



Fifth Sunday in Lent — Sunday, March 13

This Lent I have been preaching a series on “Getting Closer to Jesus”. Last week, we focused on the first part of the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15. This week we are looking at the second part of the parable: what happens when the elder brother comes in from the fields after a hard day’s work and discovers a party celebrating his younger brother who has returned home after squandering his share of the family fortune.



Remember there was a father who had two sons. The younger one left home with his share of the inheritance to make his way in the world. You can imagine how the older brother felt when his father agreed to give the younger brother the money and he split town. How do you think the older brother should have felt when he discovered his brother had returned? Relieved that he was alright? Should he have shown him some brotherly love and affection and wrapped his arms around Josh?

Why would Jesus tell such a story? Has the father lost one son because of the way he treated the other one? The Bible leaves the question open as to whether the older brother ever goes inside the house. It is going to take a lot of hard work. As one person wrote, “The attitude of the father toward his sons is not determined by their character, it is determined by his.”

What life lessons can we learn from this story? How does the story turn out when we are the older child? See you in church this Sunday.

Palm Sunday — March 20

Can you believe that it is already Palm Sunday? We haven’t even turned the calendar to spring yet, but here we are waving our palm branches and singing “Hosanna in the Highest” as Jesus rides into the city of Jerusalem on the back of a donkey. We will have a donkey on Sunday to lead the procession down the sidewalk with our children, parents and anyone else who would like to join in the parade.

I hope at some time in your life you get to be part of a parade. When the drum beats and the trumpets are playing for you, when the crowd is cheering—even just a small crowd but one you care about— call that a parade!

Jesus had one of those moments when the parade was just for him. I don’t think thousands were cheering for him. His disciples and perhaps a few hundred more got caught up in the excitement of a prophet coming into the city of Jerusalem on Passover weekend. It was one grand moment, maybe a half hour at the most. Then it was over. Jesus jumped down from the donkey and looked around and life pretty quickly returned to normal.

Glenn Doak, *Senior Pastor*

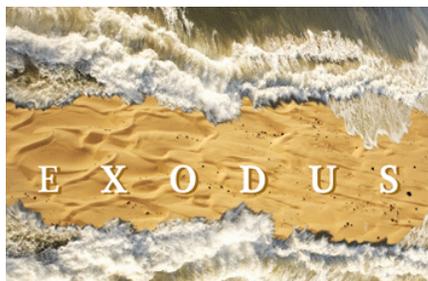
IHN News

Thank you to all the volunteers who make it possible for us to welcome families into our church during a difficult time in their lives. If you were not able to help out during our Interfaith Hospitality Network host week March 6-13, please save the date for our next host week May 15-22. If you are interested in volunteering in May, please contact Terry Nestor, terrynestor@hotmail.com.

Thank You to Blood Donors

Thanks to all who gave “the gift of life.” On February 28, we collected 35 pints of usable blood, surpassing our goal of 32 pints. According to the American Red Cross, someone in the US needs blood every two seconds. Your generosity and time made a difference!

If you did not get the chance to donate during our blood drive, please consider making an appointment to donate soon at redcrossblood.org. The Red Cross is currently experiencing a crisis shortage of B-, O-, and O+ blood.



“Exodus” is Coming

Thursday, April 28th at 6:30 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church and Congregation Children of Israel have partnered to sponsor “Exodus,” a one-man, multi-media retelling of the biblical story of the liberation of the Hebrew slaves from Egypt. This unique dramatic performance, appropriate for ages ten and up, will be held at FPC on Thursday, April 28 at 6:30 p.m. On the two Thursday evenings prior, Dr. Doak and Rabbi Lindner will lead Bible studies on the book of Exodus. Please save the date and invite your family and friends.



Flower Dedications

The following dates are available to dedicate flowers for Sunday worship: **April 3 and 17.** The cost for two arrangements is \$100. Please contact Lucy Bell at lbell@firstpresathens.org to schedule a date.

January Financial Information

Income Received	\$153,448
Income Expected	\$99,916
Total Expenses	\$106,845
Expenses Budgeted	\$103,615
Net for the month	\$46,603

Join Us for our Family Easter Egg Hunt at The Hill

We look forward to seeing all of you on the morning of March 19th for the Easter Egg Hunt! We will get started at 10:30 a.m. Remember to bring your Easter baskets, a picnic basket with lunch for your family, and a picnic blanket. We will provide drinks for everyone. The Hill is located at 1800 Crescent Lane in Athens. If you need further directions to The Hill or have any questions, please email Natalie Bishop at natalie@firstpresathens.org or stop by the Children’s Ministry Suite.

Children’s Ministry on Palm Sunday

Join us Sunday, March 20th, for our Palm Sunday services. Our donkey will return this year to lead the children’s palm procession to the sanctuary at the beginning of the 11:00 a.m. worship service. If your child would like to meet the donkey and participate in the palm procession, please plan to arrive in the Children’s Ministry Suite by 10:15 a.m. Also, we look forward to special performances by the Cherub and St. Andrews Choirs during the 11:00 a.m. worship service on Palm Sunday.

Natalie Bishop, *Director of Children’s Ministries*

Maundy Thursday — March 24, 2016



Maundy Thursday is a strange name for a holy day even for Presbyterians who have been celebrating it for over four hundred years. The first word “Maundy” comes from the Latin for “new commandment” because Jesus said at table that night as John notes in his gospel, “I give you a new commandment.” Long discussions have been held whether the new commandment was to “love one another,” to celebrate the breaking of bread and pouring of wine or of foot washing?

This year we will celebrate Maundy Thursday around tables in Fellowship Hall. We will begin at 5:30 p.m. and have a common meal together. It will be like many dinners in Fellowship Hall, but it will also be different. We will try to stick to the menu that Jesus and the disciples might have had that night—lamb for sure, dates, flat bread—to name a few. At the end of our meal we will have a brief worship service that will end with the distribution of a loaf of bread and a pitcher of juice for each table. We will celebrate the sacrament around the dinner tables with each of us serving those around us. This will be appropriate for all ages to join in together.

Glenn Doak, *Senior Pastor*

Youth Ministry Update

This Lenten season our youth have been exploring the life of Jesus through Adam Hamilton’s book and video, *The Way*. As we approach Holy Week, we will move from a time of study to a time of action, using two ancient liturgical practices – lectio divina and contemplative prayer. Lectio divina, Latin for “divine reading,” is a slow, meditative praying of the Scriptures. There are four separate steps: read;



meditate; pray; contemplate, all with the goal of connecting to God through the living word. On Palm Sunday, we will transform the PIT into a space for intentional, creative prayer. Various prayer stations will be set up for youth to experience God using all of their senses. You, too, are invited to **stop into the PIT anytime during Holy Week to spend a few minutes in conversation with God.**

Kim Ness, *Director of Youth Ministries*



- March 16** Mary Peace Joyce Johnson, Arlene Shirley,
- March 17** Mary Attaway, Camille Heather Swank
- Attaway, Emily Boatwright,
- March 24** Debbie Craddock-Bell, Beth
- Ainsley Liken Norton, Kate O'Reilly
- March 18** Kate Coble, Curt Nessel
- March 25** Janet Bishop, Meagan Veness,
- March 19** Betsy Bushnell, Caty Cowsert, Tommy Ward
- Jeffery Peterson, Katherine
- March 26** Pat Bryan, Petch Bryan, Kenny
- Peterson, Stella Stafford Kalivoda, Bobby Watkins
- March 20** Judy Harrison, Henry Logan, Samuel McNeil
- March 27** Joe Stunzi
- March 21** Susan Frazier
- March 28** Robbie Bryan, Bob Cowsert,
- March 22** Chris Hughes, Jimbo LaBoon Lola Stafford
- III, Jack Vandiver, Jimmy
- March 29** Bo Thurston
- Williamson, Steve Yeatts
- March 30** Beth Collins, Bonnie
- March 23** Tate Alverson, Jeff Bangle, Hugo Waldrip
- Daniel Epting, Warren Horn, **March 31** Edda Agee, Sydney Goodstone,

New Website Successfully Launched

Our new website has successfully launched, complete with a fresh new look and up-to-date information about our church's upcoming events and programs! This project started in March 2015 when the Session set up a committee charged with the task of developing requirements for a revised church website design and a plan for its implementation. The committee members were Bob Bostrom (Chair), Joy Holloway, Kim Ness and Roger Burbage. In the summer 2015, we hired an intern, Angela Suh, to help with implementation, and Caitlin White joined the staff as our new Communications Specialist. Bob, Caitlin and Angela have worked for nine months on restructuring the old site, choosing a new development platform and building the new site with a local developer, Delwin Holeman.

Thank you for your patience as we all learn our way around the new website. We hope that you will take a look at the new and improved www.firstpresathens.org and share your feedback with us via the link on our home page. and please express your gratitude to Bob and Angela for their dedication to this immense task!

Music Notes by John Coble

In some church traditions, the word "alleluia" is not said or sung during the season of Lent. It is put away during this penitential season, so that it can be brought out with greater joy at Easter. "Alleluia" is the Latin version of the Hebrew "hallelujah," which means "praise Yahweh." We are not so strict about this tradition in our own church, but the word doesn't seem to appear often, if at all, during Lent. According to *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy & Worship*, in the West, "alleluia" was associated with Easter, and was omitted in Lent and also from funeral rites.

It was in the middle of the funeral for Kevin Garrison, a member of ours who passed away much too young, and we were singing the hymn "For all the Saints," when we came to the "alleluias." It suddenly occurred to me it was Lent and we weren't supposed to be singing that word, but how could we not? How could we not praise God for the life of yet another saint? On the other hand, how in the world could we be praising God at such a tragic time? We have to. One of the anthems our choir will sing on Easter Sunday is called "A Song of Resurrection." It is a setting of a poem by Peter Siedlecki, which speaks of light overcoming darkness, new life breaking forth, and old somber ways being destroyed. The poet writes, "Rise, come forth, and sing hallelujah!"

Our Church Family

In the Hospital:

- Lucy Hardell

Home from the Hospital:

- Pam Prokasy
- Ruby Freeman

Congratulations:

- To Kevin and Katie McNeil on the birth of their son, Matthew Caden McNeil, on February 18, 2016. Matthew is the grandson of Joan Pinson.
- To Randy and Sarah Heath on the birth of their son, Robert D. Heath III, on February 19, 2016. Robert is the grandson of Roy and Debbie Craddock-Bell and Bobby and Jeannie Heath.

**In Memoriam
Kevin Garrison
1979-2016**

**In Memoriam
Frank Lawson
1931-2016**

Bible Readings

- Mar. 16 Mark 10:1-16
- Mar. 17 Exodus 7:25-8:19
- Mar. 18 2 Corinthians 4:1-12
- Mar. 19 Mark 10:46-52
- Mar. 20 Zechariah 9:9-12
- Mar. 21 2 Corinthians 1:1-7
- Mar. 22 Mark 11:27-33
- Mar. 23 Lamentations 2:1-9
- Mar. 24 1 Corinthians 10:14-17
- Mar. 25 John 13:36-38
- Mar. 26 Lamentations 3:37-58
- Mar. 27 John 1:1-18
- Mar. 28 Mark 16:1-8
- Mar. 29 Exodus 12:28-39
- Mar. 30 1 Corinthians 15:30-41
- Mar. 31 Matthew 28:16-20



Return Service Requested

Sunday, March 13 - Daylight Savings Time Begins

- 1:15 p.m. AYS Rehearsal, Fellowship Hall
- 4:00 p.m. Cherub Choir, Room 203
St. Andrews Choir, Room 202
- 5:00 p.m. Celebration Singers, Room 202
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Fellowship Easter Service Project, The PIT

Monday, March 14

- 1:30 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 5:15 p.m. Finance Team, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Room 205
- 6:00 p.m. Stated Session Meeting, Moses Waddel Room

Tuesday, March 15

- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Bride's Room
- 5:30 p.m. Renovation Team Meeting, Staff Conference Room

Wednesday, March 16 - Last Wednesday@First Program

- 10:00 a.m. Tai Chi Group, Room 310
- 3:00 p.m. Wednesday@First Programs
- 5:45 p.m. Wednesday Night Dinner, Fellowship Hall
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, March 17

- 10:00 a.m. Thursday Morning Bible Study, Home of Josephine Paine, 640 Riverview Road
- 1:30 p.m. Northeast GA Presbytery Search Committee Meeting, Staff Conference Room

Saturday, March 19

- 9:00 a.m. Northeast GA Presbytery Women's Gathering, Covenant Presbyterian Church
- 10:30 a.m. Children's Ministry Easter Egg Hunt, The Hill, 1800 Crescent Lane

Sunday, March 20 - Palm Sunday

- 4:00 p.m. Cherub Choir, Room 203
St. Andrews Choir, Room 202
- 5:00 p.m. Celebration Singers, Room 202
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Fellowship Prayer Stations, The PIT

Monday, March 21

- 1:30 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Room 205
- 6:00 p.m. Right Brain Small Group, Home of Carol Strickland

Tuesday, March 22

- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Bride's Room
- 6:00 p.m. First Friends, George's Lowcountry Table, 2095 S Milledge Ave

Wednesday, March 23

- 10:00 a.m. Tai Chi Group, Room 310
- 3:00 p.m. Bridge, Room 302
- 4:30 p.m. Athens Tutorial Programs, Children's Ministry Suite
- 5:00 p.m. Cherub Choir, Room 203
Prayers for Healing, Sanctuary
St. Andrews Choir, Room 202
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Sundays
at First Presbyterian

Sunday, March 13

**GETTING CLOSE TO
JESUS THIS LENT:**

**4. *When We Are
the Elder Child***

Rev. Dr. Glenn Doak

**Sunday, March 20
Palm Sunday**

***When the Parade Is Over*
Rev. Dr. Glenn Doak**

Worship Services:

8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.

Children's Church

Children, ages 4 through
Grade 2, may leave the
11:00 a.m. service for
activities in the Children's
Ministry Suite.