



First Press

The First Presbyterian Church Newsletter

March 2005

Rev. Dr. Conrad Sharps - Senior Pastor
Rev. Hope Lee - Associate Pastor
Rev. Dr. John R. Harland - Parish Associate



Hidden in Plain Sight

The oldest African American Church in North America was established in 1773 in Savannah, Georgia. The current sanctuary of the First African Baptist Church, just off Franklin Square on Montgomery Street, was constructed by

slaves for slaves. Construction began in 1859 when both male and female slaves would come to the site following a full day of forced labor to build their church. In the winter when the light of the day faded early, they would build bonfires around the sanctuary in order to illuminate their work into the night. It's amazing to see the craftsmanship of their work, some of which includes breath-taking carvings on the pews and diamond-shaped holes cut into the flooring. But the great irony of their craftsmanship was not exposed until well in the 19th century, long after slavery had been abolished in our land. You see, slave masters would have never allowed their slaves to identify with their history, particularly that of their tribal identity from the lands from which they came.

These slaves however, took it upon themselves to carve on the pews of the sanctuary the symbols of every one of the African cultural identities (people groups) represented in the Savannah area. This house of God then, became for them not only a place of worship but also of cultural identity and pride, as the symbols of their identity remained hidden and yet in plain sight. The diamond-shaped holes also served a liberating purpose as in various strategic sections of the flooring they provided for adequate ventilation for escaping slaves on the underground railroad to freedom.

Hidden in plain sight. How often we also miss the identifying, liberating and redeeming actions of God in our own lives. If only we could train our eyes, our hearts and our minds to view life with a theological eye. The darkness of evil in the world seeks to enslave, to oppress and to take away the humanity of peoples everywhere. But God will have none of it. Our true identity has been forever carved upon the rough timbers of the cross of Jesus Christ.

We are children of God, and we are on a journey of freedom and faith. Although the safe places, the stops, the redeeming, merciful and sanctifying actions of God in our world today often go unnoticed, they remain in plain sight for those with discerning hearts. As we continue to face biological, cultural and personal tragedies that seem to enslave and distract we need not lose heart. Paul wrote to the Church in Corinth: "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

This is it! Our hope, (our redemption, our salvation) is often unseen by our world yet it is in plain sight. Are you struggling today? Do you wonder about your identity? Are you finding it hard to remember your story? Look to the cross your identity is to be found there; and though unseen and misunderstood by the world it remains unchangeable and eternal. When all the world is against you; when you are handed your own cross: pray. Pray that God will give you the ability to see in your hands (in your own fate) what the world cannot see, salvation in Jesus Christ.

Please submit articles for the newsletter as early as possible, but no later than the 20th of each month.

New Library Offerings

Books

Jesus Life Coach by Laurie Beth Jones: "...will transform the way you live day-by-day and help you gain control over the four most important life factors: focus, balance, productivity, fulfillment."

Pagan in Exile by Catherine Jinks: "...the second of four books in the action-packed saga of the savvy and sarcastic Pagan Kidrouk." This work of fiction takes place "while Jerusalem is in the hands of the Infidel and Crusaders return to Europe hoping to rally more knights to their cause" leading to a wonderful adventure.

The Edge Effect by Eric R. Braverman, M.D.: "With his emphasis on brain chemistry and electricity, Dr. Braverman leads the way in preventing brain aging. In this anti-aging century, get on the path to total health and feel as good as you look."

Letter to a Great Grandson by Hugh Downs: "In this heartwarming book-written for his great-grandson but perfect for readers of all ages-a beloved commentator and trusted public figure-shares his thoughts on topics ranging from relationships to science to life in general."

The Twilight of Atheism by Alister McGrath: "...this bold and provocative new book challenges the widely held assumption that the world is becoming more secular, and demonstrates why atheism cannot provide the moral and intellectual guidance essential for coping with the complexities of modern life."

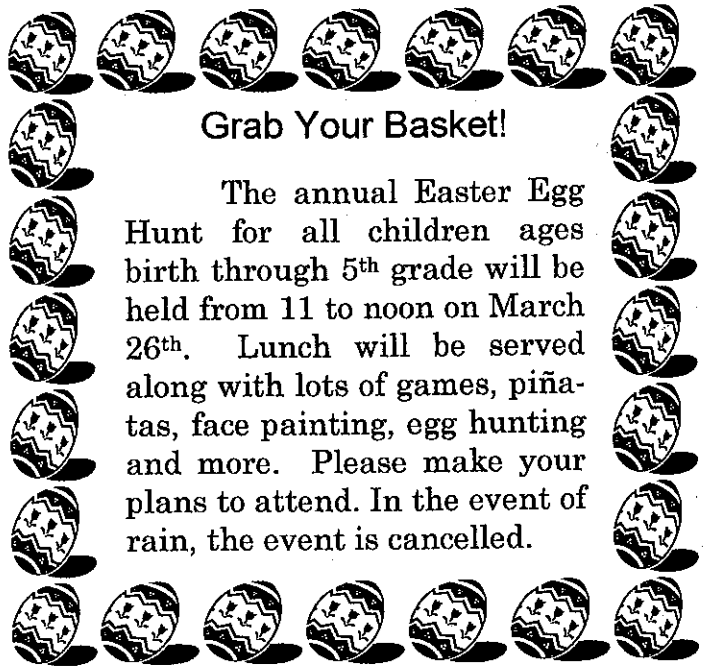
Kneeling in Bethlehem by Ann Weems: "In a style that is contemporary, reverent, and faith-filled, Ann Weems reflects on the mystery of the Christmas season."

Kneeling in Jerusalem by Ann Weems: "In a powerful and creative way, renowned author and speaker Ann Weems brings new insight into the Lenten season by providing 71 poems of inspiration."

Videos and DVDs

Religions of the World: a 6-volume box set, DVD, 50 minutes each that includes Buddhism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Protestantism.

History of Christianity: a 6-part video overview of the 2000-year history of the Christian Church which is a "basic introduction to the pivotal people, events, and issues in the Christian story."



Grab Your Basket!

The annual Easter Egg Hunt for all children ages birth through 5th grade will be held from 11 to noon on March 26th. Lunch will be served along with lots of games, piñatas, face painting, egg hunting and more. Please make your plans to attend. In the event of rain, the event is cancelled.

It's Off to Camp We Go!

Mark your calendars and make your plans now for the annual Family Weekend Retreat at Camp Montgomery.

- ♥ This is for all members of the congregation, not just people with children.
- ♥ The dates are Friday, April 15th through Sunday, April 17th.
- ♥ The price is \$30 per person and must be received, in advance, by April 7th, to secure your housing.
- ♥ Please mail or bring your reservation to the church office by that date.



Family Camp

New Worship Service

Saturday Evening Worship Services will continue through through Lent (Saturday, March 26th) at 6 p.m. in the sanctuary. At these services, we celebrate the Lord's Supper by Intinction. The content of these services is similar to Sunday morning services and are designed to alleviate crowding during our busiest season. Perhaps you might enjoy this unique worship experience.

Presbyterian Women's News

A big thank you to all of the Presbyterian Women who participated in the church services on February 26th and 27th as we "Celebrated The Gifts of Women."

All women of the church are welcome to join any of our circles. Feel free to visit any circle that fits your schedule. March meeting times and places are as follows:



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

- ♥ Elizabeth Circle, March 10th at 10 a.m., Jim Thomas Hall.
- ♥ Esther Circle, March 10th at 2 p.m., Marilyn Harlin's home, 10 Juniper Court.
- ♥ Hannah Circle, March 10th at 7 p.m., Addie Underwood's home, 403 Tarpon Avenue, Unit 401.
- ♥ Lydia Circle, March 7th at 6:30 p.m., at Joy Drewry's home, 5483 Florence Point Drive.
- ♥ Martha Circle, March 9th at 10 a.m., at Barbara Burton's home, 20 Harbor Court, Marsh Lakes.
- ♥ Ruth Circle, March 10th at 10 a.m., at Marilyn Showalter's home, 1834 South Fletcher.

The Mission outreach project for March is the collection of items for Hope House.



Easter Lilies

If you would like to place an Easter Lily in the sanctuary in honor or in memory of a loved one, please pick up an Easter Lily flyer from the church. Please bring flyers and money (\$10 each) by the church office to order your lily. The deadline is March 14th.

Upcoming March MACs Event

The MACs have two March events planned.

♥ **Mobile Trip** - Wednesday, March 16th through Friday, March 18th. The bus will leave the church promptly at 9 a.m.

♥ **Catered Lunch and Games Day** - March 17th. You may gather at 11:30 for fellowship, and a



traditional St. Patrick's Day meal will be served at noon followed by games. Please bring cards or board games that you enjoy. Your hostess, Elizabeth Kendrick, will provide some board games. Cost is \$10 and please call the church office to make reservations by Thursday, March 10th, so Chef Donna will know for how many to prepare.



This year's Easter Cantata will take place on Maundy Thursday, March 24th at 7 p.m. Musical selections will cover a time period based on Palm Sunday through Good Friday. The cantata will include scripture readings, anthems, and congregational singing.

Special music will also be performed on Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday.

Name Tag Ministry

The name tag ministry is in need of volunteers. If you can help at the 8:30 set up, please call Sewell Harlin at 277-4848. If you are able to help with the noon take down or alphabetizing of the name tags, please call John Drew at 261-0427.

March 2005

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6 2:00 PM 4:00 PM LOGOS Practice, Sanct. 5:45 PM Sun. Night LIVE Confirmation Lunch, JTH ETF Min. for Giving Hannigan Bapt.	7 5:30 PM Christian Ed. 6:30 PM Lydia Circle 7:00 PM Night CBS, FH & Sanc. 7:00 PM Night CBS, FH & Sanc.	8 7:00 AM HS Bkpt 12:00 PM Ker. Bible St. 3:00 PM Men's Coffee Klatch 4:00 PM MS Girls Bible St. 5:00 PM Mission 7:00 PM Elder/Deacon Train.	9 10:00 AM Martha Circle 12:00 PM Lenten Service 3:30 PM LOGOS Choir	10 8:00 AM Prayer 6:30 PM Presbyterian Men 6:45 PM T-N-T, Sr. Hi Ruth, Esther, Hannah, Elizabeth Circles	11 Pastor's Day Off Youth Bonfire-Bowlings	12 12:00 PM -6:00 PM Worship Service, Sanc. & FH																																																																																																																																																																																																																																											
13 1:00 PM -3:00 PM LOGOS Practice, Sanct. Confirmation Sunday	14 6:00 PM Pink Ribbons 7:00 PM Elder/Deacon Training 7:00 PM Night CBS, FH & Sanc.	15 12:00 PM Ker. Bible St. 3:00 PM Men's Coffee Klatch 4:00 PM MS Girls Bible St. 5:45 PM Deacons 7:00 PM Elder/Deacon Exam at Session	16 12:00 PM Lenten Service 2:00 PM Membership Care Choir MAC Dead Sea Scrolls Trif	17 8:00 AM Prayer 12:00 PM MAC Luncheon MAC Dead Sea Scrolls Trip	18 MAC Dead Sea Scrolls Trif Pastor's Day Off	19 12:00 PM -6:00 PM Worship Service, Sanc. & FH																																																																																																																																																																																																																																											
20 Palm Sunday Youth Mission Trip, Wimauma, FL	21 4:00 PM ETF 5:30 PM Finance Youth Mission Trip, Wimauma, FL	22 12:00 PM Ker. Bible St 3:00 PM Men's Coffee Klatch Youth Mission Trip, Wimauma, FL	23 12:00 PM Lenten Service Choir Youth Mission Trip, Wimauma, FL	24 8:00 AM Prayer 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Ser. & Com. Youth Mission Trip, Wimauma, FL	25 Pastor's Day Off	26 11:00 AM -12:30 PM Easter Egg Hunt 12:00 PM -9:00 PM Worship Service, Sanc. & FH																																																																																																																																																																																																																																											
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Men's Coffee Klatch



The first meeting of the Men's Coffee Klatch will be on Tuesday, March 1st at 3 p.m. and will be regularly held at the home of Roland Knight at 120 North 6th Street. Thereafter, they will meet each Tuesday at the same time and place, and each meeting will have a different discussion leader.

Discussions for the March meeting include

- Communicating with our children and grandchildren - led by Tom Monahan.
- Sustaining a loving marriage - conflict and resolution.
- Knowing when, where, and why to say no.
- How to use your gifts for the benefit of others.

The program goals of the Men's Coffee Klatch are to provide a time, place, and a program for the men of the church to come together in a weekly fellowship in order to discuss issues of importance to men. Our principal aim is to provide an informal, topic-driven forum where men can freely and openly discuss their experiences, and help themselves and others to better understand our many life roles in the greater community and in our church.

This will not be a bible study group, but will use the scriptures as a guide for our daily living, and to help us become more consonant with Christian behaviors and beliefs.

Lenten Services

The Wednesday Noon Lenten Services for prayer, reflection and communion continue at noon each Wednesday until Easter. A nursery will be provided. We hope you will make your plans to join us.



On the night before his crucifixion, Jesus gathered with his friends to celebrate the Passover. During the supper, Jesus got up from the table, poured water into a basin and went from man to man washing the feet of the disciples and drying them with a towel.

Peter protested, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Peter relented and asked Christ to wash his hands and head as well. (see John 13:1-16)

Afterwards, Jesus said to his friends: "If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example that you also should do as I have done to you." (John 13:14-15, nrsv)

On Maundy Thursday, let us remember Christ's command and his example of humility, service and love.

Elder/Deacons Retreat

Deacons, elders, and deacons and elders elect, mark your calendars for the annual Elder/Deacon Retreat. Which is scheduled for Saturday, March 5th at Walker's Landing. More information will be distributed.



**Elders
and
Deacons**



**Palm
Sunday**



March Logos Events

- ♥ March 2nd - Pirate Night dress up night
- ♥ March 9th - Hawaiian Luau
- ♥ March 16th - No LOGOS
- ♥ March 23rd - No LOGOS
- ♥ March 30th - Under the Sea Night dress up night

Flower Calendar


- ♥ March 6th - Miriam and Jim Hannigan in honor of their children, Olivia Evelyn and Greer; her parents, Sally and Bill Bailey; and his mother, Marge McLaughlin.
- ♥ March 13th - Dan Marley in honor of Robin's birthday .
- ♥ March 20th - Jane and Juli'Anne Barreda in memory of Robert Barreda .
- ♥ March 27th - Easter.



First Press is published monthly as part of the ministry of First Presbyterian Church.

First Presbyterian Church
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 Web site: //www.1stpres-fb.com

Bulk Rate
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Nonprofit Org.
 Permit No. 10
 Fernandina Beach
 FL 32034

“He  is risen;
 he is not here.”

MARK 16:6

Sunday Worship Hours: 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
 Sunday School: 9:55 a.m.
 Thursday Morning Prayer Group: 8:00 a.m.