



God's Resolve, and Our Response

*Called to make fully-devoted followers of
Jesus Christ:
Inwardly Strong,
Outwardly Focused.*

Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

January 29, 2023
Kerr Chapel, 8:00 AM

*First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa
Born by grace in 1885*

Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

Kerr Chapel, 8:00 a.m.

The Words of Preparation

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul and spirit, joints and marrow, as it judges the thoughts and purposes of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

The Welcome

Dr. Miller

Ariel and Bradley Martin, *Student Mobilization,*
Mississippi State University

The Call to Worship

I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul magnifies the Lord –let the humble hear and be glad.

Come, magnify the Lord with me –and let us exalt His name together!

With uplifted hearts and voices, let us adore Him!

Alleluia! Amen!

Psalm 34:1-3

♦ **The Hymn** 464 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee HYMN TO JOY

♦ **The Prayer of Adoration** Elder Denise Rounds

The Old Testament Reading Nehemiah 8:1-10 (NLT)

On the first day of the seventh month, the people came together in the open area in front of the Water Gate.

Then they asked Ezra, who was a teacher of the Law of Moses, to read to them from this Law that the LORD had given his people.

Ezra the priest came with the Law and stood before the crowd of men, women, and the children who were old enough to understand. From early morning till noon, he read the Law of Moses to them, and they listened carefully. Ezra stood on a high wooden platform that had been built for this occasion...He stood where he could be seen by everyone, and when he opened the book, all the people stood up. Ezra praised the great LORD God, and they lifted their hands, shouting "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed with their faces to the ground and worshiped the LORD.

After this, the Levites...went among the people, explaining the meaning of what Ezra had read.

The people started weeping when God's Law was read to them. Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and teacher, and the Levites who had been teaching the people all said, "Don't weep and mourn –for this is a special day for the LORD your God."

"Take joy," said Nehemiah. "Go and celebrate with a feast of rich foods and sweet drinks, and share gifts of food with people who have nothing prepared. This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don't be dejected and sad, for the joy of the Lord is your strength!"

The Preparation for Confession

O Lord Most Holy
Erin Barnhart, soloist

Cesar Franck

O Lord most holy, O Lord most mighty, O loving Father,
Thee would we be praising always. Help us to know Thee,
know Thee and love Thee; Father, grant us Thy truth and
grace; Father, guide and defend us. Rule Thou our willful
hearts, keep Thee our wandering thoughts; in all our
sorrows let us find our rest in Thee; and in temptation's
hour, save through Thy mighty power, Thine aid O send us;
hear us in mercy. Show us thy favor, so shall we live and
sing praise to Thee.

The Prayer of Confession

Rev. Julia Metcalf

Almighty God, the reading of your Law caused the
people of ancient Israel to weep –knowing that
they had not followed your Way or honored you in their
conduct. But those very tears served as their confession.
We, too, confess our sins, acknowledge our willful hearts,
and ask for your mercy and grace. Grant that we might live
faithfully, attentive to your directives, and singing praise to
You now, forever and always. Lord, in your mercy, hear our
prayers...*(in silence)*

The Invitation to Embrace Forgiveness

...Friends, embrace this good news with all of your hearts:
in Jesus Christ there is forgiveness –for all who call upon
Him! **Alleluia! Amen!**

◆ The Response

I love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love! I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true; it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do. *I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory, to tell the old, old story of Jesus and His love!*

◆ The Affirmation of Faith (The Apostles' Creed)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. AMEN.

The New Testament Reading Acts 17:10-15

The Sermon God's Resolve –and our Response

5) An *Informed* Response

They welcomed the message eagerly and examined the Scriptures every day to see if these things were so.

Acts 17:11

The Invitation to the Table

Words of Institution

Prayer of Blessing

Sharing the Bread and the Cup
The Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Joys and Concerns of the Church

The Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

- ◆ **The Hymn** 361 How Firm a Foundation FOUNDATION
- ◆ **The Charge and Benediction**
- ◆ **The Postlude**

First Church Updates

A heartfelt welcome to each and all of you! May the Lord cause His Light to shine brightly and His love to become visible -- through this expression of the Body of Christ!

Our *Letter of Well-Wishing* (placed just outside the door of this space) is directed today to Warren and Meg Hubler.

Today

Faith and Physics? A Different Angle! Join us Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the Stephenson Hall -- to hear Jerry McCoy, Professor of Physics at the University of Tulsa. A seven-week series on his soon-to-be-published (!) book: *God Is A LOT Bigger Than You Think: the Story Science Tells*. Jerry will teach this same material on Wednesdays at 11:30 in room E104. Lunch is available on Wednesdays.

This Week

Invite your friends: this Saturday - Sunday, Feb. 5-6: a remarkable opportunity to hear Dr. Ivan Rusyn, President of the Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary speak on both the tragedy and the deep hope unfolding in Ukraine. Join us for two presentations: Saturday, 6:30 p.m. and Sunday, 9:30 a.m. (in the Stephenson). Dr. Rusyn will preach at our Festival Sunday service, 11:00 a.m., sanctuary.

We have an opportunity, through our generous giving, to encourage Dr. Ivan and Luda Rusyn and their Seminary in Kiev. The Church in Philippi gave generously to the ministry of the Apostle Paul: *“How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn’t have the chance to help me!” (Phil. 4:10)*

Wednesday Night downtown: Six-Week Series Wednesdays

Navigating the River (of Culture):
What Christians Need to Know

Wednesdays: today through February 15
5:30 dinner/6:15 class, Stephenson Hall

Examining our Culture: Healthy, Robust, or Not So Much?
Examining the Church?
What kind of challenges face the Church?
What questions is the Culture asking the Church?

This Wednesday:

February 1: The Rev. Terry Buxton, Agape Bible Fellowship

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February 8: Bishop David Konderla, Catholic Diocese of Tulsa

February 15: Dr. Jeff Francis, Sharp Chaplain, University of Tulsa

Seekers - Wednesdays at 6:15 p.m. in room E104: an in-depth study of the weekly sermon scriptures, led by Rev. Wambugu Gachungi.

Congratulations to our *Chili Cook-off* winners. First place: Meaghan Perceful and her daughter Magnolia; second place: Margaret Been and Holly Thompson; most popular: the Chaney family; and most creative: John and Gloria Shelton. The event raised \$2,271, every penny of which will go to Anderson Elementary, supporting field trips and other needs at the school.

Mark Your Calendar

Mark your calendars! All-Church Retreat: March 24-25, 2023 at New Life Ranch. Dr. Wes Vander Lugt and family will join us and Wes will be our keynote speaker.

Opportunities to Serve the Master

Children's Ministry opportunities - Come serve with the youngest members of our congregation!

Two Second Grade Sunday School Classroom Assistants - Join us once a month to assist the lead Sunday school teacher in the classroom. Duties include assisting with crafts and helping with the lesson. 9:45 - 10:45 a.m.

Two Awana Substitute Leaders - Join us on Wednesday evenings 6:00 -7:30 p.m. when needed. Fill in as a group leader by moving children to activity stations and helping with scripture memory.

Infant/Nursery/Preschool 9:30 - 10:45 a.m. - Baby Rockers- Come help rock babies in the infant room. Sunday School

Classroom Assistant-Help the classroom lead teacher with lesson, craft and general playtime.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Sarah Savage at ssavage@firstchurchtulsa.org/918-301-1011.

Chancel Choir: If you love to sing and spread the Good News through music, come and add your voice to the Chancel Choir! Rehearsal: Wednesdays, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Contact Ron Pearson at rpearson@firstchurchtulsa.org/918-301-1013 or Gretchen Bashforth at gbashforth@firstchurchtulsa.org/918-301-1012.

Ushering! *Why not offer a warm welcome to worshippers and offer them a bulletin on Sunday mornings?* It's a great way to serve and get to know the flock called First Church! Call Dionna Schooley and we'll find your place! 918-301-1015.

Memorial Service Greeters: Greet with heartfelt love at memorial services. Approximately an hour commitment. Memorial services are usually weekday afternoons and sometimes on Saturdays. Contact: Kathy Wilson at kwilson@firstchurchtulsa.org/918-301-1029.

Book Table – help provide books and resources to the congregation. Manage the inventory of books and assist congregants with selecting titles and authors. If interested, please contact Laura Stevens at lstevens@firstchurchtulsa.org/918-301-1019.

Join the Masterwork Academy team ministry: we're not looking for skill, we're looking for heart. If yours beats with the

love of Christ and you have an weekday afternoon from 3 – 5:00 p.m. to spare, please contact Jenette McEntire at jmcentire@masterworkacademy.org or Laura Voth, lvoth@masterworkacademy.org/918-954-1100.

Seeking writers and photographers - We have volunteer opportunities to serve in our communications area as a writer or photographer. We publish a quarterly magazine and semimonthly newsletter; we are seeking folks who would love to tell or illustrate our stories. To volunteer, contact Louann Buhlinger at lbuhlinger@firstchurchtulsa.org/918-301-1032.

Do you enjoy the gift of hospitality? Come and share the joy! Assist with First Family dinners, Pentecost Sunday and Pancake Breakfast; host dinners in your home or help with special events such as Fall Festival and Breakfast on Boston. For more information, please contact Patricia Hall at phall@firstchurchtulsa.org/918-3001-1028.

Parish Register

Prayers for Healing: Jane Azlin, Beth Campbell, Dwight Creveling, Marilyn Davis, Paul Dick, Donna Droege, David Dunning, Mary Ann Elliott, Gaye Graeler, Cynthia Hill-Meriwether, Mike Hopkins, Elaine Horkey, Rusty Houston, Meg Hubler, Warren Hubler, Jeannie Dickey Kelsay, Joyce Kunkel, Susan Lawrence, Carmelitti LeFlore, Amy Lesh, Ann McKellar, Jan Miller, David Morgan, Jane Mulkey, David Osterholt, Shari Postier, Rosemary Priest, Carly Rivers, Zach Rivers, Mary Ruddle, Susan Shults, Robert Shaw, Bill Smith, Jane Sneed, Cissy Ssettimba, Sally Stewart, Laurie Sundborg, Mike Tidwell, Susan Waldie, and Carolyn Wilcott

With Gratitude for the Resurrection: JoAnn Gilbert, a member since 1997, died on January 26.

Worship Notes

The flowers in today's Sanctuary worship are given to the glory of God and in memory of our parents, Jody and Jack Hitt, Marilyn Pierce and Don Metcalf by Steve and Jill Metcalf.

Services are broadcast and on Cox channel 3 (each Sunday) at 11:00 a.m., 5:00 and 10:00 p.m., on the FPC Facebook page, or FirstChurchTulsa.org/YouTube.

Please notify the church if there is a pastoral need, change of address/phone number or other important family news. Contact Kathy Wilson at 918-301-1029 or kwilson@firstchurchtulsa.org.

For those who need hearing assistance in the Sanctuary or Stephenson Hall, audio headsets are available from the ushers. Also available are large-print hymnals and Bibles.

THIS WEEK

TODAY 1/29

8:00 am Worship, Kerr Chapel
 8:30 am Worship, Stephenson Hall
 9:30 am Gatherings and Classes
 11:00 am Worship, Sanctuary, Stephenson Hall and Great Hall

Monday 1/30

11:45 am Guy's Monday Bible Study, E103

Tuesday 1/31

9:30 am Precepts, E100

Wednesday 2/1

11:30 am Pastor's Study, E104
 11:30 am Downtown Theological Roundtable, 204
 12:00 pm Pathways to Hope, 206
 5:15 pm Wednesday Night Dinner, Stephenson Hall
 6:00 pm Awana, Children's Area
 6:15 pm Various Adult Classes
 6:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Choir Room

Saturday 2/4

8:45 am Before the Rooster Crows, E103
 6:30 pm *News From the Front* gathering with Dr. Ivan Rusyn, Stephenson Hall

COME, GROW YOUR FAITH!

TODAY: Adult Classes, 9:30 a.m.

Cornerstone	Minor Prophets	E102
Covenanters	<i>Renovated: God, Dallas, & the Church That Transforms</i>	E101
Forum	<i>Prayers of Jesus</i> study	E200
Harbingers	<i>Hearing God</i>	E202
Morning Glory	Prayers and Bible Study	E201
New Parents	Theology and Parenting	E205
Pastor's Study 1	Faith and Physics	Stephenson Hall
Pastor's Study 2	<i>The Parables of Jesus</i>	E104
Reflections	<i>Christian Life in Ordinary Time</i>	E103
Shepherds	Spiritual Disciplines	E203
Sojourners	Old Testament	E204
UKirk	<i>The Parables of Jesus</i>	E104
The Vine	<i>The Life You've always Wanted</i>	
Westminster	<i>Theology Brewed in an African Pot</i>	Tower Room
Young Adults	<i>The Parables of Jesus</i>	E104