



# FPC TIDINGS



## Special Dates:

- Holy Week, April 5-12, 2020
- Palm/Passion Sunday, April 5, 2020
- Maundy Thursday, April 9, 2020
- Good Friday, April 10, 2020
- Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020

## IT TAKES GRACE...

Just yesterday, President Trump turned to the body of Christ and asked us to pray. We are certainly wading in streams we've not stepped into before, aren't we? Few of us could imagine the national or even global pandemic COVID-19 has become. And while the measures being taken seem so great, they do serve to remind us of the gravity. The last large-scale event of this order was probably 9/11. And yet, even then, most of us recognize the thing that held this country together was the body of Christ coming together for prayer and for encouraging one another...

That was then. This is now. The major prescription for slowing the curve of COVID-19 (other than bumping up our personal hygiene) is a term I was totally unaware of

less than a month ago: "social distancing." For the body of Christ, that basically means doing away with gathering at the church – for worship and study and fellowship, in addition to prayer and encouragement.

As I write this article, we are still formulating First Presbyterian's response. While it all seems so fluid right now, I do agree with the president. Even more convincing to me, I do agree with what God says in His Word. We all know the Scriptures direct us to pray for our leaders and our nation, along with the rest of the world, especially in times of duress. The Holy Spirit asks us to pray at all times, and particularly, in times of need. By my own calculations, this is certainly that time. Let us pray and may we believe for the salvation of the world.

Yes, it is time to pray... *Father, we ask that You would deliver Your people and all humanity from this disease. We ask that You would show Yourself strong and glorify Yourself, Your Son Jesus and Your*

*Holy Spirit through this deliverance, so that Jesus would be lifted up and draw all people to Himself. We love You and we thank You for first loving us. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

## KEEP IN TOUCH

As of March 17, all Great Banquets remaining on the Spring schedule have been cancelled. The calendar of activities for this month is subject to cancellation, depending on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sunday Sermons and prayer will be live-streamed on our website (newfpc.com). Keep watching the website for blogs and videos from the pastors.



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**HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE**

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE [ASSUMING WE ARE ABLE TO GATHER...]

- April 5: 10:15AM Palm Sunday Communion Worship
- April 9: 7:00PM Maundy Thursday Communion Worship
- April 10: Good Friday Prayer Vigil in the Sanctuary
- April 12: 7:00AM Son-Rise Worship in the Chapel  
 9:00AM Easter Breakfast in the Gym  
 10:15AM Easter Communion Worship in the Sanctuary

**REALITY CHECK...**

Please...Be reminded that whether we are physically in the church building or not, the cost of maintaining our ministry is ongoing. Please do not fail in your regular giving to the church. We are all pray-

ing this pandemic will not go long, but it is important for us to pay our bills even in the midst of it.



**FROM THE FAMILY OF DORIS THOMAS...**

“Although Mom had moved away, she still considered here her church home. She spent many years in this building – for her love of God, her church family, and for the joy she received in serving others. She is in her eternal home now, and that’s where she wanted to be. Thank you for your presence and prayers, the

beautiful flowers, and for the love you showed her.”

## BE FRUITFUL

Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'

Luke 13:6-9 New International Version (NIV)

*A person, God Almighty.*

*Had a fig tree - the Jewish Church.*

*Planted in his vineyard - established in the land of Judea.*

*He came seeking fruit - he required that the Jewish people should walk in righteousness, in proportion to the spiritual culture he bestowed on them.*

*The vine-dresser - the Lord Jesus, for God hath committed all judgment to the Son (John 5:22).*

*Cut it down - let the Roman sword be unsheathed against it.*

*Let it alone - Christ is represented as intercessor for sinners, for whose sake the day of their probation is often lengthened; during which time he is constantly employed in doing everything that has a tendency to*

*promote their salvation. Thou shalt cut it down - a time will come, that those who have not turned at God's invitations and reproofs shall be cut off, and numbered with the transgressors.*

### ANALOGIES IN THE PARABLE

Owner of the vineyard = the heavenly Father

The vinedresser = the Lord Jesus Christ

The vineyard = the world

The fig tree = the Jewish nation

Three years = the first three years of Jesus' ministry

Fruitlessness = Israel's rejection of Jesus

This year also = Jesus' final year of

preaching

Thou shalt cut it down = God's judgment against Israel

There is nothing in this parable that requires us to consider that fig tree as being only three years old. The Greek text in this place uses the past perfect "having been planted," that is, having been planted long ago in the call of Abraham.

"These three years" refer to the special anticipation upon the part of the Father that when the Son of God appeared Israel would receive and acknowledge him. The whole history of the chosen people was epitomized by what took place in the ministry of Jesus.

Although the fig tree in this parable primarily stands for Israel, the fig tree symbolizes also every individual who remains unrepentant.

The lesson for the individual is that borrowed time is not permanent. God's patience has a limit. In the parable, the vineyard owner grants another year of life to the tree. In the same way, God in His mercy grants us another day, another hour, another breath. Christ stands at the door of each man's heart knocking and seeking to gain entrance and requiring repentance from sin. But if there is no fruit, His patience will come to an end, and the fruitless individual will be cut down. We all live on borrowed time; judgment is near. That is why the prophet Isaiah wrote, "Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon" (Isaiah 55:6-7).  
On the Inside, Pastor Pete

## FINANCES AT A GLANCE

February 2020

Income	\$14,995.81	YTD	
Expense	<u>-\$21,567.41</u>	YTD Income	\$32,565.64
Net	- \$6,571.60	YTD Expense	<u>-\$52,176.28</u>
		YTD Net	- \$19,610.64

### Undesignated

Income	\$11,066.81	YTD Undesignated	
Expense	<u>-\$21,349.80</u>	Income	\$26,076.41
Net	- \$10,282.99	Expense	<u>-\$48,282.78</u>
		Net	- \$22,206.37

### Designated

Income	\$3,929.00	YTD Designated	
Expense	<u>-\$217.61</u>	Income	\$6,489.23
		Expense	<u>-\$3,893.50</u>

### Operating Funds

Beginning Balance	\$263,950.85
Ending Balance	\$254,327.56



- 5th Kendrick Nuttall (A)
- 6th Aimee Smiley
- 7th Anna Leasure
- 10th Doug & Suzanne Henley (A)
- 19th Michael Skultety
- 21st Darrell Engelhardt  
Phyllis Klym
- 23rd Patsy Sutton
- 26th Mary George Peyton
- 28th Reed Tabor  
Olivia Thomas
- 30th Russell & Susan Fischels

# April 2020

ALL ACTIVITIES ARE SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION (COVID-10)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 Palm Sunday →	6 Spring Break—All Week	7 10am Bible Study 6PM Session Mtg	8 No Activities	9	10 Good Friday Prayer Vigil	11
12 Resurrection of the Lord	13	14 10am Bible Study	15 5:15 Fellowship Meal 6:00 Activities 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	16	17	18
19 →	20	21 10am Bible Study	22 5:15 Fellowship Meal 6:00 Activities 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	23	24	25
26 →	27	28 10am Bible Study	29 5:15 Fellowship Meal 6:00 Activities 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	30		