

Connect and Serve

Please see the website (firstpreswc.com) for a complete list of programs and ways to connect.

In Memoriam

Kenneth L. Varley Sr.

Our sympathy and prayers are with his wife Jane and their family.

Call for the Annual Meeting - The Session of First Presbyterian Church of West Chester has called for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation to be held on Sunday, March 1, at 10:00 am in the Sanctuary. **Please note that this meeting will be in-person only.**

Business to be conducted includes receiving staff and committee reports, review of the Finance Committee report regarding preliminary 2025 financial results and the 2026 budget, and voting on the Terms of Call for Rev. Andrew Esqueda and Rev. Caroline Cupp. The election of officers will also take place at this meeting. The Annual Report and the slate of officer candidates will be sent electronically in advance of the meeting.

Matthew 25 Lent Campaign - Each year during Lent we seek to raise \$25,000 to support urgent housing, hunger, and transportation needs among our neighbors in Chester County. The funds raised go toward rental payments, utilities, and car repairs for people who can't be served by other nonprofit or government programs. Most of those assisted are parents working for hourly wages who have lost work due to a health issue. Many are veterans, immigrants, seniors, or domestic violence survivors. Over the years, we've seen people impacted by this program go from homelessness to stable housing and full-time employment. Others are able to avoid eviction or access a car repair that allows them to keep their job. The dollars this congregation gives make an extraordinary impact in people's lives.

Our goal this year is the same as it's always been: \$25,000 for urgent needs. Those who wish to do so can give online (select Matthew 25 Lent), or write a check to First Pres with "Matt 25" in the memo line. The campaign runs from Ash Wednesday through Easter. Along the way, you'll hear from some of our partner organizations what your gifts have meant to those they serve.

Our hope is that each person connected to our church decides to contribute what they can – every dollar makes a difference, and we would love to celebrate every First Pres member taking part in this initiative. Thank you for your generous support of this ministry, and we look forward to another wonderful year of Matthew 25.

Lenten Dinner Signups - We've got eight families ready to host you for a Lenten Meal. Please check your calendars and sign up to enjoy a meal with some other First Pres members in the coming weeks. Look for the Signup Genius with dates, times, and more info on the Sign-Up section church website!

Family Faith Practices for Lent - Lent may not be as flashy as Advent, but it's still a valuable season to recognize as you go about your daily life. Starting today, a handout is available at the Welcome Center to help your family remember Lent. "40 Days of Simple Practices for Lent" contains ideas to help your family practice kindness, gratitude, letting go and prayer. This is targeted to families with your children but can be useful for people of all ages. Pick up a copy from the Welcome Center for yourself and a friend!

New Spiritual Connections Book Study - Spiritual Connections starts a new book on Monday, March 2 at 6:30 p.m. *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown Taylor asks us to explore all that God has to teach us "in the dark." Through darkness we find courage, we understand the world in new ways, and we feel God's presence around us, guiding us through things seen and unseen. All women are encouraged to join the discussion to consider and reflect. Meetings are the first and third Mondays via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. Contact the church office to be connected with this group and to obtain the Zoom link.

Egg Hunt Donations - We're setting a big goal for this year's Egg Hunt in Everhart Park and hope to have thousands of eggs for our young friends to gather! Last year we had 9,000 eggs and several hundred attendees. We're asking for volunteers to fill plastic eggs with wrapped candy or small trinkets to be used at the Hunt (April 5). Bins are in Fellowship Hall to collect the eggs. Thank you in advance for helping make this event a memorable one for our church and neighbors!

Egg Hunt Volunteers - In addition to the eggs, we'll need lots of help the day of the event to hide the eggs in Everhart Park. Please volunteer using the sign-up tab at firstpreswc.com or sign up in Fellowship Hall.

Prayer Meeting with Getsemani Church - Join us on Tuesday, February 24, at 8:00 pm for a time of Lenten prayer as we gather with our sisters and brothers from Getsemani Church over Zoom. This is a wonderful opportunity to engage in our church's covenant partnership with Getsemani Church! We did this last year and it was a very special time of worship with our sister church. We plan to have a few members from each of our churches lead us in prayer that will lift up both our churches and our ministries as well as prepare our hearts for the Lenten season. All prayers will be interpreted in both Spanish and English. If interested, contact Elizabeth Guman for the Zoom link (ecguman@gmail.com, 610.308.4017).

Family Music Bingo Night - All First Pres families and friends are invited to join us for a family fun night on Friday, March 13! We'll provide a pizza dinner starting at 6 pm and then play 3 rounds of music bingo, featuring tunes your kids will love. Pizza dinner, music, laughter, and friendly competition - what could be better? Please sign up so that we know how much pizza to order through the Sign-up tab of the church's website and talk to Sara Pantazes with any questions.

First Presbyterian Church of West Chester

February 22, 2026



Order of Worship for the First Sunday in Lent

**Please rise in body or spirit*

Prelude Discovering the Creator
Ryan Meeboer

Call to Worship*
Lent calls us to journey, this and every day,
following Jesus wherever he leads us.
**Lent calls us to journey
to the place where God covenants with us.**

Lent calls us to worship together,
to tell future generations the good news.
**Lent calls us to practice justice,
to bring God's hope to all people.**

Lent calls us to faithful living,
to trust the One who gives us life.
**Lent calls each of us to take up our cross,
to trust the One who bears it with us.**

Lent calls us to journey with God.
**Let us worship God, who walks with us,
this and every day.**

Hymn 41* O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!

Welcome

Moment for Ministry: Matthew 25 Lent Campaign
Joyce Chester

Prayer of Confession

In the face of temptation, Jesus refused to turn stones into bread. When we face temptation, we too often turn bread into stones. Jesus refused to use power for its own sake, and we too often take power that belongs to someone else. Patient God, forgive us. As Jesus refused to test your promises, help us to know your promises are true, and that you are sufficient to meet our every need. We will face temptation wherever we go, give us strength to reject it, and confidence that you satisfy every need. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

When we turn away from God, God does not turn away from us.

In Christ, God turns toward us setting us free from the bondage of sin. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Response*

**Lord, have mercy!
Christ, have mercy!
Lord, have mercy!**

Hymn 579

Passing the Peace*

Children's Message

During the singing of the following response, children may join their teachers for Sunday School. Families can pick up their children after the service in their classrooms on the 2nd floor.

Response God of Great and God of Small Hymn 19

First Scripture Reading Matthew 4:1-11 NT p. 2

Special Music Salvation is Created Pavel Chesnokov

Prayers of the People and 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.

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Celebrate the Day Pepper Choplin

Doxology and Prayer of Dedication*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Hymn 183* Come to Me, O Weary Traveler

Second Scripture Reading Genesis 3:1-7 OT p. 2

Sermon Beneath the Surface: Desiring God
Rev. Andrew Esqueda

Hymn 438* Rock of Ages

Blessing* Benediction
David H. Voorhees

Postlude Fanfare
Jacques-Nicolas Lemmens

Assisting in worship today:

The Miner Street Brass
The Chancel Choir
Henry Cupp, Youth Liturgist

All are welcome in worship. We are a community of people of all ages who cry, vocalize, stum, fuss, stand, sit, and come and go as needed.

The sounds of people are the joyful noise of God's creation.

Audio amplifiers are in a basket at the back of the sanctuary. There are also screens in Fellowship Hall that stream the service if you need to step out.

The nursery is available for children ages 0-3 years. Please ask a greeter if you would like additional information about Sunday School or children's programming.

March 6 - 8, 2026
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH'S 19TH

weekend with the arts

gallery | concert

Friday, March 6
6:30 pm - 9 pm
Art Show Gala Opening

Saturday, March 7
Gallery Open
9:30 am - 8 pm

Best of Dvorák Concert
6:30 pm
featuring
Vocal Soloists,
First Pres Chancel Choir,
Chamber Orchestra,
Miner Street Stringers

Sunday, March 8
Gallery Open
8:30am - 4 pm

*All events are free
and open to the public*



130 W Miner St, West Chester
610.696.0554

www.firstpreswc.com

First Presbyterian Church Staff

Rev. Andrew Esqueda, Senior Pastor
Rev. Caroline Cupp, Senior Associate Pastor
Sándor Kádár, Director of Music
Sara Pantazes, Director of Faith Formation
Nathan Preuhs, Director of Youth Ministry
Elizabeth Hess, Director of Engagement
Laura Moreschi, Children's Choir Director
Ann Ellis, Choir Accompanist
Kiana Rivera, Lead Singer, Contemporary Band
Jennifer Rosenberg, Preschool Director
Greg Ondo, AV Tech
Claire Kramer, Office Administrator
Peter Galloway, Director of Operations
Sara Ford, Facilities Manager

Emails at firstpreswc.com/staff