



*Drawing, Anagorical Window, St. Denis (12<sup>th</sup> Century), Glencairn Museum, Academy of the New Church, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania*

27 February 2022  
Transfiguration of the Lord

## **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

Established 1817

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

# Worship for the Lord's Day

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## Prayer of Preparation

*Lord Jesus Christ, as morning dawns, be our light in this new day. Let our lives reflect your glory, our words show forth your goodness, and our actions shine with your grace; in your holy name, we pray. Amen.*

## Welcome

## The Chiming of the Trinity

<b>Prelude</b>	<i>Jesus on the Mountain Peak</i>	Hildebrand
<b>Introit</b>	<i>O Splendor of God's Glory Bright</i>	Ambrose/15 <sup>th</sup> c.

## \*Call to Worship

Psalm 99

The LORD reigns,  
let the nations tremble;  
he sits enthroned between the cherubim,  
let the earth shake.

**Great is the LORD in Zion;  
he is exalted over all the nations.**

**Let them praise your great and awesome name—  
he is holy.**

The King is mighty, he loves justice—  
you have established equity;  
in Jacob, you have done what is just and right.

**Exalt the LORD our God**

**and worship at his footstool; he is holy.**

Moses and Aaron were among his priests,  
Samuel was among those who called on his name;

**they called on the LORD  
and he answered them.**

He spoke to them from the pillar of cloud;  
they kept his statutes and the decrees he gave them.

**LORD our God,**

**you answered them;**

you were to Israel a forgiving God,  
though you punished their misdeeds.

**Exalt the LORD our God**

**and worship at his holy mountain,  
for the LORD our God is holy.**

**\*Hymn 12**

*Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise* Smith/Welsh melody

### **Confession**

**Merciful and gracious God, we bow before your unending compassion, the measure of our falling short. We have not loved as you command. We have not spoken truly. We have not cared for creation, including ourselves, according to your will. What we intend, we have not pursued; what we mean to avoid, we embrace. Help us to know the mind of Christ, that in all thoughts, words, and deeds, our lives might come to honor you. Amen.**

*Silent Confession*

### **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. Anna Pinckney Straight

Lord’s Prayer

Hymnal p. 35

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

## Prayer for Illumination

### Lesson

Exodus 34:29-35 and 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

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

### Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Maren Sonstegard-Spray

### \*Affirmation of Faith

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him, all things were made. For us and our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day, he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### Anthem

*Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain*

Vajda/Neander

### Joys and Concerns of the Congregation

*The flowers in the Sanctuary this morning are given to the glory of God.*

*The sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family and friends of Joanne Behrer who died on February 20.*

*The sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family and friends of Mary Olstad who died on February 21. Her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday was to be on February 29.*

*The sympathy of the congregation is extended to Nancy Sibley on the death of her aunt Winifred Castevens on February 18.*

## **The Lord's Supper**

Invitation to the Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and Lord's Prayer

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, O God of mercy and might. In your wisdom, you made all things and sustain them by your power. You have called forth men and women in every age to be your servants and speak your word. When we rebelled against your call and turned from your ways, in your love you called us back to you. You delivered us from captivity and made a covenant to be our sovereign God. You sent prophets to call us to justice and compassion. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the choirs of heaven and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**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, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, in whom you have revealed yourself, our light, and our salvation. Baptized in Jordan's waters, Jesus took his place with sinners and your voice proclaimed him your beloved. Your Spirit anointed him to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, to restore sight to the blind, to free the oppressed. He lived among us in power and grace, touching broken lives with your healing peace. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your church and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit. Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ, we

take from your creation this bread and this cup and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming. With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

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

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be a communion with our Lord Jesus Christ. By your, Spirit makes us one with Christ, that we may be one 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. O God, as you once claimed us in the Spirit's waters and number us among your own beloved, give us the power to do your work, to show your love, and to live holy and joyful lives. 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.

Words of Institution

Communion of the People

*The elders will pass the elements through the pews.*

*We invite you to hold onto the bread and then the cup until all have received so we can, at the invitation of the worship leader, partake together.*

*All of the elements are gluten-free.*

Prayer after Communion

**Benediction**

**Response** (Hymn 227) *Jesus, Remember Me* (sung twice) Taize/Berthier  
**Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.**

**Postlude**

*We Are Marching in the Light of God*

Carter

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**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.**

Prayers reprinted by permission of Feasting on the Word Worship Companion:  
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Liturgist: The Rev. Dr. Anna Pinckney Straight

Organist: Vance Harper Jones

Ensemble: Members of the Daybreak and Sanctuary Choirs

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](mailto:cathy@firstpresnb.org) or visit [firstpresnb.org/communications](http://firstpresnb.org/communications) (scroll to the bottom of the page).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **Rothermel Foundation Lecture – TODAY**

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.

### **Ash Wednesday Service In-Person and Online**

On Wednesday, **March 2** we will have worship for Ash Wednesday with two identical services- one at 11:00 am in the sanctuary (in-person) and another at 7:00 pm on Zoom, both with communion and imposition of ashes. We’ll send an email out to the congregation with the zoom link on Tuesday **and if you’d like to pick up a bulletin with ashes, they are available in the narthex today and in the church office this week.** What is Ash Wednesday? From our Book of Common Worship: “Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent with a public act of confession. Acknowledging that we have all sinned and fallen short of God’s glory, we repent and return to our loving creator. Acutely aware of our failure and frailty, we

express our utter reliance on God's saving grace . . . Ashes are an ancient symbol of repentance, sorrow, and sacrifice. Traditionally, the ashes for this service are made from the palm branches of the previous year; thus the ashes and palms together frame the season of Lent."

### **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.

### **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](mailto:marcy@firstpresnb.org)) by **Monday, February 28<sup>th</sup>**, 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.

### **Annual Congregational Meeting**

The Session of First Presbyterian Church has called our annual meeting for **March 6, 2022**. It will be held during both the 8:30 and 11:00 worship services to receive the annual report from Jim Briley, treasurer, and Anna Pinckney Straight, pastor.

### **Nominations for Session Class of 2025**

The Session Nominating Committee would like the Congregation to nominate members for the Session class of 2025. Please prayerfully consider those whom you think would be willing to serve the Church. Please make sure the person you nominate would be able to do this. You may email your nominations to Margaret Cooper at [cooperme@embarqmail.com](mailto:cooperme@embarqmail.com) or you can fill out the nomination form and leave it in the basket in the Narthex. Please have the nominations by **March 13**.

## 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: Suicide Prevention by Madison Crum - Library (Second floor of the Ministry Center) - TODAY**

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.

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

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**

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 by Parker Palmer's "On the Brink of Everything, Grace, Gravity and Getting Older." Please contact the church office or Lloyd Griffith for information about this class.

### **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. Peterson is the author of The Message paraphrase of the Bible and of several books we have previously done in Sunday school: Traveling Light (on Galatians), Leap Over a Wall (about King David) in 2013, and Run with the Horses (on Jeremiah). 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)**

Would you like to know more about what it means to become a member of First Presbyterian? On **March 6 and 13** we will be offering an introduction to church membership with the opportunity to become a member and be welcomed either at the 11:00 worship service on March 13 or the 8:30 worship service on March 20. If you have questions or would like to know more, please contact Anna Pinckney Straight (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. 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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).