



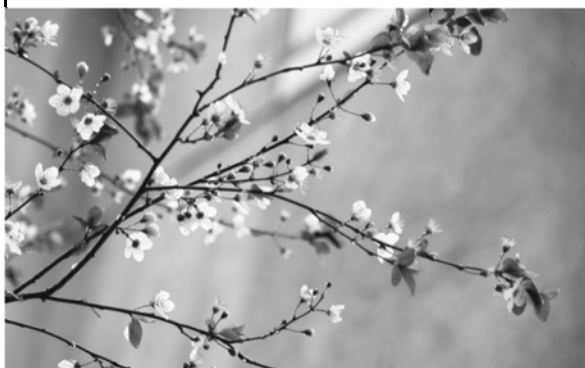
*Joyfully Sharing God's Boundless Love with All in Our Community
without Limitation, Exception, or Condition*

UNIVERSITY PRESS

April 2018

New Life Abounds

by The Reverend Renn Serna, Senior Pastor



Easter has been my favorite holiday ever since I first started to attend church in high school, because on this day more than any other we proclaim that life triumphs over death and in Christ we have been made new. It reminds us that no matter how difficult life may be at the moment, in the end, God's good plan will prevail. And everything from the spring flowers to the empty Easter eggs reminds us new life abounds!

Looking around our church, I see new life everywhere! From our joyful worship to our solemn observation of Christ's death, God is making all things new. I see new life in the many new faces stepping inside our doors this past month - whether they came seeking community, to hear a concert, or to receive the gift of a life-giving meal. It is an honor to be able to meet these individuals and to hear their stories, and it is one of the highest callings of the church to welcome the stranger and to share the Good News with all those we encounter.

I see the resurrection when people visit our church for the first time and share how their hearts have been touched by our passionate worship services. I see God's provision when our Food Pantry has been singled out for our incredible hospitality and has been chosen to receive extra resources to share with our community. I see new life when brothers and sisters in Christ gather to study God's word together and spur one another on in faith. I have loved seeing all the people who attended our various Lenten small groups and Bible Studies.

Signs of the Resurrection are everywhere, and it is important for us to share stories of how God has sparked new life in us as well. By telling the story of God's redemptive power we encourage one another and help each other persevere when things get tough.

So, let me ask you, my friend: How have you seen the resurrection in your own life? How has God brought new life into your world? Where is God at work in your life right now? And, how will you tell the story of God's amazing grace?

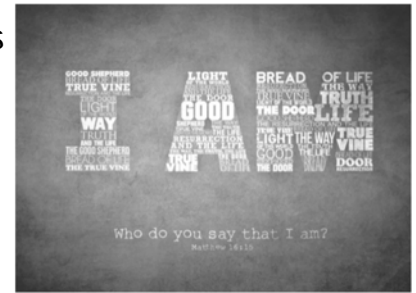
Love, *Renn*

Encountering Jesus: The "I Am" Statements of God

by The Reverend Renn Serna, Senior Pastor

Who does Jesus say he is? Jesus describes himself in unusual ways - the Bread of Life, the Good Shepherd and the Way, the Truth and the Life to name a few.

Join us in worship as we take a look at the seven "I Am Statements" in the Gospel of John and wrestle with what these bold claims mean today.



Life After Death: Formation & Education Opportunities in the Easter Season

by Reverend Dustin Maddox, Associate Pastor



During the Easter season leading up to Pentecost, we are exploring the life of Jesus in light of the resurrection. Through small groups, adult education, and a book study, we are seeking to gain clarity and insight about the implications of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection for what it means for us to be followers of the resurrected Jesus in our cultural moment.

Adult Education

Cross Examination: Exploring the Meaning(s) of Jesus' Crucifixion

Sunday mornings between services

Have you ever wondered what Jesus' death really meant? Doug Lowe guides us through an exploration of six biblical motifs that will shed greater light on the implications of Jesus' death for our lives today.

Small Groups | *The Way: Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus*

Sunday Evenings (Fireside Room) and Wednesday Evening (Volpp home) at 6:30 p.m.

How does our understanding of Jesus' life and teachings deepen in light of the resurrection? Using historical background, archaeological findings, and stories of the faith, we retrace the footsteps of Jesus from his baptism to the temptations to the heart of his ministry, including the people he loved, the enemies he made, the parables he taught, and the roads he traveled.

Book Study | *Waking Up White (and Finding Myself in the Story of Race)* by Debby Irving | Sunday Evenings in the Minturn Home

Todd Minturn leverages his years of cross-cultural and ethnic identity ministry to guide us in a conversation about race using the 2017 PC(USA) Book of the Year.

Grace + Peace, *Dustin*

Deacon's Sunday: Connect & Grow

By Barbara Schlueter, Moderator of Deacons

Between services on Sunday April 15, come to the patio and meet your Deacon.

This is your opportunity to meet someone who is praying for you - your deacon. Come and say hello to the face behind those phone calls and emails. It is a great opportunity for deacons and the congregation to connect and grow life-affirming relationships.



Deacons lovingly provide the following:

- Pray for you.
- Provide cooked meals when needed.
- Celebrate the new babies in your life with a rose on the Communion table.
- Set and clean up for Communion at both services.
- Organize the Cookie Ministry for newcomers.
- Assist with memorial receptions.

Through your generous financial support, the Board of Deacons also provides emergency financial assistance.

We on the Board of Deacons look forward to meeting with you on April 15.

Bluegrass Comes to UPC on Saturday April 7

by Cactus Harris, Director of Music & Arts and Resident Organist



On Saturday, April 7, at 8 p.m. we are hosting a Fresno Folklore Society concert with The Gilly Girls and Eva Scow, Evo Bluestein, and Kevin Hill. Enjoy an evening of phenomenal bluegrass music. For tickets log on to the Fresno Folklore Society website at fresnofolklore.org/store. Tickets are also available at National Hardware and Patrick's Music Store. Cost in advance is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children, \$12 and \$6 at the door. Please bring a non-perishable food item for the UPC Community Food Pantry.

Last month, The Gilly Girls won First Place at the California State Old Time Fiddler's Contest in the *Anything Goes* category. You won't want to miss their award-winning music and enthusiasm.

In harmony, *Cactus*

Nursery Care Provider Position Available

Do you know someone who loves kids? We are hiring a Nursery Care Provider to care for children from birth to age 4 on Sunday mornings and for special events. The position is for four hours per week.

For more information, contact Elder Linda Stolling at linda.stolling@sbcglobal.net, or contact the church office at info@upcfresno.org for an application.



The Blessings of Being Together

by Chanthay Phothivongsay, for the Southeast Asian Ministry



We are thanking God for the first Sunday of the month's Communion as we gather to worship our Lord Jesus together -- Lao language and non-English speaking members -- at the 11 a.m. service in the Great Room.

We feel comfortable eating snacks and drawing at the tables. We enjoy the music and are blessed to have Pastors Renn and Dustin. They have very inspirational sermons.

Also, we were blessed by a Women's Retreat with eight Lao churches in Fresno on March 10.

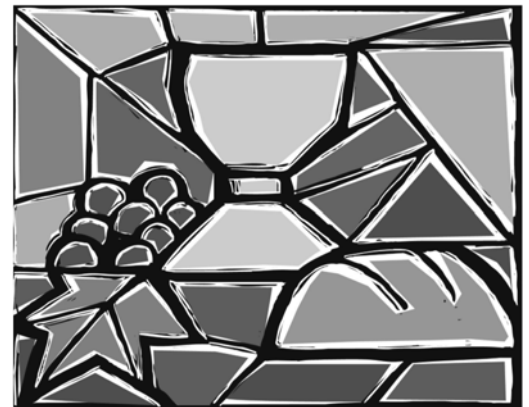
Help Needed with Communion Set Up

by Edith Barnette, for the Deacon's Communion Committee

Volunteers are needed to help set up and take down Communion on Sundays.

9 a.m. Service: Helpers are needed the first Sunday of each month. Helpers arrive at 8:15 a.m. to set up, then take down after the service, usually around 10 a.m.

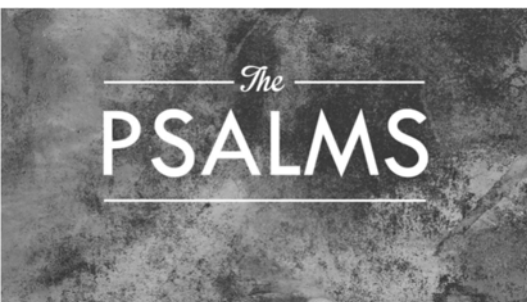
11 a.m. Service: Until arrangements and volunteers from the 11 a.m. service are available, Communion supplies are taken by cart to the Great Room between services each week. This takes about 10-15 minutes, finishing up by 10:30 a.m.



Training is provided. If you are interested in helping with this important way of serving our church, call Edith at 446-1819 (cell) or 304-7484.

Singing "Psalmes"

by Rus Stolling



In the worship service of the first Sunday of this Lenten season, we enjoyed the double pleasure of singing the beautiful classic "*Amazing Grace*" and the rousing "*Rock of Ages*" without instrumental accompaniment - "*a capella*." The term *a capella*, Italian meaning "as in the chapel," comes from times when religious music was composed for voices only, for singing in chapels which, unlike the larger churches, had no organ or piano.

In the UPC hymnals, *Glory to God*, the small print beneath the music of these "golden oldies" tells us these tunes have been stirring Christian souls since the latter half of the 1700's. From the footnotes we learn the verses of "*Amazing Grace*" were written in 1773, and the music in 1835. "*Rock of Ages*" lyrics were composed in 1776, and the music in 1830. Certainly, both songs were sung *a capella* for many decades.

Many of the hymns in our hymnal are footnoted with historical information including the names of the authors of the verses, the composers of the music, and an approximate date at which the song

came into practice, plus the metre, and perhaps the biblical verse by which the hymn was inspired.

In addition to the interesting footnotes beneath each song, several appendices at the back of the hymnal avail us of a greater wealth of information on the songs. One appendix lists the Biblical book, chapter, and verse, upon which a song is based, in the event that one is looking for music to accompany a particular study or message. A separate index reveals that an astounding 120 of the songs in our hymnal are derived from or inspired by Psalms. (See *Glory to God*, page 989.)

Interestingly, the first book ever printed in North America was a book of hymns adapted from the Psalms. The *Whole Booke of Psalmes*, more casually known as the *Bay Psalmes Book*, was printed in the Massachusetts Bay Colony town of Cambridge in 1640.

A debate had arisen among the Congregational Puritan church on two points:

- Whether songs (psalmes) should be sung in church, and if so, what songs should be sung -- "whether David's and other scripture psalmes", or the "psalmes invented by the gifts of godly men in every age of the church"; and
- Whether the psalms should be sung by the whole church, by the "Choristers" only, or by "one man singing alone and the rest joyning in silence & in the close saying amen."

It was decided that each "may sing in Sion the Lords songs of prayse according to his own will; until hee take us from hence, and wipe away all our teares, & bid us enter into our masters ioye (joy) to sing eternall Halleluiahs."

The entire book of Psalms was subsequently set to rhyming metre and printed for the use of the faithful. Of the 1,700 copies printed, only 11 copies now survive.

Below is one of our most familiar psalms, the Twenty Third, in the parlance of 1640. The 17th Century letter 's' looked like an 'f'. Here I have used 21st century style for it, but otherwise the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are as in the original:

23 A Psalme of David

The Lord to mee a shepheard is,
want therefore shall not I.
Hee in the fold of tender-grasse,
doth cause mee downe to lie:
To waters calme me gently leads
Restore my soule doth hee:
he doth in paths of righteousnes:
for his names sake leade mee.
Yea though in valley of deaths shade
I walk, none ill I'll feare:
because thou art with mee, thy rod,
and staffe my comfort are.
For mee a table thou hast spread,
in presence of my foes:
thou dost annoynt my head with oyle,
my cup it over flowes.
Goodnes & mercy surely shall
all my dayes follow mee:
and in the Lords house I shall dwell
so long as dayes shall bee.

UPC Groups

WEEKLY

Contemplative Prayer: Come **Mondays at 6:30 p.m.** to the Godly Play Room (Rooms 3-4) for Christ-centered meditation. No previous experience is necessary, just a desire to spend quiet, still time with the Divine. For more information, email Cathy Wingert at wingy104@aol.com.

Women's Bible Study: The group meets for study and prayer **Wednesdays from 9:30-11 a.m.** They have just begun a study of the Book of Hebrews. For more information, email Laura Lindegren at punkin2826@yahoo.com, or call her at 299-1838.

Thursday Evening Bible Study: The group, led by Ceci Johnson, meets for study **Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room**. They are "wrestling" with the Gospel of Matthew, and invite you to join them. For more information, email Ceci Johnson at cjartistquilts@gmail.com.

MONTHLY

Intercessory Prayer Service: This is a monthly service where all are invited to come pray for loved ones, members of our congregation, community, and world. Join them on **April 2 at 7 p.m.** For more information, email Pastor Tedd at teddlyons@gmail.com, or call/text him at 906-1438.

Presbyterian Women (PW): Presbyterian Women will have a special tour of the Japanese Garden in Woodward Park on **Tuesday, April 10, carpooling at 10 a.m. from the UPC parking lot**. Reservations are required ahead of time, with a payment of \$5. Please see Sue Smith. Parking is \$3.00 per car for seniors. Wear your walking shoes and bring a sack lunch. Water will be provided. There will be an informal business meeting. For more information, email Ruth Kallenberg at rbkallenberg@gmail.com.

Pub Theology: Join the discussion on **Tuesday, April 17 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.** at Sequoia Brewing Company, on the corner of Champlain and Perrin in the Piazza Del Fiore Center. Add your voice to the discussion of a variety of topics concerning faith, religion, and God. Seating is limited so come early to ensure a spot. We meet monthly on the third Tuesday. Listening and discussion are encouraged; drinking is optional. For more information, email Dustin at dustin@upcfresno.org, or text him at 288-0083.

UPC Food Pantry: The food distribution this month is **Saturday, April 21 at 8 a.m.** It is held the third Saturday of each month. Come and help by texting Dustin at 288-0083 to volunteer. If you would like to donate to the food of the month item for the distribution, **the food item this month is canned protein (fish, chicken, etc.)**. Bring your donations to the Narthex on Sunday mornings or drop them at the office during the week.

Clippers: Sing along with Clippers at the Clovis North High School production of *Mary Poppins* on **Saturday, April 28, at 2 p.m.**, at Mercedes Edwards Performing Art Center (Clark Intermediate School, 902 5th Street, Clovis). Tickets can be purchased from Gloria Pearson or Jean Ann Fulton (432-5092) for \$10 (senior discount). For those who are interested, dinner at the Hacienda Tequillas, 1320 Clovis Avenue follows the production.

April Birthdays, Anniversaries, & Calendar

April Birthdays

1 Leslie Stephenson
3 Carol Doyle
5 Eddy Neate
8 Robin Allen-Maddox
15 Mary Johnson
Lennox York
16 Stephen Grisez
21 Colin Warnes
22 Christi Paradise
27 Kathy Scofield
28 Amy Evans

April Anniversaries

7 Don & Susan Vinicor
8 Tim & Julie Buchanan
11 Jim & Kathy Pinto
15 Dave & Nancy Youngs

April Calendar

1 Easter Sunday
2 Contemplative Prayer
6:30 p.m.
Intercessory Prayer 7 p.m.
3 Deacons 6:30 p.m.
4 Women's Bible Study
9:30 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.
Small Group 6:30 p.m.

April Calendar cont.

5 Bell Choir 6:30 p.m.
Thursday Bible Study
6:30 p.m.
7 Gilly Girls & Friends 8 p.m.
8 Adult Ed 10:15 a.m.
Small Group 6 p.m.
Book Study 6:30 p.m.
9 Contemplative Prayer
6:30 p.m.
11 Women's Bible Study
9:30 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.
Small Group 6:30 p.m.
12 Bell Choir Rehearsal
6:30 p.m.
Thursday Bible Study
6:30 p.m.
15 Deacon Sunday 10 a.m.
Adult Ed 10:15 a.m.
Small Group 6 p.m.
Book Study 6:30 p.m.
16 Contemplative Prayer
6:30 p.m.
17 Pub Theology 6:30 p.m.
18 Women's Bible Study
9:30 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.
Small Group 6:30 p.m.

April Calendar cont.

19 Bell Choir Rehearsal
6:30 p.m.
Thursday Bible Study
6:30 p.m.
21 Food Distribution
22 Adult Ed 10:15 a.m.
Small Group 6 p.m.
Book Study 6:30 p.m.
23 Contemplative Prayer
6:30 p.m.
24 Ministry Meetings
times vary
25 Women's Bible Study
9:30 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.
Small Group 6:30 p.m.
26 PneuMatrix Group
6 p.m.
Bell Choir Rehearsal
6:30 p.m.
Thursday Bible Study
6:30 p.m.
28 Clipper - "Mary Poppins" Sing-
along 2 p.m.
29 Adult Ed 10:15 a.m.
Small Group 6 p.m.
Book Study 6:30 p.m.
30 Contemplative Prayer 6:30
p.m.

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Sunday Worship Schedule for March

9 a.m. Classic Worship | 11 a.m. Contemporary Service

11 a.m. Lao Language Service | except the 1st Sunday

Pastors

The Reverend Renn Serna, Senior Pastor

The Reverend Dustin Maddox, Associate Pastor

Return Service Requested

Mailing Label Here

Joyfully Sharing God's Boundless Love with All in Our Community without Limitation, Exception, or Condition



Easter Sunday: The Resurrection and the Life | April 1

9 a.m. Traditional Service

11 a.m. Contemporary Service

Easter Egg Hunt 10:15 a.m.

Join us as we celebrate the joy of the Resurrection and welcome our new members and those being confirmed. Both services feature special music and an uplifting message the whole family can enjoy. Godly Play includes a special message of God's love for children ages 5 - 12, and the annual Easter Egg Hunt begins at 10:15 a.m. Easter is a wonderful testament to God's love, so bring a friend!