

We Go Out In God's Name

*Having gathered together in God's name and been fed by God's Holy Word,
we go out in God's name bearing the peace of Christ to the world.*

Connecting with our Community
Minute for Mission – Food Pantry

‡Hymn for Commitment *Down at the Cross* (see screens)

‡Charge and Benediction

May the Spirit of the Living God, made known to us most fully within life's Dark Wood:

Go before you to show you the way; **Go above you** to watch over you;

Go behind you to push you into places you may not necessarily go yourself;

Go beneath you to uphold and uplift you;

Go beside you to be your strong and constant companion;

And dwell within you to remind you that you are surely not alone,

And that you are loved—loved beyond your wildest imagination.

And may the fire of God's blessing burn brightly upon you, and within you, now and always.

Amen.

‡Congregational Sung Benediction (Congregation echoes words in **bold**.)

There's a path (**There's a path**) ... and it leads us out together.

To the Wood (**To the wood**) ... where the darkness hovers still.

We are sent (**We are sent**) ... and the Spirit goes before us.

God says, "Go (**God says, "Go**) ... be my presence in the world."

‡Postlude *Hark! The Ech'ing Air*

Henry Purcell

‡Please stand as you are able in body or spirit.

Service Material References

Series based on *Gifts of the Dark Wood* by Eric Elnes

All liturgy by Marcia McFee, www.worshipdesignstudio.com

There's a Path & Come and Rest words by Marcia McFee, music by Chuck Bell.

Contemporary reading and *Blessing from Gifts of the Dark Wood* by Eric Elnes.

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

March 22, 2026

5th Sunday in Lent



Welcome to First Presbyterian Church
Bienvenue à La Première Eglise Presbytérienne de Champaign
Bienvenidos a La Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana

삼페인 제일 장로교회에 오신것을 환영합니다.

Si vous souhaitez que le service soit traduit en français,
procurez-vous un récepteur et des écouteurs à l'arrière du sanctuaire.

Welcome to worship!

When you enter the worship space, please be mindful of the silent prayers of those around you.

We invite you to share your contact info in the Friendship Pad when passed,
then to stay after the service for coffee and fellowship.

Mingle with other friends and guests and learn more about this congregation's ministry. **Welcome home!**

We Gather Together In God's Holy Name

God calls us together as "children." How wonderful it is to be so loved! Our natural response is worship.

Prelude *Morgen!*

Richard Straus

Chiming of the Hour on Tower Bell

Greetings & Welcome/Act of Friendship & Prayer Concerns

Please pass the Friendship Pad, noting with whom you are sitting, and list prayer concerns on the prayer request cards in the pews.

✠**Call to Worship** (✠Please stand as you are able in body or spirit.)

(See screens. Soloist sings first time through; then leads congregation in the echo second time through.)

Opening Prayer

✠**Hymn of Praise** *Blessed Be the Lord God Almighty* (see screens)

Call to Confession *(Congregation may be seated.)*

Prayer of Confession

For paying more attention to the expected path than the right one,

Forgive and restore us, O God.

For denying our very aliveness out of a misguided self-sacrificing agenda,

Forgive and restore us, O God.

For valuing the safe choices instead of the ones that lead to life,

Forgive and restore us, O God. *Silence is kept.*

Confession Response #577 *Lord, Have Mercy*

Assurance of Pardon

Hear these words of assurance: God desires our fully-alive selves.

God is cheering us on as we discern best choices. God is with you, forgiving and restoring you to wholeheartedness.

Thanks be to God! Amen!

Passing of the Peace

We Gather Around God's Holy Word

At the center of Christian life and worship is God's Word incarnate in Christ and God's Word as recorded in scripture. We hear the story of God's love in scripture and sacrament and we say, "Thanks be to God!"

Word with Children

Prayer for Illumination #204 *Stay With Me* (vs. 1)

Scripture in French *2 Corinthians 5:16-19*

Ceci est la Parole du Seigneur./ **Gloire à Dieu** (pronounced "glow-ah ah dew")

Anthem *In Control* (see screens)

Contemporary Reading in English

Message *The "Shoulds" In Life*

Rev. Beth Wagner

A Time for Reflection

✠**Hymn for Reflection** *Because He Lives* (see screens)

We Respond to God's Word

As God invites us to be disciples of his Son, we prayerfully respond to God with affirmations of faith and acts of self-giving, commitment, and thanksgiving.

Invitation to the Offering *(We are invited to return God's tithes and give our offering.)*

Offertory

Response of Gratitude #607 *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

Prayer of Dedication & Thanksgiving

Prayers of the People *Come and Rest* (See screens. Choir sings first time through; then leads congregation in the echo.)

The Lord's Prayer (pg. 35; *in the language or wording most familiar to you.*)

This Week

Sunday, March 22

- 9:00 AM Worship/Sanctuary
- 10:10 AM Adult Sunday Discussion/Parlor
- 10:10 AM Easy English Fellowship/Rooms 204 & 207
- 10:10 AM Sunday School/CE Building Classrooms
- 10:10 AM Tech Assistance/Library

Monday, March 23

- 9:15 AM ELL Classes/CE Building & Café
- 12:00 PM Lunch & Learn Tech Talk/Centennial Hall
- 1:00 PM Knifty Knitters/Parlor & Zoom
- 1:00 PM GROW/Chapel
- 1:00 PM DREAAM After School Academy/CE Building
- 3:30 PM Environmental Team/Parlor & Zoom
- 5:30 PM AA/Centennial Hall

Tuesday, March 24

- 8:30 AM Men's Breakfast Bible Study/Parlor & Zoom
- 9:15 AM ELL Classes/CE Building & Café
- 9:30 AM PW Coordinating Team/Zoom
- 10:30 AM Church Staff/Parlor & Zoom
- 12:00 PM Classic Book Study/Parlor & Zoom
- 1:00 PM Coffee with Beth/Mad Goat Coffee
- 1:00 PM DREAAM After School Academy/CE Building
- 4:30 PM World Mission/Parlor & Zoom
- 5:30 PM DREAAM Family Dinner/Centennial Hall

Wednesday, March 25

- 9:15 AM ELL Classes/CE Building & Café
- 11:00 AM Francophone Ministry/Library
- 1:00 PM DREAAM After School Academy/CE Building
- 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/First Methodist Church Sanctuary
- 7:30 PM Wednesdays We Gather/Zoom

Thursday, March 26

- 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study/Parlor & Zoom
- 9:15 AM ELL Classes/CE Building & Café
- 10:30 AM Circle of Joy/Parlor & Zoom
- 11:00 AM Christ Community Church Korean Choir/Chapel
- 12:30 PM Windsor of Savoy Bible Study/Windsor of Savoy
- 1:00 PM Circle of Faith/Parlor & Zoom
- 1:00 PM DREAAM After School Academy/CE Building
- 7:00 PM Circle of Peace/Parlor & Zoom

Friday, March 27 Church Office closes 12 noon

- 8:15 AM Men's Prayer/Zoom
- 12:00 PM New Americans/Chapel
- 1:00 PM DREAAM After School Academy/CE Building
- 7:00 PM French Prayer/Zoom

Saturday, March 28

- 8:30 AM DREAAM Imagine STEM Classes/CE Building 2nd Floor
- 9:00 AM DREAAM Saturday Academy/CE Building
- 9:30 AM DREAAM Illini Mentoring/Centennial Hall
- 6:00 PM Francophone Bethesda Fellowship/Chapel

Announcements

- The flowers in the Sanctuary this morning are donated by **Barbara Clark and family** in loving memory of **Stu Clark**.
- Linda Sandquist** is our liturgist this morning. If you would like to serve as liturgist on a Sunday morning, contact **Carol Miles**.
- We welcome musician/song leaders **Jean René Balekita** and **Laetitia** this morning as part of our worship service.
- Large print bulletins** available for use on Sunday mornings. Ask an usher if you cannot find one.
- We have access to our hearing assistant loop during worship. This technology allows people with hearing aids equipped with **T-Coil technology** to hear the service through their hearing aids. If you know you have T-coil technology, plan to turn on the T-coil via your phone each Sunday morning.
- We are glad you're here!** Questions about First Pres, see **either pastor** after the service or contact the church office (info@firstpres.church).
- Please join us after worship in the Parlor for our **Adult Sunday Discussion**. During Lent, we will be using a series from Darkwood Brew called *Gifts of the Dark Wood*.
- Our graduate student members** are available this morning after worship in the church library to assist congregants with their **tech needs or questions**.
- Please wear your **name tag** to help our **staff** get acquainted.
- Anyone interested in **donating flowers for use on Sunday mornings during worship**, please contact **Nancy Dankle @217.778-4088** or nkdankle@icloud.com.
- Spring flowers** will help brighten our Sanctuary Easter morning. Plants are \$15 each. If you would like to give a plant in memory or honor of someone, please place your check/cash in an envelope marked “spring flowers” along with a note for whom they are given.
- We are collecting royalties each time we hear a **Spiritual** in our service. Royalties were never paid for this music. Money we collect will go to the DREAAM Choir. Donation box is on the Welcome Center.
- Grab a sack lunch and join us Monday, March 23, at 12 NOON in Centennial Hall for a **Lunch & Learn Tech Talk** as we navigate and discover how to use our church database *Church Community Builder*. Once navigated you can access your own financial records, or addresses, phone numbers or emails of church members...essentially an online up-to-date church directory.
- Join **Pastor Beth** for **coffee in March Tuesdays from 1-3 PM** at Mad Goat Coffee in Champaign.
- Copies of the 2025 Annual Report** can be found in the kiosks or on the church website.
- If you or a loved one is **in the hospital or in need of a pastoral visit**, contact the church office.
- Check out the **book cart** in Westminster Hall. Donate a book for others to enjoy and take some.
- The **March newsletter** is available in the kiosks or at firstpres.church/newsletter.
- Please **do not park** in the spaces marked Reserved 24/7 behind Meyer/Capel Law office on Sundays.
- If unable to attend church**, watch our 9 AM service live each Sunday at firstpres.church/live. The Sunday **service video** is available on-line this week; audio sermon available the following Sunday at 10:30 AM on WDWS 1400AM.
- Scam/Email Spoof Alert** ... Your pastors will **never** send a text, email or voicemail asking you to purchase gift cards. The latest spoof is an email with an attachment. Most note FEB with a “proposal.” You should immediately delete the message and not open the attachment. If in doubt, contact the church office.