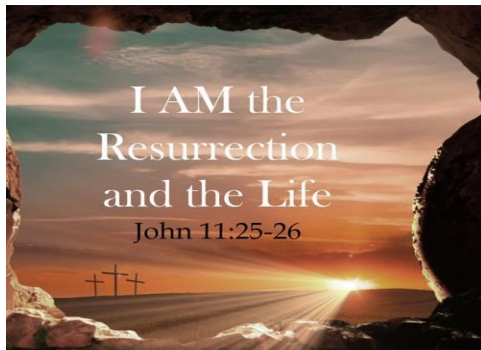


# Women in Ministry Newsletter ~ April 2021



**How does the reality and message of Easter, Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection, reveal God's extreme love for you? Hopefully, this newsletter will help you answer that question for yourself.**

## **Celebrating Christ's Death and Resurrection" by Pastor Ken**

At Easter we celebrate the heart of our Christian faith. We celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on behalf of sinners like you and me. We celebrate the gospel of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom that the prophets desired to see (Matthew 13:16-17) and into which the angels long to look (1 Peter 1:12). Paul described the gospel "as of first importance" (1 Corinthians 15:3). It is crucial for us as Christians to celebrate this, especially in times like this past year when we don't feel like celebrating. I want to encourage us to celebrate Christ's death and resurrection by seeing how our celebration affects various aspects of our lives.

Celebrating this victory of Christ affects how we battle our own sin. Our sin is what causes the struggles in our marriages, our parenting, our jobs, our friendships, etc. Therefore, let us face our sin knowing that it has no longer had power over us. As Pastor John Piper said, "fight your sin like a victor, not a victim".

Christ paid the penalty for sin and defeated the power of sin. By faith in Jesus, we have been united with Christ in His death and in His resurrection (Romans 6:5). As we await the coming of the new heavens and new earth, we still deal with the presence of sin in our lives and in the world. But we deal with it "like a victor, not a victim".

Celebrating this victory of Christ affects how we deal with our struggles, pain, and disappointment. Since we still live in a broken world, then we will deal with tough situations such as broken relationships, sickness, financial struggles, etc. Jesus reminds us of the gospel perspective in John 16:33 where we read "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." As Christians the gospel frees us to be able to celebrate even with tears. We don't have to deny the reality of our pain and suffering, but we can face it with the risen Christ in us through the power of the Holy Spirit. The power of the gospel allows us to live out Romans 12:12 that says, "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."

Celebrating this victory of Christ affects how we deal with our fears. Through Christ's death and resurrection, our two greatest enemies of sin and death have been defeated. Those two great enemies are at the root of our fears in life. Therefore, celebrating the victory of Christ over sin and death is meant to bring us peace in the midst of our fears. Jesus knew that we all battle with fear, which is why He often said, "Fear not" or "Do not fear". As we celebrate Christ's victory, our hearts are filled with the wonder and awe of our God and this brings us the proper fear of the Lord that then brings us Godly wisdom (Proverbs 1:7).

I hope this article has encouraged us all to focus on our celebration of the momentous events of Christ's death and resurrection. Take time to pray and to read God's Word to be reminded of the greatness of the events of that first Resurrection Sunday. That glorious day forever changed the world. Kathy Keller puts it in perspective this way, "We rejoice because God picked up Jesus from the grave and made him the cornerstone of salvation for everyone who believes. In him, therefore, we will live and never die (John. 11:25-27)."

For further study on the implications of Christ's death and resurrection, please read Romans 6-8, 1 Corinthians 15, and 1 Peter 1:3-12.



## Not Just Another Easter! ~ Mrs. Andrea Sartorato, Director of Children's Ministry



You might be wondering how Easter will be this year. We are not “locked” in our homes obeying stay-at-home orders like last year. You might be planning a small lunch celebration after Church worship or a socially

distanced outdoor get together. Regardless of what we plan, it will be an Easter like no other.

Yes! Although we may plan differently than usual, we have the gift to gather together at church to worship in glad adoration and greet one another with “He is risen! He is risen indeed.”

This is why this will be not just ‘another Easter’ — we will be celebrating the glory of Christ yet another Easter! Specifically, as parents and grandparents, we want to strive to make Easter fun and memorable to God’s children. We must emphasize the significance of this day with the hope that they will look forward to Easter every year!

Growing up in Brazil, my sisters and I were always eager for Easter morning. We would get up very early and look for the Easter bunny paw prints on the floor and follow it until we could find the HUGE Chocolate Easter Egg! This is a typical Brazilian Easter festivity for kids, where a little gift is enclosed in a large chocolate egg. I can almost hear, mom and dad saying: “Go ahead and open your chocolate egg; it represents a new life. Jesus is the life, and He is alive!”

It is a challenge to celebrate Easter when bunnies, baseball, and busy schedules compete for precious family time. Believe me, I get it! It is easy to get overwhelmed trying to do so many activities, especially when trying to keep up with what everyone else is doing. So much so that we can forget the true and beautiful meaning of Easter. Many times, what works for my neighbor does not work for me and my family. You know your people! So here’s a tip: Choose one activity and be intentional about getting the true meaning of Easter across in a fun and memorable way to your child.

When I was talking with my youngest son, Matt, about topics for this Easter article, he quickly reminisced on Mrs. Karemy Jacobs’ hugs, kisses, and loving celebrations on Easter. Her words “Jesus is alive! He loves you, Matt!” Those are intentional, simple, and meaningful— exactly what children need to hear.

When I think about Mrs. Mary Taylor carrying Mrs. Karemy’s egg hunt tradition for the past years, I think about people together for a celebration. I love that opportunity of fellowship that fosters the presence of Jesus there, and then later in our homes.

So, dear one, do not be overwhelmed this Easter; do not let a busy schedule keep you from fixing your eyes on Jesus during Holy Week. When you gather in your home, no matter what you decided to do, tell your little ones about the immeasurable riches of the gospel that are accomplished through Christ. Help them to see that knowing, loving, trusting, and celebrating Christ is beautiful! Help them to understand:

1. Who is Christ?
2. Why did He die?
3. Why does it matter that He rose from death?

Let your children see you opening your Bible and share the story of Christ’s death and resurrection! Above it all, have a joyful time making this Easter one like no other! Love to each one of you!

### Here are a few ideas for your Easter; if you do not have one picked out already!

- Easter story cookies. I like this one because it involves baking and Bible verses reading! <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/11317/easter-story-cookies/>
- This is a great reading for you. <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/raising-children-who-hope-in-the-triumph-of-god>
- This is a classic with a twist, for the ones that like crafts! <https://www.faithgateway.com/making-resurrection-eggs-easterstory/>
- Mini Easter Garden, for the ones that enjoy plants and playing with dirt! <https://www.proverbialhomemaker.com/mini-easterresurrection-garden.>

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

Luke 24:30-32



## Imagine it's Monday morning, after Easter...

Our celebration of our Lord at First Presbyterian Church has passed. The Easter baskets are put away, the new clothes are hanging in the closet, a sweet time with family is now a memory and a new week is beginning. We have celebrated the risen Christ and the wonder of His resurrection and the thought of His return.

The disciples who walked with Jesus experienced a very different resurrection. Some had watched our Lord die on the cross while others hid in fear and disbelief. The third day surely was confusing to them. The one that they had hoped was going to redeem Israel had been crucified, dead and buried. They

were downcast and hopeless, but things changed when they had an encounter with the risen Lord.

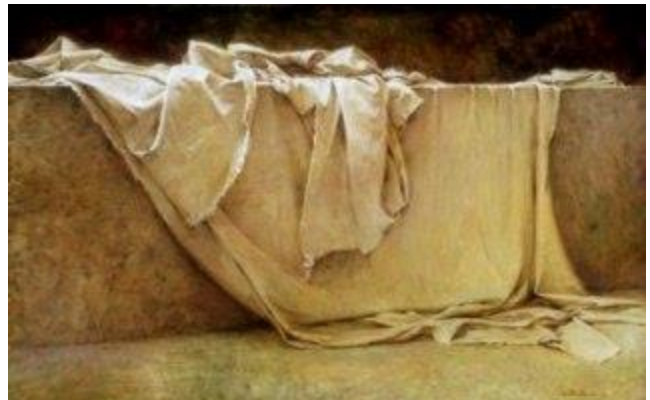
The gospel says that Jesus made a number of appearances after this death. At first in all of these encounters with Jesus, He is not immediately recognized. Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene and the women at the tomb on resurrection morning. He was not recognized until he called "Mary" by name.

On the road to Emmaus he met two travelers on the road. He walked and talked with them but they did not recognize Him until they invited Him in. When he reclined at the table He took the bread, blessed it and broke it with them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. Upon his departure they said to one another "**Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road while He was explaining the Scriptures to us.**" John 24:32. In John 21 while the disciples had been fishing, Jesus prepared breakfast for them on the beach. They did not immediately recognize Him. But when He told them where to cast their nets and when they did, they gathered in a great haul. Then they knew it was Jesus who was with them.

Jesus appeared to Thomas and told him to touch his scarred hand and His side and Jesus said to him "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John 20:26-29

These are just a few of the scriptures where Jesus showed himself to be the risen Lord. In Luke 24, he asks the disciples "Why are you troubled and why are there doubts in your heart?" He knew the pain the disciples must have felt and knew they didn't understand fully what had happened and what was going to happen. Jesus went to great lengths to show Himself to his disciples, so they would no longer have any doubts that He was truly the Risen Savior. Jesus's appearances after this resurrection proves his desire to have an eternal relationship with us. He longs to be with us. His faithfulness is unending and His love is beyond any measurement, and one day He's coming again to take us home to heaven so we can be with him forever.

So, it's Monday... The resurrection is behind us, we know that Jesus has promised us the hope of eternal life. Where does Monday find you? Going about your normal routine or changed by an encounter with Jesus? R. C. Sproul states, "We do not segment our lives, giving some time to God, some to our business or schooling, our clubs or our athletics, while keeping parts to ourselves. The idea is to live all of our lives in the presence of God, under the authority of God, and for the honor and glory of God. The resurrection was God the Father's way of authenticating all of the truths that were declared by Jesus."



**Reflection:** Why would you want to make a growing understanding of the real meaning of Easter a priority for you and those you care about this year? Will your eyes be opened and will your heart burn? These things will happen when you encounter our Lord Jesus. Will you recognize Him in your daily activities?



### ***Announcements:***

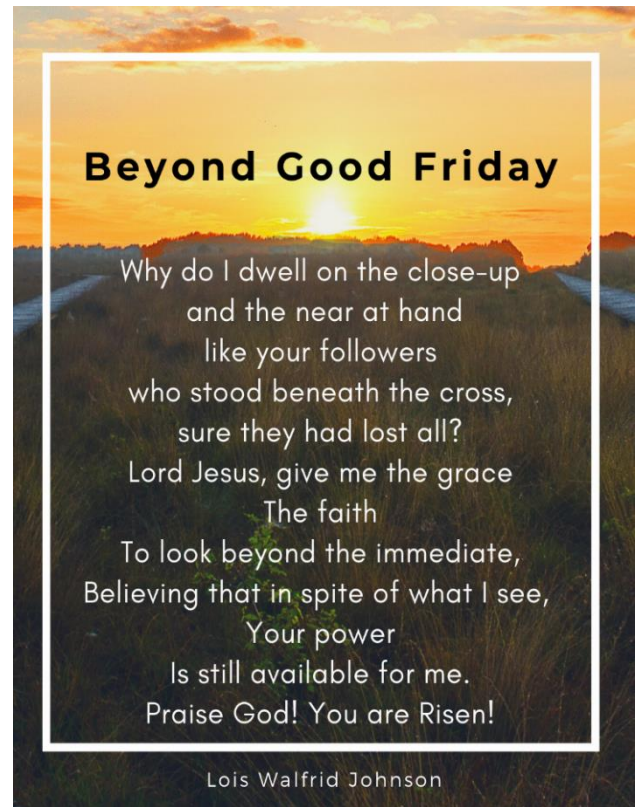
*Would you be interested in being trained to facilitate or teach a small group bible study? Please contact Katey Temple (ktt30161@yahoo.com) or Virginia Saunders (vtsaunders@gmail.com) for more details.*

*A special thank you to Stacey Pardue for being our guest speaker at the "Spring Forward" women's fellowship event. If you would like to re-watch the event, you can do so on the Women in Ministry webpage  
[www.fpcrome.org/ministries/women-in-ministry](http://www.fpcrome.org/ministries/women-in-ministry)*

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### **April Birthdays**

- April 2 – Kelly Gates
- April 3 – Stephanie Stevens
- April 5 – Donna Chadwick
- April 10 – Kathleen Temple
- April 11 – Susan Fincher, Jessica Stansell
- April 12 – Larra Schwartz
- April 13 – Natalie Stegall
- April 14– Wendy Shaw
- April 20 – Emily Katherine Johnson, Nancy Bess Johnson
- April 21 – Robin Sorrow
- April 28 – Sherri Hillesheim



**First Presbyterian**

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