



# FAIRPLAIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER



*Hosanna*

*"...when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. -Matthew 6:16-18*

Dear friends,

Have you ever turned down your car radio so you could see better? Or closed your eyes to hear better, or to savor the flavor of what you're eating or drinking?

I've been thinking about the connection between Easter and Lent: Why do many Christians fast, or give something up for Lent, in preparation for Easter?

I also wanted to know more about fasting in general. Fasting is not only a Christian thing – Muslims fast for Ramadan; Mormons fast the first Sunday of every month; Jews fast six days per year; and even before Columbus came to the Americas, people here fasted. And fasting isn't only refraining from all food; it could also be refraining from certain kinds of foods, or only eating at certain times of the day. For a couple years, my fast was logging off Facebook.

I read a CNN article that suggested one reason humans have fasted for millennia is to draw our attention to spiritual things. Our bodies and souls are tightly intertwined, so changing how we interact with something we contact as often as food can be a constant reminder, like a string tied around our hearts, to pay attention to God, to God's work in the world, and to our neighbors.

John Calvin thought regular fasting might appease God's wrath, but if you've heard enough of my sermons, you probably already know I don't believe God maintains a posture of anger with us humans in the first place. I don't believe anything we do, including fasting, could make God love us more, or less. I also don't believe fasting is a way to draw God's attention to us, like some kind of hunger strike, though many people in scripture seemed to think it worked that way. It seems to me that fasting a tool to draw *our* attention back to *God*.

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So how does this connect to Easter? If Lent tunes our hearts into a reality beyond what we can see with our eyes, hear with our ears, and taste with our mouths, then when Easter arrives, our hearts will be better tuned to sense God's grace.

Now, if you didn't give up food for Lent, that's perfectly fine; we can draw our attention to spiritual things in many ways. If you did not give *anything* up for Lent, perhaps because (like me) you forgot, that's okay too; and there's no rule that says Lent is the only time we can "turn down the radio" to pay extra attention to our souls, to God, and to our neighbors.

Blessings,

Rev. David Schell

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS



4: Ann Cundiff  
6: Melissa Cobb  
12: Charlie Duncan

14: Bill Cundiff  
21: Marlene Smith  
24: George Pica

## PRAYER REQUESTS

If you have a prayer request that you would like to leave as a voicemail to be played on Sunday morning, you can call 269-332-1118 to leave a message.

## REFRESHMENTS

Please join us following worship for refreshments in the Courtyard. There is a sign-up sheet on the serving table if you would like to help.

## SECRETARY SUPPLY

While Linda is on vacation the following ladies will be in the church office. The church office will be closed in the afternoon on these days and all day on Tuesday, May 2 and Wednesday, May 3.

Friday, April 28, 9-11:30 am: Amy Reutlinger  
Monday, May 1, 9 am-noon: Linda Zitta  
Thursday, May 4, 9 am-noon: Amy Reutlinger  
Friday, May 5, 9-11:30 am: Amy Reutlinger  
Monday, May 8, 9 am-noon: Sonja Stormo

## TOWN HALL MEETING

We are re-calling a meeting for Attendees of Fairplain Presbyterian Church and calling it a "Town Hall" Meeting. We are not going to vote on anything, but Session wants to update all of you on what we are planning to do concerning our building.

We will meet after church on Sunday, April 2, in the Courtyard, and with Google Meet.

P.S. If you are not able to attend the meeting in person you may join using the link below for Google Meet: <https://meet.google.com/ukj-jfrd-jbn>

Or dial: (US) +1 224-990-0457 and enter PIN: 117 795 717#



**PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP WILL BE AT 9:30 AM.**

**MAUNDY THURSDAY -- On Maundy Thursday, April 6 @ 6:30 pm there will be a combined service at Fairplain Presbyterian Church First Presbyterian Church.**

**EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP WILL BE AT 9:30 AM.**

## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing include Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People. They all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance and hope.

The offering will be received on Palm Sunday, April 2, and each gift helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. The offering provides a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need. Please make your check payable to Fairplain Presbyterian Church, and on your check memo include "OGHS Offering".

## WELCOME TO MAY



It's been over 3 years since we've had our Community Dinners due to Covid. Come join us for good food, good company and new friends at the FREE Community Dinner, on Wed. May 31, at 6 pm, in the Courtyard Room. Everyone is welcome – young, old, singles, families. Just bring yourself. We provide food and fellowship.

Linda will be coordinating the May 31 & April 23 dinner and she will be providing the main entree. If you would like to coordinate a future dinner this summer or fall, please also call Linda in the church office.

There will be a free-will offering taken towards the missionaries we support in Iraq, Chapias, Mexico and Frontier Fellowship. Please complete the form below if you can help with the dinner and return to Linda in the church office.

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\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I can donate a side dish

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I can donate 1 dozen of rolls & butter

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I can donate 2 dozen cookies

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I can help serve the meal (be here by 5 pm)

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I can make lemonade and coffee

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I can put out refreshments and desserts

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I can help clean-up

Signed \_\_\_\_\_



## MUSIC NEWS –

Greetings to all from Revelation 15:3

***They held harps given them by God and sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are Your ways, King of the ages."***

The following music groups and individuals "warmed our hearts" during our Worship services in March:

March 05 – Chancel Choir

March 12 – The Praise Team "Wherever Two ..."

March 19 – Chancel Choir / Family Slavujevic Vocal Trio

March 26 – David, Aaron and Rebekah Gordan, piano music

The highlight of this spring will be our Easter Sunday on April 09. On that day we are planning a rich music program. I have invited several volunteer musicians to join our choir to celebrate Jesus' resurrection that happened almost 2000 years ago. Everyone in the congregation is welcome to be present and bring family and friends.

Another interesting event this spring will be Vladimir's Student Recital on Sunday, May 07 at 5:00 pm. His piano, guitar and voice students will be performing a variety of compositions and styles. All are welcome to support young musicians. For some of them it will be the very first public performance ever as soloists.

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Here is an interesting article about Georg Frederick Handel (1685-1759) who composed the following songs found in our church hymnal: # 40, 59, 122, 167, 249, 556. It is adapted from a quality book "Devotions from the World of Music" by Patrick & Barbara Kavanaugh.

### PART ONE

On February 11 1697, Georg Handel died – But not George Frederick Handel, one of history's greatest composers. It was his father, a "surgeon-barber" at the court of Weissenfels, in Saxony (today's province of Germany).

Handel Senior disliked anything musical – he considered music-loving a sign of weakness! – and discouraged his son whenever possible. No one even knows how the young Handel taught himself to play the organ and clavier. His sympathetic mother helped him smuggle a spinet into the attic, covering the strings with stripes of cloth so that Dad would not hear any practicing.

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At the age of 7, George Junior happened to perform for the duke (his father's boss), and so pleased his audience that his father was all but ordered to find a music teacher. At 11 he played so well for the electoral highness in Berlin that they offered to send him to Italy for further study. His outraged father canceled those plans.

Why such opposition? George Senior had long since decided that his son was to be a lawyer. He had pushed so long and hard for it that even 5 years after his death, George Junior (age 17 at that time) entered the University of Halle as a law student, putting off his musical studies. Handel's father was so blinded by his expectations that he could not see his son's incredible talent that should have been obvious – and was to everyone else.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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May God bless us all, grant us protection, guidance, good health, prosperity and an opportunity to be a blessing to others.

Vladimir Slavujevic  
Director of Music

## CHURCH SUPPLY LIST

Thank you to all those persons who have contributed so far to office supplies, paper products for coffee hour and community dinners. We will continue to accept any additional donations which are listed on the Church Supply List in the Courtyard. Thanks – Linda Cogswell

## SOUP KITCHEN

March Soup Kitchen served chicken salad sandwiches, mixed greens, juice, and various desserts provided by the Soup Kitchen. Helpers were John Kauffman, Robert Smith, George Pica, David Schell, Marlene Smith, and Sonja Stormo. We served 64 people.



### MISSION STATEMENT

We, the members of Fairplain Presbyterian Church, rejoice in God's grace and redeeming love through Jesus Christ. We believe we have been called as God's children to create an open and welcoming community, to worship and praise God, and to nurture and support each other.

We are called to develop our God-given gifts and to equip ourselves to reach out to the world in love and compassion. Thus prepared, we will share our faith, preach the gospel, feed the hungry, and be peacemakers according to God's will.

## CLERK'S CORNER APRIL

Based on my daffodils, which are about 10 inches high, I think Spring might show up in the next month or so. I'm ready! I'm quite tired of the cold winds blasting us at 20 mph, or more.

It's light until almost 8:00 these days, so consider joining us for the **Lenten Study** every **Tuesday at 5:30** for a potluck, video and discussion to follow. The videos have been good, thought provoking, and good discussions.

We have 48 active members and several non-members who are active in our church family. For the month of February, we had 45 as an average attendance in person and streaming attendance. Three homebound were served communion.

On Sunday **April 30**, Nancy and Tom Rach, two of the missionaries we have supported for several years with their work in Mexico, will be here to talk to us during our worship time. They have not visited our church for about 5 years, so I hope you can either be here in person, or stream that Sunday. When they come to the U.S.A. they try to visit different churches each year. This year is our turn.

Speaking of missionaries...This year our budget had to be trimmed by \$16,500, and one of the items that was trimmed was our overseas missionaries. We contribute to three groups, The **Rachs** in Mexico, the **Callisons** in Iraq, and the **Frontier Fellowship**. Combined, we give them \$5000. I am hoping that you might be able to contribute throughout the year so that we can continue to support the work of these missionaries. If you are willing and able to contribute small amounts from time to time, just mail them to the church office.

On May 7, we are going to have a **Hymn-sing Sunday**. If there is a hymn you would like to sing, please call, or e-mail your request to Pastor David by the last Sunday of April, the 23<sup>rd</sup>. If we have it in our collection of recorded music, it will be added. Since about a third of our hymnal is recorded, there's a good chance the hymn you want is available.

Wishing you a Blessed Easter,

Marlene Smith-Clerk

***CALLISONS' SPRING NEWSLETTER IS POSTED ON THE MISSION BULLETIN BOARD BEFORE YOU ENTER THE SANCTUARY - LINDA***

## DEACONS

**THESE DAYS DEVOTIONALS:** These Days devotionals, regular print and large print copies are available on the cart in the narthex.

### **YELLOW PEW ENVELOPES**

The yellow envelopes have been reprinted for your donations toward Deacons General/Funeral Fund and Food Pantry/Soup Kitchen and are in the pews.

### **Deacons General Fund:**

Goes towards the purchase of communion cups, oil for candles, Advent wax candles, flowers for shut-ins (Christmas and Easter), printed support materials for members: These Days devotional, Care Notes (various topics), greeting cards and postage for members; CD players for shut-ins.

### **Deacons Funeral Fund:**

Goes towards any funeral luncheon expenses that are not reimbursed by the family.

**Checks for donations to the Deacons General Fund and/or Funeral Fund should be made payable to Fairplain Presbyterian Church. Include "Deacons" in the memo line.**

### **CHURCH STAFF**

The Rev. David Schell, pastor@fairplainpc.com

Linda Cogswell, Church Secretary – church email: office@fairplainpc.com

Vladimir Slavujevic, Director of Music – email: vladimirslavujevic5@gmail.com

Jody Pauley, Nursery Attendant – email: jodypauley1@gmail.com

Diane Cronk, Co-Treasurer – email: dcronk@comcast.net

Jenna McAllister, Co-Treasurer – email: jennabetz@comcast.net

Jill Wendel, Financial Secretary – email: jillannwendel@yahoo.com

Bud Cornelius, Custodian

### **CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

Linda Cogswell, Church Secretary, is in the church office during the following days/hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 8:30 am-noon and 1:00-3:00 pm

Wednesday: Church Office closed

Friday: 9:00 am-11:30 am