



First Presbyterian Church

New Bern, North Carolina

Established 1817

A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Building Community ▪ Transforming Lives ▪ Engaging the World

20 February 2022

7th Sunday after Epiphany

Worship for the Lord's Day

Prayer of Preparation

*Christ, whose insistent call disturbs our settled lives:
give us discernment to hear your word,
grace to relinquish our tasks,
and courage to follow empty-handed wherever you may lead,
so that the voice of your gospel may reach to the ends of the earth. Amen.*

Welcome

The Chiming of the Trinity

Prelude

God Is Calling through the Whisper

Alice Jordan

Introit

God Is Calling through the Whisper

Bringle/Polish carol

***Call to Worship**

Psalm 37:4–5, 7, 39

Take delight in the Lord, who satisfies the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord and trust in God's actions.

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for God.

The Lord is our salvation and our refuge in times of trouble.

Let us worship God!

***Hymn 14**

For the Beauty of the Earth

Pierpoint/Kocher

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Loving God, you call us to your merciful, gracious love freely given without expectation or strings attached. While we are eager to experience your mercy and grace in our own lives, we are quick to make our extension of your mercy and grace conditional for others. We would rather show mercy to those we judge worthy. We would rather extend grace to those who will show us grace in return. We would rather love those who are easiest to love.

We pause for a time of silent confession.

Forgive us, Redeeming God.

To transform our hearts with your amazing grace and unconditional love that our relationships are transformed as we extend your mercy and grace as an expression of our gratitude for your saving love we know in Jesus Christ. Amen.

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.’”

(11 am) **Children's Moment**

The Rev. Dr. Maren Sonstegard-Spray

Lord's Prayer

Hymnal p. 35

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

Anthem

Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive

Herklots/1820

Prayer for Illumination

Lesson

Luke 6:27-38

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

Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Anna Pinckney Straight

***Affirmation of Faith**

The Confession of 1967

The church confesses its faith when it bears a present witness to God's grace in Jesus Christ. The church gathers to praise God, to hear God's word for humankind, to baptize and to join in the Lord's Supper, to pray for and present the world to God in worship, to enjoy fellowship, to receive instruction, strength, and comfort, to order and organize its own corporate life, to be tested, renewed, and reformed, and to speak and act in the world's affairs as may be appropriate to the needs of the time. "Now to him who by the power within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever." Amen.

Anthem

The Church of Christ Cannot Be Bound

Tice/Spiritual

Joys and Concerns of the Congregation

The flowers in the Sanctuary this morning are given by Polly Frank to the glory of God and in memory of Jerry on the 2nd anniversary of his death.

*The sympathy of the congregation is extended to Bill Hollows
on the death of his wife, Nancy, on February 11.
A funeral service will take place on Wednesday, February 23 at 11 am
in the Sanctuary, inurnment in the Memorial Garden,
and reception to follow in the Session House.*

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Benediction

Postlude

Intrada

Grayston Ives

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.

The prayer of confession is © Presbyterian Outlook, 2022. Liturgy was written by Brian Coulter and Michael Washchevski. The prayer of preparation is from All Desires Known, by Janet Morley (New York: Morehouse Publishing), 2006.

Organist: Vance Harper Jones

Ensemble: Members of the Daybreak and Sanctuary Choirs

Music Notes: Today's postlude was written for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee Thanksgiving Service in Saint Paul's Cathedral, London, on 7 June 1977. An email to Vance from composer Bill Ives on 10 May 2018 explains the original ending and how it was changed for the published version.

Intrada is played today in honor of the seventieth anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's reign. The dignified, patriotic tone of the British celebratory musical genre gives this work the splendor befitting the closing ceremony of the XXIV Olympic Winter Games, 2022.

**To see art focused on
and inspired by
today's scripture
reading,
look here:**



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 8:15 am-12:15 pm. 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.

MASKS are required in the Sanctuary for today (February 20) and next Sunday (February 27), but due to decreasing infection numbers and hospitalizations, the Worship Commission has approved worship becoming “mask optional” in March, encouraging those who feel more comfortable wearing a mask to continue doing so while not requiring it of the entire congregation.

These changes to our Covid-19 response are communicated by email and will be shared on our website and Facebook page. If you’d like to be added to this email list, please contact cathy@firstpresnb.org or visit firstpresnb.org/communications (scroll to the bottom of the page).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Empty Bowls

Empty Bowls is a joint outreach of Religious Community Services and The Craven Arts Council & Gallery. Thursday, **February 24**, 2022, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm at Temple Church, 1500 Kingdom Way, New Bern. Empty Bowls tickets are now on sale! Tickets are \$30 each. Proceeds go to support the Arts and to feed the hungry. At the event, you will be served your choice of two bowls of soup prepared by participating area restaurants and churches. Also, you will be invited to choose a pottery bowl, handmade by a local potter, to take home! It is a fun festive event! **Tickets are \$30 each and are available at the Bank of the Arts, Fuller’s Music, or Mitchell’s Hardware.** For more information call: (252) 638-2577 or www.emptybowlsnewbern.org

Youth Fellowship

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

Rothermel Foundation Lecture – February 27

Stars, Galaxies, Planets, and Black Holes: Exploring a Universe of Mystery and Awe is the title of the Rothermel Foundation lecture to be held on **Sunday, February 27**, in the Sanctuary at 2 pm. Black holes lurk in the centers of nearly all galaxies. And mysterious dark matter and dark energy play “tug of war” on the

ever-expanding fabric of space. Where do life and purpose fit in this incredible cosmic drama? This talk will showcase incredible astronomical images and discoveries which enrich our contemplation of life and human significance in an awe-inspiring Cosmos. Dr. Jennifer Wiseman is an astrophysicist, author, and speaker. She studies the process of star and planet formation in our galaxy using radio, optical, and infrared telescopes.

March Fellowship Meal – Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

We will be gathering **Tuesday, March 1**, in the Fellowship Center from 5:30 to 7:00 in observance of Shrove Tuesday. A pancake dinner will be served. Our Youth Groups will be helping with the meal preparation. Please plan to come out and watch them flipping pancakes. Please contact the church office (637-3270, marcy@firstpresnb.org) by **Monday, February 28th**, and let them know of your intentions to attend. To-go plates will be available for this event. Also, mark your calendars for our April Fellowship Meal which will be served on Wednesday, April 6, 2022. More information to come.

An Evening to Celebrate Women: Habitat for Humanity of Craven County International Women’s Day will be celebrated by Habitat for Humanity of Craven County with a “Perceiving Strength” Tea & Fundraiser event on **Tuesday, March 8, 2022**, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at the Harrison Center on Middle Street. In addition to tea served in beautiful china teacups, and a selection of delicious pastries and finger sandwiches, a silent auction will offer an opportunity to bid on a variety of great items. Tickets are \$25 per person, or \$200 for a table of 8 guests and can be purchased by contacting Catherine Campbell at Habitat for Humanity at 252-633-9599, ext.104, or ccampbell@cravencountyhabitat.org. Additional donations, or Regrets with a donation, are always welcome.

Education

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

Sunday School for Children

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

Special Offering: 2022 Faith Build Information Session by Catherine Campbell - Library (Second floor of the Ministry Center) - TODAY

The 2022 Habitat for Humanity Faith Build is starting in February! It is an opportunity for service and relationship-building in our community. On Sunday, **February 20**, 9:40-10:40 in the Library, Catherine Campbell, the Volunteer Coordinator for Habitat for Humanity, will walk through a history of Habitat for Humanity, how we make an impact in our community, and what volunteering looks like for all ages and abilities as the Faith Build begins. The ground-breaking will take place on Saturday, **March 12** at 2110 Pearson Street. Stay tuned for more details!

Glittering Vices: A look at the Seven Deadly Sins/Maren Sonstegard-Spray - Session House Main Room - Starting TODAY

During the season of Lent, a time of self-examination and reflection, let's take a closer look at the seven deadly sins (also known as the seven capital vices). The study of vices has a revealing and illuminating power and can be the starting point for spiritual growth. We will be guided by Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung's book "Glittering Vices" (but no need to buy the book) and feel free to join in for any of the classes. We will meet 9:40-10:40 am in the Session House Main Room.

The Present Word/George Evans – Session House Parlor

The class is currently studying the series “Justice, Law, History” in Old Testament texts. The class is beginning a new series “God Frees and Redeems” on **March 6**. This series examines the nature of God through the lenses of liberation and Christian freedom. God’s deliverance is experienced in the story of the Passover and the good news of Easter. Please contact George Evans (gkevans4@gmail.com) with questions. The book is available in the church office.

Getting Old – Growing Gracefully/Lloyd Griffith – Ministry Center Room 2.21 and Zoom

“The laws of nature that dictate sundown dictate our demise.” This final part of our journey raises inevitable questions: What is our relationship with the younger generation? What is truth? What is the connection between work and vocation? How can I stay engaged with the outer life? How can I stay engaged with the inner life? Where do I go when I die? How we respond to these built-in concerns is ours to choose. We can answer this inevitable aging process with denial or defiance and find ourselves on a passage of decline and inaction. OR...we can collaborate faithfully with this unique section on the arc of life and find ourselves on a different passage of engagement and discovery of a Holy energy holding and guiding us along the path. This Sunday School class meets at 9:40 am in room 2.21 (large center classroom on the second floor of the Ministry Center) and **on Zoom**. We will be guided through these challenges of the journey by Parker Palmer’s "On the Brink of Everything, Grace, Gravity and Getting Older." Please contact the church office or Lloyd Griffith to register for this class. Inquiries welcome!

Special Offering: Suicide Prevention by Madison Crum - Library (Second floor of the Ministry Center) - February 27

Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the United States. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention offers hope for those in crisis and for those who have been impacted by suicide. This presentation by Madison Crum will discuss suicide research and prevention techniques for both individuals and the community. The discussion will also offer suggestions on regaining a sense of hope after losing a loved one to suicide.

Tell It Slant/Wendy Moeller - Ministry Center Room 2.21 – Starting March 6
Being offered in the Owl Classroom on the second floor of the Ministry Center will be a class on Eugene Peterson's book *Tell it Slant*. Many of you are familiar with Peterson as the author of *The Message* paraphrase of the Bible. He is also the author of several books we have previously done in Sunday school: *Traveling Light* (on Galatians) which we studied in 2011, *Leap Over a Wall* (about King David) in 2013, and *Run with the Horses* (on Jeremiah) which was used the fall of 2019 right before Covid. *Tell It Slant* spends time with Jesus and his entourage on their way from Galilee to Jerusalem as they travel through Samaria, exploring eleven parables in ten chapters in the middle of the Gospel of Luke. Peterson does not disappoint! The class which starts Sunday, **March 6**, and continues through the end of May, will be led by Wendy Moeller. You can purchase the book if you are interested in reading it; it is helpful but not necessary.

**Church Membership Class/Rev. Dr. Anna Pinckney Straight -
Ministry Center Conference Room (in the Staff Office Suite)**

Whether you have been worshipping with First Presbyterian for one Sunday or one hundred, we'd welcome the opportunity to talk with you about what it means to be a part of a church community-what it might mean for you to take the joyful, faithful step of becoming a member of First Presbyterian Church. To help facilitate these conversations we have scheduled classes to be held on **March 6 and 13** (you are invited and encouraged to attend the class both weeks) during the Sunday School time with the opportunity to join and be welcomed in worship on the 13th at 11:00 am or the 20th at 8:30 am. If these dates don't work for you, please get in touch with Anna so we can add you to the list for the next time we have these gatherings or so we can meet and find a pathway and timeline that works for you (anna@firstpresnb.org or 252-637-3270).

Mid-Week Formation Opportunities

Monday Evening Women's Bible Study

The group meets on Mondays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM via Zoom. Join us as we read *It's Not About Me* by Max Lucado, a well-known pastor and prolific author, familiar to many in our congregation. Lucado cautions us against living in a

“me-centric” universe, which keeps us from flourishing and helping others to flourish in the “God-centric” realm in which all of us are called to live and to serve. For more information or to get on our list, please call Marice Debruhl 637-5468 (h), Cathy Wingfield 828-767-0975 (c), or Wendy Moeller 876-7259 (c).

Tuesday Afternoon Grief Support

The group meets on the 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 Griffith 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. The group will be studying “Soul Force” by Lloyd Griffith and “Immortal Diamond” by Richard Rohr.

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. 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 – New Book for Lent

We are starting a new book on Thursday, **March 3**, and running for Lent: "Lent in Plain Sight" 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).

Calvin and Hops (Men's Beer and Theology) TODAY

The next gathering of Men's Beer and Theology ("Calvin and Hops") will meet at Brewery 99 (1014 Pollock St) at 4:00 pm, TODAY, Sunday, **February 20**, led by Ken Wilkins. This is 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!

Flowers for Church

Would you like to celebrate a birthday, an anniversary, or honor a loved one who has passed? Spring dates in April and May are available. The sign-up sheet is in a pink folder in the Narthex.

Looking for Reception Volunteers

If you enjoy working with friendly people in a terrific environment and can volunteer your time on weekdays from either 9 am-1 pm or 1-5 pm, please contact the church office (252-637-3270). We are looking for a few more smiling faces to join our awesome group of volunteers!

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!

*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.
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.*