

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
11 WASHINGTON STREET CUMBERLAND, MD 21502



SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY: FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT
MARCH 15, 2026 11:00 AM

GATHERING

OPENING VOLUNTARY

LAMB OF GOD, PURE AND HOLY
JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

JOHANN PACHELBEL (1653-1706)

11:00 AM

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT

THE LORD'S MY SHEPHERD, I'LL NOT WANT
THE SANCTUARY CHOIR

"CRIMOND"

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want; he makes me down to lie in pastures green;
he leadeth me the quiet waters by.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, yet will I fear none ill,
for thou art with me; and thy rod and staff me comfort still.

* CALL TO WORSHIP & PRAYER FOR THE DAY

God listens beyond boundaries.

God hears voices from the margins.

The outsider speaks, and heaven responds.

Let us worship the God who welcomes bold faith.

Let us pray -

God of widening mercy, you are not confined by our categories or limits. Open our ears to voices we have dismissed.

Open our hearts to faith that unsettles us. Teach us to receive your truth even when it comes from unexpected lips.

Through Jesus Christ, who listens and heals. Amen.

* HYMN #336

WE GATHER TOGETHER

"KREMSER"

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, we confess that we prefer comfortable voices and familiar stories. We resist interruption. We overlook those who persist at the edges of our vision. Forgive us for drawing boundaries where you extend mercy. Give us humility to listen and courage to be changed. Amen.

(Silence for personal prayer and reflection.)

RESPONSE #695

CHANGE MY HEART, O GOD

"CHANGE MY HEART"

Change my heart, O God; make it ever true. Change my heart, O God; May I be like you.

You are the Potter; I am the clay. Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

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.*

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

RUTH 1:7-18

⁷ So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. ⁸ But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. ⁹ The Lord grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. ¹⁰ They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." ¹¹ But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters. Why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? ¹² Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, ¹³ would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the Lord has turned against me." ¹⁴ Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her. ¹⁵ So she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." ¹⁶ But Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you, to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people and your God my God. ¹⁷ Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do thus to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!" ¹⁸ When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her

ANTHEM

SICUT CERVUS DESIDERAT

G.P. DE PALESTRINA (1525-1594)

The Sanctuary Choir

As the deer panteth after the water brooks
So panteth my soul after thee, O God,

SECOND READING

MARK 7:24-30

²⁴ From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, ²⁵ but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." ²⁸ But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." ²⁹ Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." ³⁰ And when she went home, she found the child lying on the bed and the demon gone.

SERMON

"WORDS USUALLY UNSPOKEN"

REV. ALISON PETERS

* HYMN #435

THERE'S A WIDENESS IN GOD'S MERCY

"IN BABILONE"

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

INVITATION TO OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY SOLO

SONG IN E FLAT MAJOR

CÉASR FRANCK (1822-1890)

JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

* DOXOLOGY #300

WE ARE ONE IN THE SPIRIT (Verse 4)

"THEY'LL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS"

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come,
and all praise to Christ Jesus, God's only Son, and all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one:
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love; yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

* UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Receive these gifts, O God, as signs that we trust you with our voices and our lives.
Use them to loosen chains, amplify truth, and to answer cries we have yet to hear. Amen.

ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF ELDERS Bill Buttermark, Kathy Getty, Eric Ringler and Deborah Roper (Class of 2029);
 Julie Courtney (Class of 2028); Linda Mellon (Class of 2027)
 SENTENCES OF SCRIPTURE AND STATEMENT ON ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION
 PROFESSION OF FAITH
 THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM
 CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS
 PRAYER OF ORDINATION AND LAYING ON OF HANDS
 DECLARATION
 WELCOME

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE CONCLUDING WITH THE LORD’S PRAYER- Ecumenical Version

(You are welcome to pray the Lord's Prayer with the version most familiar to you.)

**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 #203 JESU, JESU, FILL US WITH YOUR LOVE “CHEREPONI”

* BENEDICTION

* RESPONSE AFTER BENEDICTION #306 BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS (Verse 1) “DENNIS”

At FPC there is a tradition of joining hands while singing “Blest Be the Tie That Binds” to close our service.

You are welcome to do whatever feels comfortable during this time. There is no wrong way to participate in worship!

**Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.
 The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

POSTLUDE O DAY OF JOY AND WONDER “JONATHAN’S TUNE”

JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

Reflective Text:

*We too may know your power; your courage makes us strong.
 Your love, your joy, your patience can all to us belong.
 Come now and dwell within us, O Comforter divine.
 Come to our hearts, and keep them; there let your brightness shine.*

* 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.....Michael Levitas
 Director of Music Ministries/Organist/Pianist.....Judith Brown
 Musicians.....The Sanctuary Choir
 Audio/Video Technicians.....Joe Aurigemma and Eric Ringler
 Ushers.....Miranda Forbes and Cathy Levitas
 Nursery.....Kathy Dowell and Linda Mellon

YOUNG DISCIPLES TRAINING: Faith Formation will be hosting a “training” for our young disciples today, following worship. Members of our team will demonstrate and explain how our youth may become more involved in our service. Pizza will be served! Our young disciples will learn how to assist in:

- the Chiming of the hour
- Ushering
- as an Acolyte
- Childcare (as an assistant)
- Serving Communion
- After worship clean up
- Tech Support



WELCOME: A very warm welcome to everyone who comes to worship with us here at First Presbyterian Church! We are proud to be 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 to join us. 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 and www.facebook.com/First.Pres.Cumberland.

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.

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS: Please use the orange or blue prayer request cards, which are located in the back of the sanctuary by the bulletins to share any joys or 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. The prayer request cards are also available in the pew racks.



CHILDREN IN WORSHIP: You are welcome 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 "To Families with Young Children" 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. **Childcare is provided during worship as needed! Please see an usher if you have any questions.**

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).

SANCTUARY FLOWERS: Please contact Michael Levitas or the church office if you would like to sponsor flowers for a special occasion such as a birthday or anniversary or in memory or honor of a friend or loved one. You may specify live or silk flowers.

PASTOR'S SCHEDULE

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: 814-715-

1681/revalisonpeters@gmail.com

To help with scheduling,

please reach out to the Church Office:

301-777-3700/firstpresbyteriansecretary@gmail.com

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

RULING ELDERS: CARL BELT & CINDY CORLEY

ANNUAL GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE:	as of March 8, 2026
Total 2026 Pledges Promised	\$271,126.00
Pre-paid pledges	\$ 70,507.00
<u>2026 Pledge Balance Promised</u>	<u>\$200,618.00</u>
Pledge Balance Received Year-to-Date	\$ 53,202.00
Pledge Balance Promised Year-to-Date	\$ 38,926.00
Over/(Under)	\$ 14,275.00

ONLINE GIVING





MONDAY, MARCH (16)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
7:00 PM CHORAL SOCIETY REHEARSAL

TUESDAY, MARCH (17)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

WEDNESDAY, MARCH (18)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
12:15 PM STAFF MEETING
6:30 PM JOYBELLS REHEARSAL
7:00 PM NA MEETING

THURSDAY, MARCH (19)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
5:00 PM LENTEN BIBLE STUDY
7:00 PM SESSION MEETING

FRIDAY, MARCH (20)

7:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

SATURDAY, MARCH (21)

SUNDAY, MARCH (22)

9:45 AM ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
11:00 AM SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL – LENT: The Adult Sunday School class is studying Walter Brueggeman’s *Interrupting Silence, God’s Command to Speak Out* during Lent. “Silence is a complex matter. It can refer to awe before unutterable holiness, but it can also refer to coercion where some voices are silenced in the interest of control by the dominant voices. It is that latter silence that is the primary focus of the studies.” Please join us! Let Brittany or Ann Kellermeyer (akellermeyer@me.com) know or just show up. Books are in Brittany’s office.

THE FAITH FORMATION TEAM WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU! We are hoping to offer more faith-forming and faith-affirming activities in 2026 for all ages and we would love to hear your ideas. No suggestion is too big or too small. We have placed a suggestion box in the back of the sanctuary. Please use the box to share your thoughts and ideas with us throughout the year. We are looking forward to planning meaningful and fun events based on your input.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING: On Sunday, April 5th, we will have the opportunity to contribute to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. In a world of disaster, hunger, and oppression millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity.

The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and the Self-Development of People Program are all supported by the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. These three programs all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope. Please give from your abundance in this time of rebirth.

Jared Boxes

The Mission and Faith Formation Committees are teaming up to provide a wonderful service opportunity during this Lenten season. Beginning March 1, 2026 we will be adopting *Jared Boxes*. Jared Boxes include small toys and activities that will be given to kids in the hospital to keep them occupied while waiting for procedures to start, at a visit to the Emergency Department, etc. UPMC Western Maryland accepts Jared Boxes, so our effort will stay within our local community!

At our Palm Sunday Celebration, we will have our young disciples decorate the boxes. We are asking the congregation to assist in this service project by filling a box. Much like previous mission projects, (Angel tree, Salvation Army stockings, etc.) you may choose a specific gender and age group and are responsible for filling that box. This is also a great opportunity to partner with another church member to create a box together. (Purchasing items to fill a box generally costs \$10 - \$15.)

In the main entrance hallway, you will find clear boxes labeled with a designated age and gender of a child. Take a box and suggested items flyer with you, fill it with items from the suggested list, or be creative and add your own ideas! Add a short note on the included card and return the box any time before Palm Sunday to the church office or to Kelsey Gallo. Examples of filled boxes are also available

EASTER FLOWERS 2026

If you would like to purchase flowers to decorate the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday, please indicate your selection below. Please also choose if you wish to take your flowers home after the service, or if you wish them to be given to one of our in-home or nursing care members. Please indicate your selection and total below. **Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church and the form returned by Sunday, March 22nd so that your dedication may be listed in the Easter bulletin.**

	Price Each	Quantity	Total
Tulips	\$7.00	_____	\$ _____
Hyacinths	\$7.00	_____	\$ _____
Lilies	\$8.00	_____	\$ _____
Chrysanthemums	\$8.00	_____	\$ _____
	Total	_____	\$ _____

My floral gift is in honor/memory of: _____

Given to the Glory of God by: _____

Please indicate: I would like to take my flowers home _____ I would like to donate the flowers _____

EASTER MUSIC 2026

You may also celebrate Easter by contributing to the Special Music Fund. This fund is separate from the budget and is used to pay guest musicians who provide special music during worship on Easter and throughout the year.

Note: Special Music contributions may also be given any time of the year.

Special Music Contribution \$ _____

My Special Music gift is in honor/memory of: _____

Given to the Glory of God by: _____

Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church and the form returned to the church no later than next Sunday, March 22nd so that your dedication may be listed in the Easter bulletin.

SOUP SALE FUNDRAISER

Benefiting First Presbyterian's 2026
Learning Camp Mission trip to
South Dakota - July 25th-Aug 1st



PICK UP TIMES:
SUNDAY, MARCH 22 12-1
MONDAY, MARCH 23 9-12

Soups Quart - \$10 or Pint - \$6

Chicken Tortilla (GF, DF)

White Chicken Chili (GF)

Traditional Red Chili (GF, DF)

Vegetarian Vegetable (V, GF, DF)

Curried Butternut Squash (V, GF, DF)
(Community Cafe's recipe!)

Rolls

Pack of 2 - \$2

Pack of 6 - \$5

GF = Gluten Free

DF = Dairy Free

V = Vegetarian

**ORDERS AND PAYMENT
DUE MARCH 15TH**

2026 SOUP SALE ORDER FORM

NAME _____

EMAIL _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

PICK UP DATE:

SUNDAY, MARCH 22ND 12-1 ____

MONDAY, MARCH 23RD 9-12 ____

	# Quart(s)	x \$10	# Pint(s)	x \$6
CHICKEN TORTILLA (GF, DF)	_____	_____	_____	_____
WHITE CHICKEN CHILI (GF)	_____	_____	_____	_____
TRADITIONAL RED CHILI (GF, DF)	_____	_____	_____	_____
VEGETARIAN VEGETABLE (V, GF, DF)	_____	_____	_____	_____
CURRIED BUTTERNUT SQUASH (V, GF, DF)	_____	_____	_____	_____

Quart Total \$ _____ Pint Total \$ _____

#

2 ROLLS - \$2 _____ x \$2 _____

6 ROLLS - \$5 _____ x \$5 _____

Roll Total \$ _____

Order Total \$ Due _____

All proceeds benefit First Presbyterian's 2026 Learning Camp Mission trip to South Dakota. Interested in learning more or volunteering? email Pastor Alison revalisonpeters@gmail.com

Checks made payable to:
First Presbyterian Church with "Dakota" in memo line

ORDERS AND PAYMENT DUE BY MARCH 15

Return to First Presbyterian Church (11 Washington Street)
or email to firstpresbyteriansecretary@gmail.com



Palm Sunday Celebration

The Faith Formation team invites you to attend a pancake breakfast to kick off Holy Week! Pancakes, yogurt and a variety of toppings will be served.

Sunday, March 29th, 2026

Fellowship Hall, following worship

During our celebration, we will be assembling Jared Boxes for the UPMC Children's Specialty Care Center!

Following lunch, an Easter Egg hunt will be held for our young disciples.



Join FPC for our Holy Week Services!

*MAUNDY THURSDAY- APRIL 2ND 7:00 PM at First Presbyterian Church

RESURRECTION OF THE LORD/EASTER SUNDAY- APRIL 5TH

SUNRISE SERVICE at Rocky Gap at 7:00 AM

TRADITIONAL SERVICE in the Sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church at 11:00 AM

CHURCHES ON THE HILL LENTEN WORSHIP

We will join this Lent with our friends at Emmanuel Episcopal and St. Paul's Lutheran for our traditional combined worship services:

Palm Sunday (March 29th) Ecumenical Palm Blessing & Procession: Those who wish to participate, walk up the sidewalk with Pastor Alison to the steps of the Washington Street Library where we meet at 10:45 AM with members of the other two churches for a blessing of the palms.

Good Friday (April 3rd) Walking Stations of the Cross at 12:00 PM The service begins at the Shrine of Saints Peter and Paul, moves to St. Paul's Lutheran Church then the Emmanuel Episcopal Church and ends at First Presbyterian Church. The service attendees walk together and pause to reflect with scripture and hymns on the series of events that occurred on Good Friday.

A Monumental Revival Returns – CUMBERLAND CHORAL SOCIETY

FRIDAY APRIL 24, 2026 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 4:00 PM

First Presbyterian Church

This spring, the Cumberland Choral Society proudly brings back one of the most electrifying works ever to grace our stage:

Felix Mendelssohn's *Elijah*—a dramatic, thunderous, and deeply human masterpiece was last performed here in 2016, to great acclaim. Ten years later, this powerful oratorio returns in a revival performance designed to captivate both longtime fans and first-time listeners.

This year's performance features an exceptional lineup of **local** soloists along with **guest artists from New York, Eastern Maryland, & Virginia**, thus creating a vibrant blend of regional and national talent.

We are honored to present an edition of this performance long associated with the **legendary** conductor and arranger **Robert Shaw**, which has been condensed to a 90 minute concert and is used with the full permission of the *Robert Shaw Estate*. Although not condensed by Robert Shaw himself but by our **Artistic Director, Judith Brown**, this version preserves the sweeping drama, emotional clarity, and musical brilliance that has made *Elijah* a cornerstone of the choral repertoire.

Mendelssohn's score calls for a baritone to be Prophet Elijah. This role requires an operatic range of emotional expressions which are prayerful, weary and defiant. A full orchestra sound, three more principal soloists along with a strong and full chorus complete the work.

Expect soaring choruses, gripping solos and a story of courage and conviction brought to life with renewed energy. This is "Elijah" reimagined for today's audience – intense, inspiring and unforgettable

JOIN US FOR A



BABY SHOWER

IN HONOR OF
PASTOR ALISON PETERS

SUNDAY

APRIL 12 2026

PLEASE JOIN US IN THE
FELLOWSHIP HALL AFTER
WORSHIP FOR GAMES, DELICIOUS
BBQ AND FELLOWSHIP TO HONOR
BABY PETERS!
GIFTS ARE OPTIONAL!

ALISON'S REGISTRY CAN
BE FOUND HERE:

