

First Things First

March 2021

At the end of this month, we will head into Holy Week. We will partner with Faith Springs Presbyterian Church for Holy Thursday and Good Friday services.

[These days are special to me. As we attend each service, we live again the story of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth who we name the Christ.](#)

I have walked with a family whose son was murdered. I spoke at the funeral of a family friend, an immigrant, who died of cancer because her church told her to trust in God and not in medicine. It seems to me that we all carry the stories of people who have had the unimaginable happen to them. My experience of walking with Jesus during Holy Week has helped me through those two intense moments.

However, this year I invite us to consider walking a different path: On the evening of March 6, 2015, as my daughters and I walked home from dinner, we heard several rapid noises just down the street from us. We went in our house not sure what we had heard. Minutes later, we discovered that police had cordoned off the street just a block away. We learned that a young Black man named Tony had been shot and killed-just down the street from us in our "enlightened" neighborhood. We did not know Tony but had seen Tony on his skateboard many times. Tony was unarmed.

That police involved shooting, Tony's death, woke me up to the daily inequities, large and small, that Black people face each day. I could no longer hide behind my good intentions and do-gooderness; the veil of racism was ripped back for all to see- especially me.

This was my street. This happened in my funky, diverse and friendly neighborhood. On my watch. No matter how sensitive to racial inequities I had been.

Tony's murder shattered my white world and propelled me in an entirely different direction-acknowledging and then facing how the systematic violence and hatred by so-called white people (the phrase Ta-Nehisi Coates uses) has brutalized Black people since 1619. From chattel slavery through Jim Crow, lynchings, and now mass incarceration, the policing of Black bodies has been the main reason for the police and police brutality for more than 170 years. Every day, Black people live Holy Week- especially the trauma of Good Friday. What must that do to a body?

Since Tony's murder, I have become more educated- read more fiction and non-fiction books by Black people, taken courses, heard lectures, and journeyed to The National Memorial for Peace and Justice (the Lynching Museum) in Montgomery, AL. A holy place. Might this journey into the Holy Week of societal racism be eye opening? yes. Traumatizing? yes. On-going? yes. Life giving? yes.

It is a journey that I am willing to go on with Jesus. Facing and acknowledging the original sin on which the United States was founded.

Jesus did not come into this world to ignore people who are hurting. Jesus did not come into this world to run away from humanity's pain. Jesus is not scared of pain. For not only does Jesus feel the pain of wood and nails, thorns and mockery, betrayal and being the butt of others' rage, but like Black people in the United States, Jesus feels the weight of the evil, the malice, the pettiness of the sins of our world in his body.

He does not throw off that weight, though he could. He does not give back evil for evil, return malice for malice. He does not take revenge on the petty minded or spew out hate on all who despised, betrayed or rejected him.

No, Jesus does not give back the sin of the world, he takes it away into death, into hell and then waits. I call this the Holy Saturday moment.

Jesus waits until we realize that he has indeed died. Until we admit our complicity in his life's ending. "When did I see you Lord....?"

It is at that moment of confession that the Risen Jesus comes, says our name and opens our eyes to show us the diverse world that God so loves. It is then we know the power of resurrection and God's invitation to walk with the resurrected Christ to see what he sees, to feel what he feels and to do what he wants us to partner with him to do. For the last word is not ours or death's or racism's, but God's.

The days of Holy Week are special to me. As we attend each service, we ponder again the wonder and compassion of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. For God so loved you and me, and God so loved the world. Including the so-called white police officer who pulled the trigger. Including Tony and his family.

I wonder what Jesus has in store for us this year as we walk through Holy Week?

Peace, Glen





Out, But Not Alone, On The Streets

February 17, 2021

Rachel Yates

“Hey, I’ve got some Cracker Jacks. You want some?” I heard her ask. I heard her after the fact, but those who were there that day heard the joy-filled question firsthand. Cracker Jacks, after all, represent joy. Though not the most nutritious, they’re fun, especially if you find the little prize inside. Even their variants, like Poppycock usually come out for festivities. Who doesn’t love munching on kettle corn while wandering around the fair? Yes, we want some Cracker Jacks!

Cathy Manthei asked this question on a frigid February afternoon last week, as she greeted people who had come to Apostle Presbyterian Church, West Allis. Those present were offered more than Cracker Jacks. Hot minestrone soup was ladled into to-go cups by Apostle volunteers. The West Allis Fire Department was on hand with its Mobile Integrated Health Unit, including paramedics and mental health professionals who are adept at helping those getting by on the street and those fighting addiction. They provided medical testing as well as counseling. The Street Angels, an outreach and advocacy organization for people experiencing homelessness, has also partnered in this community endeavor, bringing food and clothing for those who drop by. Another organization has promised to supplement the meal that can be offered. On this Wednesday in February, a news crew was on hand to catch the story.

Each Wednesday from 2-4 pm, Apostle and these vital community organizations join together to welcome visitors, extend hospitality, and offer assistance. It took more than a month of planning before it came together, but now it’s growing. A second stop has been created nearer to the Presbytery Office and nearby towns are asking about replicating it in their area.

Cathy describes the program as fluid, rather than fixed in stone. You plan, but then you tweak as the real needs of the community become known. As with any good outreach program, it’s driven by what others need and can offer in return, not simply by how we think a problem should be fixed.

While Apostle, like our other congregations, has had regular worship and programming interrupted by the pandemic, it didn’t turn its focus only inward. Instead, it saw the deepening need just outside its closed doors. It chose to act.

The goal of our Matthew 25 vision as a Presbytery is to be aware of ingrained societal problems like systemic poverty and structural racism, and then to move toward action. We give thanks to God for the willingness of Apostle and other congregations to directly counter these problems through action. Cathy, in turn, offers her thanks to the Presbytery and its many leaders who are opening our eyes and nudging the church into action: “I ... am so very sad that we can't gather in person as a Presbytery but BOY OOO BOY these virtual meetings have certainly brought me to a place of wanting to find more help for the folks that need it the most. THANK YOU for pushing us towards that place--THANK YOU for planning meetings that have a ‘punch’---THANK YOU for all you do for us. God is moving and I believe, with your HUGE efforts, we Presbys are following.” Amen! Oh, and pass the Cracker Jacks, will you?



*see article

Looking Ahead

April 4 Easter Sunday

Upcoming Vacations

Pastor Glen (April 6-13)

Therese Dorna (April 8-13)

PLEASE NOTE:

Because of the uptick in COVID cases in Wisconsin and, in particular, Waukesha County, Session has deemed it prudent to keep Sunday Worship On-Line (Virtual) for now. **There will be NO in-person services at First Pres until it is considered safe.**

Please join us each week in March on Sunday Morning.

▶▶ The Worship Service will be on our website by 9:00 AM: go to www.firstpreswaukesha.org; from the homepage select the Online Worship for the current Sunday's Service. A printable .pdf copy of the bulletin is available for that service as well.

▶▶ You can also view the complete Sunday Service by visiting: [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and type into the search bar - First Presbyterian Church of Waukesha; scroll down to the Latest from First Presbyterian Church of Waukesha and you can select the recorded service.

We will keep you posted as to when we can resume in-person services.

MARCH 1

6:00 PM Session Meeting
Via Zoom

MARCH 7

MARCH 9 Presbytery Meeting* - Via Zoom

MARCH 10 NO Deacons' Meeting (cancelled)

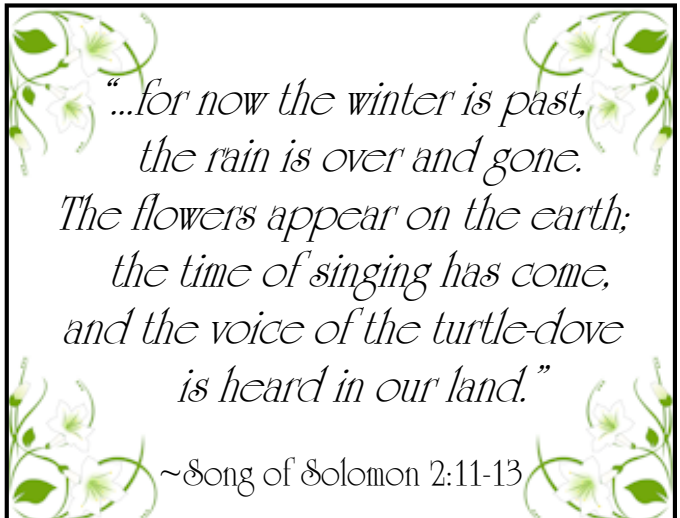
MARCH 14 Daylight Saving Time Begins*

MARCH 17 St. Patrick's Day

MARCH 20 Spring!!

MARCH 21

MARCH 28



March Birthdays

3/4 Vicki Sulsberger

3/5 Joan Schmidt

3/6 Beverly Franzke

3/10 Shannon Fisher

3/12 Alyssa Pugh

3/15 Laura Ulrich

3/17 Patrick Price

3/21 Magdalena Du Mez



Daylight Saving Time

Begins Sunday, March 14

Turn your clock ahead before you go to sleep on Saturday, March 13.



Please note office hours are Monday through Thursday, 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM.



Lenten Devotionals

2021 Lenten Devotionals, A Story to Tell, are available. Arrange with Therese to pick one up at the office.

You may also choose to select one of the on-line Lent devotionals listed below:

<http://ccca.biola.edu/events/2021/feb/16/lent-project-2021-devotional/>

- ▶ Scroll down until you see this message;
- ▶ To subscribe and have each day of the 2021 CCCA Lent Project delivered directly to your email in-box, [click here](#). If you subscribed to the 2020 Advent Project there is no need to re-subscribe, you will automatically receive the 2021 Lent Project.

Or

https://www.pts.edu/devotional_1

- ▶ Scroll down until you see Lenten Devotional 2021
- ▶ Select the daily meditation you wish to listen to or print the .pdf to read the message

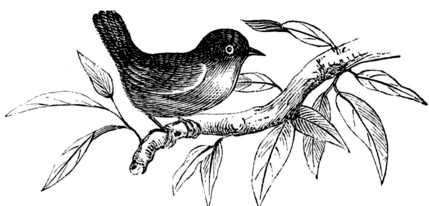
Presbytery Meeting

Tuesday, March 9, 2021
4:00PM - 6:00PM
On-line Zoom Meeting

You are invited to participate in the next Presbytery meeting to be held on **Tuesday, March 9, 2021.**

Go to: <https://www.pbymilwaukee.org> and select "Register for the March 9 Presbytery Gathering" link.

Or Contact: Christine Halverson at (414) 292-2740



Easter Remembrance Honoring Our Loved Ones

Due to Covid restrictions, we will NOT have our traditional Easter flowers available to order this year.

This Easter, Rev. Glen will set aside several moments for silent reflection where we will pray for the people you wish to honor or remember. There will be a special insert in the Easter bulletin with the names of loved ones you would like to have mentioned. Please email presby1@sbcglobal.net and provide the name(s) for whom you would like in the insert.

Or call Therese (262)542-4243 with the information.

In honor of your loved one you may still wish to make a gift through the Presbyterian Mission Agency's (PMA) Giving Catalog. Consider making a donation of a family of chickens, a farming kit, or a container garden to help those in need. You'll find more details by visiting [Presbyterian Online Giving Catalog \(pcusa.org\)](http://Presbyterian Online Giving Catalog (pcusa.org)) and select "see gifts".



Have something for the **April** newsletter? Please send it to

presby1@sbcglobal.net

or drop it in Therese's mailbox by **Wednesday, March 16** to have it included. Any items received after the 16th will be included in the May newsletter.

One Great Hour of Sharing



Each year we participate in the **One Great Hour of Sharing Offering** sponsored by the PC(USA). Since 1949 Presbyterians have joined with millions of other Christians through One Great Hour of Sharing to share God's love with those in need. Your generous gifts assist those affected by natural disasters, provide food to the hungry, and assist in helping to empower the poor and oppressed. Please consider contributing to the **One Great Hour of Sharing**. It will be collected from February 17th through April 4th.

2021 Per Capita

Per Capita for 2021 in the Presbytery of Milwaukee remains at \$38.75. Please consider contributing your per capita so that First Presbyterian might use your share elsewhere in the budget. Per Capita is not taken from your regular contributions because it must be designated by you for this specific use.

Please note "per capita" in the memo line. Thank you!

Session Recap

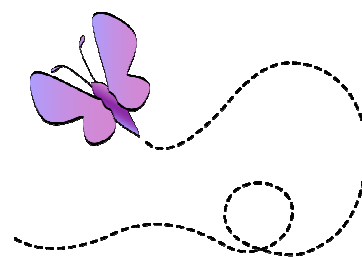
In February, the Session continued to discern the future of FPCW. While a firm plan and timeline were not established, it appears joining with another congregation is the likely path. Because the contract with Caring Place has a 12-month notice period, the Session decided to end the lease agreement on February 28, 2022. To be sure, this was not an easy decision. The intent is for FPCW to continue to support Caring Place.

Worship services are available online. You can view there from the FPCW website (www.firstpreswaukesh.com) or from our YouTube channel (head to www.youtube.com and search for FPCW). Our CCLI license was upgraded to include streamed worship services. The license will be appended to the end of the videos.

PCUSA participates in One Great Hour of Sharing during the season of Lent. The focus is to share with neighbors in need around the world. The Deacons are considering establishing a local chapter of Blessing in a Backpack. We discussed supporting this through the Matthew 25 Initiative.

The resurfacing of the Dining Room floor is complete. It turned out quite well. We are considering options to address the trim work (baseboards) as much of it is not in the best of shape. There is also some plaster work that needs to be done. Russ Volmar will work with a local contractor for this.

Financially, the church is in good shape. The Endowment Fund continues to perform well. The church received a statement from First Hawaiian Bank regarding a trust fund that lists FPCW as a beneficiary. No other details are available at this time.



Ash Wednesday at First Pres

On Wednesday, February 17, Rev. Glen, with the help of Bob Pugh, braved the freezing weather and offered the 2021-safe-and-socially-distanced-appropriate Lenten Ashes to those who stopped by to receive them. Eleven folks came that day.

"...Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

~Genesis 3:19



Heritage Presbyterian Church in Muskego

Heritage Presbyterian Church in Muskego is so excited to be able to support our church Elder, Glenn Kozicki, in his calling to serve the homeless community in southeastern WI. Glenn heads Heritage Home Delivers (HHD), a ministry of Heritage Church, that provides furniture and other furnishings for people who were previously homeless. Heritage helps to support this mission by funding truck rentals and storage units so all is ready when referrals come in.

HHD has picked up furnishings from over 50 donors in 2020 to keep a robust inventory of furniture. They have also delivered the requested furnishings to over 50 homes. Since 2017 Heritage has been involved with 115 deliveries, 175 pickups and have joyfully driven almost 9000 miles! HHD has been especially busy since November when we started receiving client referrals directly from Milwaukee County.

If you would like to donate simply email us at HeritageHomeDelivers@gmail.com.

We are in need of dressers, love seats, lamps, armed chairs and beds. With a finite storage space we may have to schedule your donation pickup into the near future, usually not longer than two weeks out. Because of COVID-19, we spend limited time in houses for donations or deliveries, keeping social distancing, and always wearing a mask.

We do all this with a joyful spirit and thank God for the opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,
Heritage Presbyterian Church





...Spring

"And Spring arose on the garden fair, Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere; And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast rose from the dreams of its wintry rest." ~ *Percy Bysshe Shelley*

"Earth is dry to the center, but spring, a new comer, a spring rich and strange, shall make the winds blow round and round, thro' and thro', here and there, till the air and the ground shall be fill'd with life anew. ~ *Alfred Tennyson*

"The year's at the spring and day's at the morn; Morning's at seven; The hillside's dew-pearled; The lark's on the wing; The snail's on the thorn; God's in His heaven - All's right with the world! ~ *Robert Browning*

"It's spring! Farewell to chills and colds! The blushing, girlish world unfolds. Each flower, leaf and blade of sod - small letters sent to her from God." ~ *John Updike*

"There is no time like Spring, when life's alive in everything, before new nestlings sing, before cleft swallows speed their journey back along the trackless track – God guides their wing, He spreads their table that they nothing lack, – before the daisy grows a common flower, before the sun has power to scorch the world up in his noontide hour..." ~ *Christina Rossetti*

"DEAR March, come in!
How glad I am!
I looked for you before.
Put down your hat—
You must have walked—
How out of breath you are!
Dear March, how are you?
And the rest?
Did you leave Nature well?
Oh, March, come right upstairs with me,
I have so much to tell!

I got your letter, and the bird's;
The maples never knew
That you were coming,—I declare,
How red their faces grew!
But, March, forgive me—
And all those hills
You left for me to hue;
There was no purple suitable,
You took it all with you.

Who knocks? That April!
Lock the door!
I will not be pursued!
He stayed away a year, to call
When I am occupied.
But trifles look so trivial
As soon as you have come,
That blame is just as dear as praise
And praise as mere as blame."
~ *Emily Dicknson*

"One of God's arrangements is that after winter there should come beautiful spring days. It happens every year and it happens every life." — *Father Joseph*