

Eastminster Eagle

Volume 42, Issue 4

April 2025



My dear friends,

My pastor friend and I added a third piece to our parting blessing. Enjoy God, Prosper, and now we add, Flourish. In Ezekiel 17:24 the Lord promises that he will make the dry tree flourish. The Hebrew word means to break forth or bloom. When we enjoy a relationship with God we prosper, and we also flourish. Our spirits begin to break forth; we bloom into fruition. Our spiritual lives produce fruit that benefits others.

Flourishing in our relationship with God means that our lives become a source of life for others. Jesus taught that “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” When we make a home in God we become a home for others. When we partake of God’s nourishment, we become nourishing for others.

We began to receive nourishment from God when we learn to trust God more than other things that we have relied on. This is the purpose of the season of Lent. We fast from things that we rely on more than God and learn to trust God for our lives. Eventually we will flourish for the sake of others.

Every gardener knows that weeds (and pests!) are the enemy. Weeds divert the needed nourishment from the fruit you are trying to grow. Spiritual nourishment are things that help us to grow closer to God and to love others in the way God loves us. Weeds take you away from connecting with God and suck the energy away from spiritual flourishing. What might those things be for you?

Some weeds are obvious like worry, hatred, and addiction. These can consume you. But other weeds are not bad in themselves, but they divert your energy and give you nothing much in return. Politics can be a weed if your politics don’t lead you to making the world a better place or if they make you abandon the teachings of Jesus. Also, there is a fine line between

Continued on Page 2



Continued from Page 1

recreation and entertainment. Recreation helps you to enjoy the life God has given you. Entertainment sucks away your time, money, and energy. Recreation gives you a much-needed break from work and leaves you with energy for another week. It RE-creates you. Entertainment will wear you out and give you very little in return.

Consider making an inventory of the things that are helping you to flourish spiritually as well as a list of the weeds that are keeping you from growing into the fruitful person God intends you to be.

Enjoy God, prosper, and flourish!

Pastor Paul



Come join us for a

SPRING FLING

Saturday, April 5th, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Right after Saturday morning breakfast
Back parking lot

We'll have hotdogs, nachos, popcorn bounce house, games, a raffle and a prayer station.

Thank you for making Eastminster's Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper Fundraiser such a great success!

With the contributions raised from this event, we will be able to enjoy additional musicians to enhance our special worship Services.



We had a fantastic time at the Garland Women's Retreat at Gilmont from February 21-23. The theme this year was *Bloom Where You Are Planted*. Jane Els was the keynote speaker and she was fantastic as always.

We joined small groups called our Blooming Buddies. In this group, we exchanged phone numbers, emails, and recorded each of our birthdays. We were encouraged to keep in touch over the next year, wishing our Buddies well on birthdays, Mother's Day, and any other time we wanted to reach out.

Eastminster received a prize for bringing the most people down in one vehicle. With funds from Eastminster's EPW account, Kathy rented a Jeep Grand Wagoneer for the weekend.

We missed Philis Knox and Melanie Litle who were not able to join us this year.

As you can imagine, there was a great deal of laughter while at the camp and we learned that Jackie Roberts is not as quiet and shy and one may think she is. We played a card game called Phase 10, which Jackie dominated!

On our way home, we made a stop at Brothers Café in Canton and enjoyed a delicious lunch.

We all are looking forward to going again next year. Don't miss in 2026! Join the fun.

What is One Great Hour of Sharing?

The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, received during Lent, has a seventy-six year history as an ecumenical endeavor that now involves nine denominations and Church World Service. Episcopal Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill, founded *One Great Hour of Sharing* in 1946 and set a goal to raise one million dollars in one hour for World Relief.

Today, projects supported by *One Great Hour of Sharing* are under way in more than 100 countries, including the United States and Canada. In recent years Presbyterians have given about \$10 million annually.

Eastminster's *One Great Hour of Sharing* receipts will be equally divided among the denomination, Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

There are many opportunities and different ways to contribute to *One Great Hour of Sharing*. Included on the back page of this newsletter is a One Great Hour of Sharing Calendar with interesting ways to begin your contribution. Truly, the calendar explains not only the needs but the daily reminders just how much we are blessed.

Eastminster will receive this offering beginning March 30, and continue through Easter Sunday April 20.

Please prayerfully consider this special offering.

Thanks be to God.





Churches throughout the world, and here at Eastminster, will celebrate Easter this month, following a church calendar

that Christians have used for centuries. Many will join with us to celebrate Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Some churches along with our congregation will continue to celebrate Easter during Eastertide. Jesus gave himself for our sins, showing us that God loves us. How can we not attend these services and speak the liturgy and sing the hymns? How can the choir not spend hours in rehearsal to offer their best to God in thanksgiving and remembrance of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection? I can assure you they are working very hard to do their best for their offerings to God and to aid you in your participation in our celebration and response to the glorious, good news in our worship.

From the 'hosannas' and palm processional on Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday when we remember Jesus and the last supper through communion. Then to Good Friday

where we remember Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal, the trial, the crucifixion, and the burial. Finally, Easter, where we celebrate the resurrection of Christ with the joyful sounds of the brass, the organ, timpani, the choir, and you, all joining together to sing the Easter hymns.

I am always moved at the end of Easter Communion when we return the Alleluias to our services with the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus from *Messiah* and how many in the congregation join in singing along with the instruments and choir.

How could you keep from singing and making joyful noises when you reflect on God's love for us as shown through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus?

Join us for Maundy Thursday at St. Mark; Good Friday and Easter at Eastminster as we thank our Triune God!



Hope for Holy Week

As you travel with Jesus through Holy Week, don't lose heart. He is your Palm



Sunday King. He will always come to you and give you the best of what he has to offer because of his humble attitude and his devotion to his mission.

When you see this Savior who personally cares for you, you can't help but join the believers of old to give to the Lord your best and most precious treasures of your heart and life, and then to join with all believers saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" —Peter Sulzle

Sharing our Easter inheritance

After David Clarke's mother died in a cycling accident, she left him \$125,000. Inspired by how his mom had lived, he decided to share that inheritance with his community. Clarke chose four organizations that assist people in poverty, those with special needs and others. Liverpool (U.K.) Kids Plant to Plate received one-fourth of the money to teach urban kids about food growth and preparation. Team Oasis, which provides free meals and positive opportunities to disadvantaged families, also received 25% of the funds, as did two other nonprofits.

Through Jesus' death and resurrection, we too have an inheritance (see

Colossians 1:12). Because we did nothing to earn this abundant love and life — and because God teaches us to serve and care for others — we look for ways to share it.

Unlike Clarke's monetary windfall, however, our gifts of salvation, grace, joy, love and blessing never run out. In fact, the more we share Jesus' love through word and deed, the more we experience it ourselves. As Clarke keeps his mom's spirit alive by following her example, so we, as Easter people, make the Spirit of God known far and wide.

Earth-shaking victory

On Ash Wednesday in 2001, a 6.8 magnitude earthquake shook the Seattle area. Charlie and Ann Lewis, co-pastors in Snohomish, Washington, reflected on the timing:

"While most years we prefer to think of Lent as a contemplative journey of faith as we walk with Jesus toward Jerusalem and the cross, this year we are thinking of how God turned the world upside down at Calvary. From the cross, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and his life was finished. Then the earth shook violently, the curtain in the temple was torn in two and rocks were split apart. The God who identified with us in our humanity in the incarnation of Jesus Christ demonstrated in that moment the depth of divine love for us — a love that leads God to choose the path of suffering and sacrifice.

"Three days later, the earth shook again — another violent earthquake, and the stone in front of the tomb was rolled away. Then the crucified Christ threw aside the burial cloths, emerging from the darkness of the tomb to walk in the dew of the grass as dawn was breaking across the sky. God had declared victory over sin and death itself. That victory was for us. ... God has given us a glorious life that extends into eternity."

Clothed in compassion

In Colossians 3:12, Paul tells us to clothe ourselves in compassion. What does that look like? Consider these parallels to actual clothes:

Each morning, we select outfits depending on our activities and who we'll see. For example, clothing looks different for a day of chores than for worship on Easter Sunday. To maintain our wardrobe, we regularly clean, fold and repair items. Likewise, each day we choose how we'll treat others. Our approach to each activity or interaction might differ, as we seek to represent Christ well. And to maintain an effective witness, we often must renew and "mend" our attitude.

One more comparison: Look in your closet. Have you updated your clothes lately? Compassion looks different than it did decades ago. While staying grounded in biblical truth, let's adapt the care we wear — making it "fit" better for today's generations. —Janna Firestone

Easter insights

Did you know the word Easter never appears in the Bible? It may be a variant of the name Eostre, a pagan fertility goddess who symbolized rebirth and spring. Eostre stems from the Proto-Germanic word for dawn, which Christians connect to Jesus' victory over darkness.

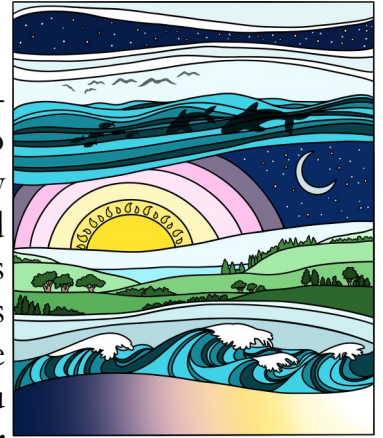
The ancient tradition of Easter baskets also has ties to Eostre, whose symbol was a rabbit. Christians likely adapted the practice of bringing eggs and seeds as an offering to Eostre. Some Orthodox Christians continue a tradition of having a priest bless baskets of Easter food on Holy Saturday. Items usually hold special symbolism, such as Paska bread, cured meats, colored eggs, salt, horseradish and lamb-shaped butter.



Easter Blessings

Creation care

Sir Robert Baden-Powell, who founded the Boy Scouts, asked troop members to "leave this world a little better than you found it." For Christians, that aim is rooted in Scripture.



Caring for God's Creation

Using a Bible-like parable, biology professor Michael Duncan writes: "Imagine you owned a property and rented it out to tenants for a period of time. Upon move-in, the tenants found the place clean and in perfect working order. As the owner of the property, it is your desire to see that the tenants regard the condition of the property and live in such a way that does not destroy the house. This is the mindset that we should adopt as tenants living on the earth."

Almost five centuries ago, John Calvin encouraged creation care too. "The earth was given to man, with this condition, that he should occupy himself in its cultivation," he wrote. "Let him who possesses a field, so partake of its yearly fruits, that he may not suffer the ground to be injured by his negligence, but let him endeavor to hand it down to posterity as he received it, or even better cultivated. Moreover, that this economy, and this diligence, with respect to those good things which God has given us to enjoy, may flourish among us; let everyone regard himself as the steward of God in all things which he possesses."

Why is church outreach important?

Katie Allred

Every church has a growth strategy. As church leaders and believers in Christ, we are called to spread the love of Jesus everywhere and to everyone. One of the ways we can reach people is by consistent outreach. By meeting the needs within our communities, we display God's love and offer up an invitation to get to know Him better through our churches.

The Great Commission: Outreach was a command given to us by Jesus. Matthew 28: 19-20 says, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

That seems like a pretty simple task, right? Maybe not. As ministry leaders, it's important that the love and light of God is evident everywhere we may go; at home, around the neighborhood, even at the gym. People will see the evidence of God's love through you. By displaying God's love all around us, we encourage others to ask God to help them do the same.

A huge amount of outreach is done through our church families. Assuming that your members fully understand God's call to make disciples of all nations can stunt your outreach. Consistently come back to the Great Commission and explain what it really means for you and your congregation.

Outreach Is Done Individually: Without outreach, it is impossible to spread the word of Christ to the world. The unfortunate thing is that there are so many people who haven't heard the gospel, even just in your own community. This can be very discouraging news, but we have been given such an amazing opportunity to spread the love of Christ.

Mission trips are an example of a great way your church can show God's love to those who may not know Him. Volunteering at places like thrift stores is another way for your church to display God's love. A lot of people think that you have to do these huge acts, or go across the world to make a difference, but the truth is that there are so many ways to show



God's love that doesn't even involve leaving your community. Even simple things like holding a door open, helping someone cross the street, or complimenting someone is sharing the love of God. It is essential that your congregation knows that people see the love of Christ displayed through them.

Outreach Is Done With Your Church Family:

While a lot of outreach is individual, there is still a ton that your church can do to provide your members with outreach opportunities. Your church will become more active with outreach through your influence as a ministry leader.

Provide multiple opportunities that capture the attention of your church. Not everyone is going to be interested in helping with everything. Some people may want to help with opportunity 1, while others would rather help with opportunity 2. Try to provide opportunities in your church's community. Not only does this make it easier for your church members to commit to whatever service of outreach it may be, but it also benefits those you are serving when they decide to visit your church one Sunday.

Know who (and whose) you are

Actor Kirk Douglas once picked up a hitchhiker. After the man got settled in Douglas's car, he turned to look more closely at the driver. Surprised to recognize the famous man at the wheel, the hitchhiker exclaimed, "Do you know who you are?!"

We would do well to ask ourselves and each other the same thing. Often, we seem to forget — or perhaps we never knew.

Through much of life, we behave as if our identity depends on our occupation, wealth, family line, daily accomplishments or good deeds. But none of these — not even the last one — determines the core of who we are. All that matters is our Creator's opinion, and God loves us with abundant, unconditional love.

Do you know who you are? You are God's beloved child! And so is everyone else. May we live out that knowledge, treating one another as such.

—Heidi Hyland Mann



From the cross, Jesus prayed words from the book of Psalms. What were they?

- A. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
- B. "I thirst!"
- C. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."
- D. "It is finished!"

Answer: A (See Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34; and Psalm 22:1.)



Scripture Readings for April

1	John 6:16–27	11	John 11:1–27	21	John 14:1–14
2	John 6:27–40	12	John 11:28–44	22	John 14:15–31
3	John 6:41–51	13	Matt. 21:12–1	23	John 15:1–11
4	John 6:52–59	14	John 12:9–19	24	John 15:12–27
5	John 6:60–71	15	John 12:20–26	25	John 16:1–15
6	Mark 8:31–9:1	16	John 12:27–36	26	John 16:16–33
7	John 9:1–17	17	John 17:1–26	27	John 14:1–7
8	John 9:18–41	18	John 13:36–38	28	John 17:1–11
9	John 10:1–18	19	Rom. 8:1–11	29	John 17:12–19
10	John 10:19–42	20	John 20:19–23	30	John 17:20–26



Congratulations to one of our very own

Alex Pappas was installed at First Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, TX on February 9th. She was hired as their head pastor last fall. Harry Meissner provided the charge to the congregation, while other pastors were invited by Alex to participate in the service. If you haven't heard Harry preach for a while, it is worth a listen. You can find the entire service on YouTube under FPC Georgetown, TX. While Alex's family is very proud of her, we must thank all of you for helping along the way. After all, it takes a village! Tom and Michele



A day in the life of a Pleasant Grove food pantry volunteer

Wake up, make the bed, feed the dog, walk the dog, prepare some lunch for your spouse, eat some breakfast. Then, head over to El Rancho, make half a dozen trips up and down the service ramp with a grocery cart full of donated food. Fill your car to the brim with all these generous donations and head over to the pantry. Once there, get help unloading all those donations from your car and head inside to see where to help. For this volunteer, that is usually filling 50-55 boxes with vegetables, fruits, proteins and grains—all the nutrition a family needs. These boxes are made for people who cannot get to the pantry on their own. Instead, DoorDash delivers them for us.

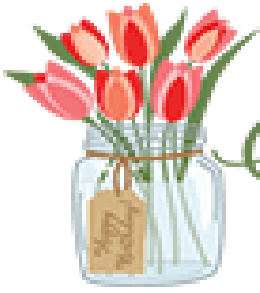
In order to fill those boxes, we have to get the table ready by moving flats of cans and other dry food products from the pantry room to the table at the back of the gym. Once the table is ready, students from DISD come in to help fill them up. While this volunteer is supervising the students, others are greeting clients as they come in, doing intake with each of those clients, making sure the shopping shelves stay full for the clients, answering any questions clients may have, serving the homeless in whatever way possible, and sometimes helping a client out with their food.

We close at 11:30 but most volunteers stay until 12:00 to clean, re-organize, fill shelves for the next day and make sure all is well until many of the same volunteers return to do it all over again. But, always with a smile!

This volunteer is done for the day, tired but leaving with a sense of gratitude for what this place means, not just to the volunteers but to all the clients.

God is good, all the time!

P.S. Come be a part of something that's bigger than all of us!



April BIRTHDAYS

Frank Karlen, Sr.	4/4
Cary Blair	4/5
Brittney Bennett	4/6
Jan Walters	4/9
Deidre Maples	4/12
Charles Blair, Jr.	4/13
Danny Wood	4/15
Talat Robert	4/18



Eastminster Session

- Chandra Anderson
- Melody Davis
- Philis Knox
- Dick Knox
- Kathy Kreger
- Michele Pappas
- Bruce Turner
- Patience Uche
- Darlene West

Holy Week Schedule

April 13 - 20

Palm Sunday, April 13:
 Eastminster: 11:30 a.m.,
 St. Mark: 9:45 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 17:
 St. Mark: 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 18:
 Eastminster: 6:30 p.m.






Easter Sunday, April 20:
 Eastminster 11:30 a.m.,
 St. Mark: 9:45 a.m.



Pastor	Rev. Dr. Paul Burns
Director of Music	Fred P. Watkins
Organist	Melody S. Davis
Administrative Assistant	Chandra Anderson
Hostess/Housekeeper	Minerva Hernandez
Child Care Provider	Betty Crabtree
Audio/Visual Technician	Sean Turner



One Great Hour of Sharing Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March 30 When homes are destroyed by floods, One Great Hour of Sharing can help rebuild them. Give 50 cents for every year your home has remained standing.	31 If you had to work today, put in a dollar and thank God you are able to work.	 Apr 01 "I was thirsty and you gave me drink." 50 cents for every drink today.	02 People are in darkness this day. Give \$1.00 for every window in your home.	03 Did you eat out this week? \$1.00 for every one who ordered.	04 50 cents for each TV and radio in your home. 	05 A cow can make all the difference. It provides milk for a family to drink or sell. Give 50 cents for each food item in your home that comes from a cow.
06 Natural disasters bring with them not just physical damage, but also separation from family and friends. Give a dime for every hour your family or group spends together today.	07 "Give us this day our daily bread..." 50¢ for every loaf of bread in your home.	 08 It's a good day today! 50 cents rain or shine.	09 A hungry world is a dangerous world. Put in 75 cents today.	10 75 cents if you don't have to wear glasses. 50 cents if you do. What a joy to be able to see!	11 Are your clothes nice and clean? 75 cents for your washer, and 75 cents for your dryer.	12 Trees help keep the soil in place so homes don't wash away and people have good soil for planting. Give 50 cents for every plant in your home and every tree in your yard.
13 Staying clean helps keep us healthy. People need toothbrushes, soap and shampoos. Give 10 cents for everything you have that helps keep your body clean.	 14 Children are a blessing! \$2.00 for each one in your family.	15 A dime for each between-meal snack you had today.	16 Jesus said, "I am the door;" 50 cents for every door in your home.	17 A dime for each time you opened the refrigerator today. 	18 \$1.00 if you have not been sick this month. Thank God for good health!	19 One Great Hour of Sharing helps deliver first aid and medicine – a luxury for many families. Give ten cents for every over-the-counter medication that your home is blessed with.
20 After a flood, people need mops, gloves, sponges, detergent, and many other things to clean their homes. Give 10 cents for each thing in your house that you clean with.	This Sharing Calendar is a fun way for your family to make an offering to One Great Hour of Sharing while you learn about how contributions help people around the world.					

Special dates

- ◆ Holy Week, April 13-20
- ◆ Palm/Passion Sunday, April 13
- ◆ Maundy Thursday, April 17
- ◆ Good Friday, April 18
- ◆ Easter Sunday, April 20
- ◆ Administrative Professionals Day, April 23



APRIL