



April
2021

The News

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.”

Peter 1:3-4

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Newsletter Team

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New Easter Worship Series

I concluded our Lenten sermon series by thanking those in worship (online and in-person) for giving that area of discipleship the seriousness it deserved. Through the worship series, online book study, and our staff studying Ed Stetzer's book together as well, I know the Holy Spirit is producing some good, kingdom fruit as a result.

Depending on your perspective, you might think, "Oh well, all good things come to an end." Or, "Thank goodness. Can we talk about anything else?" There is good news as April brings Easter and a new sermon series. "Living in a Post-Resurrection World" is a Lectionary-based series that will begin on Easter Sunday, looking at the resurrection of Jesus, and will take us through Pentecost Sunday, when we look how that sparked the greatest example of transformed life. The world truly would never be the same. As we live in a society that is post-everything (postmodern, post-postmodern, post-Christian, post-truth), why is it important we live and worship in a post-resurrection world? How can the Holy Spirit work in and through us just like the early church? I am excited to get to the most hopeful message of all the Gospel and walk together through these weeks of Easter through Pentecost. Christ is risen and is at work in our everyday lives.

Scriptures for our April Sundays will be:

April 4th: Isaiah 25:6-9; Mark 16:1-8

April 11th: 1 John 1:1 – 2:2; John 20:19-31

April 18th: 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48

April 25th: Psalm 23; 1 John 3:16-24

Easter blessings!

Pastor Chris

Finance Update

For the month of **February 2021:**

Budget (Operating and Funds Released)

Income: \$87,339

Expense: (\$79,107)

Income - Expense for month:

\$ 8,232

Income - Expense for 2021 Year to Date:

\$(14,784)



Comments:

Thank you for your generous donations. Because of your support we:

- had a successful “New Year, New Beginnings”, virtual event for Women’s Ministry,
- had a super Souper Bowl of Caring outreach,
- continue to provide opportunities for serving our community through the Mobile Food Pantry and by providing meals for the Arlington Life Shelter, or to help them in other ways.
- held the “There{4}” Teen Conference, live-streamed in the Fellowship Hall for high school girls,
- had the Children’s Ministry Picnic/Takeout Luncheon, along with a Zoom get together with games and a Bible lesson.
- were able to finally complete our roof and steeple repair projects from the damage due to the hail storms 2 ½ years ago. We used your donations, the PILP loan, and insurance money to pay for it.
- The Capital Campaign fund balance continues to grow. As of February, the balance is \$812,978.

We are on target and, because of you, we are able to carry out the ministries that are calling to our FPCA family.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns, at jeanne@firstprestexas.org.

Preschool Annual Spring Fundraiser

The preschool will be holding its annual spring fundraiser. This year, we will bring our community together in a virtual auction. If you are interested in donating to the spring fundraiser, please fill out the form that you can find with the Q-code bellow or send an email to dana@firstprestexas.org asking for the form.

We appreciate your support.



Prayer and Praise from the Shideler's

Can you believe it's already the middle of March?

Here we are having just marked one year of COVID-19 and what a crazy year it's been.

Even in the midst of COVID, we are finding cause for gratitude. We praise God for:

- His peace in the midst of uncertainty;
- His enabling grace and strength as we served Wycliffe members who had to unexpectedly return to the US as COVID concerns grew in their countries of assignment;
- Online church service and Bible studies;
- YOU, our faithful ministry partners who have allowed us to continue serving in our Wycliffe ministries!

We are excited that Bible translation has continued even in the midst of a global pandemic! Praise God with us for these Scripture dedications that took place recently; pray that the Scriptures will be used and will result in transformed lives!

- Soja* New Testament in South Asia on Jan. 24, 2021. Population: 120,000. (*Name changed)
- Himaure* New Testament in South Asia on Jan. 31, 2021. Population: 400,000. (*Name changed)
- Tafi New Testament in Ghana on Feb. 25, 2021. Population: 4,400.
- Logba New Testament in Ghana on Feb. 27, 2021. Population: 7,500.
- Nyangbo New Testament in Ghana on Feb. 28, 2021. Population: 6,400.



If you'd like to pray for us, here's what's going on for us in the coming weeks:

- Brett is heading to Orlando on 21 March for the first time in six months. His schedule is packed full of meetings. Please pray for stamina, good and restful sleep, good connections, clear communications, and that God would glorify himself in every meeting, dialogue, contact, and interaction.
- Brett will get to spend the weekend of 26-28 March in Tallahassee with Adam, Christina, and Edward. Please pray for good reconnection with them but especially with Edward, who's not yet three. How wonderful it will be to hug a grandkiddle again!
- Brett is traveling again only because our household has received our COVID vaccines. Please pray for protection and good health.
- Marla, who will remain in Washington with her dad while Brett's away, is rejoicing that several of the Wycliffe members she serves have been able to return to their countries of service. Yay! Please pray for continued stamina as she answers their questions and provides the resources they need as they transition.
- We are trying to plan a trip to visit you; there are many factors to consider as we plan. Please pray we would be led by the Holy Spirit as we submit our plans to His leading.

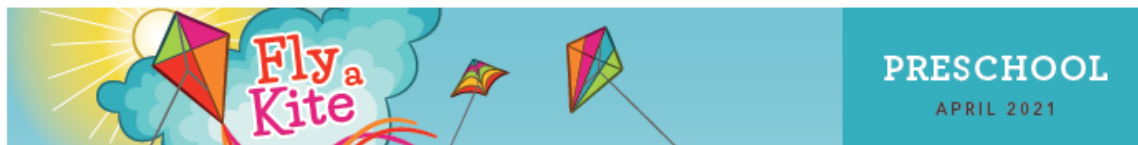
Thank you for standing with us in prayer and ministry. We are grateful!

Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done wonderful things, things planned long ago.

Isaiah 25:1 (NIV)

Children's Ministry

Preschool



MONTHLY OVERVIEW

This month, we are going to be talking about something that is high and wide and deep. Do you know what it is? Yes, it's the love of Jesus. Jesus' love for each of us is so wide and long and high and deep that we can't even measure it! And, we are going to have so much fun introducing this truth to our preschoolers this month!

We start the month with the best Sunday of the year—Easter! How exciting that we get to share the story of Easter with our youngest friends this month. Some of them will be hearing for the very first time that Jesus wants to be their friend forever. Yes! Jesus is alive, and He wants to be our friend forever!

We want to share the good news that Jesus is alive with our preschoolers all month long. We want them to hear over and over again that Jesus wants to be their friend forever. We want this foundational truth of Jesus' great love for them to live in each preschooler's heart.

WEEK ONE	BIBLE STORY Easter Matthew 26:20-30; 27:45-50; 28:1-7	STORY FOCUS Jesus is alive!
WEEK TWO	BIBLE STORY Breakfast on the Beach John 21:1-14	STORY FOCUS Jesus wants to be my friend forever.
WEEK THREE	BIBLE STORY Early Church Acts 2:42-47	STORY FOCUS Jesus taught us how to love one another.
WEEK FOUR	BIBLE STORY Great Commission Matthew 28:16-20	STORY FOCUS I can tell others about Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE	KEY QUESTION	BOTTOM LINE
"HOW WIDE AND LONG AND HIGH AND DEEP IS THE LOVE OF CHRIST." EPHESIANS 3:18, NIV	WHO WANTS TO BE YOUR FRIEND FOREVER?	JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.
JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.		

Elementary and KFC



ELEMENTARY

APRIL 2021

MONTHLY OVERVIEW

GOD VIEW:

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN PEACE AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY

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. When 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.

WEEK ONE

BIBLE STORY

Easter / God's Big Story
Colossians 1:20 and John 20:1-18

BOTTOM LINE

God made peace with us.

WEEK TWO

BIBLE STORY

Live in Peace with Others
Colossians 3:15

BOTTOM LINE

We can make peace with others.

WEEK THREE

BIBLE STORY

Isaac's Wells
Genesis 26:1-6, 12-22, 26-31

BOTTOM LINE

You can show you care about others by walking away from a fight.

WEEK FOUR

BIBLE STORY

Abigail Intervenes
1 Samuel 25:1-35

BOTTOM LINE

You can show you care about others by being part of the solution.

MEMORY VERSE

"SO LET US DO ALL WE CAN TO LIVE IN PEACE. AND LET US WORK HARD TO BUILD UP ONE ANOTHER."

ROMANS 14:19, NIRV

PEACE

PROVING YOU CARE MORE ABOUT EACH OTHER THAN WINNING AN ARGUMENT

Children's Ministry Dates to Remember

April 3: Spring Festival Egg Hunt 3:00 pm

April 10: Children's Ministry Luncheon at noon

April 25: Children's Ministry Zoom at 4:00 p.m.

May 2: Children's Ministry Luncheon at noon

July 26-30: Virtual Vacation Bible School

Youth Ministry

How Easter Gives Us Hope in the Midst of a Pandemic

By Sarah Anderson

I've got good news and bad news.

The bad news is: we're in the middle of a health crisis and global pandemic that has radically restructured our normal routines and ways of life that none of us have ever had to walk through before.

The good news is: we're all in it together. None of us have been here before—meaning we're all learning as we go, and we're co-journeyers in these unprecedented times.

But even in the camaraderie of knowing we are in this together, there are the questions.

- How do we fill our days?
- How do we get everything done that needs to get done?
- How do we maximize family time?
- How do we not drive each other crazy in the process?
- How do we instill faith in our kids, while also addressing the very real fear they (and we) are facing?

Don't overcomplicate the already complicated

As a parent of an eight and ten year old, these are the questions on repeat in my head—especially the last one. As an adult that struggles with fear and anxiety of my own, I worry about what my kids are not just picking up from the news, but from my own behaviors.

I wonder how much information is too much for them to handle. I debate over what to tell them and what to keep to myself. I find myself thinking I'm never doing it right for my kids, because it often feels like I am never doing it right for myself.

These were the things cycling around and around in my mind the past couple of weeks. Until one of the rare moments of quiet in my house—that never seems to empty of the people who live here anymore—I wondered if maybe we're over complicating things. Not that these aren't complicated times, but that maybe returning to the basics is the best thing we can do.

Between Christmas and Easter

As a country, the reality of COVID-19 really hit home for us in the time between Christmas and Easter. As I thought about the timing of it all, it didn't seem insignificant. In fact, it seemed like

maybe there was meaning there that would help us, as a family, as parents to young kids, navigate the fear.

When I think of Christmas, I think of the message of Immanuel—God with us. I think of the enormity of the decision God made in sending divinity to live alongside humanity. I think of the normalness Jesus was born into—the mundane features of day to day life, but also the fear and unknowing and uncertainty of day-to-day life.

The message of Christmas—33 years before Jesus died—was that God saw us and wanted to be near us. And so He came. And He stayed. And for so many people who encountered Him in the 33 years he walked the Earth, it was His presence alongside them that changed things for them.

And then, just a couple of months later, we celebrate Easter.

A time we specifically draw attention to for the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. But tucked into the message of Easter isn't simply the particular message of Jesus' life after death.

What Easter is about

Easter is the message of beauty from ashes. It's the message of the hardest things imaginable—yielding life when it seemed improbable, impossible.

It's the idea that the worst things are never the last things. That the story isn't over. That love wins. That good wins. That life is full of hurt and loss, of hard and uncertain, and that to feel those things and acknowledge those things isn't weak, but necessary.

And that even then, God meets us there with a message of life and hope and newness.

In other words, in a season marked by fear and loss, of uncertainty and difficulty, there are the two most fundamental messages of Christianity to draw comfort from:

God is with us. And the story isn't over.

Easter reminds us that God is with us

These days, as I parent my kids—and I coach myself day in day out—I keep these two messages front and center.

When faith shrinks in the face of fear, God is with us.

When loss overwhelms us, the story isn't over.

We may be new to parenting in the time of a pandemic. But what we are feeling isn't new to God. The messages He made sure humanity received are the messages we need more now than ever. In uncertain times, we have God's presence. In a new normal that shows no signs of changing, we have hope that the story isn't over, and beauty can come even from this.

Parenting in a pandemic raises a lot of questions. But it also raises to the forefront of our minds the two most foundational ideas of our faith.

When parenting our kids and wondering if we're doing it right, we can be sure we are at least doing something right when we recenter our family's dialogue around the things that never cease to be true, when everything else around us changes.

God is with us. And the story isn't over.

Easter Word Search



Easter Word Search



APOSTLES
CAVE
CROSS
CROWN
EASTER
FAITH
FORGIVEN

LAMB
MESSIAH
MIRACLE
REDEMPTION
RESURRECTION
RISEN
SACRIFICE

SAVIOR
SUNDAY
THIRD DAY
THORNS
TOMB



This Month

Some activities are postponed until further notice. The Activities marked with * are happening.



Bible Studies

Men's Bible Study *

The Men's Bible Study group meets every Wednesday morning at 8:00 a.m. in the parlor. 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 Monday Night Women's Bible study is currently not meeting. Normal meeting time is the third Monday of each month at 6 p.m.

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).

Youth Choir

During the school year, this group of youth in grades 6 to 12 meets on Sunday, 12:45 to 1:45 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, May 6, at 6:30 p.m., the Diaconate meets in the parlor to oversee the Congregational Care, Hospitality, and Fellowship ministries.

Team Meeting Night*

Thursday, April 8, at 7:00 p.m., all teams for ministry planning and coordination.

Session Meeting*

Thursday, April 22, at 7:00 p.m., the Session meets online to oversee the ministry of the church. Indoor worship, Budget, Generis, and other matters. 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 (at 817-460-8050) 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, , 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 May issue of The News is April 15!

Prayer Ministry

Prayers for those with health and other concerns: Apana Agha, Jack Bos, James (Andrew) Bridges, Carol Browning, Vannah Caylor, Frank and Allena Coburn, Edna Collins, Lloyd Counts, the Farnell Family, Don Farrell, Yvette Fielder, the Gifford Family, Joe and Lila Glenn, Andrew Hydock, Bob Johnson, Liana Leathem (Jane Leathem's granddaughter), Tim Karnes (Pat May's son), Gary Lindley, Pat May, Barbara Mooers, Bodil Overtree, Jim L. Quick, Jillian Reynolds, Joan Reynolds, Beth Rotert, Kathy Rotert, John and Donna Vickers, and Nancy Welborne.

Prayers for our family serving in the armed forces: Ben Boughton, Riley Curnutt, Austin Curran, James Dailey, Jeff Grimes, Nathan Haerer, Damien King, Mike Mancini, Amie Murtha, Stephen O'Neil Sosa, Colin Peden, Jason Polk, Ryan Powell, Ryan Regalado, Peyton Steeno, Christopher Young, and Robbie Wallace

Prayers for our homebound members: Esther Albright, Suzette Armstrong, Shirley Bragg, Tom and Bobbie Fowler, Jack Gray, Marge Harrand, Barbara Hughes, Barbara Kraemer, Jeanne Malone, Charlene Miller, Cary Moore, Carrie Pacot, Ann Pitstick, Betty Snowden, Dee Uhri, Richard Whitenight, and Mary Jane Wright

Pray for those who do not know Christ!

If you have any congregational care needs, please contact Pastor Chris Campbell at 817-274-8286.

