

# *The Alert* First Central Presbyterian Church Abilene, Texas

March, 2018

## *Cliff's Notes*



Look around you. Everything we call "big" is just a whole lot of "small".

In the economy of grace, God takes your little--a pot of oil, two mites, five pebbles, two fishes, five loaves, a sewing needle, a string, one jawbone – and blesses it into endless greatness.

*"Do not despise the small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin"* Zechariah 4:10

Put your little into God's hands, and rivers of blessings flow large and free. Take your little pot of oil, take your two cents and turn it into a prayer that you place in God's hands, and watch what happens!

From *"The Rock Will Wear Away"* by Holly Near

Can we be like drops of water falling on the stone  
Splashing, breaking, dispersing and air  
Weaker than the stone by far but be aware  
That as time goes by the rock will wear away  
And the water comes again

God takes the little and the nothing and lifts it up. Satan takes the large and the gifted and brings it down. Great giftedness can be a hindrance, especially when it leads us to self-sufficiency that resents neediness and resists dependence of God. It is not great numbers or great giftedness that "wins."

It is the yielding of the little into God's control that makes the biggest waves.

Where do you sense God calling you to take a little step today?

### **A "little" prayer of Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

Lord, give me an open heart to find you everywhere, to glimpse the heaven and folded in the bud, and experience eternity in the smallest act of love. Amen.



## **Around First Central**

### **Holy Week Luncheons 2018**



Each year, five Abilene churches gather to enjoy lunch on Holy Week, meeting each day at a different church with a pastor away from their home church presenting a message. 2018 is no exception, and we will enjoy this ecumenical series during the noon hour of Holy Week. This is a tradition that has been held yearly for over 35 years. It reflects the good spirit that exists between churches in our city.

This year's schedule is as follows:

**Monday at First Central Presbyterian:  
Felicia Hopkins, Speaker**

**Tuesday at St. Paul Methodist:  
Jonathan Storment, Speaker**

**Wednesday at First Baptist:  
Susan Payne, Speaker**

**Thursday at Highland Church of Christ:  
Phil Christopher, Speaker**

**Friday at First Christian Church:  
Cliff Stewart, Speaker**

### **Maundy Thursday Service**

Join us on Maundy Thursday, March 29, for our traditional Maundy Thursday service. This is a unique contemplative service that is a favorite for many of our members. The service begins at 7 p.m. and Communion will be served.



### **Easter Breakfast**



Be sure and join us on Easter Sunday, April 1, for our traditional FCPC Easter Breakfast, served between 9 and 10:30 a.m. in Faith Hall. The Deacons provide this delicious breakfast with all the fixings for just \$3 per person. Please sign up at the information desk if you can so we know how many to expect!

### **Easter Egg Hunt**

Easter Sunday at 9:45 the hunting commences! Bring your kids, grandkids, and friends to FCPC's annual Easter Egg Hunt. There will be some light refreshments and plenty of treats hidden around FCPC's playground for the grabbing. If you would like to donate candy to make the egg hunt even



sweeter, please bring it to the church by Palm Sunday, April 9.

### **Flowering of the Cross**



The Flowering of the Cross will take place on Easter Sunday at both services. Members are asked to bring fresh flowers on Easter morning and place them in the baskets in the foyer and on the parlor table. Have your child meet in the parlor prior to either service if they would like to participate. We hope you will join us in this FCPC tradition!

### **Easter Lilies**

Memorial and Honorary Easter Lily forms are available in Sunday bulletins and at the church office. Easter Lilies will decorate our sanctuary on Easter Sunday and then be distributed to our homebound members. These lilies are a beautiful way to honor or provide a memorial for loved ones. Please return all forms by Wednesday, March 28.



### **🎵 Sound 🎵 Investment Fund**



FCPC has a long-standing Music Enrichment Fund, which is used to help offset costs of extra musicians at Christmas, Easter, and at other times during the year. We are re-naming this the *Sound* Investment Fund. Individuals may contribute monies to this fund in honor or in memory of a loved one, friend, or relative. When special musicians are used in our services, we will include an insert which will list donors to the fund and to whose memory/honor these funds have been given.

With Easter approaching, we will be using these funds to help pay the marvelous brass ensemble who will be playing with us in both worship services on Easter morning. If you would like to make a donation to the *Sound* Investment Fund please make your contribution to FCPC with the notation "*Sound* Investment". If this gift is in memory or in honor of someone please include that as a note. Any questions please call the church Barbara at the church office.

### **Play to Benefit the Medical Care Mission**

What do you get when you cross the Paramount with a Presbyterian? "*They Might Be Giants*" is a play that serves as a fundraiser for the Presbyterian Medical Care Mission. It will play March 23 and 24th at the Paramount Theater. Plan for a night on the town and something that will do a lot of good.



For your health and your pleasure, save the dates and invite your friends. For tickets please contact the Medical Care Mission directly at 325-672-5601.

## **Bequests & Planned Giving**



The Bequests & Planned Giving Committee oversees, for the Session, special gifts that have been given to the church that are not designated for a specific purpose. Each year the committee seeks mission oriented requests from members of our congregation. The Bequest Committee reviews the requests and makes a recommendation to the Session who approves the distributions. To apply for a portion of these funds, a one-page written request must be received from a member of the congregation, stating the suggested amount requested, along with an explanation as to how these monies will be used in the cause of Christ. Your written requests should be sent to the church office - Attention: Bequests and Planned Giving. Requests due by April 15.

## **Wednesday Night Dinners**

Something new for Wednesday night dinners is being explored. It's great to see so many who come early to visit with one another over dinner. We've noticed that most now bring a sandwich from home or a favorite fast-food meal. In fact, this group now out numbers those who make reservations for a catered meal. Because of this, we are going to try something new! This Wednesday we are offering boxed meals from Jason's Deli. A sandwich of your choice, chips, pickle and a yummy chocolate chip cookie will be ordered for all who sign-up in the foyer or call the church office by Tuesday noon. The Deacons welcome your suggestions of possible meals for Wednesday evening!



## **A Word from Jacob Snowden, DCE**



The church that plays together stays together.

You might have heard that the Hard Knox Softball team is preparing for its second season, which is exciting, but it begs the question, "what does softball have to do with the gospel of Jesus?" Will Campbell was a minister and civil rights activist who would collect bulletins from churches and he regularly asked that question—what does a youth ski trip, knitting circle, softball team, or fall festival have to do with the gospel? I think I have something of an answer.

Churches are about the gospel. And the gospel is about an abundant life. In John 10:10, one can read

Jesus saying, "I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly." Churches that are about the gospel must be about how a church family can enjoy life together. Life includes knitting camps, having feasts, travelling and enjoying the outdoors, and yes—even softball.

It does not take an etymology expert to see that recreation comes from re-create, which is to make again. We might also think of relaxing or doing something re-freshing. In games, the smallest challenges are re-created to teach players about struggle, cooperation, problem solving, trust, and commitment. In softball, a player is forced to deal with his or her own errors and the errors of others. The joys and travails of something like getting around the bases creates a clear goal that teaches about victory and defeat. Outside of the games people play, victories and defeats are not so clear. What is to be celebrated and mourned is a little trickier to discover. What I am saying is that a person and a church can learn a lot through its recreation. How a church arrives at a batting order and how we collect money for jerseys is practice for how we recognize certain people's gifts and how we help people out when they can't cover the umpire fees. Besides, we know God likes softball because the Bible begins in the big inning (I apologize for that).

There are lots of ways to be involved in the life of the church. Softball is one. The annual Easter Egg hunt on Easter morning is another. Children are encouraged to be here on Easter to flower the cross, and some parental assistance is much needed and appreciated. Confirmation class is lurking just around the corner for our 6th graders. Meredith Stone will be with us April 4th. The last Logos of the semester is March 18th. So for all of these ways that we can play and interact together, I hope that we can find the good news of Jesus' love and grace.

## **Youth and Emerging Adults News**

### **Meet FCPC's Youth Intern, Emily Dublin**

We are excited to welcome Emily Dublin to FCPC! Emily is a first year Ministry student at ACU who hails from First Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, Texas. Her hobbies include figure skating, yoga, Zumba, golf, volleyball, photography, watching "Friends," and reading. She officially started her responsibilities on Youth Sunday and has been a wonderful addition to the team. One of Emily's main responsibilities will be to take over the management of the Mug Stop on Sunday mornings. Make sure to stop by and welcome her to FCPC.



### **New Emerging Adult Church School Class!**

March 4 marked the first ever meeting of the

Emerging Adult Church School class - The Lectionary Breakfast! Each Sunday morning from 9:45 - 10:50 AM, the group will gather at the couches on the second-floor landing by the piano and the donut/coffee station. There will be a small breakfast offered every Sunday that group members can eat while they read through and discuss the weekly lectionary passages.

### **No Youth or Emerging Adult Mid-Week or Evening Activities During Spring Break**

Starting on Sunday, March 11 at 12 PM, all Youth and Emerging Activities will be on hold for Spring Break. Both groups will resume their regular schedule starting March 18 at 9:45 AM for church school.

### **Senior-High Youth to Lead Small Groups of Mid-High Youth**

Starting on March 18 at 5:00 PM, our Senior-High students will lead a 4-week study (skipping Easter Sunday) for our Mid-High Youth. As those of you who attended our Youth Sunday worship service probably noticed, we have a wonderfully mature and intelligent group of Senior-High Youth! They are happy to take on this challenge, and we look forward to watching them step into these leadership roles.

### **All Youth Mo-Ranch Spring Retreat**

It's time to sign your youth up for the annual All-Youth Spring Retreat to Mo-Ranch! This retreat will be held on April 20-22. The speaker for this year is Tim Palmer, the College Minister at Aldersgate UMC. He is a VERY creative and energetic guy that our Youth will enjoy greatly! The registration form and trip fee of \$80 are due on April 1. The registration form can be found on the FCPC website in the "Youth" section. Do you feel led to sponsor a youth scholarship to the spring retreat? Contact [kbridwell@fcpc.net](mailto:kbridwell@fcpc.net) for more details.

### **Spirit of Abilene Online Faith Forum**



If you haven't visited SPIRIT OF ABILENE, an online faith forum, do so today! Go to [spiritofabilene.com](http://spiritofabilene.com), created by Loretta Fulton, who covers the "religion beat" and probably knows more about what's going on in Abilene related to religion than anyone in town. Loretta invites pastors and others to submit feature articles that come out each Tuesday. You will see that Janice is often a contributor to the page, so check it out today!

### **FCPC Softball Team**

Batter Up! Spring training has begun for FCPC's Hard Knox softball team. The team is co-ed and open to anyone



over 18 years old. Player contracts are available at the information desk and the church office. If you are interested in playing, please fill out and return a player contract. The season deposit is \$10 per player, and there may be small incidental costs (like official game balls and umpire fees) later in the season. If you have any questions, please contact Jacob Snowden.

### **Breakfast on Beech Street**



B.O.B.S is serving a need! In January and February 2690 people received breakfasts (158 were children/youth) and 4402 sandwiches for sack lunches were made and disbursed.

Your donations are always appreciated. If you want to be part of a FCPC Thursday team, please call Margaret Beasley at 692-4149.

### **Sympathy**

We extend our sympathies to Sharra Longhofer on the death of her mother Cheryl Laree Redden, to Woody & Nancy Weir on the death of their son Randall, to the family of Thomas Hancock, to the family of Betty Duke, and to the family of Laura Brokovich on the death of her mother.

### **Gratitude**

Dear members of FCPC,  
During a time like this with the passing of Beverly we truly are thankful for our church family, pastors and staff, who have prayed with us, supported us and comforted us. We thank each and every one of you who have expressed their sympathy, hugged us, brought us food and prayed with and for us. We also appreciate all the beautiful cards of sympathy and memorial gifts received in memory of Beverly. We thank God for the support of this church and its members.

Ralph, Randy and David Hoover

### **New Members**

We warmly welcome Emily Dublin and Frank Rausch to the FCPC family!

### **Celebrations**

We celebrate the baptism of Abigail Marlene Russell, daughter of Melissa & Andy Russel, who was baptized February 25, and the baptism of Penelope Alexandria Singiser, daughter of Elaine & Tim Singiser, who was baptized March 4.

If you have information for the Alert, discover misinformation in any printed issue, or believe you have received this publication in error please contact Kori Barr by calling the church at (325) 677-3501 or email [kbarr@fcpc.net](mailto:kbarr@fcpc.net).