

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT



THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

February 28, 2021
10:45 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas
Link to worship videos available at: www.fpcbryan.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP (DUET)

You Are My Hiding Place

Michael Ledner

WELCOME

Come, all you who are struggling.

Come, all you who have known the scars of pain and darkness.

Come to worship God who comforts and heals us.

Come to worship God who gives forgiveness.

Let us worship God, who sets us free and gives us new life!

HYMN NO. 749

Come! Live in the Light!

WE ARE CALLED

**Come! Live in the light! Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord!
We are called to be light for the kingdom, to live in the freedom of the city of God.**

REFRAIN **We are called to act with justice; we are called to love tenderly;
we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.**

**Come! Open your heart! Show your mercy to all those in fear!
We are called to be hope for the hopeless so hatred and violence will be no more.** REFRAIN

**Sing! Sing a new song! Sing of that great day when all will be one!
God will reign, and we'll walk with each other as sisters and brothers united in love.** REFRAIN

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Text in **bold face type** is to be read by all.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION, ASSURANCE OF PARDON, AND JOYFUL RESPONSE

**Merciful and Loving Lord, ever-present, and all-knowing, you feel our pains and witness our sufferings. You hold us close when we cannot hold ourselves together. You love us every minute of every day and never turn away though we may be unsightly. Lord, forgive us when our lack of compassion is what is unsightly, and when our strength is used to bypass the weak rather than lift them up. Forgive our misunderstandings of your will and forgive our reliance upon the limitations of the law, keeping us from acts of radical love. Help us to know empathy for the friend and stranger alike, and empower our hearts to never tire of loving the other. We come to you in silence as we ponder these things in our hearts and bring to you what weighs heavy this week . . .** *(pausing in silence for prayer)*

Amen.

Friends, we are liberated in the gospel news of Jesus' love and God's amazing grace for us all.

**Let us rejoice.**

HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 606

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow  
**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host;  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

OLD HUNDREDTH

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Job 2:11-13; Luke 13:10-17

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION

Engaging Scripture, Engaging the Other

HYMN NO. 452

Open the Eyes of My Heart

OPEN THE EYES

**Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart; I want to see you; I want to see you;  
Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart; I want to see you; I want to see you;  
to see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory.  
Pour out your power and love as we sing "Holy, holy, holy."  
Holy, holy; holy. Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy, I want to see you.**

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING, CONSECRATION, INTERCESSION, AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

We give you our thanks, O God, with reverence and awe, that before we were formed in the womb, you knew us; before we were born, you consecrated us. And in our nature, though we are flawed, you love us and you reach down and make us whole. Your love surpasses our understanding and breaks down our inclinations to build walls and set up barriers among us. Through your Son we know love, grace, and compassion. Through your Son, we are taught to engage with arms wide open to welcome the other.

Lord, we pray for our community. We pray for those who have faced a long year of loneliness, for those who have been forgotten or treated as unimportant. For those who struggle to know the warmth of kindness and relationship... God, bring your comfort to them and help our eyes to see them, know them, and care for them.

We pray for those who battle ailments physical and emotional. Help them to know they are not alone and they are seen, loved, and recognized. Lead us to be their strength, that we may be present and available to their needs; and for all who face a spiritual wilderness, Lord, be their shepherd.

As we journey forth in Lent, help us to engage with the world around us and scripture in a way that pleases your heart and brings joy to your kingdom. May we plant seeds and grow fruit that feeds multitudes by the ways which we live and love others. May we persist as faithful disciples though the world around us experiences chaos; may we know your abiding care in the goodness of your grace and love.

We pray all this and so much more together as we say the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples, saying,  
**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. 761 (st. 1,2,4)

Called as Partners in Christ's Service

BEECHER

**Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace,  
we respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.  
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,  
equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.**

**Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth,  
let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth.  
Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old,  
blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.**

**So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life  
that surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.  
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,  
messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

arr. Cindy Berry

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**ASSISTED LISTENING DEVICES** are available in the narthex. Please help yourself or ask an usher for assistance.

**NEW MEMBERS** may be received any Sunday by profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or transfer of membership. If you feel led to inquire about becoming a church member or deepening your commitment as a disciple of Jesus Christ, please indicate your desire on the fellowship folder. You may also call the church (979.823.8073) or email Pastor Ted Foote ([tfoote@fpcbryan.org](mailto:tfoote@fpcbryan.org)) or Associate Pastor Emily Béghin ([ebeghin@fpcbryan.org](mailto:ebeghin@fpcbryan.org)). They will be glad to arrange a mutually convenient Sunday when you can be received by the Elders and introduced to the congregation.

By vote of Session on December 30, First Presbyterian moved to **an altered Sunday morning format for an indefinite time (hopefully not long), that began January 3<sup>rd</sup>**. Due to the COVID-19 infection, active case, and hospitalization rates, FPC – to assist the efforts of health providers and public officials – is suspending Sunday morning “full worship” in the sanctuary. **The sanctuary will be open in this calendar period each Sunday, from 10:40 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (regular time) for “come-and-go” contemplation, prayer, and receiving the Lord’s Supper. All who choose to participate in this opportunity are encouraged to wear a mask and observe physical distancing.**



## A WARM WELCOME!

*We are delighted that you chose to worship with us today.*



### WORSHIP NOTES

#### PREACHER

Rev. Emily K. Béghin

#### LITURGISTS

Rev. Ted Foote

Rev. Dr. George E. Klett

#### MUSICIANS

Michelle Lassiter, *piano and organ*

David Kipp,

*Director of Music Ministries*

### AUDIO-VISUAL | SOUND

Emily K. Béghin

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*The Presbyterian Hymnal*

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### THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

#### SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT, FEBRUARY 28, 2021

9:00am Loose Leaf Church School Class-via Zoom

9:20am Seekers Church School Class-via Zoom

9:00am The Word Class Church School Class-303/via Zoom

**10:45am Sanctuary** \* open for prayer, meditation, and Lord's Supper;

WORSHIP pre-recorded, viewable via [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org), with

click on homepage "sentence about worship" or small red

YouTube box in far top right of homepage screen

#### MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2021

5:30pm Cub Scout Pack 350-FH

7:00pm Boy Scout Troop 976-FH

#### TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021

#### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021

11:00am Staff Meeting-L

#### THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 2021

6:30am Men's Fellowship Breakfast-CCF

6:00pm Cub Scout Pack 350-304

#### FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 2021

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2021

#### THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT, MARCH 7, 2021

9:00am Loose Leaf Church School Class-via Zoom

9:20am Seekers Church School Class-via Zoom

9:00am The Word Class Church School Class-303/via Zoom

**10:45am Sanctuary** \* open for prayer, meditation, and Lord's Supper;

WORSHIP pre-recorded, viewable via [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org), with

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YouTube box in far top right of homepage screen

\* *During COVID-19, Room 108 is available for your nursery needs.*

The deadline for the next issue of the newsletter is Noon, March 7.

It will be distributed on Wednesday, March 10, 2021.

This newsletter will cover news from March 18-31.

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PH. 979.823.8073 | FAX. 979.822.7063 | Website: [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org) | Email: [office@fpcbryan.org](mailto:office@fpcbryan.org)

Find "First Presbyterian Church of Bryan, Texas" on FACEBOOK

## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

Men gather for their monthly breakfast on **Thursday, March 4**, at 6:30am for fellowship and great food. For early risers, this is a great way to get your day going. Contact Allyn Jordan, [allyn@jordanhome.net](mailto:allyn@jordanhome.net), to RSVP or receive email notifications and . . . so there is enough food for everyone and organizers can plan adequately for physically distanced seating.

## PUZZLE SWAP



**Tired of working on the same old puzzles?** Then box them up and participate in FPC's Puzzle Swap organized by Congregational Care Committee. The puzzles are available in the Indoor Patio thru **Friday, March 12**. Bring in one puzzle, take one. Bring in two puzzles, take two. **Just want to clean out old puzzles? We'll take them!** BRING IN COMPLETE PUZZLE SETS (No missing pieces, please). Remember, children like to work puzzles, too. (NOTE: Donated puzzles will not be returned.)

## REACHING OUT TO OUR NEIGHBORS

March 7, is "Stock the Pantry" Sunday! With the recent winter storm resulting in power and water outages, you are invited to extend your love and generosity through the gift of non-perishable foods, personal hygiene product, and nutritious single- serving and/or pop-top food and beverages for Brazos Church Pantry. Your donated goods may be brought to the church any weekday during church office hours (9:00am to 3:00pm) or when you attend "come and go" meditation on Sunday mornings. Monetary donations are also welcome. (NOTE: Brazos Church Pantry). **Friends, your donations are very much appreciated by our neighbors in need.**



## 2021 LENTEN AND EASTER THEME

*In Life and in Death We Belong to God:*  
Ten Verbs Revealing Jesus as a Jobian Character

Find the schedule of weekly topics and related scriptures  
on our website at [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org)

### *Visit us on social media!*

On the web [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org) for the newsletter, announcements, worship bulletins, updates, etc.

**Facebook** [www.facebook.com/FPCBryan](https://www.facebook.com/FPCBryan)

**Instagram** [www.instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com) Search for and follow **fpcbryantx1867** and/or **fpcbryan\_youth**

**BE THE FIRST TO KNOW** when **WORSHIP** and **ACTIVITY** videos are uploaded to our YouTube channel!

Go to [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), search for First Presbyterian Church of Bryan, Texas, then click **SUBSCRIBE**

**Share prayer needs and church group news with fellow FPC participants on Church Updates!**

is FPC-Bryan's online tool for YOU to post church-related announcements, ways to serve, and your current prayer needs. While users receive a weekly reminder email on Thursdays to view new posts, this online tool is "REAL TIME."

Contact Karen in the church office, 979.823.8073 or [office@fpcbryan.org](mailto:office@fpcbryan.org) to set up your account.

Then, login at <https://fpcbtx.churchupdates.org/login> to create your password-protected account.

## Engaging Scripture, Engaging the Other

Rev. Emily K. Béghin  
Job 2:11-13; Luke 13:10-17

February 28, 2021  
First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas

You may be wondering, what do these two texts from such wildly different times and even different cultures have in common? Why were these paired together for us today? As we explore Job and Jesus together throughout Lent, we may find that we end up with more questions than answers.

I remember sitting down with Pastor Ted to discuss what we should do for Lent with our sermons and he on the one hand was very excited about the idea of Job. My reaction was close to a gag.

After 2020 and all we've been through, why would we want to explore even further such a dark and sad story about suffering and God's place in it? Why drag out further the complicated mess of theodicy beyond our own experience and seek it in the Bible?

But what I was missing is that in times like these, it is Job who has much to teach us if we engage his story with empathy, wonder, and vulnerability.

So, again, what do these two texts have in common? Let's bring them both into a modern-day scenario. A little girl was late coming home for supper one evening. It was getting dark; the streetlights had already come on and her mother was growing anxious.

She sees her little girl running down the sidewalk with her bike into the driveway and up to the garage where her mother was waiting. Her mother made the expected irate parent's demand to know where she had been.

The little girl, unsnapping her helmet and parking her bicycle replied that she had stopped to help Janie, whose bicycle was broken in a fall on the way home. Janie had swerved her bike a little too quickly and fallen down.

The front tire was dented, and the chain of the bicycle had come off and was on the asphalt beside her. Janie began to cry, examining her bicycle, picking up the chain in her scraped palms, sobbing over the wreckage.

The mother interrupted, "But you don't know anything about fixing bicycles," her mother responded.

"I know that," the girl said. "I just stopped to help her cry."

Janie was one lucky duck to have a friend like this little girl to help her cry. Empathy is one of the aspects of compassion that makes us human. To recognize another's pain, acknowledge it, and sit in solidarity with it is a language of love.

When Job's friends came upon him that day thousands of years ago, I imagine they must have walked a long path through his fig trees and olive orchards to get to his home which at one time had been filled with the laughter of his wife and many children.

The air would have been filled with the sounds of grazing livestock, braying sheep, and baby goats. But on this day, as they came around the last trees what they would have seen was absolute devastation. The house would have been in shambles because the roof collapsed and killed his children.

Job's wife would have been in the distance, encountering her grief in her own way. Job's animals would have been dead where they once stood, flies buzzing over an otherwise silent scene.

And there was Job, clothes ripped, and ashes smeared all over his body as was the custom way to mourn. They would have been shocked as Job was known as being the most blessed and prosperous man in their land.

They did not speak. They too ripped their clothes, covered themselves in ash, and sat next to him, mourning for several days.

This is my favorite part in Job because it is the only part of Job that goes as it should. Job's friends give him solidarity and love him by way of showing empathy in Job's worst of times.

They met a great need in Job's darkest hours. They ensured he need not grieve alone, just as the little girl had done with Janie when her bicycle lay in ruin.

At least Job's friends met his needs until they didn't. By opening their mouths in unwarranted judgment towards Job, speculating that he must have deserved such a tragedy to befall him, they caused further harm and isolation to Job.

You see, Job's situation was so shocking that they figured there must be a reason for it. Being from the land of renowned wisdom, they used rationale similar to that found in the book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes...

The wisdom that says everything happens for a reason. Because of Job's sin, he must have been punished. Sure. Except, Job, in this case was punished because he had no major transgressions at all. But the characters of this story did not know that.

So, they berate him telling him to confess and to make things right with God again. Job refused to hear more of

this. But, oh they were only using the wisdom of what was written... surely that makes it okay... or does it?

Can you imagine walking into the hospital room of a dying child and turning to the mother who holds her son's cold and frail hand in hers and saying, "Everything happens for a reason?"

That sounds ridiculous, doesn't it? It happens frequently though. People say this all the time and it is cruel and wrong. It is a phrase used by those who do not wish to put more thought into choosing their words. Truly, it is better to say nothing at all. Sometimes the best pastoral care is given just by sitting down and being quiet.

The ways in which we care for and engage others when they are in pain can speak a lot to the ways in which we understand God's word. In our Luke text today, we see the leader of the synagogue... the clergy telling Jesus he was wrong to heal a suffering woman because it was the Sabbath.

Again, to put this into perspective, imagine your dog broke its leg and was crying out in pain. Would you look at it and say, "Oh, but it is Saturday, so you'll need to wait until tomorrow for me to help you"? If so, you should be reported for abuse...

but truly, these scenarios demonstrate why the Bible and the Laws within it are not always hard and fast. In many cases they are better treated as guidelines or best practices.

There are many who might argue that the Bible must be taken literally as God's word and not to be disobeyed, but texts like the one presented by Luke today refute that theology. God and Christ prioritize the love of others over the law of religion. God's love is progressive and multicolored, not black and white and stuck in time.

Two weeks ago, I was having some fun reading a book called "Half Truths" by Adam Hamilton. He brought a brilliant example for the need of progressive theology to light in discussing the issue of Deuteronomy chapter 23 verses 12 and 13.

It reads, "You shall have a designated area outside the camp to which you shall go. <sup>13</sup> With your utensils you shall have a trowel; when you relieve yourself outside, you shall dig a hole with it and then cover up your excrement." Friends, in the 1880's this text was used by many denominations in America to argue against having indoor plumbing. This is a prime example of never thinking beyond the pages, of allowing the societal rules of man from hundreds of thousands of years ago to hinder us in our very different circumstances today.

So, how do we engage scripture? Do we engage it with our minds? Or do we treat it as a one-size fits all, simply add water recipe for our lives? Maybe if we repeat it loudly enough it will address every situation, right? Wrong. God is moving, the story is continuing, and real people are here now, needing compassion, love, and understanding. Scripture is not a sword. It is a guide, but not our overlord and master. It is informative, not prescriptive...

Compassion is what we are called to give when we engage others. Mindfulness is what we are called to use when we engage scripture. We all know that God probably has nothing against having a toilet in your house. We also know from Luke that God does take issue with ignoring the suffering of your neighbor on a technicality of a religious rule. And thirdly, we know that Job's friends' use of compassion and empathy to engage his mourning process was the final thing they did right in their story despite their great wisdom.

The way we engage the word of God and the way we engage the people of God can work together to create a beautiful way of life. If we live in a way that Jesus has shown us, with the Bible in one hand and the hand of our neighbor in the other, then we can walk the path of God. To love our neighbor is to love God.

Job's friends initially engaged with Job in a way that met him where he was, acknowledged his grief, and shared the burden of its weight with him. Jesus saw a suffering woman and healed her because it was the right thing to do and the best way to love her as God's child, not because of what day it was.

We are called as followers of Christ to lead empathetic, kind, and caring lives... compassionate lives. To engage others with compassion first and foremost is the way God created us and hoped we would continue to be.

It's okay to break the rules sometimes in order to meet a fellow human where they are and lift them up when they have fallen. Like the little girl and Janie, sometimes being late for dinner is less important than helping a friend cry.

After a year like this... after the last few weeks even, many of us probably have a little crying to do ourselves. Now more than ever we are called to engage the other in compassion and great love. Set the rule book on the table for a while and let your heart take the wheel. It may steer you to places you'll cherish forever, places you'll find God alive and near, standing by in solidarity, alive and moving among us. Amen.