



Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on
him,
and by his wounds we are healed.
We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:4-6

March
2018

The News



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My Testimony at the Fellowship Community National Gathering

Peachtree Presbyterian Church

Atlanta, Georgia, February 20-22, 2018

First Presbyterian Church of Arlington and Carter Junior High

By Pastor Rich McDermott

For the last twenty years I have been preaching and teaching that we need to look for wherever God is doing his kingdom work and jump on board. That often took the form of my churches engaging in gospel mission work in distant places like Mexico, Nigeria, Liberia, and Belize. But I've discovered, as you have, that God's kingdom work is not simply in faraway places. The *Missio Dei* is often right next door.

For about three years now, I have served a great congregation at the First Presbyterian Church of Arlington, Texas, between Dallas and Fort Worth. It was founded in 1888 and the sanctuary was built in 1956. It is a great building, but, of course, now it requires a lot of tender loving care and cash. It sits on a busy five lane road at 1200 S. Collins Street in Arlington.

Decades ago, several of our members and then their children were students at the junior high that is right next door to us. Ten years ago, I'm told that our church members used to complain about the school using our parking lot to park and to drop off their students. Fortunately, the pastor before me did a good job of changing the attitude of our congregation into seeing how the Lord had put us together for a reason.

Carter Junior High has over 1200 students in the seventh and eighth grades: 80% of the students are Hispanic, 15% are African American, 4% are White or Anglo, and 1% is Asian and other nationalities. About 97% of the students are on free and reduced lunch, and I'm told the 30 students who don't take free and reduced lunches are all in debt to the school for the lunches they do take. In addition, 70% of Carter students have only one parent listed as a contact. It is, by any measure, the poorest junior high of the 13 in the Arlington school system.



Needless to say, it is a tough place to work, but has a lot of great kids. From 2010 to 2014, Carter had five principals in just four years. In 2014, the year before I came to Arlington, God worked a miracle to bring a new principal to Carter who is a Christian with a true servant heart. Reny Lizardo is in the middle of his fourth year as principal and is the first bilingual, Spanish-speaking principal they have ever had. On Valentine's Day last week at Carter, they invited all the parents to come for a Valentine's luncheon at the school. In a school of 1200 students, 30 parents were able to come to the Valentine's luncheon.

In the last few years, bilingual church members have helped Carter at their opening registration. We give a breakfast for their teachers once a year. We take them snacks and refreshments on occasion. Two of our members, Allen and Carole Ray, give away two laptop computers each year to aspiring students. We pushed the school district to build them a new football and soccer field, because the old one is being washed into Johnson Creek, and the new one will be built this year.

Principal Lizardo surprised us when he said that his priority need was a PTA, a Parent-Teacher Association, which Carter had not known for decades for lack of available parents. That is because many parents work two jobs; many do not have transportation; many have had little schooling themselves; some avoid public meetings and signing forms if they are undocumented. The bottom line is that there is little parental involvement at Carter Junior High.

But a PTA that has local community members taking the leadership proved to be just the support and advocacy needed to undertake some of the projects and fund-raisers that will move them into the future. One of our members, Carroll Hulla, actually took a sabbatical from our choir so he could have time to serve as the President of the PTA, and Allen and Carole Ray, the ones who donate the computers, agreed to serve as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. Our youth director, Adrian Rodriguez, jumped in as a Vice President for communication and 10 of our members signed up to be a part of the team.

In closing, I want you to know about our most recent Confirmation Class at First Presbyterian Church of Arlington, several of whom are students or recent graduates of Carter Junior High. We also invited parents and one mom was able to come to her son's confirmation. We have since extended pastoral care to her as she battles breast cancer. The end of my story is this. Keep looking for where the Lord is doing his kingdom work, because it may be right next door, even in a junior high PTA.

P.S. We will be needing several new PTA team members to start in the summer of 2018! If you have an interest, please contact Pastor Rich (817-274-8286) or Carroll Hulla.

Spring Cleaning Time

Come help clean the Sanctuary, classrooms, and hallways for Easter. We will have many guests, so let's make our facilities shine!

Saturday, March 17, 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Bring your dust cloths and cleaning supplies. Join your friends for a little spring cleaning.

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

The One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering is received during the season of Lent at FPCA. This is one of four special offerings collected during our church year. Offering envelopes are provided outside the chapel and sanctuary, or designate OGHS on the memo portion of your check. Posters are located around the church halls.

Presbyterians worldwide have participated in this offering for over 60 years and give about as much as all other denominations put together. The offering gifts are divided among three programs - Self Development of People, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and the Presbyterian Hunger Program. For a list of how these gifts were used in previous years or for more information, see www.pcusa.org/oghs. Please see our Sunday bulletins for more details.



Holy Week



HOLY WEEK

March 25 - April 1

Palm Sunday Services	8:30 and 11:00 AM
Maundy Thursday Service of Communion	7:00 PM
Good Friday Choral Service	7:00 PM
Easter Sunday Services	8:30 and 11:00 AM

Easter breakfast will be served between services from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Youth News

We are so proud of our youth and their performance during FPCA's first annual Parable of the Talents Show. They put in lots of work and it showed.



Thank you to all that helped make the talent show a huge success. A huge thank you to the Fellowship Team for preparing and serving lunch. A special thanks to Eric, Talita, Katina, James, and Russell for helping our youth prepare and helping during the actual talent show. The youth are blessed to have you in their lives. See you next year!

Blessings,
Adrian

Preschool Doings

Our winter/spring is off to a great start! We have learned about Jesus being our best friend and that he always loves us. The 3- and 4-year-olds had a rodeo and know about horses and horse care. Our students studied nocturnal animals, winter animals, and what you should wear during cold weather. The children can tell you about being a farmer, dentist, and doctor.

We had a special guest, Dr. Juan Carlos Gavalda. He brought his family and told us about being a doctor. The children really enjoyed all the instruments in his doctor bag. He told us what they were and how to use them. Dr. Gavalda let everyone have a turn listening to their friend's heart.

We all loved celebrating Valentine's Day.

Fun days filled with learning and loving!

Preschool Summer Camp 2018

- June 11 through August 3
- Ages 6 weeks through third grade
- Monday through Friday, 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

To register, contact the Preschool at 817-274-4051.



Children's Ministry News

Preschool Sunday School



This month we've GONE FISHIN' and we can't wait to see what ideas you and your preschoolers reel in. It just seems perfect since this month is all about Jesus and how He taught the disciples to be fishers of men. How did they learn to be fishers of men? Well, they followed Jesus! And, we want our preschoolers to know that they can follow Jesus too.

We'll start the month with the man who introduced Jesus to the world—John the Baptist. He even baptized Him. John was famous in his own right, but he was just preparing the way for Jesus. When Jesus came to the river, John told everyone how special Jesus was.

During week two, we'll hear Jesus say, "Follow Me" to four different men. When Jesus asks you to follow Him, you drop whatever you're doing and follow Him. Preschoolers will hear how four different fishermen went from fishing for fish to being fishers of men.

In week three, we'll stick to the idea of "Follow Me" and meet Matthew the tax collector. Even though Matthew had made some bad choices and wasn't liked by the masses, he still followed Jesus when He asked. We can all follow Jesus, even when we've made bad choices.

We'll end the month with a celebration. Week four is Palm Sunday, and Palm Sunday is a party! We celebrate Jesus because He is special. He is God's Son. When the people heard He was coming to town, they were excited, and they yelled, "Hosanna! Hosanna!"

This is going to be a wonderful month as we help preschoolers prepare to celebrate the biggest act of love ever known to man ...Easter.

Elementary Sunday School and KFC

When Adam and Eve decided that their way was better than God's way and broke God's rule, they changed the relationship between God and His creation. Where once everything and everyone could be in the presence of God, now we were at odds with God. God could have done anything He wanted, including wiping us out and starting over. But instead, God decided to make peace with us. Ultimately God did this through His Son, Jesus.

When Jesus died and then rose from the dead, He paid the price for everything that was wrong and unfair in this world. Because of Jesus, we can have peace. We don't have to get even. Instead, we can reflect the character of Christ by caring for others and making peace.

WEEK 1 - Key Question: Why is it so hard to give up what you think is fair? Fairness is a big deal to children. It's often their biggest complaint when something doesn't go their way. As kids start with this question, they'll discover how God thinks about fairness and how they can be more willing to let go of what they think is fair.

Bottom Line: **Prove you care more about others by letting go of “what’s fair.”** Sometimes choosing peace means letting go of what we want or our perception of ourselves. Preserving the relationship is more important than protecting our own sense of fairness.

WEEK 2 - Key Question: How do you walk away from a fight?

If you walk into a fifth-grade classroom, you’ll start to discover that even if fists aren’t flying, kids fight with each other. Walking away from a fight can be one of the hardest things a kid does because they feel like their entire reputation is at stake. We pray kids leave with a game plan for how they can make the wise choice and walk away from a fight.



Bottom Line: **Prove you care more about others by walking away from a fight.** Sometimes creating peace with someone means walking away even if we’re not wrong. Often it takes a stronger person to have the self-control to walk away.

WEEK 3 - Key Question: What are ways you can be a peacemaker? It’s one thing to say that peace is important, it’s another thing to actively work toward making peace. As kids go about their day, we hope they stop, look around, and see how they can help make peace between people they know who are experiencing an argument.

Bottom Line: **Prove you care more about others by being part of the solution.** Peace is often about helping stop an argument before it can escalate into something worse. Acting as a peacemaker between others will take time and energy, but God can give us the strength to help others make peace. Sometimes our outside perspective is what someone might need to see a peaceful solution.

WEEK 4 – Key Question: Who do you need to make peace with? Hopefully, the kids in our environments aren’t experiencing fights with their friends, but more than likely a few of them are. As kids learn that God went to great lengths to make peace with us, they can pinpoint exactly whom they need to offer forgiveness and peace.

Bottom Line: **We can make peace with others because God made peace with us.** Jesus is our ultimate example of peace. Because He made peace between God and us, we should strive to make peace a part of how we work together as the Body of Christ.

Save the Dates

Luncheon for families March 4 after the 11:00 service
**with children sixth grade
and younger**

Kids Night Out March 9 and 23, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Spring Festival..... March 24

Vacation Bible School..... June 11 through 15

Gifts of Hope

Thanks to everyone who participated in FPCA's Gifts of Hope alternative gift market! This past Advent season, 186 gifts were purchased totaling \$1714.50, which will be given to various mission and outreach organizations.

GIFTS of HOPE

This amount represents 45 medicine kits, 18 ducks, 29 chickens, 1 hot meal, 2 blankets for rescued slaves, 7 care kits for children, 5 care kits for persecuted believers, 15 Bibles for believers in captivity, food for 16 families for one week, 6 pairs of warm winter socks and gloves, 26 paperback books for H.O.P.E. tutoring students, 5 reams of paper for H.O.P.E. tutoring, 8 welcome kits for kids entering foster care, and 3 parenting classes sponsored by PCHAS.

Thank you for giving these gifts in the spirit of Christian love that will bless people in need both locally and internationally.

Women's Retreat – April 6 to April 8



The women of the church will return to the Lakeview Conference Center near Waxahachie for their annual retreat. Our speaker is Barbara Retzloff, and her topic is Wholehearted Women. She will highlight the “whole-heartedness” of several women in the Bible. Reservations begin March 4 and end March 25. All are welcome.

Finance Update

for the Month of January 2018

General Operating Fund

Income: \$ 69,212

Expense: \$ 93,780

Summary

Income - Expense for month: (\$24,568)

Income - Expense for 2018 Year to Date: (\$24,568)

Comments:

Total Income is under budget for the month by (\$16,402) and under for the year by the same.

Donors - Under budget for the month by (\$12,640) and under for the year by the same.

Loose Offering – Under budget for the month by (\$445) and under for the year by the same.

Temporarily Restricted Funds Used – \$ 2,170

Total Expenses - Under budget for the month by (\$3,499) and under for the year by the same.



This Month



Bible Studies

Men's Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study group meets every Wednesday morning at 8:00 a.m. in the parlor. The current study is the book of Revelation. Men of all ages meet 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, March 19, 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.

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

During the school year, this group of youth in grades 6 to 12 meets on Sunday, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m., in the choir room.

Children's Music Ministries

The children's choirs meet from 12:45 to 1:45 p.m. on Sundays during the school year. 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, March 1, at 6:00 p.m., the Diaconate meets in the parlor to oversee the Congregational Care, Hospitality, and Fellowship ministries.

Team Meeting Night

Thursday, March 8, 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, March 22, 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, March 15, 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
1200 S. Collins Street
Arlington, TX 76010

Deadline for the April issue of The News is March 15!

Prayer Ministry

Prayers for those with health and other concerns: Esther Albright, Elaine Bahn, David Boice, Shirley Bragg, James (Andrew) Bridges, Edna Collins, Lee Carol Copeland, Tommy and Kathryn Copeland and family, Laura and Moses Duffney, Neal Estes, Tom and Bobbie Fowler, Lila Glenn, David Goff, Jack Gray, Andrew Hydock, Tim Karnes, Bob Koch, Pat May, Allen Miller, J. Fred Miller, Barbara Mooers, Ruth Moore, Cosme Pacot, John Pittman, Jim L. Quick, Aileigh Rodriguez, Albert Ross, Kyle Terwilliger, Donna Vickers, Karl Winter, 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, Stephen O'Neil Sosa, 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.

For questions about specific concerns listed above, please contact Juanice Young at juanicey@gmail.com or 817-794-5626.

