looking for donations of teacups, saucers, teapots, and tiered trays. Before donating, please check your items for chips and cracks; cups and saucers do not have to be matching. Donations can be dropped off Wednesday-Saturday from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm at their ReStore located at 930 Pollock Street. For questions about donations, please reach out to Volunteer Coordinator, Catherine Campbell, at ccampbell@cravencountyhabitat.org or (252) 633-9599, ext. 104. A small donation like this can help build homes, communities, and hope in big ways!

Education

Sunday School classes meet Sundays 9:40-10:40 am

Sunday School for Children

Children and Teachers are asked to wear masks in the classroom.

Preschool – active play in the Nursery

Kindergarten-5th Grade – Ministry Center Room 1.27 (Follow Me: Biblical Practices for Faithful Living)

Middle & High School – Ministry Center Room 2.23-24 (Follow Me: Biblical Practices for Faithful Living)

Sunday School for Adults

The Present Word/George Evans – Session House Parlor

The class is currently studying the series "Celebrating God," looking at passages in both the Old and New Testaments. The class will begin a new study on **December 5** "Justice, Law, History" in Old Testament texts. Please contact George Evans (gkevans4@gmail.com) with questions. The book is available in the church office.

TheoEd Talks/Jim Copland and Beth Paul – Ministry Center Room 2.21 (large center classroom on the second floor of the Ministry Center)

Final gathering for this class is today, November 14.

Getting Involved with God: Wrestling with the strange and sacred Scripture of the Old Testament/Maren Sonstegard-Spray – Session House Main Room

Final gathering for this class is today, November 14.

Special Lecture on November 21 during Sunday School

The Education Commission is excited to announce a special lecture on the history of New Bern and how that history has shaped our community today. Local historian Bernard George will present a lecture entitled "New Birth of Freedom: The Early African American Experience in New Bern." Bernard George is a former member of the Board of Directors of the New Bern Historical Society and was awarded the Education Award which acknowledged all his work to share New Bern History, most especially our African American history. He was instrumental in the creation of the New Bern African American Heritage Trail. Bernard George's family has lived for nine generations in Craven County. This lecture, and accompanying time of questions and answers, will take place on Sunday, **November 21**, from 9:40 - 10:40 am in the Session House.

Coming Soon! Advent Sunday School Class

Led by Anna Pinckney Straight, beginning on Sunday, **November 28**, and running for the four Sundays of Advent. "I love Christmas. I like the candles. I like the trees. I even like the shopping. But I particularly like the stories." These are the words that Amy-Jill Levine uses to introduce her book on Advent. In *Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent*, Levine explores the biblical texts surrounding the story of the birth of Jesus. What is Advent? For whom are we waiting? For what are we waiting? In our four weeks together, we will explore the season of Advent (Anna's favorite season of the church year). Books will be available in the church office or can be ordered. The class will meet in the Session House main room.

Mid-Week Formation Opportunities

Monday Evening Women's Bible Study

The group will meet on Mondays from 7:00-8:30 pm, starting with a hybrid arrangement – those comfortable meeting in person at the Ministry Center conference room, and those not yet comfortable attending online via Zoom at the same time. Join us as we accompany Amy-Jill Levine, one of our favorite authors and teachers, and author of “The Difficult Words of Jesus,” as she guides us through that struggle to a place of greater understanding of what it is that our Lord is requesting of us. For more information, call Wendy Moeller 252-876-7259 or Marice Debruhl 252-637-5468 or Cathy Wingfield 828-767-0975.

Tuesday Afternoon Grief Support

The group meets every 2nd Tuesday of the month from 12:00 to 1:00 pm in the Chapel. This ongoing group provides its members with companionship, understanding, support, and guidance as we seek to go on living when someone we love dies. All are welcome. Come and bring a friend. Contact Lloyd for more information.

Life of Prayer: The Practice of Contemplative Living

Led by Lloyd Griffith on Wednesdays noon-1:00 pm and meets in Ministry Center Room 2.21 and by Zoom in a hybrid format to begin the fall. The group will be studying “Soul Force” by Lloyd Griffith and “Immortal Diamond” by Richard Rohr. *The group will not meet this coming Wednesday, November 17th, or the following Wednesday, November 24th. They will resume the normal schedule again beginning December 1st. All are welcome!*

Wednesday Evening Contemplative Worship

Led by Lloyd Griffith and meets in the Chapel in the Ministry Center. This contemplative, or reflective, approach to worship is offered each Wednesday from 5 to 5:30 pm in the Chapel. This quiet service is focused on silence, prayer, and reflection on the Biblical text chosen for preaching the coming Sunday. The Lord's Supper is observed on the 4th Wednesday of the month. Come when you can and bring a friend.

Thursday Morning Women's Bible Study – Advent Book

We will begin a new book for Advent on Thursday, **December 2**, “Advent in Plain Sight: A Devotion through Ten Objects” by Jill Duffield. Our Thursday Morning Women's Bible Study meets weekly 10-11 am by Zoom. The book is available for purchase on Amazon (Kindle version also available). If you need help acquiring the book or want to be added to the email list for the class, please contact Maren (maren@firstpresnb.org).

Sunday Afternoon Men's Beer and Theology led by Ken Wilkins at Brewery 99 (1014 Pollock St) at 4:00 pm, Sunday, **November 21** (on the third Sunday of the month). This will be a casual men's gathering for fellowship and conversation around topics of theology and faith. Don't let any bad weather stop you from coming – there is a nice indoor space for gathering!

Presbyterian (and friends) Wine and Theology Open to anyone interested in wine AND theology! We will meet the first Sunday of the month, **December 5**, at Cravin' Wine (2500 Trent Rd Suite 16, located in Trent Road Plaza) at 4pm. This will be a casual gathering for fellowship and conversation around topics of theology and faith. Wine will be available for purchase for \$5 a glass with some small bites to go with it. Questions? Contact Maren (maren@firstpresnb.org).

Pandemic Devotional Booklet

From March 2020 to July 2021, devotions written by church members and staff were emailed to the congregation on weekdays. These devotions have been collected into a booklet that will be made available to the congregation. Please contact Maren (maren@firstpresnb.org) if you would like to receive a copy.

Church Nursery

Our Nursery, located on the first floor of our Ministry Center, has resumed regular hours (8:15 am-12:15 pm). We have a team of paid, trained, and background-checked nursery workers to care for infants and preschool-aged children during Sunday school and both worship services. Stop by and say hi to our new nursery workers Cindy, Kimberly, and Carolyn, and our nursery coordinator Bailey.

Fellowship Café

Join us from 9:30 until 10:45 am in the Fellowship Café (on the first floor of the Ministry Center) for a cup of coffee, a bite or two, and to renew your church friendships, or stop by and grab a coffee on your way to Sunday School!

Church Email List and Church Newsletter

We communicate a lot of things happening in the life of the church through emails through Constant Contact. If you would like to receive regular announcements or the newsletter, or both, please contact Cathy Wingfield (cathy@firstpresnb.org) or sign up on the church website!

Nametags

We want to encourage everyone to get in the habit of wearing their nametags again! If you have misplaced yours, Marcy, our Office Administrator, is happy to make you another one (marcy@firstpresnb.org). There is a board in the Narthex where you can leave your nametag at the end of the service, and it will be waiting for you the next Sunday.