

FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
COVINGTON, GA



seeking:
Who will you
listen to?

First Sunday in Lent

February 26, 2023

❖
Gathering As God's Beloved People

Gathering Music

Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus Walter E. Buszin
*Yield Not to Temptation/
Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me* Horacio Palmer and John Gould
O God, Our Help in Ages Past David Cherwien

Prelude

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus Folk Song from India

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

✦ **Call to Worship**

Listen!

There is hope to be found here.

Listen!

God calls you by name here.

Listen!

There is love that abides here.

This world is full of chatter, so may we do our best to listen.

God is speaking.

Let us worship.

Amen.

✦ **Hymn of Praise 618** *O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High* DEO GRACIAS

✦ **Call to Confession**

✦ **Community Confession**

Holy God, too often we treat your Word like a radio station—something we can tune in and out of when it's convenient. Our minds are full of ads, emails, news updates, and notifications. In the midst of this clutter, we tend to gravitate toward the voices that think like us—easily ignoring the voices being silenced, easily ignoring your voice. Forgive us for failing to listen.

Forgive us for getting caught in distractions. Forgive us for forgetting what your voice sounds like. Drain the distractions from our minds and help us turn once again toward you. With earnest hearts we pray, Amen.

✦ **Response 423, verse 1** *Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God* SARADAY
First time - soloist; second time - all

✦ **Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness**

Friends, even when we tune God out, even when we prioritize other voices, even when we do all the talking and fail to listen, we are still held by God. Our sins are forgiven. Nothing could ever separate us from God's love. So with joy in our hearts, please repeat after me:

I am loved! **I am loved!**
I am held in grace! **I am held in grace!**
I belong to God. **I belong to God.**
Church, we are forgiven!
We are free to try again.

✦ **Passing of the Peace**



Proclaiming the Word

Wondering with God's Children

Dan Walden

Special Music

Let Us, With a Gladsome Mind
Holden Evans, piano

Traditional Melody

Anthem

My Sheep Listen to My Voice
Jodi Atkins, soprano; Perri Walden, alto;
Aubrey Evans, flute

Arranged by Shayla L. Blake
Words and Music by
Julie I. Myers and Shayla L. Blake

Prayer for God's Wisdom and Understanding

Hymn 451, verse 2 *Open My Eyes, That I May See* OPEN MY EYES

***Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth thou sendest clear.
And while the wave notes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!***

Scripture Readings

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

Pew Old Testament page 2

Matthew 4:1-11

Pew New Testament page 3

Message

Seeking in the Wilderness

Rev. Erin Morgan

❖ *Responding to the Word*

✦ **Hymn of Response 167**

Forty Days and Forty Nights

AUS DER TIEFE RUFTE ICH

✦ **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.**

Prayers of the People 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.**

Offering Our Gifts

Offertory

Devotion

Fanny J. Cosby

Janet Carmichael, soprano

American Folk Hymn

✦ **Response 606**

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

OLD HUNDRETH

***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 Gratitude

All are invited to join in our community Prayer of Gratitude by lifting up a one-word prayer of thanksgiving.



Being the Church in the World

✦ Sending Hymn 175

Seek Ye First

LAFFERTY

✦ Charge and Benediction

As you leave this place, may God bless you with seeking. Seek out the hungry. Seek the weary. Seek the good in every person you pass. Seek out the hopeful. Seek the faithful. Seek God in each of us. As you seek and as you wonder, may you find what you are looking for. In the name of our loving God, who is always seeking us, go now in peace. Amen.

Postlude

Allegro from Harpsichord Suite

G. F. Handel



Worship Practices

Musical offerings are an act of worship. If you wish to express thanks to God at the conclusion of a musical offering, feel free to offer a hearty "Amen," a Biblical way of saying "so be it!" and affirming spiritual gifts. Music printed in our bulletin and streamed online is covered by One License #A-728738 authorizing their use. Offertory: *Devotion* by Fanny J. Crosby; American Folk Hymn based on I AM THINE by William H. Doane and I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN (American Folk Melody); Setting by John Ness Beck; Transcribed by Craig Courtney.

Liturgy by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | Art: *Tune In* by Lisle Gwynn Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Friendship Registers

Friendship Registers are back! In each pew there is a pad with a black cover that we invite everyone to fill out. If the Friendship Register is nearest to you, please fill it out and pass it down the pew so it can reach everyone. When you pass it on, we invite you to introduce yourself to your pew friends! We encourage visitors and newcomers to connect with us by filling out the Friendship Register so we can be sure to send you a message to thank you for joining us.

Children in Worship

Children are always welcome to wiggle and giggle in the pews at FPC! There are Worship Bags for children on the rack outside the Sanctuary. During worship children are invited to join us at the front of the Sanctuary for a time of Wondering with God's Children. Afterwards, children planning

to go to the nursery will be escorted downstairs by Pastor Neeley or Pastor Erin. They will sign in your children in the nursery so you can sign them out when you pick them up! This is to help you stay in worship and us get them to the nursery safely. If you need help finding the nursery, you are invited to ask an usher to point the way.

Serving Today

Tech Team | Dan Walden, Jonny Atkins, Brad Hawley
Usher Chair | Stan Hall **Acolyte** | Alexander Whisnant



Worship Music Notes

Seek Ye First

The influence of Scripture on congregational song is unmistakable. Sometimes a song makes a brief allusion to Scripture, sometimes a hymn paraphrases a passage of Scripture, sometimes entire sections are cited almost verbatim. It is in the latter category that this well-known Scripture song falls - a direct quotation from two passages in the Gospel of Matthew. Karen Lafferty's "Seek Ye First" is an example of a devotional Scripture song at its best.

Lafferty was born in Alamogordo, New Mexico in 1948. She received a bachelor of music education from Eastern New Mexico University in 1970. She became the worship leader and concert artist for Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California in 1971. The convergence of Lafferty's nascent faith and musical calling merged with one of the fastest growing and influential congregations in the country. Calvary Chapel, which opened in Costa Mesa in 1965 with 25 members, has grown to include about 1600 churches worldwide under the auspices of the Calvary Chapel Association, of which Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa serves as the "cathedral" church. According to some accounts, Calvary Chapel is one of the ten largest Protestant churches in the United States.

Maranatha! Music, a major publisher in the field of contemporary Christian music, was an outgrowth of Calvary Chapel. Karen recorded four albums with Maranatha! and began receiving invitations to perform abroad. After completing missionary training in Holland with Youth With a Mission (YWAM), Karen founded Musicians for Missions International (MFMI) in 1981 as a part of YWAM in Amsterdam, Holland.

Lafferty explains her calling to music ministry like this: "I am grateful for Christian parents and the Baptist church where I took my first steps with Christ. I'm also grateful for the relationship with a Christian friend who in 1970 helped me understand the glorious truth of walking daily with Jesus. I was working as a nightclub entertainer at the time and began to witness to people in the bars. As I grew in the Word and became active in my

church, I felt a call from God on my life to ministry. What adventures the Lord has had for me since that time! God has called me to be a 'Musicianary," to seek those places where others aren't going and to disciple the national musicians, who can then reach their own nations. I believe there are other Christian musicians with that calling too. MFMI's goal is to work with the local church to facilitate these musicians into ministry, especially missions."

"Seek Ye First," Lafferty's signature song was written during her early years at Calvary Chapel, following a Bible study on Matthew 6:33. Its elegant and unpretentious melody reflects the text perfectly, which is taken verbatim from the King James version. Carlton Young notes that this song became a standard of the "Jesus movement" of the post-Vietnam era. Music from this movement became absorbed into the early years of contemporary Christian music. The acoustic sounds and uncluttered harmonies are a perfect vehicle for a scriptural passage that stresses how our priorities as Christians should be ordered. The hymn has been included in almost every hymnal published in North America since 1980.

In 1995, after leading the first "School of Music in Missions" in Amsterdam, Karen felt she needed to return to the U.S. to help her elderly parents. She relocated to Santa Fe and incorporated YWAM Santa Fe to be the new home of MFMI. Although Karen has become very involved with local Santa Fe churches, her call to the nations remains strong. She is still a world traveling troubadour who loves to share the Love of Jesus through music.



Worship Art Notes

Today's worship guide cover is a silk painting with digital drawing and collage by Lisle Gwynn Garrity titled *Tune In*. The following is an excerpt of the artist's statement.

In this image, the words of the Tempter hover in the background. The Tempter's voice lingers like a ringing in Jesus' ears.

Somehow, Jesus has deciphered that these words are simply background noise. He closes his eyes and goes inward, wrapping himself in a posture of self-embrace. From this introspective perspective, Jesus essentially says, "Get behind me, Satan."

His belovedness washes over him, giving him the courage to defy the deception of the Tempter and tune into his inner wisdom. In this way, he is given a new song to carry with him, a lullaby from God that goes, "You, my child, in you, I am well-pleased." This is a melody for singing, a song for dancing.

What are the voices that linger with you like a ringing in your ears? What are the messages that try to deceive or devour you? Let those voices buzz and fade into the

background. Close your eyes, tune in, and embrace yourself. From your belovedness, what song will you sing? —Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

◆
Lenten Theme

“This Lent, we invite you to engage in the spiritual practice of seeking. [We have hung a banner with the seeking eye (designed by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman) in the sanctuary.] The eye may seem at first glance to be somewhat obvious, but at closer inspection, it can expand, confuse, and surprise the viewer.”

“We encourage you to stay curious, open, and nimble. We hope you will soften your assumptions and expand your perspectives. We pray that these questions will create a safe space to explore—to be drawn more deeply into the fullness of life, into the heart of God.” —A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



1169 Clark Street SW, Covington, GA 30014 | fpccov.org | 770.786.7321

Our Mission Statement

First Presbyterian Church Covington is a Christian community existing to glorify God by welcoming all of God’s children. We celebrate through serving, teaching, praying, eating, crying, singing, and dancing with the Holy Spirit. As works in progress, we seek to respond to God’s presence in our church, lives, and community.

Want to Get Involved?

Reach out to become a more involved member of the church! We always have something happening that we would love for you to be a part of. You could be an integrated member of our church by volunteering with witness team, becoming an usher, joining a book club, singing in the choir or many other activities. Contact the office and we’ll point you in the right direction! Email: catherine@fpccov.org or call: 770-786-7321

Officers

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | Reaching Out | |
| Curtis Watson | | <i>Witness (2024)</i> |
| | Engaging | |
| Charles Ardis | | <i>Christian Ed (2025)</i> |
| Pat Harper | | <i>Worship (2024)</i> |
| Nichole Howell | | <i>Worship (2025)</i> |
| Mary Catherine Whisnant | | <i>Christian Ed (2024)</i> |
| | Belonging | |
| Doug Bolton | | <i>Welcome (2025)</i> |
| Louly Hay Kapp | | <i>Marketing (2023)</i> |
| Bob Tabb | | <i>Finance (2023)</i> |
| | Connecting (Deacons) | |
| Tom Crews | | <i>Pastoral Care (2025)</i> |
| Dana Hall | | <i>Faith & Fellowship (2025)</i> |
| Eleanor Scarborough | | <i>Pastoral Care (2023)</i> |
| Darcel Tabb | | <i>Faith & Fellowship (2024)</i> |
| | More | |
| Billy Fortson | | <i>Personnel (2024)</i> |
| Stan Hall | | <i>Facilities (2023)</i> |
| John McCarthy | | <i>Clerk of Session</i> |
| Ed Perkerson | | <i>Strategic Planning (2023)</i> |
| Jim Stillerman | | <i>Strategic Planning (2025)</i> |

First Presbyterian Church Staff

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|----------------------|
| Neeley Rentz Lane | <i>Senior Pastor</i> | |
| Erin Morgan | <i>Associate Pastor</i> | |
| Alicia Taylor | <i>Dir. of Music & Worship Arts</i> | <i>Nursery Staff</i> |
| Alice Walker | <i>CAGO, AAGO Organist/
Ambassador Choir</i> | Hattie Bellinger |
| Catherine Laseter | <i>Dir. of Communications
& Operations</i> | Laina Lalane |
| Peni Kehoe | <i>Finance Administrator</i> | Amanda Sotolongo |
| | | Kyla White |



IGNITING A SPARK

Youth Fundraising Lunch

The youth are holding a luncheon with soups, salads, and dessert to raise money for their trip to the 2023 Montreat Middle School Conference in July.



**Sunday, March 5 at 12 pm
in the Fellowship Hall**

Any donations are appreciated!

NO RESERVATIONS NECESSARY

BLESSING OF A SKINNED KNEE

BLESSED PARENTING CLASS

Wednesdays, March 8 & 29
4:30-5:30pm in the Gathering Room
Childcare provided.

Sunday, February 26 First Sunday in Lent

11:00am Worship

7:00pm Jammies and Jesus

Monday, February 27

5:30pm Young Adult Family Night

Tuesday, February 28

12:00pm Lectio Divina

1:00pm A Novel Bunch Book Club

Wednesday, March 1

RSVP deadline for Day Retreat

10:00am Coffee and Conversation

4:30pm Joyful Noise

4:30pm Presbyterianism 101

5:00pm Hallelujah Kids

6:00pm Carillon Handbell Choir

7:00pm Chancel Choir

Sunday, March 5 Second Sunday in Lent

9:45am Sunday School

11:00am Worship

12:00pm Youth Fundraising Lunch

7:00pm Jammies and Jesus



THIRST NO MORE

Montreat Worship & Music Conference

Sunday, June 18—

Friday, June 23

Talk to Alicia Taylor or check the e-news for details!
alicia@fpccov.org

SOUL FEAST



Feed your body and soul with FPC in the Fellowship Hall at 5:15pm.

RSVP by Monday, March 6th at 12:00pm to catherine@fpccov.org or 770-786-7321

MARCH 8

**ON THE MENU:
BRISKET**

Signup with Erin to bring your favorite side!
erin@fpccov.org

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Illness

- ✦ Jim Stillerman—in the hospital with gallstones and pancreatitis, no visitors at this time
- ✦ Benson Dial, friend of Judy and Dennis Hooten - cancer
- ✦ Patsy Freeman, sister of Judy Davis - dementia
- ✦ Dionne Young, friend of Alice Walker - recovering from concussion
- ✦ E.W. Sims, great-uncle of Robert Lane
- ✦ Beverly Beasley, friend of Jean Elder - caring for husband who has leukemia
- ✦ Patrick Carmichael
- ✦ Ellen Clary, ex-wife of Bill Clary - ovarian cancer
- ✦ Larry Cox, brother-in-law of Randy Layton - cancer

- ✦ Bob Darby, friend of Jeff MacKenzie - leg amputated, kidney problems
- ✦ Linea Lott, niece of Tricia Hinton - leukemia treatment
- ✦ Karen Lein Kaasa, sister-in-law of Julie MacKenzie - home health care
- ✦ Donald Vining, brother of Danny Vining - vision loss
- ✦ Blair Weaver - health issues
- ✦ Joyce Williams, sister of Danny Vining - Alzheimer's

Condolences

- ✦ Our thoughts and prayers are with Angela Gilmer and her family as they mourn the passing of her father Homer Sharpe.

Military Service

- ✦ Billy Scarborough - Marines
- ✦ Koen Ardis - Navy

Independent and Assisted Living

- ✦ Penny Blakeney - Oaks Assisted Living
- ✦ Julia Brubaker - Benton House
- ✦ Jean Elder - Florida with her daughter
- ✦ Dot Fincher - Merryvale
- ✦ Travis Moss - Westbury, Conyers
- ✦ Gene Wallace - Merryvale
- ✦ Louise White - Merryvale

Prayer Requests

All prayer requests should be sent to: catherine@fpccov.org
Requests may be removed after three weeks if not updated.

Lenten Prayer Stations are back!

We have nine prayer stations around the FPC grounds to guide you on your Lenten journey with a focus, reflection, and response.

Sunday School

Sunday School classes are at 9:45am on Sunday mornings.

- Children's Class (PreK-4th)
- Youth Class (5th and up)
- Foundations Adult Class
- The Wired WORD Class

Interested in teaching?
Email erin@fpccov.org

Have you been thinking about officially joining the church family of FPC?

If you plan to join please let Neeley know!

On Sunday, March 12 immediately following worship we will meet in the Gathering Room to receive new members!

This will be a time of celebration as you say YES to becoming an official member of FPC! Our church elders are excited to get to know you and greet you!



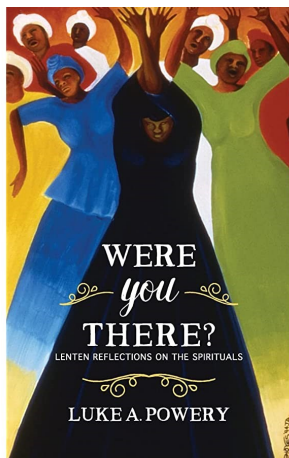
**in the Gathering Room on
March 12. 12:00pm- 12:30pm**

You are invited to
"Text to Give"

your offering.
Text FPCCOV followed by your donation amount to: 73256



Or point your camera at the QR code and follow the link to give online.



Lenten Book Study: **Were You There?**

Join Neeley and Erin **Mondays in March at 6:00pm on Zoom** to study *Were You There?: Lenten Reflections on the Spirituals* by Luke A. Powery.

Contact the office if you would like to order your book through the church.

For the class link visit fpccov.org/zoom-links



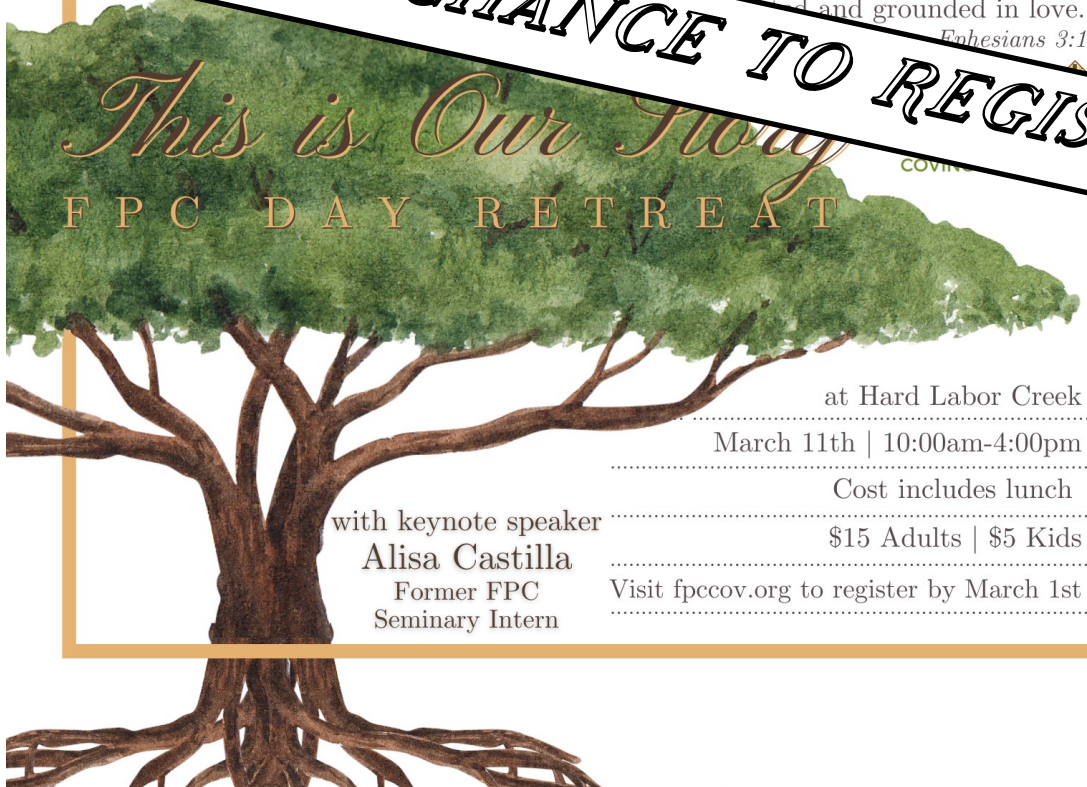
JAMMIES AND JESUS

Join Neeley and Erin on Zoom for a 10-minute bedtime prayer.
SUNDAYS 7 PM Invite a Friend!

visit fpccov.org/zoom-links to join in!

LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER!

... dwell in your hearts through faith,
... and grounded in love."
Ephesians 3:17



This is Our Flow
FPC DAY RETREAT

COVING

with keynote speaker
Alisa Castilla
Former FPC
Seminary Intern

at Hard Labor Creek
March 11th | 10:00am-4:00pm
Cost includes lunch
\$15 Adults | \$5 Kids
Visit fpccov.org to register by March 1st