

# *The First Presbyterian Church* *in the City of New York*

---

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT  
*Service for the Lord's Day*  
March 15, 2020 | 11:00 a.m.

*The Session and members of First Church extend a sincere welcome to all persons regardless of race, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation. This includes an open invitation to membership, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, marriage, funerals, memorial services, and service as an officer of the Church.*

## GATHERING

### WELCOME AND INVITATION

### PRELUDE

Prelude on ROCKINGHAM

*Kenneth Leighton*

### CALL TO WORSHIP

**Loving God, hear our cry.  
Bring us to life.  
Redeeming God, rescue us.  
Bring us to life.  
Spirit of God, breathe on us.  
Bring us to life. Let us worship the life-giver!**

### HYMN 435

“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”

IN BABILONE

**There’s a wideness in God’s mercy,  
like the wideness of the sea.  
There’s a kindness in God’s justice,  
which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth’s sorrows  
are more felt than up in heaven.  
There is no place where earth’s failings  
have such kindly judgment given.**

**For the love of God is broader  
than the measures of the mind.  
And the heart of the Eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.  
If our love were but more faithful,  
we would gladly trust God’s Word,  
and our lives reflect thanksgiving  
for the goodness of our Lord.**  
-Frederick William Faber

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious God,  
you have taught us in Jesus Christ  
to consider the lilies of the fields,  
to be free of anxiety about our lives  
and certain of your steady care and love.  
Yet, we acknowledge before you  
that we are anxious in these days  
when the earth seems to be moving under our feet.  
You know our hearts; you embrace us in our fears.  
So, we pray yet again for your gracious forgiveness,  
your kind compassion, and your steadying presence.  
Support us with your Spirit,  
in the company of the saints who have gone before us,  
that we may be agents of your kindness, healing and hope.  
We pray in the strength of Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

## SILENT PRAYER AND THE ASSURANCE OF GOD'S PARDON

### SHARING THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.  
**And also with you.**

### HEARING THE WORD

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION AND FIRST LESSON

Genesis 50:15-21

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

## CHILDREN'S PRAYER 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.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

## SECOND LESSON

Matthew 18:21-35

Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.'

‘For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.” And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, “Pay what you owe.” Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you.” But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, “You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?” And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.’

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“What Not to Give Up for Lent: 3. Forgiveness”

Dr. Dunham

SILENT MEDITATION

### RESPONDING TO THE WORD

#### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Apostles’ Creed  
(Ecumenical Version)

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;**

**he ascended into heaven,**

**is seated at the right hand of the Father,**

**and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, 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 CHURCH

#### SENDING

HYMN 65

“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

CWM RHONDDA

**Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,  
pilgrim through this barren land.  
I am weak, but thou art mighty.  
Hold me with thy powerful hand.  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,  
feed me till I want no more;  
feed me till I want no more.**

Open now the crystal fountain,  
whence the healing stream doth flow.  
Let the fire and cloudy pillar  
lead me all my journey through.  
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,  
be thou still my strength and shield;  
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
bid my anxious fears subside.  
Death of death, and hell's destruction,  
land me safe on Canaan's side.  
Songs of praises, songs of praises  
I will ever give to thee;  
I will ever give to thee.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Prelude on MORNING SONG

Robert J. Powell

### PRAYER REQUESTS

For the family and friends of Helen Lazarides, who passed away March 4.

For the family and friends of Joan May McNamee and Kathryn Esther McNamee, who  
have passed away.