



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

E-Link

March 23, 2022

10:30 am
Sunday Worship
Firstprescf.org



This Weekend's Worship

Lenten Series: Roll Down, Justice

Sermon: "I Choose Love: Communities of Forgiveness"

Scripture: Luke 23:32-43

Guest preacher: Rev. Betsy Thompson will be leading worship this Sunday. The scripture reading will be Luke 23:32-43.

Prayer of Preparation

We come before you, O Grace Itself, knowing that we hold onto resentment, distancing ourselves by a wall of fear or anger. Open us to your refreshing water of life. When we are faced with a choice, help us choose a love that moves us closer to compassion and courage to speak up and stand up for what is right and good.

"Roll Down, Justice" Poetry by [Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling](#).

Among the many wonderful resources for worship provided by our Worship Design Studio Lenten worship series, "Roll Down, Justice", are profound poems written by Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling. I shared one of those poems during worship last Sunday, "Before It's Too Late". Bishop LaTrelle Easterling is the episcopal servant and leader of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, the oldest and most diverse annual conference in The United Methodist Church. Her voice is one of prophetic calls for justice. Read more about her justice work [here](#). I look forward to sharing more of her poetry with you during Lent.



Nightbirde's Songs of Lament

On Sunday, March 13, I shared some of the writing of Jane a.k.a. 'Nightbirde' who became a worldwide sensation after her "America's Got Talent" audition. She was battling Stage III breast cancer and shared a song she wrote about the journey, "[It's OK](#)". Her strength and vulnerability were appreciated by many, especially those who could identify with her honest lament, not holding back her anger and frustration with God and knowing that speaking that lament brought her closer to God, not farther from God.

"Call me bitter if you want to—that's fair. Count me among the angry, the cynical, the offended, the hardened. But count me also among the friends of God. For I have seen [God] in rare form. I have felt His exhale, laid in His shadow, squinted to read the message He wrote for me in the grout: "I'm sad too." Nightbirde died February 19, 2022, but not without leaving us with words that expressed so eloquently our human struggle with the divine. Read more of her work [here](#).



Church Birthdays

Mar. 24-Mike Rokes, Eli Braley, 25-Sandy Jensen, Brad Wells, Apr. 2-Ray Burfeind, 3-Joyce Well-house

Memorial & Funeral Services; Covid Protocol Update Policies:

Please see page two for these actions by Session.

For your prayers...

Sue Luck's sister-in law and niece.

Notice...

Wednesday, April 6

5:30 pm SHINE Supper, dining room

Coming Soon...

- Holy Week Info: pg. 3
- Easter, Apr. 17
9:30 am— Refreshments for all ages, Egg Hunt
10:30 am Worship

There will be no Procession of the Cross this year on Good Friday. There may be one next year.

Volunteers can sign up anytime online:

Greeter Sign Up:

[Sign Up Genius: Greeters](#)

Worship Leader Sign Up:

[Sign Up Genius: Worship Leaders](#)

Covid Protocols at Church

The Session has decided to slowly ease off the covid restrictions between now and April 1st. Some of these changes will continue as they have proven helpful beyond Covid needs.

Current Protocol Includes...

- Congregational singing while masked during our worship services.
- Live music from the Praise Band and soloists without masks, but at a distance.
- Removal of distancing ribbons from the *outside rows of pews*.
- Use of *all rooms* in the building (including the Dining Room) for meetings and gatherings of church groups and other community groups.
- Facebook Live and Vimeo recordings of worship.
- Using screens and website for the Order of Worship.
- Collect offering at the door.
- Gather outside after worship if weather permits.

Starting April 1st if Community Spread Stays Low...

- The kitchen will be open and available for use.
- Masking will become welcome, but not required.
- All other COVID-19 protocol will be lifted.

***Please note:** while we hope that it will not be necessary to reintroduce mask wearing or social distancing, we do not know what the future brings. If the situation changes, we will enact whatever restrictions are necessary for the wellbeing and health of the congregation and all those who use our building.

Presbyterian Disaster Relief: Ukraine

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) launched an [appeal for funds](#) to help support the Church's humanitarian response to the Ukraine crisis.

The situation is on pace to become Europe's largest refugee crisis this century. All neighboring countries are keeping their borders open to Ukrainian refugees. PDA is addressing Ukrainian refugee needs through their International Refugee Program (DR000156). Read more [here](#).

To donate: Donations to Presbyterian Disaster Relief's efforts for Ukrainians can be made online [here](#) or through the church. All donations sent through the church should be marked "Ukraine".

Funeral & Memorial Services Policy Update

When the time comes to plan a funeral or memorial service for a loved one there are many details to address. The church can provide leadership for worship planning and help for the reception, but the remaining details are best handled by a funeral home. Funeral homes are our partners in ministry during the difficult time of laying to rest those we love.

There is a growing trend for families to forego the help of a funeral home when planning funerals and memorials. When this is the case, many additional responsibilities are put on the family and the staff and volunteers of churches. Unfortunately, churches often do not have the needed resource to take up these responsibilities.

It is becoming increasingly common for congregations in our area to require funeral home involvement to use church facilities for such services. This way, families are given the space to grieve, and congregations can focus on offering the spiritual support they need, while our funeral home partners take care of the details.

For these reasons, the First Presbyterian Church Session unanimously voted to instate this policy going forward:

"All families wishing to hold a funeral or memorial service at First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls shall employ services of a funeral home."

We appreciate your understanding on this matter. Contact us if you have questions.

Thank You

Thank you for the prayers and concern you have shown for my parents and Tim. My Dad has no issues after recovering from his fall, and they both had just mild symptoms of covid. Tim is making great progress using his new knee. The support from my church family means a lot to me and them.
~ Jean Boller



Northeast Iowa Food Bank - 2X Matching!

Thanks to a generous grant from the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, your gifts to the food bank will be matched up to \$40,000!

- Give today-this match expires *April 30!!*
- Make checks payable to the church with 'Food Bank' on the memo.

EASTER DONATIONS NEEDED!!

We are looking for small items that can fit inside a plastic Easter egg (erasers, chocolate, stickers, etc.) to share with the SHINE families. Please leave donations in the plastic tub in the library. The donation deadline is April 3. Thank you!



Thanks for serving last week:

Worship Leader: Jan Thedens

Videographer: Neal Leeper

Computer Operator: Kevin Thedens

Office Doors Replacement & Repaint: Gary Sabey,
Jim Seeley, David Lee

Nursery Bulletin Board: Gary Clark

Bulletin Board: Sandy Lawry

This week's schedule

Wednesday, March 23

10:00 am Working for Justice, Zoom

6:30 pm "Lent of Liberation" Devotional Reflection Series, dining room

Thursday, March 24

1:30 pm Safe Ministry, classroom

Saturday, March 26

10:00 am Re-forming of the Congregation at Northminster Presbyterian, Ames and Zoom

Sunday, March 27

10:30 am Worship, sanctuary
-SHINE breakout sessions

Wednesday, March 30

10:00 am Working for Justice, Zoom

6:30 pm "Lent of Liberation" Devotional Reflection Series, dining room



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. Please consider what you can give to this offering! Checks may be made payable to the church with "One Great Hour" written on the memo.

Campership donations still needed!

We are still short of our goal for our anticipated 5-6 campers. The average fee is between \$500-\$550 per camper. Children and Youth can learn more here: [Summer Camp at Lakeshore Center](#)

Make checks to our church with 'camp' on the memo.

HOLY WEEK with Cedar Valley Presbyterians, PC(USA)

- **Maundy Thursday** - April 14, 2022 - 6:00 pm

Hosted at First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls -

902 Main Street, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

Join us for a service of contemplation in three movements. We will open ourselves to the radical possibilities of grace as we: *remember* God's claim on us through baptism, *share* at Christ's table through communion, and *respond with love* through the Spirit's prompting. Encounter, connect, and be transformed!

*All are welcome to partake in communion. Childcare will be available.

- **Good Friday** - April 15, 2022 - 6:00 pm

Hosted at First Presbyterian Church of Waterloo -

[505 Franklin Street, Waterloo, Iowa 50703](#)

This service will feature a joint choir that blends together voices from our churches. The pastors will share brief meditations from the Iona community of Scotland and read the seven last words of Christ from the gospels. The congregation will have the opportunity to come forward and place nails in the cross. Childcare will be available.

Additional participating congregations are:

Westminster Presbyterian Church, Waterloo
Unity Presbyterian Church, Waterloo
Cedar Heights Presbyterian Church, Cedar Falls



Lenten Classroom for SHINE

Children, youth and their families are invited to explore and observe Lent in our Google Classroom. Visit this site for books, activities, recipes, music and more! We hope your Lenten journey is enriched through these offerings: [SHINE Classroom](#).

A grid of icons representing food and drinks. The top row contains three burgers and three soda bottles. The bottom row contains three soda bottles and three hot dogs.

JOIN US FOR FOOD, GAMES,
FUN AND FRIENDS!

**FAMILY
FELLOWSHIP
EVENT**

Wednesday, April 6th | 5:30 pm | @ The Church