

3rd Sunday in Lent

March 23, 2025



First Presbyterian Church
220 North Cullen Street - Rensselaer, Indiana 47978
219-866-7005

Rev. Dr. Michelle J. Bartel, Preaching
Kathy Staddon, Liturgist
Sally Berger, Accompanist

Welcome
to
First Presbyterian Church
219-866-7005

www.firstpresrensselaer.org

www.facebook.com/First-Presbyterian-Church-Rensselaer

Church Mission Statement: We are a Presbyterian church responding to new mission frontiers presented by our changing culture. Guided by our Lord Jesus Christ, we love, serve and embrace all people.

Sunday Offering: \$3,490.00

Attendance: 15

Pastor:

Rev. Michelle J. Bartel, Ph.D.

Youth Minister:

Stephanie Davisson

Director of Music:

Stephanie Davisson

Office Administrator:

Bethany Dodge

219-866-7005

Maintenance/Housekeeping:

Pat McKinney

Technology Assistant:

Andrew Dodge

Prayer concerns: Jennifer Perez, Margaret Miller, Larry Alexander, Family of Joyce Cady, Carol Geisel, Rick Dragoo, Dawn Jefferson, Rob Jefferson, Trent Jefferson, Kristian Jefferson, Joy Mendenhall, Family of David Courtright, Sharon DeWees, Tony's mother, Family of Richard and Wendy White, Ron Sheffler and family, family of Phil Nagel, Ed & Barb Michael, the family of Larry Huhn, Carol Hoover, and the family of Bill Gehring.

If you would like a child's folder or a wireless hearing assistance device, let the usher know.

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.

Lead us not into temptation;

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory,

for ever. Amen.

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✠ Please stand in body or spirit

Prelude

Welcome

Rev. Michelle Bartel

Call to Worship (based on Psalm 63):

Kathy Staddon

Leader: O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you;

People: Our flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

Leader: So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.

People: Because your steadfast love is better than life, our lips will praise you.

Leader: So I will bless you as long as I live;

People: We will lift up our hands and call on your name.

Come, let us worship the Lord!

✠ Hymn of Praise #475 *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession (based on Luke 13):

Merciful God, we confess that we have been quick to judge others and slow to make changes in our own lives. We confess that we have focused on others' shortcomings instead of reforming our own. Turn us, O Lord, from these ways that lead to perishing. Lead us, O Lord, in your ways that lead to abundant life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Assurance of Pardon:

Leader: God speaks through the prophet Isaiah: "my thoughts are not your thoughts nor are your ways my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways." As far as east is from west, so God removes our sins from us. Let us find peace in God's ways of mercy and grace. Friends, hear the good news of the gospel:

People: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Alleluia, Amen.

✠ Response #581 *Gloria Patri*

Announcements

THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading Isaiah 55:1-9 p. 685 OT

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

Psalm Reading Psalm 63:1-8 p. 527 OT

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

Gospel Reading Luke 13:1-9 p. 76 NT

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Bearing the Fruit of Repentance

“ ‘If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’ ”

OUR RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Joys and Concerns of the Congregation

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer (we use "debts and debtors" in the prayer)

The Offering

(The Offering plates will not be passed. You may place your offerings in the plates on the pedestals either before or after Worship.)

✠ Doxology #607 *Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow*

✠ Prayer of Thanksgiving

Gracious God, you give to us out of your abundance. For the material gifts and the spiritual gifts you give us, we thank you. We dedicate these gifts of time and talents and tithes to you and ask that you continue to lead us as we use these gifts to join your work in this community. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

✠ Hymn of Sending #649 *Amazing Grace*

✠ Benediction

Congregational Response #765 *May the God of Hope Go with Us*

Postlude

-Call to Worship (slightly adapted), Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession (adapted), Assurance of Pardon (adapted), Prayer for Illumination, and Prayer of Thanksgiving (slightly adapted) written by Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Carrico, Jr. for *The Presbyterian Outlook*.

Luke 13:

"Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

And he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?' And he answered him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.' "

Which definition below best helps you understand your relationship with God?

Which definition below best speaks to you of the grace of Jesus Christ?

Metanoia: to change one's mind, to undergo transformation of inner self, to come to one's senses. In the New Testament, it is translated as "repentance."

Repentance: to regret so deeply as to change the mind or course of conduct in consequence and develop new mental and spiritual habits.

O Lord, who hast mercy upon all,
take away from me my sins,
and mercifully kindle in me the fire
of thy Holy Spirit.

Take away from me the heart of
stone,
and give me a heart of flesh,
a heart to love and adore thee,
a heart to delight in thee,
to follow and to enjoy thee,
for Christ's sake.

(Ambrose of Milan, c 339-397)

