

*Be Thou our vision, O God. Be our eyes. Be our hearts. Be the grace that flows through our lives. Only with your eyes can we see rightly.*

\* All who are able, standing

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: When the world is dark and full of hate and fear, when we cannot see God

**People: we will turn on the light.**

One: When we cannot find our way back to love and peace

**People: we will turn on the light.**

One: When our vision dims due to the darkness within

**People: we will turn on the light.**

One: Christ opens our eyes with the gift of sight.

**People: The light of the world is Jesus Christ.**

One: Come and worship the one who brings sight to the blind.

**People: Jesus, Light of the World, give us eyes to see as you see!**

\* HYMN Purple # 314

*"Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness"*

\* CALL TO CONFESSION

\* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**All: Forgiving God, in a world filled with so much pain, we would rather shut our eyes and be blind than see things as they really are. Grant us the courage to face the reality of our world, and give us the strength to bring your light to those who walk in darkness. Help us see others as you see them, and forgive us when we do not trust you enough to open our eyes to the possibilities before us. Heal our self-inflicted blindness, O God, and lead us in the footsteps of the Light of the World, who reveals your glory in his life, his teachings, and his love. In his holy name, we pray. Amen.**

\* ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Even though we have lived in darkness, God's light is being poured out for us. Accept the light and love that is freely offered, and be transformed by its healing mercies.

**People: Thanks be to God! Amen**

\* RESPONSE Gloria Patri # 577

*"Glory Be to the Father"*

**All: Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. A-men.**

**As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. A-men.**

**A-men. A-men. A-men. A-men. A-men. A-men. A- - - men.**

\* PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: Look around. Look closely. Do you see Christ's light shining? Greet one another as children of light, for that is what you are when you abide in Christ, the Lord of light. May the peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

### OLD TESTAMENT LESSONS:

1 Samuel 16:1-13 (NIV)

One: The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.”

But Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.”

The Lord said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate.”

Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, “Do you come in peace?”

Samuel replied, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here before the Lord.” But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “The Lord has not chosen this one either.” Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, “Nor has the Lord chosen this one.” Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, “The Lord has not chosen these.” So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?” “There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered. “He is tending the sheep.” Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.” So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; this is the one.” So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.

Psalm 23 (KJV) Responsively

One: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

**People: He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.**

One: He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

**People: Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.**

One: Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

**People: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.**

One: These are the words of our Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God!**

#### NEW TESTAMENT LESSON:

The Gospel of John 9:1-41 (NIV)

One: As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." "How then were your eyes opened?" they asked. He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." "Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said.

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received

his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner perform such signs?" So they were divided. Then they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet."

They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?" "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God by telling the truth," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?"

Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from." The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." Then the man

said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains. These are the words of our Lord

**People: Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

"Eyes Wide Opened"

\* HYMN Purple # 649

*"Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound"*

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD'S PRAYER

**All: 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**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERING

\* DOXOLOGY # 592

*"Praise God from Whom All Blessings*

*Flow"*

**All: 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**

\* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**All: God of grace, we know you want justice rolling down like water. Accept these gifts from our hands, which we cast upon the waters of your love, a generous ever-flowing stream feeding the hungry and helping those in need. Accept these gifts for the work of your church. Amen.**

\* HYMN Purple # 215

*"What Wondrous Love Is This"*

BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

*"May the Lord Go with You"*

*"May the Lord go with you, let Him take your hand. Keep his love within you until we meet again.*

*A- a- a- a- amen"*

POSTLUDE

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Lynn Mance, Commissioned Pastor

Ava Culp, Organist/Pianist

Al Shoupe, Liturgist

Kathy Frain, Deacon Greeter

Prayer Chain Starter: Frances Kennedy

**There is a sign-up sheet available in the Narthex. Prayerfully sign-up to be a April or May liturgist. Thank you for participating in the Worship service.**

**The March ARK newsletter is available at the entrances. Pick your copy up today!**

**The Church has available “Our Daily Bread” devotionals. Located at the entrances please help yourself.**

**The Church will continue to collect donations for the Avonmore Food Pantry. A box is in the coat room for your donations. Thank you!**

<b>March 16, 2025</b>		
<b>Attendance- 28</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Weekly</b>
<b>Finances</b>	<b>needed</b>	<b>received</b>
(First Fruits) Benevolence	20.00	105.00
First Fruits (gold)	combined	0
Current (General) Fund	1,115.00	1,461.00
Offering box Envelopes	7.00	0
Building fund		160.00
Stairlift		25.00
OGHS		40.00

# First Presbyterian Church



Third Sunday in Lent  
March 23, 2025