



The Presbyterian Light

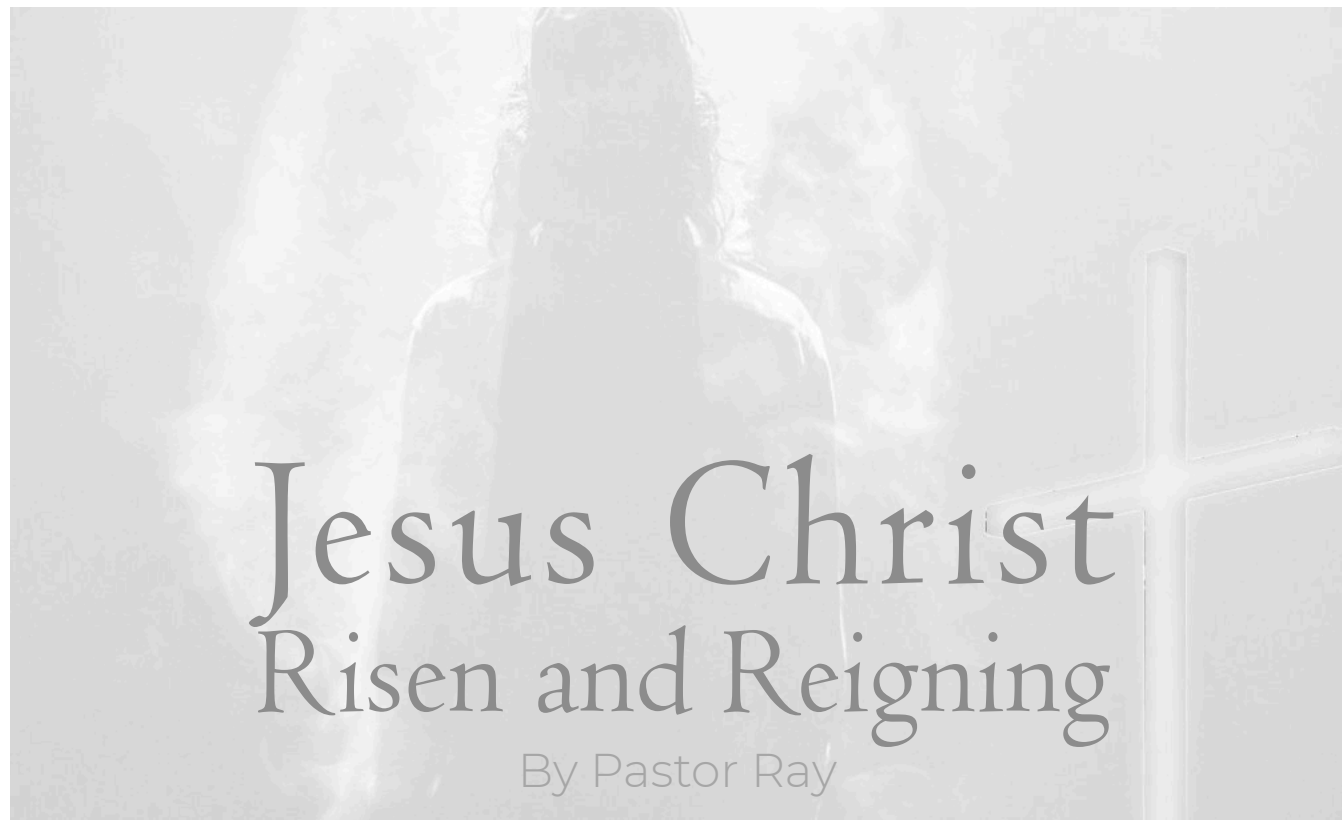
April 2021



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Easter
2021



A popular gospel song regarding the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead declares:

"I serve a risen Savior, He's in the world today. I know that He is living, whatever men may say. I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer, And just the time I need Him, He's always near. He lives! He lives! Christ Jesus lives today! ... You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart."

The song is a testimony of personal trust and relationship with the living Lord Jesus Christ. However, it seems to rest on personal experience as the final

testimony of Jesus Christ, Risen and Reigning. There certainly is that wonderful testimony of knowing and trusting Jesus Christ. In our consideration of John 9 we heard the testimony of the man who Jesus healed of blindness: *"One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."* (v.25) But by the end of the chapter, his statement of faith is clarified through the further revelation of Jesus: *"Lord, I believe," and he worship Him.*" (v.38)

John tells us that after looking inside the empty tomb, he *"believed,"* but then adds, *"for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise from the dead."* (20:8-9)

The Scriptures are God's self-revelation. The Scriptures point us, from Genesis – Revelation, to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Scriptures find their fulfillment in Christ. I would submit that the greatest weakness in the Church at this time is "not understanding the Scripture." For adults, and for teaching and training our children.

The shield logo for the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church includes a portion from Psalm 36:9. *"In your light we see light."* Psalm 119:105 declares, *"Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."* Apart from the knowing and understanding the Word of God, we are left stumbling around in darkness. It affects everything else in life. Everything.

On Resurrection Day we will sing, *"Christ the Lord is risen today. Alleluia!"* It includes the verse: *"Following our exalted Head. Alleluia!"* Resurrection is rightfully a great festival and celebration of the Church, worshiping Jesus Christ, the risen King. Such exaltation then requires of us no less than the desire and intention to closely *"follow our exalted Head."* Jesus called His disciples, saying, *"Follow me."* We best do that by growing in our *"understanding of the Scriptures."*

May we renew our commitment to this endeavor in response to our worship of

Jesus Christ this Easter day. Through this past year we have lost some ground. While there is only about a month left in the schedule for small group ministry this year, I would encourage you to join in if your group is meeting. If your group has not yet begun, then I would encourage you to reach out to one another and make plans to start up, perhaps with regathering times over the summer.

And if you are fairly new to the FPC family, I invite you to join us for a New Members Class that I will be leading, along with Elder Karl Davis. As we seek to *"understand the Scriptures"* we will consider these topics: What is the Gospel? What is Reformed theology? How does the Church function? How can I be involved in the Church? Time: 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Wednesdays: April 14, 21, 28 & May 5. In the Sanctuary. Nursery and children's ministry available. We would be delighted to have you join us. Please call the office for information or to sign up. (465-2742)

Jesus Christ is Risen and Reigning! Alleluia! –

Pastor Ray



An Easter Poem

By Jeanne Fortier

*Easter morn is coming
We wait in silence to hear
Today is quiet and silent
But soon we'll shout a cheer!*

*Our Lord came down to save us
And gave His life for all
Soon the morn will be here
The time to hear the call*

*He is Risen! He is Risen!
Oh let His glory reign
The Lord came down to save us
Because He is our King*

*Let's lift our voice in praise
And tell everyone the news
The Lord came down to save us
And all of us did choose*

*If only for the asking
He'll be your Savior too
Always near and never far
Our Lord is there for you!*



Living Without FEAR

By Barbara Thayer

Ever since the first lockdown took place in our nation over a year ago due to the COVID19 virus, many of us have experienced anxiety over the unknown as we heard about people dying from this terrible disease. It seemed like reports changed daily as to how to avoid it, how long it would last, and when it might be safe to re-open businesses. For us, the isolation ended as we returned to home group and finally worship services once again just recently. This was a high point for us after the months of remaining at home. Oh, we still take precautions, but we refuse to let fear dominate

our lives as we follow the Lord's guidance in matters.

We all will acknowledge that fear is a paralyzing emotion. When it takes hold, we cannot use our reasoning abilities given to us by God. Unfortunately, Satan knows this very well, and tries hard to feed us with things that cause us to doubt God and His power. This is how sin first came into the world as Satan caused Eve to doubt God's good will toward them. He made it seem to Eve as though God did not want her to have the knowledge of good and evil. God was holding out on them;

so the woman took matters into her own hands. As a result, both she and her husband disobeyed God and fell into sin. Now they lived in fear of His judgment.

While we don't have Satan whispering in our ear as he did in the Garden with Eve, we do have many other tools he can use that can pull us away from trusting in God. For example, we have to be careful of misinformation spread on the internet, in the news or over the air waves. In my own situation, I belong to a number of social media sites so I can interact with friends. However, one of the drawbacks comes from people spreading questionable information about conspiracies, vaccines, and groups of people. If all these things were to be believed, we would never leave our house, never seek medical treatment, and have little to no contact with other human beings. Yet, this is not what God has called us to do. 2 Timothy 1:7 tells us: "For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, love and a self-control." Paul was trying to encourage Timothy in this passage to stir up the gift within him and not be overcome by fear.

In another letter to the Roman church, Paul wrote this about fear: "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'" Here Paul is reminding his fellow believers that the spirit of slavery is our fear of death and final punishment. However, we have been set free as Christians from

this fear and can draw near to God intimately.

Another letter written by the Apostle John (1 John 4:18) proclaims the freedom we have from fear when we know the love of God: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love." Through Christ, we have salvation and the outpouring of God's love through forgiveness. This casts out all fear so why do we get entangled in it?

Let me suggest that we turn off that T.V. and social media for a while. Quit listening to the opinions of others. This world is full of different persuasions on any subject. We are called to live by faith not fear. Seek the Lord and His wisdom and understanding on issues of importance. Don't spend time running from one opinion to another or you will find yourself in a knot of anxiety. God has given us a sound mind with which to reason and His Holy Spirit to teach us in His Word. He has also given to us godly men and women that can pray with us for discernment. Most of all, let us lean upon the Lord Jesus who told us not to worry in Matthew 6:25-34. Remember that fear puts a wedge between God and us when we yield to this form of slavery. May we pray instead: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths" (Prov. 3:5-6). Selah!



Barbara Thayer



New Members Class



It will be a blessing

If you are newer to the FPC family, we invite you to attend a class --- just for you! Led by Pastor Ray, the four-week class will cover the following topics --- What Is the Gospel? --- What Is Reformed Theology? --- How Does the Church Function? --- and How Can I Be Involved in the Church?. In addition, there will be time for answering other questions that you may have. The class will meet from 7 pm to 8:30 pm in the sanctuary on the following Wednesday's --- April 14th, April 21st, April 28th, and May 5th. Nursery and children's ministry will be available. If you would like to attend this class, please call the church office at 863-465-2742.

Hope you can join us. It will be a blessing!

Instructor:

Pastor Ray

Time:

7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Dates:

Meet on Following Four
Wednesdays:

- April 14th
- April 21st,
- April 28th,
- May 5th

Location:

Sanctuary

Call:

863-465-2742





Grove's Got Talent

A Dinner & Talent Show

Dear Friends,

This school year is going by very quickly and I'm so thankful for God's protection during these challenging times. It was a sudden and hard end to the last school year with our youth due to COVID-19. When we started back up last September, we didn't know how many students to expect from such a long layoff with in person youth group. However, we have between 35-50 students attending weekly. Many of whom, are new to The Grove Youth Group.

We have been blessed with a great team of youth leaders, consisting of parents, interns, and college age students. God's work of grace has been so clearly evident in all of the interworking of the youth program. Thank you for your unwavering prayer and support of the next generation.

I am excited to announce and invite you to the Groves Got Talent on April 17th. This will be a dinner and show to raise money for our youth to attend camp in the summer. The show will feature the talents of our young people and the lineup will range from musical performances, dramas, and some that will just make you laugh. There will be a special guest panel to provide commentary and analysis of each performance and Pastor Drew will serve as the MC for the program. We hope that this will be a night of good food, laughter, fellowship, and impactful performances from our students. Please pray for the preparations being made for this event and that God would be glorified through our young people.

In Christ,

Reid

Date:
Saturday, April 17th

Time:
6:00 pm

Location:
Genesis Center





April

Anniversaries

Wayne & Carrie Sullivan	April 01, 1978	Years Married: 43
Bill & Judy Monsma	April 06, 1963	Years Married: 58
Tom & Terry Brashares	April 15, 1977	Years Married: 44
Howard & Marilyn Brainerd	April 17, 1999	Years Married: 22
Steve & Ann Fatout	April 20, 1974	Years Married: 47
David & Anne Marie Wheeler	April 20, 1991	Years Married: 30
Michael & Ellie Rubio	April 23, 2017	Years Married: 4
Roger & Judy Londo	April 29, 2006	Years Married: 15



The Gideon Report

By Joe Barney

We're so blessed to be back, and I say we're for a good reason. I'll get back to that.

First, I want to introduce our camp members: Wendell (Doc) Anderson and wife, Roselyn; Reynolds and Ashleigh Tanner; Joe and Jan Barney; Dan and Katherine Durrance; Richard and Mary Rucker; Sam and Glenda Cox.

You may have noticed a common thread that exists in the Gideon organization. It is basically made up of business or professional men and their wives in the form of an auxillary. Husbands and wives in the USA and other countries are enjoying stepping out in faith to share the Gospel while doing it together as a team.

During Dan Edgerton's Gideon presentation 6 years ago, I felt this strong feeling from the Lord. :(That's how He talks to me sometimes.): Telling me to talk to Dan is something I want you to do. That's when I answered the call and became a Gideon and Jan also became an auxillary. Since then, we have distributed many Bibles in

hospitals, hotels, offices, a major blitz in Orlando, and numerous Personal Witnessing Testaments.

It seems in my rambling that I have drifted from an introduction of our camp to somewhat of a (recruitment). Just imagine, you're on an internet bunny trail. Please forgive me.

Well, I just got to thinking that maybe there are couples in our church searching for things to do together, while also searching for ways to share the Gospel and their faith. Anyway, I'm rambling again. If, by chance you feel an urging, you could reach out to Jan in person or by phone at 441-0018 or me at 441-0020. We will try to answer your questions.

Until next time, see you in church and Happy Resurrection Day

Joe and Jan

GB



Naomi's Heart Mission

Since the start of the pandemic, we have used birthday money, given to a sponsored child, for the purchase of rice and other food items for the family. As I have written the thank you notes for the gifts, I have felt it necessary to explain (almost apologetically) that we bought rice instead of clothes, candy, toys, and whatever else for the birthday child.

It is hard to explain except to say that our families still have less now than they had before the pandemic. Rice is more than a food here. It is eaten with every meal. It is a deep part of the culture. A family that does not have rice is considered poor in a world that looks poor already to Americans.

As much as I know this, and as hard [as I try to] explain it to sponsors and donors, I also need reminders to this truth. My sister sponsors a grade 6 student at the Academy and sent money to get her Christmas gifts. I asked one of our workers to visit this girl and find out what she wanted for Christmas. The little girl gave our worker three things: First on the list was rice; second, a dress; and third, a toy for each of her

two brothers. When asked about the brothers, she said simply that they do not get gifts for Christmas.

Oh, the heart of this little girl.

It is my hope that this story will help others understand. If we buy rice for a gift for your sponsored child, know that it was done because it is the best thing we could do for them. It will meet more than just the physical needs. It will help the child feel secure, safe, healthy, and provided for. Loved.

And don't worry about this little girl. She will get all she asked for and more. Her Christmas, hopefully like that of all of our sponsored children, will be one she remembers. And she will feel God's love coming to her from her sponsor through the giving of a simple bag of rice.

Becky Mingus

Please visit our Website
<https://www.naomisheartmission.org>

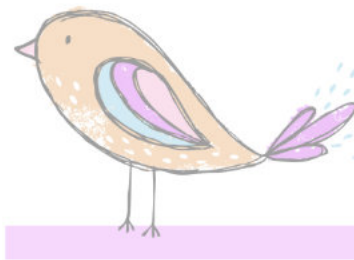


♥ The Heart of a Little Girl



Foreign Missions II

Child Beyond International



A Message From Mandy, Our Children's Home Director:

Hola! My name is Carolina. My mommy is 14 and has been living in another children's home in Guatemala while receiving the emotional and psychological help that she needs right now. Today was my court hearing and everything looks good for me and mommy to be together soon. My great grandparents (who are 47 and 49) will be preparing their house to receive my mommy in about two months. Then, once

she is acclimated and has my space ready I will join her! I have not spent even one day with my mommy. I am 7 months old now and I am excited that I will be with her every day very soon. Will you pray that everything will work out for God's glory and my good in the rulings by the courts and for smooth transitions for both me and my mommy?

I love to eat and have two bottom teeth. Mandy said that now that I have those two teeth I can start eating ribs! I hope that that will be soon! Ribs sound so very good!

Thank you so much for supporting the care that I have and am currently receiving. I am loved, fed, cared for, and cherished by my family at God's Grace Children's Home. I am the smallest member of the house and I think that I might get more attention than everyone else! The big kids like to play with me and bring me toys. I love playing peek-a-boo with them the most Here are a couple of my favorite pictures with Mandy and Shane.

Yo te quiero mucho, (I love you very much)
Carolina

A Message from Jorge, our Mission Teams Director:

February was a month of expectancy for many people in Guatemala as we continue to deal with what has been affecting all of our lives since last year. We started to see a rise in the Covid positive cases and the hospitals getting to their full capacity again at the beginning of the year. So, as anticipated several months ago, it seemed that we were just about to start "the second big wave", and because of this our government started to readjust some of the restrictions again. But one of the main concerns for many was if we were going to have another lock-down or not, especially because of the big impact that the first one brought to our economy. In Guatemalan standards, while we continue to have big numbers, it does not seem that things are getting out of control. So, this has allowed

many families to continue looking for their daily income with more freedom. Unfortunately, we still have the biggest rate of deaths in Central America. While the second wave did not get out of control, there are still some restrictions and big recommendations for people to be as careful as possible.

As several countries around the world have started to offer a vaccine, Guatemala has been waiting along with many other countries on the WHO through their distribution system. But it seems that this process is getting delayed, so our government has also started to see what could they do to bring them by their own means. Unfortunately they have been getting some incorrect decisions regarding this whole situation, including the purchase of thousands of fake Covid tests that have made the general population question more and more their decisions. So, at least for now, it seems that we will still need to wait maybe a few months more for people to have the chance to access a vaccine. Please pray for us!

Many of you were able to bless several families in the past months through your generous donations with our White Flag Campaign. I know you will be blessed with this thank you letter from Pastor Ery. He has a congregation with one of our partner churches in the communities where we have been able to serve.

God bless you all, Jorge



Manna Ministries



Like many other organizations, Manna Ministries faced challenges in 2020 and the first quarter of 2021. Covid brought changes but with the help of our community, our volunteers and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we found ways to remain in ministry to the people of Highlands County.

The biggest change at Manna is the drive-thru service we are using for food distribution. Clients drive up, check in with the greeter and food is delivered right to them. We have also started an “open air market” in the driveway for clothing and home goods giveaways.

We have all seen the images of food bank lines on the news and heartbreaking interviews with those seeking help. Manna has experienced some of that. We have had many new clients sign up for food assistance. Some have never been to a food bank before. We have clients who have taken in their children and grandchildren. Their households have grown from two

to five, six or seven. The need in our community is great.

Manna is blessed to partner with USDA, local grocery stores and bakery, local community organizations and churches and the very generous residents of Lake Placid. Together we have served 1,000 + 1,200 people per month. We thank you from the bottom of our very grateful hearts for your continued support of Manna and the people of Lake Placid.

Anita Hurley

Executive Director



This January we began a membership process that was highlighted by a sermon series called 'I Am a Church Member' by Dennis Rainer. When we completed the series this past January there were over 25 people who had signed the charter to become founding members of Iglesia en Movimiento (Church on the Move). Above is a picture of the charter form that all core group members have signed. God has certainly been faithful amid this pandemic. The number of

[click here to see](#)

iglesia
en
movimiento