



Friendship Community Church
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April 2011 Newsletter

I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in me, even though they die, yet shall they live. And anyone who lives and believes in me, shall never die. John 11:25

Many people believe that spending your time in this life concerned about the next life is a waste of time. Many believe that this life is all there is. Others believe that even if there is life after death, it isn't anything to worry about or prepare for, perhaps trusting that they will all be drawn to a bright light once they die. Still others have given up any hope that God exists or that God has anything to do with a life after this one. And for another group, they believe that the afterlife just means a reincarnation of who you are now for someone/something else you will be. And yet, Jesus taught that what happens in this life is directly connected to what happens in life after death. In fact, He taught that what we believe in this life has direct bearing on what happens to us after death. Jesus revealed that His entire life was given for the purpose of saving us from an eternal separation from God in the afterlife to being in God's eternal presence forevermore. He taught us that God loves us more than we can imagine and is intricately involved in our lives right now. Jesus showed us that deep love by allowing Himself to be crucified on the cross in order to secure our heavenly future. He rose from the dead to prove that all that He taught about God and heaven and hell is the truth about the here and now and what is to come. Easter is our celebration of the fact that Jesus is the Resurrection and Life. When we as Christians celebrate Easter we are telling the world that we believe that not only does this life count because God created us, but that what we believe in this life about Jesus has direct bearing on what happens to us after death. This Easter, as we all celebrate Jesus' rising from the dead, let us also give thanks that we believe in Him. Let us be thankful that because we believe in Him now, we will spend life after death with Him in eternity!

Pastor Michele



BIRTHDAYS IN APRIL

April 6th	Florence Warrington
April 6th	Laura Barr
April 11th	Viola Mitchell
April 13th	Nicholas Rossi
April 15th	Melissa Bishop
April 20th	Nina Nasir
April 21th	Kelsey Miller
April 23th	John MacLachlan
April 23th	Juliana Lockhart
April 25th	Valerie Miller

Milestones



ANNIVERSARIES IN APRIL

April 1st	Ted and Peggy McDaniels
April 5th	Louis and Dorothy Ashton



Days to Remember with Flowers

Don't forget to place your flower orders
to Celebrate Birthdays & Anniversaries
or
in memory of that special loved one!

The order form for is in the lobby on the table.

Just fill in the date you would like the flowers, your name
and address and the reason for the flowers.

The price of the flowers is \$25 and the florist will send
the bill to your home!



SPRING CLEAN UP DAY!

Saturday, April 9th from 8am-12pm
Rain Date will be April 16th

Anyone available should contact Christy Hind at
cmhind@hotmail.com or 856-309-9284 so that we
have a rough count and can prioritize.

Let's make the grounds beautiful for Palm Sunday and Easter :)



Special Events

5 th	Junior High Youth Group	06:30 PM
12 th	Junior High Youth Group	06:30 PM
12 th	Session	07:00 PM
10 th	FCC Potluck	12:00 PM
17 th	PALM SUNDAY	
19 th	Junior High Youth Group	06:30 PM
21 st	Maundy Thursday Service	07:30 PM
22 nd	Good Friday Prayer Vigil	ALL DAY
24 th	EASTER SUNDAY	
26 th	Junior High Youth Group	06:30 PM



The Colors of Easter - Color used in worship is especially important during the season of Easter. The changing colors of the sanctuary from the purple of Lent to the black of Good Friday provide graphic visual symbols for the Lenten journey. The change of colors for Easter and the following Sundays helps communicate the movement of sacred time as well as personal faith journeys.



The Sanctuary colors for Easter Sunday and Ascension Day are white and gold, the colors of sacred days throughout the church year. For the Easter season, white symbolizes the hope of the resurrection, as well as the purity and newness that comes from victory over sin and death. The gold (or yellow) symbolizes the light of the world brought by the risen Christ that enlightens the world, as well as the exaltation of Jesus as Lord and King.





April 10th

Potluck directly following the 11am service with an Easter Egg Hunt for the children.



EASTER SEASON OFFERING



Easter is celebrated by Christians for 40 days. It's the longest celebration of the entire Christian Year. It begins with Easter Sunday and ends with Ascension Thursday, which is the day we remember when Jesus ascended back into heaven.

This Easter Season we would like to collect a special offering for Friendship Community Church. This Easter Offering will be a way to offer a special gift to the Lord out of Thanksgiving for His saving work of dying and rising for us.

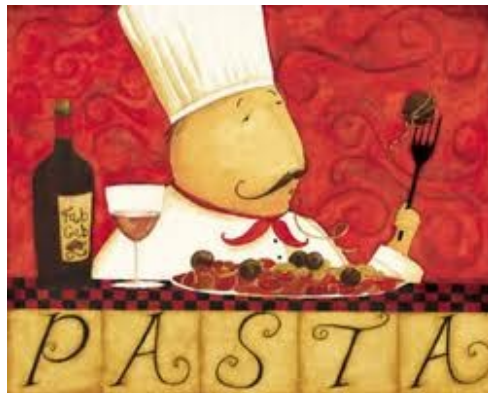
We are asking that each member of FCC set aside \$1 each day of Easter Season (\$40 total) for this special offering. On June 5th, the final Sunday of Eastertide, we will receive our special offerings during worship and acknowledge our gift with prayer.

Please consider making this special Easter Season Offering for our church. It is a concrete way to recognize together how much the saving grace of Jesus our Lord means to us.



We are starting a prayer ministry at FCC! We spend a great deal of time talking about what we should do as Christians. But we also need to spend a great deal of time in prayer, before we do anything! Prayer is an essential practice in a Christian's life. It brings us into a constant awareness of God's presence in our lives and of God's purpose for us. It helps us to be thankful, penitent, and joyful in the Lord. It also gives us the benefits of peace and calmness because we have taken time to spend with God and His loving presence.

As we start this ministry at FCC, you will be hearing about a multitude of opportunities for praying, being prayed for, and inviting others into prayer. WE are looking forward to sharing the gift of prayer with you and with our Lord Jesus Christ!



A Night In Italy dinner with Live Jazz Music
May 21st at 6pm

Adults \$10, Children \$3. Mark your calendars because you won't want to miss this event. Invite your family, friends and neighbors too! Please contact Kathy Repici if you're interested in volunteering for this event.



When they call to me, I will answer them. - Psalm 91:15

Earthquake. Tsunami. Nuclear meltdown. Any one of these disasters could be catastrophic.

Recovery efforts continue in Japan following the March 11 tsunami and earthquake. The humanitarian situation has been exacerbated by reports of hundreds of large aftershocks, the onset of subzero temperatures, and the fear of nuclear fallout from damaged nuclear power plants.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is responding through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) and our ecumenical and mission partners. \$100,000 from the One Great Hour of Sharing offering was provided for immediate assistance to survivors of this disaster—and we'll continue to walk with them as they rebuild their lives.

While Japan is among the world's most advanced countries, the damage caused by the unprecedented scale of these multiple disasters is beyond imagination. **You can make a difference** in bringing God's healing to this devastated nation, where Presbyterians have been engaged in active mission work since 1859.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

GIVE—Faithful members who shared their financial blessings undesignated through the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) last year made \$100,000 immediately available for the Japan response. Please consider increasing your OGHS support this year. For individuals wanting to exclusively support this disaster, we invite you to designate your gift to DR000148 for supporting relief efforts wherever disasters occur, or DR000117 for Japan. Gifts can be made online at www.pcusa.org/pda, by phone at (800) 872-3283, or by mailing a check to: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

ACT—Plan a special worship service using resources available on the PDA web site. Make Gift of the Heart hygiene kits to replenish the supply being sent to Japan from the region.

PRAY—Join with others in lifting up the people of Japan and those providing aid.

Learn more at www.pcusa.org/pda.

New

Choir Members
Welcome!

The FCC Singers is always looking for new members! If you love to sing, please consider joining us on Thursday evenings from 7:15-8:30 for rehearsals. We have a lot of fun while learning songs to enhance the worship service for our members. We are beginning to learn music for Holy Week at this time, so please come out and add to our numbers! For more information, see Tamah Freni. See you Thursday!



The Donations arm of the Transition Team working with Robin's Nest is inviting the congregation to join with it in gathering \$5 WAWA gift cards (or the money to purchase them) for the 30 young people currently at residence at Robin's Nest.

We would like to present each with a gift card tucked inside a seasonal bag with a favor filled with a bit of candy.

We are asking for your contributions to help make this possible. Since times are tight for everyone, this just might mean forgoing a cup of coffee or a treat one day in order to make the season brighter for someone else.

Contributions and/or cards may be turned in to Teresa Romeo or Peggy McDaniels, or put into the collection plate with this flyer.



Throughout this Sunday School Year we have been preparing two of our youth for Confirmation. They are Heather Torres and Zachary Miller. They have been baptized as young children and have reached the age of preparing to make their own Profession of Faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Confirmation is the other half of Baptism, if you will, where a baptized child is made ready to make their personal statement of faith in Jesus Christ for themselves.

Heather and Zachary have been attending worship every Sunday. They have been studying the gospel of Matthew with their parents. They have studied The Heidelberg Catechism with Pastor Michele and are learning about Church History, Mission and Polity Presbyterian style. They are completing 40 hours of community service in order to learn that being a Christian means that we serve others with our time as a natural part of our expression of faith in Jesus. They will write up their own statement of Christian faith and make a commitment to a particular ministry in our church.

We will all have the opportunity to celebrate with them on Pentecost Sunday, June 12th, right after worship during our June Potluck. During worship that day they will make their Professions of Faith and become active members of Friendship Community Church.

Please pray for Heather and Zachary as they continue to prepare for this most important occasion of claiming Jesus as their personal Savior. And plan to join us as we mark the day when they become professing Christians on Pentecost Sunday, 2011!!!



There will be no Sunday School on Easter Sunday.
Children's Worship will be held as regularly scheduled during the 11 am service



I am coordinating an effort to provide meals for church family members when they encounter such situations as health challenges, bereavement or the birth of a baby – when our lives feel like they are turned upside down, it is nice to know that someone is thinking about you and the burden of worrying about dinner has been lifted for a time. It is my hope to create a rotating list so that volunteers will be available to be called upon periodically when these situations arise. If you would be willing to make a dinner for a fellow church member when the need arises, please contact Laura Barr at barr94@verizon.net or call me at [856-589-2673](tel:856-589-2673) to put your name on our list. Thank you.

Volunteer Opportunities



There's an immediate need for volunteers to lead the Children's Worship lessons during the 11 o'clock service. Teaching materials are available for any level teacher - even a beginner. All you need is a love of the Lord to get started sharing His message! If you are interested please contact Melissa Bishop to discuss scheduling.



If you're interested in helping us put together another FCC drama during worship in February, please let us know. Whether you have experience on the stage or would like to try it for the first time, you are welcome to join our group. You can contact Pastor Michele at (856) 873-2569 or Glenn Fennimore at (856) 728-4843.

SYMBOLS OF EASTER



EASTER LILY - A popular symbol of the Easter festival, the white lily is held as the traditional Easter Flower and represents love and hope. The single flower stem originating from a bulb represents the resurrection of Christ three days after his apparent death by crucifixion. Legend has it that white lilies were grown at the place where drops of blood fell from Jesus Christ's body.



DAFFODILS - Daffodils, also known as Narcissus, are another popular Easter flower. This vibrant flower contains six petals which are yellow. Daffodils symbolize rebirth and eternal life which is relevant to the Christian meaning of Easter. Daffodils also bloom in the spring. According to Christian beliefs, the flower bloomed during Christ's resurrection.



PALM - It was a Roman custom to welcome royalty by waving palm branches. When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday, people welcomed him with palm branches carpeting the streets and waving them. Today, on Palm Sunday, Christians would carry palm branches in parades, make them into crosses and garlands to decorate the Church.



DOGWOOD - There is a popular story for the flowering dogwood tree. It was said to be the wood used to build the cross for the crucifixion of Christ due to its towering characteristic and hardwood. The tree then won the favour of God that it was turned into a smaller tree with gnarled and twisted trunks so that it will not be used again for that dire purpose. It was also given white flowers resembling the cross. The center area of the flower is reddish and is regarded as a symbol for the blood of Jesus.



EASTER EGG - As Christianity spread, more familiar traditions, symbols and celebrations of spring were associated with Easter - Christ coming back to life after death. One of the oldest spring symbols in the world is the egg. The oval shape of the egg was the same shape for a raindrop and a seed. These two were important life-giving elements. The egg itself promises new life as in spring, birds, and many other animals are hatched from eggs. Whether you're painting eggs or eating eggs for Easter, be sure to consider how our God has given us the gift of new life through Jesus Christ, His Son!



LAMB - The lamb was the central sacrifice to God by the Hebrews at Passover. When Jesus died, he gave himself as an offering to God for the sins of the world. Early Christians then saw the lamb as a symbol of Jesus and used it for Easter celebration. Many people serve lamb as part of the Easter feast.

Christian Education

A Reformed Point of View:

Part III: Further Examination

This month we continue to look at what we learn when we worship and study, and what we teach when we lead lessons according to the Reformed point of view.

All persons of the Trinity are included: God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. God is the central character of the Bible. The sovereignty of God – that God is the one in charge – is apparent. God is revealed through God's Word and in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Both the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ are portrayed. The spirit of God is at work in individuals and in the world initiating, confirming, and sustaining faith.

God is revealed in the Bible; materials from both the Old and New Testaments are studied.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

(Matt 5:3-10, English Standard Version)

The whole Bible tells the story of God's love and interaction with God's creation therefore lessons include stories from both the Old and New Testaments. The stories of the Bible are sufficient and relevant to our lives today because they are the stories of God's people in relationship with God.

Worship and the sacraments are important to the life of the faith community.

“Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.’”
(John 6:35)

When appropriate, connections are made in the lessons to the worshipping life of the congregation, including instruction about Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Faith language and practices are used to help learners become familiar with them and integrate them into their daily life experience.

Next month I'll conclude this review of Reformed theology.

Melissa Bishop

Biblical Parenting Tip



Sorrow Instead of Anger

The goal of discipline is to help children change their hearts as well as their behavior. When misbehavior requires discipline, one of the ways to touch a child's heart is to respond with sorrow instead of anger.

Anger can be a type of revenge, to get back at someone for an offense committed. Anger builds walls between people. Sadness or sorrow, on the other hand, opens doors in relationships. It touches the heart of a person. When a child sees disappointment in a parent's eyes, it's often a powerful motivation for the child to want to change.

"But I'm not sad, I'm mad!" you may be saying. Just stop for a moment and look past your anger. If you think about it you really are sad because of what this negative pattern will do to your child if not addressed. You can see future consequences and know where this course of action is heading. Sadness is there. It's just covered up by your anger.

Ephesians 4:30 says, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit." God expresses sorrow when we sin. The same thing can be true in family life. Let your child see your disappointment and why it hurts you. That alone is a powerful motivation for children to change their hearts. "I'm really sad that you're acting so selfishly."

Be careful you don't lay a guilt trip on your kids by faking it, but sincere sorrow touches the heart so don't be afraid to show it. Your genuine concern for your children will go a long way to foster a closeness with them.