

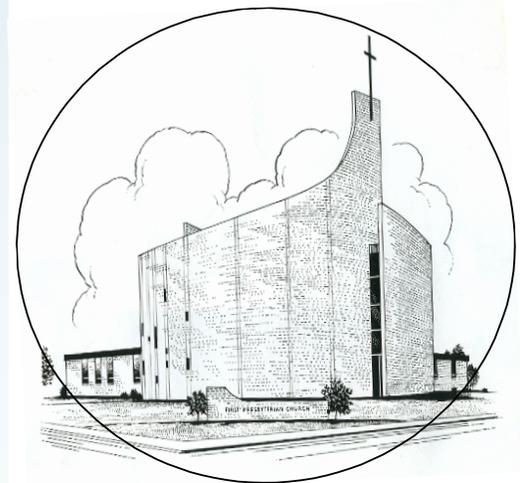
# Focus

April 2019  
Volume 56, Issue 4

News of the Community of Faith

## Holy Week Activities

**Palm Sunday, April 14 at 10:30 am**  
Celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.



**Maundy Thursday Seder, April 18 at 6:00 pm**  
with First Christian Church

The Seder is a ritual banquet which reenacts the Exodus. Its major feature is the reading of the Haggadah, which relates, in detail, the events of the Exodus of the Jewish people from ancient Egypt, complete with symbolic reenactments using Kosher wine, specially prepared Matzah, and bitter herbs.

**Good Friday Tenebrae Service, April 19 at 8:00 pm**  
with First Christian Church

The service will be a moving experience of light and darkness, drama and reflection, scripture, music, and prayer. In this time together, we will gain a new understanding of what Easter really means for us all.



**Easter Sunday, April 21st at 7:00 & 10:30 am**



Sunrise Service at **7:00 am** on the lawn on the north side of the church to joyously welcome the Risen Savior. Bring a breakfast to share for breakfast afterwards. At **10:00 am** we will have an Easter egg hunt for the little ones. At **10:30 am** we will join Christians all over the world in celebrating the Resurrection of our Lord in our beautiful sanctuary.

# Dave's Doodles



“Drip, drip, drip, little April showers...”

Do you remember that song? I remember it really well, because my mother was the music teacher at my elementary school for a year or so, and in my 3rd grade, she decided to teach that song to us. About halfway through the class, she remembered that there was a little girl in the class whose name, believe it or not, actually *was* April Showers.

I'll never forget the look of horror, mortification, and desperation on her face (my mom, not April). In an inspired move, she quickly changed the lyrics to, “Drip, drip, drip, little Springtime showers...” and catastrophe was averted.

Sometimes, necessity is the mother of invention, and, Beloved, we, as the church find ourselves in a time of necessity.

We are in a time of transition, a time our town is sharing. Changes in demographics, changes in culture, changes in all areas of life are affecting all of us in many different ways, and the church is not immune. Many of the young people of our town have moved to find jobs elsewhere, and when they have kids of their own, the grandparents in our congregation relocate to be near them. The net effect is that we lose not just young folks, but eventually their parents along with them.

This is not unique to 1st Pres. Other mainstream churches are experiencing the same effect. Membership is down across the board among all the historic churches in Plainview.

And not just in Plainview. The Presbyterian Church (USA) finds itself declining as well, along with other mainstream traditions. One reason is the rise in the popularity of the prosperity gospel (who doesn't want to believe that if you pray hard enough, God will give you money?), but there are other reasons, if we are honest about it.

One of them is our difficulty in letting go of what we've always done. It's hard to let go of tradition, it's hard to let go of something that has meant so much to us for so long.

And the reality is, tradition and ritual are not just the *form* of our worship, they also *inform* our worship. The four-fold structure of liturgical worship - Gather, Word, Response, Sending - reflects our own understanding of what it means to be a body of Christ.

And so, we find ourselves in a dilemma. We need to look for ways to reach out and attract new members, but we are afraid to try new things, and we loathe to let go of old traditions. As a consequence, we are stuck between the old and the new, paralyzed as we try figure out what is next for the church.

Now, it would be great if there was a blueprint for success. It would be great if the PC (USA) published a booklet that outlined exactly what steps need to be taken in order to reverse the trend of declining membership. But there isn't. What works in one church doesn't necessarily work in another. Cookie-cutter worship doesn't guarantee results.

Yet, there are some things that are universally recognized as indicators of vital churches. One of them is a renewed focus on mission and ministry. Another is a willingness to reach out on an individual, personal basis to friends and neighbors. And most importantly, vital churches are willing to try new things, and are willing to fail as they do so.

This is a hard thing to imagine. Why would we do anything so dangerous as spend money, invest time, in a new thing, if there was the slightest chance of failure? I completely understand the reluctance to take that kind of risk. After all, we have limited resources, we have a small congregation that we don't want to upset, why take the chance?

But, I think we need to take the chance anyway. I think we're past the time when we could open our doors as a church, and people would walk in. We are past the time when most people in America identified themselves as being religious, much less even knew what being a Presbyterian really is.

We are past the time that we can risk *not* taking a risk.

Fortunately, our church has already been taking some of these risks. Sherry Thompson has revitalized our missions emphasis with her passionate work on the behalf of those in our community and our world who are hurting. New ideas are spinning out of her committee like crazy, and it is exciting to watch.

Our membership and outreach committee has been trying new things as well, from an actual billboard for advertising to looking for ways to talk to our members about what makes them excited about our church.

And of course, one of the most immediately visible ways that we are trying new things is in the worship service itself, with new music, new words, new ways of thinking about old traditions.

I don't know how, or even if, these new ideas will pan out. I wish that I could promise that they will work. But, I can't.

I can, however, say that in trying these new things we are being faithful to our God, whose faithfulness to us is new every morning. In taking a risk for the sake of our church and our faith, we are living the very essence of what church and faith mean, and whether we succeed or fail, I know that God is pleased with our willingness to try.

# April Birthdays and Anniversaries

Lynda Perkins  
Juli Rigler  
Lisa Kersh  
Heath Bozeman  
Benjamin Bozeman  
Lou Ann Weaks  
Morgan Sweeney  
Hayden Walter  
Mary Ellen Cole  
Chris Lewellen  
Elizabeth Lackey  
Gaylan Goddard

April 1  
April 6  
April 10  
April 12  
April 17  
April 18  
April 21  
April 21  
April 23  
April 24  
April 25  
April 27



## Mission Projects

The Mission and Discipleship Committees are asking for donations of Easter candy to fill an Easter basket of personal hygiene items to be delivered to the Reed Center to help brighten the holiday of the boys living there. Please bring the candy to church next Sunday so that the baskets can be put together. Would you pick up a second bag of candy for our Easter egg hunt? We will be stuffing the eggs during the breakfast potluck after the sunrise service.

Thanks for all your help being the hands and feet of Christ in our community.



**“Without women preachers, we would have no knowledge of the resurrection.”**

JÜRGEN MOLTSMANN  
#DROPTHESTONES

# April 2019

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

	1	2	3	4	5	6
		5:30 pm—Snack Pak4Kids & Dinner 6:30 pm—Den Meeting	11 am—MoW 6 pm—WNF T-Bones 6:45 pm—Choir			
7 9:15 am—Sunday School 10:30 am—Worship 11:30 am—Potluck	8	9 6:30 pm—Den Meeting	10 11 am—MoW 1:30 pm—Naomi Ruth Circle 6 pm—WNF Amazin' Grazin' 6:45 pm—Choir	11	12 FFFF @ China Dragon	13 8:00 am—Men's Breakfast
14 10:30 am—Worship/Palm Sunday	15	16 6:30 pm—Den Meeting	17 11 am—MoW 6 pm—No WNF 6:45 pm—Choir	18 6 pm—Seder w/ First Christian Church (here)	19 8 pm—Tenebrae Service w/First Christian Church (here)	20
21 7 am—Sunrise Service 10 am—Easter Egg Hunt 10:30 am—Worship	22	23 6:30 pm—Den Meeting	24 11 am—MoW 6 pm—WNF Disciples 6:45 pm—Choir	25 ← David gone w/WBU Jazz Band/Greeley, CO	26 PDP Meeting	27 FPC Canadian
28 9:15 am—Sunday School 10:30 am—Worship/Neutral Pulpit →	29	30 6:30 pm—Pack Meeting				

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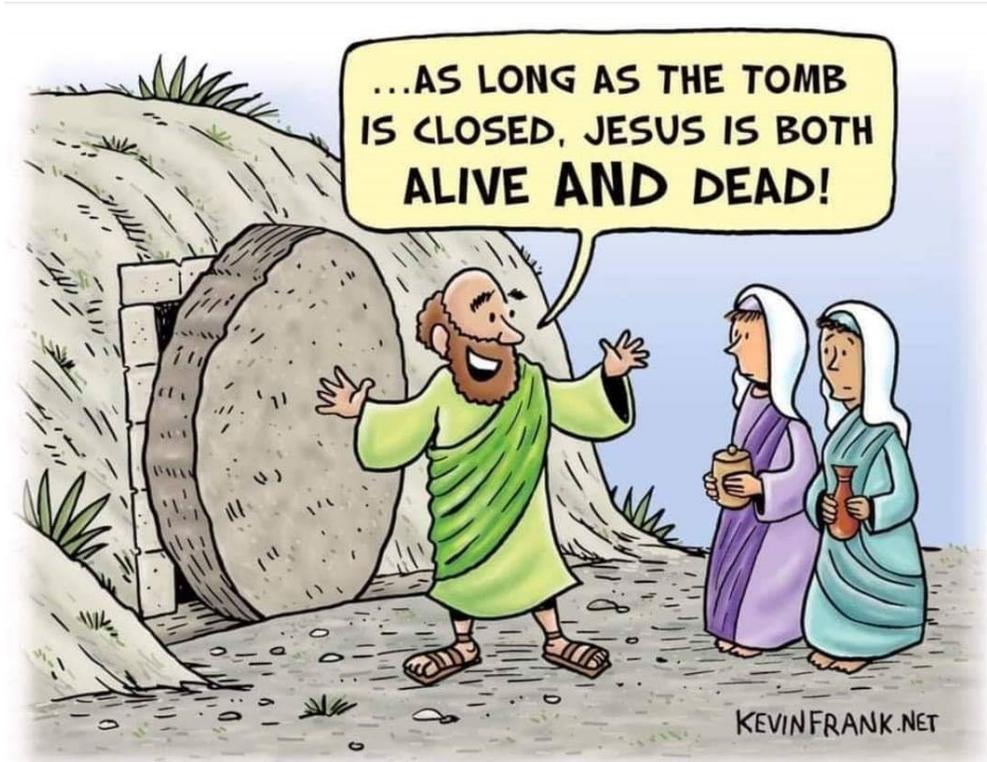
There are a couple of ways to view ourselves as a church, I think. One way is to think of ourselves as a church in the autumn years of its life, gradually winding down, getting ready to lock up tight for winter. This is a tempting picture: a cozy, intimate gathering of family and friends, sitting around in our living room with cups of hot chocolate, remembering old stories of good times.

Or, we can view ourselves as a church in the spring, as new seeds are planted and watered by the April showers, and all kinds of weeds sprout up; a chaotic, unpredictable, time of regeneration, with no guarantee of a good crop, but always with the promise of new hope and new life.

The choice is ours to make. Both views have consequences, both good and bad. There is no perfect choice.

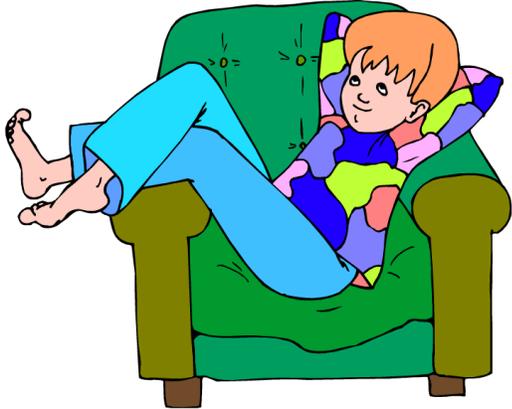
Having said all that, I encourage us to choose the springtime. Let's plant new crops. Let's water new ideas. Let's be ready for some things to grow out of control, and for some things to fail.

Above all, let's look for God in the risk. It is in the risk that we discover that our faith is real, and that God is with us, regardless of where our path leads us.



Saint Schrodinger, the forgotten disciple.

# Announcements

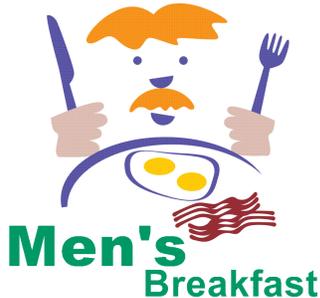


Do you have a gently used chair or couch you might donate to our youth? We have a youth group again and would also like to reach out to Wayland students and would love to offer a comfy place for them.

Anyone who would like to help with the set up of our Seder meal please meet at the church at 3 pm on April 18. This will be a potluck and we will try to be as kosher as possible. There is information on kosher cooking on the tables in the Narthex.



## Fourth Friday Fellowship with Friends



Saturday, April 13  
8 am

will meet on April 12 at noon at China Dragon. We might have to switch the 'f' from 'fourth' to 'floating' Friday since April 12 is the second Friday. LOL

Save the Date!

Ladies Spring Tea & Purse Parade  
in Fellowship Court  
Saturday, May 4 at 11 am



## Focus

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### APRIL NEWS TO KNOW

Focus is published monthly by First Presbyterian Church, Plainview, Texas. Articles for inclusion in the FOCUS are requested by the 20th of the month.

Rev. David Hawkins, Pastor  
Dr. Charles Teykl, Pastor Emeritus  
Karen Hawkins, Publisher

Be sure to note these important dates and jobs to be done during the month of March.

#### Ushers

Whit Hunt, Richard Morgan,  
Gaylan Goddard, Chris Lewellen,  
Larry Williams, Mike Craig,  
Graham Tirey

#### April Liturgist

#### Wednesday Night Fellowship

4/3—T-Bones  
4/10—Amazin' Grazin'  
4/17—Holy Week (no WNF)  
4/24—Disciples

#### March Attendance

Mar 3	36
Mar 10	59
Mar 17	35
Mar 24	48
Mar 31	40

#### March Contributions

Mar 3	\$4,044.95
Mar 4 (online)	\$2,130.00
Mar 10	\$2,041.18
Mar 17	\$3,861.00
Mar 24	\$ 782.70
Mar 31	\$1,519.30

Total Income:	\$13,722.00
Total Expenses:	<u>\$13,422.61</u>
	\$ 299.39

