Easter People

As Christians, we're taught every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection, of the defeat of death by God's love. We recognize the Sabbath on Sundays rather than on the Jewish Sabbath, the day of Saturday, because that's the day Jesus' tomb was found empty. Perhaps one of the primary reasons we celebrate the resurrection every week is that we need to be reminded that God's love conquers all that is evil and deadly in this world.

As I write this Columns article, there are a number of families in our church community who are struggling with life-altering challenges, health-related and otherwise. Whether we're suffering ourselves or know others who suffer, times as these are when we need more than ever to trust in the resurrection. We need to be reminded that we are Easter people.

What does it mean to be Easter people? Two things: The first is that we actually believe in what happened on that first Easter morning, that the tomb was indeed empty, that Jesus had died and returned from the dead victorious. The second is believing that our lives have been changed because of the resurrection. Easter matters beyond the lilies, beyond the brass instruments in worship, beyond the baked ham dinner. Easter matters. It changed the world forever. And believing in it has the power to change our lives every day.

It's easy, even in a place like Muncie, to feel isolated and overwhelmed. Even though

He is RISEN!

many of us have lots of friends and family, we have days that are filled with moments that challenge us. Sometimes our very lives are at risk. As Easter people, we look to the God of Easter for a reminder that we are not on this journey alone. God became one of us, a human, and died a human death, all in order to prove that God is indeed present in every step of our lives. Then on that Sunday morning, God raised Christ from the dead, showing us that there is nothing more powerful than God's love. As Easter people, we're called to remember both that God is deeply present with us and nothing we face in this world is more powerful than God's love.

Easter comes early this year, the last day of March—March 31st. The sanctuary will be filled with fanfare and Alleluias. It will be a glorious celebration. But what comes next? How do we live as Easter people during the rest of the year? How do we hold onto the promise that every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection, and not just for Jesus but for all of us?

Let us raise our voices loud and clear on Easter Sunday, proclaiming, "He is risen! He is risen indeed!" And let us remember that every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection. Resurrection is a continual reality in our lives—the sure promise of the power of God's loving presence in the midst of everything we face.

With much love as your pastor,

Ron Nagler
Members and Friends,

We have taken the first steps on this year’s Lenten journey, which has begun quite early (Feb. 13th). Lent is traditionally a time in the Church year for all of us to slow down, take extra time for prayer, and reflect on our lives — both personally and as members of Christ’s Body in the world. During this transition year at First Presbyterian, Lent will be especially meaningful as you pray for your beloved Pastor Ron and his preparations for retirement as well as for your new Pastor for whom the Pastor Nominating Committee has been faithfully searching.

This Lent can be time set aside to reflect on where you have been as a Church, what ministries have been fruitful and life-giving and to be open to where God’s spirit is calling you to move in ministry under new leadership. I thank God every day for this congregation — for your loving spirit and attitude of grace — and my prayer for you this Lent is a deepening of your relationship with God and with one another and a growing sense of excitement for where God is leading you next.

In Christ’s Peace,
Pastor Laura, Your *Interim Associate Pastor

LEN T SMALL GROUP STUDY
The Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations* (By Robert Schnase)
The most visible way God knits people into community to fulfill the mission of Christ is through congregations, and these 5 practices give congregations a common language. As a result of working through a common language, faith communities become clear about their mission and confident about their future. (pg. 8)

Small Groups have been formed around each of the 5 Practices. Everyone is free to join a group already in progress and as your schedule allows. Meeting places for each are posted visibly throughout the church and most meet 9:45am-10:45am, with one group meeting 9:30am-10:30am and another group meeting during the week at Westminster. We also have an on-line “blog” group — just visit our website (www.firstpresmuncie.org) for the link.

*Books are available in the Church Office through March 10th. This is a great text for all church members and church leaders and will hopefully provide some of the language for discussions about the Church and its future throughout this transition year. Everyone is invited to read this as a part of the small groups (even if you can’t make it to every session) or on your own.

Cost is $12.00/copy (discounts are available to make this resource available to everyone who wants to participate — see Pastor Laura). You can also purchase and download the EBook directly for $9.99 at www.christianbook.com (type book title in the search bar, then click “EBook.”)

TAIZÉ TUESDAYS in LENT
7:30PM ♦ SANCTUARY
with Guided Meditation
This is a music-led prayer service based on the tradition of the Taizé community in France. The songs are written in simple, lilting melodies and are meant to be sung repeatedly until they literally become a prayer within you as you sing. The music leads us into times of prayer-filled silence.

Come for a peaceful evening service with beautiful simple music, casual atmosphere and quiet prayer.

DEAD SEA SCROLLS EXHIBIT - SPOTS STILL OPEN FOR FIELD TRIPS
We’ve had a wonderful response to the opportunity to learn about the Dead Sea Scrolls and to visit the exhibit at Cincinnati Museum Center. 3 trips have been organized and spots are still available to go with the group on the Church bus on THURSDAY, MARCH 14th and SATURDAY, MARCH 16th. Cost is $21/person, with everyone bringing an additional $10-$15 for lunch. Contact Pastor Laura (LSherwood@firstpresmuncie.org) as soon as possible if you’d like to join us on one of those dates.
Looking for a responsible way to recycle your computer and electronics? Our Green Living Team has the answer for you. **On Saturday, April 6th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.** you can bring to the church anything you want to dispose of that has an electric plug on it. Two groups in Indianapolis, Recycle Force and Wings for West Africa, will be at the church to collect used but usable computers which will be shipped to schools in West Africa and Haiti. In addition you can also bring to the church anything with an electric plug. (Did you know that since January 1, 2012, it is illegal in Indiana to dispose of anything with a plug in the trash or a landfill?)

Usable computers, monitors, and towers are refurbished, including data removal, then shipped to schools in West Africa or Haiti. Desktop computers go to schools in Senegal and laptops go to Haiti. They are shipped by Wings for West Africa.

Recycle Force will “demanufacture” anything with a plug. This includes: TV’s, VCR’s, microwaves, lamps, etc.—virtually anything with a plug. There is no charge for any of this except that they ask for a $5-$10 donation for TV’s due to the cost of recycling them.

This is another win-win opportunity: we can recycle our old electronics knowing that materials that could corrupt God’s good creation are being responsibly disposed of—and students in Africa and Haiti can get a boost to their education. For more information, please call Carrie Jo at 289-4431.

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**A Note of Appreciation**

The note below is from one of the many groups to whom we make Fellowship Hall available for their events. Many of these groups, including this one, are service or ministry organizations on the Ball State campus.

Dear First Presbyterian Church,

I would like to send you a giant thank you on behalf of Ball State University Dance Marathon. You all were kind enough to lend us your Fellowship Hall for two of our events this year. We are beyond grateful to you. Both of these events were huge successes and helped us a lot to reach our goal.

I do not know if I talked to you about what our goal was this year. Last year, we raised $87,000. We went into this year with a goal of $100,000 to raise towards Riley Hospital for Children. This past Saturday, we held our marathon and revealed our total at the end. Over the last 12 months, we raised $196,728.20. We reached our goal and far surpassed it!

I just want to tell you thank you because you were a huge part of this success! I hope to work with you again at some point in the next year? Thanks so much!

For The Kids,
Ross Pierson, Director of Fundraising
Ball State University Dance Marathon

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**SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:**

8:30 a.m.—Contemporary Service (Sanctuary)
11:00 a.m.—International Service (Chapel)
11:00 a.m.—Traditional Service (Sanctuary)

**First Presbyterian Church**
1400 W. Riverside Ave.
Muncie IN 47303
Phone: 765-289-4431
Fax: 765-289-4486
www.firstpresmuncie.org

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For The Kids,
Ross Pierson, Director of Fundraising
Ball State University Dance Marathon

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**~ SUNDAY, MARCH 17 ~**

**ONE WORSHIP SERVICE at 11:00 am**

(no 8:30 am service)

immediately followed by an

**IMPORTANT CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

and CATERED LUNCH

- All members are encouraged to attend -

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**SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:**

8:30 a.m.—Contemporary Service (Sanctuary)
11:00 a.m.—International Service (Chapel)
11:00 a.m.—Traditional Service (Sanctuary)

**The Rev. Dr. Ronald Naylor, Senior Pastor**
ronpres@sbcglobal.net

**The Rev. Dr. Myungku Lee, Associate Pastor**
ninebrights@hotmail.com

**The Rev. Laura Sherwood, Interim Associate Pastor**
lsherwood@firstpresmuncie.org

**Pastor Carrie Jo Miller, Commissioned Lay Pastor**
carriejo1stpres@sbcglobal.net

**Cathy Alexander, Youth Director**
cathy@firstpresmuncie.org

**Lisa Ulrich, Business Administrator**
lisa@firstpresmuncie.org

**Jane Smith, Administrative Assistant**
jsmith@firstpresmuncie.org
Branches’ Upcoming Events

To glorify God, Branches’ activities provide education, fellowship, mission, stewardship, and worship experiences for all junior high and senior high students. All gatherings are from 5:00 to 7:00 pm at the church unless otherwise noted and will usually include dinner. Always check your email for more details and last minute changes. If I don’t have your email address, please send it to cathy@firstpresmuncie.org.

March 3: No meeting - D.R. Trip
March 10: No meeting - D. R. Trip
March 17: Mystery Meeting
March 24: Palm Sunday
March 25 - 27: Mini Mission
March 28: Maundy Thursday
March 29: Good Friday
March 31: No meeting (Easter)
April 7: Dead Sea Scrolls field trip

“I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.”
John 15: 5

MISSION

I BRANCHES: IF YOU WILL BE IN MUNCIE FOR SPRING BREAK AND WOULD LIKE TO SPEND A COUPLE OF DAYS DOING LOCAL MISSION ON MARCH 25, 26, AND 27, LET THEA KNOW!
We Welcome Children and Families on Sunday Mornings to First Presbyterian!

Infants through 3 year olds receive child care and Christian nurturing in Room 101 with Marie Burkey and her helper throughout Sunday morning from 8:15 am to noon.

During Worship Services:

**Children's Worship Center**

Children 4 years old through 2nd grade join their parents in the sanctuary for the beginning of worship and are dismissed with a leader for Children's Worship Center, held in Youth Hall. Storytelling is used as a way for children to be in worship so God is experienced. Children in the 3rd grade and older remain in worship with their parents.

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9:45-10:30 am Sunday School for Children and Youth:

- Room 104: 4-year-olds through 5th graders with Jeff & Tracy Clinger (combined class using the "One Room Sunday School" curriculum that provides comprehensive Bible study, application of Bible lessons and a variety of age-appropriate activities)
- Room 23 (on the stage): 6th-12th graders with Aaron & Jacqueline Burton

Branches Summer Mission Trip News!

Mark your calendars now for June 17-22, 2013. We will travel to Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania, to work at Crestfield Camp and Conference Center. Crestfield is a year round Christian ministry facility of the Pittsburgh Presbytery that offers retreat facilities, programs, and special events to nurture others in their experience with God, through Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Mound Ridge Camp director Christy Foster recommended Crestfield to us. Watch for more information and check it out: www.crestfield.net.

AP BIBLE STUDY

Who: High School and middle school students
What: Light supper and Bible study
Why: Because Sunday School isn’t enough!
When: Thursday evenings, time varies*
Where: Locations vary (junior high room, Starbucks, etc.)*

*Email Thea for time and location... we're mixing it up! 🎉
**Dominican Republic Trip News**

The following fifteen missionaries from our church will travel to the villages of Mella and Duverge in the Dominican Republic, March 2-9:

- Cathy Alexander
- Amanda Brown
- Mackenzie Clinger
- Michelle Kaichuck
- Carrie Jo Miller
- Dan Alexander
- Scott Brown
- John Foster
- Hyejung Lee Cho
- Alan Simmons
- Jack Alexander
- Lucas Clay
- Dan House
- Myungku Lee
- Lauren Simmons

There are 3 high school students and 2 college students among the missionaries. Eight missionaries have international mission experience, but all are new to the Dominican Republic. Please keep this team in your prayers.

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**Adult Ministry Luncheon**

*Wednesday, March 20*
*12 noon in Fellowship Hall*

Program: Laura Sherwood - "Russian Travels"

Everyone—young, old and, in between—is invited to join us for the program and lunch ($3.00 per person)

*Please call the office (289-4431) to make reservations by March 18.*

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**Holy Week Services**

**Palm Sunday, March 24**
Regular Services at 8:30 am & 11:00 am

**Maundy Thursday, March 28** (at First Presbyterian) ~
- 6:00 pm Carry-In Dinner *(bring a dish to share!)*
- 7:15 pm Communion Service

**Good Friday Service, March 29** (at St. Lawrence Catholic Church) ~ noon

**Easter Celebration, March 31 at First Pres** ~
- 8:30 am Contemporary Worship: Special Music celebrating the Lord's resurrection
- 9:45 am Easter Brunch in Fellowship Hall (provided by Ministry Guild)
- 11:00 am Traditional Worship: supported by the Chancel Choir, the Hallelujah Choir, organ, piano, and the School of Music Faculty Brass Quartet. He is risen indeed!

*(International Congregation meets for Prayer each weeknight of Holy Week @ 9:00 pm, and Saturday, March 30 @ 7:00 am, in the chapel)*

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**Grounds Clean-up Party**

*Saturday, March 23, 8:30 am*

First Presbyterian Grounds Committee will once again sponsor the **ALL CHURCH GROUNDS CLEAN-UP PARTY!** All FPC churchgoers are encouraged to come and join in the fun. We will work together to prepare our landscaped beds for spring. We always have a great time working together and the result is incredible.

Look for more information in the coming weeks, or call Jonathan Schmidt (759-5616) if you have questions.

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“**The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”**

And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.”

Faith vs. Evil

As Adolf Hitler and the Nazis wrecked monstrous evil on Europe, a small group of dissidents worked to dismantle the Third Reich from within. Prominent among them was Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a pastor and author.

In *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* (920 BONH), author Eric Metaxas tells the story of a humble man of faith who challenged the Nazi regime with courage and the conviction that Christians must stand up for the Jews. In 1939, Bonhoeffer made the fateful decision to leave the United States and return to his German homeland. There he began his underground activities in opposition to the government. In 1945, he was executed in a concentration camp for his part in a plot to assassinate Hitler.

Treasures of Faith

Open to any of the 500-plus pages of *The Christian’s Treasury* (242 ROCH) and you will find real treasure for the soul. This book is a collection of great writings. It includes stories, songs, prayers, poems, and more. They range from classic to contemporary. The names of some of the authors hint at the wide diversity of times and places the selections represent. The section on thankfulness includes selections by George Washington and George Washington Carver. Meditations were written by St. Augustine, Corrie ten Boom, Mother Teresa, Abraham Lincoln, and Robert E. Lee. Essays on Christian Witness were written by Benjamin Franklin, Helen Keller, and John Calvin. Selections on Love were written by Agatha Christie, Henry Ward Beecher, and Michael Novak. Discussions on Truth and Understanding were selected from the work of St. Thomas Aquinas, John Wesley, Charles Colson, St. Augustine and Leonardo da Vinci among many others.

Joy for Mamas

“Make the choice to rejoice,” advises Lindsey O’Connor, author of *If Mama Ain’t Happy, Ain’t Nobody Happy!* (248.8 OCON). In a series of essays, she illuminates a path toward joy and contentment. She shows how to find sparkle among the rocks, how to want what we have, and tips for practicing joy.

The author is a writer, speaker, and broadcaster and also a full-time wife and mother of four.

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**PNC PRESENTS:**

**A CANDIDATE FOR CONGREGATIONAL REVIEW**

*Candidacy Week*

**Open House Schedule**

March 13-17

**Wednesday:**

10:00-11:00 am
6:00-8:00 pm

**Thursday:**

7:00-9:00 am
12:00-2:00 pm

**Friday:**

10:00-11:30 am

**Saturday:**

8:00-11:30 am
(Candidate and Family)

**Sunday:**

11:00 am **ONE SERVICE** for Candidacy Sermon followed by Congregational Vote

All open house times will meet in the Lounge. Please find a time to come meet the PNC’s candidate for Senior Pastor.

**Candidacy Sunday will be**

Sunday, March 17

**ONE SERVICE** held at 11:00 am followed by congregational vote.

Catered lunch in fellowship hall directly following service and vote.

Additional information can be found by visiting [firstpresmuncie.org](http://firstpresmuncie.org)
As in previous years you have the opportunity to order lilies for Easter Sunday, March 31st, in honor or in memory of someone dear to you. The flowers may be taken home with you after the Easter service.

Cost is $12 each.
Make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church; memo: Easter lilies

Orders must be received by the church office before Monday, March 18, 2013!

To order, please place a completed form and payment in the offering plate or send it to the church office at 1400 West Riverside Avenue, Muncie, IN 47303.