

EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

serving to encourage and build up faith in Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Fall 2019

I've Been Thinking...

Seattle

FPCT Bible Study

"The Language of Love"

First Presbyterian Church Tacoma

Sept. 15 and 29, 9:15 - 10:15 a.m.

Fall Theological Dialogue:

Meetings with Earl Palmer

Karl Barth: Dogmatics in Outline

Sept. 11, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11

(Reservations needed)

Kindlings Muse

A Hobbit, A Wardrobe, and

A Great War

Walker Ames Hall UW

Oct. 7, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

**C.S. Lewis: The Writer of
Stories and Man of Faith**

Ephrata, WA

Our Redeemer Presbyterian Church

Oct. 11, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Oct. 12, 9 a.m. - noon

**A Morning with Stories of the
Marvelous:**

The Chronicles of Narnia

University Presbyterian Church

Jan. 11, 2020

8:45 - 11:45 a.m.

UPC Worship Services

University Presbyterian Church

Jan. 5, 2020

8:30, 10, and 11:45 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Around the Country

Camp Weed Jacksonville, Florida

Bishop's Weekend,

Diocese of Florida

The Book of Ephesians

September 20 - 22

Presbyterian Heritage Center

Montreat, NC

International Symposium

on C.S. Lewis:

Influence and Relevance Today

November 6 - 8

Watch for details at
www.earlpalmer.org
info@earlpalmer.org

How do those who believe in God explain and share their own faith in Jesus? Let me reflect on two ways. One is to point directly to the Holy Bible. In The Old Testament we read of the promise from the prophets and the singing in the psalms that looks to the coming of the Messiah. We can ask, "What will the Messiah be like?" In the New Testament we find witness narratives written by people who meet Jesus and follow him. The most useful starting place toward understanding who Jesus really is, is the sentence-by-sentence reading of the Biblical texts that speak for themselves. This is an "expositional approach." Wherever we begin, sooner or later the text will always point to the one who fulfills the story – the teacher, Lord, Savior who is Jesus of Nazareth. For example, in the book of John, chapter 4, we watch Jesus break through barriers to offer grace and bring wholeness to the Samaritan woman at the well. When we meet Christ in the Gospels, He wins our respect.

Another way to discover the center point of faith is to experience stories lived by persons of faith as manifest in the journey of their lives. We are drawn to the results when we see and hear how a person lives because of his or her faith in Jesus Christ. This is what happened to a 19-year-old British Army 2nd Lieutenant in World War I who was hospitalized in a French field hospital. The inquisitive young man was C.S. Lewis, who wrote:

It was here that I first read a volume of G.K. Chesterton's essays. His humor was of the kind which I like best—not "jokes" imbedded in the page like currants in a cake, but the humor which is not in any way separable from the argument but is rather (as Aristotle would say) the "bloom" on dialectic itself. The sword glitters not because the swordsman sets out to make it glitter but because he is fighting for his life and therefore moving it very quickly ... moreover, strange as it may seem, I liked him for his goodness. I can attribute this taste to myself freely (even at that age) because it was a liking for goodness which had nothing to do with any attempt to be good myself ... in reading Chesterton, I did not know what I was letting myself in for. A young man who wishes to remain a sound atheist cannot be too careful of his reading. There are traps everywhere. Bible's laid open, millions of surprises as George Herbert says, "fine nets and stratagems". God is, if I may say it, very unscrupulous'. (C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, pp 190, 191).

St. Paul integrates these two ways to discovery of faith. He points to Jesus who is the center of faith. He prays in a letter to the Ephesians that they will be grounded in the love of Jesus: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (Ephesians 3). And then from this center he shares the expansive implications of Christ's mandate for our lives at the edges: "I beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling ... with all humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another in love ... and do not make room for the devil" (Ephesians 4).

As a follower of Jesus, these words challenge me to be aware of how my faith impacts the way I live. I must make every effort to care about and for those in my surround and to make choices that honor the grace I have received. I must not make room for the dark when political and moral temptations and controversies threaten to damage my own soul and the soul of others. Lewis survived the war. He faced evil.

I am reminded of two human markers. The first is to recognize goodness and humorous joy. It was the goodness and humor that prepared that young soldier C.S. Lewis for meeting Jesus. He found the center that the goodness revealed. He was "surprised by joy." The second is to keep focus and not veer from the centrality of Christ and what He taught us during His life on Earth. Lewis met this Jesus. The world has benefited from what Lewis has given in testimony through his writing of who Jesus is and what it means to live a life that reflects the power of good to overcome evil and to remember always that how we live should point to the Jesus.



In the pulpit at First Presbyterian Tacoma in June

— Earl F. Palmer

The Latest News from Earl

I am excited to announce that we at Earl Palmer Ministries have committed to work with Princeton Theological Seminary to recognize the importance of expositional preaching and teaching by establishing an award for a student who demonstrates excellence in studies and delivery in exposition.

Why? Teaching and preaching from the Bible has been a major emphasis of my own years as a Presbyterian pastor while serving four major churches. In recent years under the loving support of Earl Palmer Ministries I have had the privilege of continuing in a ministry at-large and working with pastors and laity from churches across various denominations and Christ-centered organizations both in the United States and abroad. During this time, Earl Palmer Ministries has partnered to offer short-term seminars featuring the case for exposition of the Bible in many settings. Through these years, I have become increasingly aware of the need for pastors to be encouraged in not only the practical aspects of expositional preaching and teaching but to find joy in doing so.

What? Plans are now in progress to launch a campaign this fall for funds to establish an endowment in perpetuity at PTS that can help to encourage joy in expositional teaching and preaching from the Bible in pastoral ministry. The goal is to present an award annually \$5,000 to each of two PTS students for his or her third year in the Master of Divinity Studies in preparation for pastoral ministry. Selection will be made by faculty under guidance of the president of the seminary.

How? This award will be dispersed directly to each student selected in the final year of studies. For those who share our vision and want to encourage future pastors in finding joy in using expositional studies in their ministry, **stay tuned for details.** Contributions for this award will go directly to PTS to establish an endowment fund to support what I am greatly humbled to say is to be named:

The Earl F. Palmer Award for Excellence in Expositional Teaching and Preaching.



PRINCETON
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY

I invite you to consider joining Earl Palmer Ministries along with me in this effort. Please contact me directly if you have questions. - Earl

earl@earlpalmer.org or

(206) 524-3250.



In conversation with Andrew Garbarino, a PTS student

Earl on Exposition

I define exposition as a teaching/preaching form that enables a text in the Old and/or New Testament to make its own point here and now, and, in turn, positions the content of the text within the whole biblical and theological witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Exposition of the Biblical text becomes a natural way to make a theological and discipleship truth relevant and allows people to discover it for themselves. The goal is to help a person meet this Jesus and be able to say, 'Ah, I see the truth for myself in the portrayal of the life of Jesus.' Earl F. Palmer (2019), *Then Something Happened: The Case for Exposition of the Bible* p 2

A Visit from a New Friend

During the many travels and adventures (including Papua New Guinea, Sydney, and Vancouver) on my summer sabbatical, one of my most memorable highlights was visiting Earl and Shirley on Whidbey Island. I've been a fan of Earl's preaching for over 20 years, so it was an honor to finally meet him and talk face-to-face in his living room. Over a leisurely and delicious lunch (thanks for that amazing salmon, Shirley!), we had the chance to discuss our families, pastoral ministry, politics, good books, and, of course, expository preaching.

—Matt Woodley, Editor at "Preaching Today"



Earl with Matt Woodley at the Palmer's home on Whidbey Island

Our Redeemer Church Seminar

Earl will be speaking on C.S. Lewis and Dorothy Sayers at Our Redeemer Church in Ephrata, Washington.

October 11 (7 - 8:30 p.m.)

C.S. Lewis: The Man and His Faith

October 12 (9 a.m. - noon)

C.S. Lewis: In Time of War,

The Writer of Stories of the Marvelous

Recommended but not necessary readings:

Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis

The Man Born to Be King by Dorothy Sayers

No charge, nursery provided, refreshments

EPM and "Preaching Today"

Visit www.preachingtoday.com/skills/2019/may/how-to-prepare-expository-sermons.html

And look forward to more content in partnership with "Preaching Today."



A Pastor Explains "Theological Dialogue"

I have had the pleasure of being a part of the theological dialogue since its inception. The combination of Earl's insightful teaching, the warm fellowship of the participants, and the wonderful pastries prepared by Shirley keeps me coming back year after year. This group helps feed my mind, my body, and my spirit. I look forward to another year of wrestling with the text of a classic theological work and learning from Earl and from my fellow participants.

—Ken Sunoo, (Pastor of Global Ministries at UPC)



University Ministries at UPC invites Earl again to lead a 4-week study with UMin interns. Above is Earl with last year's UMin intern, Alex Marrs.

A First for Earl: Audiobooks!

Be on the lookout for Earl's newest and first ever recorded audiobook, *Trusting God*. Through numerous biblical examples, Earl shows the many ways that we can be assured that our faith is well placed and yet be open to honest inquiry and deep self-questioning. Anyone who has ever been paralyzed in their faith by the forces of internal doubt will benefit from listening to audiobook. Originally published in 2006, Earl recently sat down to revisit and narrate the entire text. If you've read *Trusting God* before, or would like to listen to it in a new light, find it on Audible, Amazon, and iTunes.



Earl at work in recording mode

Health Update

Thank you for caring. For your prayers. For your phone calls, e-mails, texts, and get well cards. As many of you are aware, I had surgery on June 24 to deal with a fracture in my hip bone (head of femur) and an attendant crack in the leg bone (femur) due to an accident when an area rug slipped out from under me. I am now back up, walking around, and returning to my normal schedule. My recovery will continue, and I am thankful for the amazing gift of God's healing. —Earl

Bible Class in Tacoma

"The Language of Love in the Bible" September 15 and 29, 9:15-10:15 a.m. in the South Chapel at First Presbyterian Church of Tacoma.

Not to Miss: The Upcoming Kindlings Muse

Join Dick Staub and Earl Palmer in their review of *A Hobbit, a Wardrobe, and A Great War* by Joseph Loconte (2017). This fall's Kindlings Muse podcast will trace the impact of WWI on the lives of two young soldiers (J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis) who lived through the war years 1914-1918 and "survived the delirium with their souls intact" (Loconte, p. 47). What can we learn about the experience in the battle between good and evil in the "stories of the marvelous" that followed from these authors?

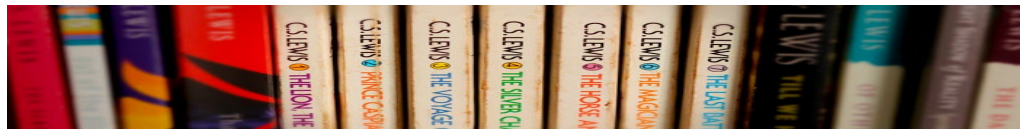
Earl Palmer Ministries/Kindlings Muse
University of Washington
Kane Hall, Walker Ames Room
October 7, 2019 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Looking Forward: You are invited by Earl Palmer Ministries

A Morning with Stories of the Marvelous: The Chronicles of Narnia

This coming January plan to attend a morning of food, fellowship, and an exploration of C.S. Lewis's world of Narnia. Earl will draw from the seven novels that Lewis wrote after World War II. His famous works, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, are both whimsical and theologically profound. This seminar will begin at 8:45 a.m. in Larson Hall at University Presbyterian Church and conclude at noon. Mid-morning coffee and pastries will be served. Watch for registration this fall.

Join us January 11, 2020 at 8:45 - 11:45 in Larson Hall



Earl and Bishop John Howard of the Diocese of Florida last year. Earl looks forward to another year at this event.

On the Road with Earl

Earl was not able to accompany me on this last trip to Oxford due to his accident and subsequent surgery, but he was there in spirit. Although there were changes in my schedule accordingly, I was able to join the class at a banquet on their final night and heard of the amazing adventures from the week. When I arrived at the Kilns in Oxford, I was greeted by a very welcoming group that included Ken Sunoo, who had attended class sessions at the Kilns all week to learn from Don King, a professor at Montreat College, and Kim Gilnett, organizer of the event in all things C.S. Lewis. I got to explore around Oxford a bit the next day, and although breathtaking, it wasn't the same without Earl's expert commentary. Next up, we are off to Jacksonville, Florida to be with the Episcopal Diocese Bishop's retreat! Lots to study on Ephesians, with thanks for all your prayers!

—Tate Busby



Tate and Ken Sunoo

Mark your calendar... Earl will preach at University Presbyterian Church on January 5, 2020



Kindlings Muse at Walker Ames room in Kane Hall at University of Washington

EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

serving to encourage and build up faith in Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:11

PO Box 85117
Seattle, WA 98145

EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

serving to encourage and build up faith in Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Board of Directors

Tony Whatley, Chair

Richard Greiling, Treasurer George Nethercutt
Alex Berezow Melissa Ries
Scott Hardman Mary Snyder
Paul Lange Gordon Stephenson

Staff

Tate Busby, Program Director / Ministry Associate
info@earlpalmer.org
LaVonne DuBois, Records Administrator

If you have any questions regarding Earl Palmer Ministries and its events, or to schedule an event, visit us at www.earlpalmer.org, email us at info@earlpalmer.org or call [\(206\) 524-3250](tel:2065243250).

If you know of others who would like to receive this newsletter, or if you would prefer not to receive this mailing, email Tate at info@earlpalmer.org.

EPM's mission statement comes from 1 Thessalonians 5:11: "Serving to encourage and build up in Christian faith." These words from the Apostle Paul inspire our ministry of teaching, writing, and mentoring. First, we seek to mentor young theologians through our internship program and theological dialogues. Live podcasts through the Kindlings Muse offer regular teaching and conversation for all ages to consider major Christian themes. Word and Worship provides a setting for expositional teaching of the Bible and inspirational music. EPM's wider ministry focuses on encouraging pastors and giving a case for expositional worship.

Your support makes this ministry happen. As we continue in this 11th year of ministry, we invite you to share in this outreach again with your prayers and your financial investment. To make a tax deductible contribution, please send a check made out to Earl Palmer Ministries, PO Box 85117, Seattle, WA 98145, electronically via PayPal, or by credit card at www.earlpalmer.org.

On behalf of the EPM team, I thank you.

—Earl F. Palmer