



© Nora Allison-Pleasants, 5th grade

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA**

MARCH 16, 2025

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Second Sunday in Lent

March 16, 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

PRELUDE

Jerusalem, My Happy Home

Land of Rest, arr. Philip M. Young

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Mindy Douglas

Leader: The Lord is our light and our salvation;
whom shall we fear?

**People: The Lord is the stronghold of our life;
of whom shall we be afraid?**

Leader: We seek your face, O Lord.
Do not hide your face from us!

People: Do not forsake us, O God of our salvation!

Leader: Make us strong, and let our hearts take courage.

People: We wait for the Lord. Let us worship God!

***HYMN NO. 35**

Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty

Lobe den Herren

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

Esther Hethcox

Call to Prayer

Prayer of Confession (*in unison*)

Loving God,

**you have formed a covenant with us,
committing yourself to us
and inviting us to walk with you.**

**Yet we have resisted,
seeking other companions,
going in different ways,
thinking that we know best.**

Now we find ourselves far from life, further still from you.

Have mercy on our waywardness.

Help us find our way back.

**Give us faith so that we can hold the hand
you have extended to us in Jesus Christ.**

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. 157**

I Danced in the Morning, v.1

Lord of the Dance

*I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth.
At Bethlehem I had my birth.*

Refrain:

*Dance, then, wherever you may be;
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,*

*and I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Mason Essif

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

**All: God of all creation,
as a hen gathers her chicks together,
so we gather here to worship
within the safety and warmth of your wings.
We look to you to know what righteousness is.
We listen to you that we might know which path to take.
Open our eyes and our ears so that we may follow you well.
May we see your promises more brightly than we do the stars
and hear your good news more clearly
than the noise that inhabits our lives.
We are here, God, watching and listening.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

EPISTLE READING

Philippians 3:17-4:1

(Pew Bible, NT page 198)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

Mason Essif

People: **Thanks be to God!**

PSALTER READING

*Psalm 27
(See Insert)*

Mason Essif

GOSPEL READING

Luke 13:31-35

(Pew Bible, NT page 77)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

Mindy Douglas

People: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

"Stumbling in the Darkness"

Mindy Douglas

(Silent reflection)

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** *Confession of 1967 (inclusive version), 9.54-9.55*

Biblical visions and images of the rule of Christ culminate in the image of the kingdom. The kingdom represents God's triumph over all that resists the divine will and disrupts God's creation. Already God's reign is present in the world, stirring hope in all people and preparing the world to receive its ultimate judgment and redemption. With an urgency born of this hope, the church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, the church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God.

***HYMN NO. 314**

Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness

Christ, Be Our Light

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

Lenore Champion

DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS

Invitation to Give

Esther Hethcox

Offertory Anthem

Hide Not Thou Thy Face from Us, O Lord

Richard Farrant

Hide not thou thy face from us, O Lord

And cast not off thy servants in thy displeasure;

For we confess our sin unto thee,

And hide not our unrighteousness.

For thy mercy's sake,

Deliver us from all our sin. —Psalm 27:9

*Doxology

Old Hundredth

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Esther Hethcox

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**

O Jesus Christ, May Grateful Hymns Be Rising

Donne Secours

(See Insert)

(Children's Music: The children who are attending the music program after church can follow Kathy Parkins upstairs to begin rehearsal.)

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Mindy Douglas

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY!

Congregational Meeting: The Session of FPC has called a Congregational Meeting for today, Sunday March 16th, at the end of worship. FPC Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (elected by the congregation on Sunday, November 17) will present their candidate, Esther Hethcox, along with the terms of call (salary, housing, and benefits) for the position of Associate Pastor.

Meaning in the Middle Fellowship (8:00pm): MnM is a faith formation group and a fellowship community of adults in their late 20s to 40s – single or with life partners. Read our newsletter at <https://firstpres-durham.org/weekly-newsletter/> to learn more. New friends are always welcome!



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 ***Crafton*** by ***Tom, Margaret, Neel*** and ***John Keller***.

The ***Lenten Banner*** was completed in 1990 and dedicated in 1991. It depicts traditional Lenten symbols. The banner was made possible by funds donated in memory of ***Bess Bryant*** and by the stitching of many devoted members of this congregation.

The ***Pulpit Paraments***: In 2012 First Presbyterian Church commissioned Laurie Wohl to design and create paraments to be hung from the pulpit and lectern during Lent and Advent. Wohl is an internationally known fiber artist who exhibited her work at the church in spring of 2012. Her liturgical projects emphasize the “threads that bind” and the unity of the Old and New Testaments. We are grateful that the bequest of ***Anne ‘St. Clair’ Williams*** made it possible to enhance our sanctuary with these beautiful works of art.

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.

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.

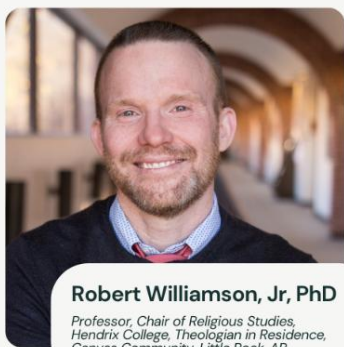
Today's **bulletin cover** was created by 5th grader **Nora Allison-Pleasants**. The image of Jesus as a mother hen is one of the most striking in scripture. Throughout Lent, bulletin art will be in grayscale or pencil, as a mark of the solemnity of the season.

Portions of today's worship resources were reprinted from: *Call to Worship 2021-2022*, *Call to Worship 2024 – 2025*, and *Connections Worship Companion*. Music is reprinted under Onelicense.net: A.713926.

First Presbyterian Church Durham

McPherson Lectureship 2025

Sunday, March 23 9:45 Faith and Community Class
11:00 Worship Service
4:00 Community Gathering
Monday, March 24 9:00 am Clergy Breakfast



Please join us next Sunday (and maybe Monday) for the McPherson Lectures:

Loving Your Neighbor in a Fearful World!

Dr. Amy Cooper Robertson, PhD, is Director of Lifelong Learning and Music at Congregation Or Hadash in Sandy Springs, Georgia. Prof. Robert (Bobby) Williamson, Jr., PhD, is the Margaret Berry Hutton Odyssey Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas, and ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Amy and Bobby are not married to each other, but they are longtime thought partners. Together, they produce [BibleWorm](#), a weekly Biblical podcast discussing the Narrative Lectionary text, both as Biblical scholars and as people of faith - one Jewish, one Christian. (BibleWorm is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and other podcast apps.)

Friends of all faiths are welcome, especially at the 4 pm session.

Lectureship Schedule

Sunday, March 23

9:45am - Faith & Community - "The Economics of Loving Your Neighbor"

1:00am - Worship Service - "The Limits of Neighborliness" (Luke 10:25-37)

4:00pm - Community Gathering - "Trusting God, Trusting Neighbor: The Vulnerability of Interdependence"

Monday, March 24

9:00am - Clergy Breakfast - "Spiritual Leadership in a Fearful World"

~Celebrations and Concerns of the Congregation ~

Condolences:

Sarah Cunningham and *Zach Czajkowski* upon the death of Sarah's grandfather who passed away last week.

Keith and *Franzi Rokoske* upon the death of Keith's father, *Tom Rokoske*, on Sunday, March 9th.

We remember in prayer:

<i>Tony Brown</i>	<i>Paul Cornsweet</i>	<i>Sam Crabtree</i>	<i>Susan Cyr</i>
<i>Kerry Holbrook</i>	<i>Lee House</i>	<i>Ann Huff</i>	<i>Jenni James</i>
<i>Maryn Leonard</i>	<i>Mitzi Leshner-Thomas</i>	<i>Jen McGonigle</i>	<i>Madge McKeithen</i>
<i>Harriett Mitchell</i>	<i>Franzi Rokoske</i>	<i>Keith Rokoske</i>	<i>Alfred Tisdale</i>
<i>Phyllis Verhey</i>			

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

Julia Allen, grandmother of Amy Wilson

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

Doug Hervey, son of Jeanne Hervey

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

Wu-Chou Su, father of Claire Su

Logan Tice, friend of the congregation

Jim Vacca, father of Jamie Chambliss

Rokoske GoFundMe Available

Franzi and Keith Rokoske are grateful for the support many of you have been able to provide directly or through the Care Team. Recently, they have identified a specific new need for emergency preparedness: the purchase and installation of a whole-house generator. A GoFundMe site has been created specifically for this expense. If you are interested in contributing in this way, please read more on the GoFundMe Site: <https://gofund.me/fdde6aae>

This Week at a Glance!

<p style="text-align: center;">Later Today</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:15 PM Children's Choir (Choir Room)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3:00 PM Youth Beach Trip Returns</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8:00 PM MnM's/Meaning in the Middle Fellowship (via Zoom)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday, March 18</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10:00 AM You Are Not Alone (Wilson Parlor)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6:00 PM Day School Board (via Zoom) Finance & Investment Committee (Zoom / Daye Meeting Room)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:00 PM Somethings Prayer Service (Wilson Parlor)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Thursday, March 20</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Friday, March 21</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10:30 AM Yoga (Room 201)</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Saturday, March 22</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11:00 AM LGBTQIA+ Gathering (home of Beth Stringfield and Cris Rivera)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6:00 PM Somethings Potluck / Durham CAN Listening Session (home of Susan Dunlap)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Monday, March 17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11:45 AM Coalition for Affordable Housing and Transit (Watts-Hill Hall)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1:30 PM Worship Planning (Mindy's Office)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6:00 PM Leadership Team</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday, March 19</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1:00 PM Staff Meeting (Daye Meeting Room)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4:30 PM Yoga (Room 201)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:00 PM Choir (Choir Room)</p>	
<p>Sunday, March 23 <i>3rd Sunday in Lent</i> <i>Newsletter Deadline, Durham CROP Walk</i></p> <p>9:45 AM - Faith Formation (Classes available for children and youth. Adults are invited to join with Faith and Community in Watts-Hill Hall for a presentation by our McPherson Lecturers.)</p> <p>11:00 AM - Worship; Bobby Williamson, Preaching & Amy Cooper Robertson, Cantoring</p> <p>12:15 PM - Children's Music (Choir Room); Diaconate (Watts-Hill Hall)</p> <p>4:00 PM - McPherson Lectureship</p> <p>5:00 PM - Youth Groups Farm Church (Watts & Green Sts.)</p> <p>8:00 PM - MnM's Fellowship (via Zoom)</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>.

305 EAST MAIN STREET DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA 27701 919.682.5511 ORGANIZED 1871