

WORSHIP SERVICE ON SUNDAY, MARCH 28, 2021

Our next worship service, on Sunday, March 28, 2021, will be a joyous celebration of **Palm Sunday** (the sixth and last Sunday in Lent). Our Scripture readings are: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-20; and Mark 11:1-11, and my sermon is entitled is "Jesus' Triumphal Entry." The Bulletin is available here: https://fpcofvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/3-28-2021-Bulletin-Palm-Sunday-PDF.pub_.pdf

On Sunday, palm branches will be available at the entrances to the Sanctuary, and members and guests are invited to take one and join us in waving them vigorously during the Passing of the Peace. Dawn Neel will sing our anthem which is appropriately entitled, "The Palms." C.F. Schneider will play "Were You

There?"

Please join us in person or via the Internet to enjoy the beautiful music with which we offer praise and glory to our God as we approach the end of the Lenten Season and look forward with great joy to celebrating the resurrection of our Lord on Easter Sunday.



HOLY WEEK

As in past years, the Session determined that our church would place an announcement in *The Advocate* regarding our Good Friday and Easter Worship Services this year. The public is invited to celebrate with us in person or by livestreaming. The announcement, which appears differently than the picture above, will appear in the Faith Section of *The Advocate* on Saturday, March 27th. I have written a brief article, entitled, "Jesus' Robe," to accompany the announcement.

Let us encourage one another to invite family, guests, friends, and neighbors to attend or to watch our Good Friday and Easter Worship Services. Fortunately, we are able to assure visitors that we wear masks and maintain appropriate social distancing. Especially if they have been vaccinated, our visitors should feel very secure, not to mention very welcomed!, in our midst.

Come! Let us gather and marvel at the empty tomb! *He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said.* Matthew 28:6.



REMEMBERING AND HONORING LOVED ONES AND OTHERS NEAR AND DEAR TO OUR HEARTS

Following a beautiful tradition that has been in place in our church for many years, Linda Patterson is once again going to decorate our Chancel with a “lily cross” to greet us on Easter Morning. A picture of the cross that Linda and her helpers created last year appears above.

As always, the church also provides an opportunity for members to honor their loved ones and friends (past and present) by purchasing one or more lilies from this year’s lily cross. We have reduced the price of each plant to \$10.00. This is not, therefore, a money-raising effort by the church. It is simply an opportunity for our members to purchase a beautiful reminder of Christ’s resurrection, while also making a public expression of love and gratitude to anyone who has a special place in their hearts.

Purchase order forms were inserted in the Bulletin last Sunday, as they will be again this Sunday. Also, there is a copy of the form below:



EASTER LILIES

Our lily Cross is such an integral part of our celebration of Easter that we will once again create it for our Easter Worship Service. In addition, we offer you the opportunity to purchase Easter lilies for \$10.00, making your payment for the lilies to FPC in honor or memory of a loved one. At the bottom of this form, please indicate your preference as to how your payment should be used, and place the form and your payment in the collection plate or bring them by the office. All memorials will be acknowledged in our Easter bulletin.

Your Name: _____

To the Glory of God and in Honor of: _____

To the Glory of God and in Honor of: _____

To the Glory of God and in Memory of: _____

To the Glory of God and in Memory of: _____

Please select one of the following

_____ Please forward my donation to VCAM.

_____ Please use my donation for a lily.

_____ Please divide my donation between VCAM & a lily.

TOTAL Amount Enclosed			
Check	\$ _____	Check No.	_____
Cash	\$ _____		

You can also phone the church office (361.575.2441) to place your order. Checks or giving envelopes should be marked "Lily Cross."



COVID-19 VACCINE SOON AVAILABLE TO ALL ADULTS IN TEXAS

On March 29, 2021, all adults in Texas will be eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination, whether consisting of one shot or two. For more information, go to this website: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/news/releases/2021/20210323.aspx>.

This is wonderful news, and we rejoice that the assurance against disease afforded by the modern miracles of vaccination is now available to so many more individuals.

While we anticipate that newly eligible members of our church will not need much, if any, assistance in obtaining an appointment to receive their shot(s), the members of the Session are nevertheless continuing to offer their assistance to all our members, their loved ones, or their friends who encounter any difficulty in obtaining such an appointment. If you need assistance, or know someone who does, please contact us here at the Church Office.

Although it is unlikely that I need to do so, I would like to mention again that if you have any reservations or anxieties about taking any of the three available vaccines (aside from what you have already discussed with your doctor), I would like you to feel free to discuss those concerns with me. These vaccines are nothing short of God's miraculous gifts to his suffering people. It would be a sin to let gossip, Internet conspiracists, or other misinformation dissuade any of God's children from accepting such a potentially lifesaving gift.

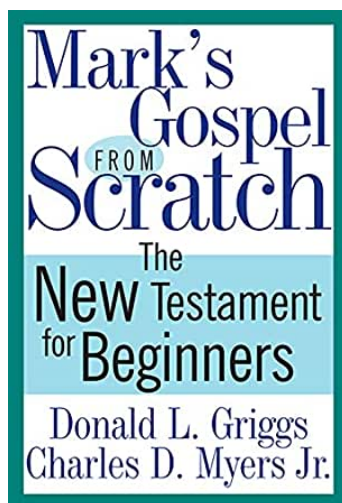


It has been a while since VCAM and Christ Kitchen have been mentioned in this Newsletter, but that does not mean that the needs of those organizations have diminished. If anything, the need for food and clothing has only increased in the midst of the current pandemic and economic downturn.

On the one hand, I want to thank once again those who are faithfully dropping contributions in our VCAM collection box as well as bringing cookies and other desserts to supplement the meals being prepared at Christ Kitchen. Thank

you for your generosity and support.

On the other hand, I would also like to encourage you to continue engaging in the Christian “habit” of generosity. If you can spare some prepackaged desserts or some canned goods or dry goods to bring by the church, we will make sure they get delivered to the right place. This is truly a situation where a little goes a long way. Your ability to bring even a small amount of groceries or baked goods will go far to alleviate hunger and suffering in our community. Please prayerfully consider how you can help.



**IS THERE ANY INTEREST
IN A
SHORT BIBLE-STUDY COURSE?**

Allow me to remind you that your pastor is wondering if there would be any interest among the congregation in participating in a short Bible-study to be offered after Easter.

I have found an excellent little study guide entitled, “Mark’s Gospel from Scratch” (from the “New Testament for Beginners Series”). The book is authored by Donald L. Griggs and Charles D. Myers, Jr., prominent Christian educators and authors. A picture of the cover of their book appears above.

The book has six discrete chapters, each of which lends itself to a one-hour class and study session. I am open to suggestions as to a good time and day of the week to hold the class, but my initial suggestion would be to hold classes over the noon hour (12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.) on each of six successive Sundays (from example, beginning on Tuesday, April 14th, and ending on Tuesday, May 19th). I

realize that holding this class during the noon hour would preclude participants who work during the day, but if the classes work well, perhaps we could later repeat them during evenings in the Summer or Fall.

I believe this class would work best if all participants (a) read the entirety of the Gospel According to Mark in advance (it is not too terribly long) and (b) arrived for class having read the chapter in our study guide that was assigned for that class. I also believe it would be best if, as a class, we spread out in Fellowship Hall with appropriate social distancing. Those who were reluctant to participate in person could, if they preferred, join us by Zoom, although they would miss the fellowship “feel” of the class. Of course, there would be no tests or written assignments(!), we would just experience the joy, inspiration, and learning that would come from studying Scripture together.

Please send me your comments, suggestions, or questions at jimdement@fpcovictoria.com. I may not be able to respond to each and every one of them, but I promise you I will read and prayerfully consider all of them. In time, I will provide the congregation with more definite plans for this Bible-study if sufficient members express an interest. May the Holy Spirit bless and support us in this undertaking!

Peace, grace, and mercy,

Pastor Jim

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