

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

First Sunday in Lent

February 21, 2021

A SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

(Click [here](#) to connect to today's live worship.)

GATHERING MUSIC

In Memory - H.H.L.

Dan Locklair

Robert Parkins, organist

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

PRELUDE

I Love the Lord, Who Heard My Cry (Psalm 116)

African-American Spiritual

FPC Chancel Choir

arr. Richard Smallwood

I love the Lord, who heard my cry and pitied every groan.

Long as I live and troubles rise, I'll hasten to God's throne.

I love the Lord, who heard my cry and chased my grief away.

O let my heart no more despair while I have breath to pray.

CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 25:1, 4-6)

Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

Leader: To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

All: **My God, I put my trust in you.**

Leader: Show me your ways, O Lord,
and teach me your paths.

All: **Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.**

Leader: Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.

All: **All your paths, O Lord, are steadfast love and faithfulness
to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.**

HYMN No. 183

Come to Me, O Weary Traveler

Austin



1 "Come to me, O wea - ry trav - eler; come to me with your dis - tress;
2 "Do not fear, my yoke is eas - y; do not fear, my bur - den's light;
3 "Take my yoke and leave your trou - bles; take my yoke and come with me.
4 "Rest in me, O wea - ry trav - eler; rest in me and do not fear.



come to me, you heav - y bur - dened; come to me and find your rest."
do not fear the path be - fore you; do not run from me in fright."
Take my yoke, I am be - side you; take and learn hu - mil - i - ty."
Rest in me, my heart is gen - tle; rest and cast a - way your care."

CONFESSION OF SIN

Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession (in unison)

God of mercy,

you sent Jesus Christ to seek and save the lost.

**We confess that we have strayed from you
and turned aside from your way.**

We are misled by pride,

**for we see ourselves pure when we are stained,
and great when we are small.**

We have failed in love,

**neglected justice,
and ignored your truth.**

Have mercy, O God, and forgive our sin.

**Return us to paths of righteousness
through Jesus Christ, our Savior.**

Silent Confession

Declaration of Forgiveness

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Amy Dillon

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

All: **Gracious God, our way in the wilderness,
guide us by your Word, through these 40 days,
and minister to us with your Holy Spirit,
so that we may be reformed, restored, and renewed;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

GOSPEL READING

Mark 1:9-15

Amy Dillon

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

HEBREW SCRIPTURE LESSON

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Mindy Douglas

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

"Can You Imagine?"

Mindy Douglas

HYMN No. 51 (verses 1-2)

To Abraham and Sarah

Llanfyllin

To Abraham and Sarah the call of God was clear:

"Go forth and I will show you a country rich and fair.

***You need not fear the journey, for I have pledged my word
that you shall be my people and I will be your God."***

***From Abraham and Sarah arose a pilgrim race,
dependent for their journey on God's abundant grace;***

*and in their heart was written by God this saving word,
"That you shall be my people and I will be your God."*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH	(from Confession of 1969, 9.31)	Susan Dunlap
To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as God's reconciling community. This community, the church universal, is entrusted with God's message of reconciliation and shares God's labor of healing the enmities which separate people from God and from each other. Christ has called the church to this mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit. The church maintains continuity with the apostles and with Israel by faithful obedience to his call.		
INVITATION TO GIVE AND DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING		Susan Dunlap
A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN		Lenore Champion
CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS		John Weicher
PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER		John Weicher
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. 51 (verse 3)	<i>To Abraham and Sarah</i>	<i>Llanfyllin</i>
<i>We of this generation on whom God's hand is laid can journey to the future secure and unafraid, rejoicing in God's goodness and trusting in this word, "That you shall be my people and I will be your God."</i>		
CHARGE AND BENEDICTION		Mindy Douglas
POSTLUDE	<i>Martyrdom</i> Gordon Campbell, organist	Healey Willan

The **Annual Meeting of the Church** will be held **immediately following worship today via Zoom**. The following business of the church will be conducted:

- Hear a report from the Finance Committee;
- Vote on changes to Terms of Call for the pastors;

- Hear a report from the Nominating Committee;
- Elect officers and persons to serve at-large on the 2021-2022 Nominating Committee.

Access the meeting using this link (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89213698179>) or join the meeting using the ID: 892 1369 8179. Members without internet access may call +1 301 715 8592 to listen in and vote by voice during the virtual meeting.

The **Lenten Drive-Thru**, postponed from last Sunday (watch this [video](#)), will be held **TODAY from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.** You are invited to drive thru the church's parking lot to receive devotional resources for Lent as well as your own small seed to tend. **REMEMBER to bring donations of boxed cereal for the food ministry of Iglesia Emanuel.** All are invited to join us as we observe Lent as a season of cultivating and letting go. For more info about this event, contact [Mitzi Lesher-Thomas](#) or [Lenore Champion](#). (NOTE: If you still have your Advent/Christmas Carols song book, you can drop it off this Sunday during the Drive-Thru.)

First Presbyterian Church welcomes all who worship with us. We honor and celebrate the human diversity and unity that God gives us in Christ. We welcome individuals of every age, race, nationality, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and economic circumstance to participate fully in the life of the church. On February 14, 90 households tuned in to the 11:00 a.m. live-streamed broadcast of worship.

Today's worship flowers are given by **Elinor Hess** and **John Mozart**, to the glory of God and in memory of **Lawrence Hess** and **John Conover**.

Music Notes:

- Today's gathering music is from **Dr. Robert Parkins'** CD "Salome's Dance." **Parkins** is University Organist at Duke University and husband of FPC's Minister of Music, **Kathy Parkins**. He has kindly given us permission to use his recordings for our worship services.
- The tune for the Prelude is an African-American spiritual arranged by Richard Smallwood. The text is by Isaac Watt.
- We are grateful to **Michael Thomas Smith** for his technical expertise in creating our FPC Choir presentation and to our choir members who continue to support our worship with their weekly presence at rehearsals and their effort to record their individual tracks that Michael then joined together to create today's Prelude.

Many thanks to **John Fricks, Jody Maxwell, Pat Dillon, Keith Rokoske, and Jay Klinck**, for their "behind the scenes" technical assistance with our live broadcasts of worship on Sunday mornings. We are also grateful to **Jennie Alwood** for the powerful images accompanying our online services.

Portions of today's worship texts are taken from *Book of Common Worship* (2018) and *Call to Worship* (2020-2021). **Hymn texts and music** are reprinted from *Glory to God* under Onelicense.net: A.713926.

The **FPC Investment Subcommittee** is seeking 1 or 2 new members. The Subcommittee meets 4 times annually via Zoom (January, April, July, October) to review the church portfolio's performance for the previous quarter. *A background in finance* is not necessary. If interested in serving, please contact [Ed Pritchett](#) (chair).

~ Our Concerns ~

Condolences:

The love and concern of the congregation are extended to **Hendrika Vande Kemp** on the recent death of her sister, **Nellie Van Eywk**; and to the family and friends of **John Kerr**, FPC member who died peacefully at his apartment home at Durham Regent on February 18. He was 95 years old. We also mourn the loss of **Dr. James Michael "Mickey" Efird**. Dr. Efird was Professor Emeritus of Duke Divinity School and an ordained Presbyterian (USA) minister. He presented "Efird Lectures" (free to the community) at FPC during Lent for many years. He died on February 17.

Concerns:

Grace Abels, recovering following a surgery on Friday

Dewey Lawson, undergoing tests at Duke Hospital

Jesus and Jordan, neighbors of Doug and Marsha Butler and friends of the Armstrong family

Recovering at their homes

Catherine Dumas, recovering from hip replacement surgery

Kerry Holbrook

Robin Morey

Kathy Parkins, recovering from shoulder and bicep surgery

Margaret Sims, undergoing treatment for cancer

Alfred Tisdale

Carol Wills

Care Communities:

Brookdale Durham: **Julian Boswell**

Croasdaile Pavilion: **Bob Rankin**

Dubose Center at The Cedars, Chapel Hill: **Arthur Clark**

Durham Ridge Assisted Living: **Phillip Herndon**

Emerald Pond: **Paul Cornsweet**

Hillcrest Convalescent: **Walter Chambliss**, father of Will Chambliss

The Forest at Duke: **Fran Bryant**

The Laurels of Chatham County: **Ann Prospero**

Family and Friends of the Congregation:

Peggy Boulden, mother of Dick Boulden

Linda Capers, a friend of Li-Chen Chin

Flora Estrella, a relative of Beth Stringfield and Cris Rivera

Phil Goss, a friend of the congregation

Peggy Mordecai, mother of Beth Eisenson

Margaret Nelson, sister of Charlotte Nelson

Shannon Putman, daughter of Mary Putman

The Planned Giving Committee of FPC presents

“Building Your Christian Legacy”

Tuesday, February 23 at 11:00 a.m.

Forum Speaker: Joseph Moore (click [bio](#))

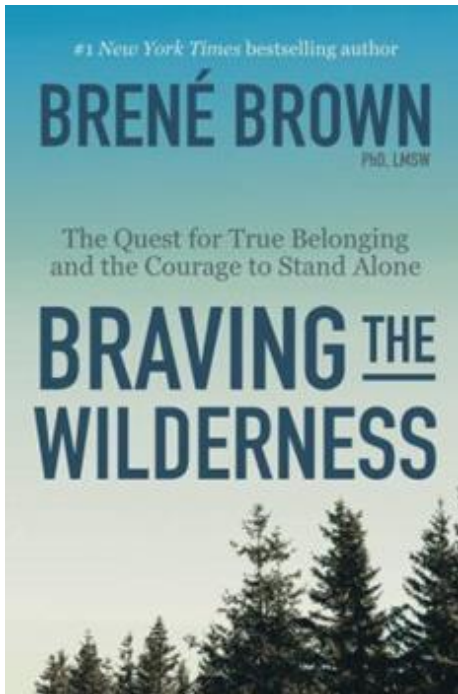
All are welcome!



Planned gifts, no matter the size, have the power to change lives for generations to come. You can become a Legacy Society member by providing for the future mission and ministry at First Presbyterian Church in your estate plans or through a life-income gift. ([View the FPC Legacy Society video](#)) Whatever your financial circumstances or your charitable goals, you can make a gift that benefits you and your

loved ones as well as the church's mission of following Jesus through the love of God and love and care for our neighbor. **Register in advance for this free Zoom event:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0tduCtrzssH93AoVc91uG78MdpikCbuTL>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email on how to join the meeting.



New book study begins February 23!

Brené Brown's

Braving the Wilderness

We will read this seven-chapter book one chapter at a time as we make our way through Lent. Join us over Zoom at 6:15 p.m. on Tuesdays during Lent.

Here is a link to a summary of the book:

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/234254/braving-the-wilderness-by-brene-brown-phd-lmsw/>

If you would like your own personal copy of this book, contact [Mindy Douglas](#) for information on how to obtain a copy.

Don't miss this!

The 2021 Annual McPherson Lectureship

Sunday, February 28 during the Faith & Community Class

9:30 – 10:45 a.m. - Join the class via this [Zoom link](#)

All adult Sunday School classes are invited to join this Zoom presentation and discussion.



About the Lecturer

Wallace McPherson Alston III, known to all as Macky, was a small boy when his father, Wallace Alston, served First Presbyterian Church as pastor from 1969 through 1974. Macky graduated from Columbia College in 1987, and has become well-known as a documentary film maker.

Macky's 1997 *Family Name* explores the mystery of a name that applied to both black and white families. Alston's quest to solve this genealogical mystery took him from New York to Alabama and then back to North Carolina. He sought clues at family reunions, graveyards, church services, and, eventually, the original Alston plantations. The people he met varied markedly in race, age, class and perspective, but they all had two things in common: the family name and a compelling story to tell. This documentary was awarded the Sundance Film Festival Freedom of Expression Award, the IFP Gotham Open Palm Award, the Bermuda International Film Festival Grand Jury Prize, and the North Carolina Film Festival Best Feature Award.

In 2009, Macky won the Documentary Special Jury Prize for an Agent of Change at the Sundance Film Festival for *Love Free or Die*. This film chronicles the struggles of New Hampshire's Bishop Gene Robinson, the first openly gay bishop in the global Anglican Church, as he sought acceptance in the face of worldwide controversy and death threats.

Macky explored life in prison in *Hard Road Home*, and the psychology of youth violence in *The Killer Within*, and reactions to human suffering in *Questioning Faith: Confessions of a Seminarian*. His current project, [Acts of Reparation](#), is a collaboration with Selina Lewis Davidson, with whom he worked on *Family Name*. The two filmmakers, one black and one white, explore different ways communities and families, their own included, are engaging in conversations and activism to heal the effects of slavery and racism. *Family Name*, *Love Free or Die*, and *Questioning Faith: Confessions of a Seminarian* are available on Apple TV. There are links to these and other films on [Macky's website](#).

In his presentation on February 28, Macky will guide us in a conversation about repairing historic harm in regard to slavery and the Native American genocide and their legacies that live in our political, social, and individual systems today. Macky is committed to acting in ways that establish equity and justice in this nation in the light of what many call its "original sins." In our shared conversation, Macky will tell stories of his own quest and the models for repair he has observed. He will then invite us as individuals and as a community to imagine our region and country healed and how we might act toward that end. As a part of the Lectureship, we have invited Macky to return for a follow-up engagement when it is safe for him to travel and us to gather.



FROM THE CREATION CARE COMMITTEE

Join the Creation Care Committee in a discussion of biodiversity: what it is, why it's important, and what humans have sometimes done in ignorance to disturb the balance of ecosystems and even cause extinction of species. Join us at our monthly Creation Care meeting, **Thursday, March 11 at 7:00 p.m. (Zoom)**. All are welcome. For more information about the Creation Care Committee, check out our [page](#) from the church's website.



Growing thru Grief offers year-round support for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. We meet each Tuesday from 4:00-6:00 p.m., on Zoom. Those who attend need to have both audio and video available. Each meeting begins with a short presentation about a part of the grief journey, and then we break into small groups for sharing and conversation. The topic and speaker for **February 23** is "What Is the Condition of Our Hearts: How Do We Heal?" led by Mike McCleod. To register for this Zoom session, please contact admin@growingthrugrief.org by 8:00 a.m. on the Monday before the meeting.

SHARING *God's* LOVE THROUGH HELPING THOSE IN NEED!

Support the Day School using Amazon Wish List

Like so many other organizations in our community, the First Presbyterian Day School has been seriously impacted by the pandemic, and was forced to close in mid-March 2020. After reopening at the end of June to meet the needs of children of essential workers, the Day School has seen its enrollment remain at around 25, or half of normal capacity. Through heroic efforts by the faculty and staff, the school has not experienced any cases of COVID-19, has maintained its 5-Star status, and has kept all faculty and staff on board. At her presentation to the Service and Mission Committee earlier this month, **Executive Director Michele Miller-Cox** noted that the school is doing well and providing a vital service to the community, but it has a need for supplies that are beyond its current capacity to purchase.

Rather than asking for donations of supplies, the Day School has set up an Amazon site that lists the supplies needed. Those wishing to contribute can go to the site, purchase items of your choosing, and the supplies will be sent directly to the school. Request a Monday or Friday delivery. The link is https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2QNXF2NAUV1TB?ref=wl_share. Thank you for your support.

Iglesia Emanuel still needs our support . . .

1. **Bag rice or beans from home.** For instructions and to sign up, contact [Margaret Rubiera](#). Put on music, sing, and have fun while you fill those bags!
2. To help in person at Iglesia Emanuel, grab your trusty mask, and come join others in a safe environment to help organize donated food, fill bags and boxes in preparation for the Wednesday food pantry. You will work hard but leave after your 2-hour shift knowing you have made a big difference in the lives of many families. For more information, and to sign up, click here: [Iglesia Emanuel COVID-19 Food Bank Signup Genius](#)
3. **Your financial support** is always welcome, and will help us purchase more food. Online: emanueldurham.org, or mail your check to Iglesia Presbiteriana Emanuel, 2504 N Roxboro Street, Durham NC 27704. Thank you so much! - **Margaret and Miguel Rubiera**

Tom Bloom, Business Administrator
Lenore Champion, Children's Ministry Director
Mindy Douglas, Pastor/Head of Staff
Susan Dunlap, Parish Associate
Sybil King, Administrative Assistant



Mitzi Leshner-Thomas, Associate Pastor
Valerie McMillian, Parish Administrator
Kathy Parkins, Minister of Music
John Weicher, Associate Pastor

**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

To Abraham and Sarah

I Will Be Your God

1 To A - bra - ham and Sa - rah the call of God was clear:
 2 From A - bra - ham and Sa - rah a - rose a pil - grim race,
 3 We of this gen - er - a - tion on whom God's hand is laid

"Go forth and I will show you a coun - try rich and fair.
 de - pen - dent for their jour - ney on God's a - bun - dant grace;
 can jour - ney to the fu - ture se - cure and un - a - fraid,

You need not fear the jour - ney, for I have pledged my word
 and in their heart was writ - ten by God this sav - ing word,
 re - joic - ing in God's good - ness and trust - ing in this word,

that you shall be my peo - ple and I will be your God."
 "That you shall be my peo - ple and I will be your God."
 "That you shall be my peo - ple and I will be your God."