



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

APRIL 27, 2025

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Second Sunday of Easter

April 27, 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

Retrospection

Florence Price

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Mindy Douglas

Leader: The heavens declare the glory of God.

People: The firmament proclaims God's handiwork.

Leader: The plants and trees show God's presence.

People: Let us join with creation in praising God.

*HYMN NO. 20

All Things Bright and Beautiful

Royal Oak

*CONFESSION OF SIN

Mindy Douglas

Call to Prayer

Prayer of Confession

Giver of life, in the midst of a plundered earth we groan with creation:

Have mercy on us.

Giver of life, in the midst of poisoned water we groan with creation:

Have mercy on us.

Giver of life, in the midst of polluted air we groan with creation:

Have mercy on us.

Giver of life, in the midst of mountains of waste we groan with creation:

Have mercy on us.

Giver of life, in the midst of rising seas, we groan with creation:

Have mercy on us.

**Giver of life, forgive us and make us agents of healing for the good of your creation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray.**

Silent Confession

*Assurance of Pardon

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Mindy Douglas

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

**Those who are able, please stand.*

***REGATHERING HYMN NO. 243**

Be Not Afraid

Be Not Afraid

Be not a - fraid; sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al - le - lu - ia!

Be not a - fraid; sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al - le - lu - ia!

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written in the treble staff, and the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the staves. The first system ends with a double bar line, and the second system continues the melody and accompaniment.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Jennie Alwood

Reader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Reader: Let us pray.

All: Gracious God, your word is a living word.

By your Spirit awaken us,

that we may see and hear your presence in the world

and in today's scripture readings.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our brother and guide. Amen.

FIRST READING

Revelation 1:4-8

(Pew Bible, NT page 245)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

Jennie Alwood

People: Thanks be to God!

SECOND READING

Acts 5:27-32

(Pew Bible, NT page 123)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

Cris Rivera

People: Thanks be to God!

SERMON

"Obedience in the Anthropocene Age"

Cris Rivera

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

From *Norman Habel, from Live Simply (CAFOD)*

Esther Hethcox

We believe that God creates all things,
renews all things, and celebrates all things.

We believe Earth is a sanctuary,
a sacred planet filled with God's presence,
a home for us to share with our kin.

**We believe that God became flesh and blood,
became a part of Earth,
a human being called Jesus Christ,
who lived and breathed and spoke among us,
suffered and died on a cross,
for all human beings, and for all creation.**

**We believe that the risen Jesus
is the Christ at the core of creation
reconciling all things to God,
renewing all creation, and filling the universe.**

**We believe the Spirit renews life,
groans in empathy with the suffering,
and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.**

**We believe that with Christ we will rise,
and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.**

***HYMN NO. 713**

Touch the Earth Lightly

Tenderness

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

Lenore Champion

DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS

Invitation to Give

Esther Hethcox

Offertory Anthem

For the Beauty of the Earth

Mark Schweizer

*For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth, over and around us lies:
Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.*

*For the wonder of each hour, of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flower, sun and moon and stars of light:
Christ, our Lord, to you we raise, this our hymn of grateful praise.*

*For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild,
Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.*

*For your Church that evermore, lifts holy hands above,
offering up on every shore, her pure sacrifice of love:
Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.*

***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!***

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 NO. 37**

Let All Things Now Living

Ash Grove

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Cris Rivera

POSTLUDE

Fugue in G Major (BWV 541b)

J.S. Bach

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY!

Children's Music will return Sunday, May 4 (following worship).

Youth Groups (5:00pm): Join us for cookie baking and making care packages.

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



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.

The ***flowers*** today are given to the glory of God by ***Ellen*** and ***Tom Bacon*** in celebration of ***Michael Bacon's*** birthday.

We welcome ***Cris Rivera*** as our preacher today. Cris and their wife Beth Stringfield have been members of FPC since 2005. Last year, Cris completed a Master of Arts in Public Theology degree at Union Presbyterian Seminary. They have been active at FPC as a worship leader, preacher, teacher, confirmation advisor, youth leader, and elder. They have served on the Finance, Stewardship, and Creation Care Committees. They work for the Durham Public School Foundation. Cris enjoys hiking, cooking, being with family, and saving the world. We are grateful to have Cris in the pulpit today.

Our *thanks* to **David Durkop** for playing the organ this morning and **Dan Huff** for conducting the choir. Kathy Parkins is attending Duke Chapel this morning as they say “Godspeed” to Robert Parkins, Kathy’s husband, as this is his last Sunday playing in Duke Chapel as University Organist. Kathy was at Duke Chapel for the first service, 50 years ago in 1975, and immediately took a church job herself the next Sunday and hasn’t been back to a Sunday morning service since then. She appreciates First Presbyterian allowing her to attend this last service that Bob will play.

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.

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.

Our ***Paschal Candle and stained Red Oak Stand***, crafted by Marklin Candle Design of Contoocook, New Hampshire and given in memory of ***Elder Ed Kwon***, was originally dedicated on April 30, 2017. This candle stands as a visible sign of God’s enduring presence in our beautiful century-old sanctuary. Rooted in Passover (Pesach) and adopted by early Christians, the lit Candle represents the Risen Christ’s triumph over darkness and death, his resurrection, to become the Light of the World. The beeswax candle is inscribed with a Cross, an *alpha* and *omega*, symbols attesting to Christ’s presence among us now and always. Traditionally, the Candle, reminding us that we are preeminently an Easter People, is lit during worship services throughout the fifty days of Eastertide from Easter to Pentecost, as well as at Baptisms where it signifies that we are crucified and resurrected with Christ, and at funerals and memorial services where it visually proclaims Paul’s message in Romans 6: 3-4 that “all of us who have been baptized into Jesus Christ ... have been buried with him ... into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead ..., so we too might walk in newness of life.”

Portions of today’s worship resources were reprinted from: *Book of Common Worship*. Music is reprinted under Onelicense.net: A.713926.

The bulletin cover clipart copyrighted by the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license](#).

Easter Lily Addendum: In celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord on Easter Sunday morning, April 20, 2025, First Presbyterian Church members and friends chose to honor the memory or life of loved ones and friends by making gifts toward the purchase of our Easter lilies and for contributions to the *One Great Hour of Sharing Offering* which helps to feed the hungry, assist victims of disasters, and enable the poor to help themselves. The names of those so honored and the donors are as follows:

Given By...	In Memory of ...
Robert and Jane Brawley	Sara Frances Brawley
Rod and Sara Radtke	Justin Radtke
Given By...	In Honor of ...
Robert and Jane Brawley	Anna Patrick Brawley

~Celebrations and Concerns of the Congregation ~

We remember in prayer:

Andy Henry is at home recovering well from a successful heart ablation.

Wu-Chou Su, father of Claire Su, received news that his cancer has returned.

Keith Rokoske will have surgery on Friday.

Tony Brown

Dennis Buckley

Paul Cornsweet

Sam Crabtree

Susan Cyr

Kerry Holbrook

Lee House

Ann Huff

Jenni James

Mitzi Lesher-Thomas

Diane Lesman

Jen McGonigle

Madge McKeithen

Laura McNab

Harriett Mitchell

Franzi Rokoske

Alfred Tisdale

Phyllis Verhey

Care Communities

Croasdaile Pavilion: *Dub Gulley, Harvey Estes*

Durham Ridge: *Phillip Herndon*

Hillcrest Convalescent: *Carol Wills*

Pruitt Health - Durham: *Fred Callaway*

Brookdale Senior Living: *Debbie Mathews*

Family and Friends of the Congregation

Julia Allen, grandmother of Amy Wilson

Evan Breyer, grandson of friends of Jo Ann Moore

Francisca Cristobal, relative of Al and Judy Arrowwood

Kim Cummings, father of Drew Cummings

Linda Foster-Momsen, mother of Deborah Momsen-Hudson

Cheryl Fowler, friend of Cheri Reece

Michael Gilmer, neighbor of Becky Martin

Jennifer Hervey, daughter-in-law of Jeanne Hervey

Donna Johnson, mother of Ann Huff

Katie Jackson, wife of Matthew Hirsch

Aaron Pritchard, friend of Kathy Parkins

Logan Tice, friend of the congregation

Jim Vacca, father of Jamie Chambliss



FPC'S COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE

Sign up via [RedCrossBlood.org](https://redcrossblood.org)
& use the code "firstpres".

Blood Drive

Thursday, May 1 from 1pm - 6pm

Sign up by visiting <https://redcrossblood.org> and use code "firstpres" in the search box. You may also contact Julie Whiddon by email at foxylady3642@yahoo.com for more information.



Men of Faith Breakfast

Friday, May 2 at 8am

Located at Mad Hatter's

Join us for calories, conversation, and caffeine.

MUFFINS and MUMBLINGS

Sunday, May 4th

during faith formation

We will gather during the last 15 minutes of the faith formation hour to reflect on intergenerational friendships!

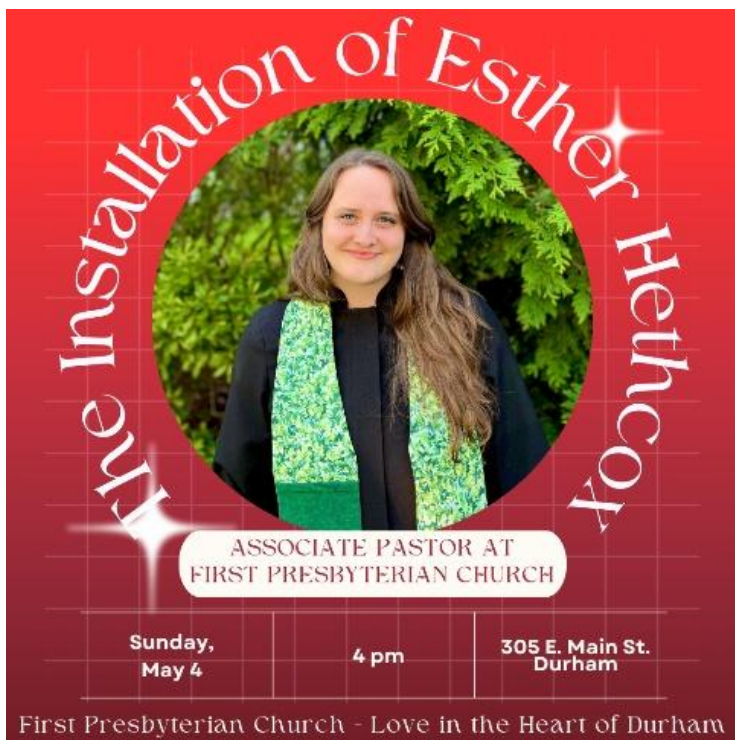
Muffins and Mumblings

Sunday, May 4

One of the joys of being in church together is that together, we are all the generations. On *Sunday, May 4*, we will celebrate that with Muffins and Mumblings. We'll spend the last 15 minutes of the faith formation hour, pairing up faith formation classes. Together, we'll munch, connect and explore intergenerational friendships.

Here are the pairings...

- 2s, 3s, 4s visit Journeys
- Kindergarten-2nd grade visit Lectionary
- The Somethings and Meaning in the Middle visit 3rd – 5th grade
- Middle and High School visit Faith & Community



***The Installation of Esther Hethcox
as Associate Pastor
Sunday, May 4 at 4:00pm***

Reception to follow in Watts-Hill Hall

**Youth Stock Sale
Sunday, May 4, 11, and 18.**

Our Second Annual Stock Sale is happening soon! This is our youth fundraiser for summer trips. FPCers can support our youth who are participating in Appalachia Service Project, CROSS, and the Montreat Youth Conference this summer. A stock entitles its holder to a letter from one of the youth during their trip, sharing first-hand about their experience. We will also hold a stockholder brunch late in the summer, complete with presentations from youth, slideshows of the trips, and brunch cuisine. To purchase a stock, stop by the table in the foyer after worship on Sundays, May 4, 11, or 18. Stocks are \$30 for an individual or \$45 for a family (donations always accepted). You can pay via cash, check, or card.

**Presbyterian Women Circle
May 5 at 10:30am**

Daye Meeting Room

Membership in Presbyterian Women is open to all women of the PC (U.S.A.) who choose to participate in or be supportive of PW in any way.



Where We Find Hope and Light in These Times
First Presbyterian Church
305 E Main St, Durham

Join Rev. Dr. Jay Augustine and Rev. Dr. Mindy Douglas for a morning of community and conversation as they reflect on where we find hope and light in challenging times. Together, they'll invite those gathered into a heartfelt dialogue grounded in faith, resilience, and connection.

Moderated by Rev. Dr. Jennifer Copeland, Executive Director of the North Carolina Council of Churches.

REGISTER NOW
act.ncchurches.org/a/hopeandlight

Rev. Dr. Jay Augustine

Rev. Dr. Mindy Douglas

6 MAY AT 8 AM

90 YEARS
Rooted in Faith

North Carolina Council of Churches

This Week at a Glance!

Later Today

12:15 PM

No Children's Music

Diaconate (Daye Meeting Room)

12:30 PM Officer Training (Watts-Hill Hall)

5:00 PM Youth Group: Cookie Baking and Care Packages (offsite)

8:00 PM MnM's Fellowship (via Zoom)

Monday, April 28

1:30 PM Worship Planning (Mindy's Office)

7:00 PM Session (Watts-Hill Hall)

Tuesday, April 29

Wednesday, April 30

1:00 PM All Staff Meeting (Daye Meeting Room)

4:30 PM Yoga (Room 201)

7:00 PM Choir (Choir Room)

Thursday, May 1

1:00 PM Red Cross Blood Drive (Watts-Hill Hall)

6:30 PM Retirements Committee (Room 205)

Friday, May 2

8:00 AM Men of Faith Breakfast (Mad Hatters)

10:30 AM Yoga (Room 201)

Saturday, May 3

Sunday, May 4

Newsletter Deadline

Youth Stock Sale

9:45 AM Faith Formation (Classes available for children, youth, and adults.)

11:00 AM Worship with Communion; Esther Hethcox, Preaching

12:15 PM

Children's Music (Choir Room)

Racial Equity Task Force (Wilson Parlor)

4:00 PM The Installation of Esther Hethcox as Associate Pastor (Reception to follow.)

5:00 PM Youth Groups (Offsite)

8:00 PM MnM's Fellowship (via Zoom)

CHURCH STAFF

Shakira Bethea, 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, 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