



First Light

Volume 27, Issue 4

April 2017

FPC PRAYER MINISTRY TRAINING EVENTS

On the first Tuesday of the next three months, Pastor Andy will be leading prayer ministry training sessions. The focus of the first event will be on **"Our Authority and Identity in Christ."** It will be held on **Tuesday, April 4** from **6:30-8 pm**, upstairs in **the conference room**. If you are interested in serving as a prayer minister in our church, please plan to attend the training. If you've already attended prayer training sessions in the past, feel free to join us again, since new material will be introduced and there is always something more to learn. **Mark your calendar now** and plan to attend this first prayer training event and the others listed below.



Tues. April 4, 2017: "Our Authority and Identity in Christ"

Tues. May 2, 2017: "Praying for Forgiveness"

Tues. June 6, 2017: "Strongholds"

News from the Session

At its March 21 meeting the elders met. We were led in a good discussion on living with integrity and then devoted time to praying for our church family and the world. We prayed that God would birth in our congregation a strong hunger for more of him and that we'd all have a deeper desire to bring God glory. We also conducted the following business:

- Reviewed the church rolls.
- Formed a task force to look into some church membership questions such as minimum voting ages.
- Discussed the possibility of conducting an all church survey, which was an idea floated during our fall retreat
- We were led by the stated clerk of our presbytery in a discussion on the vital importance of the session overseeing the work of evangelism outreach in the local church. The two passages from the Book of Order that we focused on are below.

"The responsibilities and authority given to the Church by Jesus Christ are not ends in themselves, but are given to edify God's people, to promote the faith of the Church, and to evangelize the whole world to the end that all might know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. "

"It is the primary mission of the local church to evangelize, making disciples by extending the gospel both at home and abroad, leading others to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, providing for the nurture of that faith that all might worship the true God and grow in grace and in sanctification. It is to be remembered that good deeds in ministry and service to others, offering relief to those in need, is the fruit of the gospel. Without the clear evidence of such fruit, all else is brought into question. However, the Church must never confuse its primary mission of evangelism (the gospel) with the fruit of faith (good works)." (Book of Order of the EPC, 4-3)



Easter is a transformational event. On the first Easter Jesus was raised from the dead, women were dignified as the first witnesses to Jesus' resurrection, expectations were turned on their heads, doubting disciples became convinced, grieving travelers to Emmaus testified to new revelation from and a feeling of the presence of God, life was forever changed.



Easter is more than a Sunday celebration and even more than an event in time, though it is not less than an actual event in time. Easter presents us with God's invitation to *"Wake up, rise from the dead and let Christ will shine on you"* (Ephesians 5:14). What would doing that look like in your life?

When Peter wrote, *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"* (1 Peter 1:3f), Peter was clearly saying Easter has present day implications for our living. Easter brings new birth, birth from above, and it brings us into God's Kingdom of living hope. Do you know anybody who could use some living hope and new birth?

When Paul wrote: *"So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is..."* (Colossians 3:1) and, *"we have been buried Christ by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life"* (Romans 6:4), Paul was addressing the present day fruit of resurrection in our lives as believers.

Easter is first and foremost the historical event of Jesus' resurrection from the stone cold tomb of death, but, *"Because He lives,"* as the hymn tells us, *"I can face tomorrow, and life is worth the living just because he lives."* In other words, Easter is an event with ongoing personal invitation to new life through Christ. This is, in fact, as we see above, how the New Testament writers understood it.



- Practice forgiving those who have hurt you.
- Open your heart with compassion to another person's brokenness and listen and love them.
- Practice resurrection by personally praying with and for others.
- Laugh and sing and relish life, you are practicing resurrection.
- Be a spiritual gardener, planting seeds of gospel hope into the soil of barren hearts.
- Leave the past regrets to God's mercy.
- Celebrate the new life of spring.
- Know that you don't have to stay stuck. Jesus has overcome the grave and you can rise and hope.
- Tell God, *"I am willing to be used by you to bring your life to somebody. Will you show me who?"*

Eugene Peterson wrote: *"The practice of resurrection is an intentional, deliberate decision to believe and participate in resurrection life, life out of death, life that trumps death, life that is the last word, Jesus life."*

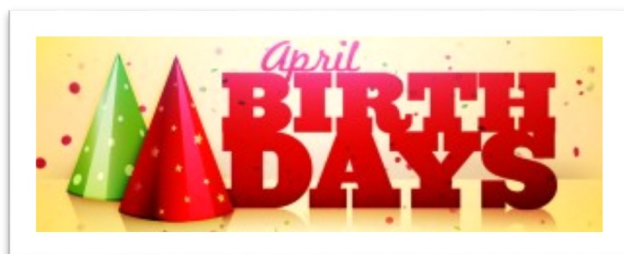
So what are some ways we can personally practice resurrection life?

Every time we bring hope into a situation, be it our own lives or the lives of others, every time we bring joy that shatters despair, every time we share the gospel of salvation through the Risen One, every time we practice the gospel of grace, every time we listen and love, confront injustice and speak truth with grace, we are practicing resurrection. So let me say to you who have been raised with Christ, live out the Easter hope today and every day and you will be a bringer of life.

As Wendell Berry said, *"So, friends, every day do something that won't compute. Love the Lord. Love the world....Be joyful though you have considered all the facts.... Practice resurrection."*

Yours in God's Springtime of new beginnings,

Pastor Andy



1	Bill Satterberg	13	Jerry Cleworth
4	Claire Cherniawski	19	Marty Foster
5	Ciana Masterson	19	Sean Williams
5	Camden Masterson	19	Susie Hackett
5	Colten Masterson	19	Pam Miller
5	Jake Johnson	20	Robert Askelin
5	Ivory Huffaker	23	Stephanie Rozell
5	Melissa Logan	23	Sonia Brown
6	Paul Bonnell	24	Allan Baldwin
6	Kelly Quist	25	Eleanor Karns
8	Werner Hoefler	26	Patricia Fink
10	Bob Howard	26	Kaylee Powell
11	Eugene Bartels	29	Phyllis Bartels
12	Angela Thies	30	Susan Craft
12	Cora Wietgreffe		

Please let the Deacons know if we have overlooked a birthday, or have the wrong date. Contact the church office or leave a note in their box in the church office.

First Light

A Monthly Newsletter Publication
Of First Presbyterian Church

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Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 20th day of each month. Submissions may be dropped off at the church office, mailed, faxed or emailed to Claire.

Four

“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here. He is risen!” (from Luke 24)

In two Sunday's, between 150 and 200 people will meet on the bridge over the Chena to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. With joyful songs and copious cups of hot chocolate on a brisk April morning, the crowd will shout “He is Risen!” Celebrating along with all of Christ's church around the world the central event in Christianity, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

There's much wisdom in the Bible, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. There are many stories and exhortations towards kindness to neighbor and love for God. Jesus has much to tell us, and he is a great teacher in how he does that- through story, parables, analogy- things we remember and get into our bones.

But the thing that sticks out like a sore thumb, the thing that St. Paul says everything hangs on, and that if it didn't happen, followers of Jesus should just hang it all up- that thing is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

All the claims Jesus made about being God's son, about forgiving sins, his claims of being equal with God, his teachings about God's kingdom- all of those hang on his reputation as the Messiah, the one whom God appointed to rescue humankind from sin and death, and usher in a new life. If Jesus wasn't vindicated by being raised from the dead, then he was- in C.S. Lewis' words, “either a liar or a lunatic.” And if he is one of these then he really shouldn't be followed.

But his followers call him Lord. His empty tomb for Christians provides the hope not only that Jesus is who he says he is, and that on the cross he indeed died ‘for us’ and that we can have peace with God through him, but that he is alive now! And that through the Holy Spirit, he remains Emmanuel- God with us.

Jesus' resurrection for his followers points to our own resurrection at his return. Somehow, someday, at his appearing those who have died will be raised like him and those who are alive will be changed, to be like him. This is the Christian hope! Death as final as it seems is not the final word from God. But Jesus Christ is God's final word to us. That is good news! And that is why Easter - the celebration of Christ's resurrection- is such a big deal.

For as much evil, injustice and brokenness as there is in the world -and there is much- because of the resurrection of Jesus, there is hope. Hope based upon a cross and an empty tomb. Hope- not wishful thinking. There is a God who loves you, who entered into our world, took on human flesh- became a human man forever- so that through his life, death and resurrection, we might become one with him in his resurrection. Both in this life and the next.

Friends- this is great news. My hope and prayer for you in your life journey is that you might be presented fully mature in him on that great day, when all is made new. Even so, come quickly Lord Jesus!

Confession is good for the soul. This is a re-write/update of an article I wrote for the News Miner several years back.

Pastor Dave.



Praying for your children!

God has given each of us the privilege of raising his children. With the privilege comes constant responsibility and lots of work. Parenting can be a source of a person's greatest joys and deepest sorrows.

How can we handle the task that God had given us? Simple, yet not so simple – PRAY! Easy to say but often hard to do in this busy world of ours. Begin by writing a prayer for each of your children. This helps get thoughts together and helps us to focus. Be specific for each child. Sit and think about the things you want God to do for or in your child.

A great resource is an article called “40 ways to Pray for your children”. It can be found at <http://www.todayschristianwoman.com/articles/2002/june/40waysprayer.html>. Below are some examples of what you might include in your prayer. Set aside a few minutes daily to invest in your children by praying for them. One mom of 2 preschoolers put a stick note up on the wall in the bathroom for those few minutes that she occasionally got to herself.

Thanks: Thank God for the special qualities he's given your child. Ask him to continue to develop those characteristics.

Relationships: Pray that your child will have a heart for God and healthy relationships with their parents, siblings, and friends.

Purity: Pray for their future spouse. What your child's future spouse is going through right now will have an effect on their marriage. Ok, so your child is only two – you can't begin praying for this one too soon in my book!

Personal Weakness: Each of us have weaknesses. Pray that God will shape your child's weaknesses and develop their strengths.

Prayer is such a powerful thing. When we pray evil is terminated and God is glorified. Watch how God uses YOUR prayers, even that one word prayer “Jesus!” to make a difference in a person's life, in your child's life.



In KidZWorld

April 2 – **Crazy Hair Contest**

April 7 – **Teachers Meeting** – If you're interested in joining a great team, join us at 5:30 in the church

April 8 – **Eggxtravaganza** Time: 10am – 12:00pm Ages: 2 years – 6th grade

April 9 – **Palm Sunday** – Kids Choir will sing at both services

April 13 – **Maundy Thursday** - Join us for communion meal at 6pm and service 7pm.

Children's Programming available at 6:30 for ages 3 years and under.

April 15 – **Easter Vigil** – Service begins @ 7:00pm

April 16 – **EASTER!** Join us 8:30 or 11:00 Service with Brunch at 10:00am—NO Sunday school.

Children's Church and nursery will be Available @ 8:30 and 11:00.

April 22 - **Mystery Game Youth Fund Raiser @ 2 pm**

Spicy Mustard Youth News!



You're Invited To

Till Death Do Us Part

A Night of Love, Marriage & Murder

Your presence is requested to celebrate the union of Becky Giovanni to Stanley Simpson with a wedding reception you won't forget.

As friends and family come together for a night of food and fun, it will quickly turn into a night of mystery and mayhem— leaving one of the guests murdered!

And you are left to solve the crime...

Will it be the jealous ex-boyfriend who is to blame? The father of the bride who opposed the marriage from the start? Could it be the bridesmaid who longs to be a bride? Or possibly the estranged uncle that has drank away his family fortune?

As the night progresses, secrets will be revealed, motives exposed and your sleuthing skills will be put to the test.

What will you say when it is your turn to finger the culprit?

Speak now or forever
a killer goes free.





Murder Mystery Fundraiser - Saturday April 22 at 2pm

Test Your Sleuthing Skills and Join Us for a fancy Wedding Reception in the Fellowship Hall, but plan on a horrendous murder to take place mid-event! All are welcome, inviting friends is encouraged, and admittance is FREE! Donations to the Spicy Mustard Youth Mission Trip are requested and there will be a Silent Auction as well. *(The Nursery and a second room for kids under the age of 10 will be available as the scene of a 'murder' is no place for little ones!)*

Due to Easter and the Mystery Fundraiser, we will not be having a Game Night this month. We will be back on for Friday, May 19, 5:30pm-10:30pm

Holy Week Worship @ First Pres

The middle of April will bring our Lenten journey to an end. Lent comes to a close with Holy Week as we remember Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, his betrayal, arrest, crucifixion, and death.

While the Scripture and these Worship services are not the cheeriest moments in our Christian walk of faith, they are pivotal in helping us understand the nature of God's love for us and the call to discipleship in Christ's Kingdom. As Paul reminds the church in Romans 6, "We have been buried with Christ by baptism into death, so that, just as He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."

In addition to Palm Sunday (At normal worship times), we will have the following services:

- Maundy Thursday worship service on April 13. Please come promptly at 6:00pm for the Soup Supper, as we will transition into worship by 6:30pm.
 - NEW! Easter Vigil Worship Service on April 15 at 7:00pm
 - Easter Sunday Worship services at the normal times of 8:30am and 11:00am with a special brunch at 10:00am
- Please join us for special services on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Easter Vigil, and Easter.



David McConnell Booher

Easter Sunrise Service A community-wide celebration!

When: April 16, 2017

Time: 7:00am-7:45am

Where: Centennial Park Bridge

Parking: Courthouse, Denali State Bank, Doyon Building

Hot Refreshments, Warm-Up Tent, Community Choir, Handicap Access

**For more information, please call: 907-452-3425
or visit: www.easterfairbanks.com**

**Come out and celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ
with your community at The Centennial Park Bridge!**



Maundy Thursday

Join us as we remember Jesus' last supper with his friends, recall his foremost commandment for his disciples, and as we worship our Lord who goes to the cross for us and for all creation.

April 13, 6pm - Beginning with Soup Supper



Easter Vigil

A new service of music and scripture. As we gather in darkness, we await the bright hope of the Resurrection and celebrate the story of God's purpose of Creation and Salvation, woven throughout the story of the Hebrew Covenant and the promise of Jesus Christ.

April 15, 7pm

Women's News and Upcoming Events:

Priscilla Shirer Simulcast on Saturday, April 8 @ North Pole Assembly of God. This is an annual event you will not want to miss! Please contact Diane Henry for tickets.



Serving God: Women's Monday Night Gathering will take place on Monday, April 10 from 6pm-8pm. All women are invited to join together for a light meal followed by a thorough cleaning of the Narthex and Sanctuary in preparation for Easter. All cleaning supplies will be provided. See Diane Henry or call 750-1859 for more info.

Women's Arise Morning of Worship—April 29, 9am-11am

Join us on Saturday, April 29 at First Presbyterian for a morning of worship, sharing and prayer. Bring a friend! Coffee available at 9.



EPC Baby Shower: Saturday, May 6, 2017 from 10am–12pm

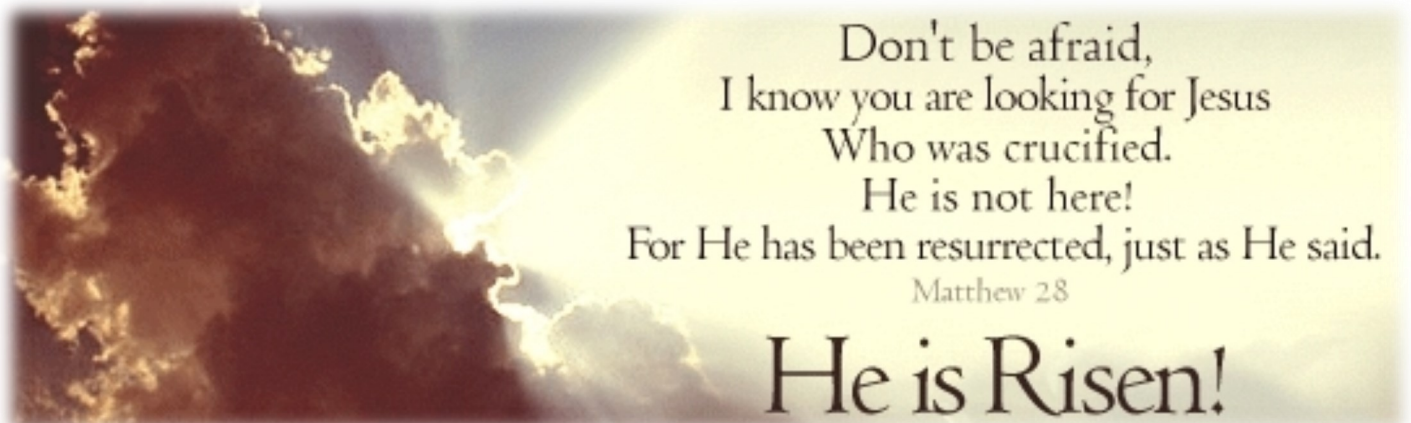
We will be holding our annual baby shower and celebrating with a Potluck brunch. Please bring a dish to share. If you know mothers who should be honored during this time, those who are expecting or who have recently had a child, please contact Diane Henry at 750-1859 or the Church Office. Thank you!

Thank You! To Stuart Young for removing the hard pack from the parking lot! We appreciate your help!

Daily Lectionary Readings for April 2017

*The lectionary readings can be found at:
www.pcusa.org/devotions/lectionary/lectionarylist.htm.

They can also be emailed to you daily. Please call Claire at the church office if you would like them printed for your personal use.





Saturday
April 29, 2017
9am-11am

Worship

Share

Prayer

547 Seventh Ave, Fairbanks, AK 99701
Call: 452-2406 with Questions

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