Early Easter: March 27!
By Gerrit S. Dawson, Senior Pastor

Why is Easter so early this year? For that matter, why does the date of Easter change every year? It’s all about the moon! Centuries ago, the western church determined to celebrate Easter on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the first day of spring. This year, there’s a full moon on March 23, right after the first day of spring (March 20), so we get Easter on March 27. Really early. If the moon had peaked just before the first day of spring, we would have had to wait all the way through another moon cycle before we could have Easter in late April. Interestingly, the Archbishop of Canterbury is hoping to have a chat with the Pope and the Orthodox patriarch about decreeing Easter to be the second Sunday in April every year. That would sure make planning easier. But truthfully, I sort of like having to reorient my life and calendar around Easter every year. It makes me plan for Easter, as if it’s the most important day of the year (which, by the way, it truly is!).

Palm Sunday Celebration
Our annual Palm Sunday festival is March 20, beginning at 10 am with our procession around North Boulevard. A jam-packed combined worship service occurs after the procession. This year, we will introduce our new members at that service, so you’ll have about 25 new faces to greet. Egg hunts, a picnic and street party follow worship.

Service of Shadows
We observe the Thursday before Easter as a sacred day, remembering that Jesus initiated the sacrament of communion on that night, and washed his disciples’ feet, giving them the commandment to treat each other the same way. (That’s why it’s called Maundy Thursday from the Latin word for mandate, or command). Our service on March 24 at 7 pm includes a very quiet communion, the dramatic retelling of the passion narrative and a visit in silence to the garden where the entombment of the body of Jesus will be reenacted. As the stone is rolled across the tomb, we sing “Were You There?” It’s a very moving moment. That also sets up the particular joy of meeting in the same place at sunrise on Easter.

Easter Services: 6.30, 9 and 11
We gather around the stone rolled away in the garden at 6.30 am for a brief service followed by breakfast. Then we have two festival worship services in the Sanctuary at 9 and 11. Acoustic Communion worshipers will join in with these services.

I look forward eagerly to the sweet joy of keeping Holy Week and Easter with you, beloved congregation!

The Power of Narnia!
Millions have read C.S. Lewis’ book The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. Millions more have seen the movie. Christians know that Lewis’ classic fantasy story conveys the depth of the cross more powerfully than a zillion theology books. When the great Lion Aslan gives his life to save the traitorous child Edmund, we see Jesus in a fresh, deep way.

Your church will present a stirring musical version of Narnia on April 15-17. You know the quality of productions we’ve done from Fiddler on the Roof to Roots and Promises to the Sound of Music. This is a great opportunity to bring people to see excellent theater and hear the gospel.

So here’s the word of encouragement from the old pastor: let’s not make our church spend all her energy wooing our own members to come. Let’s plan now to be there as a matter of course so we can spend our energy getting people from outside the church to see the gospel in this attractive format.
IN MEMORIAM:

January 28, 2016
Helen Young, aunt of Virginia Simeral
February 2, 2016
Roger Head, father of Lisa Head
February 11, 2016
Grandmother of Barat Travis

BIRTHS:

January 28, 2016
Theodore "Teddy" James Price
Parents are Stacie and Jesse Price
Grandparents are Terri and Ed Douglas

February 11, 2016
Carter Roy Hart
Parents are Kathryne and Ryan Hart
Grandparents are Pam and Bob Downing

BAPTISMS:

February 14, 2016
Grayson Scott Kurtz
Parents are Leah and Tyler Kurtz
Grandparents are Rhonda and Gerrit Dawson

SANCTUARY FLOWERS:
Sanctuary flowers serve to honor a departed loved one or celebrate with thanksgiving cherished people or events. The flowers are placed in the Sanctuary ...

Mar 6 ... to the glory of God and in loving memory of William Warren Munson and Dr. and Mrs. W.H. Pipes, by Sarah Munson and family.

Mar 13 ... to the glory of God and in loving memory of Samuel Eugene Field III, by his father, Dr. Samuel Eugene Field Jr.

Mar 20 ... to the glory of God and in loving memory of the Hamilton, Dunham and Witty families, by Kathryn Witty.

Mar 27 ... to the glory of God and in loving memory of Norman Saurage III, Maude and Norman Saurage Sr., Alma Lee and Norman Saurage Jr., and Flora and Gustave Spaht, by their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

UPCOMING DATES

Narnia Musical Apr 15-17

WORDS

By Nancy Spiller, Creative Arts Director

I don’t know about you, but the older I get, the more I seem to cry. I feel things deeper than I used to. You would think I would be getting my “act” together at my age! As a singer and a musician, I have always been moved to tears by moving melodies and beautiful harmonies. That is why I still love what I am doing at FPC. It’s part of my job to listen to beautiful music that lifts up the name of Jesus, and to find songs that can help us do that. We want to articulate our love back to him.

I know you’ve noticed that Gerrit is a “word” guy. He has us thinking about God’s Word all the time, and he stretches us to think so hard my brain aches. I think it has caused me to think more of the lyrics we sing, as well as the words that come out of my mouth. Perhaps that is why you see tears on my face many Sundays, too. I see very deeply how much God loves us and cares for us and I just can’t help it. But I am not alone. There are plenty of grown men out there shedding a tear or two. And you always want to let me know for some reason. I love that! The Holy Spirit is moving us!

And another thing, the same thing happens to me when I hear a testimony of what God is doing in people’s lives, whether in joy or pain. It is amazing to me. So let’s not ever stop singing and speaking “words” of what God has done, words of what he is doing in our lives presently through the Holy Spirit, and words of the glorious future we will have in heaven because of the resurrection of Jesus!

“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5: 15-16, 19-20).

ASLAN IS ON THE MOVE!

The First Presbyterian Creative Arts Department presents its spring production of Narnia, The Musical, written by Thomas Tierney and Ted Drachman, based on C.S. Lewis’ book The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. Performances are Friday, April 15 and Saturday, April 16 at 7 pm. Then on Sunday, April 17th at 2 pm we will have a matinee. Admission is free! We have an amazing cast.

It is not too late to join in the fun! If you are interested in helping behind the scenes in any capacity—make-up, stage hands, technical, costumes, set building, snack foods and promotion, just email me at nancy@fpcbr.org. Our director, Terry Byars, is not only a long time friend of FPC, but an accomplished writer, composer, college theater teacher, pianist, organist, director and well loved in our community. The cast of Narnia is already loving his direction and sense of humor. Please help us get the word out and remember to invite personally your friends and co-workers. “Aslan is on the move!!”

MAundy Thursday Service of Shadows

On Thursday, March 24 at 7 pm, we enter into the passion of Christ, recounting his arrest, trial and death through the service of shadows. We will end the service in silence on the terrace garden where the stone is rolled over the tomb.

Weekly Lent Continues

Wednesday Lenten Noon Communion services continue until March 16. All are welcome to join us in the Dunham Chapel then stay for a $5 light lunch.

SIAC Scholarship Applications.

The Session Income Allocation Committee is accepting applications until March 21 for financial grants for individuals interested in seminary. Please contact Jaci if you have questions (387.0617).
EASTER
march 27
6.30 am Sunrise
9 am Contemporary
11 am Combined Classic Reformed
and Acoustic Communion

PALM SUNDAY
march 20
One 10 am Palm Procession
& Worship Service
Congregational Lunch,
Pony Rides, Egg Hunt,
Balloon Twisters and
Face Painters.

SUNDAY WORSHIP @
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
COME WORSHIP WITH US!
7.45 am Chapel Communion Service
9 am Contemporary Service
11 am Classic Reformed Service
11 am Acoustic Communion

MARCH SERMON TEXTS
March 6, 2016
"He Went Up"

March 13, 2016
"What is Jesus Doing Now?"
Ephesians 1: 15-23

March 20, 2016
"The Kingdom to Come"
Isaiah 2: 1-5; 25: 6-9

March 27, 2016
To be determined

PASTORAL STAFF
Gerrit S. Dawson
Senior Pastor
M. Whitney Alexander
Associate Pastor of City Ministry
Derek McCollum
Associate Pastor for Discipleship
and Young Adults
Barry Phillips
Ministry Executive
Josh Maddin
Assistant Pastor of Student Ministry

COME WORSHIP WITH US!
7.45 am Chapel Communion Service
9 am Contemporary Service
11 am Classic Reformed Service
11 am Acoustic Communion

Are You Anchored in Truth?
First Presbyterian Church Women in Ministry is excited to welcome Sarah Ivill as our teacher for a two-day retreat. Sarah lives in Matthews, NC right outside of Charlotte and is a dear friend of Elizabeth Parker, FPC Women in Ministry Director.

We'll gather for a time of fellowship, relaxation and excellent teaching, unpacking what it means to be anchored in truth and anchored in community.

Register online at fpcbr.org.
Registration ends March 11

Anchored in Truth, Anchored in Community
Women's Retreat
Friday, March 18-Saturday, March 19
Wesley Center, Woodworth, Louisiana

March Circles
1ST MONDAY, MAR 7
WoW Circle 15 Lagniappe
Restaurant @ 7 pm
Zachary

1ST TUESDAY, MAR 1
WoW Circle 1 Mary Ellen Juban’s @ 9.45 am
#23 Jamestowne Ct. (766.6260)
WoW Circle 2 Church Parlor @ 9.45 am
WoW Circle 3 FPC Room 201 @ 10 am

1ST THURSDAY, MAR 3
WoW Circle 11 Church Library @ noon

1ST FRIDAY, MAR 4
WoW Circle 7 Sara Blankenstein’s @ 2 pm
2030 Terrace Ave (344.7911)

2ND MONDAY, MAR 14
WoW Circle 13 CP Apts. @ 2 pm
WoW Circle 14 Ingrid Medford’s @ 9.30 am
7662 Sevenoaks Ave. (329.5662)

2ND TUESDAY, MAR 8
WoW Circle 4 Michelle DeSimone’s @ 6.30 pm
2055 Old Carriage Ln (349.8598)
WoW Circle 5 Rachel Williams’ @ 11.30 am
2142 Oleaner (907.7015)
WoW Circle 6 Ainsley Lewis’ @ 10 am
428 Highland Trace (773.9313)
WoW Circle 8 Sheri McKey’s @ 6.30 pm
21627 Turkey Creek Dr. (752.9548)
WoW Circle 9 Meet @ 6.30 pm
Contact Ann Gregorie (937.0488)

3RD WEDNESDAY, MAR 16
WoW Circle 10 Bistro Byronz @ 5 pm
5412 Government St.
Prayer for Our Nation
Sundays at 5 pm
Dunham Chapel

Volunteers are needed to play and love on our community’s children with special needs and their siblings at rEcess on Friday, March 4. Contact Jess at jess.con-cienne@gmail.com for more information on how to get involved.

Ranch Hands Needed Saturday, March 5.
Heritage Ranch is having a work day March 5. Bring your work boots and meet us at the church at 7.30 am. Contact Katy Cosby at katy@fpcbr.org for more information.

Playing with and Loving on Special Needs Children.

Volunteers are needed to play and love on our community’s children with special needs and their siblings at rEcess on Friday, March 4. Contact Jess at jess.con-cienne@gmail.com for more information on how to get involved.

He Is Risen Signs
Let’s share the joy of our Lord’s resurrection with our neighbors. “He Is Risen” yard signs are available for purchase at the Connection Center. Before Easter, turn the blank side toward your street. After Easter, turn it around to reveal “He Is Risen.” The $5 per sign covers the cost of this Children’s Ministry project.

Children’s Ministry Volunteer Training
Saturday, March 5 10 am-2 pm
Lunch served in between two sessions.
Pastor and Speaker Scott Barber will equip us with the necessary tools to minister to our children from a gospel perspective.

Current and prospective volunteers are welcome.
Childcare provided by registering online at fpcbr.org.
Register to attend by emailing Audra Cato, audra@fpcbr.org.

Scott Barber

VBS 2016
What’s in the Bible?
Monday, June 27 - Thursday, June 30
9 am-12 pm
Register online at fpcbr.org.
Invite your friends and neighbors!

VBS Family Night
Sunday June, 26 at 5 pm