



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 22, 2020
11:00 a.m. Livestream
Fourth Sunday in Lent

GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Greeting Psalm 118:24

This is the day the Lord has made; **let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

Prelude *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* Charles Callahan

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Song of Gathering Hymn 77, Stanza 1

**Forty days and forty nights you were fasting in the wild;
forty days and forty nights tempted, and yet undefiled.**

Call to Worship

Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God,
the Lord alone.

You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.

***Hymn Insert** *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* NETTLETON

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed. We have sinned by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have sinned by what we have said, and by what we have left unsaid. In your grace, forgive what we have been, amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, to the glory of your holy name.

*Silent Prayer

After a moment of silent prayer, the traditional response Kyrie eleison ("Lord have mercy") will be sung.

***Congregational Response** Healey Willan



Written for Pentecost by a British Baptist pastor, *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* is full of biblical terms like "Ebenezer" (1 Samuel 7:12), Hebrew for "a stone of help" set up to give thanks for God's assistance. The tune name honors hymnal compiler Asahel Nettleton.

**Those who are able may stand.*

***Assurance of Pardon**

***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.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you.

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson

Psalm 89:1-4, page 533

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

Where True Charity and Love Dwell

Kaye Saunders

Where true charity and love dwell, God is also there. Since the love of Christ has joined us in one body, let us now rejoice, now and always. And as we love and serve our Lord, the living God, with sincerity love each other.

Second Lesson

Mark 12:28-44, page 925

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

The Greatest Commandment

Dr. Ryan Baer

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn Insert 326** *Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart* MORECAMBE

***Affirmation of Faith**

Colossians 1:15-20

Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible. All things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn of the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross. Amen.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

WONDROUS LOVE

Charles Callahan

***Doxology**

Hymn 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**

The anthem, performed today as a solo, is by contemporary American composer, Kaye Saunders, who is currently Organist and Director of Music at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Durham, North Carolina. It is a new setting of the *Ubi Caritas* text.

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart, a reflection on Galatians 5:25, was written by a literary Anglican clergyman whose preaching drew people of many social classes to one of the formerly poorer London churches. The tune was created for "Abide with me" but more often appears with the present text.

Please continue to support the church financially. You can mail your check to the church office or go to our website: firstpresathens.org/home/giving

SENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

***Hymn Insert 85** *What Wondrous Love Is This* WONDROUS LOVE

*Benediction

*Congregational Response

Hymn 540, Stanza 2

**God be with you till we meet again;
unseen wings protecting hide you,
daily manna still provide you:
God be with you till we meet again.**

*Postlude

Fugue in G Minor

Johann Sebastian Bach

The postlude today is the well-known "Little" Fugue in G minor by J. S. Bach, in honor of Bach's birthday, March 21, 1685.

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The melody for *What Wondrous Love Is This* shows signs of Celtic influences, and the unusual meter is that of an old sea chanty about Captain Kidd. The tune first appeared in the valleys of the Southern Appalachians, where William Walker recorded it and included it in his historic *Southern Harmony*. Each stanza has a single thought which is underscored by repetition, but it is the haunting melody which has made this hymn so popular in this country.

A special word of welcome: thank you for being with us online for worship this morning. We are delighted and hope that you will join us again next Sunday.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor*

Dr. Carol Strickland, *Associate Pastor*

Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*

Kendall Kookogey-Bono, *Soloist*

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Rebecca Carlton

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Prayer requests can be submitted to the church office, 706-543-4338, or by the Prayer Request link on our church website (firstpresathens.org).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROGRAMS CANCELLED OR POSTPONED

In response to the crisis that has unfolded in recent weeks, the Session voted to cancel all church-wide activities scheduled through March 31. This includes the 8:45 worship service, all Sunday School classes, Wed@First Dinners and programming, Choirs, and group meetings such as Josephine Paine Bible Study, Bookless Book Group, First Friends, and PW Circles.

For more information, please check the website or contact the church office.

PRESBYTERIAN HERITAGE TRIP TO NORTHERN IRELAND

Join the Presbyterian Heritage Trip to Northern Ireland this September! Information about the trip is located on our website. For additional information, please contact Sam Thomas at sthomas@trrcobbhouse.org.

SAVING VISION MONTH

Your donation of old but useful eyeglasses will help many who are in need of vision correction receive a true "twenty-twenty" gift in the year 2020. Donations accepted include prescription glasses, reading glasses, and sunglasses (prescription or plain). Our Bicentennial goal is to collect 200+ pair of glasses. You may drop off your donations in the church office from 9:00 a.m. until noon, Mondays through Fridays.

WOMEN'S MONTREAT CONFERENCE

Join FPC women attending the Women's Connection Conference August 14-16 in the beautiful NC mountains. Register on our website to stay with us at the Georgia Lodge and register for the conference itself at montreat.org. The keynoter is popular author, speaker, blogger Jen Hatmaker. Contact Carol McKay at carol_mckay@att.net with questions and Carol Strickland at cstrickland@firstpresathens.org for scholarship help.

The Wayne F. Middendorf Memorial Concert Series

presents

Geneva Stonecipher-Overbaugh

Organist

Sunday, April 5, 5:00 p.m.

Stephen Ministry

An important theme of the Lenten season is the humanity of Christ. In Jesus, God became human and fully experienced the wide range of emotions we all encounter in life. Jesus experienced times of loneliness, sadness, hurt, anger, disappointment, grief, and abandonment. That is part of being human. Another part of being human is needing help from each other. God never intended us to be completely self-sufficient. Part of God's plan is for each of us to turn to others for help when we need it.

So when you are experiencing difficult times, don't struggle alone. Our Stephen Ministers will walk with you, listen to you, encourage you, pray with you, and provide confidential one-to-one care to help you through tough times. Stephen Ministers can bring the love of Jesus back into your life or the life of someone that you know. Our Stephen Ministry team works with church members and non-members. **Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you!**

Contact a Stephen Leader for more information:

Bob Frisch: rpfrisch@aol.com, 914-262-1078

Dawn Frisch: dawnmfrisch@aol.com, 914-255-3447

Lisa Oelke: lisakoelke@gmail.com, 706-540-4251

Carol Strickland: cstrickland@firstpresathens.org, 706-765-7671

Wed@First Online

Please join us for Wed@First Online on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m., where Dr. Baer will facilitate a theological conversation via Zoom. Zoom is a web-based audio and video conferencing tool that can be used through desktop computers, laptops and smartphones. Information on how to set up Zoom and join the conversation can be found on the website.

If you've never joined a Zoom meeting before, please go to the following link to learn how: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Meeting>.

To join the conversation, shortly before 6:30 p.m. please go to <https://zoom.us/j/598537769>. You can either watch from your laptop or install the app on your smartphone. Please keep in mind that if you are using a desktop computer or laptop you will need a built-in camera or microphone to join the conversation.

Easter Lily Dedication

If you wish to give a contribution in honor or memory of a loved one, please place your order by **Monday, April 6**. Each dedication is \$12. You may place your completed form and check in a Fellowship Pad envelope and drop it in the offering plate, mail it to the church office, or contact the church at 706-543-4338 or frontdesk@firstpresathens.org with your dedications.

Each dedication will be listed in the April 12 worship service bulletin.

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Given by _____

BAPTISM

475 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

1 Come, thou Fount of ev-ery bless-ing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;
 2 Here I raise my Eb - e - ne - zer; hith-er by thy help I'm come;
 3 O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be!

streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud-est praise.
 and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe-ly to ar - rive at home.
 Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan-dering heart to thee.

Teach me some me - lo-dious son - net, sung by flam-ing tongues a-bove;
 Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-dering from the fold of God;
 Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;

praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un-chang-ing love!
 he, to res - cue me from dan-ger, in - ter-posed his pre-cious blood.
 here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Written for Pentecost by a British Baptist pastor, this text is full of biblical terms like "Ebenezer" (1 Samuel 7:12), Hebrew for "a stone of help" set up to give thanks for God's assistance. The tune name honors hymnal compiler Asahel Nettleton, who probably did not compose it.

326 Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

MORECAMBE 10.10.10

George Croly, 1854

Frederick Cook Atkinson, 1870

1. Spir - it of God, de - scend up - on my heart;
 2. Hast Thou not bid us love Thee, God and King;
 3. Teach me to feel that Thou art al - ways nigh;
 4. Teach me to love Thee as Thine an - gels love,

Wean it from earth, through all its puls - es move;
 All, all Thine own: soul, heart, and strength, and mind?
 Teach me the strug - gles of the soul to bear,
 One ho - ly pas - sion fill - ing all my frame;

Stoop to my weak - ness, might - y as Thou art,
 I see Thy cross, there teach my heart to cling.
 To check the ris - ing doubt, the reb - el sigh;
 The bap - tism of the heaven - de - scend - ed Dove,

And make me love Thee as I ought to love.
 O let me seek Thee, and O let me find!
 Teach me the pa - tience of un - an - swered prayer.
 My heart an al - tar, and Thy love the flame.

What Wondrous Love Is This

WONDROUS LOVE 12.9.12.12.9

Walker's *Southern Harmony*, 1835
Harm. *Cantate Domino*, 1980

American folk hymn, c. 1811

1. What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
2. To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing,
3. And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,

What won - drous love is this, O my soul!
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;

What won-drous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
To God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joy - ful be,

To bear the *heav - y cross for my soul, for my soul,
While mil - lions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;
And through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on, I'll sing on,

To bear the *heav - y cross for my soul!
While mil - lions join the theme, I will sing!
And through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on!

*Or "dreadful curse" (as original text).

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

(706) 543-4338

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor*
 Dr. Carol Strickland, *Associate Pastor*
 The Rev. Margaret Davis, *Parish Associate*
 Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*
 Mrs. Kim Ness, *Director of Youth Ministries*
 Mrs. Natalie Bishop, *Director of Children's Ministries*
 Mrs. Elaine Johnson, *Director of Weekday School*
 Mr. Roger Burbage, *Church Administrator*
 Mrs. Lucy Bell Johnson, *Administrative Assistant*
for Congregational Care & Membership
 Mr. Paulo Santos, *Communications Specialist*
 Mrs. Jennifer Sunderlin, *Receptionist/Admin. Assistant*
 Ms. Katherine Worsham, *Accountant*
 Mrs. Marcy Fabris, *Weekday School Admin. Assistant*
 Ms. Rita Raines, *Nursery Coordinator*
 Mrs. Charlotte Chromiak, *Children's Music Assistant*
 Mrs. Madeline Van Dyck, *Parish Nurse*

STUDENT INTERNS

Ms. Naina Amballa, *Website Technician*
 Ms. Jordan Osborne, *Middle School Ministry*
 Ms. Natalie Siegman, *High School Ministry*

WADDEL FELLOWS

Ms. Emmaline Michael, *Mission & Outreach*
 Ms. Leighton Parker, *High School Ministry*

PLEASE SEE FIRSTPRESATHENS.ORG
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH.