

Highlights

MAR 17 2024

The Tiny Miracles of God

PASTOR ROGER OWENS

Dear Friends,

Earlier this week, on a sunny late afternoon, I took a walk outside instead of going to the gym. My rule of thumb is that I walk outside when the sun is shining. I mean, this is Pittsburgh—it could be the last time we see it. As I walked, I listened to one of my go-to podcasts, *The Happiness Lab*. This particular episode discussed the challenge we humans have with subtraction, and not the math kind. Rather, with subtracting from our overfilled lives in order to find balance and breathing space. Apparently, we are wired for addition, for thinking that most of our problems can be solved by adding something. (The episode explored a study in which participants were given soup to taste, then asked for recommendations how to improve the soup. All the participants offered potential additions—a little cream, more salt, various spices. No one suggested removing ingredients.) Lost in the podcast, I was plowing along my walking route, oblivious to my surroundings. If you passed me and waved, my apologies for not returning the gesture.

The podcast ended just as I started up the hill leading back to the house. I stashed the phone and earbuds in my pocket, and, as if by a miracle, this springing-to-life world presented itself to me in all its glory: daffodils in bloom, cherry tree decked in pink, forsythia bursting into flame. Where had this been while I was walking?



Photo: ABCBirds.org

Not a second after I pocketed my phone, I caught movement out of the corner of my eye, a bird flitting in a barren bush. It hopped from branch to branch snagging insects with its needle-like beak. The way it flicked its wings was the first clue as to its identity, the hint of yellow on its head the second, confirming clue: a golden-crowned kinglet. This kinglet has a narrow stripe of yellow feathers on its head that's difficult to spot. But sometimes it shoots up like a flame, bright and distinct. I stood only a couple of yards away, and the bird didn't mind my presence nor my angling to get a better look as it moved about. Like the rest of this miraculous world, always offering itself to us, this small bird presented itself as a gift, full of grace and beauty and charm—no small amount of charm.

I remembered the famous opening lines of Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem "God's Grandeur":

*The world is charged with the
grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from
shook foil . . .*

Continued...

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The Tiny Miracles of God *Continued from front...*

That image captures my experience exactly: the flashing onto my awareness of this tiny miracle of God with its shock of yellow feathers.

More often than not, I am preoccupied. Thinking about something that needs to be thought about—an idea for a newsletter article, the flow of a seminary class session, whether I'm out of Stonyfield probiotic whole milk yogurt that's hard to find in the grocery store—or ruminating about something that doesn't need to be thought about—a

meeting next week, a thoughtless word spoken yesterday, why anyone would be using a leaf blower in March. As Denise Levertov writes in her poem "Primary Wonder": "Days pass when I forget the mystery."

Ditto.

And then, without any effort, mystery flashes forth in the smile of a child, the reverent bow of a daffodil in the morning, the daintiness of a kinglet. And it is the mystery of God—the divine self-giving that thrums beneath

the surface of things, flashing forth like light reflected off of foil or like trick candles on a birthday cake sizzling back into flame or like a kinglet flitting on the periphery of sight. And we can see it, when we are available. Open to noticing. Willing to receive.

Peace,



Holy Week & Easter Worship

PALM SUNDAY MAR 24

8:15, 9:30, and 11am All children and their loved ones are encouraged to join us during the Children's Message as we wave palm branches to celebrate Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (9:30 & 11am services only). Meet 10 minutes before the service to participate!

MAUNDY THURSDAY MAR 28

7pm in the Atrium with Holy Communion and designed with all ages in mind. This service will not be live-streamed. (Childcare provided)

GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE MAR 29

7pm with Mendelssohn's *Christus: A* service of extinguishing candles, darkness, and dramatic music and drums, reflecting the drama of Christ's crucifixion.

RESURRECTION OF THE LORD MAR 31

8:15 and 11am Traditional Service with the West Virginia Brass Quintet and Timpani, in Sanctuary
9:30am Contemporary Service



Mission Partner Spotlight

REVERENDS ELMARIE & SCOTT PARKER MISSION CO-WORKERS IN LEBANON

Our Mission Partners of the Month for March are the Reverends Elmarie and Scott Parker. Elmarie and her husband Scott are Presbyterian mission co-workers who are based in Beirut, Lebanon.

Elmarie serves as a regional liaison to Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. She works to strengthen the relational ties between the churches in her region and churches in the United States. Scott serves with the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) as a writer in residence. Scott has been asked by the MECC to lead their efforts

in responding to children traumatized by unrest and war in Iraq and Syria who now seek refuge in Lebanon.



FCPC supports the Parkers' ministry financially through our mission budget. We hope you can join us to encourage the Parkers in their work to further God's kingdom abroad.

Sunday at FCPC

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Rev. Roger Owens shares Freedom from the Idol of Power and Mark 10:35-45.

New Member Receptions Following the 9:30 and 11am worship services. Join us for a cookie reception to welcome our new members!

8:15am Cup and Loaf Worship Service Chapel

9:30am Contemporary Worship in Fellowship Hall

Kids' Church (Lowest Level), Nursery Care (Room 109), Comfort Space (Room 107)

10:15am Children's Choir (Choir Room)

11am Traditional Worship Service Sanctuary

Kids' Church (Lowest Level), Nursery Care (Room 109), Comfort Space (Room 107)

12-1pm Confirmation (Youth Lounge)

2pm Middle School Youth Group (Youth Lounge)

4pm High School Youth Group (Youth Lounge)

7pm Lenten Small Group (Lounge)

Positive Painting Project

APR 13 10AM-12PM IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

The Positive Painting Project is a community-based organization that uses visual art to promote mental health awareness and suicide prevention. We believe that art can be a powerful tool for healing and connection, and we are committed to providing opportunities for people of all ages to create and share their own art.

Join us for a special event using art to:

- + Provide opportunities for people to express their positive thoughts and feelings
- + Promote positive mental health and suicide prevention
- + Break the stigma surrounding mental illness and suicide
- + Let people know that "It's okay not to be okay"

Learn More You can learn more about the Positive Painting Project at <https://www.paintpositive.org>.

Using visual art to promote mental health awareness and suicide prevention.





Spring Potted Flower Orders

ORDER DEADLINE IS THURS MAR 21

These beautiful spring flowers will decorate the worship areas for the Easter services in memory of loved ones or to honor family or friends. The deadline to order is Thursday, March 21. Pick up an order form in the church office, or use the QR code to order online!



New Meditation Course

TUESDAYS 5:45-7PM / CHAPEL / THRU APR 9 (WILL NOT MEET ON MAR 26)

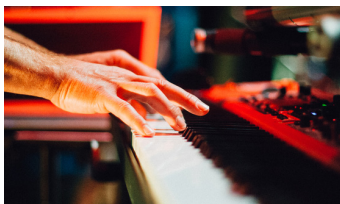
Led by Will Adams, PhD, this course is designed for beginners as well as experienced meditators drawing deeply from the wisdom of Christian contemplative traditions as well as Buddhist traditions. For more information, contact Will W. Adams by email at adamsw@duq.edu. **Just show up, no registration needed.** A donation of \$10-\$15 per session is suggested but not required to attend.



Event Hosts Needed

PAYS \$100 PER EVENT

We need Event Hosts to provide help and hospitality during community events at FCPC. Event hosts need to be 18+ years old and have (or be able to obtain) clearances at church's expense. If you are interested or need more information, please contact Rebecca DePoe at rebecca@fcpc.us.



Worship Musicians Needed

VOCALISTS & INSTRUMENTALISTS FOR 9:30AM WORSHIP

We are in need of musicians and vocalists desiring to use their God-given gifts and talents for the 9:30am contemporary worship band. Must be available for rehearsals and Sunday mornings. Contact Jason Adams, jason@fcpc.us, to get involved.



FCPC Preschool Summer Camp Registration

NOW OPEN

For more information, please visit the preschool website at www.fcpc.us/preschool, or call the preschool office at 412-552-9382.

Want to Serve Your Church?

USING YOUR GIFTS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Several ministry committees and teams are looking for people interested in sharing their gifts for the upbuilding of the church! If you have gifts in offering hospitality, organizing events, preparing food, encouraging others, communicating, tracking finances, learning tech or AV equipment, or

managing projects, your gifts are needed! Contact Pastor Ginger Thomas (ginger@fcpc.us) to discuss how you can use your gifts for the church!

Tech Team Needs You

The 9:30am and 11am worship services are seeking people to be trained to run sound, projection, and live stream. Contact Ryan Lancia (ryan@fcpc.us) if you are able to join the crew!

Care & Concern

We hold these friends in prayer:

Elizabeth Kurzinski Kim & Rob Strohm
Penny Young Jenna Rodrigues
Laurel Schultz David Garzarelli
Missy and Jason Fry
Jan, friend of Gail Harger
Matt Logue, friend of Bob Heister
Jane May, sister of Sue Patrick
Hayley Hellstern's grandfather, John Philips

We celebrate with:

Rebecca and David Clements on the birth of their son Wallace William Clements, born March 4. His grandparents are Wally and Sandy Clements.

Chris Follansbee and Katie Kurzinski on the birth of their daughter Harper Elizabeth Follansbee, born March 5. Her grandparents are Bill and Susan Follansbee.

Rob and Lauren Simmonds on the birth of their son Graham Kurt Simmonds, born February 29. His grandparents are Bob and Jean Simmonds.

We pray for those who grieve:

Marcia Mayhew with the loss of dear friend and companion Gary who passed away on January 8.

Barry Leonard and family with the loss of his sister, Carley MacDonald on February 28.

Dorothy Hill and family with the loss of Dorothy's husband Bill Hill on February 25.

Matt Scott and family on the passing of his father.

Judy Due with the loss of her husband, George Due, on February 11.

Prayer for Our Congregation: Prayers for Lent small groups, gratitude for Roger's book and the leadership of Ginger and Roger leading. May the groups grow to know God more and grow in His love together.

We pray for peace, aid, and consolation for all who suffer, including:

- + The people of Israel, Palestine, Ukraine, and every place there is conflict and violence.
- + Refugees throughout the world.

To keep this list current, please renew requests on a monthly basis for continued prayers.

Birthdays

MAR 17 Brooke Barbour, Meghan Lucas, Bill Gilbert

MAR 18 Michael Braham, Andrew Donovan, Becca Garbisch, Isabel Tuttle

MAR 19 Barbara Lenz, Dillon Stein, Michael Mendelson

MAR 20 Patti Wiegand, Elicia Sutton, Libby Thompson, Emory Daniels, John Boyer, Linda Morton, Jeff Kauper

MAR 21 Carolyn Stewart

MAR 22 George Siple, Susanna Hegnes, Aggie Haverlack, Charles Sliger

MAR 23 Luciana Pasay, Dawson Tupponce, Tad Scheri

MAR 24 Ann Marsico, Gary Celo, Amy Stabingas

Letters of Concern

Every week the deacons send letters of concern to members of our church family who are experiencing joys or concerns. You are invited to sign these letters each week. Cards are located at these locations:

+ **8:15am Chapel**

+ **9:30am Fellowship Hall**

+ **11am Atrium**



Need a Caring Presence?

Stephen Ministers at FCPC provide one-on-one, Christ-centered care to people in the congregation and the community experiencing life difficulties. If you or someone you know needs support, contact Nikki Rosswog at 412-963-8243 ext. 07, or nikki@fcpc.us.

Subscribe to Weekly Highlights

Get the weekly *Highlights* newsletter delivered to your email inbox. Sign up: tinyurl.com/FCPCEmail.

Children & Family Ministries (Infant-5th Grade)

SUNDAY MORNING

8:15AM WORSHIP

No children's programming during this service.

9:30AM KIDS' CHURCH

For age 3 to 5th grade. Children are signed in prior to worship and begin the service on the children's rugs at the back of Fellowship Hall. After the Children's Message, children are led to the lowest level Kids' Space. Parents/guardians can pick up their children in the lowest level.

9:30 & 11AM NURSERY CARE

Room 109, for ages 0-3. Staffed by two experienced adults.

9:30 & 11AM COMFORT SPACE

Room 107. A place to comfort or feed a child and watch the worship service.

11AM KIDS' CHURCH

For age 3 to 5th grade. Children are signed in prior to worship and begin the service with loved ones. After the Children's Message, children are led to the lowest level Kids' Space. Parents/guardians can pick up their children in the lowest level.

Questions? Contact our Director of Children & Family Ministries, Pastor Lori Bass-Riley, by email at lori@fcpc.us or call/text 412-737-1412.



Wednesday Night Live

WEDNESDAYS 6:30-8PM / ELEMENTARY AGE (K-5TH)

Join us for Wednesday Night Live – a time for kids to connect, share, relax, play, learn, and deepen their relationship with God. All together in God's Love! Sign-up via the QR code or just show up! Please call or text Pastor Lori with questions, 412-737-1412.



VBS 2024

JULY 8-12 1-4PM / PREK (AGE 4) - GRADE 5

Registration is now open for VBS! Our planning is taking shape and we are excited to share more with you soon. To register, scan the QR code. Our VBS theme will be announced soon along with more information on ways you can be a VBS volunteer.



Now Hiring Sunday Nursery Caregivers

Know someone with experience and love for young children? We have several available positions for Sunday nursery caregivers, 9am-

12:30pm. You must be 18+ years and have experience with children and infants. The schedule is flexible. To apply, contact Pastor Lori Bass-Riley at 412-737-1412 or by email, lori@fcpc.us, or scan the QR code.



Youth Ministry (Grade 6-12)

We invite all middle and high school students to join our weekly Sunday afternoon youth group. We meet in the Youth Lounge for games, snacks, discussions on how scripture impacts our life, and to grow together as a community.

TODAY, SUN MAR 17

12-1pm Confirmation (Youth Lounge)

2-3:30pm Middle School

4-5:30pm High School

THIS WEEK This week we'll have Easter candy and a Saint Patrick's Day game (themed version of the grog). Middle School will be looking at the time of Jesus before and after the cross. High School will be talking about God's faithful heart.

Questions?

Reach out to Ryan Lancia, Director of Youth Ministries at ryan@fcpc.us or 412.963.8243 x19.



MARCH 2024

3RD - MS 2-3:30 & HS 4-5:30

10TH - MS 2-3:30 & HS 4-5:30

17TH - MS 2-3:30 & HS 4-5:30

24TH - ZONE 28 MS 13 & HS 3:30 - 5:30

31ST - EASTER NO YG



Summer Trips for Youth

SURF CITY CAMP IN MICHIGAN

Surf City is a camp in Michigan that is full of activities like tubing, zip-lining, laser tag, crazy games, and time to grow in community and with God.

Middle School (available for those in 6th-9th grade for '24-'25) happens August 4-9 and costs \$650.

High School (available for those in 9th grade through high school graduate) happens July 21-26 and costs \$650. Register at fcpc.us/youth-ministry.



Sunday Kids' Church Adult Team Sign-Up

SIGN-UP THRU THE QR CODE

Be a part of our Sunday team and help share the love of Christ! Adults will need clearances and to go through our child protection process.



College Scholarships

DEADLINE TO APPLY IS APR 7

FCPC offers a one time college scholarship for high school seniors. All are welcome to apply! Award amounts are based on the number of awardees. Deadline to apply is April 7. The application is at fcpc.us/youth-ministry.

Graduating Senior Information

HONORING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

If you know and love a high school senior in our community, please send their name and their plans for college to Ryan Lancia (ryan@fcpc.us). We want to honor and pray for them on May 19 during the service and send them a gift from the church.

Ways to Give

Give Online

- + **Scan this QR code** to give online
- + **Text** the word "Give" to 412-201-0557



Make a Financial Pledge You can make a financial pledge to FCPC no matter the time of the year. 2024 pledges can be made online via our website (www.fcpc.us/giving) or by contacting FCPC's Finance Administrator, Sandi Deaner (sandi@fcpc.us) or call 412-963-8479.

Corporate Matching Gifts If your workplace supports nonprofits through a corporate gift matching program, double the impact of your gift to the church!

Giving Envelopes Second quarter giving envelopes are being mailed out. You can expect to receive your envelopes in the mail around March 18. If you no longer wish to receive envelopes, or if you would like to start receiving weekly or monthly giving envelopes, please contact Sandi Deaner, Finance Administrator at sandi@fcpc.us or 412-963-8479.

We're Hiring

Administrative Assistant, Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm

Do you know someone who feels a call to serve in the church, is organized, proactive, attentive to detail, a good communicator, and experienced with Microsoft Office? Please share our job posting at <https://www.fcpc.us/job-opportunities> and encourage them to apply to join our staff team!

Chancel Flowers

Your order of flowers beautifies the sanctuary and is a way to honor or remember someone special. You can find order forms in the church office, scan the QR code, or visit fcpc.us/forms.



This Week at FCPC

MON MAR 18

- 9am-2:15pm** Preschool
- 10:30-11:45am** Lenten Small Group (Lounge)
- 2-3pm** Knitting Group (Library)
- 7pm** Deacon Mtg. (Chapel)

TUES MAR 19

- 8-9:15am** Men's Prayer Fellowship (Lounge)
- 8am** Men's Prayer Fellowship (Lounge)
- 9am-2:15pm** Preschool
- 9:30-10:30am** Staff Mtg. (Lounge)
- 3:30pm** Stephen Ministry Meeting (Bride's Room)
- 5:45-7pm** Meditation Class (Chapel)
- 6pm** Safety Team (Lounge)
- 6:30pm** Finance Committee (Library)
- 7-8:15pm** Lenten Small Group (Zoom)

WED MAR 20

- 9am-2:15pm** Preschool
- 9:30-11am** Community Bible Study (Rm 310)
- 6:30-8pm** Wednesday Night Live (Fellowship Hall, LL)
- 7pm** Preschool Committee (Zoom)

THURS MAR 21

- 9am-12pm** Preschool
- 10-11am** Lenten Small Group (Longwood)
- 6:30-7:30pm** Bell Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
- 7:30-9:30pm** Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

FRI MAR 22

- 9am-12pm** Preschool

SUN MAR 24 / PALM SUNDAY

- 8:15am** Cup and Loaf Worship (Sanctuary)
- 9:30am** Contemporary Worship (Fellowship Hall)
- 11am** Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
- 1-3pm** Middle School Youth Group Fun Event (Zone 28)
- 3:30-5:30pm** High School Youth Group Fun Event (Zone 28)