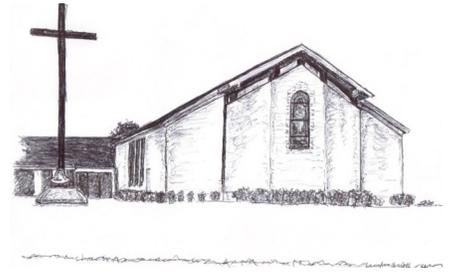


# Presby News

April/May 2014



## FROM THE PASTOR

### DIVINE COMEDY

Robert Short, in "The Gospel According to Peanuts", reminds us that there is a "reason for the Christian faith's close kinship with comedy. Christianity, like comedy, always involves a genuine fall or reversal, that is nevertheless not ultimately serious or final. This is why the story of Creation, Fall, and the subsequent Redemption of all men is finally a 'Divine Comedy'."

Charles Schultz illustrates this when Charlie Brown's kite falls and smashes to the ground. He screams, "I'll never be able to get that kite into the air! Never, never, never!"

Consequently, we cannot help but laugh when we see Snoopy flying the same kite from the top of his doghouse comfortably lying on his back. What this means is that what we as weak and frequently frustrated humans could never, never, never accomplish what has been done for us by Jesus in His perfect and costly sacrifice for our redemption.

As we move through the Lenten Season toward our Maundy Thursday Service and the celebration of Easter Resurrection, let us remember what Graham Green has so beautifully and forcibly expressed in "The Heart of the Matter." He quotes the following lines by Rilke, Bohemian-Austrian poet and novelist

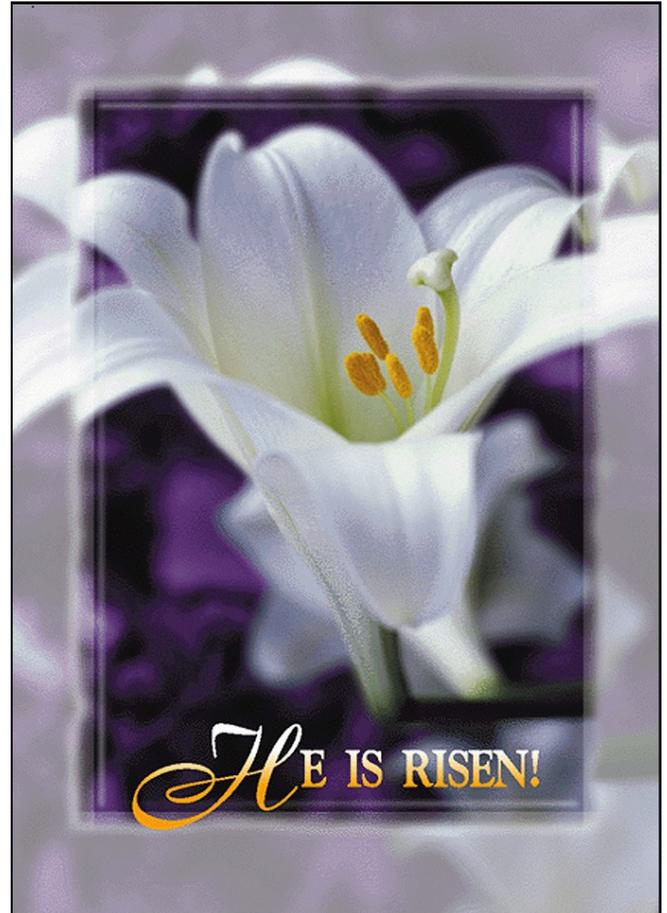
"We are falling. This hand is falling too--all  
have this falling sickness none withstanding.  
And yet there's always One whose gentle  
hand this universal falling can't fall through."

Whether it is the Three Stooges, Charlie Chaplin or a contemporary comic's standup routine, I love to laugh at myself and my stumbling, bumbling efforts to "fly my kite" even when it looks like it will never, never fly. Why do I love to laugh? I love to laugh because laughter and joy are, for me, an expression of prayer and praise. They remind me that in Jesus I am "working with a net" and there is One through whose hand I can never fall. The Hebrew Poet, in Psalm 8: 3-4, marvels:

"I look up at your macro-skies, dark and enormous,  
your handmade sky jewelry,  
Moon and stars mounted in their settings.  
Then I look at my micro-self and wonder (and  
laugh?),  
Why do you bother with us?  
Why take a second look our way?"

(The Message, Eugene Peterson)

In one comic strip, Charlie Brown laments as he speaks to Lucy: "You know what I think? I think that there must be a tiny star out there that is MY star. And as I am alone here on earth among millions of people that my tiny star is out there among millions and millions of stars. Does that



### SPECIAL DATES

- Fifth Sunday in Lent, April 6
- Palm/Passion Sunday, April 13
- Holy Week, April 13-19
- Maundy/Holy Thursday, April 17
- Good Friday, April 18
- Holy Saturday, April 19
- Easter Sunday, April 20
- Administrative Professionals Day, April 23
- National Day of Prayer, May 1, 2014
- Christian Family Week, May 5-11, 2014
- Mother's Day, May 11, 2014
- Armed Forces Day, May 17, 2014
- Victoria Day (Canada), May 19, 2014
- Memorial Day, May 26, 2014
- Ascension of the Lord, May 29, 2014

make any sense, Lucy? Do you think it means anything?" Lucy, consistently in character, responds: "Certainly. It means you are cracking up, Charlie Brown!"

In a world that has lost its way where many people are really "cracking up," it would seem preferable, to me, to be able to "crack up" with laughter and joy knowing that One much greater than we, through whose hand we can never fall, sees and cares for us. Or as Peterson

has so richly stated it, the God of the macro stars and skies sees and cares for the micro-self of our existence. Like Larry, Curley and Moe, we can take the occasional pie in the face. Like Chaplin, we can stumble over our own over-sized shoes, get up, dust ourselves off and move on in our journey. Or with the Apostle Paul we can say we are knocked down by life but never knocked out.

This is the Easter message and it makes me want to laugh for joy.

## Minutes of Called Session Meeting First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana February 16, 2014

The Session met in the church library, 357 Windermere Boulevard, Alexandria, Louisiana. The meeting was called to order and opened with prayer by Reverend Ron Sutto, General Presbyter and Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of South Louisiana.

Members Present: John Allen, Bill Higgins, Jim Hockensmith and Jack Ready

Member Excused: Elizebette Kennedy (in South Africa)

A quorum was present.

**Purpose of Called Meeting:** To receive new members  
After answering the questions concerning their faith by the

moderator, the following motion was made:

*That Reverend Doyle Bailey and Barbara Bailey be accepted into membership of First Presbyterian Church by affirmation of faith.*

Moved: Jim Hockensmith                      Seconded: Jack Ready  
Motion: Carried Unanimously

The meeting adjourned with prayer after the Stated Session Meeting following worship service.

Respectfully submitted:  
Jim Hockensmith, Clerk

### Do "eustress" enough?

Stress generally isn't viewed as positive, but psychologists speak of both *distress* and *eustress*. Eustress is a level of discomfort not so high as to make us give up but high enough to urge us forward.

Winemakers know that the best wine comes from stressed grapevines, planted in rocky soil and given only enough water to prompt the roots to stretch downward to find more moisture. People, too, grow strong when pushed to work hard, not when handed everything we want or need. Good parents know this, as does our good and gracious God.

When we're struggling and stressed, God hasn't abandoned us, but he may be practicing the vinedresser's tough love to help us grow. Perhaps the Spirit allowed the Bible to be difficult in places so we'd work to learn what it means. Perhaps God lets questions challenge our faith so we'll stretch to find answers. Maybe God will transform what seems distressing into *eustress* — making us the very best we can be.

### Grin and bear it

A preacher decided to skip worship services one Sunday and head to the hills to do some bear hunting instead. As the man rounded a corner, he collided with a huge bear and tumbled down the mountain, losing his rifle and breaking both legs in the process. The bear charged toward him, but the preacher couldn't move.



"Oh, Lord," he prayed, "I'm so sorry for skipping church today. Please forgive me and grant me just one wish: Please turn that bear into a Christian!"

Instantly, the bear screeched to a halt, fell to its knees, clasped its front paws together and began praying aloud at the preacher's feet.

"Dear Lord," the bear said, "bless this food I am about to receive. Amen."



**Minutes of Stated Session Meeting**  
**First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana**  
**January 20, 2014**

The Session met in the church library, 357 Windermere Boulevard, Alexandria, Louisiana. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Elder Jim Hockensmith. Ron Sutto joined the meeting at 6:10 p.m. and presided.

Members Present: Jim Hockensmith, Bill Higgins, Elizebette Kennedy

Treasurer Present: Jim Smolenski was out of town

Elders Excused: Jack Ready recovering from surgery, John Allen arrived after meeting adjourned

Guests Present: Doyle Bailey, FPC Temporary Stated Supply Pastor

A quorum was present.

**Finance Report:**

The financial statements for December, 2013, were distributed to the Session. The December, 2013, bank statements were reviewed and initialed by Session members.

**Motion:** That Session approve the December, 2013, Financial Reports.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith      Seconded: Bill Higgins  
Motion: Carried

**Approval of Minutes:**

The Session members reviewed the minutes for the December 9, 2013 Stated Meeting of the Session.

**Motion:** That the Session approve the minutes for the December 9, 2013 Stated Meeting of the Session.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith      Seconded: Bill Higgins  
Motion: Carried

**Clerk's Report:**

Holy Communion was served on Sunday, January 5, 2014, during worship.

Holy Communion was served on Sunday, January 5, 2014, at Emeritus.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS AND SESSION ACTIONS**

**Congregational Life Report:**

The Session discussed the cook book. The general consensus was that the cook book should not be sold but could serve as a community project with people making a voluntary donation to recover cost.

**Worship and Evangelism Report:** Presented by Jim Hockensmith

Jim Hockensmith reported on the new system for counting the offering each Sunday. He stated that the offering is now counted immediately following the worship service, and, after counting, the Monitor for that week deposits the offering in the Capital One night deposit.

Jim Hockensmith also stated that a Congregational Meeting needs to be held to fill the vacancies left by Brandi Woolam on the Session, Church Nominating Committee and Pastor Nominating Committee.

**Property Report - No Report**

**Pastor's/Moderator Report:** Presented by Doyle Bailey, Temporary Stated Supply

Rev. Bailey requested approval of a housing allowance for 2014 for tax purposes (see attached).

**Motion:** That the Session approve Rev. Bailey's request for a housing allowance for 2014 for tax purposes.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith      Seconded: Elizebette Kennedy  
Motion: Carried

Wedding Venues:

1. Rev. Bailey requested the church buy a full length mirror for brides using the church facilities.
2. Consensus from Session Members was that during weddings the piano and baptismal font not be moved.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**2014 Budget**

Request from Linda Pearce, President, Eta State Kappa Kappa Iota Sorority to use the church facilities on Saturday, February 22, 2014 for the organization's state business meeting from 7:45 am to 2:00 pm. They would need use of the fellowship hall, the kitchen and 4 smaller rooms.

**Motion:** That the Session approve Eta State Kappa Kappa Iota Sorority's request to use FPC on Saturday, February 22, 2014.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith      Seconded: Elizebette Kennedy  
Motion: Carried

**NEW BUSINESS:**

2013 Statistical Report Due to PSL. Will send in online prior to deadline.

Session will ask Roger Best to go to Presbytery Meeting, Tuesday, February 18 at University Presbyterian Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

**Motion:** That Roger Best represent FPC at the February 18 Presbytery Meeting in Baton Rouge.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith      Seconded: Bill Higgins  
Motion: Carried

**Motion:** That the Stated Session Meeting be adjourned.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith      Seconded: Elizebette Kennedy  
Motion: Carried

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm with a closing prayer by Ron Sutto. The next Stated Meeting of the Session will be **Monday, February 17, 2014.** (Addendum: The February meeting was changed to **Sunday, February 16, 2014.**)

Respectfully submitted:

Elizebette Kennedy, Acting Clerk of Session



**Minutes of Stated Session Meeting  
First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana  
February 16, 2014**

The Session met in the church library, 357 Windermere Boulevard, Alexandria, Louisiana. The meeting was called to order following the Sunday morning worship service by Ron Sutto, General Presbyter and Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of South Louisiana.

Members Present: John Allen, Debbe Clegg, Bill Higgins, Jim Hockensmith, Jack Ready

Treasurer Present: Jim Smolenski was out of town

Elders Excused: Elizebette Kennedy (in South Africa)

Guests Present: Doyle Bailey, FPC Temporary Stated Supply Pastor

A quorum was present.

**Finance Report:**

The financial statements for January, 2014, were distributed to the Session. The January, 2014, bank statements were reviewed and initialed by Session members.

Motion: That Session approve the January, 2014, Financial Reports.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith                      Seconded: Bill Higgins  
Motion: Carried

**Approval of Minutes:**

The Session members reviewed the minutes for the January 20, 2014 Stated Meeting of the Session.

Motion: That the Session approve the minutes for the January 20, 2014 Stated Meeting of the Session.

Moved: Bill Higgins                      Seconded: Jim Hockensmith  
Motion: Carried

**Clerk's Report:**

Holy Communion was served on Sunday, February 2, 2014 during worship.

Holy Communion was served on Sunday, February 2, 2014 at Emeritus - (16 residents, 4 church members present: Roger Best, Judy Ready, Doyle Bailey, Barbara Bailey)

Motion: That the Clerk's report be closed by common consent.

The motion was approved unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS AND SESSION ACTIONS**

**Congregational Life/Christian Education Report:**

John Allen referred the Session members to the minutes of the February 5 committee meeting. He asked if the church would pay for the candy for the Easter Egg Hunt.

Motion: That the church pay for the candy for the Easter Egg Hunt.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith                      Seconded: Bill Higgins  
Motion: Carried

**Worship and Evangelism Report: No Report**

**Personnel Report:** Presented by Bill Higgins

Bill Higgins reported that Nursery Worker Delores McDaniel has agreed to the proposal presented to the Session in January. She will obtain a doctor's release as requested and she has been placed on call as needed for a six-month period.

**Property Report: No Report**

**Pastor's/Moderator Report: No Report**

**Old Business:**

Motion: That the 2014 Budget be accepted with the option that the Session may allocate funds as needed.

Moved: Jack Ready                              Seconded: Bill Higgins  
Motion: Carried

**New Business: None**

Motion: That the Stated Session Meeting be adjourned.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith                      Seconded: Jack Ready  
Motion: Carried

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm with a closing prayer by Reverend Bailey. The next Stated Meeting of the Session will be **Monday, March 17, 2014.**

Respectfully submitted:

Jim Hockensmith, Clerk



From a church email in Patchogue, New York:

~~Easter Egg Hunt this Sunday.~~  
We'll have snakes and juice for the children.  
All ages welcome

These *snacks* sure sound tempting!



From a newsletter in Aurora, Colorado:

~~Children's Page~~  
Kid's Are Smart!  
Help maintain reading skills during the

Let's hope those *kids* learned about punctuation.

**Minutes of Congregational Meeting**  
**First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana**  
**February 16, 2014**

The meeting was called to order and moderated by Reverend Ron Sutto, General Presbyter and Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of South Louisiana.

Jim Hockensmith was designated clerk for the meeting.

A quorum was present.

**Purpose of the Meeting:**

To elect a member to the Pastor Nominating Committee, to elect a member to the Church Nominating Committee, and to elect an elder for a one-year term.

**Motion:** That Bill Higgins be elected to the Pastor Nominating Committee.

Moved: John Allen                      Seconded: Jack Ready  
Motion: Carried Unanimously

**Motion:** That Elizebette Kennedy be elected to the Church Nominating Committee.

Moved: Ed Ware                      Seconded: Bill Higgins  
Motion: Carried Unanimously

**Motion:** That Debbe Clegg be elected to fill a one-year vacancy on the Session.

Moved: Ed Ware                      Seconded: Bill Higgins  
Motion: Carried Unanimously

There being no further business, the Congregational Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Jim Hockensmith, Clerk

**Minutes of Congregational Meeting**  
**First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana**  
**March 9, 2014**

The meeting was called to order and moderated by Pastor Jane Conerly from the Woodland Presbyterian Church.

A quorum was declared present.

**Purpose of the Meeting:**

To ordain and install elder candidate Debbe Clegg.

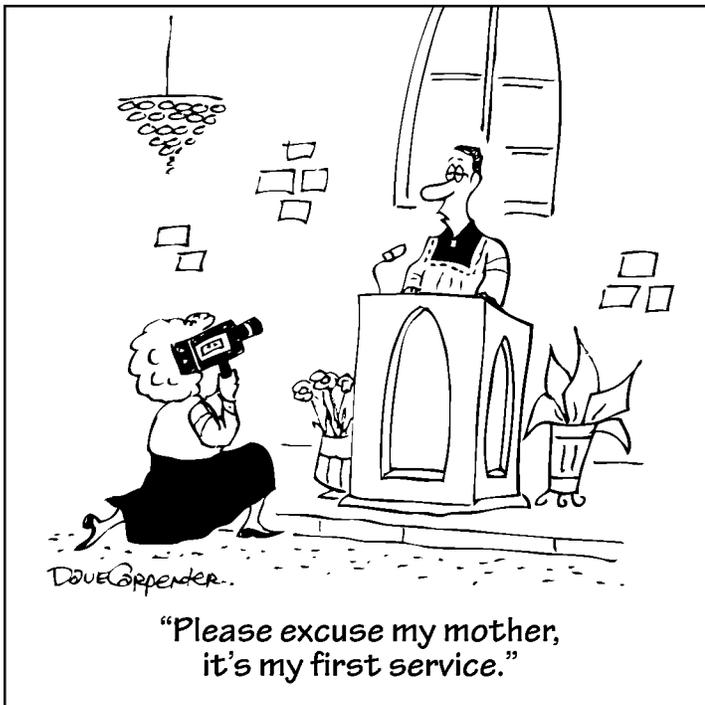
Pastor Conerly asked the instructional questions of Debbe Clegg, which were

all answered in the affirmative. Elder Jack Ready asked the questions of the congregation.

Installation and ordination was concluded by the laying on of hands by the current elders.

The meeting was closed with prayer by elder Jack Ready.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Jim Hockensmith, Acting Clerk





In case you don't recognize these folks, they are Marcelle Slaughter, Aaron Allen and Allen Doyle, the popular Southern Plainsmen gospel singers. FPC has been fortunate enough to schedule them for a concert at our church on September 20. More information will be forthcoming as the date draws nearer.

### Scarred — for eternity



If God raised Jesus from the dead, why didn't God fix him up? Why scars? Why the print of nails that you could feel with your fingers? Can it be that the gospel ... is saying to us in our waiting: "You will not see Jesus Christ unless you see the wounds"? Somehow we must understand that the resurrected Christ is forever the wounded Christ. Living, but never fixed up. Not bound by death, yet scarred for eternity.

The deaf have a sign for Jesus. Quickly they make this sign many times during their worship: the middle finger of each hand is placed into the palm of the other. Jesus, the one with wounded hands. And when they touch the place, they remember. They hear the name in their own flesh.

—John Vannorsdall

### He is risen!

W.E. Sangster (1900-1960), a well-known pastor in England, contracted a progressive, incurable muscle disease. He lost the ability to move his legs, and eventually his voice faded away. Because Sangster wanted to continue serving God even though he could no longer preach, he became a prolific writer and organized prayer cells throughout England.

On Easter morning, shortly before his death, Sangster wrote a note to his daughter in an unsteady hand. "It is terrible to wake up on Easter morning and have no voice to shout, 'He is risen!'" he wrote. "But it would be still more terrible to have a voice and not want to shout."

### Holy Saturday

What's compelling about Holy Saturday for me is that Jesus' disciples surely descended into their own kind of hell — one to which anyone who has lost a loved one to death can relate. Death's finality and wrenching silence strike fear in us. The silence of Holy Saturday reminds us powerfully that death isn't something to be circumvented or avoided. The truth is that we need to go through a Saturday of death, recognizing its power, before we can realize the power of a Sunday of resurrection, when death is defeated.

—Bob Kaylor, *Homiletics*

### The peacock's symbolism

The beautiful peacock is likely one of the lesser-known Christian symbols. Based on an ancient myth that its flesh doesn't decay after death, early Christians appropriated the bird as a symbol of immortality. The molting of its tail feathers each year to be replaced with supposedly more beautiful ones led to use of the peacock as a sign of resurrection and glorification.



Additionally, the eye-like pattern in the peacock's tail feathers made it a symbol of conscience and of God, who sees all. However, the peacock also represents arrogance as it struts to show off its plumage. During the Baroque period, the peacock was often part of artwork at the 10th Station of the Cross, depicting Jesus stripped of his clothing—atonement, according to some teachings, specifically for our sin of vanity.

Early Christians believed peacocks shriek when they catch sight of their feet, which they consider ugly. Christians took this as a reminder that we, too, should lament our spiritual imperfections that detract from the beauty of life lived in Christ.

### +Christian Symbol+

#### Palms

When Jesus entered Jerusalem days before his death, crowds welcomed him by waving palm branches, which were common symbols of victory and rejoicing. Thus churches continue to use them in remembrance of that occasion, knowing that Jesus' crucifixion was ultimately his triumph over sin and death. As early as Leviticus 23:40, God commanded Israel to use palms in a festival of rejoicing. In Revelation 7:9-10, Christian martyrs carry palm branches as they praise the Lamb before the throne of God.



# Responders Schedule

	Usher Narthex	Greeter Front Door	Monitor	Communion Servers
<b>Apr 6</b>	Ben Yang Sulin Best (Oct-May) Helen McDaniel (May-Oct)	2 Vacancies	Jim Hockensmith	John Allen Debbe Clegg Vacancy
<b>Apr 13</b>	Jim Huffman Stephanie Huffman	John Allen Liz Magee	Dirk Benade	
<b>Apr 20</b>	Bob Kennedy Elizabette Kennedy	Bill Higgins Martha Higgins	Roger Best (Oct-May) Vacancy (May-Oct)	
<b>Apr 27</b>	Jim Hockensmith John Allen	Mike Vickers Pat Turpin	Jim Smolenski	
<b>May 4</b>	Ben Yang Sulin Best (Oct-May) Helen McDaniel (May-Oct)	2 Vacancies	Jim Hockensmith	Jack Ready Wynn Ware Vacancy
<b>May 11</b>	Jim Huffman Stephanie Huffman	John Allen Liz Magee	Dirk Benade	
<b>May 18</b>	Bob Kennedy Elizabette Kennedy	Bill Higgins Martha Higgins	Roger Best (Oct-May) Vacancy (May-Oct)	
<b>May 25</b>	Jim Hockensmith John Allen	Mike Vickers Pat Turpin	Jim Smolenski	

## Angels.....As Explained By Children.

I only know the names of two angels, Hark and Harold.

\* Gregory, age 5

Everybody's got it all wrong. > Angels don't wear halos anymore. I forget why, but scientists are working on it

\* Olive, age 9

It's not easy to become an angel! First, you die. > Then you go to Heaven, and then there's still the flight training to go through. And then you got to agree to wear those angel clothes.

\* Matthew, age 9

Angels work for God and watch over kids when God has to go do something else.

\* Mitchell, age 7

My guardian angel helps me with math, but he's not much good for science.

\* Henry, age 8

Angels don't eat, but they drink milk from Holy Cows!!!

\* Jack, age 6

Angels talk all the way while they're flying you up to heaven. The main subject is where you went wrong before you got dead.

\* Daniel, age 9

When an angel gets mad, he takes a deep breath and counts to ten. And when he lets out his breath again, somewhere there's a tornado.

\* Reagan, age 10

> Angels have a lot to do and they keep very busy. If you lose a tooth, an angel comes in through your window and leaves money under your pillow. Then when it gets cold, angels go south for the winter.

\* Sara, age 6



Angels live in cloud houses made by God and his Son, who's a very good carpenter.

\* Jared, age 8

All angels are girls because they gotta wear dresses and boys didn't go for it.

\* Antonio, age 9

My angel is my grandma who died last year. She got a big head start on helping me while she was still down here on earth.

\* Ashley ~ age 9

Some of the angels are in charge of helping heal sick animals and pets. And if they don't make the animals get better, they help the child get over it.

\* Vicki, age 8

What I don't get about angels is why, when someone is in love, they shoot arrows at them.

\* Sarah, age 7

### Heavenly thoughts

What is heaven going to be like? Just as there is a mystery to hell, so there is a mystery to heaven. Yet I believe the Bible teaches that heaven is a literal place. Is it one of the stars? I don't know. I can't even speculate. The Bible doesn't inform us.



I believe that out there in space where there are one thousand million galaxies, each a hundred thousand light years or more in diameter, God can find some place to put us in heaven. I'm not worried about where it is. I know it is going to be where Jesus is.

—Billy Graham

### Mother and Child"

"I love you,"  
said a great mother.  
"I love you for what you are,  
knowing so well what you are.  
And I love you more yet, child,  
deeper yet than ever, child,  
for what you are going to be,  
knowing so well you are going far,  
knowing your great works are ahead,  
ahead and beyond,  
yonder and far over yet."

—Carl Sandburg



### A 20th-century martyr

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was born in Germany to parents who rarely took their children to church. When, at age 14, he declared his intent to become a



theologian and pastor, his parents were dismayed. According to Mark Devine in *Bonhoeffer Speaks Today*, Dietrich's brother called the church a "poor, feeble, boring, petty, bourgeois institution" — to which Dietrich replied, "If what you say is true, I shall reform it!"

At 21, Bonhoeffer earned a doctorate in theology. Too young for ordination, he attended Union Theological Seminary in New York and gained sympathy for oppressed people. Bonhoeffer returned to Germany and was ordained at age 25.

Opposed to Hitler's rule from its start, Bonhoeffer helped form the Confessing Church in resistance to Nazi persecution of Jews. He was arrested in 1943 and hanged in April 1945, only weeks before Germany's surrender.

Shortly before his death, Bonhoeffer famously declared: "This is the end — for me the beginning of life."

### Daffodil hope

In Lisa Genova's novel *Love Anthony*, Olivia lives on Nantucket Island, where winter is long but daffodils bloom even while it's still cold. In one scene, she watches the flowers "shivering in the wind, impossibly bright and fragile and brave against the cold grayness."



Struggling with deep grief, Olivia finds hope in the bright yellow blooms after a long, bleak winter. She embraces the daffodil as a sign that summer will come again — and that "life will return to her as well."

In Christ, God gives us hope that sometimes appears vibrant against the grayness of earthly life. We cling to it because we've seen the promise made good before — winter yielding to summer, a new beginning granted — and we trust that new life will return to us, as well.

## CELEBRATIONS

- Apr 1 - Will Smolenski
- Apr 4 - Dirk Benade
- Apr 15 - John Allen
- Apr 27 - Kathleen McCurry
- Apr 27 - Christopher Tyler
- May 6 - Jeff Huffman
- May 15 - Jace Torres
- May 28 - Debbe Clegg



- Apr 1 - Bill & Laverne Willson
- Apr 3 - Dirk & Annelize Benade
- Apr 11—Ed & Barbara Ware

## Women of valor

In *A Year of Biblical Womanhood* (Thomas Nelson), Rachel Held Evans explores the concept of the Proverbs 31 woman, whose character is described as noble or virtuous. Many scholars say the most accurate translation of the Hebrew phrase *eshet chayil* is actually the “valorous woman.”

To many modern-day women, Proverbs 31 seems like an impossible-to-meet job description. But Evans says that shouldn’t be the case. “The woman of Proverbs 31 is not some ideal that exists out there; she is present in each one of us when we do even the smallest things with valor,” she writes. “Like any good poem, the purpose of this one is to draw attention to the often-overlooked glory of the everyday.”

To affirm the females in her life, Evans started calling them “women of valor.” What an honoring way to bless someone’s day!

## Holy homophones!

Do you remember learning homophones in school? We enjoy hearing our grade-schooler make the connections. Every once in a while, he hears one — say, *chilly* — and announces, “Hey! That’s a homophone of the kind of chili we eat!”

Stuck at home one Sunday morning, I listened to a local worship service on the radio. When the pastor prayed, “O Lord God, reign ...” my brain — apparently due to the same son’s horse-riding lessons — perceived “rein.” In the fraction of a second before the pastor’s next word, I assumed he’d say “us in”; instead, he said “in us.”

Ah, I realized, his phrase was “reign in us,” not “rein us in.” But sometimes God has to do both: In order to reign in us fully as King of our lives, God must rein in our tendency to wander away from him. Only then can we sense the peace that comes from Christ alone *raining* down on us! (Aren’t homophones fun?!)

—Heidi Mann

## Be a praying parent

Prayer is the saucer into which parental fears are poured to cool. ... Each time a parent prays, Christ responds. His big message to moms and dads? Bring your children to me.

—Max Lucado, *Fearless*

“Behold ... the spring is come; the earth has gladly received the embraces of the sun, and we shall soon see the results of their love!”

—Sitting Bull

## Celebrating Mom

In spring 2013, a young man named Aba Atlas wanted to do something special for his birthday, so he gave his *mom* a present — and made a video about the gift and its beloved recipient. (Locate it on YouTube by searching for “iProjectAtlas, Dear Mother.”)

For years, Aba’s mother had worked long hours outside the home and then cared for her kids each evening. She’d bought a house so her children would always have a place to call home, yet the [mortgage](#) caused her great stress. Working at a \$30,000/year position, Aba saved enough money to pay off his mom’s mortgage and, on his birthday, presented her with a check. According to a caption in the video, her response was “Wow x 9000.”

“I want to celebrate my life by celebrating the woman who gave me life,” Aba says.

## Beauty in brokenness

Leonard Sweet, author of *Strong in the Broken Places*, describes a style of Japanese pottery called kintsukuroi. It’s the art of repairing pottery with gold or silver lacquer, leaving the piece more beautiful for having been broken.



God is like a kintsukuroi potter, healing and staying near to the brokenhearted (see Psalm 34:18; 51:17; and 147:3). Instead of ashes, mourning and despair, God provides “a crown of beauty,” “the oil of joy” and “a garment of praise” (Isaiah 61:3, NIV).

Although earthly brokenness brings pain, the Master Creator can turn it into something amazing that glorifies him. When life seems to fall apart, remember that our powerful God can make you more beautiful for having been broken.

## Why we celebrate

Jesus is a redeemer, a restorer in every way. His day on the cross looked like a colossal failure, but it was his finest moment. He launched a kingdom where the least will be the greatest and the last will be first, where the poor will be comforted and the meek will inherit the earth. Jesus brought together the homeless with the privileged and said, “You’re all poor, and you’re all beautiful.”

The cross leveled the playing field, and no earthly distinction is valid anymore. There is a new “us” — people rescued by the Passover Lamb, adopted into his family and transformed into saints. It is the most epic miracle in history. That is why we celebrate.

# Youth Page

## Blooming Button Flowers

For Mother's Day, add a special touch to any houseplant with this easy craft.



### What you need:

- A small houseplant with leaves
- Colorful buttons of various sizes
- Green 26-gauge floral wire
- Wire cutters

### What you do:

1. Stack three buttons from largest to smallest, with the smallest on top. Align the button holes.
2. Cut 8 inches of wire. Thread it up through one hole of the stacked buttons and back down through another hole.
3. Twist the wire just below the bottom side of the button stack to secure it.
4. Insert the "flower" in the plant's soil and repeat the process.
5. Present this to Mom and wish her a happy Mother's Day!



## Mothers in the Bible

Children have always had a special place in their mother's heart.

Directions: First, cover up the second column and see if you can name some of the mothers' children from the Bible. Then write the circled letters on the correct lines below to complete Proverbs 23:25, NIV.

### MOTHERS

Eve<sup>31</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Sarah<sup>25</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Rebekah<sup>7</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Rachel<sup>13</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Leah<sup>12</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Zilpah ..... bore .....  
 Bilhah<sup>34</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Jochebed<sup>19</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Naomi<sup>2</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Ruth<sup>14</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Hannah<sup>26</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Bathsheba ..... bore .....  
 Elizabeth<sup>10</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Mary<sup>3</sup> ..... bore .....  
 Eunice<sup>6</sup> ..... bore .....

### CHILDREN

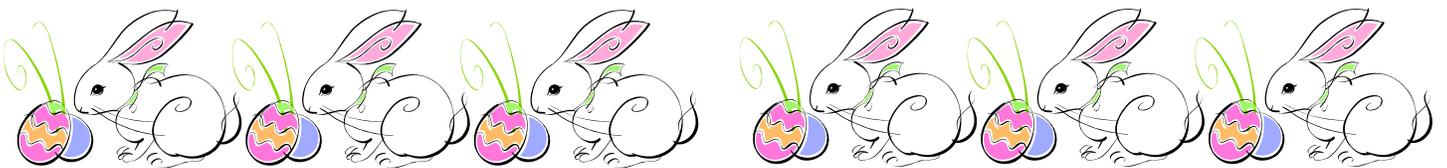
Cain, Abel<sup>25</sup> and Seth<sup>11</sup>  
 Isaac<sup>18</sup>  
 Jacob and Esau<sup>15</sup>  
 Benjamin and Joseph<sup>41</sup>  
 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah,  
 Issachar, Zebulun and Dinah<sup>30</sup>  
 Gad and Asher<sup>39</sup>  
 Dan and Naphtali<sup>38</sup>  
 Moses<sup>29</sup>  
 Mahlon and Kilion<sup>32</sup>  
 Obed<sup>5</sup>  
 Samuel<sup>21</sup>  
 Solomon<sup>42</sup>  
 John the Baptist<sup>37</sup>  
 Jesus<sup>9</sup>  
 Timothy<sup>4</sup>



“ \_\_\_\_\_ ;  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20  
 \_\_\_\_\_ W \_\_\_\_\_  
 21 22 3 23 24 25 \_\_\_\_\_ 26 27 28 29 30 31 4 32 33  
 \_\_\_\_\_ f \_\_\_\_\_ !”  
 34 35 36 37 38 \_\_\_\_\_ 39 31 41 42 3 43 44

PROVERBS 23:25, NIV

Answer: "May your ... mother rejoice; may she who gave you birth be joyful!" Proverbs 23:25, NIV



## "JUDAS ASPARAGUS":

(This is amazing and should bring tears of laughter to your eyes. I wonder how often we take for granted that children understand what we are teaching?)

A child was asked to write a book report on the entire Bible. Here is what was written:

### *The Children's Bible in a Nutshell*

In the beginning, which occurred near the start, there was nothing but God, darkness, and some gas. The Bible says, 'The Lord thy God is one,' but I think He must be a lot older than that. Anyway, God said, 'Give me a light!' and someone did.

Then God made the world.

He split the Adam and made Eve. Adam and Eve were naked, but they weren't embarrassed because mirrors hadn't been invented yet. Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating one bad apple, so they were driven from the Garden of Eden.....Not sure what they were driven in though, because they didn't have cars.

Adam and Eve had a son, Cain, who hated his brother as long as he was Abel.

Pretty soon all of the early people died off, except for Methuselah, who lived to be like a million or something.

One of the next important people was Noah, who was a good guy, but one of his kids was kind of a Ham. Noah built a large boat and put his family and some animals on it. He asked some other people to join him, but they said they would have to take a rain check.

After Noah came Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob was more famous than his brother, Esau, because Esau sold Jacob his birthmark in exchange for some pot roast. Jacob had a son named Joseph who wore a really loud sports coat.

Another important Bible guy is Moses, whose real name was Charlton Heston. Moses led the Israel Lights out of Egypt and away from the evil Pharaoh after God sent ten plagues on Pharaoh's people. These plagues included frogs, mice, lice, bowels, and no cable.

God fed the Israel Lights every day with manicotti. Then he gave them His Top Ten Commandments. These include: don't lie, cheat, smoke, dance, or covet your neighbor's stuff.

Oh, yeah, I just thought of one more: Humor thy father and thy mother.

One of Moses' best helpers was Joshua who was the first Bible guy to use spies. Joshua fought the battle of Geritol and the fence fell over on the town.

After Joshua came David. He got to be king by killing a giant with a slingshot. He had a son named Solomon who had about 300 wives and 500 porcupines. My teacher says he was wise, but that doesn't sound very wise to me.

After Solomon there were a bunch of major league prophets. One of these was Jonah, who was swallowed by a big whale and then barfed up on the shore.

There were also some minor league prophets, but I guess we don't have to worry about them.

After the Old Testament came the New Testament. Jesus is the star of The New Testament. He was born in Bethlehem in a barn. (I wish I had been born in a barn too, because my mom is always saying to me, 'Close the door! Were you born in a barn?' It would be nice to say, 'As a matter of fact, I was.')

During His life, Jesus had many arguments with sinners like the Pharisees and the Republicans.

Jesus also had twelve opossums. The worst one was Judas Asparagus. Judas was so evil that they named a terrible vegetable after him.

Jesus was a great man. He healed many leopards and even preached to some Germans on the Mount.

But the Republicans and all those guys put Jesus on trial before Pontius the Pilot. Pilot didn't stick up for Jesus. He just washed his hands instead.

Anyways, Jesus died for our sins, then came back to life again. He went up to Heaven but will be back at the end of the Aluminium. His return is foretold in the book of Revolution.



# First Presbyterian Church

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Scott Laborde, *Pianist*

Delores McDaniel, *Nursery*

Charles Bell, *Sexton*

Sue Shipman, *Newsletter Editor*

## Wednesday Night Schedule

Apr 2	Open	(Sulin)
	5:45	Asian Food - Sulin
	6:30	Lenten Study
Apr 9	Open	John
	5:45	Lentil Soup - John; Sides: Cornbread - Laurie, Rice and sweet potatoes - Sulin
	6:30	Lenten Study
Apr 16		No Wednesday Activities
Apr 23	Open	(Annelize)
	5:45	Make-your-own sandwiches - Sulin
	6:30	Bible Study
Apr 30	5:45	Chicken - John; Potato Salad, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw - Sulin, Cake - Annelize
	6:30	DC3 Concert
May 7	Open	(Annelize)
	5:45	Make-your-own sandwiches
	6:30	Committee Meetings
May 14	Open	(Annelize)
	5:45	Pizza - John
	6:30	Prayer Meeting and Bible Study
May 21	Open	(Doyle)
	5:45	Covered dish: A-G Desserts, H-N Veggies, O-Z Main Dish
	6:30	Prayer Meeting and Bible Study
May 28	Open	Jack Ready
	5:45	Chicken - Jack Ready
	6:30	Prayer Meeting and Bible Study

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Alexandria, LA 71303

**Come experience God's love at First Presbyterian Church**

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