

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ROANOKE RAPIDS NC

First Presbyterian Church seeks to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ by expressing our love for Him and our neighbors through worship, discipleship, stewardship, fellowship, congregational care, and mission.

In Touch



Sharing Our Gifts

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A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In a conversation I had recently with Susan Gaylor we lamented the news of the shooting at a school affiliated with a Presbyterian Church in Nashville. (If you wish to reach out to the church in some way, it may be helpful to know that the church, Covenant Presbyterian, is in a different denomination from ours called the Presbyterian Church in America.) As we talked Susan remarked that it is a difficult task to teach children nowadays. She noticed this in her waning years of teaching in public schools. And in conversations we both have had with more recently retired teachers it seems that things have gotten even harder. This is because that children seem to come to school with so many more emotional problems than in earlier times.

We both speculated on why this was so. After trying out some theories on each other, we both landed on the idea that children often become part of society without any spiritual anchor. They don't have any idea of God or Jesus and thus they don't have a sense that there is an all-powerful, all-knowing, and omnipresent being that loves us and has expectations as to how we behave. When human beings are young children, having knowledge of God is no guarantee that they will behave, but as children become adults, knowledge of God often grows into respect, even if these adults don't become regular attenders of a church, mosque, or synagogue.

If there is a perceived decline in the numbers that know about God and Jesus (and many periodicals I read point to that decline) then we tend to believe that the religious world is in a tailspin, headed for oblivion. But history tells us something else.

There have been periods in the history of our country when it had similar spiritual low points which were then followed by spiritual revivals. The first of these "Great Awakenings" began in about 1730 before the United States was a nation and lasted for ten years. The second awakening began roughly in 1790 and lasted for fifty years. The third awakening began in about 1855 and lasted until about 1930.

Each awakening had its own characteristics. The first Awakening made religion intensely personal. The rituals and

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR (continued—Page 2)

doctrines of the Catholic and Episcopal traditions were passed by in favor of the evangelistic practices of the Congregational church, the Presbyterian church (yes, Presbyterian!), the Baptists, and the Methodists. This awakening was affecting mainly people who were already church members. Multi-day events were staged outdoors where people would gather to hear rousing preaching. These events had the effect of reinvigorating one's faith. Hence the use of the word "revival."

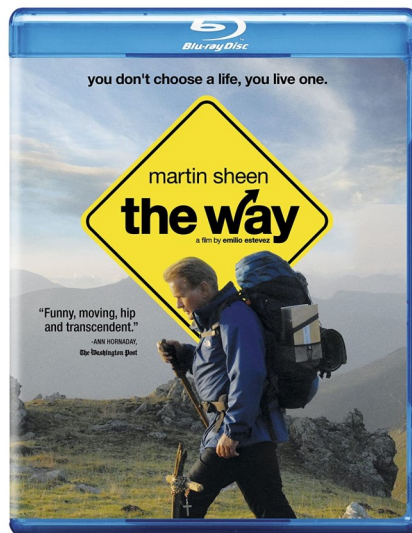
The second Awakening was mainly focused on the unchurched. It had as one of its chief themes, the view that the average person was a doomed sinner whose only hope was conversion to a life in Christ. By the time of the second Awakening the mission field had expanded to the Midwest. While the first Awakening was a phenomena of mainly the educated elite of New England, the second Awakening was purposely dedicated to converting the less wealthy and less educated. Unchecked denominationalism was a viral effect of the second Awakening. This included the formation of African American churches. These churches formed first in the north where black people were free but not welcomed into white churches and later in the south. The second Awakening spun-off movements such as temperance, abolition, and women's rights.

The third Awakening was characterized by even more new denominations. It had as one of its focuses the curing of societies ills. The chief concern was poverty and how the gospel called Christians to care for the poor. But this "Social Gospel" sought to address other concerns like labor reforms for women and children, alcoholism, crime, racial tensions and poor schools.

It has been argued that there was a fourth Awakening in the 1960s to the 1970s. This was a period that produced changes in Catholic practice through the Second Vatican Council. In Protestant churches the Jesus Movement, a charismatic Christian movement that began in the West Coast of the U.S., is cited as evidence of a fourth Awakening. But it may be argued that the countervailing effects of the mass exodus of Baby Boomers from the church during the same period diminished any mass movement toward a renewed spiritualism.

(continued on page 6)

**JOIN US ON FRIDAY, APRIL 21
AT 7:00 PM IN THE LOY BUILDING FOR
MOVIE NIGHT
MOVIE PLAYING IS "THE WAY"
POPCORN AND DRINKS WILL BE PROVIDED.
WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE MOVIES!**



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

**Presbyterian Women will meet
on Tuesday, April 4th, in the
Loy Building.**

**Morning Circle will meet at
9:30 am with Cheryl White
leading Lesson #8.**

**The Afternoon Circle will meet
at 1:30 pm with Nancy**

Sandoval leading Lesson #8.

All women are invited to come to either circle!

**Prayers for Healing of Friends &
Families of the Church**

Priscilla Ricks
Bill Howell
Glenn & Gayle Garner, @ Meals on Wheels
Sally Ray and G.C. Warren
Sandra Stephenson
The homeless
Doug Hayes
Linda Ray
Roger Fuester
Jeff Peedin
Frank Lonesky
B.T. Brown
Darlene Kassner
Sheryl & Wayne O'Neil
Cathy Hux Keeter
Sandy Sandoval
Rev. Mitzi Leshner-Thomas
Victims of the war in Ukraine
Jeff Gibson
Reid Hinson
Victims of Hurricane Ian
John Shives
Doug Thompson
Lou Ann Clarke
James Spragins
Michael Shelby
Bill Graham
Ellie Parker
Allyson Johnson
Grace Fishel
Bev Hummel
Tony Martin, Jr.
Ila Burnett
Kenny Phipps, Jr.
Lee Cranford (broken wrist)
Susan Barmer
Those affected by the imminent closure of the paper mill in
Canton, NC

**If you have someone that needs to be on the prayer list
or someone that needs to come off, please contact
Susan Gaylor at sdgaylor@embarqmail.com or
call her at 678-4228.**

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR (continued—Page 3)

I think its fair to say that America doesn't know that it is experiencing an awakening until it has as already begun or maybe not until it is over with. And awakenings are more dependent on the social conditions of the country's populace than the effectiveness of its leaders at the time. For sure there were faithful evangelists preaching to Americans in every age of its history, but there were only a few times when Americans *en masse* were ready to hear their messages.

This brings us to the age old question. Are we poised for yet another awakening? Are we already in the beginning of one? Or are we still in a "Dark Age" where America's mind is focused elsewhere? I don't know. And I don't think anyone else knows.

Indeed, with the internet effectively shrinking the whole world into a "global village" does talking about American awakenings even make sense? Shall we have to wait for a global consciousness to emerge before another Awakening can occupy a space in it? One thing I think we can know is that because awakenings have come and gone we may expect another to come our way.

But I wonder if hoping for an Awakening is missing the point of being a Christian in our era. To say that we are not currently in an awakening does not mean that there is nothing happening in the relationship between the church and the world. Maybe there are periods in a society's life when the church needs to go deep rather than wide. That is, maybe we are in a period when each of us is called to put the bulk of our energies into our own spiritual growth individually and into the church in its current state while the rest of the world sorts out what it wants to do and believe.

Just some thoughts for you to ponder. Reach out to me if you want to talk about this subject sometime. In the meantime, I wish each of you a blessed Holy Week and Easter season.

God bless,

Joe

Pleasant Surprise



Yesterday I opened the March 28 edition of The Herald to find that I had been greatly honored with a tribute as your pastor's wife. While I'm not sure how this acknowledgement is done, I was most touched by the signature "Your FPC Family."

Family is exactly how I think of our church. Sharing God's love as a family makes us stronger Christian witnesses to the hope and peace that the world is clamoring for.

Thank you for making me a part of your family.

Nancy



**Grace Fishel in her new home at
Fountains of the Albemarle in
Tarboro, NC**

Grace would love a visit or note
or call from you...

Her address is:

Grace Fishel
c/o Fountains of the Albemarle
200 Trade Street
Tarboro, NC 27886
Phone: 252-641-0001

WITNESS COMMITTEE NEWS

Happenings at the March 8th meeting:

- Bev shared some information from Donald Marsden who was in Turkey at the time of our meeting.
- Thank you notes were received from the following:
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, The Food Bank, The Safety Pup Program, and Medical Benevolences
- Book Bag Buddies: Susan reported that the grant for \$2000 has been received. A back up plan is being developed in the event that Susan is for some reason unable to oversee the work of this committee. Overall, everything is going well at present.
- Ways to continue purchasing gift Cards from Food Lion, specifically for this Easter, as the need is great in the county, was discussed.
- Monthly Prayer Meeting: Plans are in the works to organize a monthly prayer group, open to all. Following Donald Marsden's call to pray specifically for mission work, and in an effort to improve communication about prayer concerns in our congregation, we are hoping to have an initial planning meeting in the next few weeks. A suggestion to have it between circles on the first Tuesday is being considered. More information will be available soon.
- **Pennies for Hunger** Collection was \$385.04 on March 12
- Contributions from the congregation for Earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria totaled \$1098.00 and was sent to **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**
- The Love Offering taken for Donald Marsden with **Frontier Fellowship**, was \$1151.00
- \$625.00 was collected for **Clean Water Projects**. Two community Irrigation Water Pumps @ \$250 each and five Jerry Cans @ \$25 each were purchased through the Presbyterian Giving Catalog. The "water jug" remains in the Narthex and donations are welcome.

Thanks to all of you who have supported our missions through your generous givings!

Happy April Birthday to:

James Brewer—4th
Danny Phipps—12th
Wally Spragins—16th
Jacob Hackenburg—17th
Alice Ricks—22nd



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Offering will be received on Easter Sunday.

Return your fishbox banks or use the envelopes that will be provided in the bulletins.



Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) — Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People — all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope. Received during the season of Lent (February 22 – April 9), each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. The Offering provides us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need. In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world.

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (PDA) • Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters, and support for refugees

- Receives 32% of funds raised

PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM (PHP) • Takes action to alleviate hunger, care for creation, and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed • Receives 36% of funds raised

SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE (SDOP) • Invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these issues

- Receives 32% of funds raised

APRIL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY, APRIL 2—PALM SUNDAY

9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am Coffee Fellowship
11:00 am Worship

TUESDAY, APRIL 4

9:30 am PW Morning Circle
1:30 pm PW Afternoon Circle

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

7:00 pm Choir

THURSDAY, APRIL 6

7:30 pm Maundy Thursday Service
Communion

SUNDAY, APRIL 9—EASTER

9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am Coffee Fellowship
11:00 am Worship-COMMUNION
One Great Hour of Sharing
Offering



MONDAY, APRIL 10

6:00 pm Worship Committee (Parlor)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12

3:30 pm Witness Committee
7:00 pm Choir

APRIL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, APRIL 13

6:00 pm Finance & Personnel Committee

SUNDAY, APRIL 16

9:30 am Sunday School

10:30 am Coffee Fellowship

11:00 am Worship

6:00 pm Session Meeting

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19

7:00 pm Choir

FRIDAY, APRIL 21

7:00 pm Movie Night (Loy Bldg.)

SUNDAY, APRIL 23

9:30 am Sunday School

10:30 am Coffee

11:00 am Worship

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26

7:00 pm Choir

SUNDAY, APRIL 30

9:30 am Sunday School

10:30 am Coffee

11:00 Worship



Did You Know?

Since the laying of the cornerstone at First Presbyterian Church in Roanoke Rapids there has been a total of nine ministers called. Their names and dates of service are:

<i>Flourroy Morton</i>	<i>1914-1916</i>
<i>Stanley White</i>	<i>1916-1923</i>
<i>Joe Mack</i>	<i>1924-1927</i>
<i>Hugh Bradley</i>	<i>1928-1934</i>
<i>Lawrence Stell</i>	<i>1934-1942</i>
<i>John M. Walker, Jr.</i>	<i>1942-1980</i>
<i>Frank Covington</i>	<i>1981-1996</i>
<i>David McDonald</i>	<i>1998-2006</i>
<i>Joe Sandoval</i>	<i>2010-present</i>

You probably noticed there are some missing years on the list. Between 1996 and 1998 our congregation was led by various Session members as well as students and/or professors from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond. Between 2006 and 2010 we had our first (and only) female interim pastor, Rev. Jane Love, sent here by the Presbytery.

We have framed pictures of these former pastors and they used to hang in the hallway of the Administration Building until it was painted. Watch for the May issue of "In Touch" for more Did You Know? about our beloved church.

Betty Keyes



**First
Presbyterian
Church
CIRCA
1930's**

**Notice that
Roanoke
Avenue is
dirt.**



*Our gratitude abounds to
all of you who made our
90th birthday a wonderful
time to remember.
We will never forget your
outpouring of love.
You made us feel extra
special and loved.
Thank you, dear friends.
We love you too!
Betty and Mary*

"A friend loveth at all times." Proverbs 17:17

Hello Ladies,

This is regarding flowers for the sanctuary on Sundays. I have been remiss in my duties (since I am the committee) regarding the flowers. Many thanks to Faye who has been taking care of this lately.

I've decided the best thing to do is to ask for your help. If any of you can, please pick a Sunday to be in charge of the flowers. The arrangement doesn't have to be purchased.

It can be an arrangement using greenery or flowers from your yard or a friend's. I am signing up for May 21st. April 2nd and 9th are taken care of also. Please email the date you choose to me at movingmom@charter.net. Please include your phone number and I will try to call with reminders.

Thanking you in advance for your help.

Mary Small



MAUNDY THURSDAY

Maundy Thursday begins the Three Days (or Triduum), remembering the new commandment that Christ gave us in word and deed as he taught us how to love one another, washing our feet as a servant. We also celebrate the Lord's Supper, remembering the meal Christ shared with his disciples before his death.

An excerpt from the *Companion to the Book of Common Worship* (Geneva Press, 2003, 113-116, 131-132)

The name is taken from the first words sung at the ceremony of the washing of the feet, "I give you a new commandment" (John 13:34); also from the commandment of Christ that we should imitate his loving humility in the washing of the feet (John 13:14-17). The term *mandatum* (maundy), therefore, was applied to the rite of the footwashing on this day.

The opening service of the Triduum is not inherently mournful. The penitential acts of Maundy Thursday have celebratory aspects as well: restoration through the bold declaration of pardon; the act of footwashing connoting humility and intimacy; the celebration of the Lord's Supper embodying the mystery of Christ's enduring redemptive presence. Maundy Thursday's acts provide the paradox of a celebratively somber and solemnly celebrative service.

Footwashing. A powerful symbolic response to the Word, representing the way of humility and servanthood to which we are called by Christ, is the act of footwashing, practiced within the church since at least the fifth century. The practice of footwashing in first-century Palestine may have been as common as when today a host helps guests take off their coats, a waiter seats diners, or a driver holds the taxi door open for passengers. Hospitality underlies all such welcoming gestures. ...

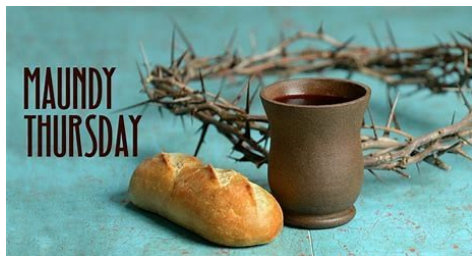
What is startling if not jolting about the footwashing story in John is not the act of footwashing, but the identity of the servant who washed others' feet — Jesus, God-with-us, the least likely person. Following the footwashing, Jesus took on himself the humiliation of the cross, the ultimate symbol of his selfless love for others. ...

In the priesthood of all believers (not hierarchies of power), *all* members of the body of Christ can "kneel" before each other and wash one another's feet as did our Lord and Savior himself — neighbor to neighbor, perhaps even stranger to stranger. More important, as the priesthood of all believers, our corporate kneeling before others for the earthly task of footwashing symbolizes our servanthood within and beyond the body of Christ.

The Lord's Supper. Though on this night we remember and celebrate the final supper Jesus shared with his disciples in the context of Passover, we are neither celebrating a Seder ("order of service"), nor reenacting the Last Supper, but sharing with our risen Lord a foretaste of the heavenly banquet. ...

The term "last supper" suggests that it was only one of many meals shared by Jesus and his disciples, and not *the* meal. The Eucharist is rooted not only in the Last Supper but also in Jesus' eating with sinners, and in his feeding the crowd with the loaves and fishes, and it foreshadows the meals after his resurrection. All together they constitute the multiple meanings of the Lord's Supper. To reduce the Lord's Supper to the Last Supper is to cut off the Sacrament from its eschatological significance (that is, as it relates to the unfolding of God's purpose and in the ultimate destiny of humankind and the world).

Stripping of the Church. The final act of this service is the evocative stripping of the worship space. This is most effectively done in absolute silence, and in an unhurried, orderly fashion. Designate several people to extinguish the candles, strip the Lord's table of all cloths and vessels, and remove all textile hangings, candles and candelabra, flowers, and so forth, carrying all the items out of the room. The stark, bare, unadorned church now reflects Jesus' abandonment during the night in Gethsemane. The visual aspect of the transformed worship space gives people a dramatic depiction of Christ's desolation. The church remains bare until the Easter Vigil when the process is reversed and the worship space is "dressed" again. Ordinarily, neither a blessing is given nor a postlude played on this night, as the services for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday (the Great Vigil of Easter) are actually one unified ritual. ... The church remains in semidarkness, and all depart in silence, thus making the transition from the eucharistic celebration to Jesus' crucifixion and death. Symbolically, Christ, stripped of his power and glory, is now in the hands of his captors.



**JOIN US FOR
OUR MAUNDY
THURSDAY
SERVICE ON
THURSDAY,
APRIL 6,
7:30 PM**

INVITE A FRIEND OR TWO!

**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

ROANOKE RAPIDS,

16 EAST 5TH STREET

Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870

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APRIL 2023

IN TOUCH

