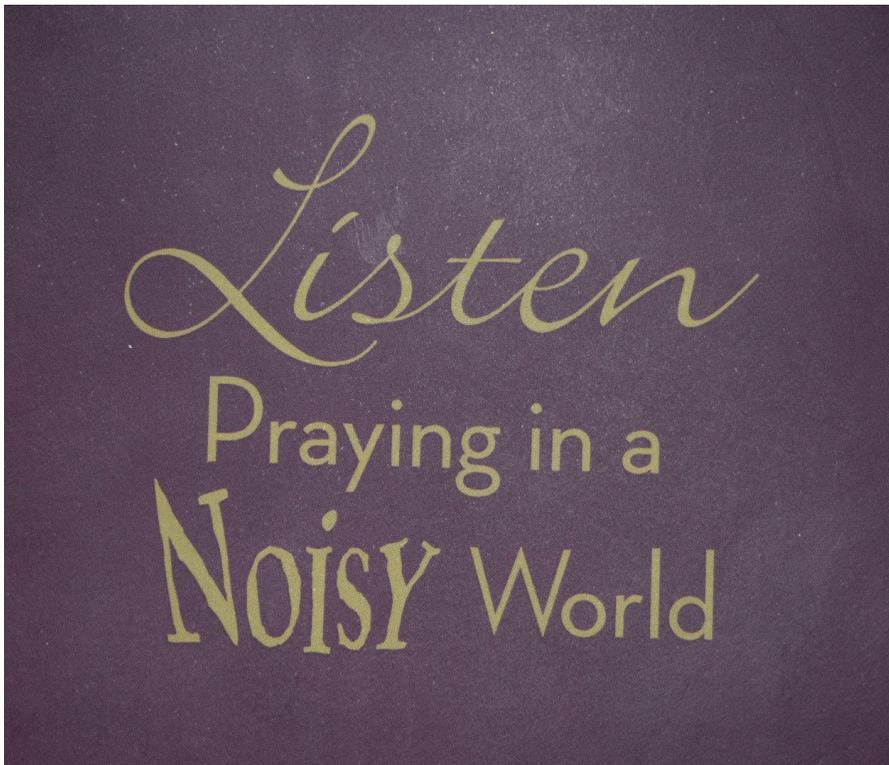


1 JOHN 4:7-10
EVERYBODY NEEDS HELP



March 14, 2021
4th 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

secretary@firstpresgfmt.org

 firstpresgfmt

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

God of healing and salvation, turn our eyes away from our troubles and set our focus on you — first, for this time of worship, and even in the days ahead.

God is rich in mercy, loves us greatly, makes us alive through Christ (Ephesians 2:4-5) and **welcomes** us to this time of worship and fellowship. 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 Psalm 139:1-10? How did you intentionally listen for God message to you? When did you trust God to mentor you through the Holy Spirit? How did knowing that God knows you fully and intimately bring you peace?

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.

All music copied, projected, and live streamed with permission, CCLI #2716126, OneLicense A-722348.

* 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

Jesu, meine Freude, J.S. Bach

Welcome

Call to Worship (Leader **People**)

The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in love.

God is love.

Those who abide in love abide in God
and God abides in them.

God is love.

Let us love one another,
and worship God together.

*Song #137

He Came Down

Listen: Praying in a Noisy World – Everyone Needs Help

Prayer Practice/Type – Meditation

Message in Music

Speak, Lord, in the Stillness

Prayer of Presence (**Unison**)

God,

**Greater than anything we can imagine,
Holiness purer and more brilliant than light,
Mercy that forgives, redeems, and leads to righteousness,
Love that accepts and embraces us just as we are,
Grace that sustains and molds us into more than we are,
Promised presence that will never forsake or leave us alone,**

We tremble in awe of such greatness and love;

We fall on our knees in gratitude and humility;

We yield our will to yours;

We declare that we are yours alone

and invite you to do with us what you will

As we walk in the light and life

of your unfailing presence.

Silence

Scripture

1 John 4:7-10

Reading

It is true that each one of us, no matter how capable, competent, and self-assured we are, needs help now and then. However, as this story by Ronald J. Greer points out, sometimes God sends that help in unexpected ways and from unexpected sources.

I was sitting in the Atlanta airport, waiting at Gate 32 to board a plane. Zones 1 and 2 were called; I stood, picked up my briefcase, and walked toward the line that was forming. As I passed a row of seats I heard a girl ask her mother, “Do I stand up now?”

Something about the girl’s voice got my attention. She was developmentally disabled. I kept walking, got in line, and boarded the plane.

I took my place in seat 7C. After I settled in, I looked up. There was the girl, coming down the aisle by herself. I was surprised to see that she was a teenager—she was so petite that she appeared almost frail. The seat in front of mine was hers.

Then “Animal House” boarded. A group of college students came down the aisle and took several rows of seats across from us. They were laughing, joking with one another, and having a great time. But above all else, they were being cool. Cool, you understand, was imperative.

Finally, the plane was pushed back and began taxiing. Ten minutes later the pilot announced that we were cleared for takeoff. He made the final turn onto the runway.

I looked up and saw that little head with the brunette hair lean partway across the aisle. I heard the girl say to the college student across from her, “I get real nervous when we take off. Would you hold my hand?”

My eyes were riveted on the young man to see what he would do. Holding a stranger’s hand is not cool. After an initial nervous blush, he began to smile, and halfway across the aisle came that kid’s big ol’ hand. The girl’s tiny hand grabbed it and squeezed.

There they held hands, across the aisle, as our Delta jet was airborne.

There they held hands as I stared, also in disbelief, and memorized that sacred moment. I knew I was witnessing a sacrament.

The plane’s wheels clunked into place beneath us. She let go of his hand and said something to him. The engines were now so loud, I couldn’t hear.

For the next hour and a half he read his Harry Potter book. She listened to her iPod.

Then the plane descended as we approached Shreveport. In those few moments, as we anticipated the jolt of the runway, this young man turned to the girl and – as I read his lips – asked, “Do you need to hold my hand?”

Apparently she said, “No.” He smiled and nodded.

Reflection

Response

*Song #215

What Wondrous Love Is This

Giving of God's Tithes and Our Offerings

Offertory

Andante (from *Sonata 6*, Felix Mendelssohn)

*Song #606

The Doxology

*Prayer of Dedication

Merciful God,

we thank you for your wonderful works among humankind.

Accept this offering

with the dedication of our lives

and help us be for the world an emblem of your steadfast love,

in Jesus we pray,

Amen.

Prayers of Petition

Prayers of Petition

The Lord's Prayer (Luke 11:2-4, NRSV)

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial.

Amen.

*Song #366

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

*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

Hyfrydol (*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*), Healey Willan

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 Children and Youth Ministries Committee needs empty **egg cartons** for a craft project at our Easter celebration April 3. Please bring any that you have to the church office. Thank you!

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.

Tithes and Offerings may be mailed to the church office or made online through our website, www.firstpresgfmt.org.

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

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.

Faith Formation & Spiritual Growth Events

Current:

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!

Bible 101 Mondays at 6:30 p.m., through March 29. Using Bible Blueprints makes the Bible more approachable for anyone interested in learning more about each book of the Bible. Each blueprint outline gives an overview of 1 book of the Bible including essential context, background and perspective.

Coming Soon:

Breaking Free by Beth Moore, Tuesdays at 2:00 p.m., from April 6 to June 15. This women's Bible study draws parallels between the captive Israelites of the Old Testament and New Testament believers in Jesus as the Promised Messiah. Using the Book of Isaiah, we'll look through the lives of the kings who ruled during the prophet's ministry. These kings exemplify many of the obstacles to freedom with which we must deal. Using Scripture to help identify spiritual strongholds in our lives, no matter how big or small, we'll see that anything that hinders us from the benefits of knowing God is bondage.

Life in the Minor Key Thursdays 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., Sundays 8:15 a.m., from April 8 – July 4. This study, in parallel with Sunday worship themes, will look at the 12 books of the Bible known as "the minor prophets". Often these books are left out of the worship lectionary rotation because of the harsh nature of the words and ideas they contain. As Israel is being devastated by war and is in the grip of idolatry, God sends these prophets to plead with Israel so they will denounce evil and turn back toward God. Amid the sorrow we find God's great grace: an unconditional love for God's people and a desire to save them from their own wickedness and the wickedness of the world around them. Through the entire Old Testament, we see the world's need for a Savior. The books of the minor prophets represent the pinnacle of that need. Alongside (and inseparable from) some of God's harshest judgments are God's greatest promises of mercy.

The session has **rescheduled** the **Annual Meeting** of the congregation and corporation to next 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.

COMING WORSHIP THEMES

Next Sunday, March 21, 2021

5th 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.

April 2, 2021

Good Friday

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

April 11, 2021

2nd Sunday of Easter

Hosea 6:1-3

Life in the Minor Key: Hosea – A Call to Repentance

MAY GOD BLESS THIS WEEK

All Events Live-Streamed or via Zoom Unless Noted

Today, 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 Children & Youth Ministries Committee
Monday, March 15	9:30 a.m.	Sailboat Church Crew 2
	6:30 p.m.	Bible 101 Class
Tuesday, March 16	6:30 p.m.	Session Meeting
Wednesday, March 17	7:00 a.m.	Men's Group
	6:00 p.m.	Mid-week Ministry
Thursday, March 18	10:00 a.m.	Listen: Praying in a Noisy World Class
	6:30 p.m.	Listen: Praying in a Noisy World Class
Next Sunday, March 21	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
	11:30 a.m.	Annual Meeting

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

All Events Live Streamed or via Zoom Unless Noted

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 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.
Tuesday, April 13.....	Finance Committee, 4:00 p.m.
	Property Committee, 5:30 p.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

Setting Captives Free Though St. Patrick's Day has become a secular "holiday," March 17 commemorates the life of a Christian missionary. St. Patrick grew up in a Christian home in Britain but wasn't very devout until he experienced crisis. As a teen, he was captured and sold into slavery in Ireland, escaping after six years. "The Lord opened my unbelieving eyes" in Ireland, Patrick later said. God led him back there, and he converted tribe after tribe to Christianity. In *Confessio 61*, St. Patrick writes, "I testify in truth and in great joy of heart before God and his holy angels that I never had any other reason for returning to that nation...except the Gospel and God's promises."