



In This Issue

Prayer Concerns

- Avera Scholarship
- Communications and Technology Updates
- Easter Sunday Activities
- Habitat Faith Build
- Ham and Yam
- Highlights of Session
- Hospice Meal
- Hunger Sunday
- JOY Connection
- Memorials
- New Hope Presbytery
- Passion driven Ministry
- Our Missionaries, the McGills
- Property Box
- Presbyterian Women's Spring Gathering
- Relay for Life Team 37
- Thanks
- Youth Updates

April Calendar

- Lectionary
- Worship Nursery
- Flowers
- Birthdays
- Anniversaries
- Ushers
- Lay Readers
- Acolytes
- Trinity Ringers
- Building Officers
- Sunday Shepherds
- Time with Children

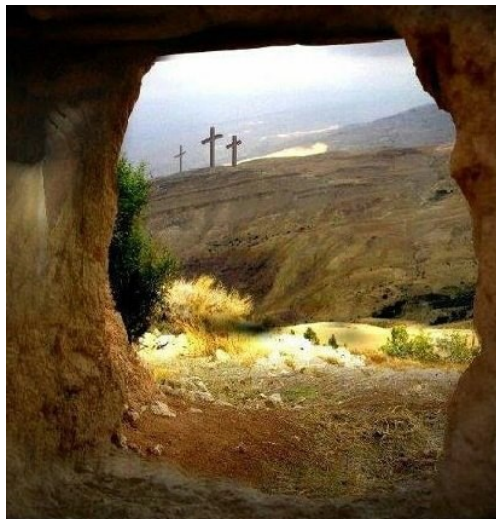


A publication of
First Presbyterian Church
 215 S. Third Street
 PO Box 1159
 Smithfield, NC 27577
 919-934-0988
 fpcmwallace@gmail.com
 www.fpcsmithfield.org

ICHTHUS

April 2018

The Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church, Smithfield, North Carolina



The Empty Tomb

Christmas has a large and colorful cast of characters including not only the three principals themselves, but the angel Gabriel, the innkeeper, the shepherds, the heavenly host, the three Wise Men, Herod, the star of Bethlehem, and even the animals kneeling in the straw. In one form or another we have seen them represented so often that we would recognize them anywhere. We know about the birth in all its detail as well as we know about the births of ourselves or our children, maybe more so. The manger is as familiar as home. We have made a major production of it, and as minor attractions we have added the carols, the tree, the presents, the cards. Santa Claus, Ebenezer Scrooge, and so on. With Easter it is entirely different.

The Gospels are far from clear as to just what happened. It began in the dark. The stone had been rolled aside. Matthew alone speaks of an earthquake. In the tomb there were two white-clad figures or possibly just one. Mary Magdalen seems to have gotten there before anybody else. There was a man she thought at first was the gardener. Perhaps Mary the mother of James was with her and another woman named Joanna. One account says Peter came too with one of the other disciples. Elsewhere the suggestion is that there were only the women and that the disciples, who were somewhere else, didn't believe the women's story when they heard it. There was the sound of people running, of voices. Matthew speaks of "fear and great joy." Confusion was everywhere. There is no agreement even as to the role of Jesus himself. Did he appear at the tomb or only later? Where? To whom did he appear? What did he say? What did he do?

It is not a major production at all, and the minor attractions we have created around it—the bunnies and baskets and bonnets, the dyed eggs—have so little to do with what it's all about that they neither add much nor subtract much. It's not really even much of a story when you come right down to it, and that is of course the power of it. It doesn't have the ring of great drama. It has the ring of truth. If the Gospel writers had wanted to tell it in a way to convince the world that Jesus indeed rose from the dead, they would presumably have done it with all the skill and fanfare they could muster. Here there is no skill, no fanfare. They seem to be telling it simply the way it was. The narrative is as fragmented, shadowy, incomplete as life itself. When it comes to just what happened, there can be no certainty. That something unimaginable happened, there can be no doubt.

The symbol of Easter is the empty tomb. You can't depict or domesticate emptiness. You can't make it into pageants and string it with lights. It doesn't move people to give presents to each other or sing old songs. It ebbs and flows all around us, the Eastertide. Even the great choruses of Handel's *Messiah* sound a little like a handful of crickets chirping under the moon.

He rose. A few saw him briefly and talked to him. If it is true, there is nothing left to say. If it is not true, there is nothing left to say. For believers and unbelievers both, life has never been the same again. For some, neither has death. What is left now is the emptiness. There are those who, like Magdalen, will never stop searching it till they find his face.

—Frederick Buechner, Whistling in the Dark



Add to
your
prayer
list

Prayerful Concern for

Eleanor "Nor" Bell at Barbour Court
Bernice Johnson at Meadowview
Alice Narron at Meadowview
Shirley Williams at Meadowview
Ellen Rogers in Raleigh
Martha Rogers in Norfolk
Mary Alice Thomas in Charlotte

Marie Atkins
Ruth Daniel
Barbara Hess
Tom Johnson
Shannon Kimball
Walt Lassiter
David Lee
Bill Leist
Sandra Lester
Tony Lester
Miriam Lore
Earl Marett
Ralph Moseley
Becky Peele
Benny Pope
Ann Ragland
Chap Ragland
Peter Russell
Linda Stephenson
Nelson Vaughn
Betty Welch
Linda Wells
William Wells
Lucy Worley
Al Worsham
Hilda Worsham
Rebecca Ziady
Joseph Hester, Sr.



Memorials for Tom Barbour, Debbie Henderson, Ted Wells

Donors: Donald and Mary Peterson, Dave and Cindy Godwin, Laura Vaughn, Dr. and Mrs. Donald Westbrook, Sally Stockdale McCarthy,

Carol Stockdale Walters, Gaynelle Stockdale Patterson, Toni Lee-Andrews, Bradley and Martha Peete, Johnny and Bonnie Woodard, Johnston County Department of Social Services, Adult Services Unit, Tony, Melony, and Ashton Gupton, Vicky Windham, Minnie Windham, Ernest and Linda Whitley, Brad Correy, Roger and Eleanor Horne, Chap and Ann Ragland, Barbara and C.T. Williford, Virginia Williams, Wingate and Susan Lassiter, Betty Crawford, Billy and Clara Wellons, Scott Barbour and Al and LeeAnn Rieman families, Frank and Betsy Olive, Billy Duncan, Dennis and Jenny Ham, Jo James, Greg and Ruth Bell, Earl and Etta Marett, Jean Worley, Jane Harrell, Mr. and Mrs. Warren Grimes, Doug and Judi Blizzard, Mac Culbreth, David and Mary Stephens, Timothy and Terri Ann Barbour, John and Shirley Booker, Jamey, April, and Addison Wilkinson, Joyce and James Evans, Mabel Yelvington, Robert and Barbara Cameron, Millard and Patti Stallings, Glenn and Deborah Tart, Ross and Pam Hailey, Sandra, Jose, Blair, and Mary Heather Mahiquez, Mary Smith Keene, Cornell and Jane Cox, Hubert and Judy Schmidt, Rex and Elizabeth Johnson

New Hope Presbytery Passion Driven Ministry

What are you most passionate about? What is it that you believe you can do together with other congregations and ministries in New Hope Presbytery that aligns with the mission of the presbytery, supports and equips teaching elders and church leaders, and furthers devotion to Jesus Christ? Do you need funding to make your passions come to fruition?

Join us for a webinar on March 22, 1:00 p.m., as we talk about Passion Driven Ministries (PDM) and how the presbytery can be a catalyst for your ministry, project, or program to make a real impact in the lives of people and your communities. Join us if you want to know more about Passion Driven Ministries or anticipate applying for a PDM this year. **Participating in the webinar on March 20 or viewing the recording is necessary for all entries applying.** You can register through this link: www.nhpresbytery.org/pdm-webinar.



HIGHLIGHTS

of March Session

- Received Karen Brown Langdon to membership by Reaffirmation of Faith on Sunday, February 11, 2018.
 - Approved our high schoolers attending New Hope Presbytery Youth Retreat at Camp Willow Run, March 16-18, 2018.
 - Approved a PYC Potato Bake for Sunday, May 6, 2018, following worship. All proceeds will go to the Building Fund.
 - Approved a PYC Lock-In for June 1-2, 2018.
 - Approved designating Sunday, June 3, 2018, as Youth Sunday. Following worship, the youth will have lunch together with the pastor.
 - Approved the following leadership positions:
 - Quadrant Chair. Educational Development: Jennifer Templeton
 - Team Chair: Educational Development: New Programs/Special Events: Jake Jacobs
 - Team Chair: Educational Development: Youth Leadership: Evans Horne
 - Educational Development Youth Team Member: Emilia Anaruma
 - Spirituality Quadrant, Special Services, Team Member Nichole Parker
 - Spirituality Quadrant: Worship Team Member: Nan Jones
 - Stewardship Quadrant, Finance Team Members: Jaime Beasley, Tony Lester
 - Stewardship Quadrant, Personnel Team Members: Pam Withrow, Liz Craig
 - Approved a Called Session Meeting on Sunday, April 1, 2018, to receive this year's confirmands.
 - Approved a Called Session Meeting on Sunday, April 8, 2018, to receive new members Julie and Jeremy Pearce and to administer the Sacrament of Baptism for their daughter, Caroline.
 - Approved the pastor's officiating at the off-site wedding of Graham Wooten and Jenna Emmanuels on April 21-22, 2018.
 - Approved the pastor's Vacation Leave for April 22-26, 2018.
 - Elected Beth Daniel Church Treasurer for 2018.
 - Elected Debbie Jacobs Clerk of Session for 2018.
 - Approved repairs for the section of flat roof at an estimated cost of \$9,800.00.
 - Approved changing the time for the May 2018 Stated Session Meeting to 2:00 p.m.
- If you have items you wish to bring before Session, contact Debbie Jacobs, Clerk.

—Debbie Jacobs



Thanks to

Camille Boone for her volunteer work on Tuesdays and Wednesdays with Children's Music, and for working every Sunday with children's music.

Kathy Rice for her volunteer work with Handbells 101 and on Sunday morning with children's bells.

Betsy Olive for changing the paraments for every season of the church.

Evans Horne for putting up and taking down the church's Easter crosses.

Sandy Perkinson and Helen Best for heading up JOY Connection.

Hank Roberson for providing flowers for the Midweek Lenten Services.

All the volunteers who made the Palm Sunday Easter Egg Hunt and Hog Dog Lunch a resounding success despite the bad weather.

Hunger Sunday

Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation may spring up; and let it cause righteousness to sprout up also. I the Lord have created it. —Isiah 45:8

We all have heard the saying, “April showers bring May flowers.” In 1557 a gentleman by the name of Thomas Tusser compiled a collection of writings he called A Hundred Good Points of Husbandry and wrote, “April showers bring May flowers.” I wonder if the wet weather we have had in February and March this year will add to the explosions of blossoms this spring. Frankly, I am not sure when the leather on my shoes is going to dry out from all the puddles I’ve crossed in the last 60 or so days.

Regardless, the saying is a reminder that even the most unpleasant of thing, in this case the heavy rains of April, can bring about very enjoyable things indeed, in this case, an abundance of flowers in May. Other aphorisms reflect similar thoughts like “It’s darkest before the dawn” to let us know that the deprivations of night are short lived as light is just before arriving. Or, “Every dark cloud has a silver lining” teaches us that good things can come from bad experiences. Each of these sayings has a message of hope: that despair can be overcome.

This month be encouraged to celebrate hope, end darkness and despair, let your love for your fellow man bloom big as roses. You can begin by remembering Hunger Sunday: Yes We Can and Pennies for Hunger, which brings light to darkness for those of us in need in our community.

—Tom Barwick



Jim and Jody McGill, Our Missionaries

Through the Presbyterian Church (USA), our church contributes a hundred dollars a month to help support the mission work of Jim and Jody McGill. They entered the mission field in 1995 and have served in Malawi and now in Niger. In both countries, Jim has organized, given leadership and assistance to help provide freshwater and sanitation issues to villages, towns and cities. He has implemented both low-cost gas and hand operated pumps to many villagers that previously had to walk several miles a day to obtain water. Another priority of Jim’s is to provide and encourage the building and use of latrines in both countries. Since the McGill’s left Malawi in 2015 to go to Niger, the church has continued to support their previous work in Malawi, and it continues to be successful.

Jody, a registered nurse and a nurse practitioner, has been instrumental in being an effective advocate for better health in both countries. Jody is currently assisting with the opening of a new church-sponsored nursing school where she will train nursing students.

The McGills are very dedicated and enthusiastic about their work and the accomplishment made possible through the contributions of our church and the whole Presbyterian Church (USA) mission field. They request that we keep them in our prayers and are grateful for the support of the entire Presbyterian Church (USA).

—Tom Barwick



Helping Hospice

The Mission Outreach Quadrant partners with the volunteers at the SECU Hospice House in Smithfield 8 \eight times a year to provide opportunities for our congregation to furnish a meal to share our support and care to the families with loved ones at Hospice House and also the dedicated staff and volunteers.

Special thanks to Jaime Beasley, Rhonda Backner, Diane Dockery, Joy Worsham, Jane Harrell, Eve Creech and Betsy Olive for helping to provide dinner on Sunday, April 8.

The next scheduled meal will be lunch on Saturday, June 30, coordinated by Betsy Olive and Eve Creech.

Thank you for your continued support of this caring outreach.

—Greg and Joyce Knoll



Relay for Life

Thanks to all of you who attended our Relay Chili Lunch and to all who contributed. Because of your generous support, our team raised \$1315.00 for Relay.

Because of all the support last year for Relay, the American Cancer Society was able to invest \$152.5 million in research, give patients nearly 335,00 free rides to and from treatment, and provide more than 456,00 nights free lodging for people who don’t live close to a cancer treatment center. As you can see, we CAN make a difference!

We will be selling luminaria during the three weeks after Easter. Inserts will be in the bulletins and you can either put them in the collection plate or give them to Martha Taylor, Joy Worsham, or Betsy Olive. You can honor a survivor or someone you have lost for \$10 or buy a torch for \$100.00.

—Martha Taylor



JOY Connection

JOY Connection will meet on Thursday, April 5, at noon in the fellowship hall. This month’s guest speaker is a representative from Wheels for Hope, an organization that takes used cars, repairs them, and then sells them (with a six-month warranty) for \$500 to people who are down on their luck and in need or a reliable car so they can work. This is a wonderful program, and FPC’s own Evans Horne participates with this group.

Join us for a delicious meal, good fellowship, and an interested programs. Sandy and a team of other people are preparing the meal.

JOY Connection is an Outreach Ministry of FPC for “just older youth” aged 55 and over.

—Sandy Perkinson



JOY CONNECTION

Brady Thompson Shines in Scouts and Music

Brady Thompson, a fifth grader at Riverwood Elementary School, placed first among over 30 cars in the Pack 33 Pinewood Derby in February with his entry, Black Panther. He went on to the district competition and placed 8th in the district among the 43 fastest cars! Brady also received the Arrow of Light Award at the Blue and Gold Banquet in February where he crossed the bridge into Boy Scouts. The Arrow of Light is the only rank emblem aside from the Eagle that can be worn on the adult uniform.

Brady is a member of the Honors Chorus at Riverwood, performed twice in the Showcase of Stars, and will participate in the All County Choral Workshop and Performance in April.



Habitat Faith Build

First Presbyterian Church has exceeded its goal of \$2000 to contribute to the Johnston County Habitat house being built in Clayton.

Our thanks go to all who contributed to this fund, as well as to those who have contributed food and labor.

Take a look at the bulletin board in the fellowship hall to follow our progress.

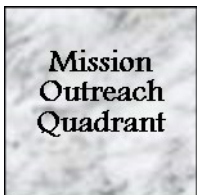


PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Spring Gathering of Presbyterian Women

First Presbyterian Church, Rocky Mount

April 14, 9:00 a.m.





SPECIAL OFFERINGS

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

A gift to One Great Hour of Sharing enables the church to share God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief to those affected by natural disasters, provide food to the hungry, and helping to empower the poor and oppressed.

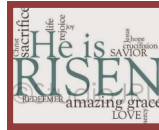
Easter Sunday
April 1, 2018



Sunset Memorial Park
7:00 a.m.

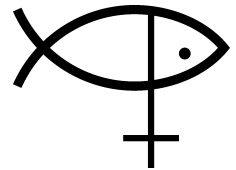
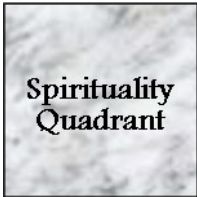


Easter Breakfast
Fellowship Hall
9:00 a.m.



Easter Worship Service
11:00 a.m.

Flowering the Cross
following worship



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

APRIL 2018

Smithfield, NC 27577

PO Box 1159

First Presbyterian Church

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The Property Box

Session has approved the replacement of the flat roof over the old preschool entrance, handbell room, and the children's music room. This should address the continued problems of leaks in these rooms.

Your Property Team asks that you make sure lights are off and doors are locked after your meetings before you leave the building.

Thank you.

Your Property Team

PYC Defy Gravity and Dinner Out on Sunday, April 8

PYC will not meet at its scheduled time on April 8., but our youth are invited to participate in a fun activity with youth leaders Evans Horne and Sarah Pate. Meet at the church ready to leave at 5:00. We will bounce around at Raleigh's Defy Gravity trampoline park for an hour and eat dinner out afterwards. **Parents must complete an online waiver before the youth. Go to depart:www.defyraleigh.com**



We will cover the trampoline park expenses with budgeted youth funds (one jour of jumping and required socks), but your child will need to cover his/her own dinner expenses. Let Evans know if your teen wants to participate.

Communications and Technology Updates

It is important that the church has your correct contact information. If your phone, address, or email has changed, please let Debbie Jacobs and the church office know.

An updated directory will soon be available through eNews. If you wish a printed copy, contact Debbie Jacobs. Also, an updated Member and Friends Directory is available on the table in the Great Hall. Please feel free to take one.

If you are not receiving the eNews or Dial My Calls information, please contact Debbie Jacobs.

COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY



New Hope Presbytery Youth Council Applications

Our high school youth are encouraged to apply to serve on New Hope Presbytery's Youth Council! As a member of the youth council, youth will actively prepare and lead middle and high school retreats. This is a rich opportunity for personal and spiritual growth—as well as something that will serve you well on future college, scholarship, and job applications!

Go to <http://nhpresbytery.org/committees/youth-leadership> for more information and to download the application. Contact Todd if you have any questions. Applications and references must be postmarked and mailed to New Hope Presbytery by April 30, 2018.



Update for Quadrants

Educational Development Quadrant Chair,
Jennifer Templeton
Special Programs/New Interests Chair,
Jake Jacobs
Youth Leadership Chair,
Evans Horne

Stewardship
Quadrant



New Hope Youth Council Commissioning Service at FPC

New Hope Presbytery's Youth Council Commissioning and End-of-Year Party will take place in our fellowship hall on Saturday, April 21, from 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

See Todd for more information.



Resurrection Rolls

In last month's ICHTHUS, I shared about one hands-on Lent project that families can try together. This month, I'm including a recipe for Resurrection Rolls, a tasty way to share the Resurrection story with your young ones.

Recipe and Meaning

One can of crescent roll dough
8 large marshmallows (or one for each roll you'll be making)
Melted butter
Cinnamon sugar



Read John 19 as a family while the oven is preheating to 350.

Unroll the crescent rolls and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Explain that the dough is like the cloth they wrapped Jesus in.

Give your child a marshmallow and explain that it represents Jesus, all white and pure because He was without sin.

Roll the marshmallows in the melted butter. This symbolizes the embalming oils.

Roll the marshmallows in the cinnamon sugar. This is like the spices used to prepare his body for burial.

Wrap the marshmallow in the crescent roll cloth, pinching the dough together securely. This represents how they wrapped Jesus' body. (If you don't completely seal the seams, the marshmallows will ooze out.

Put the rolls in the oven (symbolizing the tomb) and bake for about 12 minutes.

While the rolls are baking, read John 20:1-18.

Open the tomb and remove the rolls. When they're cool enough to handle, break one open and discover what happened to the marshmallow. This represent the empty tomb!

Happy Easter!

Blessings,
Todd

The Evelyn Southerland Avera Scholarship

It is time to apply for the Evelyn Southerland Avera Scholarship. The purpose of this scholarship is to honor the Avera children's mother, her love of First Presbyterian Church, her spirit, and her strong belief in the value of education.

This scholarship is designed for someone seeking a two- or four-year degree, has a financial need, has a connection to this church, and exhibits the characteristics of Evelyn Avera. It is open to any student who is currently enrolled in college. Download an application from our website and return it by June 15, 2018, to Debbie Jacobs.



—Debbie Jacobs



Saturday, May 5, 2018

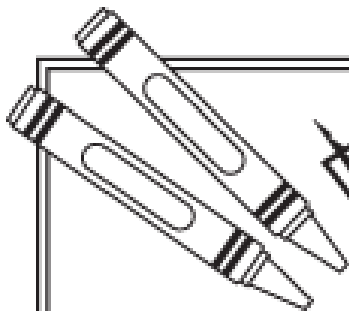
Eat at the Troop 95 Booth
and enjoy hot dogs, barbecue sandwiches,
and Italian sausage.

Donations of sweet tea
appreciated.
Leave in church kitchen
on Friday
before the event!

Educational
Quadrant



Kid's Page



PUZZLE

RESURRECTION HOPE



Romans 6:5 reveals the hope we have because Jesus rose from the dead on Easter.



Directions: First solve the math problems. Then put the corresponding words in the blanks; for example, the word next to the answer "1" goes in the first blank, the word next to the answer "2" goes in the second blank, and so on.

2+2 = ___ united 2x3 = ___ death 7+6 = ___ resurrection

3x3 = ___ certainly 18-16 = ___ have 4-1 = ___ been

0+1 = ___ if 2x4 = ___ we 13-1 = ___ him

2+3 = ___ in 20-6 = ___ like 2+5 = ___ his

2x5 = ___ be 8+3 = ___ with

"For 1 we 2 3 4

with him 5 a 6 like 7;

8 will 9 also 10 united

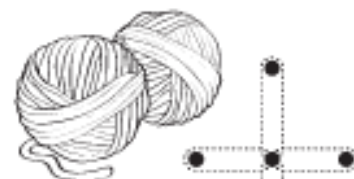
11 12 in a 13

14 his." Romans 6:5, NIV

Answer: For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. Romans 6:5, NIV

CROSS CRAFT

Make this special cross as a reminder of Jesus' death and resurrection.



What you need:

- Adult help
- Piece of wood
- 5 nails
- Hammer
- 2 balls of yarn (blue and yellow)

What you do:

1. Hammer the nails into the wood to form a cross shape (see example).
2. Tie the blue yarn to the bottom nail. Wrap it up and around the top nail and back down to the bottom nail. Then wrap it around the middle nail and around the side nails. Repeat until the yarn is wrapped about halfway up the exposed nails.
3. Repeat step two with the yellow yarn. Wrap it around the nails until only the heads are visible.