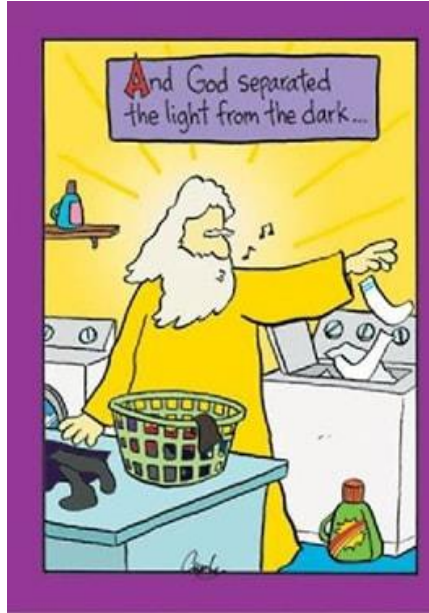


# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

11 WASHINGTON STREET CUMBERLAND, MD 21502



## SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY: SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

APRIL 16, 2023

11:00 AM

Bulletin (noun);

1. Something to read during the sermon;
2. A fan used in churches without air conditioning;
3. Your receipt for attending church

OPENING VOLUNTARY

EASTER MEDLEY  
JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

11:00 AM

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT

EASTER BELLS  
THE SANCTUARY CHOIR

"ENGELBERG"

### \* CALL TO WORSHIP & PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Joy is loose, In the wiggles of the children,  
**The whispers of the youth, The smiles of the adults.**

We praise God for this glorious day!

**Let the praise break forth in the most unlikely places and in silly ways.**

Joy and praise fill our hearts and in our songs

**Let the laughter be deep, for we are God's people.**

Let us pray -

O Great Laughing God, we come into your presence with joy and longing to be surprised. We thank you that you have given to us the gift of laughter and delight.

These things give hints as to the nature of your purpose for us and for all the earth.

May we find that in giving up to laughter there is healing and hope and abundance and blessing.

Tickle our souls with the brush of your Spirit to renew our worship and our living. Amen.

\* HYMN

GOD REST YE MERRY SINNERS

"GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMAN"

God bless you merry sinner, you're forgiven it is true;  
Remember Christ your Savior has lived and died for you,  
and lives again as King of Kings, of saint and sinner, too.

*(Refrain) Oh, tidings of Easter peace and joy, peace and joy.  
Oh, tidings of Easter peace and joy.*

In Jerusalem at Calvary that dismal Friday morn,  
amid the pain and suffering eternal life was born.  
It came with arms outstretched to us, right through the curtain torn.

*(Refrain)*

So sing an alleluia, for our Savior's victory,  
and shout to all "Hosanna!" that we have been set free  
from sin and death and devil's grip throughout eternity.

*(Refrain)*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Amused God, you know better than we do. You know what important people we believe we are. Believing we have to be serious all the time, we miss out on the joy of your creation. Choosing to feast on the pain of the world, we skip the picnic offered in paradise. Clinging to the despair which is our best friend, we ignore Jesus, who can bring us home to your heart. Forgive us, Heart of Joy, and make us open to the startling, and upside-down, ways in which you work. Fill us with Easter's laughter; fill us with your healing joy; fill us with the love poured into us through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

*(Silence for personal prayer and reflection.)*

RESPONSE

YOU'RE FORGIVEN AND YOU KNOW IT

"HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT"

You're Forgiven and You Know it Clap Your Hands *(clap, clap)*  
You're Forgiven and You Know it Clap Your Hands *(clap, clap)*  
You're Forgiven and You Know, God's love will surely show it.  
You're Forgiven and You Know it Clap Your Hands *(clap, clap)*

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PASSING OF THE PEACE AND CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

*Please stand and greet those in the pews near you. Send a wave to the camera for those joining online.  
We recognize how important we are to each other; we belong to each other and are stronger together.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

PSALM 16

Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.<sup>2</sup> I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."

<sup>3</sup>As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble ones in whom is all my delight.

<sup>4</sup>Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.

<sup>6</sup>The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

<sup>7</sup>I bless the LORD, who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.

<sup>8</sup>I keep the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.

<sup>10</sup>For you do not give me up to Sheol or let your faithful one see the Pit.

<sup>11</sup>You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

ANTHEM

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR  
THE SANCTUARY CHOIR

That Easter day with joy was bright;  
The sun shone out with fairer light  
When, to their longing eyes restore,  
The apostles saw their risen Lord.

Unto us a child is born!  
King of all creation,  
Came he to a world forlorn,  
The Lord of every nation.

From every weapon death can wield,  
Your own redeemed forever shield;  
O Lord of all, with us  
abide in this our joyful Eastertide.

Cradled in a stall was he  
With sleepy cows and asses;  
But the very beasts could see,  
That he all men surpasses.

SECOND READING

JOHN 20:19-31

<sup>19</sup>When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." <sup>22</sup>When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

<sup>24</sup>But Thomas (who was called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

<sup>26</sup>A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>27</sup>Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." <sup>28</sup>Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup>Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." <sup>30</sup>Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup>But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

SERMON

"WHAT A JOKE"

REV. ALISON PETERS

\* HYMN

FOR THE HUMOR OF THIS DAY

"FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH"

For the humor of this day, for the joy this season brings,  
For the joke that Easter plays on all dour and deadly things.

*(Refrain)* Lord of all, to you we raise, Joyful hymns of heart-felt praise.

For the freedom of release from the bonds of vanity  
Won by Christ who brings our peace and restores our sanity. *(Refrain)*

Though our faults are numerous, in pretension we excel;  
You must find us humorous; help us share that view as well. *(Refrain)*

If, O Lord, we learn to laugh at our pride when it is bruised;  
At each silly goof and gaffe, we shall always be amused. *(Refrain)*

INVITATION TO OFFERING

*(Please place all tithes and offerings as well as any orange prayer request cards in the offering plate.)*

\* DOXOLOGY

JOHNNY APPLESEED GRACE

Ooooooooooooooh, The Lord is good to me  
And so I thank the Lord. For giving me the things I need;  
The sun and the rain and the apple seed. The Lord is good to me. Amen!

\* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE CONCLUDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

\* HYMN #539

WE WILL GO OUT WITH JOY

“WE WILL GO OUT WITH JOY”

\* BENEDICTION

\* RESPONSE AFTER BENEDICTION #80

YOU SHALL GO OUT WITH JOY

“THE TREES OF THE FIELD”

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace, the mountains and the hills will break forth before you;  
there'll be shouts of joy, and all the trees of the field will clap, will clap their hands. And all the trees of the field will clap  
their hands; the tress of the field will clap their hands while you go out with joy.

POSTLUDE

JOY  
JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

\* When this symbol precedes an element of the service, if you are able, please stand.  
Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in bold.

### This Morning's Worship Leaders

Preacher.....	Rev. Alison Peters
Liturgist.....	David Stickler
Director of Music Ministries.....	Judith Brown
The Director of the JoyBells.....	Julie Courtney
Musicians.....	The Sanctuary Choir and The JoyBells
Audio/Video Technicians.....	Joe Aurigemma and Eric Ringler
Ushers.....	Kathy Dowell and John Mullan

**HISTORY OF HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY:** Today's celebration is based on an old custom begun by the early Greek Christians. For centuries in Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant countries, the week following Easter Sunday, including "Bright Sunday" (the Sunday after Easter), was observed by the faithful as "days of joy and laughter" with parties and picnics to celebrate Jesus' resurrection. The festivities included jokes, singing, and dancing.

In 1988, the Fellowship of Merry Christians began encouraging churches to resurrect this practice on the Sunday after Easter, often known as Low Sunday because of the usual letdown after the celebration and crowds at Easter Services. Many churches responded enthusiastically, naming it "Holy Humor Sunday", and the practice has continued to spread since then. Please feel free to join in the spirit of the day and feel free to laugh and joke as we celebrate this season of Eastertide!

## OUR STAFF

Teaching Elder/Pastor.....	Rev. Alison Peters
Director of Music Ministries .....	Judith Brown
Executive Administrative Assistant.....	Brittany Jackson
Sexton.....	Zach Dodge
Sound Tech/Security.....	Joe Aurigemma
Audio/Video Technician.....	Eric Ringler

## MISSION STATEMENT

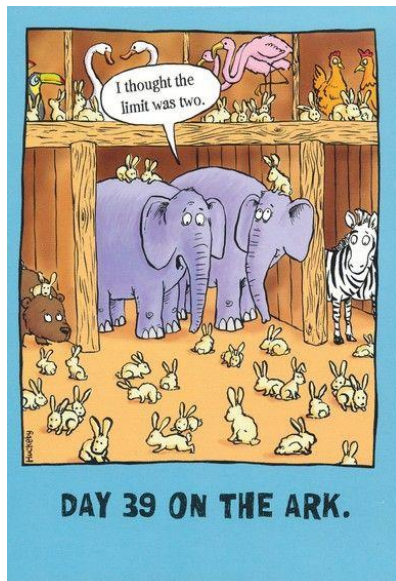
Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we worship God and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by loving our neighbors and promoting peacemaking, justice and care of the earth.

## VISION STATEMENT

We strive to be a community grounded in the good news of God's love in Christ where all of God's children are:

- Welcomed and cherished
- Called to worship, learn and grow together in faith, and
- Sent to share God's love and justice with a broken and hurting world.

-Adopted by the Session on September 17, 2015



## GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

**WELCOME:** A very warm welcome to everyone who comes to worship with us here at First Presbyterian Church! We are proud of being a “Big Tent Church” where everyone is welcome to join us in worshiping and serving our Lord, Jesus Christ. We welcome and encourage worshipers of all races, all women, men, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, all political parties, and all walks of life. We welcome you to worship with us.

**WELCOME VISITORS:** We are glad you found your way to First Presbyterian Church of Cumberland. For more information about opportunities to worship, learn and serve with us, we encourage you to visit the table outside the church office. You can also learn more about us at [www.fpc-cumberland.org](http://www.fpc-cumberland.org) and [www.facebook.com/First.Pres.Cumberland](https://www.facebook.com/First.Pres.Cumberland).

**CHILDREN IN WORSHIP:** We welcome you to bring your child with you to worship. We have "worship bags" in the back of the sanctuary that include materials for drawing and coloring, as well as Bible stories and Bible word-find games. Our "Young Children in Worship" pew card contains information about why young children should be encouraged to come to worship and how parents and others can engage them more fully in worship. **Nursery care is provided during worship for all children 4 years of age and younger!**

**THE PRAY-GROUND** is a special space in the sanctuary for our youngest children and their families. All families are welcome to come and sit in the right front pews with their children seated on the rug. This front row seat will allow God's youngest children to participate in the service in a place where they can see and hear best. There will be activities provided so that their little hands are kept busy while participating in worship. “Jesus said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it’” (Mark 10:14-15).

**FRIENDSHIP PADS:** Please locate and sign the red pad in your pew, tear off the sheet and place it in the collection plate during the offering. This important practice allows us to be mindful of new folks and long-time members as well, and is a good way to learn (or remember) the names of those with whom you are seated. **If you are visitor, please fill out the “Welcome to First Presbyterian Church” card in the pew rack and put it in the offering plate when it comes by during the service.**

**PERSONAL LISTENING DEVICES:** (amplifiers) are available in the back of the church for use during worship. Please see an usher for assistance.

**SANCTUARY FLOWERS:** The flowers in the sanctuary are given to the glory of God in congratulations with joy for Brian and Kristin Mathews on the greatly anticipated birth of their son on April 13th, name to be shared soon. Big sister Charlotte will turn 2 years on the 17th. Very blessed grandparents are Carolyn and Tom Mathews. Please contact Michael Levitas or the church office if you would like to sponsor flour in memory or in honor of someone. You may specify white or whole wheat. Wheat flour money will be directed to the Special Ministries Fund.

**SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS:** Please use orange prayer request cards in the back of the sanctuary by the bulletins to share any joys and concerns. Place the card in the offering plate once you have completed your request. The ushers will bring them to the pastor during the offering.

**PASTOR ALISON'S AVAILABILITY:** Pastor Alison is available when requested or informed of a need. If you are aware of someone in need of a visit or phone call, please call or text her to let her know. *[Fridays are generally her day off and she will respond when she is available.]* Ways to contact Pastor Alison: call, text, or email: 814-715-

1681 / [revalisonpeters@gmail.com](mailto:revalisonpeters@gmail.com) To help with scheduling, please reach out to the Church Office:

Brittany Jackson: 301-777-3700 [firstpresbyteriansecretary@gmail.com](mailto:firstpresbyteriansecretary@gmail.com)

**MOUNTAINSIDE BAROQUE CONCERT:** Join Mountainside Baroque this Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00 PM as the present “Hark, How the Songsters: Purcell’s Music for Court and Chapel” at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church. (Our very own, Pastor Alison will be singing in the concert.) Included are Henry Purcell’s birthday ode for Queen Mary, “Come ye Sons of Art,” and the “Jubilate Deo” written for Westminster Abbey. Both works include music for the Baroque trumpet performed by Nashville resident Kathryn Adduci, considered one of the best baroque trumpeters in the nation. She will be joined by orchestra, soloists and choir in recreating this wonderful music. First half treats will be selections from his theatre music, including “King Arthur” and “The Fairy Queen.”

Audience members are invited to come early on Sunday around 3:30pm to hear the pre-concert talk designed to put the music in context. Tickets for “Hark, How the Songsters” may be purchased online at the Mountainside website or in person at the Allegany Arts Council.

## ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

RULING ELDERS: CARL BELT & CINDY CORLEY

ANNUAL GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE:	as of April 9, 2023
Total 2023 Pledges Promised	\$219,970.00
Pre-paid pledges	\$ 13,282.00
<u>2023 Pledge Balance Promised</u>	<u>\$206,688.00</u>
Pledge Balance Received Year-to-Date	\$60,669.00
Pledge Balance Promised Year-to-Date	\$58,490.00
Over/(Under)	\$ 2,178.00

## FAITH FORMATION

RULING ELDERS: JOSH GILHART & ANN KELLERMEYER

**BEING PRESBYTERIAN: FOUNDATIONS OF PRESBYTERIAN DISCIPLESHIP:** The Faith Formation committee is looking to host a two session class on the basics of Presbyterian Discipleship. This class will be perfect for newer guests and members looking to learn more about what it means to be a Presbyterian, as well as anyone looking for a refresh. If you are interested please speak with Joshua Gilhart.

## MISSION

RULING ELDERS: AARON HENDRICKSON & BRENDA LUGER

**THE CITY'S DAY OF LET'S BEAUTIFY CUMBERLAND-DAY OF CARING AND SHARING IN MAY IS FAST APPROACHING.** Those who signed up to help with our street planting and mulching project need to sign the volunteer form! If you signed up to volunteer, or would still like too, please see Aaron Hendrickson, directly after the service in the parlor. Today is the deadline for anyone to sign up!

# SESSION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## CLERK OF SESSION

Carolyn Mathews

## ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Carl Belt & Cindy Corley

## BUILDING & GROUNDS

Bob Courtney & Evan Swanger

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE & OUTREACH

Mikayla Dodge & Linda Mellon

## FAITH FORMATION

Josh Gilhart & Ann Kellermeyer

## MISSION

Aaron Hendrickson & Brenda Luger

## WORSHIP & MUSIC

Sharon Kazary & Mike Levitas

## WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK:

### MONDAY, APRIL (17)

7:00 PM CHORAL SOCIETY REHEARSAL

### TUESDAY, APRIL (18)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL (19)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

10:30 AM STAFF MEETING IN REV. PETERS' OFFICE

7:00 PM N.A. GROUP MEETING IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

7:30 PM SANCTUARY CHOIR REHEARSAL

### THURSDAY, APRIL (20)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

7:00 PM SESSION MEETING IN THE GATHERING PLACE

### FRIDAY, APRIL (21)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

### SATURDAY, APRIL (22)

10:00 AM PEO MEETING IN THE PARLOR

### SUNDAY, APRIL (23)

10:00 AM ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

11:00 AM SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY