



April
2017

The News

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.

He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.

Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

Matthew 28:5-8

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The Despair that Became the Foundation of Civilization

by Pastor Rich McDermott

Hope was lost. Despair was rampant. Fear gripped their community. Jesus’ disciples were scattered and scared, fearing for their lives. Their Master had been brutally beaten, crucified, and quickly buried in a borrowed tomb before the Sabbath began at sundown Friday. They were convinced that Jesus was indeed God’s promised Messiah, and Jesus himself had accepted that title. But now, all that was in doubt. Crucifixion was connected with curse, not blessing or authority or deliverance. No one had ever imagined that the Messiah could be crucified.



Some women went to anoint Jesus’ body early on Sunday, after the Sabbath had ended. But they were initially upset, because the stone was rolled away from the tomb, and the body was missing. Who had stolen the body? Some men in dazzling clothes standing nearby asked them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.

Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” They remembered his words; then, the women ran to tell it to the eleven. But it seemed to the eleven apostles an idle tale (Luke 24:5-12). Peter and John ran to check it out, and, John, the younger of the two, got there first. They found the stone was rolled back, the head cloth that had covered Jesus’ face was rolled up in a place by itself, and the body wrappings were still wrapped, but empty of a body. How could that be? (John 20:1-10)

As Mary Magdalene continued to weep outside the tomb, Jesus appeared to her, saying, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?” At first, she thought him to be the gardener, and asked where the body was placed. Then Jesus called her name: “Mary!” She turned, seeing Jesus, and came to him, saying, “Teacher!!” Jesus urged her not to cling to him but to go and tell his brothers that he was alive (John 20:11-18). Later that evening, Jesus appeared to the group of gathered disciples and said, “Peace be with you.” He showed them his hands that bore the nails, and his side that received the lance of the sword. He went on to say, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” He breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (the Messiah) has had a more profound influence on world civilization than any other event or person in history, by far. The magnitude of Jesus’ continued presence and influence in every area of life around the globe is difficult to overstate. Where there is little to no influence of Jesus,

there is a longing and a need for it. While this may seem politically incorrect to say, there is a strong case to be made for continuing to share Jesus with everyone around the world. While Christians have involved themselves in evil practices at various points in history, that evil cannot be attributed to the influence and Spirit of the One who is Crucified and Risen, but can only be a perversion of his life, teaching, passion, crucifixion and resurrection. At Easter, we marvel in gratitude to Him who died for our sins and was raised for our justification. May we, in humility, give thanks to the Lord who so graciously rescues us daily. Alleluia! Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed!

Many Thanks

I want to give a massive thank you to several groups of people for your kindness, sacrifices, and commitment as seen given over the past month. First, I want to thank Suzie McCoy, Coleman Sanger, and Roger and Diana Young for attending the Fellowship Community's National Gathering with me in Tampa. (And thank you to the session for sponsoring the cost of their attendance!) It was a great couple days and I got to reconnect with colleagues who are scattered all over the country. The plenary theme was Deep and Wide: Making Missional Disciples. It is impossible to boil down four greatly informative talks to a sentence or two, but I will try. The early church (pre-Constantine) was greatly effective at creating disciples and literally changing the historical landscape of their day. This was done primarily through discipleship within households: immediate family, extended family, neighbors, servants, business partners, and so on – ranging between 20 and 50 people). They lived, worked, played, and worshiped together, but they were also on mission together for Christ. Our speaker made the case that this is the size group we, as the Church, have gotten away from when, historically, it had the greatest impact. It is similar to the effectiveness seen in countries like China. I am hoping they will make those presentations available to stream so that I do not further butcher its greatness. Dr. Mark Roberts from Fuller Theological Seminary led us through a Bible study on the book of Ephesians. And we expressed various styles of worship. And before we could fully unpack (bags and the content), it was time to fly home.

The day after I returned, my wife, Chelsea, underwent a surgical procedure to repair her abdomen. Apparently, small women giving birth to giant babies can take a certain toll. This was certainly the case. Friends from the Foundations Sunday school class, the Preschool, and others were kind in providing meals, inviting Colton over to play, and prayerful support. For that we are grateful. Chelsea continues to recover without complications. It will just take some time to get back to our "normal." Thank y'all!

Live Forever,
Pastor Chris



Children's Ministry

Preschool Sunday School



Happy Easter! It's time to celebrate that Jesus is alive! He went away, but He came back!

Remember, this Easter could be the very first time EVER for some of the preschoolers to hear the true story of Easter. And for others, this could be their first time ever even going to church. We have the awesome opportunity to tell them for the first time about how Jesus washed His disciples' feet; made His triumphal entry; died and rose again; built His Church; and gave us the Great Commission.

We get to tell them the true story of how much God loves them and how He gave them His only Son. We get to tell them that Jesus is alive, and He wants to be their friend forever. We have one of the best jobs in the world! We get to share with preschoolers that Jesus is the best! What an honor and a privilege.

Elementary Sunday School

Humility is a response of the character of God.

God has no beginning and no end. God is the creator and sustainer of the universe. He deserves all of our worship and praise for what He has done and continues to do in our lives.

On the other hand, we are humans, created by God. And while we are the crowns of God's creation, we are nothing without our Creator God.

Yet so often, we act like we are God. We allow our pride to take over and forget that any of our strengths or accomplishments would not exist without God. The only proper response in light of God's greatness is to respond with humility in our interactions with the people around us.

Jesus is the ultimate example of humility.

Jesus is the Son of God. And in the beginning, Jesus was part of creating the heavens and the earth. And as the Son of God, there is nothing in Heaven or on earth that isn't under Jesus' command. Yet Jesus chose to become one of us. He was born as a baby and walked among us. He developed calloused hands as He worked in a carpenter's shop. The dirt of the road caked His feet as He traveled to show love to others. Jesus willingly left the majesty and glory of Heaven to laugh and cry as He fully became a human.

Jesus' ultimate act of humility on Earth was His sacrificial death. He could have called down an angel army to protect Him, but instead, allowed Himself to be wrongly accused and arrested. He could have been worshipped with a gold crown and royal robes, but instead wore a crown of thorns. Jesus deserved praise and adoration, but sacrificed Himself for us.

We live in a world that's all about putting ourselves first. Jesus lived in a world like that too. He could have looked out for Himself, called 10,000 angels to come and rescue Him. But He didn't. Out of His love for us He chose the humble route and put us first. It cost Him everything.

Putting others first will cost you something: your time or money. Maybe it will cost you some pride. But when we choose to follow Jesus with our lives, believing that His death and resurrection made it possible for us to be right with God, the least we can do is put others first even if it's a bit uncomfortable and cost us something.

We think it's important, especially at Easter, for us to help our kids and families discover more about humility—putting others first by giving up what you think you deserve. Our memory verse for April comes from Philippians 2:3: *Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves.* (NIRV)

This verse is part of a passage that describes Jesus' humility. Jesus left everything He deserved to humble Himself to save us. As we respond to Jesus' love, we can show humility as we love on those around us.

As we celebrate Jesus' life, death, and resurrection this Easter season, we'll be taking a closer look at the way humility shows up throughout the end of Jesus' time on earth.



Save the Date

Kids Night Out April 7 and 21 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Spring Festival April 8

About the Spring Festival

Time: 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. on April 8

Location: North parking lot

Events: Petting zoo from Down on the Farm

Egg hunt divided into 3 age groups starting at 3:50 p.m.

Who: Children, their parents, and their friends and neighbors



Come on over!

The First Tithe

by Pastor Rich McDermott

In Genesis 14:19ff, the mysterious priest Melchizedek blesses Abram (or Abraham) and God Most High, the maker of heaven and earth. Abram then gave to the priest one tenth of everything he had, a tithe. The Lord then came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.” Abram complains that he does not yet have an heir. The Lord took Abram outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then the Lord said to Abram, “So shall your descendants be.” And Abram believed the Lord. The name “Abram” means “exalted ancestor.” But Abram was later (chapter 17) named “Abraham,” which means “ancestor of a multitude.”

Today, Jews, Muslims, and Christians all count Abraham as their ancestor, or about 3.8 billion people out of the 7.5 billion people on our planet, just over half of the people alive today. Abraham became known as a friend of God, one who believed in the Lord. And the Lord's promise to Abraham about his descendants has been fulfilled beyond his wildest dreams, a fulfillment, of course, that extended well beyond his mortal life. That promise to Abraham came after he had given a tithe, ten percent of his income, not expecting a reward, but nevertheless receiving a most amazing one.

The New Testament, also, is not shy about promising rewards to those who are generous, indicating that “you will be enriched in every way for your great generosity” (2 Corinthians 9:11). At FPCA, we depend upon people who are growing in their faith in the Lord. As Christians mature in faith, they grow in their generosity, and may move from giving to the Lord's work one half of one percent of their income (usually a few hundred dollars, annually) to growing towards giving a tithe or ten percent of income (often a few or several thousand dollars, annually). This growth by Christians is what enables us to fulfill the ministry to which the Lord is calling us. As we face a challenging first year with a full staff, some major mission projects, and several expensive repairs to our building, we are praying for our congregation to grow in faith, in maturity, and in generosity. Will you pray with us for God's provision? May the Lord bless each of you in your generosity even as Abraham was blessed beyond his dreams!

Easter Lilies



If you would like to place a lily in the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday, you can contact Kim Lewis or fill out a form.

Forms are located in the Narthex, outside the Chapel, and in the church office. You may place the form in the offering plate during Sunday worship or mail it to Kim.

Cost is \$9.00 per lily (per dedication), and the deadline for orders is Monday, April 10.

Holy Week Services

- Sunday, April 9** Passion Sunday choral service, 6:00 p.m. in the *Sanctuary* (evening of Palm Sunday)
- Thursday, April 13** Maundy Thursday service, 7:00 p.m. in the *Chapel*
- Friday, April 14** Good Friday service, 7:00 p.m. in the *Sanctuary*
- Sunday, April 16** Easter services, 8:30 a.m. (in the *Chapel*) and 11:00 a.m. (in the *Sanctuary*)

All-Church Easter Breakfast

On Easter morning, between worship services, we will eat breakfast together in Fellowship Hall. (That means NO Sunday school.) Please come, share a continental breakfast with your church family, and rejoice in the day. Juice, coffee, fruit, pastries, and good company!

The Fellowship Team is responsible for organizing this celebration - and many others throughout the year. Recently, several team members have moved or had a change in family responsibilities. As a result, the team is actively seeking new members. You don't have to be an elder, and you don't have to be a deacon. You just have to have a servant's heart and some free time. The team meets on the second Thursday of each month to plan, and then, of course, works together at fellowship events. It's a wonderful way to meet with, help, and enjoy your fellow church members. If you would like to know more about the Fellowship Team, or want to volunteer, just speak to one of the team members. They will be the ones wearing blue aprons on Easter Sunday!



Senior Exercise

We are beginning a senior exercise group this summer in the parlor. Sessions will be Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. We plan to begin on Monday May 15.

There is no charge, but participants will be responsible for purchasing and storing their own exercise equipment. Come and get fit with us!

For further information, please contact Thomas Dombrowsky at 817-287-9773 or tomasdom@sbcglobal.net.

YouthCUE, Carter, and Chancel Choir Connections

The seventh and eighth grade choir students that attended the YouthCUE Baylor Festival of Youth Choirs at the end of February didn't know what they had signed up for, and they still don't know how it will affect them for the rest of their lives.

It was amazing to see God use the music that they learned to open up opportunities for discussion about spiritual matters. The students learned songs that are different from the music that they generally listen to on the radio. These songs speak of hope, mercy, grace, and the love of God for us. These are concepts that can be foreign to people who have no church background. One song in particular spoke to some of the students, and it surprised me that it was the song that described sin, guilt, and the need for God's mercy. (Our Chancel Choir recently sang this song, entitled "Mercy," by Craig Courtney.) Because of their interest, the door was open to share the gospel with these students, and to help bring a new dimension of worship through song to those singers in our group who are believers.



Thanks for Donna Vickers, Jane Leathem, and Cheryl Harris for being willing to sacrifice their time to chaperone the students for the weekend. This was a wonderful opportunity for ministry, and a memorable experience of music making that will not soon be forgotten. Our Chancel Choir continues its support of the Carter music programs through endeavors such as the bake sale. We continue to be a presence at Carter by encouraging and being available.

But the important part of all of this is that seeds of faith were planted, and the gospel was presented to these youth through song. Scripture was written in their hearts through the words to the songs that they memorized. I know from experience that those

words are planted deeply in their hearts forever, and they will be recalled at some point in life, when God calls.

Russell Farnell
Minister of Music

Youth News

“You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother’s womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous - how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.” Psalm 139:13-16 NLT

With the recent birth of my second daughter, Addileigh Isabela Faith Rodriguez, I am reminded all over again at the power of God and his love. I was drawn back to a very familiar passage in Psalm 139. It is here that we know without a doubt God created us and he did it all by himself. Oh how I thank God for making all the delicate, inner parts of Addileigh’s body and knitting her together in Alecia’s womb! It brings me so much joy every time I think about how God so wonderfully knit together Addileigh and my first born daughter Aileigh.

But it doesn’t stop there. As I make preparations for our annual camp trips, The Great Escape and Fun in the Son, I am reminded of our youth and how God loved them just as much as he does my daughters to delicately knit them together too. Every day and moment of their lives was also recorded and laid out. The Great Escape and Fun in the Son are the days and moments that God has set aside for our youth here at FPCA and in this community. I am grateful that God has allowed me to be a part of these days and moments with them. As we try to make these camp trips a reality for our youth, we need some help financially.

Our youth volunteers and I want so badly for every youth possible in our church and from our community to experience these wonderful trips, where they will hear about Jesus and be nurtured, equipped, and strengthened in their relationship with Christ. But we need your help.

First and foremost, we need your prayers. Please pray that every kid God has identified to go this year will make it no matter the obstacle or obstacles. It is because of your prayers that we have been able to take so many of our youth to camp year after year. So, I thank you in advance for your prayers!



Second, we need your financial help. It costs **\$399** for each youth to attend, and for many families, this can be a financial burden. Would you consider sponsoring a kid or two this year? If you can’t sponsor a kid we will gladly accept any donation the Lord lays on your heart to give. At the end of the day, we will need roughly **\$8,500** to make our camp budget for this year. Thanks to our men’s Bible study and their contribution of \$1,500 we are off to a great start!

Lastly, we ask you to pray some more. I truly do believe that it all starts with prayer and that it is through prayer that God makes the impossible possible. I know God hears our prayers and we will meet our financial goal for this year. We will have some other fundraising opportunities coming soon where you can also take part in helping us reach the \$8,500 mark. Be on the lookout for these opportunities in the church bulletin and weekly email. Thanks again for your prayers, and I look forward to rejoicing with you all when we look back at what God does this summer for our youth.

Blessings in Christ,
Adrian Rodriguez

Adult Sunday Classes

Have you been hoping to find a class on Sunday morning? Lots of choices are available – and lots of people are ready to welcome you! Here is a list of what the adult Sunday school classes are studying right now...

Bible Study (Room 210 at 9:45) – Working to strengthen faith through Bible study, each class member reads a chapter during the week and answers two questions each day.

- Gospel of Matthew

Family Living (Parlor at 9:45) - This class consists largely of empty-nesters and uses the *Present Word* curriculum.

- Creation: A Divine Cycle

Foundations (Room 209 at 9:45) - Many class members are parents of young children.

- *The Prodigal God* by Tim Keller

Friendship (Room 103 at 9:45) - The Friendship Class also uses the *Present Word* curriculum.

- God Loves Us

Genesis (Room 208 at 9:45) - The Genesis Class studies a variety of topics related to applying the Scriptures to daily living.

- *The Prodigal God* by Tim Keller

Indagators (Bride's Room at 9:15) - This group usually studies theological works.

- *The Holy Land Revealed* by Dr. Jodi Magness

Loose Ends (Library at 9:45) – The Loose Ends class has all ages and stages of life.

- *The Beatitudes: Developing Spiritual Character* by John Stott

Theological Inquiries (Room 204 at 9:30) – The class primarily studies theological issues facing Christians today and will periodically host outside speakers.

- History of Lent and Christ's journey to the cross

Remember – no Sunday school classes meet on Easter Sunday. But everyone will be in place, waiting to include you, the Sunday before or the Sunday after or the next Sunday or the next.

Preschool Summer Camp 2017

Dates: Monday, June 5, through Friday, August 4

Times: Monday to Friday - 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Before and after camp programs available (open 6:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.)

Flexible schedule

Ages: 6 weeks through third grade

Cost: \$75.00 program fee

Register for the fall, and the summer program fee is FREE

Stop by the Preschool to register or contact Sandra Ybarra at: 682-551-1207 with questions.

Out and Around



From March 12 to 19, the Belize mission team worked alongside the girls and staff of Youth Enhancement Services (YES), sharing in worship, fun activities, and painting. The team's primary focus was to engage the people they met in Belize to share God's love and encouragement as they built relationships.

Meanwhile, back in Arlington, FPCA was one of the many churches that provided shelter to the 1,600 youth who came to teach children and carry out service projects to help Mission Arlington. Those who stayed at FPCA came from Mulberry Springs Baptist Church in Hallsville.





This Month



Bible Studies

Men's Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study group meets every Wednesday morning at 7:00 a.m. in the parlor. Men of all ages meet to study the book of Exodus and enjoy great fellowship and a prayer session. All men are invited to join this study.

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Monday Night Bible study is open to all women. The next meeting is at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, April 17, in the parlor.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

Men and women of all ages are invited to meet in the Bride's Room every Tuesday morning at 10:00 a.m. The current study is *Twelve Ordinary Men* by John MacArthur.

Music Ministries

Chancel Choir

This is the primary worship leadership ensemble for the 11:00 service. The choir also sings for special services around Christmas and Holy Week. It is more than just a great choir, it is a caring fellowship. Rehearsals are on Wednesdays from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. *Nursery care is provided during rehearsals.*

Ring of Praise Handbell Ensemble

This intergenerational handbell group rehearses Wednesday evenings from 6:15 until 7:15 p.m. If you are interested in ringing, please contact Russell Farnell (fpcamusic@yahoo.com or 817-274-8286).

Agape (Youth) Choir

This group of youth in grades 6 to 12 meets on Sunday, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m., in the choir room. This year the focus of our youth choir is to engage singers at Carter Junior High by inviting them to participate in the YouthCUE Choir Festival in Waco. This is a combined choir of 300+ singers from all over Texas and surrounding states..

Children's Music Ministries

The children's choirs meet Sundays, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., during the school year. These choirs strive to impart God's love through His gift of music. The focus is on ministry to children rather than on performance. Children ages 4 (when school starts) through grade 5 participate in activities including music/singing and bells/chimes, instruments, and listening activities. There are two sections, divided by age, and both participate in the 11:00 worship service twice per year, usually in December and April.

Church Leadership

Deacon Meeting

Thursday, April 6, at 6:00 p.m., the Diaconate meets in the parlor to oversee the Congregational Care, Hospitality, and Fellowship ministries.

Team Meeting Night

Thursday, April 6, at 6:45 p.m., all teams meet for worship in the chapel with subsequent gathering into respective teams for ministry planning and coordination.

Session Meeting

Thursday, April 27, at 7:00 p.m., the Session meets in the parlor to oversee the ministry of the church. The work of the Diaconate, church administration, and all Discipleship, Worship, Facility Management, and Mission and Evangelism ministries will be discussed.



Discipleship

Library Team

The library team works the first Wednesday of each month, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Anyone interested is welcome. No particular skill is required, the work is easy, and we always have a good time as we process books to be added to our inventory. If you would like to be involved in library work but cannot come at that evening time, please contact Sandy Thomlinson and special daytime work sessions can be arranged.

Fellowship



Happy Quilters

This group meets Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. to quilt, sew, knit, crochet, embroider, and just enjoy being together. Bring your project and join in!

Saints Alive!

Church seniors will meet for a potluck lunch on Thursday, April 20, at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a casserole, salad, or dessert and enjoy a fun and interesting afternoon.

Contact Bev Koch (817-261-3202) for details.

First Presbyterian Church
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Deadline for the May issue of The News is April 15!

Prayer Ministry

Prayers for those with health and other concerns: Esther Albright, Chona Pacot Anwar, Yvonne Babb, Polly Baugh, David Boice, Shirley Bragg, James (Andrew) Bridges, Crystal Castaneda, Kevin Chin, Jerry Colleps, Lee Carol Copeland, Dorothy Curtis, Tom and Bobbie Fowler, Lila Glenn, David Goff, Susan Graham, A. Jack Gray, Dick Haney, Margery Harrant, Ken and Edna Harris, Bill Hayden, Doyle Malone, J. Fred Miller, Allen Miller, Mary Ellen Miller, Pat Mingle, Barbara Mooers, Ruth Moore, Bill Olsen, Jim L. Quick, Judy Reck, Albert Ross, Eulabel Sheldon, Linda Smith, Al Smithson, Bob Spriggs, Brooks and Connie Taylor, Kyle Terwilliger, B. J. Thomas, Jerry Thomas, Allen Underwood, Donna Vickers, Jessica Villarreal, and Mary Jane Wright.

Prayers for our family serving in the armed forces: Ben Boughton, Riley Curnutt, Austin Curran, Eric Dill, Jeff Grimes, Nathan Haerer, Damien King, Mike Mancini, Jack Murtha, Colin Peden, Jason Polk, Ryan Powell, Ryan Regalado, Christopher Young, and Robbie Wallace.

Pray for our homebound members.

Pray for those who do not know Christ!

Please contact Pastor Rich McDermott at the church office at 817-274-8286 if you have any congregational care needs. For questions about specific concerns of those listed above, please contact Juanice Young at juanicey@gmail.com or 817-794-5626.

