

First Press

March 2024 - Volume 72 - Number 3



March

Ramblings *from the* Reverend

Dear Friends,

As we go through Lent and move toward Easter, I have been thinking about what the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus means for us in our spiritual journeys. I've been thinking, in specific, about the biblical-theological concepts of "redemption" and "sanctification."

Much more can be said about these concepts, but I'd like for us to view that facet of them in which "redemption" is a moment in time, and "sanctification" is an ongoing process. Let me illustrate this with an example of each from the bible:

In Acts 9, Saul of Tarsus is on the road to Damascus for the purpose of harassing and persecuting Christians. On the way, Saul is blinded and brought to his knees: "He heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' He asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The reply came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.'" In that moment, through that dramatic encounter, Saul (soon to be Paul) is redeemed. His life, from that moment on, is not his own – he belongs to this Jesus who reached out to him. Thereafter, he goes from persecutor of the Christian faith to champion of the Christian faith.

John, the beloved disciple has followed Jesus since the beginning of Jesus's earthly ministry. John's Gospel, when Jesus is on the cross, relates: "When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home." For John, and for Mary, this ongoing relationship, responding from the loving instruction of Jesus, is the continual action of sanctification. Having been redeemed by Jesus, they now live into his command to "love one another."

I am grateful for our reformed heritage, of which an emphasis on sanctification is a key principle. We don't believe that conversion (and redemption is more than conversion, but conversion is linked to that moment of redemption) is the end point of faith in Christ – but rather the starting point for it.

Two of my favorite illustrations of the process of sanctification come from the Chronicles of Narnia. Both involve what happens to two characters that are very unlikable when we first meet them: Edmund, who betrayed his family, and his cousin Eustace, who was "a stinker."

In *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, Edmund does betray his family, an action rising from his childish jealousy. He is redeemed by Aslan, who dies to save him from death at the hands of the White Witch. After Aslan's death and resurrection, Edmund is changed, and eventually (alongside of his brother and two sisters) becomes a king of Narnia. Edmund and his siblings grow into their role as Narnian royalty and are described in the last chapter by their names and characteristics. Here is how C.S. Lewis describes Edmund: "Edmund was a graver and quieter man than Peter, and great in council and judgement. He was called King Edmund the Just."

Oh my! This traitor, this reckless and selfish boy, through the ongoing process of living into his redemption, has been sanctified in such a way that who he was does not limit who he becomes: King Edmund the Just!"

If Edmund is a betrayer, Eustace is just a pest who will not stop being a pest. In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, his redemption comes when Aslan sheds his dragon skin and turns him back into a boy (I highly recommend, if this does not make sense to you, that you read the book!).

First Press Newsletter (USPS 197-760) is published monthly, except for June and July when combined, by First Presbyterian Church, 318 South Cedar Street, Spokane, WA 99201-7030. Periodical postage paid at Spokane, WA. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to First Press Newsletter, 318 South Cedar Street, Spokane, WA 99201-7030.

Eustace recounts this to his cousin Edmund. Edmund tells him more about Aslan the Great Lion. Lewis finishes the chapter by telling his readers this about Eustace, "It would be nice, and fairly true, to say that 'from that time forth Eustace was a different boy'. To be strictly accurate, **he began to be a different boy**. He had relapses. There were still many days when he could be very tiresome. But most of those I shall not notice. **The cure had begun.**"

There is such hope in these two passages. I hope you can say of your life, that through Jesus, the cure has begun! The redemptive power of Christ – and the ongoing power of the Holy Spirit – means that we are not only redeemed, but we are being sanctified. We are not imprisoned by our pasts, but because of the sacrificial love of Jesus, we are being renewed.

I hope that you know the redemptive love of Jesus. I hope that in this season of Lent, you are once again experiencing the regenerative power of the sanctification of God. With that hope in our hearts, we move on toward Easter!

Blessings – John

HOLY WEEK 2024

March 24th **PALM SUNDAY**



Maundy Thursday
MARCH 28TH
7 PM

Childcare Available



GOOD FRIDAY
MARCH 29TH AT 7PM
CHILDCARE AVAILABLE



2024

EASTER

6:30 AM
SUNRISE
AT MANITO

8:30 AM
SANCTUARY
ONLY

10 AM
SANCTUARY
& ONLINE

SUNDAYS *after worship*

ACT II Communities

How do we Interpret the Bible?

Sundays, February 25 & March 3, 17, 24 at 11am

This is an opportunity to discuss and share how we have been biblically disciplined in the past and how we interpret and allow scripture to be internalized and directive in our lives.

This is an Initiative 2 Building Block; an outgrowth of Phase 2 with the consultant in which we are seeking ways to live more fully into our charism of hospitality.

Initiative 2: *How do we develop a vision and plan of biblical discipleship that equips us to address issues in our culture with grace and love?*



Conversations (Option 2)

Sunday, March 24 @ 11am

We have been engaging in reading and conversations about how we are in relationship as a church with LGBTQ+ siblings in Christ. If you aren't able to participate in the conversations on the 2 books we read together, you are invited to join us for this conversation. It would be helpful for you to watch a video we recommend on the topic before this Sunday. We hope this will help us come into the conversation with some understanding of different perspectives so we are able to listen well to one another. For more information go to spokaneipc.org/conversations-2024.

Easter Lilies

Contribute in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone you appreciate. Donate any amount online or call 509-747-1058.

**ORDER BY
MARCH 25th**



New Staff Member: Ella Makarov, Finance Manager

As your new Finance Manager, I would like to tell you more about myself. Originally, I am from Siberia, Russia. My family and I lived in Tomsk, served in Youth Ministry in Tomsk Christian Church and raised our three kids Daniil, Anna and Alex. My husband's name is Michail and he worked as a pharmacist.

One day, our lives changed and because of the war we had to move. My husband's sister lives here in Spokane, so a little over a year ago we arrived here with the whole family. This is how our new life and adaptation in America began.

From the first day, I began to study English diligently. In the summer, I graduated from Spokane Community College with a degree in English as a second language. I wanted to continue to improve my language skills and that is how I found the wonderful Barton School. I was so delighted by the atmosphere of love and acceptance. God created even more than what we asked and expected: our youngest son Alex began studying at FPCS and is now wrapped in the care of the amazing Mrs. Sowers. I was so thankful, blessed and ready to do anything to help our school so I started volunteering. Not long after, I was offered this position at FPC and it was like a great gift from our Lord through you on Christmas.



Now, I would like to talk a little about my professional background. I graduated from high school with top marks in 2001. After high school, I continued my studies in economics at Tomsk University and graduated with honors in 2006. I have 12 years of experience working in various finance positions in the agriculture and food production, gas and oil, and pharmaceutical industries. I also have another diploma in Psychological Counseling.

Finally, I would like to say a lot of thanks to the many people who supported our family during this time. I am very grateful and so excited to be here. Please don't stop introducing yourself.

- Ella Makarov
Ellam@spokanefpc.org
509-747-1058 x242

Financial Update: January 2024

- Pledged income is \$50,423 favorable to budget. Non-pledged income is \$4,597 favorable to budget.
- The expenses were \$9,617 favorable to budget.
- Church operations was \$52,059 favorable to budget.
- Our YTD Budget deficit is showing heavy in January due to several large bills that are due in full this month. During the oncoming months, this deficit will flatten out.

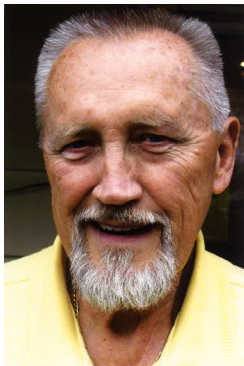
Church Only	YTD Actuals	YTD Budget
Pledge Income	157,964	107,541
Non-pledge Income	23,514	18,917
Other Income	19,638	12,982
Total Income	201,116	139,440
Total Expenses	185,683	176,066
Income over (under) Expenses	15,433	(36,626)

Congregational Care

Dear FPC family,

Thank you for your participation in the CareFair a couple weeks ago! It was wonderful to see what a caring, welcoming congregation we are! Several congregational caring groups were represented: GriefShare, Prayer Partners, Memorial Volunteers, Cookie Ministry, Meals Ministry, Deacons and more. You had to wind your way through the delicious bake sale treats to reach us, but we were encouraged by the many who came back to see what ministries were available. We reached several new people who signed up and many more asked about the ministries. We encourage you to stop by the information center on any Sunday to inquire, or sign up on a card in the back of the pews any Sunday. We look forward to another CareFair in the future!

- Care ministry leaders

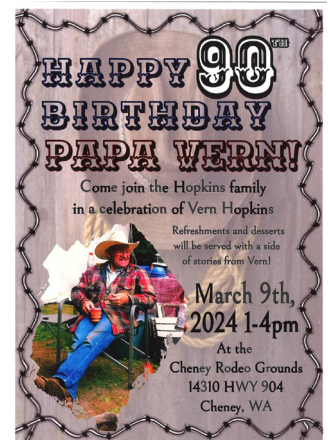


Memorial Service: Jack Arkills

Jack Arkills memorial service will be held at FPC in the Sanctuary on Saturday March 16th at 12:00pm.

Vern Hopkins' 90th Birthday Celebration

The FPC congregation is invited to join the Hopkins family in celebration of Vern Hopkins. Refreshments and desserts will be served with a side of stories from Vern! March 9th, 1-4pm at the Cheney Rodeo Grounds.



Diamond Jubilee Celebration

The Annual Recognition & Honoring of the FPC Family who are 75+



Coffee & Cookie Reception Immediately Following Worship Service



A special worship service is being planned for Sunday, April 14th, 2024

*As we carry each other's burdens,
we will fulfill the law of Christ.*

Galatians 6:2

Prayer Partners

Each Sunday, at the conclusion of the worship service, Prayer Partners are available at the front of the Sanctuary near the organ, and in the Prayer Chapel. We encourage anyone to share burdens, praises, & request for healing.

GriefShare

FPC's latest session of GriefShare began on February 28th but it is an open class – think of it as an “ER for grief”. Anyone is welcome to begin attending at any time. If childcare is required please call at least 5 days ahead. Workbooks are \$20; scholarships available. Call René for more info and to register 509.747.1058 x251.



LAUNCH PAD

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING LEADERS WHO HELPED IN LAUNCH KIDS THIS PAST MONTH!

Lesa Painter, The Condons, Ava Swigart, The Whites, Rachel Adams, The Whittakers and Addy Somes



NEW SERIES - GLOW IN THE DARK

In the dark, a world of neon colors comes to life. Whether it's the soft green of glow-in-the-dark stars or the bright colors of bioluminescent creatures, light can break through the darkness. When the world needed some light, God sent Jesus because he glows in the dark, and he can teach us how to shine with God's light, too! In this series through the Gospels, we'll follow Jesus' life leading up to Easter to see some of the ways he can shine bright in our lives. As we explore, we'll see Jesus is the light in the darkness. We'll also learn how we can choose Jesus and know God hears our cries while celebrating how Jesus died and rose again!

4TH-5TH GRADE THE BIG SEARCH

Get ready for a scavenger hunt like never before! 4th and 5th Graders get in teams and be on the lookout for some wacky things as well as engage in some scavenger hunt challenges in Spokane! Who knows what (or who) we'll find! Maybe even a certain red and white striped individual may pop up here and there!

We'll have lunch together then head out in our teams. Our event will conclude at the church for pickup.

Scan the QR code or visit www.spokanefpc.org/children

A red banner for "THE BIG SEARCH" event. At the top, it says "4TH-5TH GRADE" in a curved banner. Below that, "THE BIG SEARCH" is written in large, bold, blue letters. In the center is a graphic of a pair of black-rimmed glasses. Below the glasses, the date and time "MARCH 17 | 12:00-4:00" and the price "\$10" are listed in blue. At the bottom left of the banner is a QR code.

4TH-5TH GRADE
THE BIG SEARCH
MARCH 17 | 12:00-4:00 | \$10

Serve.

“The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood.” — John 1:14, The Message

FPC Mission Partner Spotlights:

Meals on Wheels

The Meals on Wheels Spokane program has been delivering hot, nutritious meals to elderly, homebound seniors in Spokane since 1967, and has been an official ministry partner of First Presbyterian Church for many of those years.

They believe that every individual, regardless of age, deserves to live a healthy and fulfilling life. Our team works tirelessly to deliver not only meals but also a sense of companionship and care to those who may be isolated or vulnerable. In addition to providing seniors with sustenance, we provide seniors with the human connection and care we all need.

In 2024, Meals on Wheels hope to continue their goal to never turn away a senior in need. Whether they are requesting liquid nutrition because of special dietary needs, hot meal delivery, pet food and/or veterinary care, or simple items of comfort to provide for a better quality of life, our goal is to be able to continue to say yes.

They seek to:

- Eliminate hunger among homebound seniors.
- Enhance the overall well-being and health of our community's elderly population.
- Foster a sense of connection and care.
- Promote independence and dignity among seniors who wish to remain in their homes.

How can FPC help in 2024?

In addition to receiving funding from our Mission budget, there are many ways the people of FPC can help the Meals on Wheels ministry.

- They have an updated “wish list” of most needed items on their website: <https://www.mowspokane.org/wish-list>
- Volunteer!
 1. Deliver hot or frozen meals to seniors in our community. Must be available 10:30am-1pm weekdays.
 2. Help is needed in their kitchens (just blocks from FPC!) Monday-Friday from 8-11am to assist with packaging meals.
 3. You can help manage their pet food supply - any availability appreciated between 8am-1pm on weekdays.



Cup of Cool Water

Another of our downtown neighbors doing incredibly beautiful work is Cup of Cool Water.

Cup is a ministry to youth and young adults experiencing homelessness in Spokane. They provide a safe respite from street life where youth can get a hot meal, a hot shower, clothing, and have most of their daily essential needs met with compassion and love. They host a daytime drop-in center five days a week and run several other programs throughout the year including our life skills, mentoring, job training, and juvenile justice system programs.

Cup of Cool Water has experienced a severe drop in volunteers (including from FPC) since Covid and would love to re-build some of those relationships. Here is what Daniel from Cup would like to share with our church:

1. We need Volunteers: Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, we were blessed with an abundance of volunteers. Unfortunately, most of our volunteers, typically elderly, did not return following our "return to normal." As such, we need volunteers for each of our daytime drop-in periods (12-3 pm) and for Tuesday and Thursday evening drop-in periods (6:30-8:30 pm)
2. We need Christian business owners who are willing to partner with us to hire youth graduating from our job-training program. We have a few businesses who've already partnered with us, but we need more to expand our job-training placement capacity.

If you are able to help Cup of Cool Water's vital ministry please contact Amanda Jones at 509-747-6686 or amanda@cupofcoolwater.org

To learn about the many FPC mission partners we proudly support, go to:
www.spokane-fpc.org/mission-partners.



FPC
FAMILY
MINISTRY
IS
HIRING!

**NOW
HIRING
PART-TIME
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

The ideal candidate has an organized mind and wonderful administrative skills. This position will support the Family Ministry in its efforts to equip and inspire children, students and families as they begin or continue a lifetime of discipleship and adventure in following Jesus.

Necessary skills: Word, Excel, Squarespace, databases and printing & making flyers. Position will start at 15 hours per week.

Contact
Ryan Schmall
for more info:
509-747-1058x163
ryans@spokanefpc.org

First Pres Christian School

Auction

Every year, First Presbyterian Christian School needs to fundraise for about 20% of our overall operating budget. We prioritize this so that we can stay accessible to families who desire a Christian education and who have children that flourish in a smaller classroom environment. Our church family has always wowed us with your generous support of this ministry. Join us in supporting it once again by coming out to our biggest fundraiser of the year!

A Class Act: Black & White Auction will be held in the Convention Center on Saturday, April 27, at 5:30pm. There will be silent and live auctions, dinner, and drinks for a great cause. Watch First Word in early March for details on ordering your tickets.

If you have items, experiences, tickets, or getaway places that you would like to donate to our auction, please contact Tracy Blue at tracyb@spokanefpc.org or 509-747-9192. Thank you for your support!

Registration

Imagine a year where your student is thrilled to go to school every morning! At First Presbyterian Christian School, your student will fall in love with learning in our Christian classrooms with small class sizes and experienced, loving teachers. Open Registration for the 2024/25 school year began on Thursday, February 22, 2024. We would love to offer you a personal tour. Give us a call at 509-747-9192 or check out our website for more information at fpchristianschool.org.

First Presbyterian Christian School presents

A CLASS ACT

BLACK & WHITE AUCTION

SATURDAY, APRIL 27,
AT 5:30 P.M.
Spokane Convention Center



Tickets go on sale in early March.
Watch this space for details!

COMMUNITY MAD SCIENCE NIGHT

FEATURING HANDS-ON SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS FOR PRESCHOOL THROUGH 5TH GRADE

THURSDAY MARCH 7
6:00-8:00PM

FREE!

TOUCH BRAINS! EXPERIMENT WITH PHYSICS! CREATE SQUISHY CIRCUITS!
DISCOVER THE SCIENCE BEHIND POLICE WORK!



"Attention is the beginning of devotion."

- Mary Oliver

YOUNG ADULTS SERIES

PAYING ATTENTION

join us for simple spiritual practices during the lenten season

9 AM ON SUNDAYS
FEBRUARY 25
MARCH 3, 10, 17, 24

IN THE FIRESIDE ROOM
BREAKFAST PROVIDED



Shift Calendar

March

3/5 Shift 6:30-8:30

3/12 Shift 6:30-8:30

3/17 Potato Party @7th Ave House 1:00-3:00pm

3/19 Spaghetti Night! 6:30-8:30pm

3/26 movie night! 6:30-8:30pm

Contact Kezia:
email: keziar@spokane-fpc.org
phone: (509) 747-1058 ext 173

FPC FAMILY MINISTRY
2024

summer calendar

PRESCHOOL/KINDER LAUNCH KIDS DAY CAMP

JUNE 24-28

ELEMENTARY VBS NIGHTS

JUNE 26, JULY 31, AUGUST 28

FAMILY VBS

JULY 25-28

BIG FAMILY DAY

AUGUST 24

SAVE THE DATES!

PRAXIS WINTER CALENDAR

2024

EASTER PROJECT DATES

MARCH

3/10 Auction

6 D-GROUPS IN HOMES

3/23 Building Day

13 PRAXIS 7-9

3/30-4/6 In Tijuana!

17 ST PATRICK'S DAY POTATO PARTY AT THE 7TH AVE HOUSE

Watch for Report Sunday Dates in April!

20 SPAGHETTI NIGHT 6:30-9

27 NO PRAXIS

28 MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE

29 GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

CONTACT INFO

LYDIA
509-747-1058 EX 161
CELL: 619-458-5304
LYDIAP@SPOKANEFPC.ORG

KEZIA:
509-747-1058 EX 173
CELL: 509-844-2579
KEZIAR@SPOKANEFPC.ORG

EASTER PROJECT SILENT AUCTION

MARCH 10

BIDDING BEGINS AFTER WORSHIP



Coming Up

March 7 FPCS Mad Science Night

*March 10 Daylight Savings
EP Auction*

March 17 Big Search

March 24 Palm Sunday

March 28 Maundy Thursday

March 29 Good Friday

March 31 Easter

April 14 Diamond Jubilee

April 27 FPCS Auction

Contacts

(509) 747-1058

Pastoral Team

John Sowers (250)
Betsy Wynne (253)

Administration

Stephanie Coy (244)

Worship/Music

Derrick Parker (307)

Finance

Ella Makarov (242)

FPC Christian School

Tracy Blue & Shawna Harris (120)

Family Ministries

Ryan Schmall (163)

Childcare/Nursery

Ryan Childers (164)

Middle School Ministries

Kezia Rhodes (173)

Intergenerational Ministries

Brad Hauge (252)

Preteen Ministries

Lydia Halma (161)

Young Adult Ministries

Jourdan Cornell

Adult Ministries

Brenda Norton (243)

Newcomers Ministry

Sue Reidt (241)

Communications

April Egly (245)

Barton English Language School

Becky Rempe (212)

Deacon Prayer Line: 747-1050

Office Hours

M-Th 8:30am-4pm and Fridays 8:30am-1pm

Sunday Worship Services

Online and In-person Sundays at 10am



First Presbyterian
Church of Spokane

For more information about ongoing programs, visit our website at www.spokanefpc.org or pick up a brochure at the church