First Presbyterian Church

400 Jefferson Street
Tupelo, Mississippi
662.842.5681
Fax 662.842.1696
Visit us online. www.firstprestupelo.org
www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurch.tupelo

Morning Worship Service

Fourth Sunday in Lent

MARCH 19, 2023 9:00 & 11:00 A.M.

The purpose of this sermon is to remind the congregation there are degrees of blindness and not all blindness is physical.

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME, CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS OF THE CHURCH

PRELUDE *"Variations on a Hymn for Lent"* Dale Wood

INTROIT *"Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus"* Helen H. Lemmel

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: From where will our help come?
People: Our help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.
Leader: Who is our keeper?
People: The Lord is our keeper, by day and by night.
Leader: How long will God protect us?
People: God will keep our going out and our coming in from this time on and forevermore.
Leader: Come, let us worship God.

*HYMN OF PRAISE NO. 263

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

PRAYER OF APPROACH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: Almighty God, in Christ You have shown us the way, revealed to us Your truth, and offered to us everlasting life. Keep our eyes upon him, that we may see Your path more clearly, know Your truth more fully, and receive Your life more abundantly. This we ask in the name of Him who has redeemed our lives from the pit and has taught us to praise You with life and lip praying…

Unison: 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.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: God's love has been poured into our hearts through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Trusting in God's overflowing grace, let us confess our sins, praying together the prayer of confession in this morning's bulletin. Let us pray.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of clarity, show us the places where we choose confusion over transparency, and open our hearts in repentance. Awaken us to the times when we prefer illusion to truth, and open our hearts in repentance. Shed light on the ways in which we choose an easy sin over a harder faithfulness, and open our hearts in repentance. Enlighten us when we would prefer to close our eyes to the pain, the need, the oppression, and the injustice that multiply unchecked when Your people are content with apathy. We ask Your forgiveness in the name of the One who was Light incarnate. Amen.

Leader: Hear now, O Lord, our personal prayers of confession in this time of silence.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: The Psalmist assures us that God's goodness and mercy will follow us, even pursue us, all the days of our life. As God's forgiven people, receive this goodness and mercy, and live a new life in the grace of Christ Jesus as one whose sins have been forgiven. Amen.

*RESPONSE – NO. 579 *"Gloria Patri"*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

ANTHEM *"At Calvary"* Mary McDonald

SCRIPTURE LESSON John 9:1-41

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON **"Degrees of Blindness"** Rev. Dr. Taylor Todd

***UNISON PROFESSION OF FAITH** Jesus Christ Is Head of the Church

Almighty God, who raised Jesus Christ from the dead and set him above all rule and authority, has given to him all power in heaven and on earth, not only in this age but also in the age to come. God has put all things under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and has made Christ head of the Church, which is his body. The Church's life and mission are a joyful participation in Christ's ongoing life and work.

Christ calls the Church into being, giving it all that is necessary for its mission in the world, for its sanctification, and for its service to God. Christ is present with the Church in both Spirit and Word. Christ alone rules, calls, teaches, and uses the Church as he wills.

(The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, Chapter One)

*HYMN OF AFFIRMATION NO. 324

"Open My Eyes That I May See"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERING

OFFERTORY *"All Men are Mortal"* J. S. Bach

*DOXOLOGY NO. 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.

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

O Lord, You are our God; we are the people of Your pasture, the sheep of Your hand. As You have fed us by Your mercy, may it be our daily bread to do Your will; through Jesus, our Christ and Lord. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 339 *"Be Thou My Vision"*

**POSTLUDE *"Rondeau"* Henry Purcell

BENEDICTION

*Congregation standing as able.
**Please be seated until the conclusion of the Postlude.

WELCOME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Are you looking for a church home? If so, please speak to our minister following worship.

As a courtesy to those around you, please turn off or silence cell phones and personal communication devices.

The Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Martha Jo Patterson by Kirsten Bolton and Jay Mason.

Nursery care is available for newborns through four-year-olds. Please ask an usher for directions to the nursery if you are visiting for the first time.

Ritual of Friendship—Members and Visitors: Please sign the black attendance register every Sunday and pass it down your pew. Please read the names, greet one another, and meet new members and visitors.

Large print bulletins and hymnals are available from the ushers. You may also view the bulletin by visiting our website at www.firstprestupelo.org. See the "Bulletin" link at the top of the homepage.

We care about you as we care about each other. If you would like to submit a prayer request, you may use the blue cards in the pews or in McFadden Hall, and our pastoral staff and prayer partners will pray for you.

After the 11:00 Children's Sermon, preschoolers and kindergarteners are invited to attend **"Wee Kirk."** This is a time of fun childcare with age appropriate songs and games. However, all children are welcome in worship! If you excuse yourself and your child, you can hear the service over speakers in McFadden Hall (directly behind the Sanctuary).

The service is live streamed and available for viewing on YouTube.com by those unable to be with us this morning. Search *firstprestupelo*. We also invite you to visit our website at www.firstprestupelo.org.

Leading the worship service today: Rev. Dr. Taylor Todd, Dr. Bob Taylor, Dr. Ray Harris
Crucifer: 9:00: Emma McDuffie
11:00: Anne Crotwell
Liturgist: 9:00: Virginia Toliver
11:00: Andy Crotwell
Greeters: 9:00: Leslie Geoghegan, Kristi Hillhouse
11:00: Liz and Kevin Rose, Mel and Lewis Whitfield

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Be sure to join church friends and our visitors for supper in the Fellowship Hall at 5:30 P.M. on Wednesday, March 22. The menu: Presly's Smoked Pork Loin, Chicken Tenders, Homestyle Green Beans, Baked Beans, Slaw and Corn Salad, Macaroni and Cheese, Rolls, Fresh Fruit, Full Salad Bar, Lemon Crunch, Presly's Chocolate Bread Pudding, Chess Pie, Cookies, and Ice Cream. Sign up by Noon on Wednesday by using the link in Friday's newsletter or calling the church office at 662-842-5681. Following supper, programs for adults, youth and children begin at 6:00 P.M.

Interested in learning pickleball and getting some great exercise? Join us and fellow church members for a one-day clinic on Saturday, March 25 at 10:00 A.M. in the Community Life Center. The clinic is open to all who want to learn the game, regardless of skill level. To reserve your spot, please contact Grayson Robbins or Jeremy Blanchard.

You are invited! Come to the community Lenten Luncheons that are held at various area churches each Thursday at Noon during Lent. This Thursday, March 23, the luncheon will be at First United Methodist Church.

The Enneagram study will not meet tonight, due to Presbyterians on the Patio gathering at Mugshots. The study resumes on Sunday, March 26.

Electronic Deposits: If paying or giving to FPC through PayPal, please be certain that your payment or contribution reflects your name. There is currently a deposit listed on the church's bank statement as being from PayPal; however, there is no name specified with this payment or contribution. In examining the church's PayPal account, there is no record of this transaction being received through PayPal. Payment or contributions made electronically with no name indicated are recorded as Anonymous. If you would like more information, please contact Kay Stanford, Financial Secretary.

PRAYERS FOR THIS WEEK

Homebound: Bobbye Carsten, Carolyn Gaston, Betty Nash
College Students: Lilee Rose, Henry Seiler, Lucy Wells
Service Members: Patrick Hastings, Andrew Ray

Christian sympathy is extended to the family of Gigi South, who died earlier this week in Savannah, GA. She was the youngest sister of Sherry Lence.

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Weekly Budget: $17,442 Amount Received 3/12/23: $5,972
YTD Budgeted Income: $226,739 YTD Income Received: $336,415

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY

9:00 A.M.: 35 11:00 A.M.: 83

THE CHURCH AT WORSHIP AND WORK

SUNDAY, MARCH 19
9:00 A.M. Worship Service, Sanctuary
10:00 A.M. Sunday school
11:00 A.M. Worship Service, Sanctuary
4:00 P.M. Presbyterians on the Patio, Mugshots

MONDAY, MARCH 20
11:00 P.M. Friends Lunch, Weezie's
5:00 P.M. Steering Committee
6:00 P.M. Session Meeting
7:00 P.M. Boy Scouts

TUESDAY, MARCH 21
9:00 A.M. T'ai Chi Chih
10:00 A.M. Staff Meeting
11:00 A.M. Bible Study, Bolton/Sistahood Room 110, John 11:1-45
2:30 P.M. Prepare meal for Salvation Army
4:30 P.M. Serve at Salvation Army
7:00 P.M. A.A. Meeting

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22
3:00 P.M. Mah Jongg, Stewart Clayton Classroom
5:05 P.M. Tower Ringers
5:30 P.M. Supper, Fellowship Hall
6:00 P.M. Faithbuilders, Youth, Adult Programs
7:00 P.M. Chancel Choir

THURSDAY, MARCH 23
8:00 A.M. Men's Breakfast, Hilton Garden Inn
12:00 P.M. Community Lenten Luncheon, First United Methodist Church

FRIDAY, MARCH 24
12:00 P.M. A.A. Meeting

SATURDAY, MARCH 25
9:00 A.M. Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering, Oxford First Presbyterian Church
10:00 A.M. Pickleball Clinic, CLC

THE SESSION

Rev. Dr. Taylor Todd, Moderator
Clerk of the Session, Lisa Nichols

Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
Kirk Biddle	Kim Burleson	Richard Hastings
Susan Boone	Cindy Faucette	Trey Leeke
Amy Fagan	Leslie Geoghegan	Lucy Nash
Mitzi Moore	Michael Gratz Jr.	Chris Rogers
Aubrey Patterson, Jr	Chauncey Godwin	Mary Stubbs
Grayson Robbins	Charles Reece	Glenn Thomas
Debra Robison	Alice Rogers	Presly Wallace

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Taylor Todd, Interim Pastor
Rev. Dr. Ron Richardson, Parish Associate for Pastoral Care
Melissa McDuffie, Director of Youth and Christian Education
Dr. Bob Taylor, Director of Music
Dr. Ray Harris, Organist
Seth Shelnut, Audio/Visual Technician
Danielle Frerer Ratliff, Director of Elementary and Youth Choirs
Margaret Anne Murphey, Music Librarian
Helen Curtis, Church Secretary
Kay Stanford, Financial Secretary
Debbie Merritt, Receptionist
Eddie Baker, Maintenance Superintendent
Rev. M. McCoy Franklin, Pastor Emeritus

THE MISSION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IS TO:

Learn The Word Of God In Worship And Study.
Live The Word Of God In Our Homes And Communities.
Lead Others To The Word Of God In Love.

Donations Needed

Packaged snack foods for NMMC's ICU Waiting Room

Drop off box located outside of library.

Presbyterian Women are sponsoring a drive to collect packaged snack items for NMMC's ICU waiting area. The collection basket is located outside the Library. We will be delivering the snacks throughout the month. Thanks for your support!

Presbyterian Women of St. Andrews

Spring Gathering

March 25, 2023

Oxford First Presbyterian Church
924 Van Buren Avenue

Agenda

9:00 a.m. Refreshments/Registration/Gather
10:00 am. Worship & Meeting
11:30 a.m. Lunch ($10 per person)

RSVP by March 20
Lisa Hickman-Tollison, c/o First Presbyterian Church
924 Van Buren Avenue, Oxford, MS 38655
or email: grrx01@gmail.com

Church attending _____

Number of members attending _____

Questions?
Call or email Allison Ashmore
662-417-0612
flowersquaw@yahoo.com

LEARNING TO LIVE insideOUT

COMMUNITY LENTEN LUNCHES

Join us for a light lunch and short Lenten devotion on Thursdays at 12 p.m. during Lent. Donations accepted to off-set cost of food.

2/28 - Wesley UMC
Rev. Emily Sanford, Wesley UMC

3/02 - St. James Catholic
Rev. Taylor Todd of First Presbyterian

3/9 - First Presbyterian
Rev. Rusty Keen of First UMC

3/16 - St. Luke UMC
Father Tim Murphy of St. James Catholic Church

3/23 - First United Methodist
Rev. Rob Gill of St. Luke UMC

3/30 - Lawndale Presbyterian Church
Rev. Bill Bradford of Lawndale Presbyterian