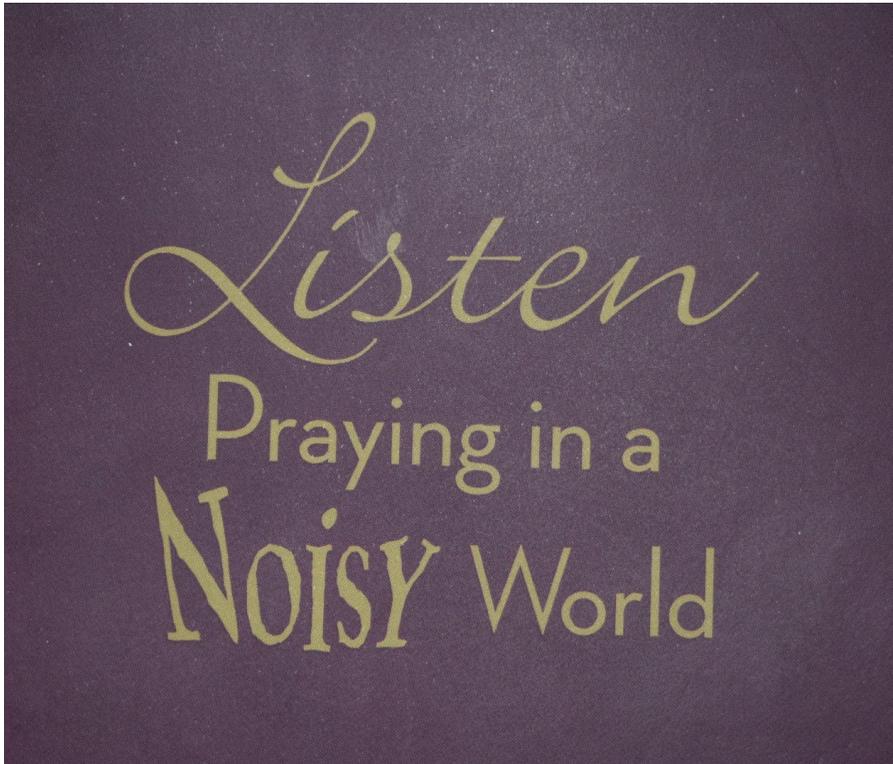


EPHESIANS 2:8-10
FLYING SOLO



March 21, 2021
5th 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

“Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew steadfast spirits within us. ... Restore to us the joy of your salvation, and uphold us.” (Psalm 51:10, 12, NKJV, adapted)

Some people said to the disciple Philip, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” (John 12:21) We are here because we too wish to see Jesus. Open your heart: Jesus is here. **Welcome**. 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 1 John 4:7-10? When did the word of God fill you with the love of God moving you to show love to others?

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

Gathering Music

*Come, Now is the Time to Worship
Good, Good Father
Draw Me Close*

Welcome

Call to Worship (Leader **People**)

God created us in Jesus for good works.

As part of our good works

we have responded to God's call to gather for worship.

Let us worship God with our all our hearts, spirits, minds, and strength.

*Song

Children of God

Listen: Praying in a Noisy World – Flying Solo

Prayer Practice/Type – Remembering God's Love

Message in Music

Be Thou Near to Me

Prayer of Presence (**Unison**)

Creator God

Whose name is love,

Who made all that is

And is creating still

Who nurtures and sustains all that is

Seeks us with clear and tender invitation,

Desiring our constant attentiveness

so that we may hear every gentle word

of guidance, assurance, and love

As we are offered our full inheritance

as children of the living God,

Speak to us now as we listen

for your word of truth,

For we are yours and desire to

Live as your faithful children this day

and always.

Silence

Scripture

Ephesians 2:8-10

Reading

He patted me on the shoulder and said, “Make three touch-and-go landings and takeoffs, and if all goes well, I will wave you off, and you will be free to go out ten miles and fly solo until your hour scheduled for the plane is up.” My instructor pilot calmly got out of the plane, securely closed the door, and walked off the runway; and I took off on my first ever solo flight.

I was surprised at how easily the plane became airborne without the 175 pounds of my instructor in the back seat. I made the three touch-and-go landings and takeoffs, received a salute and a wave from my instructor, and was off for an exhilarating look at the city and the surrounding countryside from an altitude of 2,000 feet.

I was cautious not to get too close to the “no fly zone” around the Air Force base to my north, and I followed the routine of sweeping my eyes across the air space that surrounded me and the instruments in front of me as I had been instructed. I was also careful to pick out an emergency landing spot in the event that something unexpected happened and I was forced to land before returning to the airport.

The time went swiftly, and soon I entered the landing pattern, made a good landing, and taxied in to refuel the plane before signing out. The paperwork for my student pilot’s license was soon complete, and plans were made for my first long-distance solo flight.

Reflecting on my experience, I wondered how my instructor knew when it was time to give me that confident pat on the shoulder and say, “Go out and practice what you have learned in flight school and flight training.” I assumed it was because I was a very eager and attentive student, having longed to fly for thirty -five years. But perhaps it was also his desire to build confidence and trust not only in myself but also in the truth I had been taught.

When our relationship with God in Christ is dominated by our longing to be a faithful disciple and we eagerly seek the presence, guidance, and direction that God awaits to give, we will come to that place where we get a “pat on the shoulder,” assuring us that our faithful Guide and Savior has prepared us to listen to and trust the teaching that we have treasured in our hearts and minds and the gentle, confident voice that comes to guide and direct our every decision and act.

The very best part is remembering the promises that Jesus makes to each and every one of us:

“The Companion, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I told you.” (John 14:26)

“Whoever loves me will keep my word. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.” (John 14:23)

You see, though we move forward in our lives as followers of Christ, growing in our discipleship and putting into practice all we have learned, we never really fly solo. God is always by our side, directing, guiding, and leading us onward.

Reflection

Response

*Song

May the Love of the Lord

Giving of God's Tithes and Our Offerings

Offertory

Guide my Feet

Prayer of Dedication

see Genesis 14:18, Hebrews 5:5, 6, 9

As the high priest Melchizedek blessed Abraham
and offered his tithe of bread and wine
at your holy altar,

may our gifts be made perfect through Jesus
to glorify you and bless the world.

Amen.

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

Amazing Grace, My Chains are Gone

*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

*Sending Music

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!

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.

All **church meetings**, classes, and events (including worship) held at the church are hybrid events, which means you can attend in person, or online through either YouTube or Zoom. If you are comfortable joining us in person, we welcome you! If you would rather join us from the safety and comfort of your home, we welcome you, too! The session will continue to monitor and evaluate our response to the COVID-19 pandemic in faithfulness to God and recommendations from the City-County Health Department. If you will be joining us in person, please note the following precautions the session has put in place:

- ✚ If you are not feeling well, please stay home and join us online (either on YouTube or Zoom).
- ✚ Masks are required while in the building.
- ✚ Gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer are readily available.
- ✚ Please honor social distancing, including where you sit.
- ✚ Prolonged socializing in the building is discouraged.

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

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.

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

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).

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

The session has **rescheduled** the **Annual Meeting** of the congregation and corporation to today, 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, please let the office know.

COMING WORSHIP THEMES

Next Sunday, 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

April 18, 2021

3rd Sunday of Easter

Joel 2:23-32

Life in the Minor Key: Joel – Being
Blessed After Being Blessed

MAY GOD BLESS THIS WEEK

Unless noted, all events are hybrid (in person and live-streamed or via Zoom)

Today, Sunday, March 21	8:15 a.m.	Listen: Praying in a Noisy World Class
	10:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Time
	11:00 a.m.	Pre-Meeting Prayer Time
	11:30 a.m.	Annual Meeting
Monday, March 22	9:30 a.m.	Sailboat Church Crew 2
	6:30 p.m.	Bible 101 Class
Tuesday, March 23	6:30 p.m.	Board of Deacons
Wednesday, March 24	7:00 a.m.	Men's Group
	6:00 p.m.	Mid-week Ministry
Thursday, March 25	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 28	8:15 a.m.	Listen: Praying in a Noisy World Class
	10:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Time
	11:30 a.m.	Children & Youth Ministries Committee

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

Unless noted, all events are hybrid (in person and live-streamed or via Zoom)

Tuesday, March 30.....	Called Session Meeting, 6:30 p.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.
Tuesday, April 20.....	Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, April 22 – Saturday, April 24	John is on Vacation

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

John Ritchie (Moderator)

Ginger Blevins
Alissa Brown
Mary Fagenstrom

Randy Houtz (Clerk)
Sharon Lindstrom
Gary McFerrin

Scott Royce
Jane Snowberger
Jennie Yates

Deacons

Stuart Brown
Bruce Buer (Mod.)
Kitty Cornwell

Shirley Davis
Barb Flaherty
Tom Hazen

Dave Herman
Chris Pfof

Deb Skinner
Marla Wilckens

Staff

Rev. John E Ritchie, Pastor (906-322-9490)

Alissa Brown, CE Director
Joan Schmidt, Ministry of Music
Craig Anton, Facilities Manager
Keyna Myers, Office Manager
Faith Janes, Publications Secretary

Liza Nosich, Accounts Payable/Payroll
Financial Secretary
Butch Steele, Worship Video Coordinator
Alex Rosenleaf, Choir Director
Kari Rosenleaf, Bell Choir Director
Johnny Ritchie, Music Assistant & Praise
Band Director

That's The Point! If prayer stands as the place where God and human beings meet, then I must learn about prayer. Most of my struggles in the Christian life circle around the same two themes: why God doesn't act the way we want God to, and why I don't act the way God wants me to. Prayer is the precise point where those themes converge.

--Philip Yancey