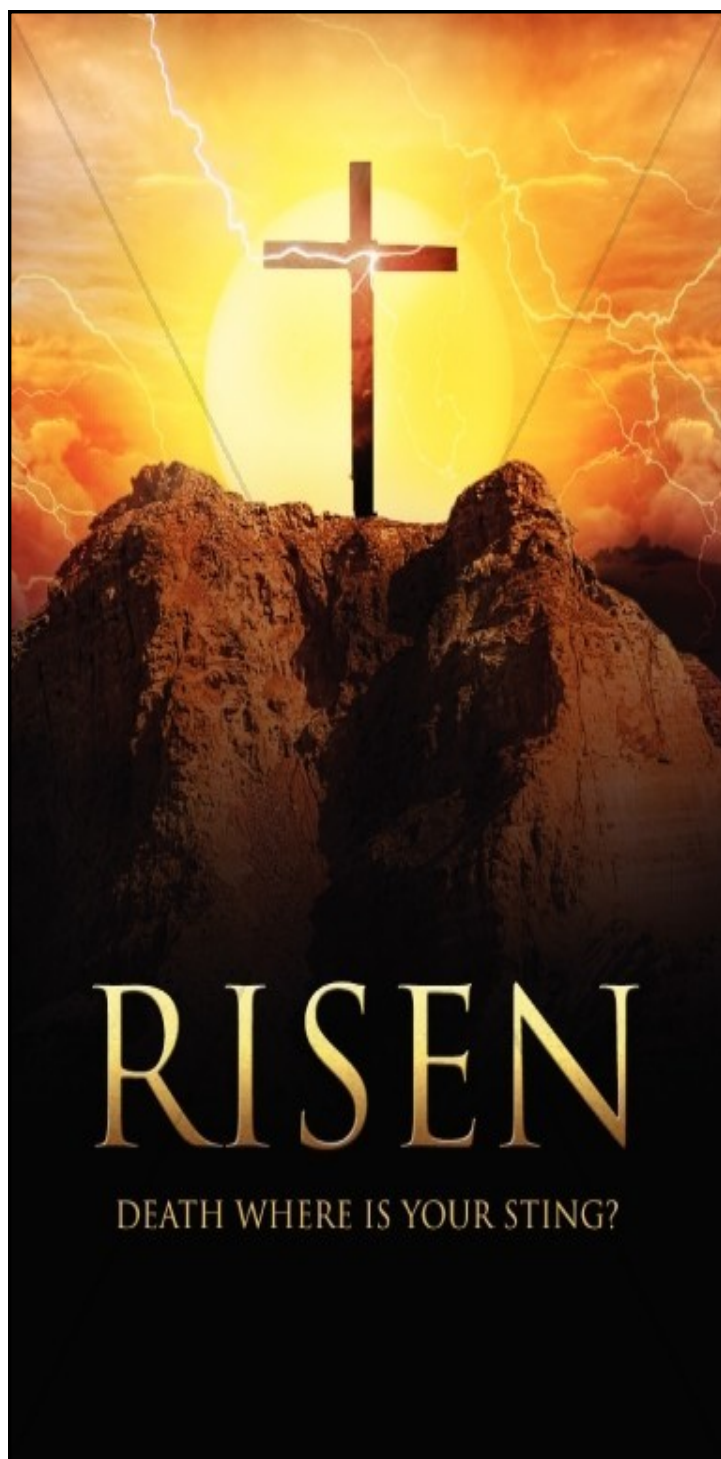
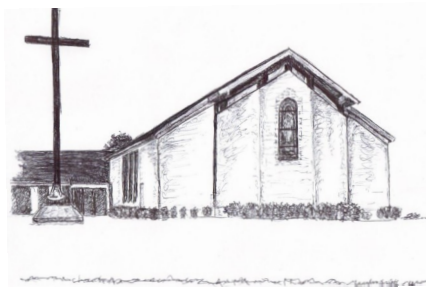


Presby News

APRIL 2022

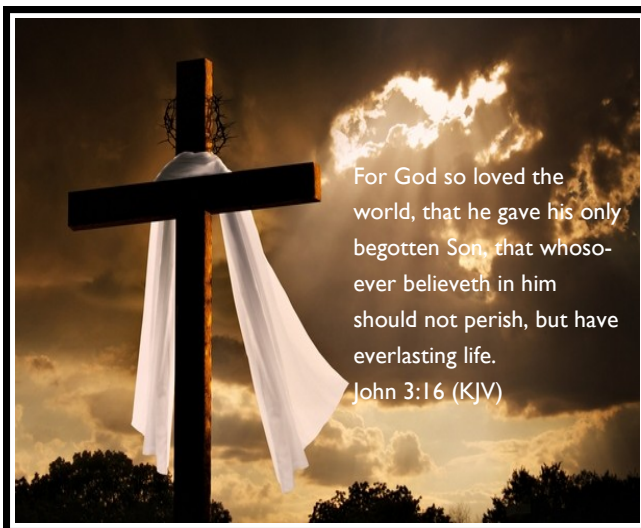


*Have a blessed
Easter!*

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die."
--John 11:25-26

SPECIAL DATES

April 10	Palm Sunday
April 14	Maundy Thursday
April 15	Good Friday
April 17	Easter Sunday
April 18	Easter Monday (Office Closed)



FROM THE PASTOR . . .

Ultimately I feel as if people are tired...

Tired people need to know they are valued and loved. Here's the connection....when your teenager walks in the door and plops down on your couch and tells you that they're tired, you are tempted to look at them with contempt. Why is that? Here you are working 40 hour weeks, picking up, dropping off, buying groceries, washing clothes, going to games, doing homework, meeting work deadlines, mowing the yard, paying bills, and the person you're providing for doesn't even know half of how tired you are....

But here's the difficult part, you know that you don't need to invalidate how they feel. You can explain the differences. But what really needs to be done is have a moment to allow these children to be seen by you and be in their moments with them.

In the Great Resignation that we are currently in post COVID world...people feel tired, overworked, and believe there is no margin for things that are primary which are a growing relationship with Christ. We know that to be vital and find that strength in the church. They don't know that....but we've got to care enough about them to lovingly and patiently show them that the way of Jesus calls us to more.

What our people don't understand is that laying down your life to the things you want to do actually gives you more of what you were trying to get in the first place. The way of the kingdom says...I've got to protect my time so that I can be a better citizen, person, employee, and believer. So what do we do...we try to safeguard all that we can to get more time for us and in the end ultimately we are more tired than when we started. Don't get me wrong...that sleep is going to hit so great for a few months....but then something happens...you're still bitter, still angry, still not satisfied, and still trying to make sense of this life. You thought that more rest would fix the issue but now you're right back where you started. So you hang on and safeguard to something else that you believe will fix the problem.... And it starts off great, but you're right back to where you started.

Why is this cycle so familiar.....

Matthew 16:24-26

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. **25** If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. **26** And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?

When you hold on to your life, you actually let it go. The way of Jesus says you let go of your life so that he can hold on to you and your life at the same time.

I feel you kicking at me already so let me go ahead and answer this question....

But Pastor, I did that too. I followed after Jesus and the cycle was exactly the same...I still feel overwhelmed while also following Jesus...are you saying that you don't have any struggles at all? Are you saying that you don't ever feel tired? Are you telling me that your life is stress free and absent of trouble..

No my friend, I am not saying that at all. I venture to say that I share so many similarities of that cycle of confusion with those who don't follow Jesus. I have those days, too. I have those months, too. I have those years that nothing seems to be right too!

So what makes the difference between you and me Pastor? I expect rain in the forecast now. I know the storm is coming. I am no longer surprised at its arrival. The storm is still unpleasant. The rain is frustrating. The delays are aggravating. The hardships are daunting. The lonely nights are still lonely. The only difference is that I know that they are coming, and it won't always be like this.

The way of Jesus tells me that the cycle is inevitable. The world is forever affected by sin. Therefore, I will always feel this never ending cycle of confusion and thinking that trying to safeguard my life from trouble or protecting my investments to only suit me will be what fixes it all.

The way of Jesus says that the cycle is inevitable, but he will be there with me through it all. That, somehow, I am able to deal with what I see with an unexplainable faith, strength, and peace because when I gave my life away....I held on to it a lot better than trying it on my own.

This divestiture will be hard to explain to someone who believes that there is nothing different in the way of Jesus vs. doing life at their own leisure. However, it's not your job to make them understand. It's your job to be obedient to faithfully sharing that the way of Jesus is better by testimony of your life and through the testimony of a risen king.

Be faithful to do just that. Trust God to handle the other pieces.

In Christ,

Vince Smith

Rev. Vincent Smith

April Responders Schedule

	Usher Narthex	Monitor	Communion Servers
April 3	Robert Kennedy	Jim Hockensmith	Elder Liturgist: Jim Hockensmith Communion Team: Elizebette Kennedy
April 10	Vacancy	Vacancy	
April 17	Robert Kennedy Elizebette Kennedy	Bill Higgins	
April 24	Robert Kennedy	Vacancy	



Bill & Laverne Willson	4/1
Dirk & Annelize Benade	4/3
Dirk Benade	4/4

FAREWELL TO JIM HOCKENSMITH
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND
FAITHFUL SERVICE TO
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
WE WILL MISS YOU!



First Presbyterian Church

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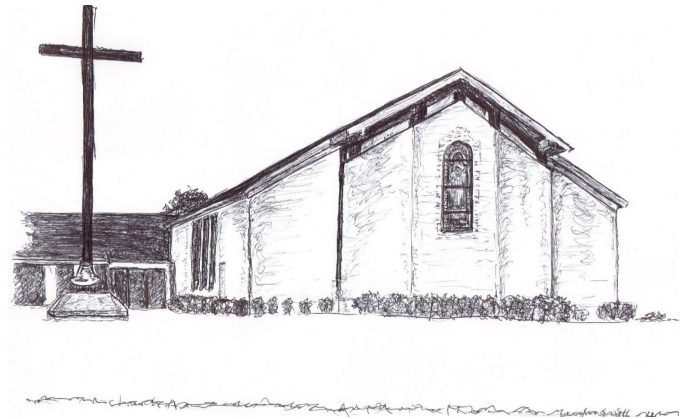
Vince Smith, *Interim Pastor*

Aaron Rogers, *Music Director*

David Berrocal, *Pianist*

Carolyn Sterne, *Administrative Assistant*

Charles Bell, *Sexton*



First Presbyterian Church

357 Windermere Blvd.

Alexandria, LA 71303

Come experience God's love at First Presbyterian Church

Sunday School—9:45 a.m., Worship—11:00 a.m.