



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CLEVELAND

MARCH 22, 2026
FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT
10AM Sanctuary Worship

WE GATHER IN THE GRACE OF GOD

PRELUDE

Fantasia in F-Sharp Minor, TWV 40:11

I. Tempo giusto

Georg Philipp Telemann

WELCOME

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

INTROIT

Let The Words Of My Mouth

Eric Thiman

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart,
be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength,
O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

* Those who are able are requested to stand

Please silence all electronic devices.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Come, people of God, to know again who you are.
Return to the One who gives you life.

**We come as children of God,
longing for a closer walk with our Creator.**

Gather together, all who feel spent and discouraged,
all who are weighed down, in bondage, and disheartened.

"Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost."

We feel death and decay in the midst of our days.

God's Spirit enters our "valley of dry bones"
to call us to a time of revitalizing worship.

**How can we sing songs of joy and praise
when there is no life in us?**

The breath of God cleanses, and hope is renewed;
life is restored to God's children.

**We welcome the winds of God among us,
the Spirit who offers life in all its fullness.**

* INVOCATION PRAYER

Let us pray together:

**May all your people find favor with you this day,
God of majesty and power.**

**Turn our sorrow to gladness and our mourning into a holiday,
a holy day, in which to praise you
and find ways to help those less fortunate than ourselves.**

**Lift us from our daily preoccupations that we may pray
with earnest intent, both to thank you and to be changed by you.**

Let our prayers be powerful and effective.

May our worship be alive and life-changing.

May the service we extend find favor in your eyes, blessed God.

Amen.

1 Breathe on me, Breath of God; fill me with life a - new,
 2 Breathe on me, Breath of God, un - til my heart is pure,
 3 Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am whol - ly thine,
 4 Breathe on me, Breath of God, so shall I nev - er die,

that I may love what thou dost love, and do what thou wouldst do.
 un - til with thee I will one will, to do and to en - dure.
 un - til this earth - ly part of me glows with thy fire di - vine.
 but live with thee the per - fect life of thine e - ter - ni - ty.

In both Hebrew and Greek, the words for "spirit" can equally well be translated as "breath" or "wind," so it is very appropriate to address the Holy Spirit as the "Breath of God." This tune by an English organist has become the customary one in North American hymnals.

TEXT: Edwin Hatch, 1878
 MUSIC: Robert Jackson, 1888

TRENTHAM
 SM

* CALL TO CONFESSION

Lori Montero

The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Rome:

"The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot, but if the Spirit of God dwells in you, your spirits are alive and you are children of God."

As Paul observed, we spend a lot of time as one-dimensional people.

We focus on our own interests as if there were no God, and other people become no more than props in our life stories.

Suddenly we are faced with meaninglessness, and we begin to feel like "dry bones."

Let us come to God, recognizing how unworthy we are to approach the One who embraces the universe yet believing we are known and welcomed in this Awesome Presence.

Let us confess our sin.

Let us join our voices in the corporate prayer of confession, followed by time for silent personal confession.

Thus, we pray:

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of the living and the dead,
we confess that sometimes we are more
dead than alive to the possibilities you place before us.
In the midst of pain, unfairness,
and destructive forces on all sides,
we see little hope.
We find it hard to discern a role for ourselves
in working for a better world;
we seem powerless to change
even that little part of the planet where we live.
How can we find a spiritual dimension in life
that would change the way we view conditions?
Where do we go for the power to face
and overcome a world that denies the resurrection?
O God, we want to find that new life
which triumphs over death and the grave.
Forgive our dullness and grant us new vision and vitality.
In Jesus' name.**

(moment of silent confession)

* KYRIE

*Return to God
(Cantor)*

Return to God with all your heart, the source of grace and mercy;
come seek the tender faithfulness of God.

(Congregation)

**Return to God with all your heart, the source of grace and mercy;
come seek the tender faithfulness of God.**

* ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

"Thus says the Sovereign God,
'I will raise you from your graves, O my people;
and I will bring you home and I will put my Spirit within you,
and you shall live.
I, the Sovereign One, have spoken, and I have done it,' says God."
We are assured that God is already at work in our lives,
accepting us where we are and granting us new life.
Know that you are being unbound; you are free to live,
able to share in God's saving action in our midst.
Accept the gift of God's forgiveness and empowerment.
Take your place among Christ's disciples.

Thanks be to God.

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer a sign of peace to one another.

* GLORIA #204

Stay with Me
(Cantor)

STAY WITH ME

Stay with me; remain here with me; watch and pray. Watch and pray.

(Congregation)

Stay with me; remain here with me; watch and pray. Watch and pray.

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Please be seated.

Like salt that enhances the flavor of food,

Christians are called to share the joy and gladness

we are discovering in our relationship with Jesus Christ.

The good news is extended through our support of the church and its ministries.

The offering will now be received.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Dry Bones

African American Spiritual
arr. Brandon Waddles

Ezekiel cried, "Dem dry bones!" "Oh, hear the word of God."

Ezekiel fixed dem dry bones!" "Oh, hear the word of God."

Dem bones, dem bones gonna walk around. Oh, hear the word of the God.

* DOXOLOGY #215

What Wondrous Love Is This

WONDROUS LOVE

To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing, to God and to the Lamb, I will sing.

To God and to the Lamb who is the great I am, while millions join the theme,

I will sing, I will sing; while millions join the theme, I will sing!

* OFFERTORY PRAYER

Lori Montero

Let us join our voices in prayer:

**Bring life, O God, to the program and mission of this church,
which we support through our tithes and offerings.**

May our giving bring life and hope to many "valleys of dry bones."

As Christ sacrificed life for us,

**so may each of us commit ourselves to carrying forward the work
to which we are called in our own day.**

Bless us and all the gifts we bring, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE

We Give Thee But Thine Own

J.S. Bach

We give Thee but Thine own, whate'er the gift may be.

All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord from Thee. Amen.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**O Lord, we wait for you,
and in your Word we trust.
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
set our hearts and minds
on the source of life and peace:
Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

THE READINGS

Psalm 130 (*Congregation sings the refrain*)

With the Lord there is mer - cy, and full-ness of re - demp - tion.

Em F#m7(b5)/E F#dim/E Em

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; Lord, hear my voice!
2. If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?
3. I long for you, O LORD, my soul longs for his word.
4. For with the LORD there is mercy, in him is plenti - ful re - demption.

Am^o/C Em/B Am^o B

1. O let your ears be at - tentive to the sound of my pleadings.
2. But with you is found for - giveness, that you may be re - vered.
3. My soul hopes in the Lord } more than watchmen for } daybreak. } Let Israel hope for the LORD.
4. It is he who will redeem Israel from all its in - iquities.

Tanach

Ezekiel 37:1-14 (Inclusive Bible)

The hand of YHWH was upon me, and it carried me away by the Spirit of YHWH and set me down in a valley—a valley full of bones. God made me walk up and down among them. And I saw that there was a vast number of bones lying there in the valley, and they were very dry. God asked me, “Mere mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “Only you know that, Sovereign YHWH.”

And God said, “Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: ‘Dry bones, hear the word of YHWH! Sovereign YHWH says to these bones: I am going to breathe life into you. I will fasten sinews on you, clothe you with flesh, cover you with skin, and give you breath. And you will live; and you will know that I am Sovereign YHWH.’”

So I prophesied as I was commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and all the bones came together, bone to matching bone. As I watched, sinews appeared on them, flesh clothed them, and skin covered them. But there was no breath in them.

Then God said to me, “Prophesy to the wind (breath); prophesy, mere mortal, and say to it: ‘Thus says Sovereign YHWH: Approach from the four winds, Breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.’” I prophesied as I was commanded, and breath came into them; they came alive, and stood up on their feet—a vast multitude.

Then God said to me, “Mere mortal, these bones are the whole House of Israel. The people keep saying, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope is gone, and we are doomed.’ Prophesy, therefore, and say to them, ‘Thus says Sovereign YHWH: I am going to open your graves and raise you up from the dead, my people. I will return you to the land of Israel. When I open your graves and raise you up, you, my people, will know that I am YHWH. Then I will put my Spirit into you and you will return to life, and I will settle you back on your own land. Then you will know that I, YHWH, have spoken and made all this happen, says Sovereign YHWH.’”

The Holy Spirit has a word for each of us today.

With God’s help we are listening.

Gospel

John 11:1-45 (Inclusive Bible)

There was a certain man named Lazarus, who was sick. He and his sisters, Mary and Martha, were from the village of Bethany. Mary was one who had anointed the feet of Jesus with perfume and dried his feet with her hair, and it was her brother Lazarus who was sick. The sisters sent this message to Jesus, “Rabbi, the one you love is sick.”

When Jesus heard this, he said, “This sickness will not end in death; it is happening for God’s glory, so that God’s Only Begotten may be glorified because of it.” Jesus loved these three very much. Yet even after hearing that Lazarus was sick, he remained where he was staying for two more days. Finally he said to the disciples, “Let’s go back to Judea.”

They protested, “Rabbi, it was only recently that they tried to stone you—and you want to go back there again?” Jesus replied, “Aren’t there twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk by day don’t stumble, because they see the world bathed in light; those who go walking by night will stumble because there is no light in them.”

After Jesus said this, he said to the disciples, “Our beloved Lazarus has fallen asleep. I am going to Judea to wake him.”

The disciples objected, “But Rabbi, if he’s only asleep, he’ll be fine.”

Jesus had been speaking about Lazarus’ death, but they thought he was talking about actual sleep. So he said very plainly, “Lazarus is dead! For your sake I am glad that I wasn’t there, that you might come to believe. In any event, let us go to him.” Then Thomas, “the Twin”, said to the rest, “Let’s go with Jesus, so that we can die with him.”

When Jesus arrived in Bethany, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Since Bethany was only about two miles from Jerusalem, many people had come to console Martha and Mary about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him, while Mary stayed at home with the mourners. When she got to Jesus, Martha said, "If you had been here, my brother would never have died! Yet even now, I am sure that God will give you whatever you ask."

"Your brother will rise again!" Jesus assured her. Martha replied, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the Resurrection, and I am Life: those who believe in me will live, even if they die; and those who are alive and believe in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes!" Martha replied.

"I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, God's Only Begotten, the One who is coming into the world."

When she had said this, Martha went back and called her sister Mary.

"The Teacher is here, asking for you," she whispered.

As soon as Mary heard this, she got up and went to him. Jesus hadn't gotten to the village yet. He was at the place where Martha had met him. Those who were there consoling her saw her get up quickly and followed Mary, thinking she was going to the tomb to mourn.

When Mary got to Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, "If you had been here, Lazarus never would have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the other mourners as well, he was troubled in spirit, moved by the deepest emotions. "Where have you laid him?" Jesus asked.

"Come and see," they said. And Jesus wept.

The people in the crowd began to remark, "See how much he loved him!" Others said, "He made the blind person see; why couldn't he have done something to prevent Lazarus' death?"

Jesus was again deeply moved. They approached the tomb, which was a cave with a stone in front of it. "Take away the stone," Jesus directed.

Martha said, "Rabbi, it has been four days now. By this time there will be a stench."

Jesus replied, "Didn't I assure you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" So they took the stone away.

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said, "Abba, thank you for having heard me. I know that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd, that they might believe that you sent me!" Then Jesus called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

And Lazarus came out of the tomb, still bound hand and foot with linen strips, his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus told the crowd, "Untie him and let him go free."

Many of those who had come to console Martha and Mary, and saw what Jesus did, put their faith in him.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

"New Life into Dry Bones"

* THE NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

LIGHTING OF CANDLES, PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

We ask all these things in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray...

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.

O Christ, the Healer
(Verses 1,3,and 5)



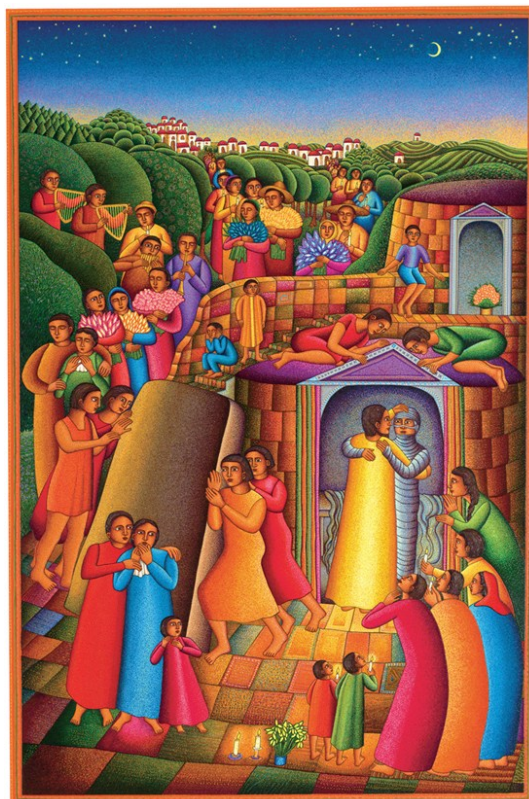
1 O Christ, the heal - er, we have come to pray for
 2 From ev - ery ail - ment flesh en - dures our bod - ies
 3 How strong, O Lord, are our de - sires, how weak our
 4 In con - flicts that de - stroy our health we rec - og -
 5 Grant that we all, made one in faith, in your com -



health, to plead for friends. How can we fail to
 clam - or to be freed; yet in our hearts we
 knowl - edge of our - selves! Re - lease in us those
 nize the world's dis - ease; our com - mon life de -
 mu - ni - ty may find the whole - ness that, en -



be re - stored when reached by love that nev - er ends?
 would con - fess that whole - ness is our deep - est need.
 heal - ing truths un - con - scious pride re - sists or shelves.
 clares our ills. Is there no cure, O Christ, for these?
 rich - ing us, shall reach the whole of hu - man - kind.



* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

Go forth into the world, forever changed,
freed from your narrow vision and limited faithfulness.

**We have received new life:
these dead bones live again.**

Know that the God who raised Christ from the dead
is also at work in you to bring life to others.

**We have been claimed by God
adopted as God's own children, heirs of grace.**

Share God's gift with all who are in bondage,
longing to be unbound and set free.

**We will respond in faith and action
to God's call and our neighbor's need.**

The Spirit of God dwells in you,
empowering you for faithful service.

**We welcome the winds of God to empower us,
the love of God to inform and shape our service.**

* CHORAL RESPONSE

Polyphonic Amen

Russell Wichmann

POSTLUDE

Salleras Variation

Steven Banks

*“My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”*

Psalm 73:26



We continue to keep in our prayers:

Lulu Myers, Balavaju, Victor Georgiev, Clarence Niles, Linda Marsh, Rosa Buccino,
Doris and Gus Ellis, Bruce Arnoff, Todd St. Clair, George, Tralaina, Patricia Gerard,
Dorland, Barbara Maloney, Gail Harris, Fletcher Hattis, Addie Singleton,
Sandy Colombo, Jayne Zborowsky, Charles Rabb, Tony and Annie Carlos,
Courtney Knapp, Bruce Baunach, JoAnn Hood, Gwen and Bob Baus,
Judy and Frank Macuga, the Welton family, the Naylor and Olmsby families

We pray for those struggling with illness, convalescing, homebound or in need.

Names are generally removed after four weeks unless there is a continuing need.

There are many ways to support The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland

Online Giving:

firstprescle.org/giving

Mail to:

The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland
Attn: Financial Office
1380 Ontario Street
Cleveland, OH 44113

Scan the QR Code with your phone.



Checks should be made payable to "The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland."

All contributions are tax-deductible and will be appropriately acknowledged at year-end.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CLEVELAND

LOVING CHRIST, SERVING CITY—SPIRITUALLY, SOCIALLY, CULTURALLY—SINCE 1820

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Senior Pastor: Rev. Stephen C. Blonder Adams

Parish Associate: Rev. Denise Clark-Jones

Minister of Music: Evan M. Collins

Choir

Leah Jennings Brown, *soprano*

Kaya Sparks, *soprano*

Val Sibila, *soprano*

Christian Bush, *tenor*

Anthony Steward, *tenor*

Noah Whitaker, *tenor*

Rayna Brooks, *alto*

Reese Henrick, *alto*

Morgan Potts, *alto*

R. Dominic Aragon, *bass*

Christopher Clark, *bass*

Albert Donze, *bass*

Church Elders:

Clerk of Session: Beth Buchanan

Class of 2026

Beth Buchanan

Judy Macuga

Melissa Maffia

Harriet Niles

Marty Vassel

Class of 2027

Michelle Baron

Bernard Medie

Bob Reid

Class of 2028

Dave Finley

Don Urban

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Class of 2026

Mark Corey

Forrest Diehl

Pam Daly

Ruth Finley

Alyssa Niepokny

Charlene Thornton

Class of 2027

Anand Bandari

Eric Grattan

Sunny Kunche

Amy Wheeler

John Wheeler

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Valorie Hempstead

JoAnn Hood

Elie Medie

Brad Oglesby

Mark Pichler

Lori Montero

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Dave Eifert

Class of 2027

Bruce Kranicz

Class of 2027

Mike Musson

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