

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

7th Sunday after Epiphany

February 23, 2025

A SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

(As we prepare to worship, please silence all mobile devices.)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS, JOYS AND CONCERNS

Mindy Douglas

MINUTE FOR MISSION – CROP WALK

Tom Bacon

PRELUDE

Cornet Piece in B Flat Major

Charles Burney

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Mindy Douglas

Leader: The way of Christ turns the world upside down.

People: God's ways are not our ways.

Leader: It moves us beyond retribution and cycles of violence.

People: God's ways are not our ways.

Leader: It leads us to enemy-love and scandalous forgiveness.

People: God's ways are not our ways.

Leader: It calls us beyond reciprocity into radical giving.

People: God's ways are not our ways.

Leader: So let us commit our way to the Lord together

**All: until our righteousness shines like the dawn
and our justice, like high noon.**

*HYMN NO. 756

O God of Every Nation

Llangloffan

*CALL TO CONFESSION

Esther Hethcox

Call to Prayer

Prayer of Confession (*in unison*)

Merciful God, we confess

**that we have not followed your ways
or trusted your promises.**

We love only those who love us;

**we show kindness only to those who are kind to us;
we give only when we expect to receive.**

Forgive us, Lord.

Fill our hearts with your selfless love.

Change our lives by your matchless grace.

These things we pray through Christ our Savior.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

*Those who are able, please stand.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Esther Hethcox

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

***REGATHERING HYMN NO. 399**

God Welcomes All

Themba Amen

*God welcomes all, strangers and friends;
God's love is strong, and it never ends.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Amy Dillon

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

**All: Gracious God, by your Word
you provide all we need—
for salvation,
for wholeness,
for abundant life.**

**Now draw us close in your Spirit
so that we may discover your will
and live according to your purposes;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 45:3-11, 15

(Pew Bible, OT page 42)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

Amy Dillon

People: **Thanks be to God!**

GOSPEL READING

Luke 6:27-38

(Pew Bible, NT page 64)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

Mindy Douglas

People: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

"Confounding Words"

Mindy Douglas

(Silent reflection)

***HYMN**

Christ Your Words of Love Confound Us

Sung to Beach Spring

*Christ, your words of love confound us,
even as we give you praise,
for the lessons that you teach us
seem so far from this world's ways.
How can we love those who hate us?
How can we love enemies?
What of people who abuse us?
How can we love even these?*

*Make us mindful: love is action,
not a feeling that uplifts.
In each daily situation,
love's the greatest of all gifts.
It's the wiser, stronger person
who will break the chain of hate.
Love can usher in redemption;
love can make a people great.*

*Faced with those who seek to hurt us,
make us confident and free:
you don't call us to be helpless
but to stand with dignity.
Lord, when others are demanding,
may we know they matter more
than our money or possessions.
May we share, not keeping score.*

*If we love just those who love us,
where's the giving? Where's the grace?
Even sinners try to do this;
they have friends that they embrace.
May we do, Lord, unto others
as we'd have them also do.
You have shown us: Love is action.
May we love, and make things new.*

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

John Weicher

DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS

Invitation to Give

John Weicher

Offertory Anthem

O Jesus, Grant Me Hope and Comfort

Johann Franck

*O Jesus, grant me hope and comfort;
O let me ne'er in sorrow pine,
my heart and soul, yea, all my being,
O Jesus, trust alone in Thee.
Thou Prince of Peace, Thou pearl from heaven,
true God, true Man, my Morningstar!
O come, Thou precious Sun most radiant,
Thy beams illumine my heart and soul.*

*O Jesus, with Thy advent quiet
my restless soul and anxious mind.
In true humility, I welcome Thee,
Jesus Christ, my Joy divine.
My thoughts, desires, and all my longings
I dedicate, O Christ, to Thee!
O come, Thou precious Sun most radiant,
Thy beams illumine my heart and soul.*

*Doxology with Alleluias

Lasst uns erfreuen

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia; Alleluia;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!*

NEW MEMBERS SERVICE

Mindy Douglas and Esther Hethcox

Words of Welcome and Introduction

*Affirmation of Faith (in unison)

The 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.

Reaffirmation of Faith

Prayer

Sung Response (Hymn No. 727, verse 1 & 2)

The Servant Song

*Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.*

*We are pilgrims on a journey; we're together on the road.
We are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

John Weicher

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

(Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession)

...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.

***HYMN NO. 750**

Goodness Is Stronger than Evil

Goodness Is Stronger

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Mindy Douglas

***POSTLUDE**

Voluntary in D

James Hook

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY!

Children's Music

Children in kindergarten to Grade 6 are invited to the choir room right after worship today for a time of music with Kathy Parkins.

Monthly Diaconate Meeting

12:15pm in Watts-Hill Hall

Youth Group

5:00 – 7:00pm in Youth Rooms

Meaning in the Middle Fellowship

8:00pm via Zoom



First Presbyterian Church welcomes all who worship with us. Let us know you have joined us for worship by scanning the QR code to the left. For online giving, scan the QR code to the right.



Sign In

Donate Online

We honor and celebrate the human diversity and unity that God gives us in Jesus Christ. First Presbyterian welcomes individuals of every age, race, nationality, gender identity, ability, sexual orientation, and economic circumstance to participate fully in the life of the church. So that you may know who is sitting nearby, please sign the *Friendship Pad*, pass it along the pew, and **then return it to the starting point**, noting the names of those sitting near you.

Today's *flowers* are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of **David Rimmer**, son of **Steve Rimmer** and brother of **Lyn & John Williams**.

New Members: The following persons were received into membership by the Session at a called meeting held prior to today's worship:

Ashley Bradshaw (she/her) Originally from Wilson, NC, completed her undergraduate studies at Meredith College and her graduate work at Appalachian State University. Now, as a dedicated member of the UNC healthcare team, she balances her passion for nutrition with the joys of being a dog mom, indulging in a good book, and whipping up delicious creations in the kitchen.

Sarah Cunningham (she/her) - Born and raised in New Jersey, Sarah moved to Georgia to attend the University of Georgia for her undergraduate degree. She then relocated to Durham, North Carolina, for graduate school at Duke University, where she has since planted her roots. Currently, she navigates the biotech industry as a remote project manager. She is joining the congregation with her husband, Zack, and their beloved 4-year-old bulldog mix, Petunia. In her leisure time, she finds joy in knitting, reading, and yoga.

Zack Czajkowski (he/him) - A Chapel Hill native and Elon University alumnus, found his passion not only in the world of small business but also on the tennis court. The competitive spirit he honed in business translated seamlessly into his love for the game. Off the court, he found companionship and support in his marriage to Dr. Sarah Cunningham.

Morgan Markwood (he/him) - Morgan was born and raised in Maryland to a proud Virginia family; upon adulthood, he skipped the Old Dominion to study and live in the Carolinas. Morgan works in supply chain management but prefers to be outdoors with his dog, Gracie, whenever possible. He enjoys camping, backpacking, studying history, and playing guitar.

Clare Stull (she/her) - Originally from Pensacola, Florida, Clare has called Raleigh, North Carolina home for most of her life. Her academic journey led her to NC State University, where she earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees. Currently, she's pursuing her dream of becoming a doctor at the UNC School of Medicine, with hopes of specializing in either primary care or OBGYN. When she's not hitting the books, Clare loves to explore new places, create delicious treats in the kitchen, and find her zen through yoga.

Childcare: A staffed nursery and children's playroom are available on the second floor of the education building during worship. **Activity bags** are available in the foyer for children. Please return bags to the foyer at the end of worship.

Hearing Assistance Receivers are available from the ushers for use in the sanctuary during worship. Before you leave the sanctuary, please turn off the receiver and place it in the specially marked receptacle by the door or return it to the audio/video console at the rear of the sanctuary. **If you accidentally took one home, please return it to the church so it can be recharged, sanitized, and used again.**

Restroom locations: To the left and right as you exit the rear of the sanctuary; on the second floor of the education building; and on the first and second floors of the church house. There is an infant changing table in the restroom area located to the left as you exit the rear of the sanctuary.

Portions of today's worship resources were reprinted from: *Call to Worship* and *Feasting on the Word*. Music is reprinted under Onelicense.net: A.713926. Hymn *Christ Your Words of Love Confound Us* Text: Copyright © 2019 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Memorial Services

We gather in faith and remembrance to honor those who have passed. These memorial services provide an opportunity for family, friends, and our community to come together in prayer, reflection, and gratitude for the lives of our loved ones. You are welcome to join us in offering support, sharing memories, and finding comfort in the presence of one another. Below is a list of upcoming services.

A Service of Witness to the Resurrection for **Maxie Honeycutt** will be held in the sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church on **Saturday, March 1, at 11 a.m.** Condolences may be shared with **Michael Honeycutt** (son) and **Paul Pasquarella** (son-in-law) at 17 Duke of Gloucester Circle, Durham, NC 27713. <https://www.hallwynne.com/obituaries/maxie-honeycutt>

A Service of Witness to the Resurrection for **Bill Hendrickson** will be held in the sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church on **Saturday, March 15, at 3 p.m.** Condolences may be shared with **Sally Hendrickson** (wife) at 1111 Millspring Drive, Durham, NC 27705. <https://www.hallwynne.com/obituaries/william-hendrickson>



ACTS OF REPARATION



ACTS OF REPARATION DOCUMENTARY

Sunday, March 2nd at 5:00pm

Watts-Hill Hall

Two friends – one Black, one white – travel South to their ancestral lands to explore what reparations means to them. From kitchen tables to porches, lost cemeteries to discovered diaries, their journeys lead to unexpected opportunities that transform their friendship, families and communities.



**Thursday, March 6,
7:00pm, Judea Reform
Congregation**

The 50-voice Duke Chorale sings music about freedom from a variety of eras and cultures, including Estonia, South Africa, Iran, America and more, with all proceeds supporting recent arrivals to the US. Allan Friedman, director. Mary Hamilton, accompanist. Donations accepted at the door.

Hamilton, accompanist. Donations accepted at the door.



March 23 and 24, 2025

The **McPherson Lectureship** is dedicated to enriching the faith and life of First Presbyterian Church as well as the Durham, NC community.

Together Drs. Robert Williamson, Jr. and Amy Cooper Robertson produce **BibleWorm**, a weekly podcast in which they consider a passage of biblical text from their respective faith traditions. The BibleWorm podcast is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and other podcast apps.

~Celebrations and Concerns of the Congregation ~

Celebrations: *Rod* and *Sarah Radtke* welcome a grandchild, **Rowan Cullen Radtke**, to the world. Their son **Tyler** and his wife, **Spenser**, are the happy parents.

Condolences, we extend our love and concern to:

Brantley & Jeff Blackwood and their children *Lainey & Kirbey* upon the death of Brantley's father, **Cliff Decker**.

We remember in prayer:

Mark Higgins, recovering from surgery.

Maryn Leonard, recovering from surgery.

Caroline Pritchett, recovering from surgery.

Carol Wills, recovering from surgery.

The family and friends of Emily James Steinhoff on the one-year anniversary of her death.

Lin Bentel

Tony Brown

Paul Cornsweet

Sam Crabtree

Susan Cyr

Andy Henry

Kerry Holbrook

Lee House

Ann Huff

Jenni James

Mac McCorkle

Jen McGonigle

Madge McKeithen

Harriett Mitchell

Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

Franzi Rokoske

Keith Rokoske

Alfred Tisdale

Phyllis Verhey

Care Communities

Croasdaile Pavilion: *Dub Gulley, Harvey Estes*

Hillcrest Convalescent: *Carol Wills*

Brookdale Senior Living: *Debbie Mathews*

Durham Ridge: *Phillip Herndon*

Pruitt Health - Durham: *Fred Callaway*

Family and Friends of the Congregation

Janet Bodisco-Massink, friend of Emily Wilkins

Francisca Cristobal, relative of Al and Judy Arrowwood

Jacqueline Culver, niece-in-law of Mary Jo Keenan

Kim Cummings, father of Drew Cummings

Linda Foster-Momsen, mother of Deborah Momsen-Hudson

Cheryl Fowler, friend of Cheri Reece

Jennifer Hervey, daughter-in-law of Jeanne Hervey

Katie Jackson, wife of Matthew Hirsch

Donna Johnson, mother of Ann Huff

Alan Petersburg, brother-in-law of Jenni James

Aaron Pritchard, friend of Kathy Parkins

Tom Rokoske, father of Keith Rokoske

Wu-Chou Su, father of Claire Su

Logan Tice, friend of the congregation

Jim Vacca, father of Jamie Chambliss

O God of Every Nation 756


1 O God of ev - ery na - tion, of ev - ery race and land,
 2 From search for wealth and pow - er and scorn of truth and right,
 3 Lord, strength-en those who la - bor that all may find re - lease
 4 Keep bright in us the vi - sion of days when war shall cease,

re - deem the whole cre - a - tion with your al - might - y hand.
 from trust in bombs that show - er de - struc - tion through the night,
 from fear of rat - tling sa - ber, from dread of war's in - crease;
 when ha - tred and di - vi - sion give way to love and peace,

Where hate and fear di - vide us and bit - ter threats are hurled,
 from pride of race and sta - tion and blind - ness to your way,
 when hope and cour - age fal - ter, your still small voice be heard;
 till dawns the morn - ing glo - rious when truth and jus - tice reign

in love and mer - cy guide us and heal our strife - torn world.
 de - liv - er ev - ery na - tion, e - ter - nal God, we pray.
 with faith that none can al - ter, your ser - vants un - der - gird.
 and Christ shall rule vic - to - rious o'er all the world's do - main.

Goodness Is Stronger than Evil 750



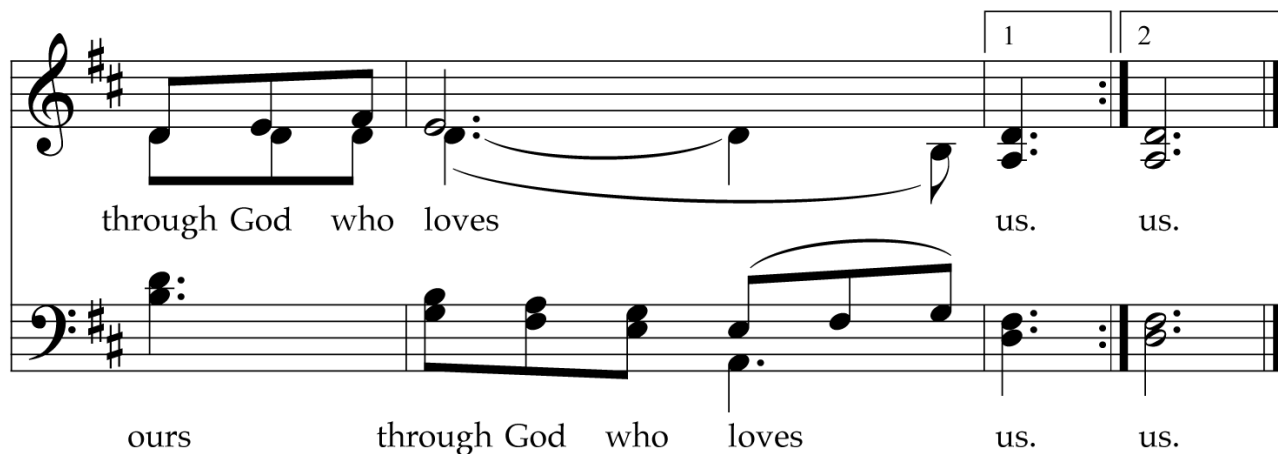
Good-ness is stron-ger than e - vil; love is stron-ger than hate;



light is stron-ger than dark - ness; life is stron-ger than death.



Vic - tory is ours; vic - tory is ours
Oh, vic - tory is ours; vic - tory is



through God who loves us. us.
ours through God who loves us. us.

This Week at a Glance!

<p style="text-align: center;">Later Today</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:15 PM (Choir Room) Children's Choir</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:15 PM (Watts-Hill Hall) Monthly Diaconate</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5:00 – 7:00 PM (Youth Rooms) Youth Groups</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8:00 PM (via Zoom) MnM's/Meaning in the Middle Fellowship</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Monday, February 24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1:30 PM (Mindy's Office) Worship Planning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:00 (Watts-Hill Hall) Session</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday, February 25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8:00 AM (Wilson Parlor) Somethings Prayer Service</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11:30 AM (Offsite) Daytimers' Luncheon</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Newsletter Release</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday, February 26</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1:00 PM (Mindy's Office) Program Staff Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4:30 PM (Room 201) Yoga</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:00 PM (Choir Room) Choir</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Sunday, March 2 Transfiguration of the Lord</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9:45 – 10:45 AM Faith Formation (children, youth, and adults) In preparation for faith and community, read the book of Ecclesiastes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11:00 AM Worship – John Weicher, Preaching</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:15 – 12:45 PM (Choir Room) Children's Music</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:15 PM (Wilson Parlor) Racial Equity Task Force</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5:00 – 7:00 PM (Offsite) Youth Group</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5:00 PM (Watts-Hill Hall) <i>Acts of Reparation</i> Showing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8:00 PM (via Zoom) MnM's Fellowship</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Thursday, February 27</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Friday, February 28</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10:30 AM (Room 201) Yoga</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Saturday, March 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11:00 AM (Sanctuary) Maxie Honeycutt Memorial Service and Reception (Watts-Hill Hall)</p>		

CHURCH STAFF

Shakira Bethea, Interim Church Administrator
Tom Bloom, Business Administrator
Lenore Champion, Children's Ministry Director
Vernon Cooper, Sexton
Mindy Douglas, Pastor/Head of Staff
Susan Dunlap, Parish Associate
Omar Guess, Sr., Sunday Morning Sexton



Joseph Harvard, Pastor Emeritus
Esther Hethcox, Designated Associate Pastor
Sybil King, Administrative Assistant
Kathy Parkins, Minister of Music
John Weicher, Associate Pastor
Mitzi Leshner-Thomas, Associate Pastor
 (Medical Leave)

For more information about First Presbyterian Church, email the church office:
info@firstpres-durham.org or visit our website: <https://firstpres-durham.org>.

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