



# First Presbyterian Church

## OF OKLAHOMA CITY

Newsletter

April 2020

## From the Pastor's Desk

### **If only I could, I surely would...**

There are times in our lives when we are reminded that there are some things completely out of our control. As a parent, spouse, pastor, friend, brother and a son, I think if only I could, I surely would make this all go away. But, of course, I can't. That leaves me a little bit sad, a little bit anxious, but also full of faith and hope.

There are things about the world I don't understand and would like to change. I don't understand human suffering and the inequity of the challenges people face in life. For example, as I just wrote that sentence, I noticed a man I know to be homeless ride by the church on a bike with what are probably all of his worldly possessions. How can you be safer at home if you have no home? I would like to change that.

There are people dying in isolation, separated from those they love and those who love them more than anything in this world. I would give anything to change that. Any of us would.

There are things about Jesus that I don't understand. I love the healing miracles of Jesus. The way Jesus not only cured a disease or restored sight, but also the way he renewed the entirety of a person's life and future by doing so. It inspires my faith, but also leaves me wondering, why not everyone?

**CONTINUED INSIDE...**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OKLAHOMA CITY**

Why not cure all the other blind, all the other lame, all the other diseased? Thanks be to God that faith is not an all or nothing proposition. God gives us room to question, to doubt and even to be angry while still remaining faithful.

I believe that Jesus Christ was the incarnation of God. I believe that Jesus Christ gave his life so that we might not only enjoy the pleasures of eternity, but also experience a radically new and different life here and now. It is because of that promise that has already been fulfilled—that companionship we have with God because of Christ and through the Holy Spirit—that we can face each and every day with confidence. We live into hope not just because of how our forever-after has changed, but because of how our today and tomorrow and the day after that have been changed.

I pray that our faith be deepened through this crisis. I pray our faith allows us to accept what is out of our control, be creative in staying connected and most importantly, be diligent in our self-care so that when the time is right, we will be able to demonstrate authentic Christian witness to the world as disaster gives way to acts of humanity and love.

I ask you to pray for me, our church, our world and particularly for those that struggle with feeling secure in their faith or are desperately trying to find it. God bless you.

- Rev. John C. McKinnon

## Online Giving

We offer a few different ways to give online! The first is through the Venmo app, which can be easily downloaded to a smartphone or tablet. You will need to set up an account and then it's as easy as typing "fpcokc" into the search and clicking "Pay." Our second method is through our website. If you visit [fpcokc.org](http://fpcokc.org) and click the "Give" button on the home page, you will be taken to our online platform. If you haven't given online before, click "Create Profile" and it will walk you through the process.

# Communications Committee

## First Presbyterian Church Rebrand

The process for our branding has been ongoing since I arrived at FPC in October. The Communications Committee (Mickie Smith, Scott Wilson, Josh Kivett, Pastor John and I) have worked to create a brand that is representative of what First Presbyterian Church was, is and will be called to be. The new branding was approved by Session on March 13 and we have now integrated it across all of our platforms. I hope you will share in the Session's excitement in seeing First Presbyterian spelled out in a different font next to a new logo.

Great time and care were put into accurately portraying our congregation through this brand. I am excited for the future of this congregation that gains its strength from tradition while embracing new ways to reach out to the surrounding community.

-Blake Barrett, Communications Director

## Logo Breakdown:



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The cross shape is a reference to the Presbyterian cross and represents the incarnate love of God in Jesus Christ, his passion and resurrection, which are foundational to the church.

The negative space surrounding the cross creates outward pointing arrows, emphasizing service and outreach.

The negative space around the outside of the icon creates inward pointing arrows, conveying acceptance and inclusivity.

The elements come together like a church body to form a unified, complete whole. This final form also represents the traditional stained glass that is so prominent in the architecture of our building.

## Online Services

We have moved all of our services online. We are so blessed and grateful to have the ability to come together in worship during this time.

All of the following Holy Week services will be livestreamed (broadcast live over the Internet) on our website. Livestreaming services will continue until it is safe for us to gather once again.

The easiest way to access our online service is by visiting our website ([fpcokc.org](http://fpcokc.org)) and clicking on the “Worship Live” button. Once there, all you need to do is click the play button on the video.

On the same page, we also have the Sunday bulletin available to view or print so you can follow along with the service; simply click the “Bulletin” button.

## Holy Week Services

### **Maundy Thursday - Thursday, April 9 | 7:00 p.m.**

Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles, the night on which Jesus was betrayed by Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane and serves as a reminder of Jesus’ command to follow his example of service; it ushers in the three final days of Christ’s passion.

*During our service, we will celebrate the Lord’s Supper.* Please prepare the elements for your use before worship begins. The bread used for the Lord’s Supper should be common to the culture of the congregation so anything you have at home will do. Same goes for the contents of the cup. When we pray the Prayer of Great Thanksgiving together over all the different elements brought to worship from different places, common elements united in purpose will become holy. We will indeed share in one body, of one cup. Thanks be to God. Once blessed, the elements you prepare should be consumed or returned to the earth outside.

## **Good Friday Tenebrae Service - Friday, April 10 | 7:00 p.m.**

On Good Friday, we stand at the foot of the cross pondering the wondrous love of God in the death of Jesus. Until we kneel at the cross, we will not experience or know the awesome wonder of Easter.

By careless or chosen thoughts, words and deeds, whom have we injured?

Tenebrae services, services of darkness and shadow, date to the 7th century. The service takes us from light to darkness, from the joy of Christ's ministry to his death.

The light of the world, can the darkness overcome Him?

Is darkness our end?

Does evil win?

During this service, we will remember the events of the week that the world fell into darkness through the reading of selections from the Gospel of Matthew and the extinguishing of candles.

## **Easter Sunday - Sunday, April 12 | 11:00 a.m.**

We will hold our traditional Easter Sunday service. Come join with us as we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord!

### **Special Request from Pastor John:**

Children, I need your help. Please create a piece of art for me to share on Easter Sunday. Draw or paint what the word "happy" feels like to you. It can be a picture, sculpture or whatever medium you have on hand.

Maybe there will even be a nice day where you can get outside and break out the sidewalk chalk! Ask a grown up to take a picture of your masterpiece and send in.

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Adults, I need your help too. The presence of your picture is requested. You are a fine-looking group of people if I do say so myself and how I look forward to seeing everyone in their Easter best! Would you please take a picture of yourself or you and your family and text or email it to me for use on Easter Sunday?

We have a few ideas in mind, but we'd like to see your faces just like we would on Sunday. As silly as it may seem, this is one way we can be together while being apart. You can dress up in your best Easter dress or rock the sweats. Whatever brings you joy!

Artists are welcome to get creative too and join the children in creating a piece of art! Please think "Resurrection" as your inspiration.

Email or text art and pictures to [pastorjohn@fpcokc.org](mailto:pastorjohn@fpcokc.org) or 405-420-6383.

## Easter Lilies

Share the beauty of Easter by sponsoring a lily or lilies to be used as decoration in the Sanctuary. Easter lilies can be given in memory of a loved one, to honor family and friends or in celebration of an event. All dedications will be printed in the bulletin on Easter Sunday. Suggested donation is \$15 per plant.

*Our plants will have added purpose this year.* Following worship, we plan to deliver a little Easter love in the form of a lily to the front porch of as many of our members as we have plants. Let's make that a big number!

If you would like to dedicate an Easter lily, please email Blake Barrett ([blake@fpcokc.org](mailto:blake@fpcokc.org)). Also, submit your \$15 donation to the church office by mail, online or through Venmo (@fpcokc).

Word your dedication exactly how it should read. For example:

- In memory of Mrs. William S. Smith by Mr. & Mrs. John L. Smith
- In honor of Robert J. Jones by Amy Jones
- In celebration of the birth of Jenny Smith by Traci Roberts

# Zoom Sunday School

Zoom is an online video conferencing platform that allows groups to meet through a computer, tablet, smartphone or even a landline phone.

We are holding all of our Sunday School classes using this technology! It is a great way to stay connected during this time of social distancing.

We will send out links to Sunday School classes on Thursdays in our Weekly E-blast. If you want to sign up for the Weekly E-blast, please email Blake (blake@fpcokc.org).

Additionally, if you're not comfortable with or confused by Zoom, do not hesitate to email blake@fpcokc.org. He is happy, willing and able to email instructions or call you directly to help you get your device set up.

## Easter Vigil - April 10-April 12

For centuries Christians have kept vigil, a period of keeping awake during the time usually spent asleep to keep watch and pray, on the eve of a festival or holy day.

For over 20 years now, First Presbyterian has made this tradition our own by having an Easter Vigil begin following the Good Friday service and last until Easter morning in the Chapel.

While so many things are changing right now, we want to keep the tradition alive and invite you to join us as we vigil in place.

If you would be interested and willing to commit to sit in prayer for an hour from your home to keep the vigil going, please click [here](#) to sign up for an available slot or email blake@fpcokc.org for available times.

Thank you for your support!

- Erica Taylor, Worship Chair

# Presbyterian Women (PW)

Presbyterian Women (PW) is an inclusive and caring community of women, committed to working toward God's promise of wholeness for all people. Presbyterian Women are women who are in any way affiliated with First Presbyterian Church of Oklahoma City.



The Birthday Offering, begun in 1922, is one of Presbyterian Women's annual offerings. It is received in April each year and gives Presbyterian Women a tangible way to celebrate the blessings in their lives.

This offering supports domestic and international ministries. Currently, the Birthday Offering funds up to five projects each year, in amounts of \$75,000 to \$150,000 each.

One 2020 recipient is the Community Presbyterian Child Learning Center in Payson, Arizona. This is a child care and pre-K facility in a church that is part of the Presbytery of the Grand Canyon.

The Learning Center provides day care and pre-K services for children in Payson, the Tonto Apache Tribe and neighboring communities. The center has been using two old buildings and a modular structure that is small and not well-suited for child care. This grant will help build a modern facility that will increase the number of children served and provide infant care that is currently not available in this area.

Birthday Grant requests come from a variety of national and international sources, such as various governing bodies of PC(U.S.A.), overseas churches and other church- and ministry-related groups.

While the Birthday Offering is usually collected in April at our small group circle meetings, we are trying to figure out a new method to participate in this special mission during the time of COVID-19.



For those women wanting to support this mission offering, checks can be written to “Presbyterian Women” (or “PW”) and mailed to Barbara Namminga, 8004 NW 101st St., Oklahoma City, OK 73162. Donations can also be made through Venmo (@pwfpcokc). You will see Lolieta Miller’s name associated with the account as she is the PW treasurer. Please indicate “birthday offering” in the “What’s it for?” section. If you are in a circle, you can add which one.

Thank you for your Birthday Offering each year. Our offerings, combined with the birthday offerings of Presbyterian Women nationally, help to fund incredible ministries.

## KirkNight To-go

As we all face the challenge of being responsible citizens of our community while still staying connected, I would like to invite you to join us for KirkNight to-go so we can have dinner alone, together. Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. you are invited to bring your dinner to your computer and join us in a KirkNight gathering online via Zoom.

We will send out Zoom links in our Weekly E-blast, but feel free to email [blake@fpcokc.org](mailto:blake@fpcokc.org) or message us on Facebook to receive information or for help getting set up.

In addition, Junebug Catering is offering meals to-go on Wednesdays if you would like a break from the kitchen. To order, call, text or email Jenn Snow at 405-408-3608 or [jenn@junebugcatering.com](mailto:jenn@junebugcatering.com) by 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday.

Meals will be available for pick-up from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Enter from the 25th Street driveway, and park by the ramp behind the kitchen where your meals will be brought to your car. If meal delivery is desired, please contact Jenn to discuss possibility.

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## **April KirkNight Menu and Prices:**

**Family Meal for 4-6:** \$20 | Dessert \$5.00

**Meal for 2:** \$10 | Dessert \$2.50

**April 15:** Millionaire Spaghetti or Chicken Alfredo, Steamed Broccoli and Garlic Bread | Dessert: Chocolate Silk Pie (whole pie or 2 pieces)

**April 22:** Baked Tacos with Black Beans and Cilantro Lime Rice  
Dessert: Sopapilla Cheesecake (8x8 pan or 4 pieces)

**April 29:** Greek Grilled Chicken Pasta (cold), 7-layer hummus dip with Pita | Dessert: Loukoumades fried donuts with honey (dozen or 1/2 dozen)

## **Children & Youth**

### **Montreat Now**

As we manage in a time of uncertainty for church programs, Montreat thought it might be a good idea to experience a bit of youth and middle school conference community now, so they asked the 2020 conference leadership if they could deliver a little Montreat Now.

Each Thursday night at 6:00 p.m. starting April 2 and going through May 14, they'll deliver a little slice of youth and middle school conference so we can be the community now. The 2020 leaders are helping to bring a variety of songs, prayer and play your way. Each week will feature a different matchup of leaders for you to meet.

All of this content will be recorded so if you miss a Thursday, it will still be there for you. You can find the webinar information as well as the recordings on their website here: <https://montreat.org/y-ya-events/montreat-now>.

I hope you will join me for a little Montreat Now!

-Leigh Miller

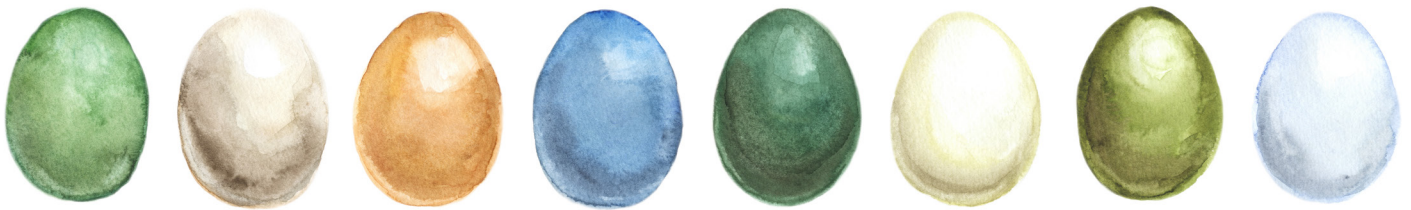
## Virtual Easter Egg Hunt

Hey kids, let's join our denomination for a virtual Easter Egg hunt! While we can't host an in-person Easter egg hunt at the church this year, we still want to provide a fun, family-friendly activity that also helps us recognize the true meaning of Easter.

Please read Matthew's account of the Easter story (Matthew 28:1-10). Before noon on April 11, post a picture on Facebook that includes an Easter egg and tell us in your own words what Easter means to you.

Use the hashtag #onebasket and tag First Presbyterian Church (@fpcokc).

After our 11:00 a.m. Easter service, log into Facebook and see how many eggs and stories you can find. We look forward to joining you on the hunt!



## April Birthdays

Happy birthday to all!

02: Beverly Georgia  
Lindsey Wallace

06: Joe Jones

08: A. Dale Henning,  
Lindsay Barton,  
Olivia Johnson

09: Josh Kivett

10: Ann Hopps,  
Cy Prigmore

12: Ed Martin,  
Emily Johnson

13: Jack Bosse

14: Robin Spaeth,  
Wesley Howard

15: Erin Langdon

16: Adam Ogden,  
Lisa Lusby

18: Bailey Jordan

19: Elaine Chard

22: Anna Denner,  
Krista Myers,  
Travis Johnson

23: John Woodard

25: Steve Whaylen

26: Isabelle Altdoerffer

28: Mark Myers,  
David Sergent

30: Matthew, Taylor  
and Robbie  
Whittington

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Or Current Resident

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Non-Profit Org.  
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CITY, OK  
PERMIT NO. 931

All are welcome! First Presbyterian Church is affiliated with The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

For more information, please contact the church office at 405-525-6584 or email office @fpcokc.org

## How to Cope with Coronavirus Stress

- Be creative and look for ways to engage virtually. Listen to an online sermon. Call or video chat with a friend. Watch the same movie at the same time as another person and talk about it afterward.
- Don't jump to the worst-case scenario. This is true for human beings in general—when we lack accurate information, we go to the worst-case scenario. Be mindful of not letting your thoughts and feelings become “facts.”
- Try to get some form of exercise whether that means a walk in the park, yoga, stretching or a brisk walk around the house.
- Don't have your TV on in the background. Limit your news sources to one particular outlet that's giving reputable information.

Credit: Duke University's “How to Cope with Coronavirus Stress” article by Amanda Solliday.

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