



Art by Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Sunday, March 23, 2025

Third Sunday of Lent

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
of **BELLA VISTA**

1880 Forest Hills Blvd.
Bella Vista, Arkansas 72715

(479) 855-2390 www.pcbv.org
E-mail: pcbvoffice@pcbv.org

LEADERS & VOLUNTEERS

MINISTER

Rev. Dr. Judi McMillan

LITURGIST

Gail Cowdin

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Bud Clark

ORGANIST/PIANIST

Gail Knudsen

Chancel Choir

Sandy Bachelder, Betty Bennett, Arlene Biebesheimer, Jerry Biebesheimer, Marcia Beard, Bud Clark, Christy Clark, Dick Francis, Gail Knudsen, Elaine McGuire, Sharry McGuire, Peggy McMenus, Jean Nichols, Mary Nimis-Tysk, David Riter, Gary Harris, Edie Harris, Martha Stout, Karen Watson, Brenda Works, Jim Works

Bell Choir

Arlene Beibesheimer, Gail Cowdin, Rosie Floyd, Gail Knudsen, Florence Riter, Michelle Schall, Cathie Whittenberger, Sharon Warner, Karen Watson, Fran Zimmermann

WELCOME DESK

Gayle Winsor

HEAD USHER

Buddy Needham

USHERS/GREETERS

Dan Dovell, Dan Johnson, Buddy Needham, Nancy Ortman, Frank Taylor

COFFEE HOSTS

Shepherd Group 4

Peggy McMenus, David & Florence Riter

AUDIO/VISUAL

Tom Hackleman,

Steve Little, Jim Watson

A SERVICE OF HOLY WORSHIP

An asterisk () indicates that those who are able may stand;
Bold type — please respond in unison.*

WE GATHER AND PREPARE OUR HEARTS

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME

PRELUDE

“Ah, Holy Jesus”

Mary McDonald

CALL TO WORSHIP

In this hour we will pray,

Because we long to draw near to God.

In this hour we will sing,

Because words are hardly ever enough.

In this hour we will sit side by side,

As a reminder that we belong together.

And in this hour, we will cultivate faith—together.

So let us worship with open hearts.

Let us worship Holy God.

*HYMN #12

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

CALL TO CONFESSION (from Isaiah 55:6-7)

The prophet Isaiah instructs us to seek and to call upon the Lord.

The prophet pleads with the wicked to forsake their way, with the unrighteous to forsake their thoughts. The prophet invites them to return to the Lord that he may have mercy on them and assures them that our God will abundantly pardon. Let us seek God, let us call upon the Lord, knowing that we will be received with mercy and abundant forgiveness.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of grace—

You ask us to care for the poor and the hungry,
but that makes us uncomfortable.

You ask us to care for the environment,
but that requires sacrifice.

You ask us to love our neighbor as ourselves,
but that requires vulnerability.

Instead, we hide our hands, avert our eyes, and choose ourselves.

Forgive us for holding tight to our own agendas
and letting go of your call to love.

Cultivate in us more faithful spirits—
hearts that are strong enough to choose one
another and minds smart enough to make the sacrifice.

Forever grateful we pray, Amen.

(Moment of silence for personal confession)

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS (from Isaiah 55:8-9)

God speaks through the prophet Isaiah: my thoughts are not your thoughts nor are your ways my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways. Let us find peace in God's ways of mercy and grace knowing that we are forgiven. Amen.

THE PEACE

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

(Please take this opportunity to “pass the peace” to those around you.)

*GLORIA PATRI #581

WE ENCOUNTER THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of all times and places, be with us here and now. As we read from and reflect on Scripture, may your Holy Spirit move among us that we might hear your Word. In Jesus' name, Amen

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 55:1-5

55 Hear, everyone who thirsts; come to the waters;

and you who have no money, come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread
and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to
me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

³ Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make
with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for
the peoples.

⁵ See you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 63:1-8

- ¹ O God, you are my God; I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
- ² **So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.**
- ³ Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.
- ⁴ **So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name.**
- ⁵ My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips
- ⁶ **when I think of you on my bed and meditate on you in the watches of the night,**
- ⁷ for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
- ⁸ **My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.**

ANTHEM—BELL CHOIR *“An American Spiritual”* Patricia Hurlbutt

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 13:6-9

⁶ Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the man working the vineyard, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ ⁸ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good, but if not, you can cut it down.’ ”

SERMON

“Cultivating Friendships with God/ Letting Go of Expectations”

Rev. Dr. Judi McMillan

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

*HYMN #81

“Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken”

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

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.

God has created the world of space and time to be the sphere of God’s dealings with humankind. In its beauty and vastness, sublimity and awfulness, order and disorder, the world reflects to the eye of faith the majesty and mystery of its Creator.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Please fill out a prayer card or speak directly into the microphone

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

The Confession of 1967 reminds us that “Life is a gift to be received with gratitude and a task to be pursued with courage.” God has given each of us and all of us a variety of gifts and we are grateful. As an act of worship, let us commit to returning those gifts to God and God’s service.

OFFERTORY “*A Piece from L’Organiste*” Cesar Franck

***DOXOLOGY #606** “*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*”

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God of Creation—

You gave the wildflower soil to stand in, sunlight to grow in, and water to rest in. You have done the same for us, but so much more.

In gratitude for the countless gifts you have given us—for community and love, food and shelter, dreams and hope—we give back this small sign of our appreciation. Use it for your good. Amen.

WE GO FORTH TO MINISTER

INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

***HYMN #187** “*Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*”

*CHARGE AND BLESSING

***GOING FORTH** “*Go Now in Peace*”

***POSTLUDE** “*Joyful Postlude*” Richard A. Williamson

CULTIVATING & LETTING GO

THE WISDOM OF THE FIG TREE

ART, FILM, & MEDITATION BY
LISLE GWYNN GARRITY

INSPIRED BY LUKE 13:6-9

You are welcome to print this script in worship bulletins, or distribute it to those viewing the film. When doing so, please include the following credit line: Art, film, & words by Lisle Gwynn Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

In Luke's gospel, Jesus tells a story of a fruitless fig tree once planted with promise, only to grow barren and brittle. The landowner in the parable has returned to its empty branches for three years. With patience worn thin and hope withered, he commands the gardener to cut it down, seeing it as a liability to the soil.

But where the landowner sees waste, the gardener perceives possibility that lies fallow. The gardener has learned from the land that life flows in cycles—budding, flourishing, pruning, death. And so he requests one more year. Cutting the earth with a shovel, he loosens the clots that have settled like stone so that when water comes, the earth will receive it like a soft kiss. He blankets the roots with manure so that growth can be steadied by hope. And then he lets go.

What happens to the fig tree? Does it live? Does it die? Does it bear any fruit?

We don't know. And so, if we can't read the end of this story, then we must write it with our own lives. Because we know what it feels like to be the fig tree, to be deemed worthless, to be weary enough to believe that we don't deserve to be well. And perhaps we also know what it's like to see the world through the eyes of the landowner—calculating worth based on what we produce, what we accomplish, what we provide.

Can we cultivate the vision of the Great Gardener, the One who sees you for what you are becoming? The one who tends and prunes, nourishes and lets go?

Perhaps for us, the fruit is not the ending. The fruit is in the waiting, in the dead of winter, in the manure; the nurture, the rest, the darkness. The fruit is in all of it, sowing seeds we can't yet see.



“WHERE THE FRUIT LIES”

BY LISLE GWYNN GARRITY

INSPIRED BY LUKE 13:6-9

ACRYLIC ON CANVAS | 16x20



ART, FILM & MEDITATION BY: LISLE GWYNN GARRITY | © A SANCTIFIED ART | SANCTIFIEDART.ORG

Cover Art & Video background information



Weekly Vista

WELCOME!

We hope you will find your time of worship with us to be very meaningful. We are an open faith community.

Please visit www.pcbv.org, or call the Church Office at 855-2390 if you would like to learn more about us and inquire about membership.

OFFICE HOURS

MON- THURS:
9 am to 3 pm
FRIDAY: CLOSED

For pastoral emergencies, please call or text Pastor Judi at 479-403-9082. Pastor's day off is Friday, she will return calls later. To schedule an in-person appointment, please email her at jmcmillan@pcbv.org stating your need.

Deacons on Call
for March:
Mary Hackleman
Susan Foster

03/16/2025 Attendance:
Members/Friends: 93 Guests: 5
Online: 36



You are invited to refreshments and a time of

Sugar-free cookies will no longer be supplied, unless the Shepherd group for that week chooses to do so.

Reminder, there is a sign up sheet for soup Supper on March 25th, in Connector Hallway. Please sign up so we know how many to prepare for. Thank you.

BIRTHDAYS

March 25 Erwin Herzog

March 25 Frank Taylor

March 25 Gayle Winsor

March 26 Dave Bachelder

March 26 Mary Nimis- Tysk

March 27 Jan Grim

March 28 Sandy Andrews

March 28 Larry Hall

CALENDAR

Sunday, March 23

9am Christian Ed Class
10am Worship (Communion)
11am-12pm Fellowship Time (F/H)

Monday, March 24

3-5pm—Shepherd Game Night (F/H)

Tuesday, March 25

9:30-10:30am—Spiritual Life (A)
5-6pm—Lenton Soup Supper (F/H)
5:30pm—6:30pm Men's AA (A)

Wednesday, March 26

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
5:00pm Bell Choir
6:00pm Chancel Choir

Thursday, March 27

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
NO EVENTS

Friday, March 28

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
1-3pm—Knitting for Peace

Saturday, March 29

NO EVENTS

Sunday, March 30

9am Christian Ed Class
10am Worship
11am-12pm Fellowship Time (F/H)

Join Shepherd Group 3 for Game Night tomorrow at 3pm in Fellowship Hall.

Pastor Judi will be out of the office this week, please contact Mary Hackleman or Susan Foster if you need pastoral or deacon assistance. .

The office will be closed Wednesday and Thursday for spring break.

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CALENDARS FOR UPCOMING MEMORIAL SERVICES:

The memorial for John Foss has been rescheduled for April 26th at 2pm.

Events for Gene McKay

Dinner- Friday June 6th - 4:00 - 8:00pm Open house at BVTA Rec hall [2 Cora Circle, Bella Vista] for family, friends and neighbors. Picnic style meal provided (details on how to RSVP will be provided later. Memorial Service—Saturday June 7th - 1:00pm at BV Presbyterian Church.

The Session asked several weeks ago during announcement time if anyone in the congregation was willing to run a church sale. No one from the congregation stepped up and after three years of working very hard on church sales, the previous teams were worn out. Right now, the plan is to not have a 2025 church sale. Should you have any items you want to sell, you may donate those items elsewhere and donate the proceeds to the church if you wish. The church still has sale funds to use for building projects like renovating the bathrooms. Again, if you have any questions, please ask an elder or the pastor.

April 6th from 8:30-9:30am, the church will be hosting youth for breakfast. The congregation is invited to come have fellowship time with these NWA Presbyterian youth that are on a retreat working with food pantries in the area.

Breakfast (egg casseroles, bacon, donuts, coffee, tea, juice & water) will be provided, so please sign up in **connector hallway** to attend.

There will be no Christian Ed class on this day, please come have breakfast and talk to the youth.



All women of the Congregation are invited to the Ladies Birthday Lunch Bunch on Friday, March 28, 11:30, at BV Bar & Grill (Country Club), 98 Clubhouse Drive, 479-855-5117. It doesn't have to be your birthday month, just come and enjoy good food, friends and fellowship. Sign up in Connector Hallway so we know how many are going. Thank you.

