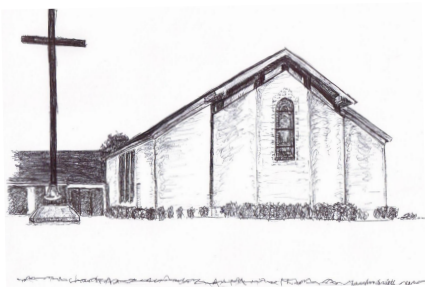


Presby News

MARCH 2023



FROM THE PASTOR . . .

"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." John 3:8

The signs of spring are surrounding us. The March wind is here! With the pollen and the wind, it makes me want to get out and fly a kite in the beautiful spring weather. The trouble is...I can't fly a kite.

When it comes to flying a kite, I seem to be a lot like Charlie Brown. Oh, I have managed to get a kite up in the air a time or two. I remember flying a kite at the beach once with my children. Oh, it was glorious! The black shark-shaped kite flew high along the sandy beach shore. My kite soared along the clouds of that beautiful blue sky. The super long nylon string tethered the kite against the above average winds of the beach. In fact, the wind was so strong that day at the beach, those who know my kite-flying skills tried to rob me of the victory. They said that anyone could fly a kite in wind that strong. I have to say that I agree. The wind that day did all the work. I just got lucky holding the spool of string.

I remember another time I flew a kite. My younger cousins and I got my Planet of the Apes kite flying over PawPaw's garden. Now mind you, PawPaw's garden stretched for nearly a tenth of a mile. It was massive. The kite was flying so high that day. My brother and I used to compete to see who could get his kite higher than the other. We would get the kite to the end of one spool of twine, then tie a second spool to the end so the kite could fly even higher. I can still see that yellow kite flying high in the air with the big gorilla face staring down. TWO spools of twine stretched tight. It was work just to hold the stick where I tied the other end of the twine.

Then, something happened. I don't remember how, but the stick slipped from my hands. Instead of the kite falling to the ground, it began to fly away. Oh, the stick with the twine would fall to the ground for a second, then rise up drifting away from me in 15-20 feet bounces. Well, I started running after the stick to catch my kite. It must have been a hilarious site. I'm running through PawPaw's freshly planted field. Thick mud stuck to my new tennis shoes. You can imagine it, can't you? The thick mud clumping to my shoes; I nearly reach the stick with the twine, and it bounces for another 15-20 feet. I just miss it. The mud caked to my shoes makes it impossible to run faster. I run, grab, miss, run, grab, miss, and run, grab, miss for what seems like miles. The whole time, I'm calling for help from my cousins who are too busy laughing to even hear me. I watch my kite soar closer and closer to the tree line at the back side of PawPaw's garden. I tell you, I am Charlie Brown and those trees were going to eat my kite!

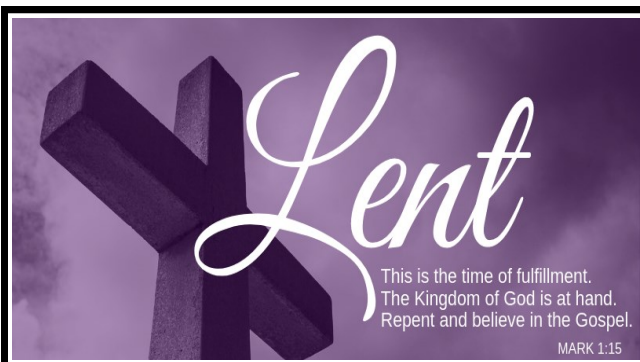
I finally catch the stick. But only with a lunge that had me falling to my knees. That would have been fine. But with my hands on the stick, I fell headlong across those muddy furrows. HEY, I HAD MY KITE! I managed to stand up looking at the muddy mess of my clothes. Then I looked across the garden with the deep foot holes across PawPaw's field. I looked at my shoes. Wow. Just wow. Now I have to walk back through the field, explain my muddy appearance to my mom, and explain the holes in the garden to PawPaw. It's a good thing that I'm the favorite.

When I got back to the yard, I began respooling the twine around the stick to slowly draw my kite back to earth from her heights. Once she was back on the ground, I stored her away in the trunk of our car. That's where we put everything in those days. My kite flying adventure was over. You know, I wonder if my lack of kite-flying skills is rooted in some sort of subconscious self-defense against being mentally scarred by lost or tree-eaten kites. On second thought, who wants to fly a kite anyway! I'd rather go fishing. That reminds me... have I told you about the time I fell out of the boat.

Grace and Peace,
Brother Greg

SPECIAL DATES

March 5	Brookdale Worship Second Sunday of Lent Worship/Communion
March 12	Third Sunday of Lent Daylight Savings Time Begins
March 19	Fourth Sunday of Lent
March 26	Fifth Sunday of Lent



TRADITIONS OF LENT

Sarah Phillips, Contributing Writer, Crosswalk.com

Practicing Lent Traditions

You can benefit from celebrating Lent even if your church does not formally do so. Here are some of the key elements of the Lenten season, along with some of the symbolism that comes with it. Many of these practices can be celebrated both individually and as a community:

Purple: Like Advent, the official color for Lent is purple. Usually, churches that celebrate Lent choose the deepest, darkest shade of purple for this special season. They may also strip their churches bare of some of the usual decorations adorning the walls. Purple is the color of repentance for sins and also symbolizes the state of our souls outside the light of Christ. During this time, pray for those who do not know Christ and for those who have sinned gravely against Him.

Confession: As mentioned above, Lent is a penitential season or expressed sorrow and repentance.. The 40 days are set aside to really examine areas of recurring sin in our lives that prevent us from being conformed to God's Will. A good way to start an examination of conscience is by praying [Psalm 139](#), verse 23-24: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Fasting and Prayer: Fasting is a practice that has really gone by the wayside in many Christian circles. Yet, if done correctly, it can be a powerful time of renewing your relationship with God. Fasting can be found in both the Old Testament and the New, with Moses ([Exodus 34:28](#); [Deuteronomy 9:9,18](#)), Elijah ([1 Kings 19:8](#)), and our Lord ([Matthew 4:2](#)) all participating in 40-day fasts. Fasting is a way of denying ourselves the excesses of life so that we might be more attuned to the Lord's voice. It is also a way of disciplining yourself, strengthening your "spiritual muscles" so to speak so that when temptations arise in life, you are already used to saying "no" to your desires. And finally, fasting is also a way of participating, in a small way, in the sufferings of Christ and can be particularly powerful when accompanied by prayer and confession.

Meditating on Christ's Sacrifice for Mankind: In addition to periodic fasting and prayer, our scriptural meditations typically turn to the salvation offered to us through Christ's suffering. Read Old Testament Scriptures prophesying the suffering of Christ and the New Testament Gospel accounts.

Charity/Almsgiving: A very important element of the Lenten season is becoming aware of not only the suffering and sacrifice of Christ but also to the suffering of others. Between now and Good Friday, choose one way you can increase your giving to those in need. It could be through extra financial offerings, donating goods you no longer need or use to charity, or increasing your personal time commitment to a ministry or cause close to your heart.

Lent is a time when Christians separate from the world; when we find out our faith is not just a feel-good, self-help religion but one that answers the deepest questions of life and eternity. Those who journey through the Lenten season will enter the Easter season with an increased appreciation for who God is and what He has done for us. And the joy of Resurrection, as well as the promises of eternity, will not be soon forgotten.

March Responders Schedule

	Usher Narthex	Monitor	Communion Servers
March 5	Robert Kennedy	Elizebette Kennedy	Communion Team: Bill Higgins & Elizebette Kennedy
March 12	Robert Kennedy	Elizebette Kennedy	
March 19	Robert Kennedy Elizebette Kennedy	Elizebette Kennedy	
March 26	Robert Kennedy	Elizebette Kennedy	



Robert Kennedy	3/7
Brenda Willson	3/16
Roscoe Wilson	3/22
Robert & Elizebette Kennedy	3/28



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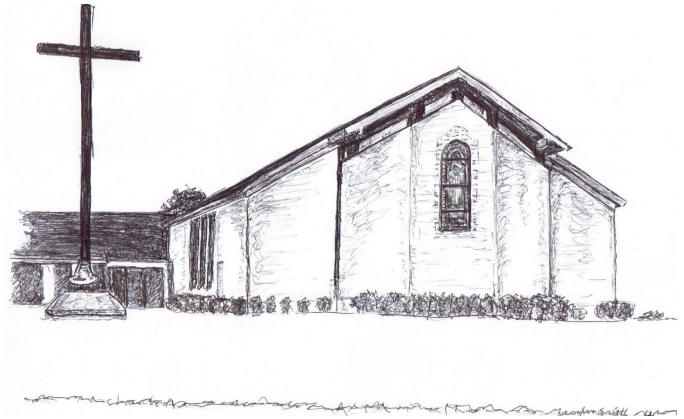
Greg Carroll, *Interim Pastor*

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.