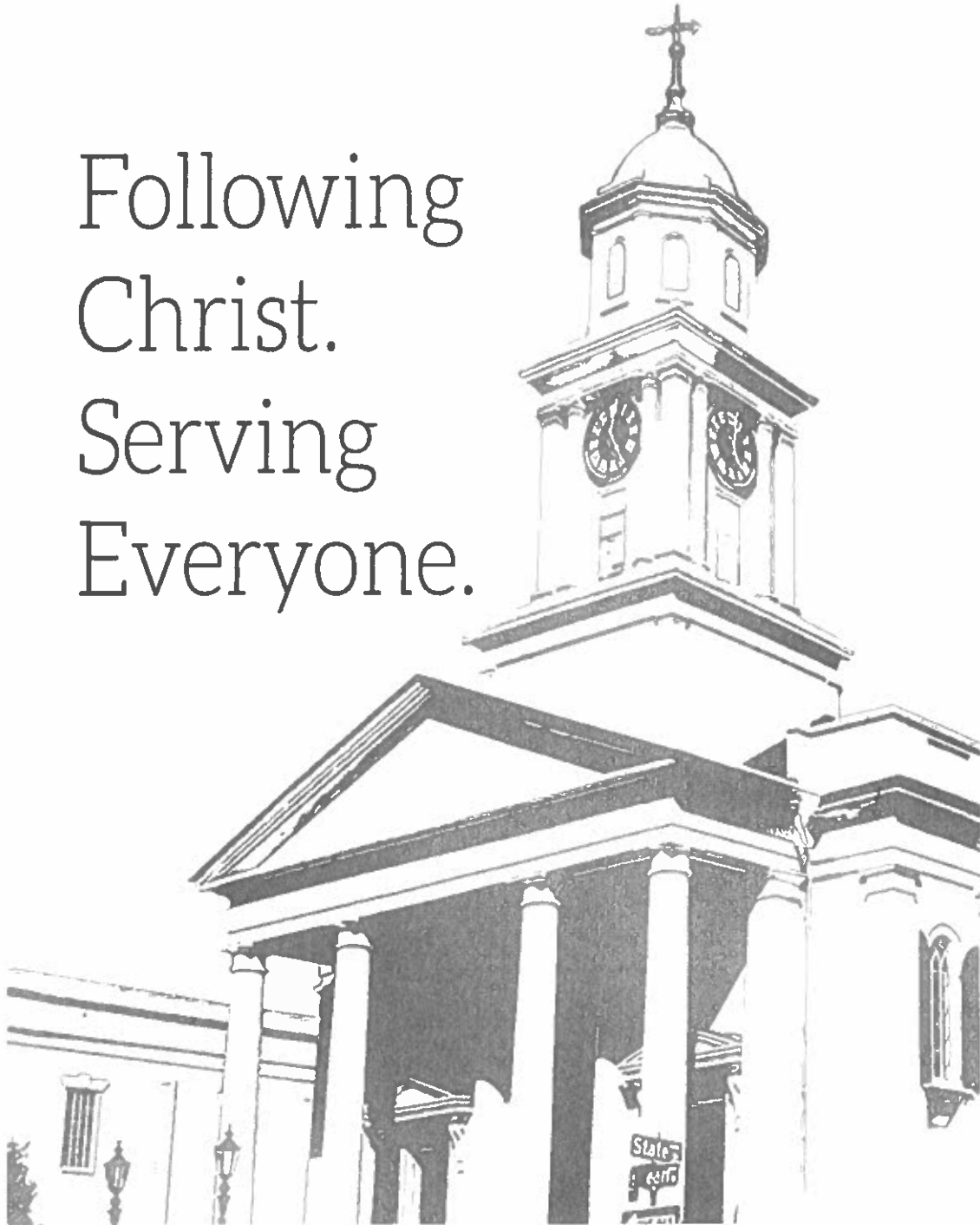




First Presbyterian Church of Natchez

Following  
Christ.  
Serving  
Everyone.



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**Morning Worship**  
**Fourth Sunday in Lent**  
**Honoring Local Heroes Today**  
March 19, 2023 ~ 10:30 a.m.  
The Rev. Dr. Joan W. Gandy, Minister  
Mr. Vincent Bache III, Director of Music and Organist

**THE GATHERING**

---

Westminster Chimes

The chiming of the hour signals to us that it is time to be seated.  
Now let us direct our hearts to the One who calls us here!

Prelude

Chorale Prelude on *Ellers*

Robert Hebble

Welcome

Rev. Dr. Joan Gandy

Call to Worship

See Ephesians 6:13-17

*Leader:* Take up the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the evil of this world.

***All:* Fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness.**

*Leader:* As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace.

***All:* We will take the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God!**

*Leader:* Praise the Lord

***All:* The Lord's name be praised!**

\*Processional Hymn 275: *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*

EIN' FESTE BURG

# 275 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a bul-wark nev - er  
 2 Did we in our own strength con - fide, our striv - ing would be  
 3 And though this world, with dev - ils filled, should threat - en to un -  
 4 That word a - bove all earth - ly powers, no thanks to them, a -

fail - ing. Our help - er he, a - mid the flood of  
 los - ing, were not the right man on our side, the  
 do us, we will not fear, for God hath willed his  
 bid - eth. The Spir - it and the gifts are ours through

mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing. For still our an - cient foe doth  
 man of God's own choos - ing. Dost ask who that may be? Christ  
 truth to tri - umph through us. The Prince of Dark - ness grim, we  
 him who with us sid - eth. Let goods and kin - dred go, this

seek to work us woe. His craft and power are great, and  
 Je - sus, it is he. Lord Sab - a - oth his name, from  
 trem - ble not for him. His rage we can en - dure, for  
 mor - tal life al - so. The bod - y they may kill; God's

Long before Isaac Watts began to Christianize the Psalms, Martin Luther had already done so when he created the text and tune for this, his most famous hymn, which is based on Psalm 46. Luther encouraged metrical versions of psalms as well as chanted psalms and new hymns.

JESUS CHRIST: ASCENSION AND REIGN

armed with cru - el hate, on earth is not his e - qual.  
age to age the same, and he must win the bat - tle.  
lo, his doom is sure. One lit - tle word shall fell him.  
truth a - bid - eth still. His king - dom is for - ev - er.

The musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a vocal line with lyrics. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a piano accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The music is written in a simple, homophonic style.

Offering our lives in the life of Christ's church

*Join in the ministries of your church as God calls you!*

### Confession of Sin

The congregation joins in Call to Confession and Unison Prayer of Confession.

After silent prayer, all sing the *Kyrie (Lord, Have Mercy)*

### Call to Confession

Romans 5:8; Hebrews 4:16

*Leader:* The proof of God's amazing love is this: While we were sinners, Christ died for us.

***All:* Because we have faith in him, we dare to approach God with confidence.**

*Leader:* In faith and penitence, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

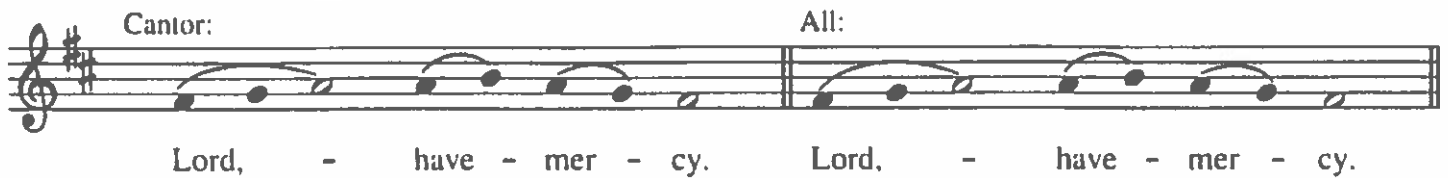
### Unison Prayer of Confession

**God of all ages and all people, we confess our sins before you and one another this morning. Forgive us those things that have moved us from light to darkness. Correct our vision. Lead us to the light, and help us to live there and bring others to your light. Free us to walk humbly in your holy ways for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior.**

Time for Silent Confession

*Lord, Have Mercy upon Us*  
(Choir and congregation sing.)

*Kyrie*



Cantor: All:  
Lord, - have - mer - cy. Lord, - have - mer - cy.



Cantor: All:  
Christ, - have - mer - cy. Christ, - have - mer - cy.



Cantor: All:  
Lord, - have - mer - cy. Lord, - have - mer - cy.

Declaration of Forgiveness

\*Response Hymn 581

*Gloria Patri*

GREATOREX

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
And to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning,  
Is now and ever shall be,  
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

\* Greeting and the Peace

*Leader:* The peace of Christ be with all of you today.

*All:* **And also with you.**

## THE WORD

---

A Time for Young Disciples

*Afterwards, children may return to their seats or go to children's class.*

Prayer for Illumination

Lee Jones, Reader

Old Testament Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

*Pew Bible Page 322*

A Reading from Psalms: Psalm 23

*Pew Bible Page 617*

Reading from the Epistles: Ephesians 5:1-2, 8-10


*Pew Bible Page 237*

\*Gospel Hymn 14, verses 1, 4, & 5:

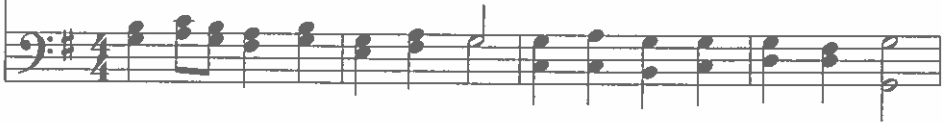

*For the Beauty of the Earth*

DIX

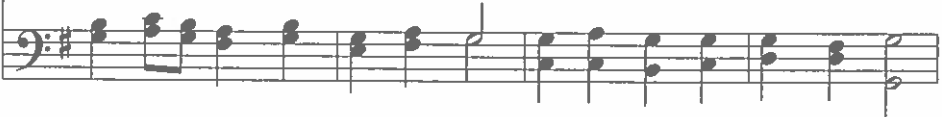

## For the Beauty of the Earth 14




1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the glo - ry of the skies,  
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,  
 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,  
 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,  
 5 For thy - self, best gift di - vine to the world so free - ly given;

for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:  
 hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light:  
 for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:  
 friends on earth, and friends a - bove, for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:  
 for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heaven:


*Refrain*


Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.



In the course of many revisions, the original eucharistic emphasis of this text has shifted to a hymn of thanksgiving for a wide range of human experience, with a Christological summation. It is set here to the tune that is customary in North America, though not elsewhere.

TEXT: Follitt Sandford Pierpoint, 1864, alt.  
 MUSIC: Conrad Kocher, 1838; abr. William Henry Monk, 1861; harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

DIX  
 7.7.7.7.7



This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

Sermon

“Light to Our Paths”

Rev. Dr. Gandy

Affirmation of Our Faith

\*Apostles’ Creed

Traditional

**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

*(Beginning with a prayer of thanks for those who serve.)*

*Leader:* Let us bring before God the needs of the church, the world, the community, and those who serve the needs of the people.

**All: O God, we give thanks for your watchful love over all, especially upon those who serve in places of human need and danger.**

*Leader:* As a potter fashions a vessel from clay, you form us to be the people of your joy and service. Shape us through the cross of Christ so that all we do reflects your love upon those you call us to bless in your name.

**All: Renew us in the ways of justice and peace. Give all of us strength to build a society that is based on trust and respect.**

**All: Bless and strengthen those who risk their lives to protect our community, to instruct our youth, and to give help to the weak. Lead them in your Way.**

*Leader: Watch over, strengthen, and lead all who live and work in this place we call home.*

**All: Let us be a people who love one another, who work together for good, and who reveal our love for you, O God, by the deeds we accomplish.**

The Lord's Prayer (*debts/debtors*)

Traditional

**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.**

## **THE THANKSGIVING**

---

### Call for the Offering

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it.* Psalm 24:1

With gladness, let us present the offering of our life and labor to the Lord.

### \*Offertory

#### *Be Thou My Vision*

Text: Irish poem; trans. Mary E. Byrne, 1905

Music: Richard Shepherd

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;

Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art.

Thou my best Thought, by day or by night, Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;

I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;

Thou my great Father, I Thy true son; Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,

May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

\*Response Hymn 606

*Doxology*

OLD HUNDREDTH

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.

\*Prayer of Dedication

## THE SENDING

---

\*Hymn 35: *Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty*

LOBE DEN HERREN

\*Benediction

\*Postlude

*Chaconne*

Louis Couperin

*The flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of James "Jim" Dent by his family.*

**Music Notes:** The Prelude is a lush setting of a hymn tune entitled *Ellers* (Blue Hymnal 539) utilizing some of the most beautiful stops on the organ. This chorale setting is the work of American composer Robert Hebble (1934-2020). This tune is sadly not included in the new hymnal. The Anthem at the Offertory is a setting of a universally loved hymn *Be Thou My Vision*, set for choir here by English organist and composer Richard Shephard. The Postlude is the rousing and regal *Chaconne* by French Baroque composer Louis Couperin (1626-1661).

## 35 Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty

1 Praise ye the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -  
 2 Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so won-drous - ly  
 3 Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me a -

a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for he is thy  
 reign - eth, shel - ters thee un - der his wings, yea, so  
 dore him! All that hath life and breath, come now with

health and sal - va - tion! All ye who hear, now to his  
 gen - tly sus - tain - eth! Hast thou not seen how thy de -  
 prais - es be - fore him! Let the a - men sound from his

tem - ple draw near; join me in glad ad - o - ra - tion!  
 sires e'er have been grant - ed in what he or - dain - eth?  
 peo - ple a - gain; glad - ly for aye we a - dore him.

This very strong 17th-century German hymn employs many phrases from the psalms, especially Psalms 150 and 103:1-6. It did not receive an effective English translation until the mid-19th century, but has remained popular ever since, thanks in part to its stirring tune.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Local Heroes Luncheon:** Today we honor our local heroes — police officers, fire fighters, sheriff's deputies, and emergency medical responders. They are invited to the 10:30 worship service and to a luncheon in their honor afterwards in Fellowship Hall. Please join us!

**Congregational Meeting:** There will be a congregational meeting Sunday, April 2, following the 10:30 service. The finance committee will present a 2023 budget report.

**Pastor's Bible Study:** Join the Bible study Tuesday, March 21, at 11 a.m. in the parlor in Stratton Chapel. Scriptures for this week's study are Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; and John 11:1-45.

**Soul-Tending Lenten Programs:** "Soul Tending" programs continue for the next two Thursdays during Lent. Put these dates on your calendar: March 23 and 30. The programs are at 12 noon in Fellowship Hall and will include lunch. All are welcome to these free events. Invite friends and neighbors to join you.

**New Members Welcomed:** If you are interested in becoming a member of First Presbyterian, you will be warmly welcomed. The first step is to let the minister know of your interest. You may see her before or after worship; or call the church at 601-442-2581 to speak with her.

**New Member Class Continues Next Sunday:** A class for new members or prospective new members continues from 9 to 9:45 a.m. in the church library in the FPC Education Building. The class is great for anyone wishing to know more about what it means to be a Presbyterian and a member of First Presbyterian. All are welcome! Call the church office, 601-442-2581, if you have questions about the class.

**Monday Prayer:** Community prayer in the Prayer Room, located adjacent to the sanctuary, is held Mondays at 11:30 a.m. This prayer time is informal and offers opportunity to pray with others for people and things that are on each heart.

**Sunday Immerse Study:** A second study group reading the Immerse Bible lessons meets on Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock. Join this group in the parlor in Stratton Chapel.

**Sanctuary Choir:** The choir meets on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. upstairs in the choir room.

**Handbell Choir:** The Handbell choir meets on Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. upstairs in the Sanctuary.

**AA Meetings:** Open Gates AA Meeting meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 12 noon in the downstairs meeting room in Stratton Chapel. These are open discussion meetings.

**ACOA Meetings:** Adult Children of Alcoholics meets every Tuesday at 12 noon in the downstairs meeting room in Stratton Chapel. ACOA is a fellowship of people who desire to recover from the effects of growing up in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional family setting. Anyone who is interested in attending is welcome!

**Photo Gallery:** Please consider donating a couple of hours to the museum as a docent. The exhibit is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. You may call Rosemary Hall or the church office to sign up.

**Pastoral Visits:** If you have special needs and wish to share them with the minister, please plan a visit so that you can talk about what's going on in your life. Contact the minister at 601-442-2581.

### **Church Staff**

The Rev. Dr. Joan W. Gandy, Pastor  
Mr. Vincent Bache III, Director of Music and Organist  
Aretha Davis, Playschool Director  
Pam McNeil, Office Administrator  
Mary Ann Peoples, Financial Secretary  
Deon Buford, Sexton

### **Officers of the Church**

#### **ELDERS**

**Class of 2023:** Lane Feltus, Mary Lessley, Catherine Ratcliffe  
**Class of 2024:** George Bates, Stratton Bull, Bobby Meason, Cara Moody  
**Class of 2025:** Chuck Borum, Sandra Burkes, Marc Doyle, Jay Fitch, Sammy Gore

#### **DEACONS**

**Class of 2023:** Ken Price, Ryan Sharp  
**Class of 2024:** Kristen Abney, Everette Ratcliffe, Hubert Smith  
**Class of 2025:** Edie Christian, Rusty Jenkins, and Randy Smith

Thank you to Charles Hall (Director), Lance Harris, Ryan Sharp, and  
Jon Borum for livestreaming and video services.

### **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**117 South Pearl Street  
(Mailing Address: 400 State Street)  
Natchez, Mississippi 39120  
601-442-2581**

**[www.fpcnatchez.org](http://www.fpcnatchez.org)**

**[fpcnatchez@bellsouth.net](mailto:fpcnatchez@bellsouth.net)**

All printed words & music are used by permission: CCLI License #11185315