

The Window

The Newsletter of Fort Hill Presbyterian Church

Message From the Pastor

March 2021

Are You Ready?

Last week, I felt like my dog Baxter who likes to go find the warmest, sunniest spot and just revel in it. We have had some spring like days and with them, I feel more hopeful. I sense that we are all ready to re-engage in meaningful ways to practice our faith. I hear so many of us say we are ready for Christian fellowship and friends. We are ready to hear and study God's word in community. We are ready to draw near to the incarnational Christ, whom we meet in one another and our neighbor. We are ready to enjoy those celebrations of life, gifts we no longer take for granted. We are ready to emerge from our cocoons — to start flapping our wings, strengthen them again, knowing that we might not come out in a burst, but tentatively until we remember how to interact in new ways. While I love my yoga pants and easy commute to my home office, I will have to remember how to keep a different schedule, wear real clothes, and pace myself.

Session and the Return to Church Task Group has been monitoring the Covid-19 situation in our area. **Considering the decline in cases, percent positives, and other criteria, our Congregation will move back to Phase One of our Return to Church plan.** With better weather and longer days, we can better gather in outdoor settings and enjoy safe fellowship inside in small groups. Beginning Sunday, March 7, we will have in-person worship for those who register in advance with limited seating in our Sanctuary at 10:45 service. Sign-up information will be sent by email or call Julie Bryant or Lori Houck, 864-654-2061 or 864-723-1669 (Lori's cell phone), if you need assistance. Worship Services continue to be streamed for those who are safer at home.

Please be aware that we continue to require masks and to be physically-distanced in order to protect one another. While many of our over 65-year-olds are getting vaccinated, we expect to continue these practices for some time until the threat of the virus is minimal for our members of all ages. Groups are encouraged to meet outside if possible. New provisions are in place to begin ministry with children. Families are welcome to come to worship together, but the nursery will be limited to limit contact between numbers of households. Youth and all ministries are updating and adapting guidelines based on new information from the CDC and DHEC. Our Session's Task Group will begin preparing for Phase Two in hopes that we are seeing very positive movement.

God be with you 'til we meet again. And know that we will!

Together in Faith,

Laura Conrad, Pastor

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Fort Hill Presbyterian Church

101 Edgewood Avenue
Clemson, SC 29631
(864) 654-2061
www.forthillchurch.org

Laura Smith Conrad, Pastor
Mary Morrison, AP for Discipleship
Michael Sanchez, AP for Univ. Min.
Katie Wilson, Children's Ministry Coord.
Jacob Kennedy, Associate Youth/Missions
Margaret MacKay, Director of Music
Judy Bonham, Organist/Handbell Dir.
Becky Bowman, Pianist
Lori Houck, Administrator
Julie Bryant, Admin. Assistant
Scott Thrailkill, Facilities Caretaker

Joining together on a journey of Christian faith, we seek to be Disciples of Christ and to share God's love in our community and around the world.

We do this as we Glorify God, Grow Disciples, Meet Human Needs.

Weekly Lectionary Scriptures

- 3/7 3rd Sunday in Lent**
Ex. 10:1-17 and Ps. 19;
1 Cor. 1:18-25; John 2:13-22
- 3/14 4th Sunday in Lent**
Num. 21:4-9 and
Ps. 107:1-3, 17-22; 1
Eph. 2:1-10; John 3:14-21
- 3/21 5th Sunday in Lent**
Jer. 31:31-34 and Ps. 51:1-12
or Ps. 119:9-16; Heb. 5:5-10;
John 12:20-33
- 3/28 Palm/Passion Sunday**
Palms: Mark 11:1-11 or
John 12:2-16 and
Ps. 118:1-2, 19-29;
Passion: Isa. 50:4-9a and
Ps. 31:9-16; Phil. 2:5-11;
Mark 4:1-15: 47 or
Mark 15:1-39 (40-47)

April 2021

The Window Deadline

The deadline for articles, announcements, and features for the February issue of *The Window* is **Monday, March 15.**

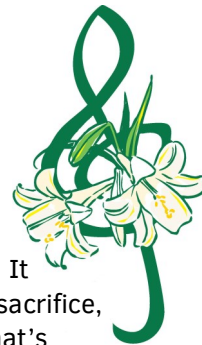
Please email your item as a Microsoft Word document to the church office at window@forthillchurch.org or type the item directly into your email and send. If possible, please keep your articles to 500 words or less.



Sunday, March 14

Choir Corner

We are on our Lenten journey — traveling with Jesus through 40 days to Holy Week and Easter. And usually this question is posed to us. What will you give up during Lent? Many say chocolate, social media, caffeine, TV, etc.



I remember the first time this hit home for me as a consideration. It was in college. And I decided to give up chocolate. That's a real sacrifice, right? But what if you do something to replace the chocolate? That's exactly what I did. I just substituted starburst fruit snacks for the chocolate. That seemed to be okay since it was "healthier". I mean it was fruit, right? I didn't eat chocolate at all. But I gained weight because I ate pure sugar!!!

It seems we all have given up a great deal and sacrificed many treasures of our lives in this past year. Not being together in worship, no singing, no hugging, no in person visits. We cannot gather to rehearse as a group of 30 in a room because there would not be 6 feet between us. We sing in masks so as not to propel the aerosols. The list goes on...

But here is the good news. **We are still the church, the body of Christ.** And we still have music in our hearts and lives. So I leave you with one of my favorite songs to teach children of all ages:

**I am the church. You are the church. We are the church together.
All who follow Jesus all around the world - yes, we're the church together.
The church is not a building. The church is not a steeple. The church is not a resting place. THE CHURCH IS THE PEOPLE!**

Smiling-n-Singing,

Margaret

Membership Ministry & PSA Thank All Mask Makers!

Starting in January, the Membership Ministry Team and PSA teamed up to distribute masks to our neighbors as a local mission. Due to the wonderful work of mask makers, Nancy Lloyd, LeAnne Greene, and Cindy Sloan, as well as others who volunteered to make or contribute materials, this mission became reality. These ladies cannot be thanked enough for their time and talent. Each mask is in a Ziploc bag with a card that has a prayer for those taking a mask for free to be protected and information about PSA on the other side. When riding by PSA take a look and see the banner and masks that are providing those less fortunate with much needed protection during these unusual times.



Lenten Art Workshop with Ashley Brown

Pansy Duke Scholarship Recipient

Sabbath in the Desert — Exodus 16

Sunday, March 14

from 3:00-4:00 pm via Zoom

Limit of 30 participants

Register in advance:

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUvf-CtjgrH9YPqEnzsVfZ_0STIYR2uR4X

Families and friends of all ages are invited to join in a reflection of the Sabbath in the Desert as we ponder and paint the story of manna in the wilderness with the symbol of cacti, remembering the complaint of the Israelites and how God answered them.

You may already have some of the needed supplies on hand.

Below is a supply list link created by Ashley using Amazon.

This is for a single order. Varnish and gold paint are optional.

[https://www.amazon.com/ideas/amzn1.account.](https://www.amazon.com/ideas/amzn1.account.AHZGILDUKJJA04YOLK6MZEUI6W4A/1MMMOXOGXQBWW)

[AHZGILDUKJJA04YOLK6MZEUI6W4A/1MMMOXOGXQBWW](https://www.amazon.com/ideas/amzn1.account.AHZGILDUKJJA04YOLK6MZEUI6W4A/1MMMOXOGXQBWW)

This is for a group order if your whole family wants to join the fun.

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlists/1JQSBCN9Q1FHR?ref=wl_share

(everyone needs 2-3 ounces per paint color and 2 gold leaf sheets)

Christian Action Ministry Update

Let's talk missions! You may wonder how in the world can we do missions in times when we can barely hear each other talk through masks and across our six feet of social distance. Well, there are ways. We've already proven we can do it with the huge success of our Christ Child Box project in December. Over the next couple of months look for more opportunities through Christian Action Ministry's Fabulous Five Missions. You'll find Five Fabulous ways to do mission work in our community.



Church Mouse

Oh my, the congregational meeting was exciting. Almost no people were present but voting went on with **Pastor Mary** watching the polls of those voting electronically and **Pastor Michael** staffing the phones. **Pastor Laura** moderated the elections. There were presentations by Clerk of Session, **Gail Williams** and **Josh Young** of Personnel & Program Support and **Hack Trammell** with Finance.

The ONC with **Donna Crader** as coordinator presented the following to serve on Session: **Bill Cato, Gregg Morton, Mark Stokes, Nancy Spitler, Cindy Trammell, Dulcie Mohr (youth)** and for Deacons: **Stacey Miller, Melanie Job, Chris Torres, Georganne Burton, Chip Egan, Mark Morrison, Peggy Rutland, Heather Wright, & Ann Howard**. Be sure to thank these elected to serve in Christ's name. The ONC deserves special thanks for a diligent job during a pandemic: **Donna Crader, Garland Gravely, Michael Steele, Melanie Job, Cooper Hays, Susan Brown, Cile Dunkelburg, Jackie Worley, & Jay Jones**.

The APNC with **Helen Mohr** as the coordinator brought forth great news: **Jacob Kennedy** will be Fort Hill's new **Associate for Youth and Missions** and will be working part-time remotely until he finishes seminary this year. The committee consisted of **Elizabeth Bost, Mike Worley, Mark Stokes, Sydney Weeks, Chloe Satzger, & Chip Egan**. Be sure to thank them for their efforts that spanned more than a year for sure.

Fort Hill will be exciting this year as these individuals serve in our leadership.



Attention

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH

Pi Day Party

March 14 @ 5pm on Zoom

Together on Zoom, we will make a basic Chocolate Pie and check in with each other.

Ingredients to purchase prior to event:

- Sugar
- Cocoa Powder
- Eggs
- Unsalted Butter
- Evaporated Milk
- Pie Shell



Zoom information to come



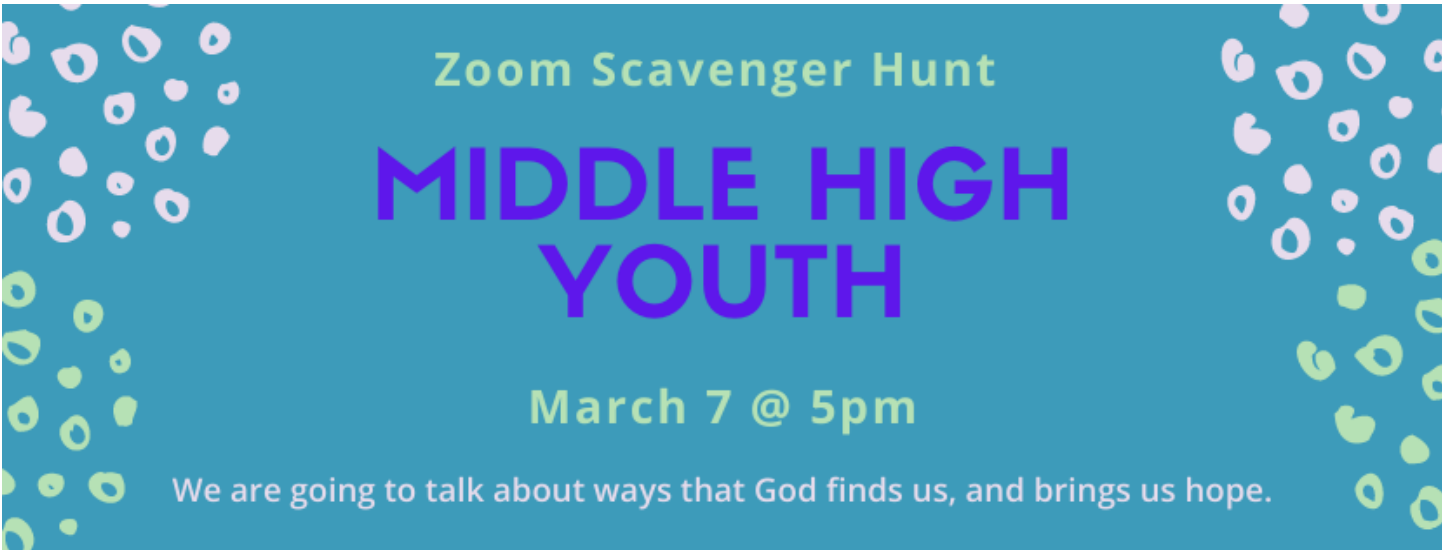
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MARCH IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY?

MARCH 7: DRIVEWAY CHURCH 1:00PM
WESCOTT DRIVE

MARCH 14: PLAYDATE & PRAYER 1:00PM
VETERANS PARK (PENDLETON)

MARCH 21: DRIVEWAY CHURCH 1:00PM
STILLWATER NEIGHBORHOOD
911 SHADOW OAKS DRIVE
SENECA

All events will require masks for all participants over age 2



Zoom Scavenger Hunt

MIDDLE HIGH YOUTH

March 7 @ 5pm

We are going to talk about ways that God finds us, and brings us hope.



News from Presbyterian Women

Clothing Drive for Mission Haven

Presbyterian Women are again collecting spring and summer clothing for Mission Haven on Sunday, March 21.

Ladies, spring and summer will be here soon! When you go through your closets to remove the clothing for women, men, and children that you no longer wish to have, please consider donating your gently used clothing in **good condition** to a worthy cause! You may bring your donations to the drop-off area in front of the Fort Hill Presbyterian Church Education Building and playground on Sunday afternoon, March 21. There will be someone to unload your bag(s) and take them into the church for sorting. The drop-off time will be announced in the Wednesday emails from the church office. Proceeds from this collection will benefit Safe Harbor. For more information, please see below.

Contacts: Susan Beckwith (654-3337)
 Joan Dixon (654-1065), or
 Gensie Waldrop (882-5782).

Valentines for Our Fort Hill College Students

Thanks to all of the Fort Hill Presbyterian volunteers who brought donations of gift cards to put into the Valentines for our FHPC college students! These cards were either mailed or hand-delivered to brighten our students' lives on Valentine's Day with a sentiment of affection from our church. We also send a big THANK YOU to Lauren Young for heading up the *Valentines for College Students Project*. Thanks for sharing your love!



Date to Remember

- **March 21, 2021 — Drop-off spring and summer clothing for Safe Harbor**

Submitted by Mary Barron, PW Publicity Chairman



Week 2

FEBRUARY 28 – MARCH 6, 2021

From lost to found

by Roger Gench




HYMN OF THE WEEK: "Amazing Grace"


PRAYER FOCUS: Confession — In what ways have I done those things that I ought not to have done, and left undone those things I ought to have done?

ACTION: Each day, pray "God, send someone into my life whom I can encourage." Pay attention to how God responds, and how you are called to encourage that person.

Sunday, FEBRUARY 28, 2021
LUKE 15:1-8

The parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin are powerful stories in and of themselves, but the context in which they appear is also important. Jesus tells these parables in response to grumbling about his hospitality to sinners! How might these parables prompt reflection on our own perception and reception of sinners? How might they bring to our awareness that within each of us that is lost?

 **Practice:** Read one or both of the parables slowly, and using your imagination, place yourself in the story. Where are you in these scenes? How do you feel about what is happening? Are there questions you would like to ask of the shepherd or the woman?

 **Journal:** Record in your journal what happened during this prayer time. Describe movements toward God or away from God that came into view.

**REJOICE WITH
ME, FOR
I HAVE
FOUND
MY
SHEEP
THAT
WAS
LOST.**



Monday, MARCH 1, 2021

LUKE 15:11-24

The parable of the prodigal son – or, better, the parable of two lost sons – is likely the most familiar and beloved parable in the Gospels, and it is a moving framework for prayer. Using your imagination, enter into this story, noting where you are in this scene. Focus on each of the three main figures, noting what each evokes for you. (Feel free to mix up the genders in the story: you may wish to imagine two lost daughters or sisters, or a compassionate mother.)



Practice: Read the story slowly and prayerfully three times, each time focusing on a different character in the story. Take a few moments after each reading to reflect on what surfaced in your awareness.



Journal: Note in your journal what occurred in your three prayers — be as specific as you can. Write also of any movements toward God or away from God you discerned.

Tuesday, MARCH 2, 2021

PSALM 139:1-12

Psalms 139 is a comforting or disquieting text, depending on one's situation. It can bring peace to one who is in turmoil ("the darkness is not dark to you"); it can also unsettle us as we recall unguarded or unkind remarks ("Even before a word is on my tongue, you know it completely"). God permeates every facet of our lives. The psalm assures us that we are never cut off from the presence of God; but neither can we get away from God.



Practice: Read the psalm slowly and prayerfully several times, mulling over its images and letting them sink into your innermost being. Stay with the images that resonate with you most and ponder their significance for you. Reflect on God's comforting and disquieting presence that is always with you.



Journal: Note in your journal any movements toward God and away from God you discern.

Wednesday, MARCH 3, 2021

GENESIS 1:1-5, 26-31

Genesis 1 invites us to a cosmic perspective on creation and our place within it. As we have already noted with respect to Psalm 8, the word "dominion" does not mean domination, but rather refers to our role as caretakers of God's creation, who tend to it as God does. Most important, God beholds the creation and declares it "very good."



Practice: If possible, prayerfully read this Scripture outdoors (or at least in proximity to a window) so that you too can behold creation. Read it three times, contemplating the images that speak to you the most, aware of God's sustaining presence in all creation and in your life.



Journal: Note in your journal any movements away from God and toward God that you discern.

Thursday, MARCH 4, 2021

JOHN 1:1-14

John's prologue corresponds to Genesis 1: both transport us to the beginning of creation. The Word (or *Logos*) in John 1 evokes the cosmic reason giving order and structure to the universe in Greek thought. It also evokes the "Word of God" that came to Israel's prophets as well as the concept of Wisdom, the female personification of God in later Jewish thought (see Proverbs 8-9). All of these rich and varied associations together convey the light that came into the world that darkness cannot overcome. The climax to the prologue in 1:14 affirms that "the Word became flesh" — not just human, but "flesh" (*sarx* in Greek), signifying God's solidarity with all living flesh and the biological life of all creation.



Practice: Read John's prologue slowly and prayerfully, pondering the utterly profound imagery in this ancient hymnic text.



Journal: Note in your journal any movement toward God or away from God that surfaced during your prayerful reflection.

Friday, MARCH 5, 2021

ROMANS 8:19-25

At this critical juncture in Paul's letter to the Romans, the remarkable image of childbirth is used to convey God's work of restoration and recreation in the world. The whole creation, and we ourselves, says Paul, are groaning with labor pains to realize the fullness of our created nature, to be set free from bondage and be fully known as children of God. These words are especially poignant amid the ecological crisis that we currently face, as we ponder not only the groaning in our own hearts, but in all of creation.



Practice: Pray Romans 8:19-25 several times, with special attention to the images of creation it projects and our relationship to it.



Journal: Write in your journal of the movements of your spirit while praying with this Scripture.

Saturday, MARCH 6, 2021

ISAIAH 61:1-4

Isaiah 61 provides an inspiring vision for profoundly disorienting, destabilizing times, such as the one we currently face as a nation. In our here and now, a pandemic surges and racial reckoning and political polarization demand attention and action — realities that have impacted the life and ministries of all congregations. Like those who returned to Judah after Babylonian captivity, we too face harsh circumstances and are in need of the prophet's proclamation of God's renewal of a devastated country.



Practice: Pray Isaiah 61:1-4 several times, dwelling on the images in this text that speak powerfully to you in this moment of your life.



Journal: Write in your journal of movement you discern toward God or away from God, with special attention to the times in which we are living.

Week 3

MARCH 7-13, 2021

Dry bones come to life

by Roger Gench



HYMN OF THE WEEK: "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"


PRAYER FOCUS: Adoration — Consider the praiseworthy qualities of God. How can I praise God's majesty and glory in my words and in my actions?


ACTION: Each day, reach out to someone (by letter, text, phone or email) and say, "I care about you" or "Let's have a coffee date by phone and catch up."

Sunday, MARCH 7, 2021

PSALM 23

For the next three days, we will pray with Scripture that can help us reflect on our graced histories — that is, on your personal history of *light* (special experiences of God's presence, love and justice), your personal history of *shadows* (doubts, questions, reflections of brokenness and sin), and your history of *light out of shadows* (compassion and insight out of pain and disorder, isolation).

 **Practice:** Pray Psalm 23 with special attention to your *light* history — that is, to experiences of God's presence in your life (experiences of love, care, hope, justice). Gently sift through your light history from your childhood to the present, moment noting varied experiences of God's presence along the way.

 **Journal:** Sketch in your journal as much of this personal history of light as possible.

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I SHALL NOT WANT.



Monday, MARCH 8, 2021

EZEKIEL 37:1-3

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones can help us reflect on the *shadows* in our personal histories.



Practice: Read today's passage and imagine surveying the dry bones of your life story - that is, times of suffering, betrayal or lost relations - times when you were keenly aware of your own brokenness and that of the world. Gently sift through your shadow history from your childhood to present, noting varied experiences of brokenness along the way.



Journal: Sketch in your journal as much of your personal history of brokenness as possible.

Tuesday, MARCH 9, 2021

EZEKIEL 37:4-10

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones can also help us ponder our personal history of *light out of shadows*.



Practice: As you pray with today's vision from Ezekiel, imagine the breath of God infusing the dry bones of your life. Remember the times when you sensed hope, justice or love emerging from the difficult moments of your life. Gently sift through your *light out of shadows* history from childhood to the present, noting varied experiences of God's presence along the way.



Journal: Sketch in your journal as much of this personal history of *light out of shadows* as possible.

Wednesday, MARCH 10, 2021

MARK 4:1-9

Jesus' parable of the sower in Mark 4 prompts reflection on how we have responded differently - and at varied times in our lives - to the gospel. The seed from the sower falls in varied places: on the path, the rocky ground, among the thorns and into good soil. If time and interest allows, you might also read Jesus' interpretation of the parable of the sower in Mark 4:13-20.



Practice: Read Mark 4:1-9 slowly and prayerfully, and imagine that you are part of this scene, observing the sower of seeds. Imagine the seeds falling in varied places or situations in your life. What circumstances come to mind, and what thoughts or emotions emerge as you consider your own life story in conversation with this parable?



Journal: Note in your journal what emerged as you prayed with this Scripture.

Thursday, MARCH 11, 2021

ISAIAH 42:1-9

The figure in this “Servant Song” from Isaiah 42 is generally thought to represent the people of Israel who are called by God to bring forth justice among the nations. Note especially the powerful image of how the servant goes about the work of justice: “a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench.”



Practice: Prayerfully read these verses two or three times, noting the images that shimmer for you and the reflection they evoke.



Journal: Write in your journal of movements toward God or away from God that emerge into view.

Friday, MARCH 12, 2021

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

This passage at the heart of Philippians has been described as Paul’s “master story” of God and the world. As such, note how the text presents God’s movement toward us — a movement of decidedly “downward mobility” in which God’s own self is emptied in Christ in order to transform, redeem and liberate the world. This divine movement of love toward the world, in the world, with the world, and for the world is the very power of God.



Practice: Prayerfully read this text several times, noting the images that shine for you.



Journal: Write in you journal of movement toward God or away from God that you discern.

Saturday, MARCH 13, 2021

MARK 1:4-11

The story of Jesus’ baptism in the wilderness is an occasion on which to remember our own baptisms — even if we were infants at the time and were scarcely aware of what was happening. Mark tells us that when Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were “ripped apart” — they did not simply “open,” because something that opens can close. The heavens were ripped apart, which is to say that reality was irreparably altered as a fissure in the heavens appeared — a permanent elimination of the boundary between heaven and earth. God’s Spirit, in other words, is loose in the world and in our lives.



Practice: Pray this Scripture with special attention to the powerful images in this text, and as you ponder Jesus’ baptism, also remember your own. Imagine God’s voice identifying and claiming you as a beloved child of God and the vision of the heavens ripped apart. Reflect on the significance of these revelatory events for Jesus’ life, your own life and the life of the world.



Journal: Note in your journal what emerges in your prayerful reflection on Jesus’ baptism and your own.

Week 4

MARCH 14-20, 2021

Freedom for the captives

by Roger Gench

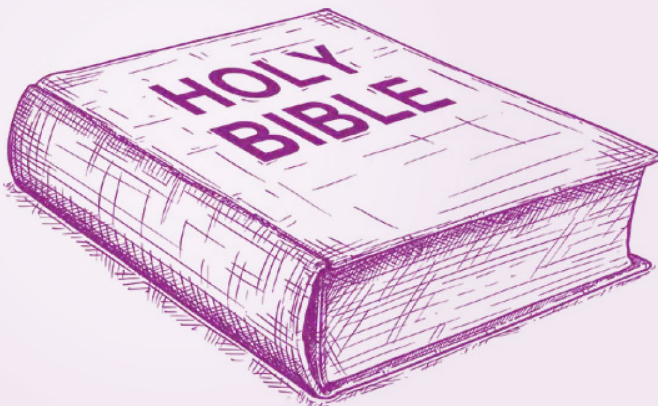


HYMN OF THE WEEK: "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"

PRAYER FOCUS: Thanksgiving — What blessings have I received from God? How can I put into words what Jesus has done for me and for my loved ones?

ACTION: Give thanks to someone for their work each day. Write an email to a colleague. Send a thank you letter to a public servant or frontline worker in your community. Express gratitude to those you encounter in customer service. Tell your pastor or a church volunteer what you appreciate about their service.

**WORSHIP THE
LORD YOUR
GOD, AND SERVE
ONLY HIM.**



Sunday, MARCH 14, 2021

LUKE 4:1-13

On the heels of his baptism, Jesus faces diabolic temptation in the wilderness that tests his mettle for the ministry before him. None of the temptations the devil sets before him have ignoble ends in view — daily bread, the good of nations and victory over death all are worthy goals. But each temptation entails selfish manipulation rather than service to the glory of God. Jesus models service to others, refusing to give in to the diabolic temptation to serve himself.

Practice: Pray this Scripture slowly and imagine that you are present in this scene, observing the devil's tempting of Jesus. Consider his responses to them, and how you might frame your own.

Journal: Record in your journal any questions, thoughts or emotions that emerge as you pray with this Scripture, noting your sense of whether they move you toward God or away from God.

Monday, MARCH 15, 2021

LUKE 4:16-30

This scene represents the inauguration of Jesus' public ministry in Luke. The words he reads from the Isaiah scroll in his hometown synagogue constitute the programmatic message his ministry will embody — bringing good news to the poor, release to the captives, the recovery of sight to the blind and letting the oppressed go free. As his ministry unfolds, it will fulfill each of these bold works of liberation.



Practice: You are invited to pray this Scripture with special attention to the words of Isaiah in verses 18-19. What images arrest your attention or challenge you, and why?



Journal: Note in your journal your sense of movement toward God and away from God as you engaged in prayerful reflection on this story.

Tuesday, MARCH 16, 2021

LUKE 4:31-37

Exorcism is a characteristic aspect of Jesus' public ministry — a reality outside the range of our own experience. But if we ponder the demonic as a spiritual condition, we can surely recognize realities that distort and disfigure human life in our own time and place from which we may need release. Racism, for example, is surely a spiritual deformity in our lives and in our society. In this exorcism story in Luke 4, Jesus represents a comprehensive threat to the whole realm of demons, providing release, here and now, from forces that deform and deface our lives.



Practice: Prayerfully and slowly read this story from Luke, pondering realities in your own life, and in the life of the world around you, that distort and disfigure life, and thus can be described as demonic.



Journal: Note in your journal any insights that emerged during your prayer time, and any demons you can identify in your own life that keep you from the life that God intends for you.

Wednesday, MARCH 17, 2021

LUKE 5:1-11

This story about Jesus' calling of the first disciples invites us to consider our own calling as disciples. Have you ever felt called to put your boat into deep water and been uncomfortable or challenged by that call? It is not easy to be a disciple of Jesus. So if we follow Jesus, we too might be called into deep waters to face into the brokenness of our world.



Practice: Read this lesson slowly and imagine yourself in the scene. Where are you in this story and what do you see, hear and feel?



Journal: Write in your journal of your experience of praying this story, and the movement of your spirit toward God or away from God that engagement with it evoked.

Thursday, MARCH 18, 2021

LUKE 6:27-36

In this scene from Luke's Sermon on the Plain, Jesus exhorts us to love our enemies — surely one of the hardest things he asks us to do. Theologian Miroslav Volf claims that loving our enemies goes to the heart of the Christian faith. In his book "A Public Faith," he writes: "Love doesn't mean agreement and approval; it means benevolence and beneficence, possible disagreement and disapproval notwithstanding." Thus, loving our enemies does not absolve us or deter us from pursuing justice as we understand it, from our calling to stand in solidarity with the marginalized among us, or from calling evil by its name. Justice and mercy go together — both are works of God.



Practice: Prayerfully read this passage from Luke and reflect deeply on what it might mean to love your enemies. When you think of your enemies, who comes to mind? Members of your family or church? Fellow citizens? Foreign adversaries? If you are to pray for your enemies, what will you pray for? As you reflect on Jesus' admonitions, what do they compel you to do?



Journal: Note in your journal any insights that emerged from your prayerful engagement with Jesus' teaching.

Friday, MARCH 19, 2021

LUKE 6:6:36-42

Another hard teaching of Jesus is before us: "Do not judge, and you will not be judged." In the hyperpolarized times in which we live, judging others is part of daily discourse and seems to have become a virtue rather than a vice. This passage challenges that notion at its very core. Today's Scripture, combined with yesterday's injunction to love our enemies, highlights mercy as a central characteristic of the Christian life — because God is merciful, and we are God's children and are to reflect that family resemblance.



Practice: Prayerfully read this passage, mulling over aspects of it that stand out to you and that resonate with your own experience. Reflect on ways in which the merciful character of God informs our identity as God's own children.



Journal: Note in your journal what happened as you prayed with this text.

Saturday, MARCH 20, 2021

LUKE 6:43-49

Jesus' teaching in this passage is very simple yet weighty: good trees produce good fruit. Thus, good conduct comes from a good heart. Moreover, the words that come out of our mouths reflect what is in our hearts.



Practice: Prayerfully read and reflect on this Scripture, with special attention to the connection between fruit and tree — between action and heart, and speech and heart.



Journal: Note in your journal key reflections that emerged in your prayer with this passage of Scripture.

Week 5

MARCH 21-27, 2021

Transfiguration and transformation

by Roger Gench



HYMN OF THE WEEK: "Crown Him with Many Crowns"


PRAYER FOCUS: Supplication — As I pour out my heart as a needy person, what do I long for from God? What friends or relations are hurting? Where would I love to see God's healing power at work?


ACTION: Reflect on a mentor or teacher from your past who helped you grow in some way. Reach out to those you can to share what their influence meant to your life.

Sunday, MARCH 21, 2021

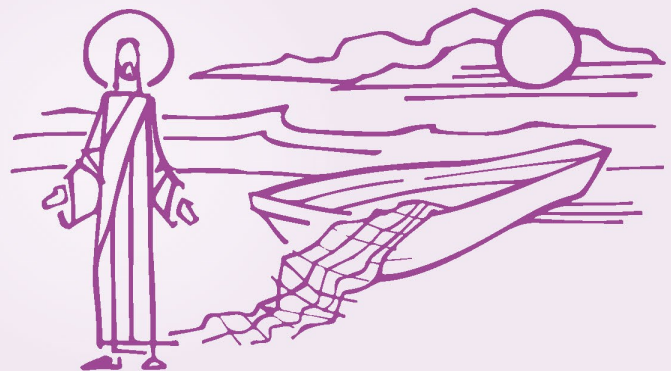
LUKE 8:22-25

As you pray this passage, imagine that you are present in the boat with Jesus and his disciples, endangered by the raging wind and waves of a storm. The boat is often depicted as a symbol of the church. As you pray with this text, think of storms that currently endanger your life and the life of the church and that threaten to undo us.

 **Practice:** Prayerfully read this story and enter into the boat with Jesus and the disciples. What assurance or challenge do you hear Jesus addressing to you in the midst of storms?

 **Journal:** Note in your journal what emerged in your prayer time, and your sense of movements of your spirit toward God or away from God as you prayed with this text.

WHERE IS YOUR FAITH?



Monday, MARCH 22, 2021

LUKE 9:12-17

The story of Jesus' feeding of 5,000 people is the only miracle story found in all four Gospels, which highlights its importance in the memories and imaginations of early Christians. The story prompts our reflection on how we perceive ourselves and the world around us: do we perceive and act out of a sense of scarcity or a sense of abundance? Scarcity is the world's logic, but abundance is the gospel's logic.



Practice: Prayerfully read this story several times and imaginatively enter into the scene. How does it challenge your perception of scarcity or of God's abundance?



Journal: Note in your journal any movements of your spirit that you discern - toward God or away from God - as you prayed with this Scripture.

Tuesday, MARCH 23, 2021

MATTHEW 17:1-8

This story takes us to a mountaintop with Jesus and his disciples, where he is transfigured before them, his face shining like the sun and his clothes dazzling white as a cloud overshadows them. Most startling of all, however, is the very voice of God, which we rarely hear in the Gospel stories. That voice was heard at Jesus' baptism, and commands our attention as it is now heard for the second time in Matthew's narrative, declaring: "This is my Son, my beloved with whom I am well pleased; listen to him!"



Practice: Prayerfully read this story and enter into the scene in your imagination, noting what it evokes in you. Listen as the divine voice identifies Jesus and urges you to "Listen to him!" When you think of listening to Jesus, what do you recall hearing and learning from him — from both his words and the life that he lived?



Journal: Note briefly in your journal what you remember of the essential teachings of Jesus.

Wednesday, MARCH 24, 2021

MATTHEW 25:31-46

The parable of the sheep and goats is not a scenario of individual judgment; "all the nations" are gathered before the Son of Man and held accountable. Have they tended to "the least of these," feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, welcoming strangers, clothing the naked, caring for the sick and visiting those in prison? The parable invites reflection on the church's engagement in civic matters and its public witness to God's concern for "the least" among us.



Practice: Prayerfully read this passage from Matthew, meditating on "the least" in your community. How might the church embody God's concern for their well-being in its public witness?



Journal: Write in your journal of your experience reading and praying this passage from Matthew.

Thursday, MARCH 25, 2021

LUKE 10:25-37

Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan in response to a question that a lawyer asks of him: "Who is my neighbor?" After sharing this parable, Jesus flips the question, asking instead, "Which of these do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" From Jesus' perspective, the important question is not "who is my neighbor?" but rather "how can I be a neighbor?"



Practice: Prayerfully read this passage, pondering the lawyer's question, as well as the question Jesus flips back to him. Ask yourself: How can I be a neighbor in my community and world?



Journal: In your journal, record your answer to this question.

Friday, MARCH 26, 2021

JOHN 1:35-42

The first words out of Jesus' mouth in the Gospel of John set before us a critical existential question: "What are you looking for?" At the other end of the Gospel, on Easter morning, the risen Lord asks Mary Magdalene a similar question: "Whom are you looking for?" (John 20:15). Who or what are we looking for? These questions frame John's Gospel and invite reflection on our deepest longings. They also reflect John's conviction that our deepest longing is for relationship with God, made available in Christ — a conviction shared by St. Augustine in his "Confessions": "Our hearts are restless until they rest in you."



Practice: Pray and ponder deeply John 1:35-42 with special attention to Jesus' question, "What are you looking for?" How would you answer this question?



Journal: Note in your journal what reflection on this question evoked for you.

Saturday, MARCH 27, 2021

JOHN 11:1-44

The church has traditionally pondered the Gospel of John's vivid story of the raising of Lazarus in its journey toward Lent. In it, Jesus makes a statement that goes to the heart of John's Gospel, followed by a very important question: "I am the resurrection and the life. ... *Do you believe this?*" Do you believe that Jesus offers eternal life — that is, fullness of life, a rich quality of life in relationship with God *now*, not just life that extends beyond death? When Lazarus emerges from the tomb, Jesus also articulates an important command for the Christian community — "Unbind him and let him go" — charging us with the ministry of unbinding others, that they may experience fullness of life.



Practice: As you pray with this vivid story, imagine that you are present in this scene. What most captures your attention as the story unfolds? How would you respond to the question Jesus asks? How might you assist in the unbinding of others?



Journal: Make a note in your journal of reflection evoked by your prayer with this story.

Holy Week

MARCH 28-APRIL 7, 2021

You are the son of the Living God

by Roger Gench



HYMN OF THE WEEK: "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"


PRAYER FOCUS: Sanctification — How can I ask God to make me more into God's likeness — more generous, forgiving, trusting, caring, creative, just? How can I care more for the "least of these" and less about what people in power think?


ACTION: Each day reflect on a time your mourning turned to joy or growth.

Palm Sunday, MARCH 28, 2021

MARK 11:1-11

Jesus' triumphal entrance into Jerusalem is ironic. The people want a king who comes with power to deliver them, but Jesus will suffer, be crucified and resurrected, which suggests a different kind of power. Jesus does not come to rule over people but rather to model mutual service with people. The story invites reflection on the reign of God and what it might look like.

 **Practice:** Prayerfully read today's Scripture with special attention to what it might mean for the reign or reality of God to be present in daily life. What does the commonwealth of God look like for you? How is it present in your community?

 **Journal:** Write in your journal of your answers to these questions, as specifically as you can.

BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!



Monday, MARCH 29, 2021

JOHN 13:1-17

The Gospel of John's account of Jesus' last supper with his disciples features a foot-washing — a symbolic act that conveys both the nature of discipleship and the significance of Jesus' death as a sign of his love for his disciples and of his humiliating death on their behalf. Two interpretations of the foot-washing are presented: the first asks us simply to *receive* Christ's act of hospitality (verses 6-11), the second to *extend* it to one another (verses 12-15). The first tends to be overlooked, but receiving Christ's gesture of love and accepting it fully precedes and grounds extension of it to others.



Practice: Read the story slowly and prayerfully at least twice and imagine that you are part of this scene. What do you see? What do you feel? Do you identify with Peter's deep discomfort? Do you find it easier to receive or to extend hospitality — and why?



Journal: Sense the movements of your spirit and the emotions they evoke as you reflected on this story — both movements toward God and away from God — and note in your journal what emerged.

Tuesday, MARCH 30, 2021

MARK 8:27-33

"Who do you say that I am?" In this watershed moment at Caesarea Philippi, we hear Peter's answer to Jesus' question — and also Jesus' rebuke of Peter when he objects to Jesus' prediction of death and resurrection. The story invites us to consider our own response to Jesus' question — and our own reaction to his passion prediction.



Practice: Prayerfully read this text from Mark, placing yourself into the scene. Imagine how you would answer Jesus' question: "Who do you say that I am?" Imagine your response to Jesus' rebuke of Peter.



Journal: Note in your journal your own response to Jesus' question, and to his rebuke.

Wednesday, MARCH 31, 2021

MARK 8:34-38

"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." When Jesus exhorts disciples with these words, he is not suggesting that they pick up crosses they do not already bear, but rather that they acknowledge and name the crosses already bearing down upon their own lives and upon those around them — and that they resist all such savage forces. The exhortation invites our reflection on crosses and systemic evils that may bear down on our own lives.



Practice: Read this Scripture slowly and prayerfully, naming the crosses that bear down on your own life and that of your community — and the shape that your resistance to them is taking. Be as specific as you can.



Journal: Briefly note in your journal the crosses in your life and signs of your resistance to them.

Clemson Presbyterian Student Association

Spring 2021



The purpose of Clemson PSA is to provide a place for worship and discussion, as well as to encourage community, friendship, and service to the campus of Clemson University in affiliation with the Presbyterian Church USA.

Mission

We are a diverse community of faith, which strives to apply the love of Jesus Christ by fostering relationships with God, others and ourselves. By using our own gifts and talents we challenge each other to grow, worship, serve, and play in the Clemson community and beyond!

A Message from Associate Pastor Michael Sanchez

Welcome to 2021, this past year was a weird one for everyone including us at PSA! We spent most of the year online just trying to figure out the new normal! It is a new year and though some things look the same, we at PSA have some big plans for some exciting stuff including, as long as things are done safely, a return to many in-person activities. We will be constantly monitoring the COVID numbers as we prepare to move in-person with Bible Study, Freshmen Group, and eventually our normal PSA Sunday programs! This semester is one of hope and anticipation, but we know we have to continue to do our part to help keep each other and our community safe!



PSA in a COVID 19 World

Madeline (Maddy) Cost A junior from Fort Mill, Maddy Cost is a junior architecture major with a minor in psychology. As an architecture major Maddy hopes to work in the architecture side of the healthcare field. She discovered PSA when she went to Montreat after her senior year in high school (her home church is Unity Presbyterian in Fort Mill) and saw it as an opportunity to meet new people. She sees PSA as a family atmosphere where she can escape the stress of classes and grow in her faith. Her favorite memory of PSA is the fall retreat her sophomore year - not only did she enjoy spending time at Montreat and growing her relationships with others who attended, but she was also the Extreme Sports Champion for the retreat! In her free time Maddy enjoys trying new foods but is always in the mood for a bacon cheeseburger (preferably pimento cheese) and she loves the movie Sixteen Candles and the book Glass Castle. She also enjoys hiking and painting (and apparently extreme sports). She would love for the congregation to know that PSA loves all the support they are given and the welcoming atmosphere on Sundays and at other church events.



Maddy Cost



Reid Sutton

Member Reid Sutton A native of Raleigh, North Carolina, Reid is a senior bioengineering major with a concentration in biomaterials. Her career goals include designing affordable medical devices and traveling the world to distribute them to underprivileged communities. Reid has been active in PSA since her first year at Clemson and has served as the media chair and the intramural chair. She was drawn to PSA after being active in her home church (White Memorial Presbyterian) growing up and had heard how great the campus ministry was at Clemson. As an out-of-state student, Reid only knew one other person at Clemson and has found PSA to be her “rock” during college...a group where she felt she really belonged and was welcomed from day one. Her favorite memories of PSA are two spring mission trips - to Baltimore and New Orleans. She would share with a freshman thinking about joining PSA that those are people who will be there for you for the long haul, and PSA will help you dive into a deeper level of your faith...plus, there’s no other group at Clemson that you could lose almost every intramural game with and still have the best time. To the congregation, Reid wants to say “thank you for taking us in from all over and welcoming us into your church family!! It means so much more to us than you realize!! Also, we really, really appreciate all the meals we are fed!” ☺ Reid’s favorite food is ice cream and you can also find her behind the counter at Spill the Beans!

For more information: Michael Sanchez, Associate Pastor for University Ministry, michael.sanchez@forthillchurch.org OR <http://clemsonpsa.org/>

Wednesdays

**Bible Study for All
@ 7 pm**

Sundays

**PSA Program
@ 6-7:30 pm**

***PSA Sunday*
February 14th**

***PSA Month of Service*
February 14th - 28th**

***PSA Local Mission Trip*
March 15th - 19th**

***Sneaker Hockey*
March 26th**

***Semi-Formal*
April 9th**

***Senior Night*
April 18th**

***Old Stone Church Worship*
April 25th**

***Exam Breakers*
April 26th - 30th**

***Beach Week*
May 1st - 8th**



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March BIRTHDAYS

3/1 Jake Alexander
Amy Elrod
Andrew Latiff

3/2 Bridget Trogden
Margaret Thompson
Katherine Whisler

3/3 Caroline Dawson

3/4 Betty Dean
Caroline Hunter
Dewayne Lawson

3/5 Luke Artigliere
Mike Moore
George Rodgers

3/6 Bitsy Barkley
Mary Elizabeth
McDaniel
Dusty Oates

3/7 Chase Aaron

3/8 Leland Hawthorne
Todd Latiff
Maggie Wilson

3/9 John Brown

3/10 Dylan Bolger
Shirley Chappell
Nina Moede
Barry Robinson

3/11 Jay Allman
Tom McInnis

3/13 Evelyn Cureton
Dulcie Mohr
Denny Walling

3/14 Julianna Ellis
Garland Gravely
Christine Hughes
Kathy Hughes

3/19 Raymond MacKay
Necia Ross
Katie Wilson

3/20 Rita Greagan

3/21 Larry Gahan

3/22 Wayne Madison

3/23 Billie Jackson

3/24 Hudson Money
Emily Poetz
Ben Sawyer

3/26 Elizabeth Crader

3/28 Preston Shealy

3/29 Finley Wiles

3/30 Maggie Bandy
Sally Martin
Gayle McGregor

3/31 Frances Caskey
Beth DeWitt
Layne Smith
Scott Thrailkill



March ANNIVERSARIES

3/5 Raymond & Margaret MacKay

3/9 Ed & Shelley Burchfield

3/12 Bo Crader & Debbie Vaughn

3/17 Danny & Brigette Gregg
Laurence & Betsy Mudge

3/22 Chuck & Elizabeth Sisson

3/27 Ed & Annette Halbig

3/31 Don & Cyndi Davis
Bob & Becky Fant

ON MARCH 3

Caroline Dawson Turns 100!

**Let's send her love and shower her
with birthday cards**

**150 Downs Blvd Apt D105
Clemson, SC 29631-2005**

From the Finance Ministry

Below is a summary of the 2021 budget passed by Session. A copy of the line item budget is available upon request. Please contact Lori Houck (654-2061 or lori.houck@forthillchurch.org) to receive a copy.

General Fund Income:

General Fund Pledged Giving	\$ 765,214
General Fund Non-Pledged Giving	167,000
Building Fund Giving	12,500
Building Usage Fee Income	13,000
Fundraising Income	14,500
Transfers from Special Funds	28,000
Total General Fund Income	\$ 1,000,214

General Fund Expenses:

Board of Deacons	2,215
Building & Grounds Ministry	118,486
Outreach Ministries (including Christian Action and UM & Presbytery Support)	112,579
Discipleship Ministry (Adult/Children/Youth/Cross-Generational)	39,925
Congregational Fellowship	7,200
Finance Ministry (including Renovation Loan payments & Session-approved Community Mission Initiative)	66,376
Membership Ministry	1,550
Personnel (includes salaries/benefits all staff)	618,353
Program Support	61,058
Planning Ministry	800
Worship Ministry	13,210
Total General Fund Expenses	\$ 1,041,752

Bridging Generations Update: Loan Principal Balance — \$291,706.85





Non-Profit Organization
US POSTAGE PAID
Clemson, SC
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101 Edgewood Avenue
Clemson, SC 29631

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www.forthillchurch.org

Return Service Requested



HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, March 28

Palm Sunday Worship Service

Thursday, April 1

Maundy Thursday Worship Service — 7:30 pm

Sunday, April 4

Easter Sunrise Service — 7:00 am
Easter Worship Service

More details will follow through the Wednesday Weekly Updates
as we get closer to Holy Week.