

2016 March/April edition

Sunday, March 13



Spring
forward
1 hour



“The Passion” A Live Palm Sunday Event at Waldenberg Park



This year Holy Week is getting off to a blazing start in New Orleans. On Palm Sunday evening March 20, 1216, at 8 pm, 30, 000 people from all over the metro New Orleans area are expected to gather at Waldenberg Park on the Mississippi to participate in a live, nation-wide broadcast of the Passion narrative. Narrated and led by



Tyler Perry (*Madea* and *Tyler Perry's House of Payne*), the musical production uses pop tunes and songs, as well as local and national artists to tell the story of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection.

The event is free to the public, and will also be simulcast on Fox TV channel 8 here in New Orleans. The producers are also asking local churches to be present at the end of the production to help the audience process what they have seen, ask questions, and find out how they can get involved in a local church community. We will email and post on Facebook where the group from FPCNO will be standing during the performance, and where we will gather afterwards to talk to visitors.



Additionally, the crew is looking for volunteers to help carry an immense illuminated cross that will be used in the production on stage at the end of the presentation. They are setting up relay teams that will carry the cross from the Superdome to Waldenberg Park while the stage production is going on. They are also looking for people of all different beliefs, backgrounds and diversity to be interviewed for television spots that will be

broadcast during the show. If you are interested in these opportunities, call or email MaddyChristine Hope Brokopp immediately at info@mchopeproductions.nl (215)687-7222.

Easter Features:



Palm Sunday – 11:00 am worship, March 20th. Join us as we celebrate Jesus' entrance to Jerusalem in word and music. We may have special musical guests from Africa!

Passion: the Musical 8pm, Sunday, March 20 (*see the main article in this issue*).



Maundy Thursday “Stations of Deliverance” 6:00 pm Thursday, March 24th.

This is the evening we remember Jesus’s last night on earth, and his gift of the communion we share regularly. We will begin our experience in the Fellowship Hall with a "Stations of Deliverance" Passover experience as you make a personal, quiet, journey with Jesus through food and prayer at your own pace to 6 different stations that tell the story of Exodus and Jesus last Supper with his disciples (6pm to 6.45 pm). Then we will gather for a short communion service in the sanctuary at 6.45.



Good Friday “Stations of Faith”

Noon to 3pm. FPCNO continues the tradition of semi-private prayer and preparation for this most solemn day of the church year. The sanctuary will be open for prayer both in the afternoon. We will have a labyrinth, stations of the cross and other devotions to help you participate in Christ's passion and death.



Easter Sunday Sunrise Service

At 7 am we will gather with our brothers and sisters at Parkway Presbyterian Church at La Freniere Park in Metairie for an early morning service of Resurrection. Dress comfortably and warmly!



Easter Sunday Easter Egg Hunt and Easter Bonnet contest

Make a wild and crazy and/or beautiful extravagant bonnet and wear it before church on Easter Morning. There will be prizes for the most creative, funniest, best in show...and several other categories as well. We will also be hiding plastic Easter eggs (please no real eggs!) in the playground for the kids. There will be a special section just for littler kids.

We also ask that you bring either plastic eggs or a bag of candy to put in the eggs...for the kids (and well, may be couple of Gold Brick Eggs for adults...) Bring your children and grandchildren for the fun!

National Committee met at FPCNO



As the next Presbyterian Church USA General Assembly gets ready to meet in Portland Oregon June 18th, certain issues are rising to the top of the Presbyterian national agenda. Whereas the issues of equality and recognition of LGBT Christians has been a focal point in past years, this year the consensus is that investment and the environment, and our Christian responsibilities for both, are set to be the big topics of conversation.

In preparation for these discussions, the MRTI committee (Mission Responsibility through Investment), composed of experts and lay people from all over the United States, has been meeting over the past two years to formulate a policy and response to the diverse issues of ethical investment to protect the environment, protect endangered tribes and peoples, and ethical use of resources. The final three day meeting of the committee took place at our church on February 11th -13th. Not only did they debate and refine the report that will be voted on by the 500+ commissioners at the Portland General Assembly, but they also attempted to meet with Energy/ Oil and Gas representatives here in New Orleans in order to learn more about the industry’s viewpoints and concerns. While Phillips 66 canceled their participation at the last minute, Entergy did come to explain their practices, as did 5 local environmental and aid organizations who engaged the committee with information about the BP Gulf Coast disaster and restoration; rising sea levels that are threatening our wetlands, the rebuilding efforts here in New Orleans, and the impact that the PCUSA is having on these issues locally.

Because this is fabulous FPCNO, the committee was treated to some fantastic hospitality; Mr. Justin and Mrs. Amie Wood prepared a full New Orleans gumbo lunch that had the entire group raving over New Orleans home cooking. Pastor Fred and Cheryl Roberts provided beads and Mardi Gras favors, and table setups and office support, and Fred took the group on a tour of New Orleans, followed by a jazz dinner at the Palm Court Jazz Café. The deacons, assisted by members of the congregation provided the room set up, snacks and fruit and drinks throughout their stay, and Lakeview Presbyterian church provided some extra furnishings for the Fellowship Hall where the committee met. The church has received feedback that of all the meeting places in the past two years, FPCNO was absolutely the best and most cordial host; and before they broke up the members of the committee took up a personal love offering for the work of the church here at FPCNO.

Where y'at, Preacher?



Church on the Move

The Universal Church

A couple of weeks ago, as I was putting the finishing touches to my upcoming trip to China, I was looking for a church to worship with on my Sunday in Macau, a former Portuguese colony perched on the very edge of the South Chinese coast not too far away from Hong Kong. While Jesuit/Catholic Macau was the only Christian country in Asia for centuries (other than the far away Philippines), when Macau returned to China, its Christian aspects all but evaporated, to be replaced by millions of people from the mainland who have never heard of Jesus or the God of Abraham--even the Catholic archdiocese looks to be a hollow shell managed remotely by Rome, and the churches not much more than quaint tourist stops on the way to the enormous casinos.



After a lot of looking on the internet, I finally found one little English speaking church that occupies a building in the middle of the old disused, Protestant Cemetery. When I got in touch with the rector though, he was cordial and gave me some good advice.

I ended our internet chat with "Is there anything I can bring you from the States?" There was a pause and then the answer came back, "Could you bring us some processional torches for the church?" This was a far cry from the grits or Old New Orleans rum that I had envisioned. Being a clueless Presbyterian, I had to look up what "processional torches" were, and told him that I would work on it for him--though I was dubious. (They are candlesticks on long poles that accompany the pastor to the altar, and then accompany the gospel book to the center of the congregation during the reading of scripture).

I commended the search to God and got busy; I shopped the Church Supply Store in Metairie, and scrutinized \$1500 sets on eBay, and called around and finally talked to Fr. Duane Nettles, our neighbor at Annunciation Episcopal. He called his Bishop, where, lo and behold, they found a pair from a Catholic church that had been gutted after Katrina. Somehow, they ended up in the huge attic at Christ Church Cathedral, and they were willing to give them to this church on the other side of the world for free.

So it looks like a Presbyterian from the US is going to be carrying some Roman Catholic liturgical objects to a young, non-denominational Macanese-Chinese church run by an Anglican Australian Pastor. To me, this looks like the global church at work, a family, caring and working together, and I think all this would please Christ who was welcomed by friends in all kinds of places.

At the time I am writing this, it looks likely that we too will soon be welcoming Christ in another guise; two dozen teenagers and adults from Ghana, in West Africa, are planning to be in worship with us on Palm Sunday (March 20), where they want to play music for the glory of God and to celebrate God's goodness with us. Like Christ himself, this is an unexpected gift, a feast given to us and shared in love and grace. As Christ said: "Go and do likewise!" Amen.

*Grace and peace,
Pastor Fred*



Wetmore Foundation Grant for the Program of Hope

Mrs Elizabeth B. Wetmore, the founder of the Grant, nearly beat Nelly Bly to be the first woman around the world in less than 80 days in 1889. Later she turned her passion towards philanthropic endeavors.

The Program of Hope has been alerted to a major opportunity to help prevent the spread of illness among the guests we serve and to also help those guests get more nights in a shelter instead of sleeping in the streets or under bridges.

The Wetmore Foundation, a local endowment set up in the 1950s, gives money to fight respiratory diseases. It is administered by three New Orleans churches, (including a representative from First Presbyterian Church) and is expanding its original remit grants to agencies like the Program of Hope.

The Advisory Board of the Program of Hope, which includes representatives from seven area Presbyterian churches, the Young Adult Volunteers and the Salvation Army, is putting this grant proposal together, with Rev Lesley Paine of Parkway as grant coordinator. They are looking at asking for \$30,000; part of this would create a partnership with the LSU School of Nursing to set up a free testing site on Wednesdays during the Program of Hope to help people who may be suffering from Tuberculosis, need testing for HIV, pulmonary diseases, diabetes and even offer pregnancy testing in conjunction with Planned Parenthood. Another goal is to help guests become better informed about their health conditions following their testing by improving their medical literacy and understanding.



The grant proposal also takes into account the overarching consideration that all of these health conditions can be immeasurably helped by having a safe, healthy place to stay for the night, and to this end, we are asking for funds to pay for overnight housing vouchers. The deadline is March 15th, and we should know if we are approved for this by mid-May.



Langhorne Slim Jazz Fest Concert, April 22

Back in December, just before Christmas, an up and coming song writer/band leader, Sean Scolnick, better known by his stage name, Langhorne Slim, approached FPCNO to ask if he and his backup group could use the sanctuary to film a music video that would be used on the Conan O'Brian late night show on TBS. The beautiful video, which visually relied heavily on the architecture

and decoration of our church, was the back piece to Langhorne's song "Changes," a soulful country/pop song about the difficulties and vicissitudes of modern life with a nod towards a brighter future.

Following the successful filming, Langhorne and Pastor Fred talked about the highly successful Hurray for the Riff Raff concert that took place at FPCNO in April 2014, which Langhorne had attended. And the idea for a concert was born and the date has been set: April 22, 2016--the first night of Jazz Fest. Tickets are \$20 and will be available for purchase soon online.

In the fall of 2015, Langhorne Slim & The Law released their fifth album, *The Spirit Moves*. The new album was released to high praise from many media outlets, including *The Boston Globe*: "Slim is more reflective now, his banjo-driven rock-folk-pop hybrid increased in artistry and depth." [11] His commitment to sobriety since his last album release is often mentioned in interviews and reviews, and has sparked lyrics evoking change as well. The *Boston Globe* stated, "With a high-pitched, almost Neil Young timbre to his voice, Slim sings that 'I'm going through changes now' – said changes amounting to a highly listenable rebirth."



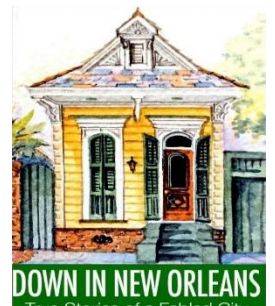
William “Bill” and Betty Norris

Bill and Betty Norris joined First Presbyterian Church in 1990 when they retired to the French Quarter. They are natives of Baton Rouge. Bill was graduated from LSU with BA and MA degrees and a BD from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond. He served twelve years as a minister with the Presbyterian Church. He earned a Ph.D. in Communications from the University of Southern California, spending the balance of his career in telecommunications business enterprises. Betty made her career as an interior decorator and specialized in historic preservation in the Vieux Carre’, serving nine years on the Vieux Carre’ Commission that regulates construction and repairs on the exteriors of buildings there.

Bill has served as a Board Member of the Wetmore Foundation for twenty years, having been appointed to that role by the Session of First Presbyterian Church. The Foundation has distributed funds according to the will of Elizabeth Bizland Wetmore focused on persons with tuberculosis and respiratory illnesses in the Greater New Orleans area. The Wetmore Clinic operated by LSU Medical School serves persons with those issues.

Bill’s interest in New Orleans led him to become a tour guide. Eventually, he was selected to teach the Professional Tour guiding course at Delgado Community College. Pastor Fred Powell took the course to get acquainted with the history and stories of the city when he came to First Presbyterian Church.

When Bill retired from Delgado teaching, he was encouraged to write down the stories. Now he has published a new 2016 book, *DOWN IN NEW ORLEANS: True Stories of the Fabled City*. The book is available for \$16.95 at book stores in the Quarter and on Kindle and Amazon. The book contains the stories of the city from 1682 to 1945, introducing readers to the people who cast the character of the city over three and a half centuries. Many residents of the city took the course to learn the stories that they could share with their families, friends and visitors.



First Presbyterian Church new Treasurer *Mrs. Candice Johnson Bellau*

We welcome Candice as the new treasurer for First Presbyterian Church. She is replacing our devoted treasurer *Kristy Ruppel* whom has served us for 5 years. We thank you Kristy for all that you have done.

I grew up at First Presbyterian Church in Mount Vernon, NY and I had the best experience with ministers who really cared and got to know me and my family. We went through some tough times and the Church was always there for us, spiritually, emotionally and even financially. After leaving my hometown I tried various churches in NY and during my travels but it never felt like "home". At times I would make the 1.5 hour drive just to go back to my hometown church.

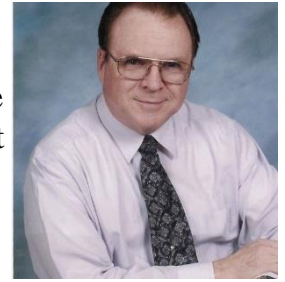
I moved to New Orleans in 2008 after many vacations here that started in the late 90's. I had met the man who would later become my husband during Mardi Grass 2005. After moving here I tried the PC by my home uptown. It didn't feel right so I didn't pursue it. When I got engaged it became important to me to get married by a Presbyterian minister, somehow I never realized there was another Presbyterian Church in New Orleans. I made an appointment and met with the wonderful Cheryl. I walked into the sanctuary looked around, inhaled deeply and started to cry. I knew I was home.

Later, attending services, meeting Pastor Fred and the rest of the congregation I knew I was where I should be. The best day was getting married and seeing the real joy on Fred’s face and solidifying our family. I am thrilled to become the Treasurer of FPC. I appreciate the wisdom and guidance of Kristy Ruppel who is selflessly helping me so that the transition is as seamless as possible.

I own a small business accounting and bookkeeping firm located in Metairie, Kramerica Business Solutions. After years of running companies in NY I decided to go into consulting and absolutely love it. I brought the business here in 2008 and have enjoyed working with many local businesses. I have a degree in Accounting and an MBA in Finance.

Temporary Clerk of Session for First Presbyterian Church

We welcome **Mr. Marshall Fisher**, as the clerk of session until a voted nominee has been assigned to this position. Marshall moved to New Orleans on Naval Reserve Active Duty Recall and retired in 1995. Marshall began attending the First Presbyterian Church in New Orleans August 2015, and he became a member in November 2015. Previously he was a member of Woodland Presbyterian Church in Algiers at Woodland Presbyterian he served several terms as an Elder, and he directed their Easter Tableau for several years.



Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering

Saturday, April 23, 7:00 AM - 11:00 AM
West Baton Rouge Presbyterian Church
640 Florida Ave, Port Allen, Louisiana 70767

The Spring Gathering will begin at 9:00 am and will conclude after lunch. Our guest speaker will be Joy Durrant, Moderator of Presbyterian Women for Synod of the Sun. Registration fee is \$15 and includes lunch, the 2016

PW Handbook, and continental breakfast. We will let you know what our offering will go for, and we'll have a list of supplies for immigrant children in Louisiana coming soon.

MaryAnn McKibben Dana receives top Presbyterian Writers Guild award
Popular blogger and author to speak at June 23 General Assembly luncheon

The Rev. MaryAnn McKibben Dana, a writer, pastor, conference leader, and highly sought-after speaker, has been named the recipient of the 2016 David Steele Distinguished Writer Award by the Presbyterian Writers Guild.



Dana, author of *Sabbath in the Suburbs*, a Chalice Press bestseller for two years running has a robust presence on social media, and has been commenting on life, ministry, theology and culture on her blog, *The Blue Room*, for more than twelve years. She will receive the prestigious award at the Presbyterian Writers Guild's General Assembly luncheon June 23 in Portland, Oregon.

Named for the late David Steele—Presbyterian poet and essayist best known for his “Tuesday Morning” column in *The Presbyterian Outlook*—the distinguished writer award is given biennially to a Presbyterian writer who blessed the church with his or her writing over the course of a career.

Dana, who most recently served as pastor of Idylwood Presbyterian Church in Falls Church, Virginia, was featured on PBS's Religion and Ethics Newsweekly for her work on Sabbath. Her writing has appeared in TIME.com, *The Washington Post*, *Religion Dispatches*, *Journal for Preachers*, and *The Christian Century*, and for three years in a monthly column for *Presbyterians Today*. Her next book, tentatively titled *Improvising with God*, is under contract with Eerdmans and will be published in 2017.



Our former YAV
Hannah Mills
Has been accepted
to Union Theological
Seminary in the
City of New York. This
Seminary is an independent,
ecumenical, Christian
seminary. It is the oldest
independent seminary in the
United States. Hannah was a
devoted volunteer here at
First Presbyterian working
with the Program of Hope.
Congratulations Hannah Mills



Yoga Classes with Tracy Rene' Helms-Capasso

Tracy Rene Helms-Capasso taught yoga for 22 years, and has had her own practice for the past 29 years. She used yoga during her own pregnancies and labor. Prenatal yoga is helpful during pregnancy and is a great way to prepare for your child's birth. It helps you stay fit, be calm and relaxed during difficult moments such as a contraction. Parent and child yoga is a great way to bond with your little one and while you exercise your body.

Classes will begin April 13 - June 3 on Wednesday

Pre-natal classes - 9am - 10:15am

Parent - Child classes - 10:30am - 12pm

Fee scale:

Per class session - \$84.00

Walk-ins - \$15.00



Camp Agape 2016

A Mission of the Presbytery
of South Louisiana



Theme: Livin' in the Light!

Scripture: 1st John 1:7

Summer camp is an exciting adventure for young people. By being away from home and experiencing the thrills of God's natural wonders, young peoples' heightened senses make them more open than ever to learning—especially in the area of spiritual growth. Daily Bible study, prayer and worship are a central part of every camper's experience. Our theme this year is "Choice = Power". Our studies will help prepare our campers for life in an increasingly non Christian environment. In addition to spiritual learning, the campers grow in self-confidence and social skills, and learn about God's creation. The retreat center, with its woods, water and wildlife, becomes a "living theater" for dramatically experiencing the truths of the Bible. Campers meet new and old friends and have lots and lots of fun!

Why go to Camp Agape?

What the campers said about Camp Agape:

"I liked the swimming and the caring people". "I will remember all the friends I made and how much fun I had".
"Agape love is strong and cool!". "I learned some Bible stories. "The Adventure Camp hike was awesome!"

Intro Camp April 22 – 24, 2016 (Friday – Sunday)

Intro Camp		1 st – 2 nd Graders (grade completed 2016)	\$ 120
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Resident Camp June 12 – 18, 2016 (Sunday Afternoon – Saturday Morning)

Explorer Camp		3 rd – 5 th Grades (grade completed 2016)	\$ 406 Early Bird	\$ 446 After May 1 st
Pathfinder Camp		6 th -8 th Grades (grade completed 2016)	\$ 406 Early Bird	\$ 446 After May 1 st
Adventure Camp		9 th – 12 th Grades (grade completed 2016)	\$ 450 Early Bird	\$ 490 After May 1 st
Premier Camp		9 th – 12 th Grades (grade completed 2016)	\$ 450 Early Bird	\$ 490 After May 1 st

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



MARCH

2 – Randy Boling
2 – Dee Boling
11 – Joyce Kleinfeldt
23 – Mark Schutt
25 – Kourash Asadi

APRIL

1 – K.C. Carmichael
3 – Olivia Genevieve Cone
4 – Betty Norris
11 – Dariush Asadi
17 – Bill Norris
17 – Amie Wood
21 – Enjoli Mallary
28 – Marshall Fisher



Prayer List



Johnny Ziifle
Bruce Robertson
May Ball
Don Robertson
Patsy Bush
Marley Harris
Clyde Posey.
Kelly and Enjoli Mallary
Arthur and Etta Myers
Lisa Hix
Heidi Bonds
Noah Adams
Gloria Boling
Adrian (Tudy) Manson
Joyce Kleinfeldt
The Homeless

Pastor

Rev. Fred J. Powell III

Office Manager/Wedding Coordinator

Cheryl Roberts

Musicians

May Ball; Aya Magavina;
Amanda Wadsworth

Sextons

Todd and Ladonna Vandergrift

THE SESSION

Marshall Fisher, Temporary Clerk of Session
Candice Bellau, Treasurer

Class of 2015

Christopher Roberts

Class of 2016

Jonathan Cone
Enjoli Mallary

Class of 2017

Sherri Hutton

THE BOARD OF DEACONS

David Capasso, Chair

Class of 2015

Kyle Carmichael
Diane Kleinfeldt

Class of 2016

Randy Boling
Carrie Fisher

Class of 2017

David Capasso
Justin Wood

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