



"A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK THAT  
CHRISTIANITY IS YOU DOING  
ALL THE RIGHTEOUS THINGS  
YOU HATE AND AVOIDING ALL  
THE WICKED THINGS YOU LOVE  
IN ORDER TO GO TO HEAVEN.  
NO, THAT'S A LOST MAN WITH  
RELIGION. A CHRISTIAN IS A  
PERSON WHOSE HEART HAS  
BEEN CHANGED; THEY HAVE  
NEW AFFECTIONS."

– PAUL WASHER

## First Presbyterian Church of Newton

10:30 AM MARCH 3, 2024

*\* indicates when to rise  
in body or in spirit*

(PH denotes *The Presbyterian Hymnal*  
and

*STF denotes Sing the Faith Hymnal*)

### GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

WORDS OF WELCOME

PRELUDE

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We come into the presence of a God we can neither see nor touch, yet a God we can sense.

**People: We are fools for Christ's sake.**

Leader: We come in the name of Jesus, whose beauty we can neither explain or capture, but know intimately.

**People: We are fools for Christ's sake.**

Leader: We come to hear from a book, words and stories that are ancient, and yet ever new.

**People: We are fools for Christ's sake.**

Leader: We live in a world whose economy is based on keeping, yet in this place we are invited to give.

**People: We are fools for Christ's sake.**

Leader: We come, leaving behind all the business of our lives — all the other important things we could be doing.  
We come here to worship.

**People: We are fools for Christ's sake.**

## CALL TO RECONCILIATION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND HOPE

Merciful God, we confess that we do not want to be challenged by the cross. We set our minds on human things — we long for the security from our possessions; we prefer our own comfort; Forgive us, we pray. May our sense of self-preservation be disturbed by Jesus’ example. Guide us to take up our cross in service to the world. Help us to see our lives honestly and clearly, as we pray.

### WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

Leader: Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners.  
The Mighty One has sent deliverance for all people.

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

**\*SUNG RESPONSE TO FORGIVENESS** *“Though I May Speak”* vs 3 TUNE: O WALY WALY

*Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,  
Our spirits long to be made whole.  
Let inward love guide every deed;  
By this we worship and are freed.*

### \*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

|                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| <h2>LISTENING FOR GOD’S WORD</h2> |
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### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gracious God, we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from your mouth. Make us hungry for this heavenly food, that we may be nourished today in the ways of eternal life; through Jesus Christ, the bread of heaven, we pray.

## RESPONSIVE READING      Psalm 19

**Leader:** The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of God's hands.

**People:** Day after day they pour forth speech;  
night after night they reveal knowledge.

**Leader:** They have no speech, they use no words;  
no sound is heard from them.

**People:** Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,  
their words to the ends of the world.  
In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.  
It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,  
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.

**Leader:** It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other;  
nothing is deprived of its warmth.

**People:** The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul.  
The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.  
The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart.

**Leader:** The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.  
The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever.  
The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous.

**People:** They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold;  
they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.

**Leader:** By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great  
reward. But who can discern their own errors?

**People:** Forgive my hidden faults. Keep your servant also from willful sins;  
may they not rule over me. Then I will be blameless,  
innocent of great transgression.

**ALL:** May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart  
be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

## TIME WITH CHILDREN

## **SCRIPTURE READING      1 Corinthians 1:18-25**

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

## **COMMUNION MEDITATION      A Bunch of Fools**

### **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH      (From Confession of 1967, 9.15)**

God's sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful men and women. The power of God's love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God's love.

## **CALL TO OFFER OUR GIFTS**

## **OFFERTORY MUSIC**

### **\* RESPONSE OF GRATITUDE PH 591 "Praise God"**

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ, all people here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.*

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**SHARING OF PRAYER JOYS and CONCERNS**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE ending with the LORD’S PRAYER (in unison)**

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

**\*HYMN**

*“Take Us As We Are, O God”*

See Insert

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**SHARING OF THE COMMUNION MEAL**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God, you speak and create, and send us forth into the world You love. Guide us to proclaim Your grace and glory with our words and with our lives. Jesus cares and challenges, and lives are changed. Help us to set free the oppressed, to be the voice for those never heard. The Spirit moves and nurtures, and the world is turned inside out. Help us to become as foolish as trusting children, as powerless as those overlooked by everyone around them. Help us to truly be followers of Jesus Christ in Your beloved world.

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| <b>GOING OUT TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST</b> |
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**\*HYMN STF 2152**

*“Change My Heart, O God”*

See Insert

**\* BENEDICTION**

**\* POSTLUDE**

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We thank our Worship Leader Doris Christians,  
and our Ushers/Greeters this morning.

### Liturgical Resources:

*Call To Worship, from the United Church of Canada's Bay of Quinte Conference website, posted on [re:worship](#). Words Of Assurance, Confessional words by Ben Gosden, Associate Pastor, Mulberry Street United Methodist Church, Macon, GA.*

### **E-Giving - *It makes giving easy!***

**E-Giving** is a convenient way to support our ministries. Here's how:



*Scan Me*

Scan the QR Code to make a donation through your smart phone. **OR**

Go to the church website, [fpcnewtonnj.org](http://fpcnewtonnj.org) and click on the **E-donate** button and sign up using your email and a password. You can make a one-time donation or sign up for automatic recurring donations.

**More comfortable using a check?** No problem, just drop a check in the mail.

***As always, we thank you for your generosity and support!***

## OUR STAFF

Interim Pastor Heather Morrison-Yaden  
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[treas@fpcnewtonnj.org](mailto:treas@fpcnewtonnj.org)

Organist Ann Socha

Bell Choir Director Melinda Kline

Choir Director Cate Pasculli

Child Care Heather Woods

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### Church Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Friday 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Church Email Address: [admin@fpcnewtonnj.org](mailto:admin@fpcnewtonnj.org)

Church Telephone # 973-383-4420

54 High Street, Newton NJ

Church Web Site Address: [www.fpcnewtonnj.org](http://www.fpcnewtonnj.org)    [facebook.com/FPCNJ](https://facebook.com/FPCNJ)  
[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) (Search for: "fpcnewtonnj")

**CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AT  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEWTON  
Week of March 3, 2024**

- Sun. 3/3      Communion**  
**Hearts and Hands Craft Sale**  
**9:00 am Adult Study & Prayer**  
**9:00 am Faith Formation classes**  
**9:00 am Worship in the Chapel**  
**9:30 am Family Choir Practice**  
**10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary**  
**5:00 pm-7:00 pm Youth Group - Pizza!**
- Mon. 3/4      10:00 am Wired Word**
- Wed. 3/6      8:00 pm Midweek Vespers via Zoom**
- Thur. 3/7      7:00 pm Bell Choir**
- Fri. 3/8      1:00 pm Hearts and Hands**
- Sun. 3/10      9:00 am Adult Study & Prayer**  
**9:00 am Faith Formation classes**  
**9:00 am Worship in the Chapel**  
**9:45 am Family Choir Practice**  
**10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary**  
**Bucket Brigade: Second Sunday loose change collection to help fight hunger in our community.**

\*Our service can also be found on our YouTube channel sometime after 3 pm.  
Go to: [www.YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com) and search for: fpcnewtonnj