

# First Presbyterian Church of Alvin

## Press Bytes



To the saints at First Presbyterian:

Greetings! We are in the month of Easter. Lent will end March 31 when Easter Sunday ushers in the time of what has been called Eastertide. This period will last 50 days until Pentecost. Then we will be in Pentecost until Advent.

When looking at what may be an interesting reading for Easter, I went to Fr. Martin Bells book, *The Way of the Wolf*. He has an interesting vision of Easter. Let me share some of his thoughts taking parts of his essays.

### WOOD

Something like an eternity ago, human beings got all caught up in the illusion that being human is relatively unimportant. Here today, gone tomorrow. What more tragic, of course, is that in the wake of this basic error there quickly followed the idea that human beings are expendable which easily degenerated into the proposition that some human beings are expendable. Well that's true, It's wrong and has always been wrong. There is nothing more important than being human. And no one, absolutely no one is expendable.

### NAILS

Jesus was dead. He was dead and buried. Caiaphas explained that to himself and to the others over and over again. It is expedient that one man should die for the sake of the people. Jesus is expendable. Caiaphas suffered from the illusion that being human is relatively unimportant. And so Jesus was dead. What happened then wasn't so remarkable really. God simply raised Jesus from the dead. He merely walked into the tomb and raised Jesus from the dead to the end we should be clear, once and for all, that there is nothing more important than being human. Our lives have eternal significance, and no one, absolutely no one is expendable.

### COLORED EGGS

Some human beings are fortunate enough to be able to color eggs on Easter. If you have a pair of hands to hold the eggs or if you are fortunate enough to be able to see the brilliant colors, then you are twice blessed.

This Easter, some of us cannot hold the eggs, others of us cannot see

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### Chilly Weather Cook Off Winners!!

**Congratulations to our Winners!!**

- Chili - Amanda Enciso**
- Stew - Helen Escobedo**
- Bread - Jo Myers**



### Send in your FPC photos!

Do you, or anyone you know, have pictures of your family members or friends at FPC activities. Some examples might include photos of VBS, families with Christmon tree, blooming cross or Easter lilies, and other FPC celebrations. We are trying to compile a photo file for historical purposes as well as giving us the capacity to make videos of church activities for future FPC events. Please send your pictures to Mandi at: [fpcalvin@fpcalvin.org](mailto:fpcalvin@fpcalvin.org)



Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday, March 10, 2024.  
 Don't forget to move your clocks ahead one hour.

## MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Carol "Sissy" Gross
- 4 Annalise Chambliss
- 27 Evan Gondesén
- 29 Billy Steckert, Jr
- 30 C.O. Magee



And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

Mark 11:22-24



75 YEARS |  ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT  
FEBRUARY 14 – MARCH 31, 2024

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY —  
FOR WHEN WE ALL DO A LITTLE,  
IT ADDS UP TO A LOT.

 ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

**Leading with a purpose**

**Gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing help set Malawians on the path to food security through unique women-owned business**

by Emily Enders Odom

LOUISVILLE - Although the women of Malawi are accustomed to doing anything and everything — from farming to running small-scale businesses — to support their families, Tropical Cyclone Freddy sorely tested Tinenenji [tee-nan-an-gee] Kalamba’s resilience.

Yet Kalamba was undeterred.

She was already proving to be an exemplary leader in the Kasupe [kuh-soo-pay] Women’s Bakery and Value Addition Centre — a project of [Kasupe Ministries](#), [a registered nongovernmental organization in Malawi — when the devastating March 2023 storm washed away the lives and livelihoods of countless thousands across the southeast African country.

This certainly wasn’t the hopeful future that the twice-widowed 42-year-old had pictured for herself when the bakery was first started in 2022 with funding support from the [Presbyterian Hunger Program](#).

Originally designed to address the local shortage of nutritious and healthy foods in the Kasupe region by having women produce and sell a variety of baked goods and farm products, the bakery has not only employed local women as bakers, but — before the cyclone struck — also bolstered the

production of local farmers and strengthened the local economy.

Although Kalamba had dropped out of school at the age of 12, she is widely acknowledged as the business-savvy woman behind the bakery’s success.

“I desperately wanted to lead,” she said. “I had noticed that this project had potential and I wanted to be at the forefront. I can’t lie, I also wanted to benefit a lot since I thought I needed more of the money than the rest.”

Kalamba knows whereof she speaks.

Not only is she HIV-positive, requiring a regimen of antiretrovirals, which are not always available to her at no cost, but she also has nine mouths to feed — herself, her four children, their two children as well as two grandchildren from her late sister. She works to give them a better life.

“I want to make sure that my children go farther with school,” she said. “I dream of them going to college and I tell them never to be like me when it comes to the issues of school. I teach them to work hard, fear God, and always face challenges head-on.”

It is thanks to Kalamba’s faithful leadership that the bakery operation survived the cyclone.

And it is thanks to a grant from the [Presbyterian Hunger Program](#) (PHP), made possible by Presbyterians’ generous gifts to [One Great Hour of Sharing](#), that the humanitarian outreach of Kasupe Ministries can continue uninterrupted.

For 75 years, the Offering’s purpose of helping neighbors in need around the world remains constant, giving the PC(USA) and other Christian

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For we walk by faith, not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5:7

### Mark Your Calendars for Lent and Holy Week 2023



Lent Soup and Devotions - 6:00 PM

March 6th - 6pm at FPC Alvin                      302 South Johnson St, Fellowship Hall

March 13th - 6pm at First Christian Church                      1212 South Durant St

March 20th - 6pm at Grace Episcopal Church                      200 West Lang St

Palm Sunday - March 24 at 11:00 AM

Maundy Thursday - March 28 at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall

Easter Sunday - March 31 at 11:00 AM

## Elder of the Month - Robert Escobedo

## Refreshments - Education

### Gathering Place News

In February, First Presbyterian Church of Alvin celebrated it's tenth (10th) year providing respite for caregivers of dementia patients. The participants enjoy coming each month to have fellowship and fun.



## EASTER LILIES

As we've done in the past, you will be able to purchase Easter Lilies to decorate our sanctuary Easter Sunday morning to celebrate the resurrection of our Savior Jesus. You can honor and/or remember a loved one by completing a form and placing it in an envelope, along with your donation in the form of a check or cash. The envelope containing your form and donation may be placed in the collection plate or taken to the church office during office hours. A form was included in last month's newsletter for your convenience. Additional forms can be found in the Narthex. The forms need to be received by Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup>. You will be able to pick up your plant(s) after worship Easter Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, or Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. If you prefer, you may donate your lily 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 Ron McClendon Camp Fund to help our members with their camping activities.



For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

## Easter Sunday Celebration

On Easter Sunday, March 31, **ALL** are invited to breakfast at 9:30 in the Fellowship Hall prior to Sunday school. After breakfast, children will participate in Easter activities in their Sunday school classes followed by an Easter egg hunt prior to worship. There will be no fellowship time after church that day, so make plans to join us for this celebration of Easter.



## CONGREGATIONAL CARE TEAM



**Ongoing Prayers** Kristy Myers, Patty Costanzo, Randy Ashley, Geri Ebert, C.O. Magee, Dan Stinson, Howard Pittman, Brandi Bowers, Wayne Williams, Nancy Williams, Barbara Williams, Audrey Roles, and Joseph Morales.

**Immediate Concerns** : The Family of Laura Dantzman

***Please call the church office with updates.***

Vouchers are available for those with needs such as job changes, homelessness, fire at home or relocation.

DONATIONS ACCEPTED ANYTIME



### Hours of Operation

**Mornings:**

**Wednesday**    9:00am - Noon  
**Saturday**        9:00am - Noon

**Evenings:**

**Monday**            6:00pm - 8:00pm  
**Wednesday**      6:00pm - 8:00pm

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the brilliant colors, many of us are not able to move at all and so it will be necessary to color eggs in our hearts. This Easter there is a hydrocephalic child lying very still in a hospital bed nearby with a head the size of his pillow and vacant moving eyes and he will not be able to color Easter eggs and he will not be able to color Easter eggs in his heart and so God will have to color eggs for him. You can bet your life on that. And God will color eggs for him. At the cross, God reconsecrated and sanctified wood and nails and absurdity and helplessness to be continuing vehicles of his love and he simply raised Jesus from the dead and they both went home and colored eggs.

I hope this message will be something you will remember as we move through Lent. Fr. Bell writes to challenge our way of thinking about Easter. He moves us outside the box. If we can't color eggs, God will do it for us. You can bet your life on that.

Peace,  
C.O.

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denominations a tangible way to share God's love. In addition to the PHP, [One Great Hour of Sharing](#) also benefits the ministries of [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](#) and [Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People](#).

Although the Offering may be taken anytime, most congregations receive it on Palm Sunday or Easter Sunday, which this year fall on March 24 and March 31 respectively.

"Tinenenji is the first to arrive and the last to leave the bakery," said Dr. Fletcher Padoko, executive director of [Kasupe Ministries](#), whose long-term goal is to reverse generational poverty and eradicate preventable diseases, namely HIV/AIDS, through programs and projects developed in partnership with Malawian nongovernmental Christian organizations.

"Although she doesn't make more money than the others, the evidence is all over the bakery operations that this woman leads with a purpose," he added. "Most of the people who come to the bakery and the Kasupe market are also her customers in her other smaller businesses. In the rural villages where everything is tough to come by, her moves are indeed shrewd."

PHP's partnership efforts with Kasupe Ministries serve primarily to address the nutritional needs of widowed households and other vulnerable groups through livestock farming. Many households, like Kalamba's, have also been severely impacted by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

"In our villages, about 70% are women and children," Padoko explained. "Because we have a lot of widows due to HIV, we try to focus on the women who are the leaders in the rural areas. They are so influential even though they are poor and vulnerable. We find if we work with them, it will be possible for us to uplift them; and, for us as a Christian organization, we try to make sure that we are not at the front but rather behind them, helping them in the areas where we feel they cannot help themselves."

Valéry Nodem, PHP's associate for International Hunger Concerns, said that in the few years that he has worked with Kasupe, he is "always amazed at how much they can do with so little."

"What's unique about Kasupe is their approach, especially the way that they relate to the community," Nodem said. "They are grassroots, not top down. They don't just start programs, but rather they go out into the communities and find out what they need. Then, even if they don't have the money right away, they start the programs. I can only imagine what it would look like if Kasupe had all the resources they needed because they're already making a big impact with what they have."

In its mission to eradicate poverty, Kasupe's work is also closely aligned with the [Matthew 25 vision](#).

"I have been following what has been going on with the Matthew 25 movement, and what we do is what Matthew 25 is calling us to do," said Padoko. "The rebuilding process has been really hard for the people in the villages, especially the women and children."

But Padoko added that women like Kalamba are still able not only to survive, but to actually thrive in hostile environments like this.

"She stands tall to be counted not just as a participant in community life, but as a leader," he said.

Nodem said that he especially appreciates the ability of One Great Hour of Sharing to allow "more people in the church to hear about the good work that we're all doing together." He added that PHP's ministry partner, [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](#), was also instrumental in bringing post-cyclone humanitarian aid to the people of Malawi.

Padoko similarly expresses his gratitude.

"I encourage people to give to One Great Hour of Sharing as a way to give directly to the people," he said. "We are so thankful to the givers because we, the Malawian people, are the beneficiaries of your generous giving."

## REPAIRING THE BREACH

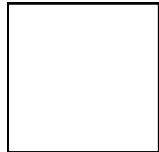
— ISAIAH 58



75  
YEARS



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS



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."*

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