

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin



Press Bytes



Life Together

On February 14, we started our journey through Lent with Communion and the imposition of ashes in our sanctuary. I loved the intimacy of serving and praying “one-on-one” with so many of you! Some of you might be wondering why we observe Ash Wednesday in the Presbyterian Church and why we do the imposition of ashes. What is the purpose of Lent in the Reformed tradition? I often hear people say they are giving up chocolate – sugar – or meat for Lent. Are we supposed to be doing this? The Presbyterian Mission Agency published a great article a year ago entitled “Lenten 101”:

“The season of Lent leads up to the most holy of Christian days, Easter Sunday. The forty days of Lent begin Ash Wednesday and end at dusk the Saturday before Easter, not counting the Sundays in between. The Sundays during Lent, like every Sunday, are considered weekly celebrations of the resurrection. Many denominations encourage disciples to renew and strengthen their faith during Lent. Plans are made for community-wide Lenten preparation through the spiritual disciplines of prayer, Bible study, fasting, and service.

“This preparation is a historical model from the Early Church. New believers were mentored in the Christian faith weeks before Easter, preparing for their baptisms at the Great Easter Vigil. The idea of giving something up for Lent came out of this tradition, when fasting—abstaining from food as an act of discipline in solidarity with others in the community—was used to raise one’s spiritual consciousness and empty oneself before God. Fasting or giving up something for Lent can be a good way to explore a deeper expression of faith, if not adopted as a show of piety, martyrdom, or moral righteousness. Presbyterians may find it meaningful to give something up for Lent, but it is not required. Some disciples may find a more valuable spiritual exercise in taking something on during Lent—a more Christ-like attitude toward others, a humble spirit at work, or a feeling of gratitude in the midst of scarcity. Whatever spiritual disciplines and preparations are embraced during Lent, they can help us prepare for or renew our baptisms as part of the resurrection celebration at Easter.”

“Ash Wednesday is the entry point for Lenten preparation. It is a service rich in ritual and symbolism. Palms waved at the previous year’s Palm Sunday service are saved and burned to create ashes for the next Ash Wednesday. Participants on Ash Wednesday come forward for a minister or elder to mark their foreheads with the sign of the cross in ashes, saying the words, ‘You are dust, and to dust you shall return,’ from Genesis 3:19. With these words, disciples are reminded of their mortality and, when combined with the sign of the cross, they are also reminded of the hope of the resurrection.”

From my perspective – Christians don’t receive the sign of the cross to attract attention or to be noticed by others – they receive the sign of the cross to focus on who they are as humans – bound in death and life to Christ. Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent provide us the time to explore the mystery at the heart of the Gospel that being a Christian means a new life through Christ.

I look forward to walking this journey of faith with you throughout the season of Lent.

Thank you for your love for the Lord and this church!

May you be blessed with peace and joy for your faithfulness to Christ’s call on your lives. Peace,

Craig





Starting with Palm Sunday and continuing through Easter day, Holy Week and Easter are one of the most momentous times in the church year. We invite you to follow the path of Jesus through a series of church services – each unique – and each an opportunity to go deeper in faith.

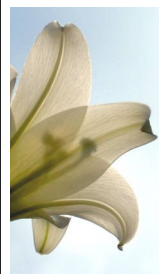
**Sunday, March 25, Sunday of the Passion:
Palm Sunday**

11:00 a.m. Worship Service (with Procession of Palms)

Thursday, March 28, Maundy Thursday

6:30 p.m. Dinner in the Fellowship Hall followed by Communion

7:15 p.m. We will proceed to the sanctuary, where we will observe a “Service of the Nails.” This will be an intense service that is not really designed for children. A nursery will be available.



Christ is Risen!
Alleluia

Sunday, April 1, Easter Day

9:30 a.m. or so
The Education Team will provide a light breakfast for all members in the Fellowship Hall; and there will be activities for the children

11:00 a.m. Worship Service (with Communion).
This year, the Blooming Cross returns to the front of the sanctuary. Those attending will be invited to place a flower in the cross before worship. At the conclusion of the service we will follow the Blooming Cross outside, where we will receive the Benediction, followed by singing the Doxology together.

“This is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives me life.”

Psalm 119: 50

LENT SCHEDULE

Beginning February 21, we will gather at 6:30 pm on Wednesday nights to share fellowship over a simple meal of soup, salads, and desserts and reflect on the meaning of Christ’s passion as seen from Simon Peter’s point of view. This year’s skits are entitled **The Simon Peter Chronicles**. The messages are simple, but profound. Here is the schedule:

Date	Time	Location
February 28, 2018	6:30 p.m	FCC
March 7, 2018	6:30 p.m	ACN
March 14, 2018	6:30 p.m	FCC
March 21, 2018	6:30 p.m	FPC



Dear Friends,

Lent is traditionally a season of fasting and prayer. During this time, Christians pay close attention to spiritual disciplines that deepen our understanding of what God is doing in our lives and in the



world. As a church, we spend time together hearing about and praying for the ministries of compassion and justice done through our support of *One Great Hour of Sharing*.

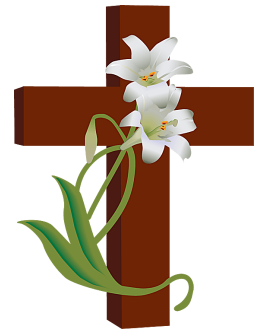
Jesus' ministry was among those who were most vulnerable. He preached Good News to the poor and release to the captives. *One Great Hour of Sharing* helps us share this same Good News to those same vulnerable people in our world today – those who are hungry, who are suffering from disaster, who are dealing with oppression in society.

Every gift made to this offering will meet the needs of people, and you will read about just a few of these individuals over the coming weeks through bulletin inserts. These stories will help us to see the face of those whose lives have been changed by our gifts – but they are only a few of the thousands and thousands of people served in this important ministry. I'd like to invite you to look at these inserts and share the stories with others.

That brings me to the challenge, which also relates to our support of *One Great Hour of Sharing*. While we trust our *One Great Hour of Sharing* programs to respond to the needs of our poorest and hungriest neighbors, those programs can only do so to the extent of our generosity. We've been blessed in so many ways because we have consistently opened our hearts to God's work in our lives. So I hope that you'll join us on Sunday, April 1, and that you'll join Christians all across the country in opening their hearts to witness tangibly to the abundant love of God through *One Great Hour of Sharing*.

Peace and love,

Craig



“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not by works, so that no one can boast..

Ephesians 2:8-9

“Lord Prepare Me”



Several folks have asked me about spiritual practices during Lent. After a little pondering (hurt my brain!), I thought of the song we sing every so often entitled *Sanctuary*. This song has always allowed me to find places of peace and refuge in the midst of this sometimes crazy world.

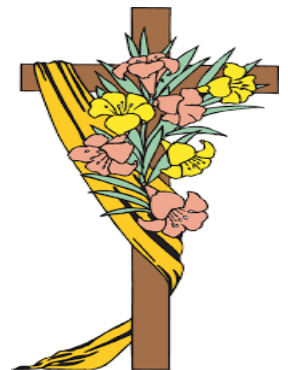
"Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary... And with thanksgiving, I'll be a living Sanctuary for you."

To be a "living sanctuary" for God's presence – that image always touches me. How to be a living sanctuary? I've found some answers in Terry Hershey's book, *Sanctuary: Creating a Space for Grace in Your Life*. The author reminds us:

"sanctuary, like anything else that's truly important, involves making certain choices: 1) To be open; 2) To be available; 3) To be curious; 4) To be alive; and 5) To be willing to be surprised by joy."

All those are great Lenten practices. To pick one per day – and live being open, available, curious, alive, and surprised by joy – that should get us ready for Easter morning and beyond for sure. Peace.

Craig



RELAY FOR LIFE 2018

Date: Saturday, June 2, 2018

Where: Manvel Junior High School, 7302 McCoy Road, Manvel

Our church Relay for Life team is getting their "scouts" out to recruit for the team. With the event being moved to summer we hope to get our numbers up on our team and fundraising. Cancer is such a horrible disease.



The theme this year is "Game Over", lets help Wipe out the Cancer!!!!

If you would like to join the team, "Angels In The Outfield", donate funds, or purchase a luminary please go to http://main.acevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY18SOR?pg=entry&fr_id=88304 to do so or you may just go to Google and search for Alvin Manvel Relay for Life. If you have questions please contact Jill Wheatley at 281-701-9013.



The choir is very excited to be working on our new Easter cantata! We will be performing "In Christ Alone" by Russell Mauldin. The piece features a great blend of familiar favorites along with some contemporary elements. We hope to see everyone there on Easter Sunday, April 1st.

Blessings,
Scott Gondesen

EASTER LILIES

Don't forget: Lily order forms need to be received by Friday, March 9th. You will be able to pick up your plant (s) after worship either Easter Sunday, April 1st, or Monday, April 2nd. Or if you would prefer, you may donate your lily for delivery to one of our home bound members with a note that says: "Happy Easter!" This year the proceeds from the lily sales will go to the Youth Fund to help our young people with their activities.



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Stated Session meeting was held on Monday evening at 6:30 p.m. on February 19, 2018 in the church library.

Treasurer's report: All records have been reconciled and are in good order.

Janet DeLeon, Wanda Cunningham, and Cathy King attended the Leadership Spiritual Enrichment Workshop hosted by Presbytery, on February 18, 2018. Wanda and Janet shared with Session the highlights of the sessions they attended.

Session heard reports from committees and on projects that are in the works. 91 contacts were made to the congregation by the Congregational Care Team. Pastor Craig shared that there were about 35 members, visitors, and friends of the church that stopped by on Ash Wednesday to receive communion and ashes.

Project reports: Sound System – equipment has been ordered. Estimated install date is the week of Alvin ISD Spring Break; Narthex Remodel – pending, waiting on dates for the timeline; and Manse Remodel – the remodel is in the last stages.

Session action items:

- + Approved Building Usage for Brandi Bowers for the fellowship hall for May 19, 2018; Linda Byrd for the fellowship hall on March 28, 2018; and Alvin HOPE a non-profit for the library on the third Wednesday of each month.
- + Approved, Cathy Copeland as a volunteer for training on the church financial software, Church Windows.
- + Approved participation and funding for a video produced by CGI contracted by City of Alvin. The video will be used to promote the City of Alvin. The church will own the video designated to it and will have rights to use the video for any marketing and / or outreach purposes the church sees necessary.

As always if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me. Blessings, Gina Ruskey

Elder of the Month - Janet DeLeon

Refreshments for - Education

Note to Congregation: Please remember that the Committee is only responsible for coordinating the refreshments. Please consider helping our committees in supplying refreshments for our after church fellowship. Its an easy and great way to be involved.

Thank You, Your Session

CONCLAVES 2018



“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

Hebrews 11:1

Bent but not Broken (2 Corinthians 4: 8-9)

Conclaves is Unique! Conclaves is created and led by youth for our youth. FPC had 10 youth and 3 sponsors that attended Conclaves. The theme this year was Bent but not Broken referencing 2 Corinthians 4: 3-7. The bible study time encouraged our youth to realize they may be frustrated at not having all the answers or having to go through difficult times but God never abandons them. They accomplished this through the following sessions:

- 1) Pressed but not Crushed
- 2) Perplexed but not in Despair
- 3) Lonely but not Alone
- 4) Struck down but not Destroyed

Youth today have to deal with a lot of difficult situations and we want them to know that no matter what God loves them and they should always have hope in that knowledge. We are blessed to have a congregation that supports our youth by ensuring they have many opportunities to learn and grow.

This is our largest contingent of youth attending Conclaves in a good many years. We look forward to what the future brings.





Ongoing Prayers Julie Thompson, Mary Leah Miller, Johnnie Waggoner, Jeanine Richey, D. J. McClendon, Camille King, Diane Murphy, Jim Berger, Pera Valdez, Paulette Brumbelow, Kay Tucker, Sofia Muzzafar, Oliver Cochran, Tina Moore, Evelyn Monk, Linda Allen, Ann Prestwood, Bill Pannell, Freddie Keene, Ruth Anderson, Juan Petty, Dianne Howard, Daniel Vaughn, Louisa Vera, Jimmy Abney, Danny Arena, Jean Barrow, Lacey Famil, Lee Syrett, Danielle Kline, Estelle Blackwell, Terri Bell, Barrett

Blackwell, Janet Brown, Dianne and Bill Murff, Cathy Carvin, Dana Shackelford Evans, Cathy Gross, Charles Harrison, Chris Henry, Diane Howard, Shelly Jenkins, Jay Jones, Ima Jane King, Dave Krauskepf, Bobby Loveless, Susie Klinkovsky, Paige LeJune, Margie Martin, Traci Owens, Marie Petersen, Lupe Rodriguez, Jason Poole, Joan and Joe Rossano, Don Roy, Elsie Smith, Clyde Scott, Theresa Stegman, Winona Temple, Karen Van Horne, Kathy Veigt, Barry Ward, Helen Watson, Stephanie Wilson, John White, Jessie Williams, Heidi Young, and Bill Von Restorff.

Immediate Concerns : Peggy Krampota, Lisa Froberg Ratjen, Sharon Roberts, Jeanette Cole, Linda McGee, Katie Gregory, Lewis & Edith Rockwell, Larry Allen, , Bill Steckert, Bill Duesing, Travis Tidwell, Bill Howell, Wanda Cunningham, Jim Hilton, "Harvey" victims, Ally Roles, Gayle Cross, Judy Martel, Brett Cotton and Norman Hirsch.

FPC Pictorial Directory

After much hard work, Brandi has submitted our Pictorial Church Directory to Lifetouch for a "proof"! We have been given an estimated day of March 8, 2018, that the "proof" will arrive for us to view. Please continue to wait patiently. We will have our new directories soon. We thank you for your patience. In the meantime listed below are a few address changes you may need:

Mike & Cheryl Case	Kelly & David Stinson
2073 Hickory Brook Drive	17101 S.E. 91st Street
Hermitage, TN. 37076	Choctaw, Oklahoma 73020

Cathy & Paul Rayburn
2031 LCR 752
Groesbeck, Texas 76442

If you have made changes to your phone numbers, address, or email address please contact the church office with the new information so that it can be added / changed in the new directory before the final print is done.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Carol "Sissy" Gross
- 4 Rachel Watkins
- 13 Laura Dantzman
- 14 Carol Warych
- 16 Dorothy DeWalt
- 24 Cathy Rayburn
- 26 Lewis Rockwell
- 27 Evan Gondesen

LENT Soup and Devotions

On March 21, 2018 FPC will host the Lent Soup and Devotion again. Cindy Waggoner is the lead on this event. If you can help by making and bringing a soup, salad, bread or dessert please contact Cindy or you can sign up in the church Narthex. She will also need assistance with the setup and cleanup that day. Please give Cindy a call if you can help!



Nikki Stafford
Damon Thomassie



Norman & LaNell Haas
Kristen Robertson
Zaden Vera
Jerry & Lisa McCalla

Easter Word Search Puzzle

Circle the words that you find.

R	E	H	T	A	F	P	Q	E	A	X	A	N	A	Q	U
A	J	C	M	F	S	U	S	E	J	M	H	O	Z	F	T
D	I	S	C	I	P	L	E	S	C	X	E	I	I	I	Y
G	B	E	B	H	U	B	K	Y	T	F	V	T	K	E	R
P	C	H	B	P	R	K	R	S	J	A	I	C	C	A	A
R	R	O	G	P	P	A	O	B	M	G	L	E	S	S	M
Q	I	O	M	K	N	H	R	B	J	R	A	R	A	T	U
M	D	T	I	G	G	F	R	S	B	E	M	R	W	E	R
A	D	B	E	Y	Q	P	X	U	K	N	U	U	O	R	A
G	K	L	L	T	V	W	Y	S	Q	E	D	S	I	S	B
C	S	O	R	P	E	T	E	R	U	D	G	E	E	J	B
R	H	A	N	N	A	O	J	K	W	R	F	R	D	O	O
O	Y	Z	F	I	V	G	I	P	G	A	B	A	D	H	N
S	Q	O	A	S	Y	R	O	N	G	G	E	M	G	N	I
S	E	P	U	L	C	H	R	E	N	D	S	P	O	L	I
K	U	O	F	X	L	K	I	I	X	J	W	U	B	T	N

Alive
Angels
Cross
Dead
Disciples
Easter
Father
Gardener

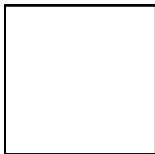
God
Holy Ghost
Jesus
Joanna
John
Mary
Peter
Rabboni

Resurrection
Sepulchre
Tomb





First Presbyterian Church
 302 South Johnson Street
 Alvin, TX 77511



Address Service Requested

Please notify the church office
 of any change of address or
 telephone number.



"The First Presbyterian Church of Alvin has been called by God and organized to share the Gospel message of Jesus Christ in our community and world."

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin

302 South Johnson Street, Alvin, Texas 77511
 281-585-3406 www.fpcalvin.org

email - fpcalvin@fpcalvin.org

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2	Holy Week Lent Soup & Devo Life Together by Pastor Craig (on Cover)

March Issue