



FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
COVINGTON, GA

# Wandering Heart

"I'm fixed upon it"

Fourth Sunday in Lent  
March 10, 2024

✠ *You are invited to stand in body or spirit*



## *Gathering As God's Beloved People*

### **Gathering Music**

*Now Praise We All Our God  
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling  
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

Charles Callahan  
Rowland Hugh Prichard  
Neil Harmon

### **Prelude**

*Everybody Sing Praise to the Lord*

Marilyn Arison

### **Chiming of the Hour**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

### ✠ **Call to Worship**

On our worst days, **God is good.**

On our best days, **God is good.**

When life is consistent, **God is good.**

And when life turns on its head, **God is good.**

Day and night, Monday through Sunday,

**God is good. God is here. God is love.**

Hold tight to that good news. Let us worship God!

### ✠ **Hymn of Praise 353**

*My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*

SOLID ROCK

### ✠ **Call to Confession**

There's a moment in our scripture today when Jesus turns to Peter,  
named "the rock" of the church, and says, "Get behind me, Satan!"

I don't know about you all, but that's a pretty bad day for Peter. It's a pretty bad  
day when Jesus calls you Satan!

Fortunately, this absurd moment comforts me with the knowledge that even  
Peter made mistakes. Peter, who was given the keys to Heaven. Peter,  
Jesus' right-hand man, made mistakes just like me. And still, Jesus chose him.  
Knowing that, let us speak honestly with God. For even on our worst days, we  
belong to God, and that will never change.

Join me in prayer—

## ✦ Silent Personal Confession

## ✦ Community Confession

Holy God,

We often find ourselves moving through a world that does not make sense.

Like Peter, we want to yell out, "This should not happen!"

We want to control scenarios beyond our reach.

We want to hold your world in our hands.

Forgive us for the moments when we lead with declarations instead of curiosity. Forgive us for arguing when we could listen. Forgive us for fixating on one truth, when we could open ourselves up to many.

Soften our hard edges and teach us how to listen.

With hope in our hearts we pray, amen.

## ✦ Confessional Hymn 227

*Jesus, Remember Me*

REMEMBER ME

*Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

*Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

## ✦ Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness

Friends, no matter how many times you have dug your heels in, no matter how many fights you have wanted to pick with God, no matter how many times you have disagreed, raged, or clung to what you know instead of embracing holy change—we worship a God of grace.

Nothing can separate us from God's love, not even a stubborn attitude or a tense heart. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

God's love for us will always be deeper than we can imagine.

We are seen. We are loved. And we are forgiven.

Now follow Peter, and go be the Church in the world. Amen.

Church, we are forgiven!

**We are free to try again.**

Let us join our voices and sing...

## ✦ Response to God's Grace 215

*What Wondrous Love Is This* WONDROUS LOVE

**Verses 1, 4**

## ✠ **Passing of the Peace**

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**And also with you!**



## *Proclaiming the Word*

### **Wondering with God's Children**

#### **Anthem**

*In Remembrance of Our Lord*  
Chancel Choir

Arr. Lee Dangler

#### **Centering Prayer**

*with handbells*

#### **Scripture Reading**

*Matthew 16:21-23*

Pew Bible page 18

*Reader's Theater*

Pat Harper, John McCarthy, Darcel Tabb

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### **Message**

*Wandering Heart: I'm Fixed Upon It*

Rev. Neeley Rentz Lane



## *Responding to the Word*

#### ✠ **Hymn of Response 450**

*Be Thou My Vision*

SLANE

#### ✠ **Affirmation of Faith**

I believe in a God of second chances,

**a God who sees through my stubbornness  
and holds my fear with tenderness.**

I believe that this God of second chances

uses ordinary people like Peter to do good in the world.

**Therefore, I believe and hope that God can use me too.**

I believe that from time to time, God invites us to imagine the impossible.

I believe that from time to time, God invites us to change our minds.

**This change is holy and important work, although challenging.  
When fear and scarcity plague me,  
or when the impossible feels out of reach,  
I believe that God meets me with grace and invites me to follow.**  
Thanks be to God for a love like that.  
**Amen.**

## **Offering Our Gifts: An Invitation to Generosity**

*You are invited to “Text to Give” your offering! Text\* FPCCOV followed by your donation amount to: 73256 and follow the link to give online, or scan the QR Code to visit the giving page! Select “2024 Pledge” if you made a stewardship pledge. Select “Non-Pledge” for a general plate offering.*



## **Offertory**

*The Gift of Love*  
Jon Pascal, Alice Walker

by Hal Hopson

## **✠Response 634**

*God is So Good*

GOD IS SO GOOD



## *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*

### **Invitation to the Table**

## **Hymn of Invitation 506**

*Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table!*

COPELAND

***Look who gathers at Christ's table! Hear the stories that they bring.  
Some are weeping; some are laughing; some have songs they want to sing.  
Others ask why they're invited, burdened by the wrong they've done.  
Christ insists they are welcome. There is room for everyone.  
Bring your joy and bring your sadness, and prepare to be surprised  
by the host whose hands are wounded, who will open wide your eyes  
when he blesses bread and breaks it—truth and manna from above!  
and then passes wine that wakens in your heart the taste of love.***

## **The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**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.**

## **Communion Music**

### **Words of Institution**

*Church, you are invited to partake with bread and cup upon hearing the words "The gifts of God for the people of God." We recognize Christ is present with us as the Body of Christ in our sanctuary and in our homes this day. May the Holy Spirit dwell with you as we participate in the sacrament of communion together. One bread, one body! See our Worship Practices section for more details.*

### **Prayer After Communion**



## *Being the Church in the World*

### **✠ Sending Hymn 720**

*Jesus Calls Us*

GALILEE

### **✠ Charge and Benediction**

Beloved wanderers, as we leave this place,

**may we carry our curious heart on our sleeves.**

**May we look for God in every face.**

**May we find the courage to get out of the boat,  
to run to the tomb, and to speak of our faith.**

**And when the world falls apart,**

**may we hear God's voice deep within,  
saying, "Take heart, it is I, be not afraid."**

**We are called. We are blessed.**

**In both our ups and our downs,  
we always belong to God.  
Go now in peace. Go trusting that good news. Amen.**

✦ **Postlude**

*Prelude in Classic Style*

Gordon Young



## ***Worship Practices***

**Communion**—All are invited to come forward to take communion. The ushers will guide you to two stations on either side of the Lord's table to receive the bread and the cup. You may choose to receive prepackaged communion elements or a gluten-free option which are available at the Lord's table. If you are not physically able to come forward and would still like to receive communion, please let an usher know and it will be brought to you. Communion elements are taken to the nursery for children to participate in the sacrament. If you would not like to receive communion, you are welcome to stay in your seat for a time of prayer.

**Worship Art**—This Lenten season we are displaying art in the Narthex by the children and youth of FPC and children of Southern Heartland Art under the instruction of Elise Hammond.

Our worship guide cover today is an ink painting by Hannah Garrity titled "Beseeching". The following is an excerpt from the artist's statement:

With every brush stroke in this ink painting, the humanity of Peter's face deepens, his expression clarifies. He cannot let his beloved friend be murdered. He worries about human things. How weighty and legitimate those things feel. Jesus seems free of those human worries. He focuses with confidence on the path ahead, though Peter's concern causes him to falter.

Perhaps we can each be free of human concerns as well... However, that feels like a pipe dream, and Jesus knows it: "Get behind me, Satan" (Matthew 16:23). He does not blame Peter. Instead, he calls out Satan from within his friend. In doing so, he offers us a much needed reminder to refocus.

**Accessibility**—In an effort to make FPC a welcoming place for ALL of God's people we have removed a portion of one of our pews in the Sanctuary to make our space more accessible to wheelchair and walker users! We've also recently updated our sound system to have Bluetooth capabilities. If you'd like to learn about connecting your Bluetooth hearing aids to our Sanctuary sound system we invite you to talk to Dan Walden on the Tech Team.

**Friendship Registers**—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**—We have a “Children in Worship” guiding brochure available in the Narthex! This brochure is intended to serve as an aid to parents and others in our congregation in welcoming our children to worship. Children are always welcome to wiggle and giggle in the pews at FPC! During worship children are invited to join us at the front of the Sanctuary for a time of Wondering with God’s Children. Then children planning to go to the nursery will be escorted downstairs by Pastors Neeley or Erin. If you need help finding the nursery, please ask an usher to point the way.

**Use**—One License #A-728728 authorizes the use of music printed in our worship guide and streamed online. \*Messages and data rates may apply when using Text to Give. Message frequency varies. Text HELP to 73256 for help. Text STOP to 73256 to cancel | Wandering Heart Graphic Design by Lauren Wright Pittman | Art: “Beseeching” by Hannah Garrity | Liturgy by Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



# Serving Today

**Tech Team** | Dan Walden, Kenny Compton, Jonny Atkins, Brad Hawley, Kraig Howell  
**Acolytes** | Audrey Fullerton, Paisley Lane **Usher Chair** | Curtis Watson



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

First Presbyterian Church Staff		
Neeley Rentz Lane	Senior Pastor	Nursery Staff
Erin Morgan	Associate Pastor	
Mark Fiddie	Dir. of Music & Worship Arts	Hattie Bellinger
Peni Kehoe	Finance Administrator	Sierra BlackShear
Catherine Laseter	Dir. of Communications & Operations	Catrina Crowe
Alice Walker	CAGO, AAGO Organist	Jahniah Greene
		Laina Lalane

Officers	
Reaching Out	
Luke Usry	Witness (2026)
Curtis Watson	Witness (2024)
Engaging	
Charles Ardis	Faith Formation (2025)
Pat Harper	Worship (2024)
Nichole Howell	Worship (2025)
Mary Catherine Whisnant	Faith Formation (2024)
Belonging	
Doug Bolton	Welcome (2025)
Pam Stillerman	Welcome, Worship (2026)
Billy Fortson	Finance, Personnel (2024)
Connecting (Deacons)	
Janet Carmichael	Pastoral Care (2026)
Tom Crews	Pastoral Care (2025)
Dana Hall	Faith & Fellowship (2025)
Darcel Tabb	Faith & Fellowship (2024)
More	
Jodi Atkins	Strategic Planning (2026)
Kenny Compton	Facilities (2026)
John McCarthy	Clerk of Session
Danny Vining	Personnel (2026)

**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.



## In Our Thoughts and Prayers

### Illness and Strife

- ✦ Lewis Compton, father of Kenny Compton - skin cancer treatment
- ✦ Ken Fullerton, father of Scott Fullerton & Pawpaw to Audrey - health issues
- ✦ Nancy, friend of Mark & Jennifer Fogarty - stage IV pancreatic cancer
- ✦ Susan Hammond, aunt of Erin Morgan - cancer
- ✦ Christy Blanchford & daughter Samantha, friends of the congregation - mourning loss of husband, Sam Johnson
- ✦ Brian, brother of Adriane Ivey
- ✦ Jeanelle Brown - cousin for Randy Layton
- ✦ Armondo Castro, friend of Mark Fogarty
- ✦ Vonzella Lee, friend of Barbara Martin - gastric cancer
- ✦ Joel Kitchens
- ✦ Sheree Evans, friend of Cathy & Denny Dobbs - treatment for cancer
- ✦ Emmie Alexander, friend of the congregation
- ✦ Debra Hales, daughter of Faye & Joel Kitchens - upcoming heart surgery
- ✦ Larry Cox, brother-in-law of Randy Layton - cancer

- ✦ Terry Smith, friend of Denny Dobbs - pneumonia with respiratory rehab
- ✦ Memama, great-grandma of Paisley Lane
- ✦ Bernice Bailey
- ✦ Brenda Buckelew, mother of Jennifer Buckelew
- ✦ Katherine Carey, mother of Erin Stillerman
- ✦ Jana Carter, aunt of Luke Usry - cancer
- ✦ Bob Darby, friend of Jeff MacKenzie - leg amputated, kidney problems
- ✦ Patsy Freeman, sister of Judy Davis
- ✦ Randy Jones, nephew of Faye Kitchens - lung cancer
- ✦ Joyce, sister of Faye Kitchens
- ✦ Karen Lein Kaasa, sister-in-law of Julie MacKenzie - home health care
- ✦ Rosalia Meadors, friend of Tom Crews - three year old with bone marrow failure
- ✦ Grant Moss & Chris Mattice, family of Louly Fowler Hay - cancer & care
- ✦ Meredith Nash, friend of Barbara Martin - four year old with stage IV kidney cancer
- ✦ Donald Vining, brother of Danny Vining - vision loss
- ✦ Carolyn Watson

### Condolences

- ✦ Our thoughts and prayers are with the loved ones of Jack Wheeler as they mourn his passing on March 3rd, 2024. A funeral was held on Friday, March 8th.

*Our prayers are with the following people and their families as they mourn the passing of a loved one:*

- ✦ Cathy Dobbs—mourning her sister Eileen Wells
- ✦ Jo Anna Fish—mourning her mother Elizabeth Baarda

### Military Service

- ✦ Koen Ardis - Navy
- ✦ Billy Scarborough - Marines
- ✦ Clint Williams - Army
- ✦ Daryl Williams - Army

### Independent and Assisted Living

- ✦ Penny Blakeney - Oaks Assisted Living
- ✦ Homer Borders - Presbyterian Village
- ✦ Jean Elder - Florida with her daughter
- ✦ Dot Fincher
- ✦ Louly Hay - Presbyterian Village Athens
- ✦ Travis Moss - Westbury, Conyers
- ✦ Louise White - Merryvale

All **prayer requests** should be sent to: [catherine@fpccov.org](mailto:catherine@fpccov.org)  
Requests may be removed after three weeks if not updated.

Easter  
Sunday

March 31



11:00am  
Sanctuary

Sunrise service

6:45am  
in the  
Memorial  
Garden

Please bring your own folding or lawn chairs to the Sunrise Garden service

Maundy  
Thursday

March 28

6:00pm  
Sanctuary  
with communion

foot & hand  
washing  
will be offered in  
the Narthex  
before and after  
worship

Good  
Friday

March 29

Prone to  
leave the  
God I love

12:00pm  
at  
Grace  
United  
Methodist  
Church

*Easter lily donations are open! Dedicate an Easter lily to a loved one and help decorate the Sanctuary for Easter Sunday! The names that donations are made in memory or in honor of will be listed in the worship guide on Easter Sunday so the deadline to submit names is March 24th. Find the form at [fpccov.org/lent](http://fpccov.org/lent) or in the Narthex!*



Sunday School classes are held at 9:45am

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



# Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, March 30th

10:00am FPC Playground

ALL are welcome!

Want to donate for a great Easter Egg Hunt?  
Bring candy filled eggs to the church by  
March 26th! (no nuts please!)

We welcome everyone  
into our church family!

**We'd LOVE to have you  
become an official  
MEMBER!**

Sunday, March 10th  
after worship  
Talk to Neeley if you are  
interested!

Becoming  
a member is a  
valuable way to say

**"I have chosen FPC Covington  
as my home to trust in our  
Lord, Jesus Christ!"**

**TODAY!**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
COVINGTON, GA**

## FLOWERING of the CROSS

Bring fresh flowers to fill the Easter cross  
starting Saturday, March 30th  
on the front lawn of the church

*Have a  
Beautiful  
Terrible  
Lent!*

**Mondays in Lent**  
at 5:30pm in the Parlor  
Feb. 26, March 4,  
March 11, March 18  
Enter through  
the office door.  
Led by Erin and Neeley  
Childcare available.

**FPC Youth**

**Youth Hang-Outing**

March 20th @ 6:00pm  
We will have a Youth Hang at  
Lily & Sparrow  
Coffee + Mercantile

email questions to  
[erin@fpccov.org](mailto:erin@fpccov.org)

## NEELEY'S NOOK LEADERSHIP BOOK CLUB

MONTHLY TUESDAYS  
6:00PM-7:00PM ON ZOOM

VISIT [FPCCOV.ORG/ZOOM-LINKS](https://fpccov.org/zoom-links) TO JOIN!

### Sunday, March 10

#### Fourth Sunday in Lent

- 9:45am Sunday School
- 11:00am Worship—I'm Fixed Upon It
- 12:00pm New Member Welcome
- 7:00pm Jammies & Jesus

### Monday, March 11

- 12:00pm Facilities Team Meeting
- 5:30pm "Have a Beautiful, Terrible Lent" Study

### Tuesday, March 12

- 12:00pm Lectio Divina—Pastor's Bible Study
- 5:00pm Faith Formation Team Meeting
- 6:00pm Neeley's Nook—Leadership Book Club

### Wednesday, March 13

- Thriving Congregations Team Retreat
- 10:00am Coffee Club
- 5:00pm Children's Choir
- 6:00pm Handbell Choir
- 7:00pm Chancel Choir

### Thursday, March 14

- Thriving Congregations Team Retreat
- 11:00am Ambassador Choir singing at the Oaks

### Friday, March 15

- Thriving Congregations Team Retreat

### Sunday, March 17

#### Fifth Sunday in Lent

- 9:45am Sunday School
- 11:00am Worship—Teach Me

**JAMMIES & JESUS**

TONIGHT March 10th

**7 PM on Zoom**

Join Neeley & Erin for a  
short bedtime prayer.

Visit [fpccov.org/zoom-links](https://fpccov.org/zoom-links) to join!

**PURSuing GOD'S WILL  
TOGETHER: A DISCERNMENT  
PRACTICE FOR LEADERSHIP  
BY RUTH HALEY BARTON**

**MAR.  
12TH**