



THE CARILLON

Monthly Newsletter
May 2019

First Presbyterian Church
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NEW ADULT BIBLE STUDY SERIES

Sunday Adult Bible Study (9:30 a.m. in the parlor) has begun a new video series on *Jesus and the Gospels*. The Gospels are fascinating literary compositions in their own right, and they raise puzzling questions about the figure they portray and about the religious movement, Christianity, that produced them. Early Christianity was prolific in its production of Gospels—narratives that in one way or another have Jesus of Nazareth as their central character.

There are many more Gospels than the four included in the New Testament. They are almost bewilderingly diverse in the way they portray Jesus. What accounts for this diversity of images? Is it possible to speak of a single Jesus when accounts of him are so varied?

The most common approach to these questions is through history. The so-called “quest for the historical Jesus” asks who the human Jesus really was behind all the different portraits. Although the historical question is legitimate and even compelling, it is also virtually impossible to answer satisfactorily. Certainly some historical statements can be made about the human Jesus that meet the strictest criteria of historical method, but such statements fall far short of providing a full or even meaningful grasp of Jesus’s identity. Worse, such historical efforts treat the actual Gospels shabbily. The

literary effect of the compositions tends to be completely ignored, while the materials in them that are deemed authentic are ripped out of their literary contexts to be placed in the historian’s reconstruction.

The approach to *Jesus and the Gospels* taken in this course is not primarily historical but literary. Of course, history comes into play as the various Gospels are placed within the development of Christianity. The search, however, is not for the figure behind the Gospels but for the even more fascinating figure within them. Only after the full range of these literary representations has been considered can the question of “the real Jesus” adequately be posed—and it may not be answerable in strictly historical terms.

The focus, in short, is not simply on Jesus but also on the Gospels as literary compositions. How did they come to be? How are they related to each other? How do they communicate through their literary structure, plot, character development, themes, and symbolism? It is, after all, as literature that the Gospels influenced history, and it is through literature that present-day readers can continue to encounter Jesus.

The opening eight lectures through mid-June set the context for the emergence of the Gospels as distinctive literary expressions: the historical, cultural, and experiential matrix in which Jesus traditions were selected and

shaped by early Christian communities. Next to be considered are the conditions that required a shift from oral tradition to written composition and the literary relations among the synoptic Gospels.

Later, in mid-August following a separate eight-week lesson series led by Tim Van Nasdale through summer on *Navigating Genesis*, the four canonical Gospels (Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John) are examined in considerable detail, precisely as literary expressions that witness to and interpret the Christian community's convictions concerning Jesus. For each Gospel, it is important to consider not only what is being said but also how it is being said. Such attention is appropriate both because of the literary richness of the canonical Gospels and because theirs are the portrayals of Jesus that have exercised the most influence through history.

Following these lessons on the canonical Gospels, the wide range of apocryphal Gospels (those not found in the New Testament) will be examined. These Gospels, deliberately omitted or lost and rediscovered centuries later, include the intriguing infancy Gospels of James and Thomas, fragments from lost narrative Gospels derived from Jewish Christian circles, and finally, the various compositions usually associated with Gnosticism that in one way or another can be considered Gospels.

The final lectures consider the illusive and compelling figure of Jesus, both as he is found in his diverse literary representations and as he is experienced in present-day communities of faith that read the Gospels in the context of worship. --Adapted from the *Course Guidebook* Ed Wahl

COMMUNION SCHEDULE

May 5 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary
June 9 10:30 a.m. Pentecost



Sacrament
of Communion

SESSION REPORT

Regular Session Meeting, April 15, 2019

New matters that required Session attention included:

-  Farmers Market registration opportunities are expected soon. We need to decide if, how, and when to participate. Staffing the tent and handling the water is another challenge.
-  A new Church Policy on Funerals (similar to the one on weddings) needs to be added to the Church Policy Manual.
-  The Special Worship Service for Healing and Wholeness led by Rev. Elvery after Monday night Community Dinner on March 25 was well

received by members and dinner guests alike, with guests taking all the major speaking roles. Session felt that a continuing series of services tied to remembrance Monday holidays should be offered. Thus, Session voted for services on May 27 (Memorial Day), September 2 (Labor Day), November 11 (Veterans Day), and December 23 (Longest Night).

Some of the continuing matters from March included:

-  The Mental Health Companionship Support Group Training at Advocate Christ Medical Center, Oak Lawn, will be attended by several Elders and members on Friday, May 3, 2019.
-  Session debriefed on the participation and free will offerings at the five weeks of Tuesday Lenten Lunches. After many years of hosting the worship and lunches, it was suggested that one of the other participating churches take a turn as host in 2020.
-  Because of travel and illness affecting attendance and participation, it has been difficult for the remaining members of the Mission Study Team to meet and make progress.

Approved in concept by Session, Rev. Elvery is working with the family of Elder Donna Moore to schedule a Sunday worship date for the adult baptism for two grandsons.

On Ash Wednesday, Rev. Elvery was on the Homewood rail station platform offering to impose the sign of the cross in ashes upon the foreheads of commuters. 13-14 people received the sign of the cross.

As stated above, Rev. Elvery led a Special Worship Service for Wholeness and Healing after Community Dinner on Monday, March 25, 2019, in Westminster Hall. The lighting of candles was a quiet symbol of prayer and unity among all who were present. Prayer requests from individuals were offered.

For personal reasons, Rev. Elvery requested two weeks of leave beginning April 24 through May 5, 2019. Rev. Jane Tuma will lead worship on Sunday, April 28, but Sunday, May 5, has yet to be arranged.

For the Clerk's records:

-  Notification of the death of retired Church Secretary Noreen A. Bussey, who served our church for 27 years, on Tuesday, April 2, 2019, was received. She was buried at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.

- ❖ Receipt of a bequest of \$5,000.00 from the Trust of Mary Ann P. Millush, who died in 2012.

Our Ministries in Action:

The Palm Sunday Bake Sale raised \$287 in support of the Monday Community Dinners Missional Venture.

The elevator has failed again because of a faulty lift pump motor. A replacement has been ordered and will be installed as soon as it arrives. This is a major project for the Board of Trustees. Because the balance in the Trustees Contingency Fund was used for the new roof in 2018, the cost of the new pump motor was approved to be taken from the Undesignated Memorial Fund.

Adult Bible Study curriculum choices and dates were discussed and approved. See the lead article above.

An email vote was taken to approve the adult baptism for Ethan Cole Moore, age 16, and Gavin Troy Moore, age 14, in worship on a date to be arranged. A second email vote firmed up the schedule for Communion through Pentecost.

Respectfully submitted,
Edward C. Wahl, Clerk of Session



FROM THE PASTOR

Rituals, whether words or actions, bring us the comfort of the known and familiar. While the comfort of the familiar can be good news, bad news comes with it. The rituals can become rote actions or words that are seldom thought about and begin to lose meaning.

One set of words we use in worship week after week we call “The Lord’s Prayer.” Beginning May 12, I will start a five-week sermon series on The Lord’s Prayer. In preparation, I ask you to remember when and how you learned the prayer. Remember also times it has comforted or maybe challenged you. Be warned: the “sermon” may be more than me talking. I may ask non-rhetorical questions. I may even ask you to converse with people sitting near you.

As you may have figured out, I do not view worship as a spectator sport. Worship is not something we watch.

It is not a noun but a verb. *Worship is something we do.* Our singing and praying, listening and speaking, laughing and crying, standing and sitting, moving and pausing, thinking and feeling together make up that sacred time when we are gathered in God’s presence to live and learn as a community. I hope that by taking time to



dwell with and ponder The Lord’s Prayer, we will deepen our life not just in worship but also 24/7.

Dudley Elvery

FLOWERS FOR THE SANCTUARY



Sign up on the wall calendar in the Narthex, or contact Karen at 248-6777, if you wish to donate flowers for the sanctuary. Flower dedications may be in honor, memory, celebration of someone (thing), or to “the Glory of God.” Garden flowers are welcome.

WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION

The Women’s Association Bake Sale was well received with proceeds in the amount of \$287. Appreciation is given to all who baked and purchased goods.

CIRCLE MEETINGS

LYDIA – Thursday, May 9, 1 p.m. at the home of Jonna James, 17313 Forestway Dr., East Hazel Crest.

REBECCA – Wednesday, May 8, **6:30 p.m. annual Salad Supper.** No lesson, but bring a salad to share.

CHICAGO HEIGHTS FELLOWSHIP

Chicago Heights Women’s Association has a gathering on Tuesday, May 7, at noon. Contact Char Hansen for a reservation. Chicago Heights Men’s Fellowship meets on Friday, May 17, at 12:30 p.m at Paulie’s Pub in South Chicago Heights. Hope to see you there.

TRUSTEE REPORT

The Trustees are continuing to look for a cost-effective way to replace the heavy outside door that allows access to the office from the north driveway. It was custom-made, and replacing it will not be inexpensive. Time, weather, and constant use have weakened it, and patching is no longer effective.

The “Basement Watchdog” battery powered back-up sump pump had to be replaced recently. This unit assists the two main sump pumps located at the base of the south stairs, outside of Westminster Hall. A damaged stair tread has been repaired, on that same staircase.



Other work recently completed was a new faucet, supply lines, and shutoff in the upstairs women's restroom in the C.E. building. Several bulbs in the sanctuary were replaced, including the "night lights." A new clock was procured for Westminster Hall.

The church received a donation of a large snowblower, adding to our collection. Raking, plus the picking up of twigs and winter debris, have been done, and spring lawn care has begun.

Finally, please take note of new signage, placed at a number of locations around the church buildings, that indicates exits, fire extinguishers, and first aid kits. If you know of something around our buildings that needs attention, please let us know. Jay Ruklic

STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE MINISTRY TEAM

Thank you to all who have already paid the 2019 Per Capita amount and to those who have pledged to do so. The amount per active member is **\$34.22**. Through March we have received \$2,766.94, which is 63.2% of the total \$4,380.16 owed. Please use the special Per Capita envelope in your offering envelope box if you are sending in your payment, and please write "per capita" on the memo line of your check.

Unchanged from last month, we have received 38 responses out of the 82 mailed for our 2019 pledges. The combined total pledge amount is \$107,028. In retrospect, these numbers correspond to 40 responses and \$113,346 in 2018, both of which are higher. There is still time to send or bring in your response envelope if you are among those who have not yet done so. Thank you to all.

Did you pay taxes on your Required Minimum Distribution in 2018? Several of our members have now seen the wisdom of tax-free donating some or all of their RMDs to the church as part of their pledged identified giving as a substitute for after-tax donations. Likewise, shares of stock, mutual funds, and insurance policy distributions that are highly-appreciated and costly taxwise to you if you accept the funds can be given directly to the church tax-free if your investment company sends the money directly to the church. Keep your taxable dollars for other purposes. Contact your broker or financial advisor for precise details.

Have you remembered the church in your estate planning? Contact your attorney for making a bequest in your Will or Trust. Name the First Presbyterian Church of Homewood and specify an amount or percentage.

The summary of receipts and disbursements for the First Presbyterian Church of Homewood for the month ending March 31, 2019, is in the following chart:

	<u>Through March</u>	<u>2019 Budget</u>
General Fund Income		
Identified Giving	\$32,289	\$130,000
Loose Offering	415	1,500
Initial Offering	360	500
Required Min. Dist./Stock Sale	5,000	5,000
Community Dinners Donations	137	3,000
Other Income	566	6,000
Dividends & Capital Gains	11,854	14,000
Sale of Investment Shares	0	21,800
Endowment Fund Distributions	0	7,700
Transfer from Designated Fund	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total General Fund Income	50,621	189,500
General Fund Expenses		
Missional Ventures	\$829	\$6,500
Faith Formation	326	1,800
Facilities	14,554	51,100
Staff	19,069	79,600
Transition	9,937	43,300
Administrative Support	2,562	7,200
Purchase of Investment Shares	0	0
Transfer to Designated Fund	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total General Fund Expenses	47,277	189,500
Designated Fund Income	\$3,579	
Designated Fund Expenses	654	
<i>Total Active Members—March 31, 2019</i>		
		<i>114</i>
<i>Average Sunday Attendance—December 2018</i>		
		<i>50</i>
<i>Average Sunday Attendance—January 2019</i>		
		<i>45</i>
<i>Average Sunday Attendance—February 2019</i>		
		<i>51</i>
<i>Average Sunday Attendance—March 2019</i>		
		<i>57</i>
Summary through March 2019 (3/12 of Budget):		
Income Over/(Under) 2019 Budget		\$3,247
Expenses Over/(Under) 2019 Budget		(98)
2019 Total Net Income (Loss) to Date		3,345

We need an average income of **\$4,000** each week to fund our mission and operate our church. This is inclusive of pledges and identified giving as well as other income sources. So, how are we doing?

- Weekly average for January (4) \$5,290
- Weekly average for February (4) \$2,731
- Weekly average for March (5) \$3,707
- **Weekly average for 2019 (13) \$3,894**

MISSION/OUTREACH MINISTRY

Thank you to all who participate in the Monday Night Community Dinners. From March 18 through April 8, we served an average of 55 guests each night. They all seem to be happy and well fed when they leave, and they

keep coming back for the food, fellowship, and the opportunity to make prayer requests at the Prayer Table. We are happy to help H-F High School members to get their community service hours. Some enjoy it so much they come back to help even though they no longer need service hours. Check it out some Monday night when you don't feel like cooking—5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Jay Webster, Char Hansen, Kathie Hazlett, Betty Owens, and Shirley Armistead

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE MINISTRY

We hope you enjoyed the Easter Breakfast. Thanks to all of you, we had more than enough food for the breakfast and for a few who attended Heavenly Perks after the service. Trustees will be hosting Heavenly Perks for the month of May. Come and enjoy yourself. There are always smiles and a lot of laughter. In case you don't know, we are now serving real coffee and decaf coffee. Hope to see you there some Sunday soon. Jay Webster, Kathie Hazlett, Betty Owens, Shirley Armistead



CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION

Tuesday Morning Bible Study (formerly at Cherry Creek Panera Bread) has resumed off-site at 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. After brainstorming a dozen possibilities, the group has chosen to meet at **Red Bird Café in Homewood**, 2057 Ridge Road. Red Bird welcomes our presence on Tuesdays. We hope that will work for all.

Young Children's Sunday School will continue through the end of May, with stories about Jesus and the stories Jesus told. Two kindergarteners and a 1st grader visited on Easter, adding wonderful conversation about Why eggs? Why seeds? Our song was: *There's LIFE inside of eggs and / There's LIFE inside of seeds / There's LIFE inside of Jesus and / There's LIFE inside of me!*



Look for **Adult Sunday School** articles from Ed Wahl (May – mid-June on *Jesus and the Gospels*) and from Tim VanNasdale (summer on *Navigating Genesis*) elsewhere in this *Carillon*. All are welcome to the church parlor in the hour before worship on Sundays, though Tim's class may add other times as well. Karen Maurer

PRAYER CARDS

The following members, friends, and staff of First Presbyterian Church will receive a card telling them that the church is praying for them. Please pray for those listed.

Week of May 5

Carolyn Wiley
Susan Zorns
Karen Allison
Joan Alvers
Joyce Anders

Week of May 12

Donna Anderson
Earl Anker/Jan Bunker
Dave/Shirley Armistead
Marilyn Austin
Ray/RoseMary Baird

Week of May 19

Karen Barge Fillippo
Nancy Beaudoin
Bruce/Shirley Boersma
Elizabeth Boersma
Barbara Bielawski

Week of May 26

Doug Bonthron/Sally Wolford
Ian Bonthron
Leslie Bonthron
Michael Bonthron
James/Natalie Calderone

HOSPITALIZED

In the hospital during the past month was Donna Moore.

NURSING HOMES

Mae Evert, Lemont Center Rehab; Pat Steiner, Plymouth Place, LaGrange Park.

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

The following have been recorded in the Memorial Book in the Narthex: Marvin Austin and Dan Austin.

GRADUATION LIST

Help us be accurate with the June list of graduates that will appear in the church bulletin and in *The Carillon*. If you (or son, daughter, grandchild) are graduating this year, please **let the office know by May 20**. Use the form below or use the form in the Sunday bulletin or telephone the office or email. If you are not using a "form," be sure to include name, school, degree, and known future plans.

GRADUATE'S NAME _____
SCHOOL _____
KIND OF DIPLOMA/DEGREE _____
PLANS???



 **IN MEMORIAM**

The names listed below are those who gave their lives in the service of their country in war and whom we remember on Memorial Day.



Charles Gregory	1863
Maurice L. Colvert	1942
Robert G. Downey	1944
Walter Richards, Jr.	1944
Walter E. Johnston	1945
Peter Shrine	1945
Frank Bonham	1946
Wilford Hall Taylor	1952
Thomas Victor Lorence	1955
Park G. Bunker	1970

A FEW WORDS OF WISDOM

A clean conscience makes a soft pillow.

A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.

Forbidden fruits create many jams.

Give God what's right, not what's left.

Nothing ruins the truth like stretching it.

We're too blessed to be depressed.

Worry is the darkroom in which negatives are developed

Don't give God instructions; just report for duty!

Having truth decay? Brush up on your Bible!

God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.

Exercise daily. Walk with the Lord.

 **JUNE CARILLON**

The deadline for having articles placed in the June *Carillon* is **Monday, May 20**. Be aware that *The Carillon* is **not published in July or August**; information for those months must also be in by May 20th. Please turn in all materials in writing to the church office for *The Carillon* mailbox or e-mail the Editor at ewahl@sbcglobal.net. The Editor thanks all the May reporters for their assistance. *J C =W=*

 **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**

May	May
4 Linda Cantway Cook	21 Betty Owens
10 Raymond Baird	24 Samantha Miller
12 Mae Evert	25 Jonna James

May God grant birthday blessings to you all this year



MAY 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 ←----- Pastor's -----	2 9:30 Women's Board ----- National Day of Prayer 6:30 Handbell Choir 7:40 Chancel Choir	3 ----- Vacation -----	4 ----- until May 6 -----
5 9:30 Adult Sun School 10:30 Worship/Kids Sun Sc Communion Guest Preacher -----> Heavenly Perks	6 5:30 Community Dinner	7 10:30 Tuesday Bible Study Red Bird Café 12:00 Chicago Hts Women's Association	8 6:30 Rebecca Circle Salad Supper	9 1:00 Lydia Circle 6:30 Handbell Choir 7:40 Chancel Choir	10	11
12 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:30 Worship/Kids Sun Sc Heavenly Perks MOTHER'S DAY	13 5:30 Community Dinner 7:00 Stewardship Team	14 10:30 Tuesday Bible Study Red Bird Café 7:00 Trustees	15	16 6:30 Handbell Choir 7:40 Chancel Choir	17 12:30 Chicago Heights Men's Fellowship	18
19 9:30 Adult Sunday School 10:30 Worship/Kids Sun Sc Heavenly Perks	20 The Carillon Deadline 5:30 Community Dinner 7:00 Session	21 10:30 Tuesday Bible Study Red Bird Café	22	23 6:30 Handbell Choir 7:40 Chancel Choir	24	25
26 9:30 Adult Sunday Schol 10:30 Worship/Kids Sun Sc Heavenly Perks	27 MEMORIAL DAY 5:30 Community Dinner 6:45 Healing Service	28 10:30 Tuesday Bible Study Red Bird Café	29	30 6:30 Handbell Choir 7:40 Chancel Choir	31	 Memorial Day <i>Remember Those Who Gave Their Lives</i>