



FROM
THE
PASTOR



“He is Risen! He is Risen, indeed!” Such were the enthusiastic cries of the early followers of Jesus, when they discovered that he had risen from the dead.

Jesus had been arrested, beaten, tried, killed, and buried in a tomb. The disciples had been scattered. They were dejected and afraid. Some had even begun walking home to Galilee. Some wanted to go back to their previous vocations like fishing.

But then they heard the news. Some women had gone to the tomb early in the morning to properly prepare the body for burial. Since Jesus had died just before the Sabbath began, he was buried hurriedly. But what they found was not the lifeless body of Jesus, but an empty tomb. And then, Jesus appeared to the women, who ran to tell the disciples. The rest, they say, is history.

This small band of men wound up turning the world upside down. Within a generation, there were Christian missionaries in Rome, Spain, Britain, Ethiopia, Libya, India, and perhaps as far away as China. They stood up to the status quo. They proclaimed Jesus was Lord in the midst of a culture that worshiped Caesar as Lord. When women threw their unwanted babies in the trash, the early followers of Jesus rescued these children and raised them as their own. Whenever there was sickness, like the plague, it was Christians who sacrificially cared for those who were sick and dying. Many of the Christian care-givers themselves died as a result. But they did so with great joy. Because they knew, “He is Risen! He is Risen, indeed!”

During this Easter season, we have good news to contemplate and to share. We are told that if we die with Christ, we will be raised with Christ. So we who claim to follow our Lord need to consider how we are dying to ourselves and living to Christ, how we are sowing seeds of eternal life with our speech, our habits, our activities.

But we also have good news to share, that “He is Risen! He is Risen, indeed!” It means that as death could not hold Jesus, death cannot hold us, nor our loved ones. We can live in hope that this life, as wonderful and beautiful, as painful and difficult as it is, is not the end. And as we live and work and play and eat with people in our family and community, we can share this good news that “He is Risen! He is Risen, indeed!”

One of the ways we can share this is with good stories. You will see the story in the Harvester about Jeremy’s Egg. I heard this read on the radio some 25 years ago, and it never gets old. It is a powerful reminder of the truth of Jesus’ resurrection, and that the deep things of faith can be embraced by a child. Go ahead and enjoy it, and pass it on to someone you love.

I am glad to be back from my sojourn in the Valley of the Sun where I watched baseball for over a week. Thanks for letting me do this, it was refreshing.

Let’s continue to seek God together, and see when He can do in and through us. SDG

Pastor Jim

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jim', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Some upcoming events:

April 2- Maundy Thursday Service, 7:00 p.m.

April 5- Easter Sunday

April 13-17 Pastor Jim at the West Coast Presbyterian Pastors Conference at Mount Hermon

April 21-23 Pastor Jim at the Presbyterian Board of Pensions Western Regional Gathering in San Diego

April 26- Discussion of Prince Caspian from the Chronicles of Narnia, 6:00 p.m. in the Youth Room (Moved from March 29)

What's Happening at Harvest?

The Presbytery of Stockton has voted to send \$10,000 to each congregation in the presbytery, of which \$2,000 must be used for local mission, however that is defined by the congregation. The remaining \$8,000 has no restrictions. Let's dream!

We have hired the Gibbs Company to do our custodial job. They come highly recommended. They will be cleaning on Fridays. If you notice anything, please bring it to the attention of Pastor Jim or a member of the Session.

The Session has approved a provisional six-month agreement for a Spanish-speaking church to use the CE room on Sunday afternoons and Thursday evenings. They will have access to only the CE room. I am excited about opening up our facility to a significant population within our community. Please pray with me for God to bless their ministry, and ours.

We are still looking for a bookkeeper. Kathy Ramos, Office Manager at Geneva Presbyterian Church in Modesto, has been helping us. She is writing checks, and helping to simplify our accounting. Do you know anyone who would be interested in doing this about four hours a week? It is a paid position, and training will be provided.

Power of Prayer by Margaret Kuglin



God has given a tool for the Christian to fight our battles— and it is the weapon of prayer. We often want to fight our battles with our own power, however, that often fails. With prayer, there is more power lies within in a group than in an individual. We often ignore this, as it is easier to pray alone than go pray in a group. We like the safety of our homes and the comfort of our aloneness, and it is hard to motivate ourselves to get in the car and drive to church to pray in a group. We do this, we avoid praying in groups, and then we wonder why problems arise in our church. The power of prayer is magnified if we pray in groups— no prayer, no power.

A book I was reading stated, “Those famous polls report that two-thirds of Americans say that they pray at home. What would be the percentage if the question were ‘pray regularly

APRIL



2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1  5:30 p.m.— Praise Practice 6:30 p.m.— Choir Practice	2 9:30 a.m.— Alpha Circle 7:00 p.m.— Maundy Thursday Service- Chapel	3  10:00 a.m.— Women's Bible Study at Margaret Kuglin's	4
5  10:30 a.m.— Worship/ Easter	6 6:00 p.m.— Church Prayer Meeting 6:30 p.m.— Outreach Committee Meeting	7	8	9 5:30 p.m.— Praise Practice 6:30 p.m.— Choir Practice	10 10:00 a.m.— Women's Bible Study at Margaret Kuglin's 1:00 p.m.— Deacons Meeting	11
12 10:30—Worship	13 6:00 p.m.— Church Prayer Meeting	14	15	16 5:30 p.m.— Praise Practice 6:30 p.m.— Choir Practice	17 10:00 a.m.— Women's Bible Study at Margaret Kuglin's 6:00 p.m.— Mariners	18
Pastor Jim at West Coast Presbyterian Pastors Conference at Mount Hermon						
19 10:30— Communion 4:00 p.m.— Session 6:30 p.m.— Town Hall Mtg.	20 6:00 p.m.— Church Prayer	21	22	23 5:30 p.m.— Praise Practice 6:30 p.m.— Choir Practice	24 10:00 a.m.— Women's Bible Study at Margaret Kuglin's	25
Pastor Jim at Board of Pensions Gathering, San Diego						
26 10:30—Worship 6:00—Narnia— Prince Caspian	27 6:00 p.m.— Church Prayer Meeting	28	29	30 5:30 p.m.— Praise Practice 6:30 p.m.— Choir Practice		

with others’?” Praying with others keeps us accountable and allows us to persevere through hardships. Jesus urges us to pray with each other in Matthew 18:19-20, “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

The early Christians saw results when they persisted in praying together. Acts 1:14 “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.” Here there were many people praying together. Imagine what could happen if all the members of our congregation were present at prayer meetings lifting prayers to God.

The nominations for leaders is coming up. We need wise men and women to take leadership; men and women who take the responsibility to lead our church wisely and makes the effort to come to prayer meetings. In Acts 1:24 a group of 120 people gathered to pray for a leader, “You O Lord, who knows the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen.” They sought the Lord for just the right leader.

Acts 2:42, “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.” They were steadfast in prayer, meaning they continued to pray. We must grow in faith and fulfill the mission Jesus has given us. It’s imperative that we gather together for instruction, encouragement, and prayer. God never intended any Christian to live a solitary life.

Acts 4:23-31, the disciples had just been beaten for preaching in Jesus’s name. In these verses they were let go and went to their companions and reported all that had happened to them. So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: “Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: ‘Why did the nations rage, and the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ.’ “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness”

Acts 6:6-7; What happened when seven men were chosen with good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom they appointed over the business. “Whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.” (Acts 12: 4,12)

Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. Peter came to Mark's parents house where the church was praying. Peter was miraculously freed from the prison by an angel of God. I challenge you all to take that step of faith and come join us for Monday night prayer.

What Was In Jeremy's Egg? The Lesson of Easter from an Unlikely Child

Ida Mae Kempel

Jeremy was born with a twisted body and slow mind. At the age of 12 he was still in second grade, seemingly unable to learn. His teacher, Doris Miller, often became exasperated with him. He would squirm in his seat, drool and make grunting noises.



At other times, he spoke clearly and distinctly, as if a spot of light had penetrated the darkness of his brain. Most of the time, however, Jeremy irritated his teacher. One day, she called his parents to come to St.

Theresa's for a consultation. As the Forresters sat quietly in the empty classroom, Doris said to them, "Jeremy really belongs in a special school. It isn't fair to him to be with younger children who don't have learning problems. Why, there is a five-year gap between his age and that of the other students!"

Mrs. Forrester cried softly into a tissue, while her husband spoke. "Miss Miller," he said, "there is no school of that kind nearby. It would be a terrible shock for Jeremy if we had to take him out of this school. We know he really likes it here."

Doris sat for a long time after they left, staring at the snow outside the window. Its coldness seemed to seep into her soul. She wanted to sympathize with the Forresters. After all, their only child had a terminal illness. But it wasn't fair to keep him in her class. She had 18 other youngsters to teach, and Jeremy was a distraction. Furthermore, he would never learn to read and write. Why waste any more time trying?

As she pondered the situation, guilt washed over her. "Oh God," she said aloud, "here I am complaining when my problems are nothing compared to that poor family! Please help me to be more patient with Jeremy!"

From that day on, she tried hard to ignore Jeremy's noises and his blank stares. Then one day, he limped to her desk, dragging his bad leg behind him. "I love you, Miss Miller," he exclaimed, loud enough for the whole class to hear. The other students snickered, and Doris' face turned red. She stammered, "Wh-why that's very nice, Jeremy. N-now please take your seat."

Spring came, and the children talked excitedly about the coming of Easter. Doris told them the story of Jesus, and then to emphasize the idea of new life springing forth, she gave each of the children a large plastic egg. "Now," she said to them, "I want you to take this home and bring it back tomorrow with something inside that shows new life. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Miss Miller!" the children responded enthusiastically - all except for Jeremy. He just

listened intently; his eyes never left her face. He did not even make his usual noises.

Had he understood what she had said about Jesus' death and resurrection? Did he understand the assignment? Perhaps she should call his parents and explain the project to them. That evening, Doris' kitchen sink stopped up. She called the landlord and waited an hour for him to come by and unclog it. After that, she still had to shop for groceries, iron a blouse and prepare a vocabulary test for the next day. She completely forgot about phoning Jeremy's parents.

The next morning, 19 children came to school, laughing and talking as they placed their eggs in the large wicker basket on Miss Miller's desk. After they completed their math lesson, it was time to open the eggs.

In the first egg, Doris found a flower. "Oh yes, a flower is certainly a sign of new life," she said. "When plants peek through the ground we know that Spring is here." A small girl in the first row waved her arm. "That's my egg Miss Miller," she called out.

The next egg contained a plastic butterfly, which looked very real. Doris held it up. "We all know that a caterpillar changes and grows into a beautiful butterfly. Yes, that is new life, too." Little Judy smiled proudly and said, "Miss Miller, that one is mine!"

Next, Doris found a rock with moss on it. She explained that moss, too, showed life. Billy spoke up from the back of the classroom, "My Daddy helped me!" he beamed.

Then Doris opened the fourth egg. She gasped. The egg was empty! Surely it must be Jeremy's, she thought, and of course, he did not understand her instructions. If only she had not forgotten to phone his parents! Because she did not want to embarrass him, she quietly set the egg aside and reached for another.

Suddenly Jeremy spoke up. "Miss Miller, aren't you going to talk about my egg?" Flustered, Doris replied, "But Jeremy - your egg is empty!" He looked into her eyes and said softly, "Yes, but Jesus' tomb was empty, too!"

Time stopped. When she could speak again, Doris asked him, "Do you know why the tomb was empty?" "Oh yes!" Jeremy said, "Jesus was killed and put in there. Then His Father raised Him up!"

The recess bell rang. While the children excitedly ran out to the school yard, Doris cried. The cold inside her melted completely away.

Three months later, Jeremy died. Those who paid their respects at the mortuary were surprised to see 19 eggs on top of his casket, all of them empty.

This is a true story, the names have been changed for sake of privacy. Ida Mae Kempel is a free-lance writer from Alameda, California. This article appeared in Focus on the Family, April, 1988, and is used here by permission of the author. Ida Mae Kempel, Copyright © 1988, 2013, Ida Mae Kempel and Focus on the Family, Used by Permission.



- 1—Virginia Irons
- 9—Jacob Holleman
- 22—Hannah Holleman



- 30—Richard & Isabel McKay

If your birthday or anniversary has not been listed, please call the office and let us know.

Regular Prayer List



Assisted Living:

- Mildred Vine—
Paramount Court
- Donna McRae—
Golden Age Home Care, (memory care)
- Mabel Cronan—
The Stratford Place

Health Issues:

- Virginia Irons
- Roger Morrow
- Dorothy Nelson
- Bill Sperry
- Margaret Kuglin (eye)
- Patti Arbizu (knee)
- Cyndy Cawley (ankle)
- Alice Visser (English Oaks)

Stockton Presbytery Prayer List for April 2015

- April 5—Trinity Presbyterian: Stockton
Pastor: Byron Nelson
David & Wendy Warner HR
- April 12—First Presbyterian: Tracy
Pastor: Everett Bosch
- April 19—Cortez Presbyterian: Turlock
Pastor: Clover Bailey
Don Strongman
- April 26—First Presbyterian: Turlock
Pastor: Craig Wright
Diane Myers Wilson, (Navy Chaplain)

Ceres School's Prayer List for April 2015

- April 6—Cesar Chavez Junior High
Principal: Jose Beltran
- April 13—Don Pedro Elementary
Principal: Rick Hall
- April 20—Hidahl Elementary
Principal: Vaughn Williams
- April 26 —La Rosa Elementary
Principal: Lori Mariani



Mission Statement ~ With God in control, the mission of the Harvest Presbyterian Church is to proclaim and bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and nurture the faith of our church family.

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