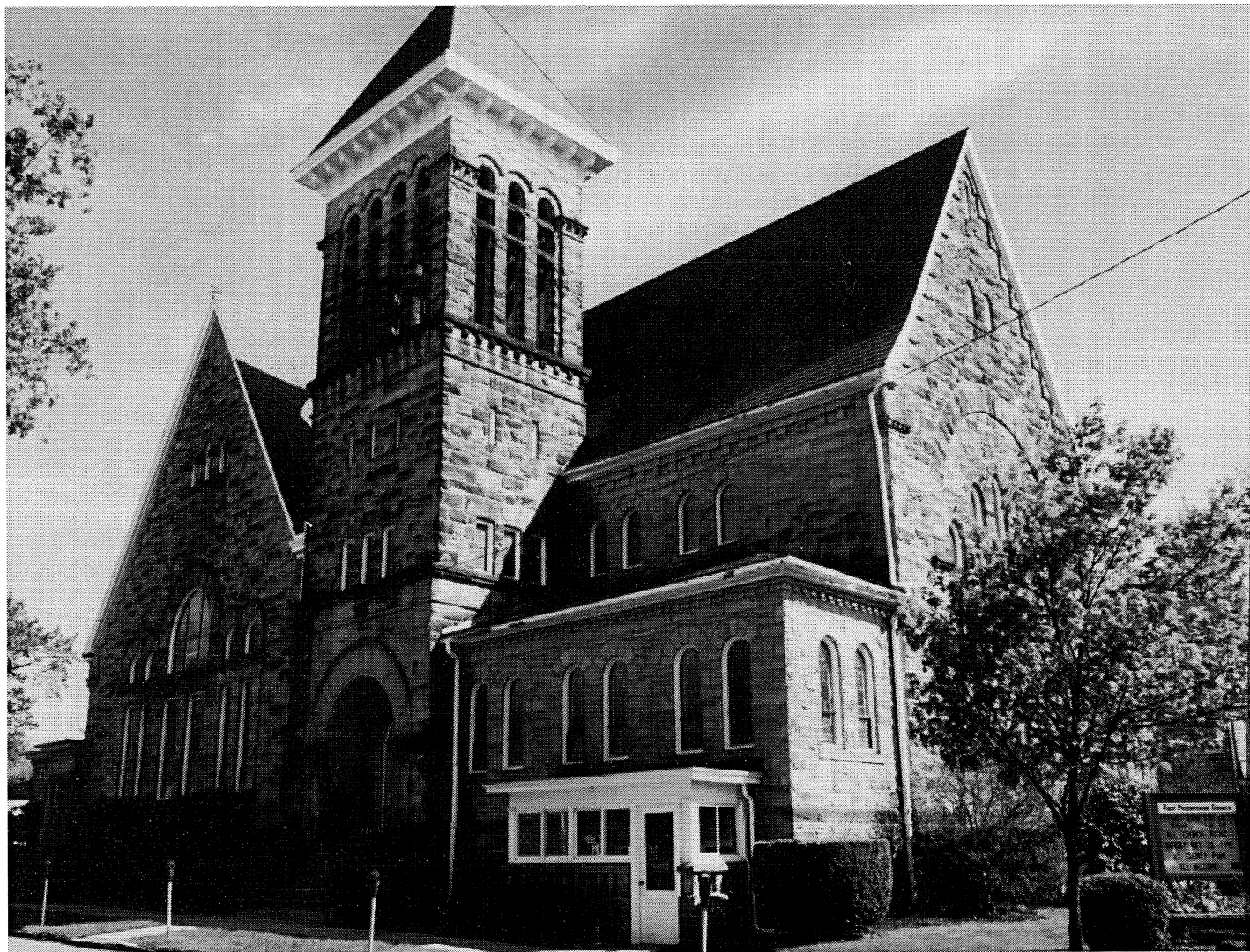


First Presbyterian Church



Seventh Sunday after Epiphany
February 23, 2025



700 Wood Street, Clarion, PA 16214
814-226-8145
churchoffice@clarionfirstpresby.org
www.clarionfirstpresby.org

We come together to worship, grow, and serve as disciples of Christ.

We Gather in God's Name

(Tune your car radio to 88.7 FM)

Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

Welcome and Announcements

Lector, Matt Kurtas

We silently shift our focus to God and prepare to worship.

Prelude

Melody of Hope

Roy E. Nolte, arr. Rob Roy Peery

Chiming of the Trinity

Introit

Healer of Our Every Ill

Marty Haugen

Call to Worship

The way of Christ turns the world upside down.

God's ways are not our ways.

It moves us beyond retribution and cycles of violence.

God's ways are not our ways.

It leads us to enemy-love and scandalous forgiveness.

God's ways are not our ways.

It calls us beyond reciprocity into radical giving.

God's ways are not our ways.

So let us commit our way to the Lord together

until our righteousness shines like the dawn and our justice like high noon.

Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in bold.

✦ When this symbol precedes an element of the service, please rise in body or spirit.

✦ Hymn No. 316

Where Charity and Love Prevail

✦ Call to Confession

Scripture says that if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But, if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. So, in humility and faith, let us confess our sins to God.

✦ Prayer of Confession (Unison)

O Christ, the economy of your love is beautiful, expending goodness and extending lines of forgiveness beyond our imagining. The economy of our love is stingy and crooked. We invest love where it can be repaid. We spend mercy where it yields gain. We advance blessing we can bank on. We hold grudges with interest. We do all of this with no recognition of how deeply indebted we are to you. Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, we pray with our whole hearts. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

✦ Declaration of Forgiveness

This saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Jesus bore our sins in his body on the cross, that we might be dead to sin and alive to all that's good.

Friends, believe the Good News:

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen

✦ Gloria Patri

We Share God's Word

Time with the Children

Debra Owens

Prayer of Illumination

Matt Kurtas

First Scripture

Genesis 45:3-11, 15

(p. 42)

The words of scripture, inspired by God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

“Our Identity”

Rev. Rebecca Mihm

Organ Interlude

✦ Hymn No. 693

Though I May Speak

We Give Thanks to God

✦ Affirmation of Faith

4.107 Heidelberg Catechism

God wants us to love our neighbors as ourselves, to be patient, peace-loving, gentle, merciful, and friendly toward them, to protect them from harm as much as we can, and to do good even to our enemies.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Call for the Offering

Offering and Offertory

Let There Be Music

Gordon Young

✦ Doxology

✦ Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

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; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

We Go Forth to Serve

✦ Hymn No. 766

The Church of Christ Cannot Be Bound

✦ Charge and Benediction

Postlude

Joy Eternal

Garrett Parker

POSTLUDE

Please remember at the close of the service, the Postlude is a time to silently reflect on God and the mission to which we are called. We ask that you please remain silent and seated until the music has ended.

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Introit: “Healer of Our Every Ill” from *Glory to God* #795. Text & Music: Marty Haugen. Text & Music: © 1987 *GIA Publications, Inc.* Livestreamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-727612, all rights reserved.

1st Hymn: “Where Charity and Love Prevail” from *Glory to God* #31. Text: Latin, 8th cent.; trans. Omer Westendorf, 1960, alt. Music: Lucius Chapin, 1812. Text: © 1960, ren. © 1988 *World Library Publication*. Livestreamed and reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-727612, all rights reserved.

2nd Hymn: “Though I May Speak” from *Glory to God* #693. Text: Hal H. Hopson, 1972. Music: English folk melody; adapt. Hal H. Hopson, 1972. Text & Music: © 1972 *Hope Publishing Company*. Livestreamed and reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-727612, all rights reserved.

Offertory: “Let There Be Music,” Gordon Young. Text & Music: © 1986 *Harold Flammer Music*, a division of *Shawnee Press, Inc.* Livestreamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-727612, all rights reserved.

3rd Hymn: “The Church of Christ Cannot Be Bound” from *Glory to God* #766. Text: Adam M. L. Tice, 2005. Music: African American spiritual; *Jubilee Songs*, 1884; adapt. Harry T. Burleigh, 1940. Text: © 2005 *GIA Publications, Inc.* Livestreamed and reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-727612, all rights reserved.

Postlude: “Joy Eternal,” Garrett Parker. © 2004 *Lorenz Publishing Co.*, a division of *The Lorenz Corporation*. Livestreamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-727612, all rights reserved.

WELCOME VISITORS

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church. We are glad to provide hybrid and virtual worship services for this Sunday. Services are currently livestreamed on our Facebook page (First Presbyterian Church of Clarion) in real time, then archived to our website and YouTube channel.

At First Presbyterian Church our mission is to worship, grow, and serve as followers of Jesus. From our youngest to our oldest, we seek to worship God in our actions, grow in God's love, and serve God's people in our community and around the world. We hope that you will come join us so we may personally extend a warm welcome. If you have any questions or particular prayer needs, please feel free to contact the church office at 226-8145 between 9 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday.

For more information visit our website at www.clarionfirstpresby.org.

Find us on Facebook! (First Presbyterian Church of Clarion)

Video recordings of past sermons may be viewed by clicking the "Worship" link on our home page at www.clarionfirstpresby.org or a phone app is available at sermon.net (look for First Presbyterian Church—Clarion.) You can also choose to listen to an audio version. Simply pick the option that works best for you. Videos of Sunday worship are also posted on our Facebook page (see above).

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CHURCH STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

Pastor: Rev. Rebecca Mihm
Organist: Jean Mitrosky
Director of Music: Bonnie Champion
Treasurer: Ann Brooks
Secretary: Debra Owens
Sexton: Mike Hetrick
Sound Engineer: Josh Deitz
Video Engineer: Dan Willy

Ruling Elders:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Class of 2025:</u> | <u>Class of 2026:</u> | <u>Class of 2027:</u> |
| Jeff Deitz | Norma Kooman | Bill Champion |
| Jeff Kapp | Dave Larimer | Matt Kurtas |
| Kurt Nesbitt | Cindy Stants | Kathy Larimer |

Deacons:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Class of 2025:</u> | <u>Class of 2026:</u> | <u>Class of 2027:</u> |
| Kim Lewis | Robin Cable | Barb Beggs |
| Lee Seitz | Tamalyn Goble | Stacy Hoffman |
| Lori Smith | Joey Kunselman | Bert Louder |

WORSHIP NOTES

Pastor: Rev. Rebecca Mihm
Lector: Matt Kurtas
Time with Children: Debra Owens
Director of Music: Bonnie Champion
Organist: Jean Mitrosky
Sound Engineer: Josh Deitz/Jeff Kapp
Video Engineer: Dan Willy/Kurt Nesbitt
Acolytes: Clara Stants, Jeremy Willy, Andrew Scovel, Nathan Scovel, Sawyer Kunselman, Audrina Champion
Ushers in Charge: Cindy Stants, Stu and Stacy Hoffman

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

10:00 a.m. Worship
 11:00 a.m. Sunday School
 11:00 a.m. Choir Practice

WEEKLY DEPOSIT SUMMARY

2/16/2025

Weekly Contributions

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Envelope Contributions | \$7,349.00 |
| Miscellaneous Cash Contributions | \$43.00 |
| Per Capita | <u>\$40.00</u> |
| Total Contributions | \$7,432.00 |

Weekly Donations

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Christian Education | \$100.00 |
| Pentecost | \$40.00 |
| One Great Hour of Sharing | \$40.00 |
| Christmas Joy | \$40.00 |
| Presbyterian Disaster Assistance | \$50.00 |
| Men's Fellowship | \$182.00 |
| Parking Permits | \$375.00 |
| Food Bags | \$525.00 |
| Caring Callers | <u>\$100.00</u> |
| Total | \$1,452.00 |
| Total | \$8,884.00 |

NOTES:

THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBY

Monday, February 24

7:00 p.m. Evening Circle, Cindy Stants

Tuesday, February 25

6:00 p.m. NA Meeting, Step Down Room

Wednesday, February 26

12:00 p.m. Advent Study Continues, SS Start Room

7:00 p.m. Session, Chapel

8:00 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous, Step Down Room

Thursday, February 27

5:00 p.m. Echoes of Joy Bell Rehearsal

6:00 p.m. Joyful Bells Rehearsal

Next Sunday, March 2

10:00 a.m. Worship

11:00 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Adult Choir Practice

Wednesday, March 5 - Ash Wednesday

7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Evening Circle will meet Monday, February 24th at 7:00 p.m. We will be meeting at Cindy Stants' home.

Roma Kline & Wayne L. Fulton Scholarship Fund applications are now available in the church office and on the Resources page of our website. The deadline to apply is March 31. The Fulton Scholarship is available to church members and children of church members who are full time students pursuing a bachelors or associate degree at an accredited college or university; both first year and subsequent year students. Applicants must have a 3.0 GPA or higher in high school or during their previous year of enrollment. Applicants are eligible to receive this scholarship twice. Donations to the Fulton Scholarship Fund are always accepted. Please make checks payable to "The Presbyterian Foundation", designate Fulton Scholarship Fund on the notation line and send to the church office.

Coat Rack Ministry: As the weather gets colder, please check your closet to see if there are any coats or boots that you are willing to donate. The need is great as witnessed by the turnover each week. If you are in need or know someone who is in need, please take a coat!

ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONTINUED)



PRAYER LIST

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Randy Cable | Rev. Robin Sharp |
| Margy Port | Kathy Meley |
| Shirley McKinley | Shawn Martin |
| Pauline Henry | Sammy DiBernardo |
| Ruth Ann Minich | Clayton Hayden & family |
| Marcia Rearick | John McConnell |
| All our homebound members | Kay Fye |
| | Kate Bowser |
| Mary Biser | Mike Hiles |
| Charlotte Hartman | Ryan Kemmer and family |
| Ben McKinley | Dave Schirmer |
| Anthony Louder | |
| Pat Hargest | <u>Bereaved</u> |
| Alexandra Sharrar | Please remember the friends |
| Dr. Shannon Penland | and family of: |
| Mary Kay Arth | Bertie Gibson |
| Mason Martin and family | |
| Angelo Gehenio | <u>Around the World</u> |
| Joe Amato | Everyone serving in the US |
| Rob Summerville | Military |
| Evie Renwick | Gitwe Congregation in |
| Cori | Rwanda, our faith partners |
| Chuck Reninger | |
| Grace Carroll | <u>Homebound Member</u> |
| Kay Caller | <u>of the Week</u> |
| Dan Clark | |
| Amy Benhoff | Marcella Seitz |
| Archer Kunselman | Shipperville Health Care |
| Ryan Cornicki | & Rehab, Rm 106 |
| Jerry Deitz | 512 S. Paint Blvd. |
| Greg Rhoads | Shipperville, PA 16524 |
| Don Neiderriter | Marcella is new to the Caring |
| Michael Kurtas, Jr. | Caller's list. She is Lee Seitz's |
| Tom Minich | mother-in-law. |

FEBRUARY 23, 2025
SEVENTH SUNDAY
AFTER EPIPHANY

taking
faith
home

Showing love and mercy is a lifelong journey.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

| | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Sunday | Luke 6:27-38 | Love for enemies |
| Monday | Genesis 45:3-11, 15 | Joseph reveals himself |
| Tuesday | 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50 | The resurrection body |
| Wednesday | Genesis 43:16-34 | Joseph is merciful and kind |
| Thursday | Psalms 25:6-10 | A prayer for guidance |
| Friday | 1 John 2:7-17 | A new commandment |
| Saturday | Psalms 37:1-11, 39-40 | Trust the Lord |
| Sunday | Luke 9:28-43a | Jesus is transfigured |

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Luke 6:36-37 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Merciful God, help us to follow the way of Jesus and do to others as we would want others to do to us. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, may this food give us strength to overcome anger and anxiety with love and mercy, through Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God show you mercy and forgiveness.

FEBRUARY 23, 2025
HYMN OF THE WEEK
*There's a Wideness in
God's Mercy*

taking
faith
home

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- If someone stole from you, what do you think should happen to them?
- What is difficult about showing mercy to those who hurt you? What are the benefits of showing kindness?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 6:27-38.

Even Jesus understands that his words to "love your enemies; do good to those who hate you" (v.27) sound challenging and are very hard to do. People don't want to hear about kindness to those who don't deserve it. No one wants to be abused or walked on. How do we experience the blessings of showing mercy, forgiveness, and love for our enemies? We are not going to learn it from a desire for power and dominance. Power can too easily lead to abuse of power. There are too many wars, bullies at school, and violence on the streets and in the news. It will take a lifetime for the disciples of Jesus to learn the importance—even power—of mercy from the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. That is why Jesus' sermon in this reading is a call to a lifetime of work. We will have to listen and try to believe it and yet fail many times along the way.

Discuss: When have you seen mercy and forgiveness work for good?

Pray: Almighty God, be our comfort and strength as we learn what it means to show mercy, forgiveness, and love for enemies. In Christ Jesus we pray, amen.

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you show forgiveness to someone who hurt you?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Psalms 37:1-11, 39-40 encourages us to trust the Lord when we are mistreated. Feeling mistreated by others can make us feel hurt and our relationship with them changes. Write a list of people who you have hurt or have hurt you in the past. Say the Lord's Prayer. Pause for a moment of silence after "forgive us our trespasses [sins or debts] as we forgive those who trespass against us." Then read the names you have written before finishing the prayer.