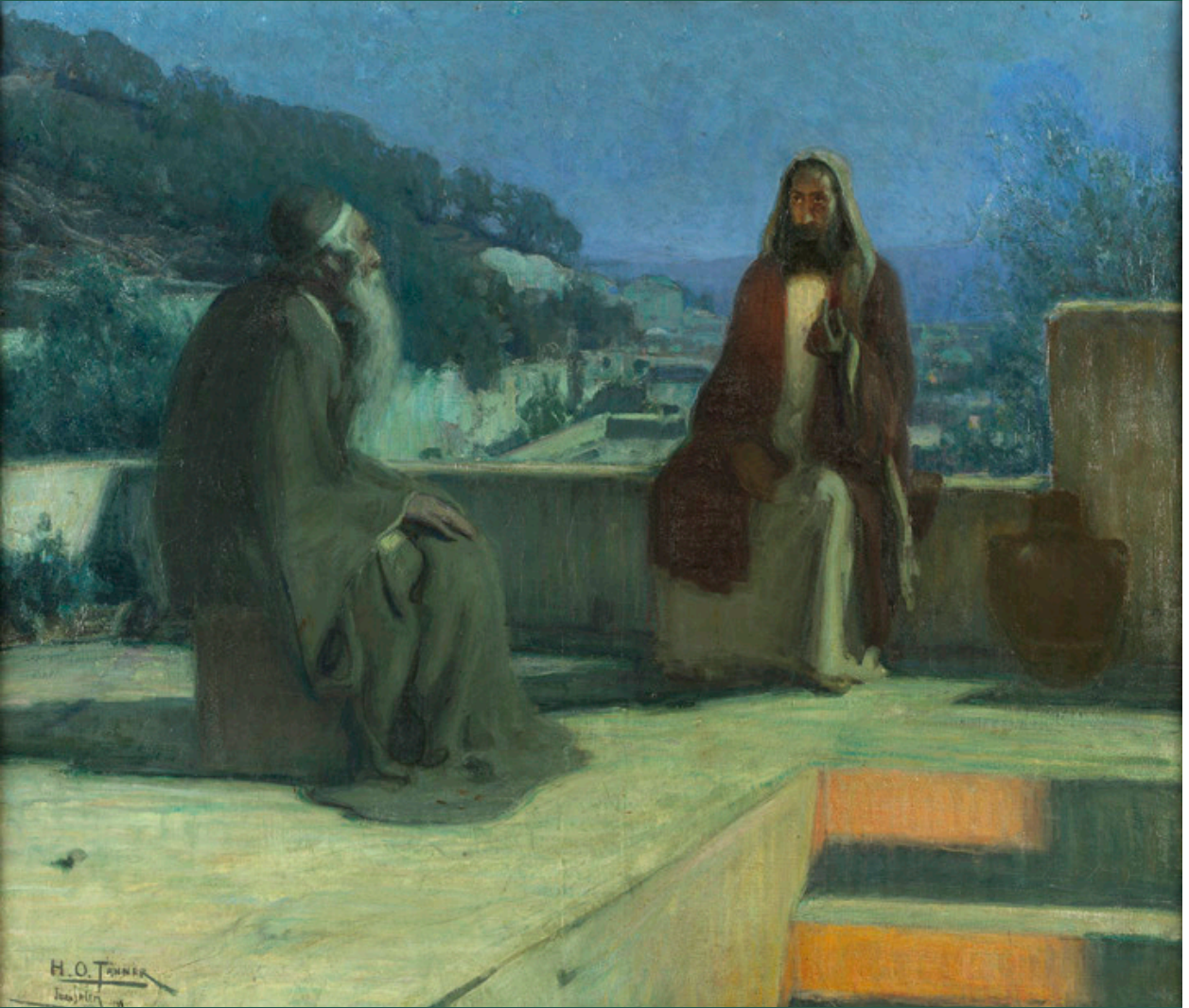




First Presbyterian

CHURCH OF LAKE FOREST

Nurturing a community of faith working through love.



Welcome!

March 1, 2026

To all who are weary and seek rest,
To all who mourn and long for comfort,
To all who are lonely and desire friendship,
To all who hunger and thirst for grace,
and to all who will come,

First Pres opens wide her doors and offers
welcome in the name of Jesus Christ.

Today's Service

2nd Sunday of Lent

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are at the heart of the Christian gospel, and Good Friday and Easter are two of the most significant celebrations of the Christian year. Lent is a season of preparation and repentance during which we anticipate these important events. The season invites us to make our hearts and minds ready for remembering Jesus' passion and celebrating Jesus' resurrection.

The Revised Common Lectionary scriptures assigned for today are Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9.

Cover Art: Henry Ossawa Tanner, *Nicodemus* (1899).

Scan the QR code to learn more about this piece of art.



Prayer for Today

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Book of Common Prayer

Visiting First Pres?



If you're new to First Pres, please scan this code to get in touch.

Join us for Coffee Hour following worship in the Great Room.

Worship Participants

Rev. Jon Wasson
Pastor/Head of Staff

Rev. Anna Langholz
Associate Pastor for
Congregational Life

Dr. Robert McConnell
Director of Worship & Music

Dr. Stephen Alltop
Organist

Sanctuary Choir

Carol Bagan
Matt Brown
Shannon Engelland
Jim Kingsley
Gretchen Seymour
Chase Spirito
Marty Vander Velde
Communion Servers

Prelude

Chorale Prelude on *O Traurigkeit, o Herzeleid*
Johannes Brahms

The Welcome

Introit

Life Thine Eyes from *Elijah*
Felix Mendelssohn

Lift thine eyes, O lift thine eyes to the mountains, whence cometh help. Thy help cometh from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He hath said, thy foot shall not be moved. Thy Keeper will never slumber.

— Psalm 121: 1-3

*Call to Worship

Psalm 121

Leader: We lift up our eyes to the mountains. From where will our help come?

People: Our help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Leader: God will not allow our feet to stumble. Our guardian never slumbers.

People: The one who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

Leader: The Lord is our protector and the shade at our right side.

People: So that the sun will not strike us by day nor the moon by night.

Leader: The Lord will protect us from all evil and will preserve our lives.

People: The Lord will protect our comings and goings,

All: for now and forevermore.

*Hymn of Praise No. 309

Come, Great God of All the Ages

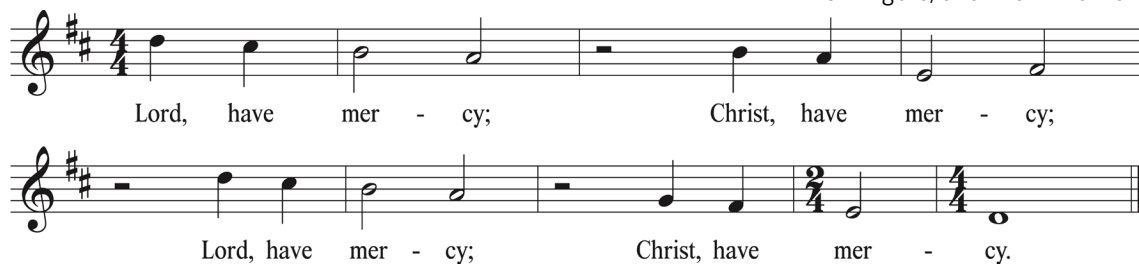
Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

(silent confession...) **Merciful God, you call us to renew our lives by the power of your Holy Spirit, but we are stubborn and resist your invitation. Like Nicodemus, we often come to you only in secret, fearing the judgement of others. We cling to ways of life that lead only to spiritual death, refusing to be transformed. Our hearts remain cold and unmoved by the knowledge of your love for us. For all these things, forgive us, merciful God. Send your Spirit from above that we may be daily renewed, and at the end, make us inheritors of new and everlasting life in your kingdom, through your Son our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Kyrie

John Arndt, David Gungor, Ian Cron,
Ben Kilgore, and Evan Wickham

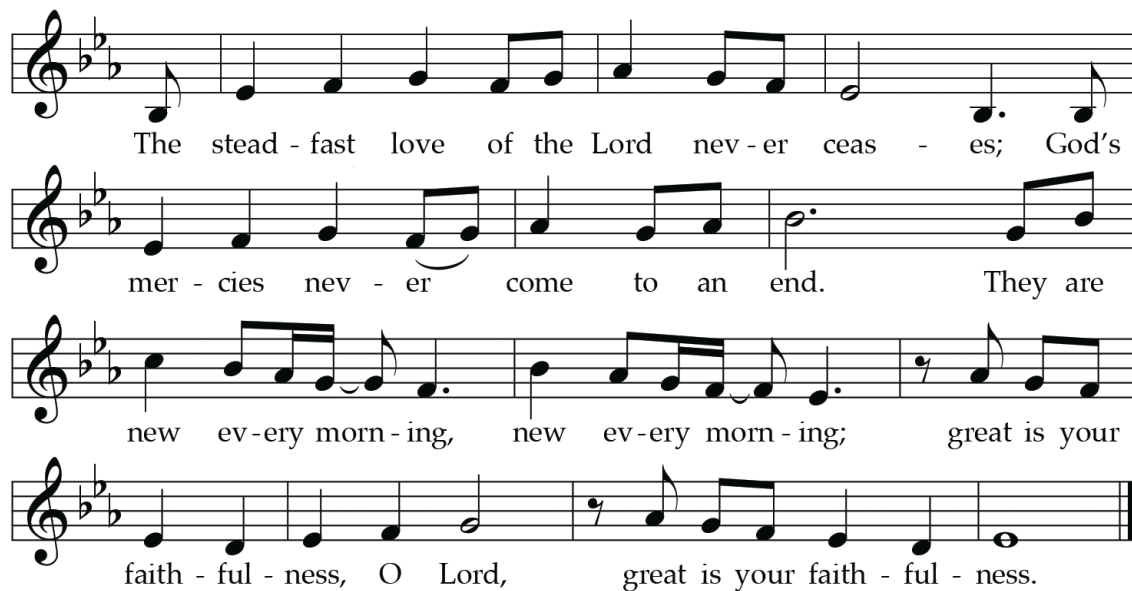


Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy;
Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy.

Assurance of Forgiveness

*Sung Response No. 59

The Steadfast Love of the Lord



The stead - fast love of the Lord nev - er ceas - es; God's
mer - cies nev - er come to an end. They are
new ev - ery morn - ing, new ev - ery morn - ing; great is your
faith - ful - ness, O Lord, great is your faith - ful - ness.

*Passing the Peace of Christ

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Blessing of the Children

Leader: Holy God, we thank you for the gift of these children,

People: And for their parents.

Leader: We know that you have entrusted them to their parents,

People: And also to our community.

Leader: To care for them,
to teach them,
to be examples of Christ to them.
Bless these children.

People: And let us be a blessing to them.

All: Amen.

Following the blessing, children in preschool through 4th grade will go to Fellowship Hall for a group lesson before returning after the sermon to join their families for communion. Every child needs to be checked-in through Church Center before attending. If you haven't already, please scan the QR code to create a Church Center profile and then check-in your child(ren) for Sunday school at one of the check-in stations in the Great Room.



Invitation to the Offering



You may give online by scanning the QR code with your mobile phone, go to firstchurchlf.org/give, or use your Church Center App. Thank you for your generosity!

Offertory

He Watching Over Israel from *Elijah*
Felix Mendelssohn

He watching over Israel slumbers not nor sleeps.
Shouldst thou walking in grief languish, he will quicken thee.
— Psalm 121:4

*Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

* PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE.

Old Testament Lesson

Genesis 12:1-4a
Old Testament, page 10 in pew Bible

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

Gospel Lesson

John 3:1-17
New Testament, page 93 in pew Bible

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Sermon

Jon Wasson

“Defining Moment”

*Hymn of Response No. 435

There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy

*Affirmation of Faith

Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Communion

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right for us to give thanks and praise.

Prayers of the People

The Invitation to the Table and Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and Cup

So that all feel welcome at the table, the bread is gluten-free, and the cups contain grape juice. Communion is served by intinction—please take a piece of bread, dip it into the cup, and partake. Ushers will guide your row when it is time to come forward.

Communion Music

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit;
aber ich will euch wieder sehen
und euer Herz soll sich freuen
und eure Freude soll niemand von euch
nehmen.

Ich will euch trösten,
wie Einen seine Mutter tröstet.

Sehet mich an:
Ich habe eine kleine Zeit Mühe und Arbeit
gehabt
und habe großen Trost funden.

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit from *German Requiem*
Johannes Brahms

You have sorrow now,
but I will see you again,
and your hearts will rejoice,
and no one will take your joy from you.
— John 16:22

I will comfort you
As one whom his mother comforts.
— Isaiah 66:13

Behold.
For a little time I have had toil and work,
But I have found great comfort.
— Sirach 51:27

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Hymn of Sending

The Lord's Prayer
Albert Hay Mallotte

Our Fa-ther, which art in heav-en, Hal-low-ed be Thy name. Thy king-dom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heav - en. Give us this day our dai - ly
bread, And for-give us our debts, as we for-give our debt-ors. And lead us not in-to temp-
ta - tion but de - liv - er us from e - vil; For Thine is the king - dom, and the
power, and the glo-ry for - ev - er, A - men. A - men.

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*Benediction

Choral Response

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me (verse 2)
African American Spiritual

In my trials, Lord, walk with me.
In my trials, Lord, walk with me.
When my the shades of life are calling,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

*Postlude

Fugue on *O Traurigkeit, o Herzeleid*
Johannes Brahms

Prayers

Joys & Concerns

We celebrate the birth of Lily Christian Stephens on February 21 to parents Bethany & Tyrone Stephens, big sisters Sophie and Belle.

We celebrate our Confirmands as they return today from their weekend retreat in Lake Geneva, WI.

For Tina Young and her family on the death of her mother.

For Dick Holmes and his family on the death of his wife, Mailyn Holmes on February 18, 2026.

For Fred Hillger and his family on the death of his mother, Loraine Hillger Seyler on February 16, 2026.

For Susan Sailor Daly and her family on the death of her father on February 15, 2026.

Community

For the ongoing work of our mission partner, ElderCARE. Founded in 1968, ElderCARE Lake County is a volunteer-driven nonprofit dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for adults age 60 and older throughout Lake County. ElderCARE's volunteers provide free essential services including: transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping assistance, technology support, friendly in-person visits, and reassurance phone calls. First Pres has long supported the work of Elder Care and they always welcome new volunteers.

If interested, please reach out to them at ElderCareLakeCounty.org. Training and flexible scheduling are provided, and volunteers are matched with care receivers based on preferences and availability, making it easier to contribute in a way that's meaningful for both volunteer and senior.

Prayer Requests

We are a church that prays for each other, celebrating life's joys and supporting each other in times of need. Our staff prays together on Tuesday mornings and would like to include your prayers. For prayer requests please fill out a Joys & Concerns card, email us at pastoralcare@firstchurchlf.org or call 224.544.1962.

Prayer requests will be removed from this listing after two weeks.

Prayer Chain For confidential prayers, you may email prayerchain@firstchurchlf.org. Please know that your prayers will be held in strict confidence.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

Lent Devotional

Lenten devotionals are available featuring prayers and practices to guide you through the Lent. Additional events and activities are highlighted as well.

Prayer Chapel

Wednesday mornings during Lent, from 7:00–9:00 am, the chapel will be open for self-guided prayer. Guidelines for different prayer practices and coffee will be available.

Youth Groups Tonight

Middle Schoolers (5th–8th Grade) will meet 5:00–6:00 pm and High Schoolers (9th–12th grade) will meet 7:00–8:00 pm in the Youth Lounge.

Dinner & Trivia Night

Our High School Youth will host their annual Dinner & Trivia night on March 15, 5:00–6:30 pm. This is a fun night of friendly competition for all ages. Register today on Church Center.

Rummage Open House

Join us for a Rummage Open House on March 8 following worship in Fellowship Hall. Tour the sorting room, see how donations are organized, meet the team who make it all happen, and browse the Easter mini sale.

Senior Luncheon

Join us Wednesday, March 11 at 11:00 am in the South Parlor for a luncheon for seniors. Hosted by the Deacons, this special gathering will feature great food, conversation, and community. Register today on the Church Center app or contact Sarah Seccombe at sseccombe@firstchurchlf.org. These lunches are planned through May.

Lenten Service Opportunity:

Feed My Starving Children

We are thrilled to be able to offer a wonderful opportunity to serve together in Libertyville on Saturday, March 7 at Feed My Starving Children (FMSC), a Christ-centered ministry dedicated to feeding children facing extreme hunger around the world. FMSC has created a wonderful, fun, and engaging atmosphere and anyone, including children age 5 and older, can help! We will meet there for either the 2:00–3:45 pm shift or 5:00–6:45 pm shift. Please register on Church Center and join us for this service opportunity!



Find First Pres in Church Center Scan here to log in and learn about everything happening in our congregation!

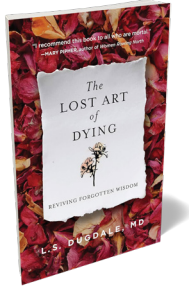


Announcements and Upcoming Events

Pastor's Book Club

The Lost Art of Dying
by Lydia Dugdale
March 14, 6:30 pm

Join others in reading *The Lost Art of Dying* by Lydia Dugdale, a thoughtful exploration of why we avoid thinking about death and how Christian faith invites us to face it with honesty and hope.



Dr. Dugdale is an Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of the Center for Clinical Medical Ethics at Columbia University, and the founding Co-Director of the Program for Medicine, Spirituality, and Religion at Yale School of Medicine. She will join us at Glen Rowan House on the Lake Forest College campus to speak about her book on March 14. Space is limited; for more details and to register visit Church Center.

Faith Connections Newsletter

Sign up using the QR code here to receive our weekly Friday email with up-to-date information about special events and other activities at First Pres!



Get Involved Scan this code to get more information about specific ministries, upcoming events and volunteer opportunities.

Sunday School Volunteers

Teachers and assistants are needed in the Sunday School classrooms each week. No experience needed and training will be provided. Sign up using the Church Center app.

Usher Volunteers

Want to get more involved? If you are a member who is eager to meet and welcome new people to worship, we are looking for more people to serve as ushers on Sunday mornings. Sign up using the Church Center app.

Please Wear a Name Tag!

As our church family grows with new staff, members, and guests, name tags are helpful for everyone and create a friendly environment. Please wear your personalized badge or make one for yourself at either entrance.

Pastoral Care

For pastoral care when the church office is closed, email pastoralcare@firstchurchlf.org or call 224.544.1962 to leave a voicemail.



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