

A vibrant field of red poppies stretches towards a horizon where the sun is setting. The sun's rays create a brilliant, golden glow that fills the sky and illuminates the flowers. The sky is a mix of soft pinks, oranges, and blues, with wispy clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and hopeful.

Walking in the
LIGHT
of the Lord

Lenten Devotions



First Presbyterian Church
IN NORTH PALM BEACH

Introduction



This year the Fellowship Committee has compiled Lenten Devotions provided by Rev. Dr. Ron Hilliard, Rev. Steve Gibbons, Elders, Deacons, our mission partners, members and friends at First Presbyterian Church in North Palm Beach. We have also included past devotions from Rev. Elton Piersma and Hunter Norwood, who served this congregation faithfully while they were alive. We have been given a great gift from those who have opened their souls by sharing with us words of inspiration, encouragement and hope.

We invite you to use these devotions as a daily source of help during the Lenten Season. We have printed an opening Scripture and closing prayer for many devotions. We pray that these will assist you in your personal preparation for Easter and your worship of God.

Lent is the forty-day period of penitence and prayer beginning with Ash Wednesday and ending on Easter. The forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness, preparing for His ministry on earth, is the model for this period of reflection. During this time, we contemplate the meaning and power of the crucifixion and the celebration of the resurrection day, Easter.

Please find a schedule of our worship services on the last two pages of this booklet. We hope you will join with us in worship on Ash Wednesday, throughout Lent and during Holy Week.



Ash Wednesday

“Think of it! All sins forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ’s cross.”

Colossians 2:14 (The Message)

Lent... a time to ponder your nail, your sin, your cross and your Savior.

During the Lenten season in 2012, I was visiting with my friend, Tim Hartner, who is a pastor in Weston, Florida. Tim and I are blessed to be friends for 40 years. I was his dorm counselor at Valparaiso and then we were fraternity brothers and teammates. What has remained over those 40 years is our relationship as brothers in Christ.

Tim gave me a “nail” which on one side had the above sentence and on the reverse: Christ has wiped out the damning evidence which hung over our heads by nailing it over his own.

Lent is a season in which followers of Christ devote “personal reflection time” to understand what God did for us, His children. What an amazing gift given to me.

I have continued to carry that nail in my pocket. During this Lenten season, it is my goal to spend quality time reflecting on those two statements and to take deep into my heart an understanding of the sacrifice that Christ did for me....for me! And for you.

I would encourage you to do the same.

Father, In our busy (Being Under Satan’s Yoke) lives we too often don’t make time for You...our Savior and our friend. Please give us the wisdom to take time right now to realize how much You love us. During Lent and for the rest of our lives on this earth, we will spend time developing a personal, intimate love relationship with our Savior in whose name we pray. Amen.

Bob Schuemann

Lenten Prayer

Jesus keep me near the cross
I am prone to wander
Jesus keep me near the cross
Thy word that I might ponder

Jesus keep me near the cross
I give my life to You
Keep me, guide me, lead me
As I strive Your will to do

Jesus keep me near the cross
You gave your life for me
You shed your blood and went to hell
Arose and set me free

Jesus keep me near the cross
Give me a heart of care
Jesus keep me near the cross
Help me Your love to share

Aleen Dirschel

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

Psalms 119:105

One of the most difficult tasks for an artist is capturing light in a painting. The first questions we ask when starting a painting is, “What is the light source and what direction is its path?” This is necessary to properly place the shadows. Where shadows are deepest, the more brilliant the light will appear. The second question is, “Where or what is the focal point?” Without a focal point, the eye has no place to rest.

The same is true in the life of a Christian. I have to deal with light and shadows in my Christian life as well as my creative life. Each morning upon awakening, I open the blinds and thank God for the sunlight and for another day. I also thank Him if there are clouds and rain outside my window. I also thank Him for the dark areas of my life, for when the shadows dissipate, His light appears more radiant. When a painting isn’t going well, it is usually because I have not included Him, the Creator of the world and my mentor, into the process.

Jesus is the light of the world, the essential guiding light, or focal point, in the Christian life. When we are lost in the shadows of illness, grief, or disappointments, we have but to follow the path He has pre-lighted for us; a path where the darkness of evil cannot intrude. When we remain on His path with our eyes on His eternal glow, there is nothing to fear.

Dear God, During this Lenten season, help me to keep You the focal point in my life, and to always walk in the light of Your presence. Amen.

Marie Pinschmidt

SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2014

“Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O Lord! Let the smile of Your face shine upon us. You have put more joy in my heart than those who have abundant harvests of grain and wine. I will lie down in peace and sleep, for You alone, O Lord, will keep me safe.”

Psalm 4:6-8

I awake every morning to the glory of God shining through the slats of my bedroom window blinds, an undeniable reminder of each instance the Lord has lifted me and guided me toward His light. The walk through life is quite fickle! The ups and downs, and twists and turns can be daunting and unhinging. One constant, the leveler in my life, is the unconditional love and gentle healing hand of God. His light illuminates my faith even through the most difficult times, guiding me home.

During my brief residence in Charlotte, North Carolina, I experienced some very dark days dealing with heart wrenching personal issues. I found an outlet in painting, and was drawn to a mirror one day and proceeded to sketch and then paint a self portrait. The hues in the portrait were intense and bold – unlike my usual color choices. Even though the portrait was a decent representation, I proceeded to white wash one side of my face in light making quite a contrast to the background which split the canvas in half – red on the right, light infused yellow on the left. I named the work *Into the Light*. I described the finished composition to my sister. She led me to see how biblically beautiful and faithfully significant the self portrait was. My cathartic painting embodied three comforting and supportive

messages from above that replenished my faith, and gave me the confidence and courage I needed to move forward from darkness to light.

When I look at my portrait today, I am reminded that the healing hand of our Father God comes in many colors, shapes and forms. With great love, He walks along side of us upon an illuminated path of faith and grace partaking in our pain. In God's light I am rescued and revived. In awe of His Holy Spirit, I am lovingly awakened, inspired and sustained each and every day of my life.

Dear God, As You take our hand and guide and support us through life, we are reminded of Your perpetual love. From the warmth of the sun upon our face, to the lush grass beneath our feet, we give thanks for Your abundant gifts poured forth in Your light for us every second of every day. Amen.

Salvatrice (Sally) Insinga



First Sunday of Lent

“...these three remain: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love.” 1 Corinthinas 13:13

My mother died of ovarian cancer when I was 29. The only person on earth that loved me unconditionally was gone!

Although I was baptized as an infant and occasionally attended Sunday school (because mom thought it would be good for us), I did not know the Lord and thought He didn't know me.

I participated in a futureless marriage for 8 years, was angry with my father for many trivial slights and blamed him for Mom's death. It looked like my life would be a series of superficial wanderings until my time on this earth expired. I was lost in a fog for 5 years.

My mom's favorite movie was *South Pacific* and she always dreamed of visiting Hawaii. In February 1986, my wife (at the time) and I vacationed on Kauai. One day we went to Haena State Park, which is not far from Hanalei Bay where *South Pacific* was filmed and Mitzi Gaynor sang “I'm gonna wash that man right outa my hair.” Mom would have loved it and I sensed that she was there.

While relaxing on the beach, God sent me a message:

“You know, Skip, you come into this life alone and you go out alone. Who you choose to spend it with is up to you.”

“Are You talking to me?”

“Yes”

“Does this have anything to do with the girl next to me?”

“It's up to you.”

He commandeered my heart and it has changed everything. He sent an angel to me, Kitty, and my life has never been the same. She encourages me to bring out the parts of my character that I am proud of. It is now clear that the Lord loves me unconditionally and has a plan for me.

Mom always told me to count my blessings. Since that day 28 years ago, I have had too many to count.

“Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found. Was blind, but now I see.” Amen.

Skip Hudson

MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2014

“...I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?” John 11:25-26

There we were, just the two of us. The candles were lit. The table was set. My bride had prepared a wonderful Italian dinner. The sun had set after a long day at work. Now we could just relax and enjoy being together.

Dimly lit rooms can be both enticing and romantic. They can also hide things from the light of day. That summer evening my wife had prepared linguine with a delicious meat sauce. As we both love Parmesan cheese, we piled it on. It was all so delicious—a memorable evening!

Only after finishing our meal, with the overhead chandelier on, did we discover that the grated Parmesan we used from the canister had turned blue from mold. It was not pleasing to look at, and we wondered, *“What have we done?”*

This reminded me that darkness can cover a multitude of sins. Secret societies are dark. So are strip joints, bars, cloakrooms, and every other place where the Truth is hidden. In the dark, like the spreading tentacles of mold on Parmesan cheese, sin flourishes.

Once sin is ingested it can lead to death, greed, pride, envy, lust, sloth, and gluttony, all of which are deadly organisms of a spiritual nature.

Light and darkness are seen throughout our world. Blessed with freedom of choice, we select the level of illumination that shines on us. The book of Genesis tells us that God created light *“and saw that the light was good.”* In John 8:12, Jesus said, *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

What a wonderful assurance! Jesus will reveal the mold in the lives of those who seek after Him! Keeping the light on, by staying fresh in the presence of God's Word, is the only way we can live an abundant life and be a blessing to others.

Father, In the purity of Your light, we see the beauty of Your creation. Remove from us all worldly imperfections. As You foreknew us, shape in us the precious character of Your Son. May the wonder of His Radiance and Resurrected Presence be seen in our countenance and heard in our conversation. Soften our hearts during this Lenten Season that we might always be mindful of Your touch. By your Word, and through Your Love, transform us that we may glorify Jesus, our Lord and Savior, in whose Name we pray through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Ray Schwedhelm

TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2014

*“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” **John 3:16***

We take light for granted. I can flip a switch in my home and have light. It's that easy.

It wasn't always like that. I grew up in a house without electricity or indoor plumbing. I can remember using kerosene lamps when the sun went down, cooking and heating the house with a wood-burning stove, drawing water from a well, and using an outhouse. If we went from room to room at night, we had to carry a light with us so that we could see.

When the power company personnel wired our home for electricity, they cut a hole in the ceiling of each room and installed a ceiling light socket with a light bulb and a long pull chain. For weeks, we kids pulled those chains with no light coming from the bulbs until all the chains were broken. What a celebration we had when the power was on, the chains were replaced, and light shone from those bare bulbs.

As Christians, God is the source of power shining through the light of Christ's love and His work on the cross. This is made clear to us in John 8:12, when Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in dark-

ness, but will have the light of life.” We carry His light within us, wherever we go, and shine for all the world, to point them toward His light of everlasting life.

Grace Robertson

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2014

*“...I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the Gospel.” **Philippians 1:12***

November 28, 2013, at 2:00 pm I was in a car accident. My five-year-old son was with me. I prayed. Everything was so quick; suddenly ambulances and police were all around us. Nine people were injured, including my son who was taken to a hospital. I was taken to prison, unjustly, because the authorities thought the accident was my fault. So many issues to worry about—my son, the other people involved in the accident, my pain, my car, the wedding anniversary dinner I was supposed to have later that night and so on. But I had peace.

At 8:00 pm, I was in a prison cell with 9 other men. I continued to pray. I didn’t have any idea what else to do. I shared my food with some men who hadn’t had anything to eat that day. Using my jacket and small pillow, I slept on the floor. It was hard, but I slept.

That next morning my cellmates called the doctor, thinking something was wrong with me. They told me later, they couldn’t sleep for one or two days. They asked me, “*How were you able to sleep? And to have peace?*” I answered, “*I have two reasons. I know God is in control, and God will rescue me.*”

Some of the men kept quiet, but others asked me to share. They needed to hear something like that, to know what God was doing. So I did. I shared my faith, and later my food. All day, before I was rescued, I shared my faith. My wife brought food for all of us which was also a way of witnessing. Now I know that what happened to me actually served to share the Gospel to others.

Thank You, Lord, for keeping our families, other people, and ourselves safe. Thank You for using us to share Your Gospel, even on those hard days. Amen.

Antonio Reyes (our mission partner in Merida, Mexico)

“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when His glory is revealed” 1 Peter 4:12-13

The beauty at the ocean was beyond compare. It was a delightfully cool morning with a piercing, clear blue sky. The sun’s rays danced across the giant boulders that lined the inlet; the shadows contrasted against the light, which created beautiful shapes and patterns. The water glistened with what looked like millions of diamonds upon the waves. It was breathtaking! Breathing in the salty air and feeling the breeze against my skin, I worshiped the God of creation while listening to the praise song, “Beautiful Scandalous Night.” My senses were overwhelmed with the magnificence! Just when I thought it could not get any better, a large school of bottle-nosed dolphins came swimming and jumping into the inlet. I continued worshiping.

As I headed back home, I kept thinking about all I had seen. What did God want me to know? My thoughts kept turning to those boulders. Then I realized they were beautiful because of the shadows that contrasted against the light!

Yes, that was the message! Are not our lives more beautiful because of the shadows? Is this not where God teaches us mercy and compassion, and where strength of character is formed? (2 Cor. 1:4, Rom. 5:3-5) And is it not in the valley of the shadow of death where we learn that God is with us? (Ps. 23:4) In all these dark places, in the depths of despair, we can find comfort in the shadow of His wings. (Ps. 57:1)

How many times do we pray, “*Jesus, mold me and make me after Thy will?*” But often when the shadows of rejection, illness, loss, and other struggles come our way, we ask, “*Why me, Lord?*”

Today’s Bible verse tells us not to be surprised by suffering. Why? Because even though we live on a spectacular planet, we are still subjected to the curse of sin and death (Rom. 8:22-25). However, when we trust the God of creation and understand He loves us with an everlasting love, He who did not spare His only Son to rescue us, then we can know our trials are not in vain; we are participating with Christ in His suffering.

In Hebrews 12:7-11 we are told to, “Endure hardship as discipline ... God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in His holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at

the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

The word *endure*, in Greek, *hupomeno*, means to stay under, remain, and persevere. The word *discipline* in Greek, *paideuo*, means to educate or correct, as in training up a child. This verse is *not* about punishment for our sins and shortcomings, or enduring suffering for the sake of suffering, because Jesus suffered on our behalf and paid our sin debt! It is about submitting to God’s training, trusting that He will use our hardships to transform us into the image of His beloved Son (James 1:2-4). However, this doesn’t mean we *remain under* abusive relationships when it is in our control to change them. We must seek justice for others and ourselves. (Deut. 16:9, 20; Is. 1:17) Even so, miraculously, some of the most heinous crimes committed against God’s children have shaped them into shining lights for God’s Kingdom.

If you haven’t experienced the goodness of God in the midst of suffering, then I urge you to press into Him, draw near to God and He will draw near to you (James 4:8). Read His Word, pray, and seek His face. God’s plan is far better than any we can devise for ourselves, because in Him, our shadows have purpose!

Father of Creation, When difficulties arise, please help me to trust You and know there is a purpose for them. May the shadows of my life make me more like You, so Your light can shine through me! Amen.

Sarah Keith

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2014

Jesus is in you! He’s living there.

I was walking up and down confessing 1 John 4:4, “Greater is He that is in me, than he that is in the world.” Greater is He.... Greater is He.... Suddenly, revelation knowledge welled up in me and I knew, Oh! God is in me!

It hit me like somebody walked up and slapped me with a wet rag. It just shook me awake. I started to stomp grandly around that old house. All of a sudden, I was the dwelling place of the Most High God! That changed my thinking about so many things. I looked at my hands and it hit me. His fingers are in my fingers! I looked at my legs. His legs are in my

legs. His feet are in my feet! If I walk into danger, He walks into danger.

Now, when I hear people say, “My prayers aren’t getting any higher than the ceiling,” I want to say, “Higher than the ceiling? They don’t need to get any higher than your nose! He’s inside you! The Author of your prayers, the Author of your faith, Jesus of Nazareth has taken residency inside you. Hallelujah!”

Some people think you don’t get filled with the Spirit until you receive the Baptism in the Holy Ghost. But that’s not so. The Holy Spirit came into you when you made Jesus Lord of your life. He came into you when you were born again. Getting baptized in the Holy Spirit is another thing. It’s when the power of the Holy Ghost comes upon you to empower you for service (Acts 1:8).

That means even if you’ve just been born again two seconds, *Jesus is in you!* He’s living there, and He will be from now on. Can you fathom that? If you’ll spend some time thinking about it and meditating on it, you can receive revelation of it just like I did. It will start growing in your spirit and eventually change your whole life.

“As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” 2 Corinthians 6:16

Jesus is in you. That’s the most glorious truth in the Word of God. Let that truth come alive in you today.

Mike Fuller

(friend of Frank Coughanour)

SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 2014

*“My beloved has a vineyard on a rich and fertile hill. In the middle
there is a watch tower...” Isaiah 5:1-2*

My Beloved Has A Vineyard

In the light of Your holiness,
I sigh to Heaven,
And speak Your sacred name.

In freedom's separation,
I turn to behold You –
Yielding the part of me,
That is You,
And the part of You,
That beholds me.

In righteous longing there rests a holy seed –

My beloved has a vineyard,
On a rich and fertile hill.
In the middle there is a watch tower...

Watch for me,
Watch for me,
Watch for me.

Dear Jesus, light of the world – From Your heavenly throne, in favor, watch for me. May the fruit of my earthly vineyard be ever pleasing to You. In the rich soil of Your love and faithfulness, help me remove the rocky stones of sin so as to season seeds of justice, mercy and humility. Amen.

Annie Dougherty



Second Sunday of Lent

“When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’” John 8:12

Several months ago my husband, Scott, and I started walking early in the morning. Almost every weekday we get up at 5:00 am, put on our tennis shoes, and take a walk around the neighborhood. What began as merely a routine to get some exercise has turned into much more. Walking at this time of the day has caused us to view God’s handiwork in a very different way.

Early in the morning we first experience darkness and stillness. Yet as we walk and grow accustomed to our surroundings, we clearly see the light of the moon and the multitude of stars in the sky. At that time, before dawn, we sense God’s presence in the peace and quiet. He “lights” our path through the darkness.

Before I became a believer, I spent several years searching to find purpose and meaning in my life. My crazy journey took me down all sorts of paths from atheism to Buddhism. Looking back I can see that I truly was walking in darkness, with no direction and no idea which way to go. I could not experience real joy or contentment because I felt like I was always searching for something just beyond my reach.

What a difference a personal relationship with the Lord makes! We do not have to be in the darkness anymore. As believers, we are given His peace, His purpose, and a plan for our lives that can be found nowhere else. From the words of David in Psalm 27:1 “The Lord is my light and my salvation.”

Dear Lord, I praise You for rescuing me from the darkness. My soul is at rest because You have saved me. As I walk through this day help me to reflect Your light to others. In Christ’s name. Amen.

Lisa Hawkins

*“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf.” **Hebrews 6:19-20***

One of my favorite things about living here in North Palm is the sky. The colors of each sunset melt together like a seashore and give way to waves of billowing clouds, creating a lagoon. On some stormy days, a rainbow may be seen breaking forth in all color and beauty, making time stand still.

All worries and troubles in that moment fade because a timeless wonder filled with ancient meaning appears in a dark and cloudy sky.

His promises are kept. His faithfulness endures and hope is bright and colorful. Out of all the things He made to remind man of hope, He chose something that only appears when certain light hits the darkness. He chose something high in the sky so that many could see and be absolutely delighted by it. Isn't it interesting that a rainbow always surprises us even if we expect and look for it? Like a kiss, it refreshes the eyes of its beholder and puts everything else in perspective. He delights in providing a kaleidoscope for us to see Him in intricate and vibrant ways. We can hope because He has never left us in our pasts, dwells within each of our todays, and has promised us a future with Him forever. We can hope because He is with us in detail.

Through you, His bride, I have seen a rainbow. You are beautiful because His love is all over you. You reflect His love to all who 'pass' through by loving in a very specific deep love. I see how much you have let Him wash your feet and how thankful you are through your love. You are so beautiful, that those who just 'pass' through seem to stay a while. Your welcoming hearts, homes and hugs have reminded me of His faithfulness and provision for me in ways no words can ever tell. All I can do is say thank you for showing me Him in another interesting magnificent color.

Father, Thank You for Your faithfulness. In our darkest moments, help us know You are near. Help us know Your presence in detail even when Your provision seems to hurt at first and we see no color or beauty. Help us desire to see a reflection of color in each mud puddle we face today. Be the anchor for our souls. Amen.

Julie Christiansen

“The Lord is my strength and my song...” Exodus 15:2

We had been renovating the building in the center of Budapest for 13 years. It was to be a coffee house, friendly to not-yet believers and their believing friends. And it was our center of ministry into the city—light in a dark place.

I felt like the children of Israel must have felt being led out of Egypt. I was scared...It was taking so long. Had the vision grown old? How would we account for all the money given if the project failed?

When the night came for our grand opening, I felt like I was backed up against the Red Sea. Was this really a good idea? Two hours before we were to open, the sound system was still being installed, and we didn't have enough chairs. But at 7 pm that night, it was like the Red Sea parted, our doors opened, and our friends flooded in to celebrate with us.

At the end of the evening, after we had cleaned up, I stepped out of our new ministry center, and locked the doors. It was as if the waters had rushed back together, and I realized I was totally dry.

My fears had been drowned in the faithfulness of God. A song of praise was in their place. The Lord is my strength and my song.

Barbara Johnson (Youth with a Mission – Budapest, our mission partner)

“You, O LORD, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light.” Psalm 18:28

Music has been a part of my life for over 20 years. From learning to read music in the 6th grade, to meeting my wife, Carrie, in the marching band at Florida State University, to participating in the handbell choir and bands at First Pres, I am blessed to have been led to Christ and to have continuing opportunities to worship God through music.

As I prepare for the season of Lent and reflect on the stunning sacrifice that was made

to wash away my sin, I am prompted to share a powerful verse from one of our favorite hymns, “In Christ Alone”, written by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend:

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious day,
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory,
Sin’s curse has lost its grip on me;
For I am His and He is mine—
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

What an incredible medium to deliver such a potent message! Have you ever heard music performed in such a way that it gave you goosebumps, or been brought to tears to hear stirring lyrics paired with a soaring melody? It’s difficult to put into words what causes that reaction in each of us, but I believe it to be one of many unique fingerprints that our Creator left on our hearts.

Father, We give You thanks for the gift of Your grace, for the salvation that we are given through Jesus Christ, our Lord. We give You thanks for entrusting us with the talents You have chosen for us and we pray that we would utilize them to further Your kingdom. In Your Son’s name, Amen.

Shawn Wallace

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2014

“Again Jesus spoke to them saying ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’” John 8:12

Lent is a time of reflecting, praying and fasting in preparation of Easter Sunday when we celebrate Jesus’ victory over sin. Jesus died a horrific death to save us from our past, present and future sins; all He asks in return is for us to follow Him.

Our Lord spent 40-days in the wilderness praying and fasting. Let us follow His example and commit this time to praying and fasting so our light will shine for Him. Please join me in giving up one food item during this Lenten season and let us commit to spending extra time praying. This would also be a good time to keep a journal of your prayers.

Lord Jesus, You gave Your life for us and in return all You ask is that we follow You. A simple request, yet, so many are lost. Lord, speak to us as we commit the next 40 days in drawing closer to You. In Your name we pray, Amen.

Joyce Moseley

FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2014

“When the whole nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the Lord said to Joshua, “Choose twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe, and tell them to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever.”

Joshua 4:1-3, 7

Like the Israelites, we all need to be reminded of what God is doing. As we minister to God’s people on the island of Eleuthera in The Bahamas, we see His hand moving amongst His people of all ages. We have been in the process of building a mission house there for some time. We have named the house The Jordan Stone Mission House. Just as the stones from the river Jordan are a reminder to the Israelites, we want the building to serve as a reminder to all who come to Eleuthera of what God is doing on the island.

The Jordan Stone Mission House will house mission teams that come to Eleuthera to serve. It will also be used by the Bahamians as a retreat center. We have been encouraged so much by the many people who have helped build the Jordan Stone Mission House and have reached out to the people on Eleuthera with The Good News of Jesus Christ.

Father, We thank You for the reminders of Your work in our lives each day, both small

and large. We thank You for the many mission partners You send us to complete Your work, those who labour and those who give. Amen.

Don Elmore (United Servants Abroad, our mission partner)

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 2014

“Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.”

Luke 12:6-7

As someone who is a firm believer in the virtues of planning, I do not always embrace change and the unknown. Reflecting on the ways that God has shown up in my life causes me to marvel at how every new and stressful situation always seems to include someone who eventually guides me through the challenges before me.

One of the most intimidating experiences was beginning graduate school at Clemson University. I was broke, away from my family for the first time, and woefully unprepared academically for some of my more analytical courses. I struggled so much that first semester. Yet I was amazed by the number of Christians in my relatively small classes as economics is an academic area better known for its atheists than followers. Whether I needed help understanding a particularly painful mathematical exercise or assistance finding additional sources of income, just as I would be ready to give up, one of my classmates would provide a solution, often without my asking. While I had become a Christian at a much earlier age, my classmates' guidance taught me so much about the joy of communion with fellow worshipers and how to walk in the light of Christ.

Lord, Thank You so much for loving me and taking care of me. Please help me to remember the many times that You have shown up in my life, and that You will always continue to do so. Amen.

Cora Barnhart

Third Sunday of Lent

“You shall not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day; Though thousands fall about you, near you it shall not come. For angels He’s given command to guard you in all of your ways; Upon their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone... and He will raise you up on eagle’s wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun and hold you in the palm of His hand.”

On Eagle’s Wings

Think of a time when you have been frightened or fearful of an event or situation, which triggered panic. At that time, your heart begins to pound harder, breathing quickens, muscles tighten and blood pressure rises. Your brain signals an alarm to fight or flee. This is God’s way of providing all living beings with an instinctive response to run from danger or fight for life.

For 59 years of my life, I would try to avoid a confrontation. When necessary, it takes strength, courage and perseverance to walk through a trial. Two years ago I was diagnosed with the biggest storm of my life, the diagnosis of a life-threatening GBM, brain tumor. At first I feared the worst and felt that I had just received my death sentence. Prior to the surgery, Lucky Arnold told me to focus on Psalm 139:16 “God saw me before I was born and every day of my life has been recorded in His Book” so there is nothing to fear. God intervened and blessed me with a tremendous peace. It is written in Psalm 56:3-4, “When I am afraid, trust in God. He will do as He has promised, so why should I be afraid?” I have embraced His Word and know emphatically that God is my Savior.

The following story is too unbelievable. As I was being prepped for surgery, my daughter, Kelly, went into premature labor. While I was in surgery, Kelly was in the delivery room

in the same hospital in Atlanta. In fact, my entire family, all from different parts of the country, went from floor to floor of the hospital praying and supporting both my daughter and me.

Shortly after, the tumor had been successfully extracted, Kelly delivered her little Georgia Peach-Sawyer Quinn Pigott! She remained in the NICU for 18 days. God is so wonderful! His timing is amazing. He comforts us with His blessings. He showed us the circle of life and how His miracles of life continue even in our darkest and most fearful hour. I knew that His angels were among us. (Psalm 91:11) Convincingly, I knew at that moment that this story was not about me, but it was clearly God's script.

Today, I am still in a preventative treatment and I am cancer free. I am so grateful for **today** and I know that every day is a **gift**. I wouldn't wish for this journey, but I will say my faith has been taken to a different level, of such beauty and magnitude, one that I never dreamed was possible. I have put all of my faith and trust in God. For tomorrow, I don't worry about it, for it will be another day and what will be, **will be**. I have learned humility, grace, obedience, compassion, and most importantly, **unconditional love**. Nothing happens by chance. Yesterday, today and tomorrow are God's script, so there is nothing to fear. He will continue to place His angels among us. I know He is using me to spread hope to others and to help others turn fear into trust and faith.

Cynthia Frye (Submitted in 2012. Cynthia went to be with the Lord in 2013.)

MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2014

"In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:6

This verse was repeated to me many times by my grandmother as I was growing up. Even though I grew up in a Christian home as the daughter of a Baptist minister, I didn't always apply that verse to my life. I thought my parents were too strict. Studying God's word, communicating with God and walking in His path wasn't that important. I thought I could pray every once in a while and go on with my life and be just fine. It was much later in my adult life that I realized my relationship with my Lord was sorely missing. A discussion dur-

ing a Bible study class about our communication with God being broken when there is sin in our life made me realize I was walking off the path.

I began to think of that verse my grandmother quoted and at that point I developed a real desire to dig into and study God's word and spend time in prayer. I think of how that verse quoted to me by my grandmother, when applied, truly will make our paths straight. Studying God's Word through adult Bible study and teaching Bible study to children for several years gave my life so much more joy and fulfillment. It has given me an attitude of gratitude. It has made me realize that every day is a gift from God and that acknowledging Him should be first every day.

Father, In everything, I give thanks. Help us as we develop a love for the study of Your Word. Give us discernment as we walk daily in Your path. Give us wisdom as we share with the world what Your path can do in our lives. Amen.

Pat Sabia

TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2014

*"I am the way and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me." **John 14:6***

As I reflect on the Lenten season this year, I think of the 2 people in my life that led me to Jesus. As a child, I would sit by my grandmother's side, as she would tell me the story about Jesus and His death on the Cross. When she spoke about Jesus, she would always mention to me what a horrific death He had. I remember how it would bring tears to her eyes and how sad it made me feel and yet, this was the start of my relationship with Him.

Many years later my grandmother went home to be with Jesus and shortly afterwards a man came into my life that later became my husband. As God worked, by grace through Curt, my faith and belief in Jesus Christ deepened. Through the ups and downs in life and battling through Curt's illness, I found myself wavering in my faith and trust in God from time to time... but not Curt. He never wavered no matter what adversities he faced. Curt taught me to never give up and to keep trusting and believing in God through Jesus Christ, to the very end. I will always remember Curt telling me, *"God loves you, don't forget it, don't*

ever forget it. I want to see you again after I'm gone from this life." When I finally learned to completely commit my life to God on His terms and not mine, I found myself to be filled with the Holy Spirit and enjoying the blessings of His goodness and faithfulness in love, peace, hope and joy.

Oh God, How Great Thou art. Thank you for working through my loved ones as they led me to You. Lord, I pray in Jesus' name that You work through me, so now I can witness to others and they will know the blessings of Your love, peace, hope and joy as I have. Amen.

Ann Marie Grothmann (Submitted in 2011)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

Psalm 23:1-3

I was recently ordained to serve as a deacon. My wife, daughter, and I have been members here at First Presbyterian Church in North Palm Beach for the last few years, but have been involved with the church since childhood. My wife and I have roots in the church going back close to its foundations. Grandparents and parents on both sides of our family have belonged to this wonderful community of believers.

The Lenten Devotional theme for this year is "Walking in the Light of the Lord." I can not picture a more beautiful passage that depicts walking with our Lord than the 23rd Psalm; particularly if you happen to find yourself dealing with the trials and travails of this world.

Recently, our family has experienced some of those trials and travails that so often plague our world and have found comfort and peace in the Lord's promises contained in the 23rd Psalm, and also from the members of First Presbyterian. Late last year, my mother-in-law, Cynthia Frye (a member here at First Presbyterian) passed away after a 3 ½ year fight with brain cancer.

It has been an extremely emotional and difficult period for my family, and particularly

for my wife, Kelly. However, in spite of our circumstances, we have experienced the quiet waters of our Lord's peace as He has, and continues to, restore our souls. Likewise, I have witnessed the Lord's guiding hands along paths of righteousness for a number of family members who have seen old flames for the Lord rekindled during this time of loss.

While the pain and hurt of Cynthia's loss is still fresh and the wounds far from healed, it is comforting to know that, truly, all things work together for His good (Romans 8:28). Nowhere is this more evident than when I see family members reconnect and recommit to the Lord's family of believers in spite of circumstances that may have, otherwise, driven them further away.

Heavenly Father, It is my prayer that You would continue to bring peace, comfort and restoration to my family during our time of grieving. I ask that others who may be experiencing the troubles of this world turn to You for guidance and that You lead them on paths beside quiet waters. Bring them peace that passes understanding so that all may see Your divine peace is available to all who ask and may it bring glory to Your holy name. Amen.

Jeremy Pigott

THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2014

*"For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, of love
and of self-discipline." 2 Timothy 1:7*

I admit it, I'm the worrying type. I know I can look calm on the outside, but inside I tend to respond to uncertainty with anxiety more than contentment. And, this has been a struggle as I evaluate my walk with the Lord. If I truly trusted in God, wouldn't I always be at peace no matter the circumstances? Well as strange as it may seem, as I get older in years and in my Christian walk, I actually struggle more with fear and anxiety. I guess it's because I now know from experience that really bad things can happen even if I'm walking in the light of the Lord.

Early in my marriage, when I was in full-time Christian ministry with Miami Youth for Christ, my wife, Barb, and I lost our first two children just hours after their birth. Since that time we have been blessed with two beautiful daughters and now we have three won-

derful grandchildren. Great blessings have come our way, but sometimes, so does the bad I always hope will never happen.

Yes, God has been good to us (more than we deserve), but we also have faced challenges and the raw truth is that we are not exempt from the suffering of a broken world. But, though I do fear and often experience anxiety (and sometime for good reason), I don't have to give in to a spirit of fear. I don't have to be controlled by my worry, but instead I can accept the true spirit within me given by God. He has given me a spirit of power (the strength to act in obedience to God), the spirit of love (the ability to be in right relationship with God and others) and the spirit of self-discipline (the ability to choose to do what is right, no matter the circumstances).

God, Grant me the grace to accept Your power, love and self-discipline and even though I may sometimes fear, help me never to give in to that alien and negative spirit. Amen.

Jim Laub

FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2014

“Because you have made the Lord your refuge, and the Most High your dwelling place, there shall no evil befall you, nor any plague or calamity come near your tent. For He will give His angels charge over you to accompany and defend and preserve you in all your ways.”

Psalms 91:9-11 (Amplified Bible)

Many years ago, when our son was age two, Curt and I lived in a quad-type townhouse in Ft. Pierce (4 units per building). The whole structure was surrounded by concrete block privacy walls that opened onto an enclosed patio, one per unit. The townhouse neighborhood was a new development and was not yet protected by any type of fence. Our townhouse faced a city street and across the street from us were single-family homes, mostly serene, with one exception. The occupants of the house facing our privacy wall were an older couple who had a teenage grandson living with them, and on the weekends he held band practice in their garage. Their driveway was right across the street from our concrete privacy wall.

Curt was working at WTVX, doing the 6:00 pm and 11:00 pm weekday newscasts. With a toddler in the condo, I usually fell asleep before Curt would get home. One Friday night, the teenager across the street was having a rather loud party in his grandparents' house. Relieved that their noise had not awakened my toddler son, I tried to sleep, but could not. So I opened my Bible to Psalm 91 and read out loud, "No evil will befall you, nor any plague or calamity come near your dwelling." I repeated that verse over and over until I finally drifted off to sleep.

At 2:00 am I heard a very loud crash. Curt and I bolted out of bed. What we saw was a bit shocking—a car from across the street had pummeled through our neighbor's concrete wall into their patio, the patio right next to ours. Yes, a car from that teenage party. Happily, no one was hurt.

I thanked the Lord that the car had missed our dwelling. Naturally, I was sympathetic for our neighbors. However, I could not ignore this "coincidence" that the car had missed our patio/townhouse on the same day that I had read the Psalm 91 promises out loud. As you may have guessed, I do not believe in coincidences, just in the goodness of God.

Lord, Abba, Father, Thank You for Your Word, for Your promises, and for Your protection. I lift up my hands in praise to You for Your compassion and Your mercy. May Your grace and love flow into each reader of this devotional. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Susan Fonger

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2014

"For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known." 1 Corinthians 13:12

Lent was another annual tradition I was obliged to observe as a Christian, with its recurring series of sermons at church each year and our family devotions at dinner. As with other traditions determined before my time, its significance was easily lost as I grew older and failed to apply its meaning in my own life.

Having been steeped in the Christian tradition since birth, I struggled with how to

approach religious seasons such as Lent with newfound inquiry and awe. A numbness replaced my childhood wonder and worsened as life became more demanding—conceivably a result of a great many “life-ly” things, but always because there was distance between God and me.

Today, I feel closest to the individual He created me to be—a result of my closeness to Him—when gratitude underlies the challenges I encounter, when I can recognize the hints of His presence in my life each day, when I embody humility in success and unbending faith in my sorrow. Recounting how sporadic such behavior is in my life, I am thankful for the opportunity for change occasioned by Lent.

The call for sacrifice during this season resounds in my mind as an invitation to remove all the hats, the false identities I adopt in pursuit of success, contentment, and love. Let us find rest in such exposure and the clarity it brings. It prompts us to recognize the areas of life that need to be purged or removed altogether. It positions us to feel once again the deep love of Christ we lose touch with during the daily round.

Lent is a season of reflection, repentance and receiving. While that journey can be painful, dark and lonely, it brings us deeper in relationship to Jesus, and makes us more complete resemblances of the individuals He created us to be: reflections of His brilliance made possible by our redemption through His death on the cross.

May such truth light our path on every journey we are called to undertake.

Lord, May we abide in times of darkness upheld by the promise of Your Light. In Your great name, Amen.

Nicolette Chambery

(Crossroad Bible Institute, our mission partner)



Fourth Sunday of Lent

“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.” 2 Corinthians 2:14

“In Christ alone, my hope is found. He is my light, my strength, my song.”

Music has always spoken to me. Recently these lyrics from “In Christ Alone” have held special meaning. They remind me of my trip to Kenya. After an enjoyable time of fervent prayer and fundraising, it was time to step out in faith. Putting aside fears of the unknown, I clung to the fact that the Lord had prompted me to stand firm and go on a short-term mission trip. It was a great experience to pack and prepare and to know that God was ultimately in charge, not me.

Twelve adults from across the U.S. gathered in Boston for our flight to Nairobi and ultimately to Mombasa. Our mission was to minister to the local church by helping them build a school. For two and a half weeks, we worshipped while working with our new brothers and sisters in Christ. Although there was a bit of a language barrier, having Christ in common brought us close to one another.

My most treasured memory was worshipping with the Kenyans in Swahili and in English. To this day, I feel humbled when I hear people worship the Lord in languages other than English. It reminds me that Jesus has created all people to enjoy a relationship with Him.

On our last day in the village, we were each given a sapling to plant in our honor as the school children sang, “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands,” in English and Swahili. Alleluia.

Dear Heavenly Father, Help us to see others through Your eyes and to minister in Your name to those that we encounter every day. In Jesus name, Amen.

Diane Kay

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8:38-39

Love's Coming Down

Little child that I love
You're a gift from above
And I love you so much
You've got my special touch

And I know you are sad
And these struggles you've had
But I've been right there
Gone with you everywhere

If you strayed far away
In my arms you'd still stay
And those times you came near
I loved having you here

My heart beats for you
Despite what you do
It will always be here
Whether you're far or near

And when you're in pain
My heart you will gain
When you can't see the light
I'll stay with you all night

When you forget what's true
And the things you once knew
When the enemy tries
To make you believe lies

Thinking you've no value
And there's no worth in you
And questioning life
And the anguish and strife

Listen closely for me
And I'll change what you see
Cuz I give you value
And your purpose too

So cling tightly to me
And soon light you will see
I will get you through
Your life will be made new

For my love's coming down
And pouring all around
It's touching your soul
And mending the hole

And wait till you see
The plans for you and me
An adventure of love
It's a gift from above

Father, Thank You for Your love. Please come and embrace me right now. Let me feel You and the love You have for me. I want to experience You. Let me fall in love with You. Come and heal my heart and my mind and keep me close to You. Let my life be an expression of Your love. I love You. Amen.

Rebecca Hilliard

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2014

Luke 15:11-31

Like the brothers in the Parable of the Lost Son, (Luke 15:11-31) I often caught myself wanting the gifts rather than the Giver. Like the younger brother, I rebelled against the Father, choosing to go my own way and our outcomes were similar. Recently, during our remodeling project, a merchant selling stone flooring prayed for God to prosper me. My initial gut reaction to this was that it rubbed me the wrong way because I thought she was asking God to give me more money and stuff; something I didn't think we should be praying for. However, this made me begin to wonder what prosperity means to God. Maybe we weren't thinking about the same kind of prosperity. Still, I was/am full of sin and didn't have a clue. What I used to crave and even lust after were material things like new cars, houses, money and status and this drive mastered me, like an addiction. I knew I was broken, but I didn't know at the time that there was anything else to seek. Still I wanted these things for comfort for me and my family, who I also wished for God to prosper.

Throughout all of this, I hit bottom and really felt what it's like to be truly broken and lost. While I still thought I was a good person, I had done things that repulsed me and harmed my family. Then an amazing thing happened. God reached out to me and this time He got my attention. He completely changed me, changed my heart, my values and a peace

and contentment came over me that I never had before. I also realized that He had been knocking on my door beginning a long time ago with many signs but I didn't pay attention then. So, with what can only be described as giving me an abundant life, God actually did prosper me but in a way I never could have imagined and I don't believe anybody other than God Himself could have explained or revealed. This is what the Lord Jesus wants for all of us and it's the ultimate expression of love because I don't believe it's something I deserve.

Dear God, We thank You for Your love and the abundant life You give us as we grow closer to You. Amen.

Lee Worsham

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2014

"Rescue the perishing, don't hesitate to step in and help."

Proverbs 24:11 (The Message)

I was returning on the train from a recent trip across the state. As the train neared the station, I followed several others to the front of the car in order to exit more quickly when the train would come to a stop. Standing behind a very tall young man—a basketball player, maybe—I heard snatches of his phone conversation which caused me to think that he might be discouraged about the way his life was going. I remember thinking, "He needs the Lord." As the train slowed, we passengers rearranged ourselves, jockeying for position, as it were, and I moved out next to a smooth wall with no one right in front of me. Suddenly the train lurched as it came to an abrupt stop. Time seemed to slow as I hurtled forward, my left arm extended to break the inevitable landing, as there was nothing to grab onto. Miraculously, it still seems, two strong hands took hold of me as I was inches from the floor and raised me back up without a scratch! Stunned and amazed, I could only give my rescuer, the tall young man, inadequate thanks as we were caught up in the flow of exiting passengers.

In later contemplation of the event, I've thought of it as a very good physical picture of our salvation. We are all fallen people, you know; unable to save ourselves by our own efforts, we need a Savior. Jesus, our strong Deliverer, is ever ready to rescue those who realize the inadequacy of their own good works and the sufficiency of His perfect life and sacrifice.

What does He ask in return? A life surrendered to His purposes.

And as for the young man who rescued me, the Lord has impressed upon me to pray for him as often as I think of him. Just as he rescued me from physical harm, I'm asking the Lord to rescue him from spiritual danger, protect him, and bring him into His kingdom of love and light.

"Rescue the perishing, care for the dying, snatch them in pity from sin and the grave. Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen, tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save." Fanny J. Crosby

Sally Privett

THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 2014

James 1:27

God hears our prayers. I have had the great opportunity of being witness to God's never ending supply of miracles. Pure religion is described very clearly in James 1:27: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

When I stepped out in faith to go forth with a vision that God had put in my mind and heart, I had no doubt that God would supply all my needs. The amazing part of this supply is when you ask in faith, God will hear. Sometimes He even answers before I pray.

God's vision to build Hannah's Home of South Florida (HHSF) requires an ongoing list of prayers. Last week we took our only van capable of holding all of our young ladies and babies around town. We found that the tires were losing air and quickly, for safety reasons, took our van to Hobe Sound. The news was not good. There was severe dry rot in each of the tires. We were offered a deal to replace the tires, without any additional labor fees, for roughly \$500. However, that wasn't enough help. The home is currently building a nursery and additional space to house more young ladies, homeless and pregnant.

The next evening I met with my prayer group and we prayed for new tires. Unbeknownst to me, a new friend to HHSF has a husband who is an executive at Tire Kingdom. He was led to donate four new tires, whenever needed, at no cost. God had moved in their

hearts and we received a call to tell us of our gift. The amazing thing is that decision to donate those tires had been made the afternoon before it was discovered new tires were needed.

God is so faithful and we praise Him for His safekeeping. Amen.

Carol Beresford

(Founder of Hannah's Home, our mission partner)

FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 2014

***Psalm 119:105, Ephesians 1:4-6, Jeremiah 29:11,
Ephesians 3:18, Colossians 1:9***

Two years ago I came to North Palm Beach to be near my sister. Among the cherished things that I had left behind were my church and my prayer group with whom I met faithfully every week for seven years. So I began praying that God would lead me to a home, a prayer group, a church and Christian girlfriends. It would be hard to replace my church but even harder to replace my prayer group, for it was in this group of eight Christian women, from different denominations, that the real fellowship of believers took place for me. Their fellowship and prayers had sustained me through my mother's death, a very serious illness, the ending of my marriage, and all of life's various problems in between.

After looking for several months, my sister and I found a charming little apartment on Singer Island, several blocks from her house and across the street from the beach...answer number one to my prayer. I discovered that my landlady was a Christian, too, and we began to talk and share our faith. The love and support of my sister, together with my new friend's testimony, encouraged me so much during this difficult time.

I searched the internet for local churches and discovered First Pres' website. The first church I ever joined had been Presbyterian so I decided to try it. I attended a service and saw in the bulletin the notice for a Saturday prayer group. I went to the next meeting. Little did I know, they had been asking God for partners to join them! They gracefully included me in their group and I have been praying with them ever since... the second answer to my prayer.

When I shared with my landlady that I had found a church and a prayer group that I really liked, she said she had been attending First Presbyterian for years! Feeling that this was confirmation of the answer to the third part of my prayer, I joined the church and have become a part of a family whom I am growing to love more and more each day.

Through our church's strong network of women's fellowship, service and Bible study groups, God has lovingly provided me with the last part of my prayer... Christian girlfriends. And there is a strong believing brotherhood among the pastors and men of the church that I feel is an additional blessing for which I had not thought to ask.

Although this may sound like an advertisement for First Presbyterian, that is not my intent. Rather, I would like to point out God's great faithfulness in providing a light for what sometimes seems like a very dark path, and that He provides this light for all of His children. He chose us from before the world began. He has plans for each one of us and He is faithful. One of His names is Jehovah Jireh. It means the Lord Who Provides. Ask Him and He will provide.

Father, Thank You for my brothers and sisters in Christ. Please help us to come to know what is the height and depth and breadth of Your love for us in Christ Jesus. Fill us with the knowledge of Your will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. Open our mouths to boldly give an answer for the hope that lies within us. Please keep our feet firmly on Your path and our eyes on Jesus, for all our lives. We ask this in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen.

Michele Fountain

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2014

“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Colossians 3:17

Jesus saved me from the darkness and brought me into His light in 1983. I was asked to teach 1st grade Sunday school at First Pres. As I prepared the lesson each week, a light started to come on in my heart. Each week my passion to learn more increased and one day I understood what I needed to do. I accepted Jesus into my heart at that time. From

that day forward, I had this passion about learning everything I could about God. I started reading and understanding the Bible; the Holy Spirit made all this possible. I wanted more knowledge; I was hungry for God's Word. I just couldn't get enough. I joined as many Bible studies as I could fit in, listened very closely to Sunday's sermons and changed the station on my radio to Christian radio.

Colossians 3:23-24 says, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men." I just finished a book call *Life Wide Open*, by Dr. David Jeremiah. This book is about living life with passion for God in whatever we do—from cleaning the house to Sunday worship to mission work. This book made it very clear to me to live my life for the Lord in whatever I do. No matter how hard, small or unpleasant the task I am doing, I try to keep in mind that I am doing this for the Lord, not for man. I try not to grumble about the small stuff that I don't think He cares about. I try to do everything to the best of my ability and I challenge you to be passionate in whatever you do. Do it for the Lord!

Dear Heavenly Father, I invite You to fill me with Your Spirit today, to step out of my comfort zone, and live my life in full passion in whatever I do. Help me do whatever I do for Your honor and glory. I pray in Jesus' Holy Name. Amen.

Priscilla McKinnon (Submitted in 2008)



Fifth Sunday of Lent

“This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” Psalm 118:24

The best walks are when I let my Lily lead. My only task is to follow. Where we go matters less than how we go. And how we go is always together.

We move awkwardly at first – six feet tripping over our own agendas. One of us primordially driven forward by passionate scents that call to her wildness, while the other drags behind, fighting her past with clenched fists and a mind screaming with obligations and obsessions. Will submits to whim, and our limping gait gradually finds its choreography. Slapping shoes and paws on pavement become a gentle drumming, and we relax into the rhythm of the morning.

The path transforms into every labyrinth I’ve ever walked, and I am suddenly grounded by a profound awareness of God’s presence in every living creature. Spider, ant, squirrel, lizard, fox and bird take their places in the communal web of creation as do we. I invite the deep awareness of the earth beneath my feet to move upwards from ankles to hips to heart. The Holy Spirit steadies my anxious breathing, and the pounding in my brain gradually retreats.

In our walking, we unexpectedly find we are at once equally tiny and enormous in our Creator’s eyes. Insignificantly invaluable; intertwined in a dance contained in a fleeting, present moment.

Yes. The best walks are when I let my Easter Lily lead.

Loving Father, Help me never cease to hear the sound of Your footsteps in the Garden. Give me courage to take hold of the hand You offer and accept with joy Your daily invitation to walk – to dance - with You upon the path. Amen.

Robin Bradley Hansel

“You shall walk in the way that the Lord your God has commanded you; that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess.”

Deuteronomy 5:33

I live in a neighborhood called Caloosa, located on the Beeline Highway near Pratt Whitney, and I am the glorified taxi service for my two girls, Rebecca age 15 and Rachel age 12. I drive a lot. Thus, instead of telling you about my walk with God, this is my drive with God.

As we go through life we have many intersections. Some we anticipate, like getting a job, getting married, having children, etc. and some are “blind” intersections that catch us off guard such as illness or accidents. I love when God gives me green lights through the intersections or a green turn arrow showing me exactly which direction I should go. However, this, of course, is not always the case. Many times it is foggy, or as we South Floridians know so well, it may be raining so hard you can barely see. However, I keep praying for those directions and those signs to lead me on this road through life.

Many years ago I was facing one of those anticipated intersections, and I met with Ron Hilliard to discuss which road he thought I should take. He gave me great advice that I use often, and I am going to paraphrase it for you.

God was not giving me a clear sign whether we should adopt a second child or be happy with just one child. I knew what I wanted. However, I wanted to make sure it was what God wanted. Ron suggested I choose a road and ask God to put up a roadblock or detour signs if it was not the direction He wanted me to go. Fortunately I chose the road I wanted, there were no roadblocks or detour signs, and God gave us green lights to adopt our younger daughter, Rachel. Thanks, Ron, for the great advice!

As a mother, many of my prayers are centered on my children. Rebecca, my oldest, is a shy, but witty and fun-loving child with many God given talents in music, academics, sports, and other artistic pursuits. She is in the 10th grade at Dreyfoos High School of the Arts where she is accepted, motivated, and challenged by others. We are presently praying where she should go to college and what she should study. Rachel, on the other hand, is extroverted and enjoys all social activities, but not schoolwork. Rachel struggles academically due to dyslexia, and through God’s blessings, we have been able to home school her.

Through home schooling, she has participated in many academic, social, theatrical, and sports groups. Here at First Pres, Ms. Cary and Ms. Kath have taken her under their wings, making her part of the acting team in “The Grove”. We are looking at options for high school, and we are praying for direction from God on His plan for her academic life. For both my girls, I am praying for those green arrows to help us decide their educational futures, and how, as their mother, I can guide them in the direction God wants them to go.

Like many of you, we have crossed some unexpected intersections such as Rachel having seizures, my mother having Alzheimers for the final 10 years of her life, and various illnesses, sadness, and deaths of family and friends. However, God has blessed us with much health and happiness, guiding us through these “blind” intersections. We are very blessed by this church and our friends here and throughout our lives. I pray God will bless us all with green lights and green turn arrows directing us on the drives He has planned for our lives.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths.” Proverbs 3:5-6

Caroline Ragan

TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2014

Finding Light

“Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “This woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?”

They were trying to trap Him into saying something they could use against Him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with His finger. They kept demanding an answer, so He stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!”

For the past twelve years, I have been blessed mightily by my involvement in Egypt. I have had the privilege of helping many Presbyterian churches in the United States discover what God is doing in Egypt. Since President Morsi of the Brotherhood of Islam was removed from power last summer, Egypt has rewritten its constitution to allow for more

religious freedom than it has ever had in its history. More remarkably, the moderate Muslims are now publically denouncing the fundamentalist and militant Muslims in ways unprecedented.

Today in Egypt, moderate Muslims are debating fundamentalist Muslim leaders on television, each side trying to claim what the real meanings of the Quran declare. That has never taken place in the history of Arab television. Islam, in general, allows for very little self-criticism whatsoever. Today, some Muslims believe Islam is compatible with democracy, and others don't. Islam is confronting the realities of modernity and globalization as never before.

Within this new spiritual and political landscape of the Arab world, many Muslims are discovering the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ. They are leaving the burdens of Islam, no longer willing or able to please Allah through their own efforts. They are discovering that in Christianity, God loves unconditionally. In fact, they are reading in the Bible for the first time that God loves sinners. According to Islam, God only loves or approves of good and obedient people, not wayward people.

In Egypt alone, there are over a million Muslim background people living in the underground who have given their lives to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Even former terrorists are becoming followers of Jesus. In fact, I have personally met a few of them in the underground church of Cairo. When you get to know them, they love to tell you about walking in the light of Christ. They have been liberated from the heavy burdens of Islam. Muslims operate on a code of honor and shame. If you are not a good Muslim, you are personally or publically shamed. In some parts of the world, a woman caught in adultery can be stoned to death in the most shameful of all circumstances.

But, Jesus came to earth, died on a cross, in order to love us, rescue us from the worst of any of our offenses or sins, the burdens of our sins. God is not distant in Christianity. He wants to have as close a relationship with us as our souls will allow. His aim is to lead us from our darkness into His glorious light.

Lord, Jesus, Help us become liberated from our own self-condemnation. Shame is a heavy burden that none of us can survive. You alone are our judge, nobody else. There is no end to Your unconditional love. Use us as witnesses for Your forgiveness, freedom, and light. Thank You for rescuing us from the utter darkness of life without You, now and forever more. Amen.

Rev. Dan McNerney

(Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship, our mission partner)

“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 6:6

Do I believe in what I say I do? *Do I?* Amidst my personal Bible study, I believe God has recently challenged my faith. Do I have confidence in His sovereignty over my life and especially the love that is the basis for it? Sometimes I question God’s love for me because His will seems hard at times but He has shown me that hardship comes when I sit astride a fence wanting His will as well as mine. So, my dilemma is to figure out what I can do to wholeheartedly, without pretense, love God with all my heart so I don’t sit astride this fence where I find myself too frequently.

With a heart to question and learn, I go back to the basics of my faith. I peer at the God of this universe that sent His son to die for all who would believe. I consider the multitude of times God has rescued me from sin and its results. I ponder my conversion and how He has lovingly guided my life. I immerse myself in His Word. I love God by responding to the Holy Spirit that prompts me to obedience. I look to the crucified Lamb and contemplate His sacrifice and then my self-will expires and His love and joy holds me fast. In John 15:9, it is written, “As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love.” Philip-pians 3:12-21 speaks of pressing on toward the goal with lifelong faithfulness.

Yes, I do believe in what I say I do even though I look away or listen to wrong voices at times...many times and have to revisit the tenets of my faith.

Holy Father, Thank You for Your constant shepherding of my life. I am grateful that You bring to my attention when I sit astride a fence, because sometimes I am not aware of it and I know I cannot have spiritual vitality when doing so. Amen.

Susan Holland (Submitted in 2008)

“Jesus said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’” John 8:12

Psalm 43:3, 1 John 1:5

For the second time in two weeks my husband, Gene, and I were being ushered into a room at Jupiter Medical Hospital. As we looked out his fourth floor window, we saw what would be a beacon for the next week, and beyond, the Jupiter Lighthouse.

The Lighthouse is constant light and that is what Jesus is for us. He is our light, a beacon directing us through all our times—even our darkest times. He is constant, steady, a light that is always there.

As overwhelmed as we felt at the unexpected happening, God was reassuring us that we weren't alone. Jesus was guiding us through this time.

When Gene was moved to rehab, then home, we couldn't see the lighthouse. However, we knew the lighthouse stood strong and solid and was still sending out its guiding light. Jesus is also still guiding us with His light even when we can't see it. We must trust!

Our Father, Help us to always remember that Jesus, the light of the world, is always guiding us no matter how dark our circumstances seem. Amen.

Betty Bennett

FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2014

1 Peter 5:7

One day in September, my husband was scheduled for a catheterization as a result of having intermittent chest pain for a few days. That morning during my quiet time, I was reading my *Jesus Calling* devotional. The Scripture reading for the day was I Peter 5:7 and it read, "Cast all of your cares on Him because He cares for you." I shared the verse with my husband, who was feeling rather anxious, and it gave him much comfort.

Later that day, while in the hospital waiting room, I wrote the verse on a piece of scrap paper and gave it to him before he went in for the procedure. He kept the paper with him under his hospital wristband throughout the procedure and during his short hospitalization. The promise in that verse, that God cares for Him, gave him and me much comfort during this time. God always knows what we need, when we need it, and, if we will just trust

Him, He will always be there for us!

The even bigger miracle of the story is that the catheterization revealed 100% blockage of a major artery in his heart! Fortunately, the cardiologist was able to clear out the artery and place 2 stents in his right coronary artery. We are very blessed to have Bill with us today!

Sweet Jesus, Thank You that You have us in Your mighty and caring hands at all times. Help us to trust You and cast ALL of our cares on You knowing that You care for us!

Suzie Inman

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2014

John 7:37-52

In John 7, we find Jesus attending the Feast of Tabernacles. This feast was a seven-day celebration of the harvest and thanksgiving to God for His provision of salvation for His people. It was also a memorial to the forty years of wandering in the wilderness by the Israelites where water and food was scarce. However, when the people entered the Promise Land, they enjoyed plenty of water and an abundance of crops.

Every morning during the Feast, the Priest would go to the Pool of Siloam, fill a golden pitcher with water and take it to the Temple altar, where the water was poured out as an offering to God. As the Priest poured out the water, the people recited Isaiah 12:3, “With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”

The water being poured out at the altar was just a collective ritual and actually left the people unsatisfied. Jesus, understanding the hearts and real needs of the people, stood and proclaimed: “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” Jesus knew the only thing that would satisfy the people was that personal relationship with the Savior. Jesus was and is calling for an individual response of faith.

I am reminded of how thirsty I was before I met Jesus. Every effort to satisfy my thirst was like pouring water on the ground and watching it be absorbed by the dirt. Only Jesus can satisfy and refresh. In John 4, Jesus met the woman at Jacob’s well and said, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will

never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

During this Lenten season, may we join together to refresh ourselves in His Word, in prayer, thanking and glorifying God for the water which quenches the thirst of our souls and to share Jesus with those who are thirsty and need refreshment.

Father, I cry out for the waters that flow from Your throne...for the fresh flood of life across a parched and weary soul. Amen.

Rev. Steve Gibbons (Submitted in 2012)



Holy Week

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” James 1:17

Growing up in North Palm Beach, most of my activities centered around the ocean. Surfing, sailing, snorkeling, and just hanging out at the beach with friends was how I liked to spend my free time. Now, having moved back to the area after being away for many years, I have discovered a new pastime – paddle boarding. I love being out in the ocean paddling along with the warm sun on my back and clear water beneath me. The view I have while standing on the board allows me to look down into the water and see the marine life teaming below. I have seen many varieties of fish, rays, dolphin, manatees, and sea turtles. When I see them, I excitedly look around to see if other people in the water see them as well. But I realize that because of my unique standing position, I am the only one who sees them. In these solitary moments, God reveals nature’s beauty to me and reminds me that He is all around me.

Sometimes, a change in perspective allows us to see things that otherwise would have remained hidden. God’s light in our lives helps us do that, allowing us to see things from a new perspective. So often I go about my daily life focused on the next chore to do or item on my agenda and I’m oblivious to everything else. I am so grateful to have those moments that open my eyes and allow me to see Him in His handiwork of creation.

Dear Lord, Thank You for surrounding us with natural beauty and revealing Yourself in it. Amen.

David Cook

*“...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds
and praise your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:16*

As Jesus tells us to let our light shine, I think about the people who have passed through our lives that have followed this command with the utmost dedication to their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

During the past year, the Agape Sunday School class has seen wonderful men who were great examples of Christian “light shining” in their lives go on to their heavenly reward. Neil Klein’s light shone brightly as he drove the church van to pick up folks who needed a ride to church, and even gained the privilege of transporting people from Hanley-Hazelden Addiction Treatment Center. Varick Schwartz dedicated his life to teaching children how to let their little lights shine for Jesus at Sunday school and Fun Arts Camp. Jack Thomas had a heart for the incarcerated and gave his love and time to Crossroads Bible Institute by grading and communicating with prisoners so they would know that their lives were still valuable to Jesus, and that their light could still shine even in prison. Ray Mathisen spent many years helping to shine the light of the Lord to others through his work with The Gideons.

As we worshipped with these men, fellowshiped with them and got to know them, it became very apparent that shining their light for the Lord was how they lived their lives. We were all touched, enriched and blessed to have known these “light shiners.”

Most Gracious Father, We thank You for these men who loved You, shared Your Word, and let their light so shine that others might come to know and love You. In Your most precious name, we pray, Amen.

Betty Percy

Life is returning to some semblance of normal. I have attended church for two Sundays, also attended our men’s breakfast for the last two Thursdays. I am doing daily physical therapy and regaining some strength.

I have discovered again that God has a way of showing up. This past week a friend from church wrote a short encouraging note saying, “Isn’t remission a wonderful word?” Indeed it is. But when the doctors talk about “remission” they are never quite sure. That’s why I need another two treatments and even then there is no guarantee. All they can say about “remission” is that they can find no physical evidence of the culprit called cancer at present. But I am content with the present remission.

And then my theological mind began to play around with that word. It was not first used about cancer or other illness. Its major application comes in the term “remission of sins.” When visiting with our senior Pastor, Lucky Arnold, yesterday he offered a prayer of thanks that I was in “remission”. And it struck me like a bolt out of the blue. Yes, I am thankful for remission of my cancer but that is nothing compared to my remission of sins. THAT means that God can find NO EVIDENCE OF MY SINS. When I enter into His judgment, I will be found “NOT GUILTY” before Him – and all because Jesus took my place. The doctors can never be sure I am “in remission.” But I can be absolutely sure that I am “in remission” when it comes to my sin. I can sing with gusto, (but out of tune) “My sin – O the bliss of this glorious thought – my sin, not in part but the whole, is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more! Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul.”

Acute Mylogenous Leukemia might not stay in remission. It may even take my life. If not, something else will. But nothing can change my “remission of sins!”

My prayer and desire is that you have also discovered that. If not, start your search now!

Rev. Elton Piersma

(Written October 2, 2010 to his family and friends)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2014

John 15:1-11

Several years ago when Catherine and I were spending some time down in the Florida Keys, we went to a plant nursery to find some tropical plants for our yard. One of our purchases that day was a small key lime tree. When we returned home, we planted it right away

and looked forward to going out into the yard whenever we wanted and picking key limes.

We are still looking forward to those limes! I have tried all kinds of things to get that tree to produce fruit but the reality is that I cannot make that tree produce key limes. I can only do what is needed and wait.

This is also true of the fruit that is produced in our lives according to John 15. We can neither make ourselves fruitful nor can we produce the “good” fruit that Jesus talks about. The production of fruit is a gift from God. Jesus says that the key to producing fruit is to “remain in Him” (John 15:4). We are only branches. The key is to stay connected to the vine. What does it look like to “remain” or “abide” in him? The spiritual formation classes that are offered on Wednesday nights suggest several spiritual practices that help us to do this. One is the practice of daily Scripture reading where we allow God’s Word to soak deep within our hearts. This sounds easy enough but in reality most Christians do not take time to simply read God’s Word. Jesus says that His words are to remain in us (John 15: 7).

This means we are to think about His words, meditate on His words, memorize His words, and study His word. One author describes this as chewing on the Word of God as a cow chews her cud. The psalmist says, “I have hidden Your word in my heart...” (Ps.119:11). Jesus invites us to “remain” in Him, to stay connected to Him. As a result of this, fruit will be produced. We cannot produce the fruit. Fruitfulness is only possible as our roots grow deep in the Word of God (Ps. 1).

This is not an easy thing to grasp. We have been taught to work hard, plan well, expend energy, make connections with people and success will follow. Our hard work is what is most important. But in God’s view, the fruit that Jesus talks about is not the result of working harder or smarter. Fruit comes from staying connected to the vine. May fruit be produced in your life as you allow His Word to soak into your hearts.

Rev. Dr. Ron Hilliard (Submitted in 2011)

THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2014

*“But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.” **Isaiah 53:5***

Many times at communion service, I have talked about our Savior's suffering for us—for me! It has often made me sad to know He suffered so much for us—for me. How can we rejoice and be glad?

1st—We need to recognize that our sin has to be paid for by suffering and death... His or ours! Therefore thank Him for His suffering.

2nd—It was a once for all as to time and value. He does not suffer over and over. It is done once and for all. "...But now He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by one sacrifice of Himself." Hebrews 9:26b.

3rd —He did it because He loves us; not because He had to or was forced to bear our sin. "For God so loved the world." John 3:16.

4th—My sin put Him on the cross. I am in that sense a "Christ killer". How that wounds my spirit but I sin and that sin has to be paid for. I put Him on the cross.

5th—It was a joy to Jesus: "for the joy that was set before Him", "scorning the shame", "looking toward" (providing) my salvation and yours.

Gracious Father, Thank You for suffering in my place. May I live with rejoicing that You have given Your life for mine. Amen.

Hunter Norwood

(Submitted in 1997. Hunter was a Presbyterian minister and missionary with South American mission. He taught Agape Sunday School for about 15 years.)

FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 2014

Six Hours One Friday

by Max Lucado

To the casual observer there was nothing unusual about those six hours. To the casual observer, that Friday was a normal Friday. Six hours of routine. Six hours of the expected.

What do you do with this day in history?

Because of the cross you and I have **3 Anchor Points for life:**

1. **Our lives are not futile.** We have meaning and purpose: Psalm 139:13-14, Romans 8:31-32. God gave us His best (His son). Why should we doubt His love for us? God doesn't give up on us...He never gives up.
2. **Our failures are not fatal.** Think of Peter's "failure" in the courtyard? Luke 22:62. Jesus' response. John 21:17 *What did Peter then do with his life?*

What do you do with your failures?? ...Bag 'em and drag 'em?

We have a heavenly father who is at His best when we are at our worst, a father whose grace is strongest when our devotion is the weakest. God sees us not as we are, but as He intended us to be. It's not that He loves what you did--but He loves who you are. You are His—the one who has a right to condemn you, provides the way to acquit you--you make mistakes, God doesn't, and He made you.

3. **Our deaths are not final.** 1 Corinthians 2:9 and 15:50-58, Hebrews 2:14-16. You have been dying as long as you have been living—someday you will face death. The promise of the open tomb is that our death is not final. "One got out." So will those who believe in Him. John 10:10 & John 14:6.

God is at His best—when our life is at its worst. In the cross, we find purpose, forgiveness and rest. For the life blackened with failure, that Friday means forgiveness. For the heart scarred with futility, that Friday means purpose. And for the soul looking into this side of the tunnel of death, that Friday means deliverance.

Six Hours....One Friday.

What do *you* do with those six hours on that Friday?

I pray, on Good Friday, you will leave your routine. You will take some time to reflect upon the cross and the Anchor Points that the Jesus' resurrection has left for our lives.

Does God Have Favorites?

One of the blessings I have received through First Presbyterian Church has been a deeper understanding of prayer. It was during one of the Wednesday night classes that I was introduced to a book that took my prayer life from crayons to perfume. From a simple monk, a tiny book (*Practicing His Presence* by Brother Lawrence) and a six-week class, I gained a new understanding of communion with God. More recently, through another member of First Pres, I gained another little trinket on the topic of prayer and how prayer relates to favor and intimacy with God.

“About eight days after Jesus said this, He took Peter, John and James with Him and went up onto a mountain to pray. As He was praying, the appearance of His face changed, and His clothes became as bright as a flash of lightening.” Luke 9:28-19

Jesus didn’t go up to the Mountain of Transfiguration with a crowd of people or even with His chosen twelve. He selected three men: Peter, John and James. Three chosen, hand-picked over hundreds of thousands, to pray with Him and to experience this magnificent, momentous, historical event. Three *intimates* encountered heaven on earth with the Son of God, His Father and two of His chosen prophets. The question begs to be asked: Does God have favorites?

The Apostle Paul’s answer is a clear “No.” “For God does not show favoritism,” Romans 2:11. “God doesn’t have favorites, but He does have *intimates*. We become *intimates* when we spend time with God,” Ginger Bills.

I think that our God, who is perfectly just, who doesn’t have favorites, leaves it entirely up to us to choose exactly how intimate we want to be with Him. Intimacy is cultivated by spending time alone with someone. God has gifted each of us the gift of time and how we choose to spend it is up to us. When we give back to Him the gift of our time, the gift is exponentially increased by the frequency and quality of the time we spend in His holy presence; in His Word, in worship and in prayer. The greater the time, the greater the gift of intimacy with God.

It is through prayer that we are transformed into the image of God and gain intimacy with the Master of the Universe. Through prayer we become His friends, His *intimates*.

Rhonda Krill

Easter Sunday

Matthew 28:1-10

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once, upon the cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia!
Unto Christ, our heavenly King, Alleluia!
Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!
Sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!

But the pains which He endured, Alleluia!
Our salvation have procured; Alleluia!
Now above the sky He's King, Alleluia!
Where the angels ever sing. Alleluia!

Sing we to our God above, Alleluia!
Praise eternal as His love; Alleluia!
Praise Him, all ye heavenly host, Alleluia!
Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!

From "The Hymnbook" published by Presbyterian Church in the US, The United Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., 1955
Stanza 1 to 3 based on the Latin, 14th century and stanza 4, Charles Wesley, 1740.

ALLELUIA! HE IS RISEN!

Easter Schedule



Ash Wednesday Service

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5

7:30 PM | Sanctuary

Sunday Worship Services

SUNDAY, MARCH 9

8:15, 9:30, 11:00 AM | Sanctuary

10:55 AM | Youth Building

Sunday Worship Services

SUNDAY, MARCH 16

8:15, 9:30, 11:00 AM | Sanctuary

10:55 AM | Youth Building

Sunday Worship Services

SUNDAY, MARCH 23

8:15, 9:30, 11:00 AM | Sanctuary

10:55 AM | Youth Building

Lenten Recital

THURSDAY, MARCH 27

12:00 PM | Chapel

Featuring Liana Brascome, violin

Sunday Worship Services

SUNDAY, MARCH 30

8:15, 9:30, 11:00 AM | Sanctuary

10:55 AM | Youth Building

Lenten Recital

THURSDAY, APRIL 3

12:00 PM | Sanctuary

Featuring Dr. Glen Arfsten, organ

Sunday Worship Services

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

8:15, 9:30, 11:00 AM | Sanctuary

10:55 AM | Youth Building

Lenten Recital

THURSDAY, APRIL 10

12:00 PM | Chapel

Featuring David Block, piano

Schedule continued on back



Easter Schedule



Palm Sunday Cantata

SUNDAY, APRIL 13

9:30 & 11:15 AM | Sanctuary

*Featuring The Sanctuary Choir
and Orchesta*

Maundy Thursday Service

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

7:00 PM | Sanctuary

Good Friday Service

FRIDAY, APRIL 18

7:30 AM | Sanctuary

Free breakfast following the service

Women's Good Friday Breakfast

FRIDAY, APRIL 18

9:30 AM | Frenchmen's Reserve

Children's Easter Carnival

SATURDAY, APRIL 19

10:00 AM | Courtyard

Ages 0 to 4th grade

Easter Sunday Services

SUNDAY, APRIL 20

8:15, 9:30, 11:00 AM | Sanctuary

10:55 AM | Youth Building



