



# First Presbyterian Church of Athens

*In response to God's grace, the mission of First Presbyterian Church is to create a community where people seek the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, rejoice in worship, and go forth sharing the love of Christ with Athens and the world!*

March 13, 2016  
8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.  
Fifth Sunday of Lent

## GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Welcome to all who are worshipping with us. As we enter a holy space this morning, **please silence your cell phone**. The nursery is available downstairs during both services. Consult an usher if you need a personal hearing device, large-print bulletin or large-print hymnal.

### Greeting

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

### Prelude

*Ciacona*

Dietrich Buxtehude

### Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

*Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad.*

### Song of Gathering

TALLIS' CANON

**The glory of these forty days  
we celebrate with songs of praise;  
for Christ, by whom all things were made,  
himself has fasted and has prayed.**

### Call to Worship

Psalms 126

Leader: Those who sow with tears

**People: will reap with songs of joy.**

Leader: Those who go out weeping

**People: will return home with shouts of joy.**

Leader: Come, let us worship God.

**\*Hymn No. 379** *My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*

SOLID ROCK

\*\*\*Latecomers may be seated.

Hymn 379 develops the imagery of Jesus' remark (Matthew 7:24-27/Luke 6:47-49) that those who believe in him and act on that belief are like someone who builds a house on a rock. The text is set to a tune created by a prolific 19th-century American composer and editor.

\*Those who are able may stand.

**\*Call to Confession**

**\*Prayer of Confession**

Gracious God, you have chosen us to be your people and to praise your glory, but we confess that we have overlooked the presence of Jesus Christ in our midst, neglected the poor and placed our confidence in the flesh.

Forgive us, O God, for the selfish gains we have accrued are nothing compared to knowing Christ. Do not remember our former sins or consider the things of old. Restore the fortunes of your people, that we, with your whole creation, may declare your praise. Amen.

**\*Congregational Response**

Hymn No. 572

Lord, have mercy upon us.  
Christ, have mercy upon us.  
Lord, have mercy upon us.

**\*Assurance of Pardon**

**\*Passing of the Peace**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.**

*Worshippers may greet each other by saying, "The peace of Christ be with you," and responding, "And also with you."*

*\*\*\*\*Latecomers may be seated.*

**11:00 a.m. Sacrament of Baptism**

Receiving the sacrament of baptism is Luke Bennett Parker, son of Jason and Shelly Parker.

**\*Question to Congregation**

Do we, as members of the church of Jesus Christ promise to guide and nurture Luke by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging him to know and follow Christ? Do We? **We do.**

**\*Affirmation of Faith**      *The Apostles' Creed*      Hymnal, p.14

**Baptism Hymn No. 498**      *Child of Blessing, Child of Promise*      KINGDOM

**11:00 a.m. A Time for Young Children**

*Children, age four through grade two, may come forward for a message and then leave for Children's Church located in the Children's Ministry Suite. To pick up your child after the service, please go through the Atrium and down the stairs.*

**HEARING THE WORD OF GOD**

**Congregational Prayer for Illumination**      *(spoken)*

**O Lord our God, your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Give us grace to receive your truth in faith and love, that we may be obedient to your will and live always for your glory, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

**First Lesson**      Psalm 126, page 561

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Children's Church is a special time for our youngest members to learn scripture through song, art, and play.

**\*8:45 a.m. Hymn No. 101** *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* HAMBURG

The familiar text of *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* from the beginning of the 18th century grew out of Isaac Watts' desire to give Christians the ability to sing about gospel events. It is set here to a very restrained tune from the early 19th century inspired by the patterns of Gregorian chant.

**11:00 a.m. Anthem** *The Penitent's Vision* K. Lee Scott

Jesus, name, all names above, Jesus, best and dearest,  
Jesus, fount of perfect love, holiest, tend'rest, nearest,  
Jesus source of grace completest, Jesus, purest, Jesus sweetest,  
Jesus, well of power divine, make me, keep me, seal me thine!

Thou didst call the prodigal; thou didst pardon Mary:  
thou whose words can never fall, love can never vary:  
Lord, to heal my lost condition, give (for thou canst give) contrition;  
thou canst pardon all my ill; bid my spirit, "peace, be still!"

Jesus, open me the gate that the robber entered,  
who in that most lost estate wholly on thee ventured.  
Thou, whose wounds are ever pleading, and thy Passion interceding,  
from my sins, oh, let me rise to a home in paradise!

**Second Lesson** Luke 15:1-3, 25-32, page 954

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon** GETTING CLOSER TO JESUS THIS LENT Dr. Doak  
*4. When We Are the Elder Child*

Text: Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. The elder one said to the father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.'" Luke 15:11b, 29

With its ballad-like repetitions before and after each stanza's central narrative lines, the meditative text of *What Wondrous Love Is This* needs performance in order to be effective. Its haunting melody proves the means of convincing us that the only adequate response to "wondrous love" is to "sing on."

**\*Hymn No. 85** *What Wondrous Love Is This* WONDROUS LOVE

**Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer** Hymnal p. 16  
... forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. . . .

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

**Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings**

*Every worshiper, young and old, is encouraged to offer a gift out of gratitude to God.*

**Offertory** *What Wondrous Love Is This* Charles Callahan

**\*Doxology** Hymn No. 592

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host;  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

## SENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

### \*Benediction

*Following worship, all are invited for a time of fellowship and refreshment in the Atrium.*

### \*8:45 a.m. Congregational Response Hymn No. 540, Stanza 1

**God be with you till we meet again;  
loving counsels guide, uphold you,  
with a shepherd's care enfold you:  
God be with you till we meet again.**

### \*11:00 a.m. Choral Response Theodore Dubois

Christ, we do all adore thee, and we do praise thee forever,  
for on the holy cross hast thou the world from sin redeemed.

### Postlude

*Trumpet Toccata*

Gilbert Martin

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### Family Easter Egg Hunt

**Saturday, March 19th at 10:30 a.m.  
The Hill, 1800 Crescent Lane**

Be sure to mark your calendars for our family Easter egg hunt. Lee Epting has graciously offered his beautiful family home, The Hill, to host this special event! We will begin the morning with egg hunting and then enjoy a picnic on the lawn for an early lunch. Please bring your **Easter baskets for egg hunting, your lunch basket and a picnic blanket for your family.** The church will provide drinks for everyone.

### Holy Week Activities

#### **March 24 — Maundy Thursday Communion Services**

12:00 p.m. Worship Service

5:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Dinner and Worship, Fellowship Hall  
Childcare available for ages three and under.

#### **March 25 — Good Friday**

7:00 p.m. Presbyterian Community Service, Friendship Presbyterian Church  
Preaching: Dr. Carol Strickland

#### **March 27 — Easter Sunday**

8:45 a.m. Worship Service

9:30 a.m. Easter Brunch, Fellowship Hall

11:00 a.m. Worship Service