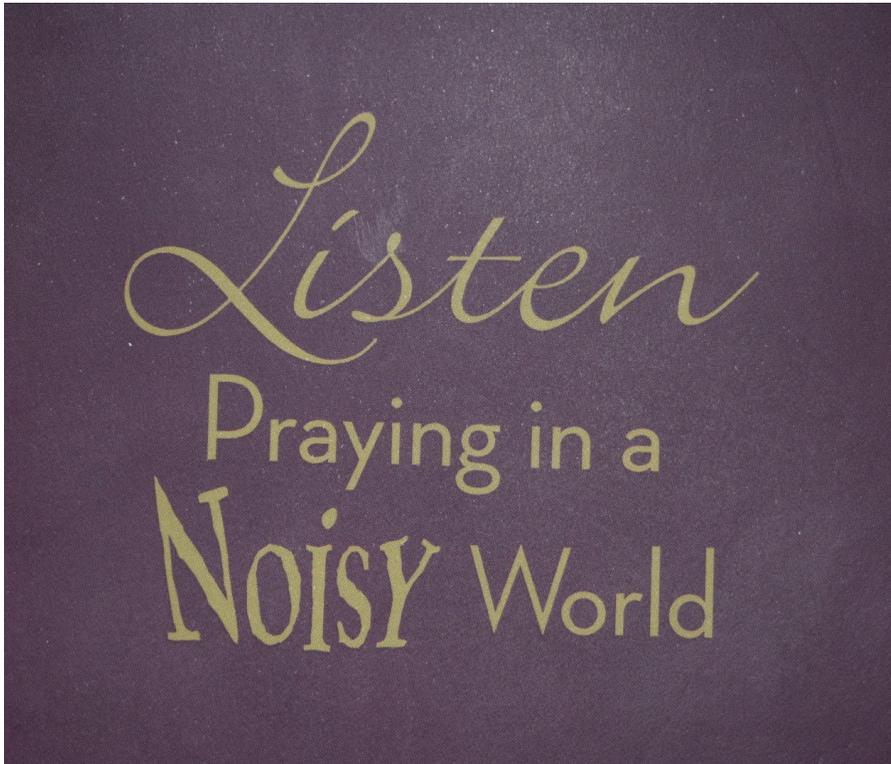


**PSALM 139:1-10**  
**A TRUSTED MENTOR**



**March 7, 2021**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent**  
**First Presbyterian Church**

1315 Central Avenue  
Great Falls, Montana 59401  
(406) 453-1411

Sunday Worship – 10:00 a.m.

[www.firstpresgfmt.org](http://www.firstpresgfmt.org)

[secretary@firstpresgfmt.org](mailto:secretary@firstpresgfmt.org)

 firstpresgfmt



## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

*God of Sinai, help us receive your law as grace: gift, not burden. When we walk in your ways, life is better both for us and, more importantly, for our neighbors.*

**Welcome** to worship, whether in person or online! May zeal for God's house consume us, as it did Jesus (John 2:17), but remember that the Holy Spirit lives in every human heart. With voices full of excitement, attitudes full of enthusiasm, and spirits full of joy let us actively give our worship to God.

**Last week**, how well did you live God's message from John 17:20-24? When did you pray like Jesus prayed? How did you live enacted prayer? Where did you need to accept God's will over your own?

Be sure to check-in through **Social Media** or text message to let your family members, friends and followers know you are here to praise God. And like us on Facebook.

Please use the time before worship begins to prepare yourself for your **offering of worship** to God. Feel free to listen to music; read and meditate on the Scripture reading for today; or silently meditate on God's grace, emptying your mind of all distractions.

May you be renewed and strengthened this morning through our celebration of **Communion**. The Presbyterian Church (USA) has an open communion table. We welcome all who are Baptized "in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" by any Christian denomination to join us in communing with our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. If you are joining us at home, be sure to have something ready for the bread and juice at the appropriate time. You will be instructed when to eat and drink.

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\* Please stand as able

*We are the Body of Christ  
Joyfully Worshiping God  
Compassionately Caring for One Another  
Humbly Serving God  
Continually Growing Together in God's Word  
And Actively Sharing the Good News of Christ*

***May our worship be pleasing to God!***

## GATHERING BEFORE GOD

Prelude

*Priere (Prayer from Suite Gothique), L. Boellmann*

Welcome

Call to Worship (Leader **People**)

The Lord has searched us and knows us,  
the Lord knows when we sit and when we stand.

**There is nothing about us that is hidden from the Lord.**

**We praise the Lord because we are fearfully and wonderfully made.**

Yet, with even with our flaws, God has called us together this day;

God yearns for each of us to listen and be blessed.

**The hour has come and is now here.**

Speak, Lord, words of healing.

Speak, Lord, for your servants are listening.

**In spirit and truth, we worship God.**

\*Song #488

*I Was There to Hear Your Borneing Cry*

Listen: Praying in a Noisy World – A Trusted Mentor

Prayer Practice/Type – Intentional Listening

Message in Music

*You Are My Hiding Place, Michael Ledner/Arr. Mark Hayes*

Prayer of Presence (**Unison**)

**Lover of all who are lost,**

**Uncertain and alone,**

**Confused and frightened,**

**Arrogant and disrespectful,**

**Anxious and fearful,**

**All who are seeking a safe and secure home,**

**And all who are already**

**comfortably at home in your presence,**

**Come to us now**

**Make yourself known to us**

**As we seek to quiet the noise of the world,**

**The anxiety of our hearts and minds,**

**And the call of unfinished tasks**

**So that we may recognize and welcome your voice,**

**Embrace your presence,**

**Understand your call,  
And invite you to change us more and more  
Into that wonderful image you have of us  
As your faithful, loving,  
and obedient children.**

Silence

Scripture

Psalm 139:1-10

Reading

I was a typical teenage boy trying to learn how to operate the family farm. My father had experienced a heart attack, and I had just dropped out of high school to do the work my father could no longer do. World War II was raging. My oldest brother was working for the atomic energy plant in Washington State, and the brother next to me was serving in the U. S. Navy, so it seemed right that I would be the one to maintain our family farm.

Because of my loving relationship with my father, I had followed him everywhere all my life and had learned a lot about farming in the northern plains. However, there was much more to learn, and my father became my constant mentor. Even though he was physically very weak, he was always available to gently guide me as I learned how to apply the correct amount of seed to the acre of the various grains we grew. And

Often he would sit where we stored the milk as I operated the milking machines, and sometimes he would take a late evening ride with me as I hauled a load of grain to the elevator after the harvesting and chores for the day were completed. In those times he would gracefully guide the conversation to what was coming next on the farming agenda and give me ideas on how to successfully accomplish what I would be facing in the future. He was a wise mentor, and because of our relationship it always seemed like a wonderful partnership.

The good news of the gospel affirms that those of us who follow Jesus have a wise Mentor who is always with us and always ready to teach us everything we need to know.

Some will be quick to tell us that we cannot know the mind of Christ because there is a huge, unbridgeable gap that separates us from God, whom we have come to know through Jesus Christ. Still others tell us we can only hear and respond to God's voice in community, because the Scriptures tell us the church is the body of Christ in the world. There are even some who suggest elaborate exercises and secret knowledge are the only way we can hear and respond to the call of God.

However, Scripture and experience suggest something else. Relationship is the key to hearing, understanding, and responding to the call of God; and that relationship is what God desires, offers, and invites us to enjoy. Jesus reminds us that he knows us, that he calls us by name, and that we will recognize his voice and follow him to life at its fullest (John 10:1-10). This promise is not for the elite but for everyone.

The promise is given to you and to me today, just as we are and not as we will one day become. This marvelous good news is for everyone, and all we need to do is claim it for ourselves.

How will we practice listening, hearing, following, and embracing life at its fullest? We practice by simply developing a way of life that permits time and space to listen, hear, respond, and rejoice in the gift of companionship with God in Christ. Prayer is the foundation of such a way of living.

The God who knows you by name invites you to follow your constant Companion and Guide so that you may claim the most wonderful life possible—a life that is already yours as a child of God. Prayer is the communication connection that makes all of this possible.

## Reflection

## Response

\*Song #702

*Christ, Be Beside Me*

Giving of God's Tithes and Our Offerings

Offertory

*O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go*, Earl Roland Larson

\*Song #606

*The Doxology*

\*Prayer of Dedication

O Lord our God,

we want to follow all your commandments—

to love only you,

not worshiping the things of this world;

to love our neighbor freely,

not desiring for ourselves something they possess.

Accept these offerings, we pray,

and teach us to be generous,

giving fully of ourselves

that we may truly be the body of Christ in this world.

Amen.

Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving and *The Lord's Prayer*

Malotte

Breaking of the Bread and Pouring of the Cup

Communion of God's People #543

*God Be the Love to Search and Keep Me*

Prayer after Communion (**Unison**)

**Inviting and welcoming God, you feed us with the bread of life and quench our thirst with the cup of blessing. Sustain us with the presence of Jesus who meets us in this feast. Fill us with the power of the Spirit to carry your good news into the world through our words and our actions. Amen.**

Prayers of Petition

\*Song

*Go Now In Peace*

\*Charge (Leader **People**)

We are the Body of Christ;

**Joyfully worshiping God,**

**compassionately caring for one another,**

**humbly serving others,**

**continually growing together in God's Word,**

**and actively sharing the Good News of Christ.**

\*Blessing

\*Postlude

*Rigaudon, Andre Campra/Arr. Bish*

***May our service be pleasing to God!***

## WORSHIP NOTES

Though we're in the midst of the 40 days of **Lent**, Sundays don't count as days of that season because they're always celebrations of the resurrection.

During Lent, our **order of worship** will be based on the prayer pattern presented in the book we are studying and using for our congregational Lenten experience, *Listen: Praying in a Noisy World*, by Rueben P Job.

Prayer of Presence  
Silence  
Scripture  
Reading  
Dialogue and Discovery  
Reflection  
Response  
Prayers of Petition  
Blessing

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Children and Youth Ministries Committee and Peace Place are sponsoring an Easter celebration for all ages on Saturday, April 3 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. in the Montana Credit Union parking lot. We will have game booths and prizes, as well as music and snacks. The games and prizes will be geared to different age groups, and the community will be invited. We are hoping that other committees and groups of the church will get involved by sponsoring a booth, providing prizes or volunteering to run a game or booth, or by helping to direct people. Especially needed are prizes for older children, such as Bibles, book covers, gift cards or ear buds, of various values of \$5 to \$20. This will be an opportunity to share Christ's love with the community and sail with the Holy Spirit! Questions? Contact Sara Buley, 788-3370, or Alissa Brown, 231-2348.

The session has **rescheduled** the **Annual Meeting** of the congregation and corporation to Sunday, March 21, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. via Zoom. Use this link to join from your computer, tablet or smart phone: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4911010646?pwd=azRJamU5dFRFdTdXU3R5Um1UZ09wZz09>.

You can type it into your browser, or if you would like it emailed to you let the office know. Then just click on the link. To call in on a landline or non-smart cell phone use any of these phone numbers. (346-248-7799) (669-900-6833) (253-215-8782) (312-626-6799) (929-205-6099) (301-715-8592) They are not toll free, and while you can hear and speak, there will be no video. You will be asked to enter the Meeting ID (491 101 0646) and the Passcode (406884).

If you would like the **Annual Report** mailed to you ahead of the Annual Meeting, please let the office know.

If you are not receiving **emails**, including the Saturday morning "Church Update", please send your current email address to the office, [secretary@firstpresgfmt.org](mailto:secretary@firstpresgfmt.org).

**Listen: Praying in a Noisy World** is our Lenten theme this year. This 40-day experience will assist us in knowing how to pray, and how to hear and respond to God's guidance. Together, each week, we will experience different prayer practices or habits, a daily prayer pattern for each week, daily scripture readings, a weekly story or reflection, and thought-provoking quotations. There are 3 times each week you can participate in a video-based small group discussion on each week's theme: Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 pm, and Sundays at 8:15 a.m. Sign up by contacting John or the office so we can get you a book and Zoom connection information. Come and listen to God with us!

**Tithes and Offerings** may be mailed to the church office or made online through our website, [www.firstpresgfmt.org](http://www.firstpresgfmt.org).

While we welcome those who wish to join us for worship in the **sanctuary** on Sunday mornings, please be reminded of the precautions the session has put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic: seating in the sanctuary is limited as we honor the 6 feet of social distancing; everyone's temperature will be checked upon entering the building; masks are required while in the building; pew supplies have been removed; singing is prohibited; bulletins will be available after worship when exiting the building; prolonged socializing in the building is discouraged; gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer are readily available.

Our times of worship are **live-streamed** on our YouTube channel; search for "First Presbyterian Church Great Falls MT" on the YouTube website. Recordings of previous live-streams will remain on our YouTube channel. Links to upcoming live-streams can be found on our website and in the weekly Saturday morning email.

**Souler Energy**, our weekly Sunday Worship broadcast, can be viewed every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. on KFBB TV Channel 5 (cable channel 9).

**Upper Room, Bulletins, Sermon Manuscripts** If you would like any of these mailed to you on a weekly basis please let the office know.

### COMING WORSHIP THEMES

#### **Next Sunday, March 14, 2021**

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

1 John 4:7-10

Listen: Praying in a Noisy World –  
Everybody Needs Help

#### **March 21, 2021**

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

Ephesians 2:8-10

Listen: Praying in a Noisy World – Flying  
Solo

#### **March 28, 2021**

Palm Sunday

Luke 22:14-20

Listen: Praying in a Noisy World – Getting  
Into Position

#### **April 1, 2021**

Maundy Thursday

Worship with Communion at 6:30 p.m.

Paschal Lamb

#### **April 2, 2021**

Good Friday

Community Worship at 12:00 noon

Evening Worship with Our Savior's

Lutheran Church at 7:00 p.m.

#### **April 4, 2021**

Easter Sunday

Communion

Mark 16:1-8

Terror and Amazement

## **MAY GOD BLESS THIS WEEK**

*All Events Live-Streamed or via Zoom Unless Noted*

Today, Sunday, March 7	8:15 a.m.	Listen: Praying in a Noisy World Class
	10:00 a.m.	Worship (Limited seating in the Sanctuary)
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Time
Monday, March 8	9:30 a.m.	Sailboat Church Crew 2
	6:30 p.m.	Bible 101 Class
Tuesday, March 9	4:00 p.m.	Finance Committee
	5:30 p.m.	Property Committee
	6:30 p.m.	Sailboat Church Crew 3
Wednesday, March 10	7:00 a.m.	Men's Group
	6:00 p.m.	Mid-week Ministry
Thursday, March 11	10:00 a.m.	Listen: Praying in a Noisy World Class
	12:00 noon	Spiritual Life Committee
	6:30 p.m.	Listen: Praying in a Noisy World Class
Saturday, March 13	9:30 a.m.	PW
Next Sunday, March 14	8:15 a.m.	Listen: Praying in a Noisy World Class
	10:00 a.m.	Worship (Limited seating in the Sanctuary)
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Time

## **UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER**

*All Events Live Streamed or via Zoom Unless Noted*

Tuesday, March 16.....	Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 21 .....	Annual Meeting, 11:30 a.m.
Tuesday, March 23.....	Board of Deacons Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 28 .....	Children & Youth Ministries Committee, 11:45 a.m.
Thursday, April 1 .....	Worship Committee, 5:00 p.m.
	Maundy Thursday Worship with Communion, 6:30 p.m.
Friday, April 2.....	Good Friday Community Worship, 12:00 noon
	Good Friday Worship with Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 3 .....	Easter Celebration, 1:00 p.m.
Tuesday, April 6.....	Souler Energy Committee, 12:00 noon
Thursday, April 8 .....	Spiritual Life Committee, 12:00 noon
Saturday, April 10.....	PW, 9:30 a.m.

The Officers and Staff of First Presbyterian Church welcome you  
to this time of worship and invite you to join us in ministry!

**Head of the Church**

Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior

**Session**

Ginger Blevins	John Ritchie (Moderator)	Scott Royce
Alissa Brown	Randy Houtz (Clerk)	Jane Snowberger
Mary Fagenstrom	Sharon Lindstrom	Jennie Yates
	Gary McFerrin	

**Deacons**

Stuart Brown	Shirley Davis	Dave Herman	Deb Skinner
Bruce Buer (Mod.)	Barb Flaherty	Chris Pfof	Marla Wilckens
Kitty Cornwell	Tom Hazen		

**Staff**

Rev. John E Ritchie, Pastor (906-322-9490)	Liza Nosich, Accounts Payable/Payroll
Alissa Brown, CE Director	Financial Secretary
Joan Schmidt, Ministry of Music	Butch Steele, Worship Video Coordinator
Craig Anton, Facilities Manager	Alex Rosenleaf, Choir Director
Keyna Myers, Office Manager	Kari Rosenleaf, Bell Choir Director
Faith Janes, Publications Secretary	Johnny Ritchie, Music Assistant & Praise Band Director

**A Breath of Fresh Prayer** Norwegian theologian Ole Hallesby described prayer as simply letting God into our lives. God “knocks,” he said, “not only in the solemn hours of secret prayer” but “in the midst of your daily work, your daily struggles, your daily grind...when you need him most.” Prayer, added Hallesby, is as essential to life as air. “As impossible as it is for us to take a breath in the morning large enough to last us until noon, so impossible is it to pray in the morning in such a way as to last us until noon,” he said. “Let your prayers ascend to [God] constantly, audibly or silently, as circumstances throughout the day permit.”