



the Chimes

March 2025

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Message from the Pastor

Beloved of Christ,

We have been examining the “Great Ends of the Church” as written and included in our Book of Order. As a reminder, “ends” in this sense means something akin to aspirations and targets at which to aim rather than a conclusion. In other words, ideally, these summarize what the Church should look like and what we should strive for in our personal life.

The first end is “The proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind.”

The second is “The shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God.”

The third is – “The maintenance of divine worship.”

The fourth end is – “The preservation of the truth.”

The fifth end is – “the promotion of social righteousness.”

We conclude our look at the “Great End of the Church” with one that sums up everything we have talked about with these – “The Exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.” Exhibit literally means to show publicly. We, in the church, are called to show publicly the kingdom of God.

What do you think of when you hear: “The kingdom of heaven”?



Seriously, take a moment to consider where your mind goes when you hear, “The kingdom of heaven.”

Did you think of the afterlife? Clouds and harps and golden streets? Did anyone consider what it might mean for God’s kingdom to be present right

here, right now among us? Jesus talks about the kingdom several times.

Matthew 13 is full of parables concerning the Kingdom of Heaven. This is Matthew 13:31-34

“He put before them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.’ He told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.’”

The Kingdom of Heaven is like that? It is a seed that is growing? It is like yeast in bread? How truly wonderful! A planted seed takes time to mature. Yeast in bread is imperceptible until the bread is
(Continues on page 3)



- 8:30 a.m. Childcare begins
- 9 a.m. Sunday School & Handbell Rehearsal
- 10 a.m. Children’s Music Time & Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Worship Service is in-person and online at fpcfairmont.com &





Musical Notes from John Morrison, Director of Music & Organist

The Cambridge Handbells will start out the month of March on Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday ringing "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" arr. by Kevin McChesney. This hymn which is an African American spiritual is found in *Glory to God* at #825. I invite you to read and sing through the text before listening to the bells ring this beautiful and fun arrangement:

"Chorus: Swing low, sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home. Swing low, sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home."

Verse 1: I looked over Jordan, and what did I see coming for to carry me home? A band of angels coming after me, coming for to carry me home.

Verse 2: If you get there before I do, coming for to carry me home, tell all my friends I'm coming too, coming for to carry me home.

Verse 3: The brightest day that ever I saw, coming for to carry me home, when Jesus washed my sins away, coming for the carry me home.

Verse 4: I'm sometimes up and sometimes down, coming for to carry me home, but still my soul feels heavenly bound, coming for to carry me home."

There is a sense of hope in this hymn referencing enslaved peoples' hope to go to across the river where they could be free. Also there is a lot of call and response which is characteristic of a spiritual.

The Chancel Choir is busy rehearsing the Easter Cantata for April 20 in addition to the weekly anthems and we also look forward to having the WV Brass Quintet on Palm Sunday, April 13!

May the peace of Christ be with you,

John Morrison

Celebrating Scout Sunday!



First Church's News & Notes

Pastor's Message

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cooked and we can see the results of the yeast. For Jesus, and for centuries of followers, the Kingdom of God was not about the "Sweet By and By" when we are whisked away from this earth and this life and plopped down into some utopia. True, we have the promise of eternal life and that is encouraging, but the kingdom of God is about so much more.

John in Revelation gives a beautiful vision of a renewed creation where God dwells with us. Isaiah pictures the day when swords will be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. Mary sings of the Lord bringing down the powerful and filling the hungry and the empty with good things. In those ways, the reign of God is powerful present with us now.

I think of certain people when considering the exhibition of the kingdom of heaven to the world. John Mabry writes: "Rosa Parks is an imitator of Christ, not because she suffered for taking her stand (or

keeping her seat, in her case), but because she had the courage to believe in her own dignity and fought for it in spite of the conflict that resulted. Nelson Mandela is an imitator of Christ, not because he suffered in prison, but because he held out for peace and justice, and led a nation to resurrection. In each case it is not the suffering that is redemptive, but the courage to pursue justice in the face of pain and evil." That is the embodiment of what it means to exhibit the kingdom to the world. It's not just waiting for the afterlife, but actively pursuing what Christ pursues – love, justice, welcome, generosity, grace, peace, and wholeness. It is living right now as though Jesus already reigns... because he does.

As we do that, we begin to see true signs of the mustard seed bursting forth and the yeast transforming the loaf of bread.

God's kingdom is not built on the things we build kingdoms. We trust in violence to bring about peace. We trust in stuff to bring about happiness and fulfillment. We trust in power to

force others to get in line. We trust in distortion and half-truths to avoid things that make us uncomfortable. We trust in force to create a society we like.

God's kingdom is most gloriously revealed in none of those. God's kingdom is revealed most gloriously in the crucified and risen Jesus Christ. The true king is the one who will be bound, who will bleed, who will be mocked and who will give his life away. That is the kingdom of God. Jesus will never counter violence with violence nor result to brute force. Jesus' reign and counter to those things is siding with victims, bringing healing, restoration, welcome, and forgiveness. God's rule is not domineering, despotic, or tyrannical. God's rule is built on love. God's power is revealed in suffering love. God's purpose is in love. God's goodness is in love. That is the Kingdom of Heaven we are called to exhibit.

To the glory of God,

Rev. Evan Walker

Mark Your Calendars

- Material for the April issue of the Chimes is due by Friday, **March 21** at noon. THANKS!!!
- Parents' Night Out: March 7 at 5:30 p.m.
- Ash Wednesday Dinner/Service: March 5
- Youth Group at Launch Pad: March 14
- Session Meeting: March 18 at 6:30 p.m.
- Men's Breakfast: Tuesdays at McAteer's at 8 a.m.
- Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m. Sunday School 9 a.m.
- Choir rehearsal: Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
- Handbell Choir rehearsals Sunday at 9 a.m.
- Children's Music Time: Sunday at 10 a.m.

March Christian Discipleship activities

February was a month full of exciting activities and opportunities for our church family to connect. We kicked off the month with our Valentine's Day Parents' Night Out on the first Friday, where parents had a chance to enjoy a night off while the kids had a blast with games, activities, and a movie at the church.

On Presidents' Day, we hosted a Game Day for the youth, who had the day off from school. It was a fun-filled day of laughter and learning as the youth enjoyed time together in a safe, welcoming environment.

Looking Ahead: March Events

As we step into March, we are excited about the upcoming events, especially those that allow us to grow in faith together as a community:

Ash Wednesday Dinner and Service: On March 5, we will kick

off the Lenten season with a special Ash Wednesday Dinner followed by a meaningful service. Childcare will be provided for the evening, so feel free to bring the whole family. It's a wonderful way to begin the season of reflection, prayer, and preparation for Easter.

Lenten Study Nights: Starting on March 12, we will hold Lenten Study Nights every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. These studies are designed to help us incorporate faith into our busy lives, with a special focus on teaching young minds about the meaning of Lent in a fun and engaging way. Childcare will be provided, and we will also have classes for school aged kids. These classes will explore Lent through activities, lessons, and discussions tailored for children.

Youth Group Trip to Launchpad: On March 14 from 1-2 p.m. we'll be taking the youth group to Launchpad for an exciting evening of fun and fellowship. It's always a great time when our youth get to spend time together and build lasting friendships!

St. Patrick's Day Parents' Night Out: On March 7, we are excited to host a St. Patrick's Day-themed Parents' Night Out starting at 5:30 p.m. Parents can enjoy a night off while their kids celebrate with themed activities, crafts, and games.

In addition to the Lenten studies, if you'd like copies of any materials to continue the conversation at home or if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Jane. We want to make sure you and your family are well-supported as you grow in faith this season.

We look forward to seeing you at these exciting events and continuing to grow together as a church family!



CONTACT INFORMATION

OFFICE HOURS: 9 AM - 1 PM ON MONDAY THRU THURSDAY

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Joe Jernigan

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Pam Stalnaker

Penny Roberts

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

Amy Koon

Tim Mersinger

HOSPITALITY

Janet Miller

Nancy Carnes

Treasurer

Roger Kritzer

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

Pam Proctor

Abby Shuck

Hospitality March events

March 4 Hospitality meeting at 10 a.m. in the parlor. Everyone is welcome to join us.

March 5 We will be having our Ash Wednesday Potluck Dinner at 5:30 (service to follow). Hospitality will be serving ham, scalloped potatoes, rolls and beverages. We are asking the congregation to bring side dishes and desserts. The congregation will receive an EVITE for this dinner and they will be able to put in the comment box what they think they will be bringing.

March 7 is First Friday, Parent's Night Out. Pizza, veggies and dessert will be served for the children.

March 12, 19, 26, and April 2 and 9 Lenten Studies at 5:30 p.m. Hospitality will be providing desserts and beverages.

Church Thank You Notes

WV Presbytery

Dear Evan and members of Fairmont First,

Thank you for your gracious hospitality in hosting the November 21 meeting of the Presbytery. The advance arrangements were well down, the

welcome generous, and the day well planned. The food was

delicious and nourishing, and the fellowship open and inviting.

Please extend our thanks to all the volunteers and staff who helped with refreshments and lunch as well last set up and parking. A special thanks for the lovely favors, the beautiful wood votive holders.

Thank you for being an excellent host church.

Grace & Peace, Mauren Wright

Literacy Volunteers of Marion County

Rev. Evam Walker & Jean Lambert,

LVMC is most appreciative of your support of funds from the Nettie Blubaugh Foundation. We are grateful that you found our services in alignment with Ms. Blubaugh's passions and mission.

We strive to keep our services free to all in Marion County with a need.

Most thankfully, Susan May

Busy Bee Band & Honey Bees

On behalf of the entire Busy Bee Band & Honeybees, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for your generous financial contribution. Your donation pays a crucial role in helping us achieve our mission and continue the important work we do. . .

T.J. Bell, Director

Nettie Blubaugh Fund

Women of the Church in Fairmont distribute the \$25,000 from the Blubaugh account to the following organizations:

Davis & Elkins College: \$3,000, Davis Stuart: \$1,000, Union Mission: \$2,000, Food Pantry: \$2,500, Soup Opera: \$2,000, Hope Inc.: \$ 1,500, CASA: \$ 1,500, RESET, Inc. (formally Rising Star): \$500, Connecting Link: \$2,000, WV Caring: \$ 1,000, Stepping Stone: \$1,000,, Wesley Foundation: \$ 1,000, Salvation Army: \$1,000, Scott Place: \$1,500, Marion County Christmas Toy Shop: \$2,000, Busy Bee Band & Honey Bees: \$500, and Literacy Volunteers: \$1,000.



March Nurturing Faith Ideas

SCRIPTURE

March 2: Transfiguration of the Lord

Read Luke 9:28-36

Peter, James, and John had a “mountaintop experience” as they witnessed Jesus’ transfiguration, or transformation, and heard a voice from a cloud, God, say, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” How do we listen to Jesus today? What might Jesus be saying to you?

March 9: First Sunday in Lent

Read Luke 4:1-12

The Gospel reading for the First Sunday in Lent always tells the story of Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness. We, too, are tempted like Jesus was, and we have to choose what we are going to do, whether we are going to follow God or follow another. With others around your table or email, share a decision you have made that you think pleased God.

March 16: Second Sunday in Lent

Psalm 27

Life isn’t always easy. People can be mean. Circumstances can be challenging. We struggle with work or school. We feel like we don’t belong, or we aren’t important, or we’re insignificant. But God is there for us. The psalmist reminds us that God is our light when life seems dark, and God provides us protection, so we don’t need to be afraid.

March 23: Third Sunday in Lent

Read Isaiah 55:6-9

The season of Lent is a time to reflect on our lives as we prepare for Jesus’ death and resurrection. This is a good time to consider where we have failed to be faithful and obedient to God’s ways. When we confess our sins, admit our wrongs, we do so without fear for God is gracious and quick to forgive. Is there anything you need to ask forgiveness for? God is ready to hear your prayer.

March 30: Fourth Sunday in Lent

Read Luke 15:11b-32

Lost and found. A story of two sons and their father. A story about God who celebrates with joy when the lost are found and seeks out those who’ve never left to join in the celebration. Who are you most like in the story? Give thanks to God for welcoming all because I suspect we’re like both sons at different times.

FEBRUARY

Birthdays

3/4	Peggy Twyman Charlene Walker
3/11	Mia Mersinger Amy Turlock
3/14	Sarah Armstrong
3/16	Judy Scott
3/17	David Floyd
3/18	Joan Krause-Smith
3/22	Marilyn Morgan
3/27	Austin Fatkin
3/28	Emily Starn
3/30	Linda O’Connor

Anniversaries

3/6	Dave & Penny Roberts
3/16	Glen & Dana Satterfield

Prayer List

Ashley Bainbridge
Family of Kelsey Bourdon
Family of Bill Folger
Family of Mary Kate Urso
Pam Abbott
Karen Cochran
Steve Bopp
Carlton Neely
Blake: The Cumming’s Grandson
Donna Dodd
Rab Snider
Cathy Reed
Judy Palmer
Karen Burgess
Alisa Perdue
Stephen Satterfield
Judy Shaver
Paul Hines
DD Meighen
Brad Dodd

Peggy Twyman
Linda Stoops

January/February Pledges & Gifts

January 26	\$2,285
February 2	\$3,864
February 9	\$13,608
Souper Bowl	\$156
February 16	\$2,410
Total:	\$22,323

Total to Date: \$29,148.25

March Ministry
Volunteers

Liturgist: Linda O’Connor

USHERS : Earl Straight (captain), Janet Chittum, & Ed Cummings



The church with a  in the heart of the city!

the **Chimes** *March 2025*

F I R S T P R E S B Y T E R I A N C H U R C H



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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