



First Presbyterian Church
El Campo, Texas
March 8, 2026

First Presbyterian Church seeks to provide a spiritual home that proclaims God's presence and love to all people by creating a welcoming environment for Christian spiritual growth through worship, fellowship, and education, joyfully celebrating God's love as disciples serving the community and the world.

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

March 8, 2026

11:00 am

3rd Sunday in Lent

All Are Welcome to Worship at First Presbyterian Church!

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah* arr. J.Wayne Kerr, 1985

WELCOME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We gather in this Lenten season knowing we are broken.

All: Come and be seen.

One: We gather in this Lenten season knowing we need forgiveness.

All: Come and be heard.

One: We gather in this Lenten season knowing our hearts long for God.

All: Come and be loved.

One: We gather in this Lenten season knowing God calls us all.

All: Come as you are.

*HYMN #475 *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

*CALL TO CONFESSION

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: God, we confess that we have often rejected the call of our baptisms. Too often we have accepted the forces of wickedness and embraced the evil powers of this world.

All: Help us choose the path that leads to love.

One: We have forgotten the covenant we made to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves. We have forgotten the promises of baptism.

All: Help us choose the path that leads to love.

One: We long for you as the thirsty long for water. We recognize our souls need you for survival, just as our bodies need water for survival. Give us strength to name our weaknesses.

All: Help us choose the path that leads to love.

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah – This bold prelude recalls Israel’s wilderness journey, where God led the people through dry places toward living water. Kerr’s setting gives the tune a sturdy, confident stride, preparing the congregation for worship with strength and assurance. The music moves like a pilgrim hymn—steady, purposeful, and full of trust.

**Please stand in body or spirit.*

One: May we be forgiven, may we turn toward you. May we remember and reclaim the promise made through the Holy Spirit in the blessing of baptismal waters.

All: Help us choose the path that leads to love. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON/DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

One: The good news of this Lenten season is this: forgiveness of sin and newness of life. In Christ Jesus we are forgiven and restored to new life. Amen.

All: Thanks be to God!

***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.**

HEARING OF THE WORD OF GOD

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE CHILDREN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 63:1-8

O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you. On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night. Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings. My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

One: The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM

Lenten Meditation

Jay Althouse, 2001

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

John 4:5-42

So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing - A hymn that opens with the image of grace as a flowing spring, always moving toward us. Its prayer to "tune my heart" invites worshipers to step into that current and let God's mercy shape their song.

Lenten Meditation - A reflection on familiar Lenten phrases and themes, this anthem moves with the steady pulse of prayer. Its harmonies linger like a quiet stream, inviting the congregation into stillness and repentance. The music holds both sorrow and hope, pointing toward the grace that meets us on the journey to the cross.

her, “Will you give me a drink?” (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?” Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.” He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.” “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.” “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.” The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.” Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?” Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” They came out of the town and made their way toward him. Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.” But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.” Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?” “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the

will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor." Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

One: God always blesses the reading
and hearing of Holy Scripture.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON *"No Strings Attached"*

*HYMN # 69 *I, the Lord of Sea and Sky*

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

CALL TO GIVE

OFFERTORY *As the Deer* arr. Douglas E. Wagner, 2001

*THE 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.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison, All)

God of glory, receive these gifts and the offering of our lives. As Jesus was lifted up from the earth, draw us to your heart that all creation may be brought from bondage to freedom, from darkness to light, and from death to life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

I, the Lord of Sea and Sky -- This modern classic weaves the voice of God calling from storm, sea, and silence. As we answer "Here I am," the hymn becomes a response to the One who meets us in every deep place and sends us out with love into the world.

As the Deer -- A tender meditation on longing for God, shaped by the psalmist's image of a deer seeking running streams. Wagner's arrangement deepens the sense of quiet yearning, letting the melody breathe with gentle reverence. It offers a moment of stillness in which the heart can rest and listen.

RESPONSIVE READING PSALM 63

One: Life-maker – You hold my life and I long for you to hold it.
You hold all of Life and I am held within it.

All: My very soul cries out for you: In the morning I linger at the sunrise eager for the light to embrace my soul; At dusk I crumple in the shadows restless for your dawn-light to replenish my thirst for you.

One: May my eyes be open to your creation-sanctuary, alive to the wonders that speak of you for this evidence is your constant-promise and my soul dances in praise of you.

All: I will speak words of thanks and live a life of thankfulness all the days of my life. This is my prayer, in word, in deed, through all of life.

One: On this blessing I shall feast and be satisfied and my every breath will be a canticle of praise. May I waken in the morning singing it and let it lull me to sleep as I lie down at night, your constant-promise, your forever-love, your always-presence.

All: And I will cling to you, and trust your love that clings to me, forever.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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.

CLOSING PRAYER

One: As we leave this place, O God, we will still remember you. We will think of you through the night, knowing that you are with us, that you are our help.

All: And so we keep singing. We will sing in the shadow of your wings. Today. Every day. Amen.

*HYMN #494 *Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts*

Shall We Gather at the River --
Lowry's hymn becomes a lively sending-forth in this rhythmic setting, its steady pulse carrying the melody like a river that refuses to stand still. The music lifts our eyes toward the promised gathering by the river of life, yet keeps our feet firmly in the world we're called to serve. It sends us out with energy and resolve, carried by grace and ready for the work ahead.

*CHARGE

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Shall We Gather at the River* Robert Lowry, 1864

WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Kristine Shultis, Pastor
Dr. Karl Paoletti, Choir Director
Ted Lashley, Music Director
Robert & Nick Fernandez, Ushers

SANCTUARY FLOWERS: Flowers are placed today in honor of Pastor Kris by L.G. and Linda Raun.

THIS WEEK AT FPC:

Thursday, March 12th FPC+EC Manna Meals
Sunday, March 15th 11:00 a.m. – Worship Service

Prayer List

Dr. Bill & Deida Bourne	Charlie Van Eman	Esther Bender
Steve Porter	Colby Hauser	Scott Mollnar
Kin & Carol Halamicek	Suzanne Hauser	Adam Catete
Sue Zanne Urbis	Avely Miller	Linda Collins

Easter Lilies

We have ordered 30 lilies to decorate the sanctuary for Easter Sunday, April 5th (\$15.00 each). If you would like to place a lily in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone, please fill out this form and place in the offering plate along with your payment or mail to the church office. You can also phone in your request. Please pick up your plant after Easter Sunday worship.

DEADLINE TO ORDER: March 23, 2026

CHURCH OFFICERS

Class of 2026

Jimmy Barger

Donnie Kainer

Youth Elder: Porter Beechwood

Donnie Clapp

Mindi Snyder

Class of 2027

John Kalina

Arlette Pustejovsky

Ester Latapie

Elizabeth Rasmussen

Class of 2028

Shawn Beechwood

Melba Clapp

Debra Hamman

B.J. Swenson

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor – Rev. Kristine Shultis

Choir Director – Karl Paoletti

Adult Music Director – Ted Lashley

Financial and Administrative Assistant – Diane Barger

Communications Assistant – Leigh Ann Neel

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