

EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

serving to encourage and build up faith in Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Winter 2022

Seattle, Washington

Theological Dialogue:

Meetings with Earl Palmer

The Reason for God by Tim Keller
Nov 9, Dec 7, Jan 11, February 1
(Reservations Needed)

Christmas Greeting

Reflections on The Messiah by
George Frederick Handel

December 2022 at earlpalmer.org

Worship at University Presbyterian Church

*Beginning this Year
with Faith, Hope and Love*
Romans 1:16,17

Jan 1, 2023

University Ministries Interns Study

*A Touchstone of Reality:
Screentape Letters* by C.S. Lewis
The Palmer House

February 8, 15, 22 and March 1

A Morning with Earl Palmer:

Called to be a People of the Gospel
University Presbyterian Church
Larson Hall

January 21, 2023

Word and Worship

Spring, 2023 Details TBA

Berkeley, California

Seminar at New College

*Power that Harms/Power that Heals:
Theological Themes in Writings of
C.S. Lewis*

May 20, 2023

Watch for details at

www.earlpalmer.org

For questions, contact

info@earlpalmer.org

I've Been Thinking...

about small pieces of driftwood. During summers at Whidbey Island, I like to carve quotations on driftwood. My favorites come from the Bible, or from great writers like Blaise Pascal, Mark Twain, or CS Lewis. I like quotations that can work on multiple levels. One of my recent driftwood carvings has just two words – “just,” on one side, and “right” on the other. Put together, they are “Just Right.”

The words “just” and “right” can have many different meanings that overlap. As an adverb, for instance, “just,” can mean exactly, as in the 1836 hymn by Charlotte Elliott: “Just as I am without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me.” And as an adjective, “right” can mean true or correct. So, in this sense, “Just Right” can mean that things are exactly as they should be.

“Just” can also be an adjective, meaning an outcome that is good because it is true. The noun “justice” derives from this meaning. We hear good news in a court room when a verdict is “just” under the guidance of the law. And when we live in the truth of justice, we feel safe from the swirling winds that surround us. “Right,” as an adjective, can mean good, true, upright, or righteous. In this sense, “Just Right” combines the justice of “just” and the righteousness of “right” to focus us on what is good and true.

“Just” and “right” also imply proximity or closeness—as in, “I live just one house from my friend,” or he is “right here beside me.” In the New Testament, justice and righteousness are both closeness words that point us to the truth and love that Jesus taught us. He is right there beside us—our guide as Lord and our redeemer as Savior.

Taking all these meanings, “Just Right” captures our yearning to know God’s truth and love, as people of the Gospel. “Just Right” combines the law and guidance God provides for our every-day lives, and the closeness of the good that holds us all together. And it declares that all these meanings are precisely as they should be, because “Just Right” is what Jesus teaches. He teaches us to search for the truth. He travels alongside us as we journey so that we are not alone. He is our protection from losing direction in our daily, composite lives.

David’s greatest psalm gives us the assurance of the love we need to share with one another: “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” Psalm 23:4. We need to live in the love we have been given by the Good Shepherd himself.

Just Right.

Earl Palmer



The Event That Brought People TOGETHER...

On June 4, 2022 the nave at St. Mark's Cathedral was filled with people from near and far who came to worship in the grandeur of the space for individual and corporate worship. TOGETHER was planned as a time for people to gather and pause in this place of worship. This was not a time for a sermon, not much talking but a place and space to focus on words of scripture and sacred music welcoming the comfort that comes from knowing the Lord is in our midst. As Earl reminded us in his opening comments, the word, "comfort," in Hebrew is translated "to breathe deeply." Feedback verified this happened.

After two years of Covid lockdowns and complications we longed to take a deep breath and together with other believers in person (although still masked). The breath of God oxygenated our spirits as Walt, Sue and Kay enveloped our souls. - Greg Asimakoupoulos

I described the time: generous, quiet, peaceful, creative, tender, healing, intentional. I felt a deep vulnerability and care in the music and Scripture. It was refreshing and needed. - Jean Taylor

A wonderful time of Worship in Word, Song, and soulfully resting piano. Thanks Kay, Sue and Walt for an unforgettable afternoon praising our Lord. May we be 'Together', again. - Ed & Joan Schnebele



We want to express our appreciation for all who made this happen. Thank you, Walt Wagner for sharing the language of your gift at the keyboard that you bring! Thank you, Sue Nixon, for sharing the gift of your voice as you bring your entire being to the music. Thank you, Kay Browleit as you read the scripture with such eloquence and such heart. Thank you, Lord, for this unique experience to know your presence.

Announcement of 2022 Award at Princeton Seminary

Earl Palmer Ministries is pleased to introduce Denise Carroll as the second recipient of The Earl Palmer Award for Excellence in Expository Preaching and Teaching. As stipulated, this award selected by faculty, of \$5000 is given to a student in his or her final year at the Seminary in recognition of excellence in the field of exposition. The purpose is to support a person who embraces thoughtful and relevant exposition in teaching and preaching in ministry going forward. In our conversation with Ms. Carroll we found that she arrived at Princeton Seminary having had 16 years in youth ministry in the Midlands, Texas area. Her background in education appears to have been a factor in her involvement in a program called "First Priority" – a Youth Bible Study Club in the schools. Denise's interest in youth and theology led her eventually to PTS where she discovered that there was more to learn – so she applied, was accepted and enrolled in 2020. This award honors and recognizes the role that biblical studies play in the preaching/teaching ministry and recognizes that grounding in such studies keeps the focus of ministry and life of the church on the centrality of Jesus Christ. It is our hope that this award serves to be an encouragement to this student who values the importance of and demonstrates excellence in keeping ministry centered on the Gospel as written in the Bible.



PRINCETON
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY

Audiobook on Laughter in Heaven

Listen to Earl's newest and first recorded Audiobook! *Laughter in Heaven*, by Earl available at [audible.com](https://www.audible.com)

Why is Exposition So Important?

Exposition is an invaluable gift to teaching because listeners are exposed to the possibility of discovery. This is true not only for comprehension of content but also because it can be the doorway into the larger whole of scripture. When this happens, the expansive implications of the discovery produce excitement for personal understanding of written text in those who listen and worship guided by a message that comes alive. I call this form of teaching and preaching joyous and contagious. The endowment at Princeton Theological Seminary is a permanent legacy for an award for excellence in teaching and preaching through exposition of the bible in honor of Earl F. Palmer, Expositor.

SAVE THE DATE...

"Power that Harms/Power that Heals:
Theological Themes in Writings of C.S. Lewis"
Saturday, May 20, 2023 9:00-11:15 am
New College of Berkeley
First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley
Watch [earlpalmer.org](https://www.earlpalmer.org) for details!

The Earl Palmer Collection at Princeton Theological Seminary

Many of you are aware that Princeton Theological Seminary honored Earl 4 years ago with the publishing of “The Earl Palmer Collection at Princeton Theological Seminary” in their Theological Commons digital library. For years, archives had collected hard copy materials on Earl’s

ministry for their their secure temperature-controlled room. When the digital collection was established, items from the archives that could be digitized were uploaded and added to the collection. Since then, past and present sermons and writings have been sent to PTS for adding to the digital library on a regular basis – reaching approximately 2000 at this time. Instead of displaying the entirety of the materials on the EPM site as has been the practice, it was decided to direct readers to the PTS website for searching specific sermons or media items thereby assuring long term/lasting access for generations to come. At the same time personal correspondence and items that are best stored in the secured environment will continue to be sent thereby available for on-site research at the campus library. In the meantime the earlpalmer.org website will focus on offering curated topics routinely selected by Earl, on the “Teaching and Preaching” page. We hope you will find this change helpful.

We appreciate your patience during this time of realignment. For more information, visit earlpalmer.org/teaching-and-preaching



You are invited...

A Morning with Earl Palmer: Called to Be a People of the Gospel (Recently Released)
January 21, 2023 9:00-11:00 a.m.
in Larson Hall at University Presbyterian Church
Seattle WA

This event will include an introduction by Earl as to why he chose to write this book, and critique by four responders of selected themes in the exposition of Paul’s New Testament Letter to the Ephesians. Come to hear relevance of this first century letter to the world today.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED – Visit earlpalmer.org for details.

It is with deep appreciation that I want to acknowledge the Board of EPM. The gift of who you are and what you do has been such an encouragement to me and made this ministry possible. Your brother in Christ, Earl

This past May, on the seventh day, New College Berkeley (NCB) had the deep privilege of hosting Rev. Dr. Earl Palmer as part of its 45th anniversary celebration. Indeed, it was forty-five years ago when Earl and David Gill co-founded NCB as a center for advanced Christian studies to equip the laity for faithful service. What a blessing it was to have both of them present for the commissioning of Dr. Tim Tseng and me as the new co-directors.

Earl delivered his Saturday morning seminar, a tradition he has honored countless times, this one rooted in *The Sermon on the Mount. Bringing Words for our Generation*; he called the Church to consider its foundations in these tumultuous times, what it means to “build our house into the rock (Matthew 7:24).” Here, Earl asserted that “the best theology is theology that is preoccupied with its center, and our living center is Jesus Christ.” He then quoted C.S. Lewis (*Learning in Wartime*, 1939) saying, “How can you young Oxford students justify studying philosophy, medicine or the arts when Warsaw is burning?” Lewis goes on to say that “good philosophy must exist if for no other reason than because bad theology needs to be answered.” A clear message we received from Earl that morning is that the times call for, perhaps more than ever, for a Christ-centered pursuit of truth. In a society increasingly characterized by mis-information or, even worse, dis-information and the rise of dangerous ideologies, the Church must come together and discern what is true. This is our aim for NCB, that we can be a “third space” for theological engagement across culture, tradition and generation - to equip the saints for faithful gospel witness in our world. - *Craig Wong, Co-Executive Director, New College Berkeley*



THANK YOU...EPM would like to express gratitude to the many of you who have make this ministry happen and wants you to know that your financial support for 2022 will be acknowledged by me in early 2023 for your records. Over the years your faithful contributions and encouragement have made the outreach possible to thousands of people through opportunities for in-person, and on-line engagement to offer fellowship in the events and content of the Gospel to bring people closer to understanding the journey of faith and a relationship with others in fellowship.

Richard Greiling, Treasurer

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serving to encourage and build up faith in Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:11

PO Box 85117
Seattle, WA 98145

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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. 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.

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

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.

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

On behalf of the EPM team, I thank you. *Earl F. Palmer*

CALLED TO BE A PEOPLE OF THE GOSPEL

St. Paul's New Testament Letter to the Ephesians



Earl F. Palmer

Foreword by
M. Craig Barnes

In this expositional commentary of the Letter to the Ephesians, Paul shares that the universal goodness of the gospel—the news of grace and truth from Jesus Christ—is not just for Jews but is for all people, regardless of birth, tribe, or nationality. And, in his letter to the first-century church at Ephesus, Paul gives realistic and practical guidance for how to live as one people of the gospel in words that are as relevant today as they were in the first century.

“The book has clearly exposed the essential message of Paul in Ephesians as the grace of Christ! The book is richly illustrated with many of Palmer’s favorite stories and quotations, and he deftly links it with Acts and Paul’s other letters. . . . I’m delighted that Palmer’s teaching of grace can be more widely spread through his new book.”

—MARTHA CHAN
Coordinator, China Academic Consortium

“Palmer’s remarkable gifts as a preacher, teacher, and author are once again on display in this study of Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians. As one of the tens of thousands around the world whose relationship with God in Jesus Christ has been strengthened and built up by the ministry of Earl Palmer, I give thanks for *Called to Be a People of the Gospel* and encourage others to read it.”

—SAMUEL JOHNSON HOWARD
Bishop, The Episcopal Diocese of Florida

“No preacher in America in the last fifty years has done a better job of introducing people to the mystery and power of Paul’s letters than Earl Palmer. Mining Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians for the better part of a century, he presents us here with the fruit of his labor: bright diamonds and polished gems on page after page!”

—RICHARD BURNETT
Managing editor, *Theology Matters*

“My soul was deeply stirred as I read this. For two reasons. One, Earl’s penetrating insights into the good news Paul is opening up for us in his letter, articulated in Earl’s winsome, engaging style. And two, the way Earl takes us into the heart and mind of Paul. . . . Reading Earl’s exposition of the letter is really a reading of the soul of a human being gripped by Jesus Christ and his gospel.”

—DARRELL JOHNSON
Regent College

Earl F. Palmer is a graduate of The University of California at Berkeley, and Princeton Theological Seminary. He has served at University Presbyterian Church in Seattle, Union Church of Manila, Philippines, First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley and as Preaching Pastor in Residence at The National Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC. Earl continues to be active as Pastor at Large in the ministry of teaching, preaching, and writing under the encouragement of the Board of Earl Palmer Ministries, founded in 2008. His other books include *Trusting God*, *The Book That John Wrote*, and *Salvation by Surprise: Studies in the Book of Romans*.

Excerpts from **The FOREWORD** to *Called to be a People of the Gospel*

THE REVEREND EARL PALMER has been a faithful expositor of the Bible for over sixty-five years since he graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary. . . .

It was the biblical text that led him to Jesus Christ, and it has always been his primary teacher. This is the root of his lifelong commitment to expositional teaching and preaching, by which he means allowing the text to make its own point about the gospel that brings us to Jesus Christ, so that the listener is drawn into the words of the Bible in such a way as to say, "Oh, I see the truth of this for myself and for our world."

I have heard Rev. Palmer teach at many conferences and retreats, and preach at the churches he has served over his long ministry as a pastor. He always arrives at the podium or pulpit with his worn Bible and a yellow legal pad filled with notes. Every presentation or sermon is so engaging not only because of its content, but also because he's just so excited about what he is going to say. One gets the feeling that he has spent the week mining the text carefully, and has discovered another precious gem that he can't wait to show the congregation. As he lifts one gem of truth and penetrating insight from the text after another, those of us in the pews are invited into the same experience he had years ago in his college Bible study. And we too discover more of Jesus Christ and the "new wholeness" he is offering to us, the church, and our society that is in dire need of his salvation.

In Earl Palmer's words, "Here we encounter the answer of the gospel to the universal longing for human identity, as we seek to know who we are. We are reminded that our basic identity as human beings is rooted in God's love for us The sheer grace of this belovedness is the primary marker of our identity."

As this commentary claims, this now makes us safe to others, and safe to ourselves. Now, as it says, "we are made ready to do good deeds. We are created and given by Christ the kindness of his love, so that we may share that grace with others as a new way of life."

M. Craig Barnes, President
Princeton Theological Seminary

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Over the last year, the manuscript that Earl worked on during the pandemic survived the rigorous process of publication and was recently released. I am pleased to announce that his commentary on the book of Ephesians has been launched. Here is a brief synopsis of *Called to be a People of the Gospel: St. Paul's New Testament Letter to the Ephesians*. The contents are divided into three sections I, II, and III.

- Section I creates the context and focuses on the life of Paul before and after his encounter with Jesus – the experience that changed his life.
- Section II is a commentary on chapters 1, 2, & 3 of Ephesians. These pages are a prayer for the people of the Gospel. The themes include the broad collections of moods and emotions; the disappointing failure to follow truth but recognizing the lightening clarity of grace that intermittently breaks in to interrupt that which is unrighteous; and then to know that as bitter untruths resurface, the truth of tenderness and kindness gives hope. In the grand final affirmation, the goodness of God prevails.
- Section III continues with the commentary on chapters 4, 5, & 6. Here, Paul turns to the people themselves and focuses on discipleship. The central theology of this section is the appeal to live a life “worthy” of the Gospel. Paul gives lots of advice for the people of faith. He gives specific direction on the importance of truth and how to stand with strength in the face of “swirling winds.”

The appendix includes: a definition of “exposition,” has questions for study of the text, and suggestions for setting up a group Bible study. Many of you have heard Earl teach and preach on this content. As he celebrates another birthday this November, he reaches a milestone over the years of ministry in the publication of his 20th book. I want to congratulate him publicly on this accomplishment.

Comments by Shirley Palmer as one reader of this work.

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