



First Presbyterian Church

Watertown, NY + www.watertownfirstpres.org

March 12, 2023 + 10:00 a.m.



A Word About the Sanctuary Decorations from Pastor Andrew

Visuals are an important part of our faith. Wherever you look in the sanctuary you will see symbols that help us to live into the teachings of our faith. Whether it is the mosaic cross above the chancel or the baptismal font at center aisle, each conveys a message to accentuate our experience in worship. The same can be said of such architectural details of the church like the steeple, pointing us always to God above the fray of everyday life.

As I prayed about our observance of Lent, I wanted to represent both the starkness and richness of this season. The season is patterned off of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, represented in our worship space by gnarly branches and jagged edges. This season is one of penitence and self-examination, represented by the deep tones of purple. Lent is a journey, from the mountain of Transfiguration to the cross, represented on the chancel by the sea of purple and willows, reminiscent of the Israel's journey to the Promised Land through the Red Sea. And at the center is the cross of Christ, high and lifted up for our adoration and praise. As we approach Holy Week and walk the steps of Jesus' death and resurrection, the cross will transform just as Jesus did during those three days in the tomb.

I thank the worship committee for allowing me to bring these ideas to life, and to Katie, Stacey, and many others who helped make it happen!

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church!

This is the day the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it! Whether you are visiting First Presbyterian Church for the first time, or are a longtime member or friend, your presence today is a blessing to our community!

Three very important commitments guide our lives together at First Presbyterian Church: *worship*, *mission* and *discipleship*. In worship we commune with God and with one another, sing and pray, and through mission, both local and international, we live out Jesus' call to 'feed my sheep' and serve the least.' In study, prayer, and community, we develop as life-long disciples of Jesus, working for a more peaceful and just world.

Following worship, please stick around for fellowship time. Enjoy a cup of coffee. Spend time in the sanctuary in prayer. Introduce yourself to me and your fellow worshippers. We're glad you're here!

Pastor Andrew
(410) 916-1673 + andrew.long1085@gmail.com

If you are new here, please fill out the card in the pew and place it in the offering plate, so that we can get to know you better.

Hearing help is available during all worship services - please see an usher for assistance.

Nursery Care is available for children to age 4 during all worship Services. You can find the nursery in the education wing of the building. A restroom and quiet room can be found in the narthex.

If you are in need of prayer, please see our Pastor before or after worship, or write your prayer requests in the green book at the front of the sanctuary (by the flags)

Sunday School for pre-school through grade 6 meets after "Young Disciples Time." Kelly Thomas is the teacher today.

Gathering Music

“The Wondrous Cross”

“Beneath the Cross of Jesus”

“Our Great Savior”

“It Is Well with My Soul”

Mason, arr. John Carter

Maker, arr. Mary McDonald

Hyfrydol, arr. Lani Smith

Bliss, arr. Janet Linker



We Approach God in Worship



Pastor’s Greeting and Words of Welcome

Prelude

“Psalm 18: I Love Thee, O Lord, My Strength” Benedetto Marcello

*Call to Worship from Psalm 146

Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God,

Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them,

Who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed,

Who gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets the prisoners free;

The Lord opens the eyes of the blind.

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.

The Lord watches over the sojourners;

He upholds the widow and the fatherless,

But the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, to all generations.

Praise the Lord!

Let us worship God together!

*Opening Hymn #320

“Beneath the Cross of Jesus”

*Prayer of the Day

Confession of Sin *and* Assurance of Pardon

Jesus showed grace to the blind man and restored his sight. Trusting in God's compassion and saving love, we confess our sins and ask his forgiveness for Jesus' sake, that we too might be open to the saving power of God's love in our lives. Let us confess our sins together.

Almighty God, although we claim to see and know so much, all too often we are lost in the blindness of our sins. We follow tempting pathways instead of walking in your commandments. We act according to our own desires instead of obeying the guidance of your holy Word. We are not always receptive to corrective wisdom from you or from one another. We seek after the same things when you have called us to transformation.

Have mercy on us and forgive our sins. Open our eyes so that, by faith, we will see the wonders of your love and grace. Amen.

a time of silence is kept

God has had mercy on us. He sent his Son to be our Savior. The Lord and Messiah, who opened the eyes of the blind, came to lay down his life as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. I announce to you that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Thanks be to God!

***Response from "Amazing Grace"**

**When we've been here ten thousand years,
bright, shining as the sun;
we've no less days to sing God's praise,
than when we first begun!**

A Time With Young Disciples

"This Little Light of Mine"

African-American Spiritual

**This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
Hide it under a bushel? No! I'm gonna let it shine...
Ev'rywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine!**



We Listen for God's Word



Scripture Introduction and Prayer for Illumination

The First Lesson

Isaiah 35:4-10

Anthem

“Open My Eyes, Spirit Divine”

James Koerts

Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth our hast for me;
Place in my hand, the wonderful key that shell on class and set
me free:

Refrain:

Silently, now I wait for Thee, ready my God, Thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine.

Open my eyes that I may hear, voices of truth Thou sendest
clear;

And while the Scriptures fall on my ear, everything falls will
disappear.

Refrain

Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth
everywhere;

Open my heart and let me prepare, love with the children thus
to share.

Refrain

The Second Lesson

John 9:1-7, 24-38

The Sermon

Grace for the Blind

***Hymn #352**

“O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus”

***Affirmation of Faith** *Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.



We Respond To God's Word



Community Connect

At this time in worship we share information on how you can connect even better with the community at FPC Watertown. During this time we also share our joys and concerns, as well as any other relevant information to our life together.

The Offering



Donations can be made by either scanning the QR code from the Venmo app or by searching for @First_Pres_of_Watertown.

The Offertory

“The Gift of Grace”

Arnold B. Sherman

***The Doxology**

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

Prayers of the People *and* The Lord's Prayer

In peace, let us pray to the Lord

Almighty God, during his earthly ministry, your Son, our Lord Jesus, healed the sick and restored sight to the blind. He fulfilled all that the Scriptures had foretold of the Messiah. His healing miracles proved him to be the Son of God and the promised Messiah. We give you thanks and praise for your saving work through Jesus our Savior. Gracious Lord,

Have mercy on us and hear our prayer.

Almighty God, by the power of your Spirit, give us eyes of faith to see the miracles that you have done and continue to do in our lives, especially the miracle of our salvation in Jesus. Help us to see clearly your truth and to grow in grace as we see Jesus revealed in your holy Word. Gracious Lord,

Have mercy on us and hear our prayer.

Almighty God, we pray for those who are suffering through illness, fear and grief. According to your will, bring them comfort and healing. Lead us to serve them as we offer help to them in their need. Help them to see clearly the hope and encouragement found in the promises of your Word. Gracious Lord,

Have mercy on us and hear our prayer.

Almighty God, the man whose sight was restored worshiped Jesus as Messiah and Lord. Give us the clear sight of faith so that we too will faithfully worship Jesus as our Savior and King. Gracious Lord,

Have mercy on us and hear our prayer.

Hear us now as we pray to you in the name of Jesus Christ, as he taught us:

**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.**

***Closing Hymn**

“Amazing Grace”

**’Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears
relieved.**

How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.

**The Lord has promised good to me; His Word my hope
secures.**

He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

**Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail, and mortal life shall
cease:**

I shall possess, within the veil, a life of joy and peace.

**The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, the sun forbear to
shine;**

But God, who called me here below, will be forever mine.

***Blessing**

***Passing The Peace of Christ**

Postlude

“But Now I See”

Richard Williamson

This morning, the **Radio Broadcast** is a gift in loving memory of
Patricia McWayne, from her husband, Frederick; daughter, Shane;
son, Shawn; and daughter-in-law, Kathy.