



the good news is..

alive in the world

Easter Sunday

April 5, 2026

Welcome to

First Presbyterian Church



Welcome to this sanctuary.

Welcome to this time of worship and wonder.

Welcome to this family of faith.

We're glad you're here today and pray that your experience with us in worship is both challenging and uplifting!

Our ushers are available to assist you as needed.

For more information about First Presbyterian Church, we invite you to visit our website. There you will find out the ways to keep in touch, how we live our faith, our different partnerships and so much more.

Our website address is: www.firstpresracine.org

If you're interested in receiving news about the church, please call 262.632.1686 or email: shelley@firstpresracine.org

Rev. Darren Utley—Church Pastor

[*pastordarren@firstpresracine.org*](mailto:pastordarren@firstpresracine.org)

TODAY'S SERVICE

PASTOR—*Rev. Darren Utley*

LITURGIST—*Shelley Maurer*

POETRY READING—*Elie Hunt*

MUSICIANS—*Alejandro Alumbremos, Mark Paffrath, Dave Titus, Alan Galle, Chancel Choir, Brass Quartet: including Pat Badger - trumpet, Jamie Breiwick - trumpet, Katie Humphrey - French horn, Chuck Barnes - trombone*

MEDIA TECH SPECIALIST—*Steve Comeau*

*Please stand as you are able.

[**Bold type**] indicates text to be spoken by the congregation.

[***Bold italic type***] indicates song to be sung by the congregation.



WE GATHER TO WORSHIP

(As a courtesy to everyone, please mute your mobile device.)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Shelley Maurer

Welcome! May you find God's love, peace, grace, and joy as we worship today.

POEM

Birdsong | *Sarah A. Speed*

Elie Hunt

Every morning the sun rises,
majestic and steady.
She is greeted
in all her strength
with the joyous cacophony of birdsong.
I like to believe
this holy chorus
is the birds telling each other—
I'm here.
We made it through the night.
You're not alone.
What good, good news.
I think the resurrection is a bit like that.
God is here.
We made it through the night.
We are not alone.
What good, good news.

PRELUDE

Easter Song | *Anne Herring, arr. John Purifoy*
Alejandro Alumbros

*CALL TO WORSHIP

On Friday, we thought the good news had been silenced.

On Friday, we thought the good news had taken its last breath.

On Friday, we thought the good news had been buried.

But today, we know the good news is alive and well.

The good news is dancing!

The good news is on the loose!

The good news is out in the world, calling your name!

Alleluia! Even death has lost its sting.

Let us worship our good-news Christ.

*OPENING HYMN

Morning Has Broken

[GtG Hymn #664]

Alejandro Alumbros, Mark Paffrath, Pat Badger, Dave Titus, Alan Galle

CALL TO CONFESSION

Friends, on Easter Sunday we remember that the world did its worst to God.

The world battered and bruised,

betrayed and abandoned,

crucified and buried our living God.

And despite it all, Jesus *still* chose to return.

Jesus rose again and immediately went to work spreading God's love to the very people who had hurt him.

So hear me when I say, there is *nothing* you can do that could keep God's love at bay.

With that good news mind, let us go to God in prayer, trusting that Jesus Christ loves, claims, and seeks us.

Friends, let us pray:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious God,
we want to be Easter people.
We want to shout your good news from the rooftop.
We want to follow the disciples, who ran to look for you.
We want to follow the angels, who said, “Be not afraid,”
but we are afraid.
And we don’t know where to look.
And we are worried we’ll say the wrong thing.
So forgive us, for we are imperfect Easter people.
We are best intentions and best laid plans.
We are an out-of-tune chorus of “alleluias.”
We are on our way, but we are not there yet.
Show us how to embody your good news in this world.
Show us how to be your Easter people.
With hope for tomorrow, we pray, amen.**

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Family of faith,
even when we are an out-of-tune chorus of “alleluias,”
we belong to God.
Jesus died and rose for you.
And there is nothing that could keep God’s love at bay.
So join me in this good news declaration:
**Through Jesus Christ we are seen, saved, loved, and claimed.
This is the good news of the gospel! Thanks be to God.
Amen.**

*ACT OF PRAISE

Goodness Is Stronger Than Evil
[GtG Hymn #750]

*PASSING THE PEACE

As Christ welcomed everyone,
no matter what their background or social standing;
as Christ welcomed enemies & friends,
outcasts & leaders, foreigners & neighbors,
let us open our hearts and homes and lives.
Let us be like Christ to everyone we meet.
Peace be with you.
And also with you.

CHORAL ANTHEM

He Is Risen | *Don Besig*
Chancel Choir, directed by Alejandro Alumbremos

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy One,
all over the world, people are gathering to hear the same story.
All over the world, people are gathering to hear how death lost its sting.
All over the world, people are gathering together,
praying for a glimpse of you.
So like our neighbors all over the world, we pray, be here.
Speak to us today.
Soften the calloused parts of our hearts until we can sense
your Holy Spirit in our midst once more.
With eagerness and hope, we run to the tomb.
We sing alleluia.
We bow our heads.
We listen for you.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 28:1-10

[NT 33-34]

SERMON

the good news is.....alive in the world

Rev. Darren Utley

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Be Not Afraid

Brass Quartet, Mark Paffrath

*SONG OF RESPONSE

Christ Is Alive

[GtG Hymn #246]

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.

It sounds like welcome and feels like home.

It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.

It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table,

so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.

I have seen it alive in the world.

And even when my heart aches,

even when wars rage,

even when mercy feels out of reach,

I remember the one who welcomed the children and led with nonviolence.

I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable

and inspired those around him.

I remember that the good news really is good news,

for I have seen it alive in the world.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

OFFERTORY

La Tromba | *Francois Couoperin*
Brass Quartet

*DOXOLOGY

*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*

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

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.

SHARING THE BREAD & THE CUP

Communion | *Jody Mayfield*

Please be assured that the communion bread will always be gluten-free.

GOING FORTH TO MINISTER

*CLOSING HYMN

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

[GtG Hymn #232]

*BENEDICTION

*SUNG BLESSING

Thine Is the Glory

[GtG Hymn #238, refrain, v. 2, refrain]

POSTLUDE

Postlude Maestoso | *Valentin Engel*

Prayer Matters

Heartfelt thoughts & prayers for all who have recently experienced the loss of a friend or family member. May they know peace and comfort during these difficult times.

Prayers of comfort & healing for Evelyn Vanderheyden, Sheila Lawrence, Don Tobias, Peggy Taylor, Pam Simpson, Vi Shufelt, Peggy Wagner, Ed Lehmann, Austin Moulds, Mac & Marilyn MacCaughey, Ellen Easley, Sandra Hopkins, Kay Mahl, Mary Johnson, Leah Fisher, Barb Stevenson, and an unspoken prayer for a church member.

As they deal with physical, emotional and/or spiritual issues, please pray for Kathy Wortley & her sister—as they help with the cares for Richard—her elderly father; Sue Ann—mother of Mary Bernstein; Dan—father of Shelley Maurer; John—husband of Sandy Hawley; Johan—brother of Cecilia Andersson; Chad—son of Sheila Lawrence; David—brother and Lynn—sister-in-law of Ed Lehmann; Mark—son of Sharon Campbell; Mary Ann—mother of Cheryl Nitz; Jack Flynn and Mary—sister of Gretchen Hermann; the paternal grandfather of Autumn Eifert; Amy—daughter of Jim & Bonnie Eastman and sister of Jenny Eastman; Elena & Ezequiel Romero—parents of Deb Utley; Masako—mother of Fumi Nakayama; Nancy—mother of Gloria Zember; John—son of Mac & Marilyn MacCaughey; Chuck—husband of Sue Pehlivanian; Ramona, Steve, Susan, Sandra, John, Liz and Gabby—friends & family of the Galles; Meyer Schaal; Scott Mohn—friends of the Paffrath family.

Prayers for those in the service — Evan Humphreys, Col. Jay Brooke, Jared Smith, Jordan Smith, Nicholas Hansen.

Thank you for your continued prayers for everyone. They are powerful!



What's happening this week?

Sun., Apr. 5 th	9:30 ^{AM}	Easter Sunday Worship
	10:40 ^{AM}	Fellowship
Mon., Apr. 6 th	9:00 ^{AM}	Staff Meeting via Zoom
Wed., Apr. 8 th	4:00 ^{PM}	Food Pantry
Sun., Apr. 12 th	9:30 ^{AM}	Sunday Worship
	10:40 ^{AM}	Fellowship

LITURGY & POEM BY REV. SARAH A. SPEED | A SANCTIFIED ART LLC | SANCTIFIEDART.ORG

A note from Shelley...

Beginning this month, you will be able to access the church's monthly calendar two ways.

As in the past, the monthly printed calendar is located on the church's webpage at: firstpresracine.org/connect/first-pres-news-calendar

To access the most up-to-date calendar, you can visit the church's website: firstpresracine.org. At the top of the page, click on **EVENTS**. As events are planned throughout each month, I will try to add events as I am notified.

If you have an event that needs to be added, or if you have questions/concerns, please let me know: shelley@firstpresracine.org

Happy Easter!

Mark Your Calendar Now!

Choral Arts Society of Southeastern Wisconsin (CAS)

To wrap up their 39th season, CAS will present *Fantasia!* on Saturday, April 18th, 7:00^{PM} here in our beautiful sanctuary.

CAS welcomes *Guest Artist* Randy Bush to the stage in a thrilling performance of Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia* on the Old 104th. This program will also feature organist Nick Renkosik on the newly restored First Presbyterian Church organ, performing Bach's mighty Toccata and Fugue in d minor. Randy and Nick will collaborate in playing piano four hands to accompany the chorus in the lovely choral version of Fauré's Pavane.

Join us as we celebrate 33 years of Music & More!

Music & More kicks off its 2026 season with a special concert on Saturday, May 9 at 7:00^{PM}. "Spring Sampler" will offer a taste of what makes M&M a unique program. Performers: "Caritas" – Greg & Kathy Berg, Kate Potter Barrow – vocal & piano; Jesse Gomez & Heather Lopp – violin & piano; and Mark Paffrath & Zachary Scot Johnson – vocal, guitar & piano. Early Bird Tickets are \$15 through May 2; \$20 after May 2.

Many of your favorite musicians are returning to play at the 10 FREE noontime concerts which will run on Thursdays from June 4 – August 6, noon to 1:00^{PM}.

Spring Flowers

John & Linnea Brooke, *in loving memory of their parents—Herman & Elizabeth Nelson,
John & Geraldine Brooke*

Sharon Campbell, *in loving memory of David Campbell;
in honor of Mark & Lisa Campbell*

Nancy DeKraay, *in loving memory of Warren DeKraay*

Larry Dickerson, *in loving memory of Ruth & Charlesworth Dickerson*

Royce & Barbara Earnest, *in loving memory of Bill Little*

Jim & Bonnie Eastman, *in loving memory of their loved ones*

Bev & Autumn Eifert, *in loving memory of Jack Eifert, Katie MacKenzie & Kristin
Kraftzenik; in honor of Racine Friendship Clubhouse*

Alan & Susan Galle, *in loving memory of Geraldine Galle, Leon & Patricia Fiorentino,
Carol Toth*

Kate Gleason, *in loving memory of her mom—Cindy Gleason*

Bill & Blanche Gunderson, *in honor of their grandchildren*

Dave & Ginny Holle, *in loving memory of their parents*

Ko Kryger, *in loving memory Myrna Kryger*

Sheila Lawrence, *in loving memory of loved ones*

Shelley Maurer, *in loving memory of Jeff Maurer*

Cathy Perkins, *in memory of loved ones*

Spring Flowers-continued

The Rash Family, *in loving memory of Margaret Cormack-Rash —“Mom”*

Nancy Reeser, *in loving memory of Dennis Reeser*

Dani Reitsma and Mari Reitsma Chevako, *in loving memory of John & Patt Reitsma*

Tim & Theresa Revis, *in honor of Shelley Maurer*

Jerry & Nancy Ritter, *in loving memory of their parents*

Karen Ruggaber & family, *in loving memory of Mr. & Mrs. Harold Keebler*

The Rowland Daniels Family, *in honor of Judy Rowland*

Carol Lee Saffioti-Hughes, *in loving memory of Ted Hughes & Autumn Grace Hughes*

Ken Schacht & Nancy Lechner, *in loving memory of Cliff Lechner, Pete Peterson,
Don & Marian Schacht*

Cliff & Ruby Seeton, *in loving memory of Marvin Wynstra, Ray & Betty Seeton;
in honor of Shirley Wynstra*

Vi Shufelt, *in loving memory of Jim, Ricky & Beverly Shufelt*

Kathi Wilson & Carrie Massey, *in loving memory of Marlene Wilson, Yvonne Massey,
Mary Larscheidt*

Russ & Kathy Wortley, *in loving memory of loved ones*

*As you leave the sanctuary, feel free to take your flowers with you.
Remember—any flowers left after today will be planted
in our beautiful Atrium garden.*

MATTHEW 28:1-10

("Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me.")

Death cannot stop the good news. It is alive, unbound, and wild in the world. Like the mustard seed, it grows without limit. Like water turned into wine, it surprises us with joy. Like loaves of bread, it multiplies to feed each hungry soul. And now, even in the face of death, it will not be buried or silenced. Just as the angels in Advent, the angel at the empty tomb delivers good news: "Do not be afraid." On the way to Galilee, Jesus greets the women with this same message, but adds: "Go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me." As we celebrate the good news of Easter, let us also go out seeking Christ in the faces of neighbors and strangers, and in the good works that are alive in this world.

good news mantra ... *new life is all around.*

SUNDAY

Question:

Where is the good news alive in the world?

Prayer:

Good-news God, in the face of violence, you chose peaceful resistance. On the cross, you joined all those who know suffering. After death, you defied the grave. Today I have good news to sing: love wins! You are with us! Death is not the end! Your goodness is alive in the world! Today, I will celebrate this good, good news. Amen.

MONDAY

Question:

Where have you seen God or felt the Spirit's presence in recent weeks?

Prayer:

God, I know you're here. Like glitter tossed into the wind, I catch a glimpse of you anywhere I look. Every person I pass on my daily commute bears your image. Every breath I take, I breathe you into my lungs. You are as near as my heartbeat and as vast as the cosmos. What a marvelous mystery. Don't let me miss it. In awe and gratitude I pray, amen.

TUESDAY

Question:

What feels full of life, hope, and vibrancy in your faith community or personal life?

Prayer:

Living God, there is so much to be grateful for. Even in the midst of death, new life emerges. Thank you for the flowers that push up through the snow. Thank you for the sun that rises each morning. Thank you for young people who bring energy to tired places. Thank you for hope on the horizon. Thank you for birdsong and new friends and the old, old story of your endless love. Thank you for all the things that help me feel full to the brim with life. Amen.

WEDNESDAY

Question:

When hope seems lost, where do you look for God's presence?

Prayer:

Holy God, I know Mary's pain. I, too, have shown up to the tomb, weary and disheartened, believing that death has won. I, too, have tucked away my optimism and prepared my heart for the worst. In those bleak moments, God, startle me with your presence. Send angels in my midst to point me back to you, the Risen One. Humbly I pray, amen.

THURSDAY

Question:

*Jesus invites his followers to look for him in Galilee.
Where do you feel Christ calling you forward in this season?*

Prayer:

Risen Christ, the Easter story is a reminder that nothing could contain you—no tomb, no body, no violent act. You are alive in the world, unfettered and beckoning us to follow. Lead me to the places you have called me to be. Show me where you're headed. I want to be there, too. Amen.



Meet Me in Galilee | Hannah Garrity

Hand-dyed and collaged newspaper with paper lace overlay