



The mission of Ginter Park Presbyterian Church
is to embody God's love
by cultivating community, practicing hope,
repairing harm, and doing justice as Jesus did.

March 9, 2025

First Sunday in Lent

11:00am

+ indicates you are invited to stand

Bold print indicates congregation in unison

We are grateful to be gathered here in the Almond Creek-James River watershed, which we share with a diversity of plants and creatures, including the flowering dogwood, butterfly milkweed, striped bass, northern cardinal, and red fox.

We acknowledge that this land is the traditional territory of the Powhatan Confederacy. May we nurture our relationship with all our neighbors, and our shared responsibilities to this watershed where we gather today.

GATHERING

The act of assembling in Jesus' name bears witness to the Church's identity and mission as Christ's body in the world. Gather your thoughts and feelings. Entrust yourself to God's saving grace.

Prelude

Fantasia in C minor

J.S. Bach

Greeting and Announcements

Introit

Doug Brown

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness. - Luke 4:1

+ Call to Worship

[by the Rev. Thom Shuman, adapted]

One: Here, at the outer limits of Lent, we are called to walk:

All: to the paper-thin edges that cut us to the soul; to the workplaces that weary us; to the people who confuse us; to the faith that threatens us.

One: Here, at the corner of Steadfast Love and Faithfulness, we are called to wait:

All: when our clenched stomachs awaken us; in the moments of unbearable sorrow; with the angels who would carry us.

One: Here, where time is fulfilled, where God's Kingdom is as near to us as our neighbor, we begin Lent:

All: with the Beloved, whose tears wash away our fears, with the God who will not let go of our hands.

+ Hymn 618 O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High

Prayer of Confession

[from Patmos Abbey—The Order of Saint Columba, adapted]

Kenyan traditional

Leader: All:

Lis - ten, lis - ten, God is call - ing, through the Word in - vit - ing,

of - fer - ing for - give - ness, com - fort and joy. — 1.(lis - ten) 2. joy.

All: Eternal God, we ask your forgiveness, for the times when we have chosen badly, opting for the easy way of habit and social convention, rather than the higher and harder ways of Jesus. We confess that sometimes our choices have been made from rank selfishness, with little concern for those around us, even for those who love us dearly. We ask your forgiveness for times we have put off decisions, hesitating and avoiding choice until opportunity has gone by. We confess also that we have sometimes made outwardly good decisions for the wrong reasons, driven by selfish motives.

Holy God, Savior and Friend, we thank you that long before we face up to ourselves and frame our confessions, your mercy in Jesus is waiting for us. We rest our mortal lives in your immortal life, allowing your grace, mercy, and peace to cleanse, refresh, and straighten us.

One: Breathe into our humanity, loving God, that we may fully live.

(Take a deep breath in ... and let it out.)

Breathe your Spirit into our minds, that our decision-making may be pure and wise.

(Take a deep breath in ... and let it out.)

Breathe your Spirit onto our lips, that our speech may bear witness to life and light and holy joy.

(Take a deep breath in ... and let it out.)

Breathe your Spirit onto our hands, that in their busyness they may serve you before all else.

(Take a deep breath in ... and let it out.)

Breathe your Spirit onto our feet, that we may tread this earth with gentleness and respect.

(Take a deep breath in ... and let it out.)

We pray all these things through Christ Jesus, our liberator.

All: Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

+ Response (sung three times)

Alexander Archangelsky

Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and might - y, Ho - ly im - mor - tal One, have mer - cy up - on us.

WORD

Where the scriptures are read and proclaimed, Jesus Christ, the living Word, is present by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God's Spirit also evokes our response. Through singing, affirmation, and prayer, with the help of God's Spirit, we discern Jesus Christ, receive Christ's grace, and resolve to follow Christ's way.

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

Deuteronomy 26:1-11 (NRSVUE)

"When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess and you possess it and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for the divine name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, 'Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us.' When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, you shall make this response before the Lord your God: 'A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and the Lord brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me.' You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

Psalms 91:1-2, 9-16

One: You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
will say to the LORD,

"My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."

**All: Because you have made the LORD your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place,
no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.**

For the LORD will command angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

One: On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.

**All: You will tread on the lion and the adder,
the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.**

One: Those who love me, I will deliver;
I will protect those who know my name.

**All: When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble,
I will rescue them and honor them.
With long life I will satisfy them, and show them my salvation.**

Luke 4:1-13 (NRSVUE)

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tested by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.' "

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only God.' "

Then the devil led him to Jerusalem and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and

'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' "

Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' " When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Carla Pratt Keyes

+ Hymn 783 *When We Are Tested*

+ Affirmation of Faith

[from the PCUSA Study Catechism]

One: What is meant by the final petition in the Lord's Prayer, "Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil"?

All: We ask God to protect us from our own worst impulses and from all external powers of destruction in the world. We ask that we might not yield to despair in the face of seemingly hopeless circumstances. We pray for the grace to remember and believe, despite our unbelief, that no matter how bleak the world may sometimes seem, there is nonetheless a depth of love which is deeper than our despair, and that this love—which delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt and raised our Lord Jesus from the dead—will finally swallow up forever all that would now seem to defeat it.

One: What is meant by the closing doxology, "For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever"?

All: We give God thanks and praise for the kingdom more powerful than all enemies, for the power perfected in the weakness of love, and for the glory that includes our well-being and that of the whole creation, both now and to all eternity. We give thanks and praise to God as made known through Christ our Lord.

One: What is meant by the word, "Amen"?

All: "Amen" means "so be it" or "let it be so." It expresses our complete confidence in the triune God, the God of the covenant with Israel as fulfilled through our Lord Jesus Christ, who makes no promise that will not be kept, and whose steadfast love and mercy endures forever.

+ Somos Uno (Hymn 322)

We are one in Christ Jesus, all one body, all one spirit, all together.

Somos uno en Cristo, somos uno, somos uno, uno solo.

We share one God, one mighty Lord, one abiding faith, one binding love,

One single baptism, one Holy Comforter, the Holy Spirit, uniting all.

Prayers of the People

EUCCHARIST

Though we are not sharing the bread and cup today, we remember with thanksgiving (eukharistia) the grace (kharis) with which Jesus welcomes us to sit at his table, eat what will satisfy our deepest hungers, and feed others as we've been fed. We offer ourselves in response to Christ's wonderful offering of love.

Offering



Everyone is invited to place tithes, offerings, visitor cards, or any other communications to the Pastor or staff in the designated wall boxes beside each door at the back of the Sanctuary or signal an usher to bring you the offering plate.

Monetary gifts and pledges to GPPC may also be given online at <https://www.ginterparkpc.org/giving>, or by using the QR Code to the left.

Offertory

He Was in the Wilderness

Doug Brown

He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Mark 1:13

+ Doxology (Hymn 607)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all people here below; praise Holy Spirit evermore; praise Triune God, whom we adore.

+ Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

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.

SENDING

Our worship and service do not end with the postlude; we go forth to love and serve God in our daily lives.

+ Hymn 775 I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

+ Charge and Blessing

+ The Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

+ Postlude

Fugue in C minor

J.S. Bach

ABOUT WORSHIP

WORSHIP LEADERS: GPPC's Director of Music is Doug Brown. Liturgist is GPPC's Seminary Intern, Katie Carboni. Our lector is Amy Clark. Our livestream operator is Anna Creech. Steve Booth is lead usher.

HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES are available in the Narthex. Please see today's greeter or an usher.

PLEASE TAKE THE PAPER BULLETIN YOU HAVE USED home for reference and/or recycling. Thank you!

ANNOUNCEMENTS about events in the life of GPPC are available through a weekly e-newsletter. If you would like to be added to the distribution, please contact Karen Mitscherlich at ginterparkpc@gmail.com.

LENTEN GATHERINGS

(For additional details, please see the website (ginterparkpc.org), the newsletter, or contact the church office.)

Mondays, March 10 – April 14, 2025, Meeting Jesus at the Table Study, 7:00pm to 8:00pm

Thursdays, March 13 – April 10, 2025, The Word Around the Table – Lenten Supper & Bible Study, 5:45pm to 7:30pm

Tuesday, April 1, 2025, Conversation about William Barber's *The Third Reconstruction*, 6:00pm on Zoom

Palm Sunday, April 13, 2025 – 11:00am Worship at GPPC

Maundy Thursday, April 17, 2025 – Evening Worship at First United Presbyterian Church, details TBA

Good Friday, April 18, 2025 – 7:00pm Worship at GPPC

Easter Sunday, April 20, 2025 – 11:00am Worship at GPPC



Remember to sign up by March 23rd for our **Easter Season Dinner Club!** Join us for fun and informal small group dinners in April, May and June. To register, scan the QR code to the left or click on this link: <https://forms.gle/gKmc1LX6vd8rd6tb6>.