

# EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

serving to encourage and build up faith in Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:11

## Winter 2020

### UPC Worship Services

*"Steadied by the Love of Jesus"*  
University Presbyterian Church  
Jan. 5

### A Morning with Stories of the Marvelous, hosted by EPM:

*The Chronicles of Narnia*  
Larson Hall  
Jan. 11 8:45–11:45 a.m.

### Truth in the Northwest with the C.S. Lewis Institute

*"Living a Life of Love and Obedience"*  
University Presbyterian Church  
Feb. 8, 10–11:30 a.m.

### University Ministries Intern Study

*"Bible Studies on Christian  
Character"*  
The Palmer House  
Feb. 12, 19, and 26

### Worship at FPCB

*"Empower Servant Leadership"*  
First Presbyterian Church,  
Bellingham  
March 15, 10 a.m.

### Word and Worship 2020

*"The Book of James"*  
Florence Henry Memorial Chapel  
March 19, April 9, May 21  
7:30–8:30 p.m.

### "Food, Fun, and Fellowship" at Mukilteo Presbyterian Church

*"The Greatest Commandment"*  
Mukilteo Presbyterian Church  
March 21, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### Berkeley Palmer Lectureship

*"Fleeing the Hotspots"*  
Speaker: Dr. Ruth Padilla DeBorst  
First Presbyterian Church  
of Berkeley  
April 18, 7 p.m.

### New College Berkeley Seminar

*"Saint Paul's Greatest Book"*  
Romans 5, 8, and 12  
First Presbyterian Church  
of Berkeley  
April 25, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.  
Register at [newcollegeberkeley.com](http://newcollegeberkeley.com)

Watch for details at

[www.earlpalmer.org](http://www.earlpalmer.org)  
[info@earlpalmer.org](mailto:info@earlpalmer.org)

## Words Make the Story by Earl Palmer

**I've Been Thinking ...** about the answer J.R.R. Tolkien gave when asked how he planned to complete the plot in one unfinished story. He replied, "I don't know. I'll try to find out." Not try to invent; try to find. He did not see himself as an inventor of story but as a discoverer..." (Carpenter, Tolkien, p. 75). C.S. Lewis similarly explained the challenge of writing or reading stories. "Find out what the author actually wrote and what the hard words meant and what the allusions were to, and you have done far more for me than a hundred new interpretations or assessments could ever do" (Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*, p. 121). Both of these men used words as sources for their imaginary stories.

If I hear a word, "rescue" or "catastrophe," for example, I find a story. Each word becomes a story-making challenge as the human imagination asks questions about what might happen next. In Lewis's *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, the most captivating part is the "rescue" of Edmund. The importance of "rescue," or the catastrophe, is captured by what happens next. Edmund becomes an enamored follower of the winter queen (the wicked witch). She wants his sisters and brother brought into her control. She manipulates Edmund and in her sweet voice she orders, "Bring your brother and sisters to meet me at my castle, then you will have many more pieces of Turkish delight." He hears that if you do what I want, you will be rewarded with what you want.

Exasperated by his siblings and entranced by the queen, Edmund was willing to betray his two sisters and brother and attempt to draw them into her hands. When that effort failed, he realized the evil intent of the queen, but by then he was her chained captive. She prepares to kill him since he is no longer of use to her when, in a sudden surprise, centaurs and unicorns sent by Aslan rescue the terrified Edmund. The story becomes heavy when the winter witch confronts Aslan in his encampment: "You have a traitor there, Aslan...you know the deep magic that every traitor belongs to me...that human creature is mine."

In this Narnian adventure, Lewis presents a grave truth that goes beyond the imaginary. It "flows into reality," as Tolkien would say. Those who commit treachery belong to the lord of treachery and, in this case, the evil queen. In Edmund's betrayal of goodness he became her ally. He made a choice for evil. It began with one taste of Turkish delight but led to putting others in danger to satisfy his personal wants. Stories can become guidance parables for the contemporary reader. Regardless of one's intentions, when we betray goodness, whether for religious or political goals, we become allies with all who seek a personal or public agenda in the guise of truth, but in reality seek power and vengeance against supposed foes. When this happens we belong to the cruelty of despair. Interruption of harm is needed. For Edmund it is Aslan who interrupts the terror. Aslan himself takes on full consequences of the deep magic judgment. The rescue is the story.

Edmund's sisters, Susan and Lucy, follow Aslan to the stone table and are nearby when the witch slays the lion. They hear her say, "The great cat lies dead." Huddled in grief throughout the night and with the first light of morning, the girls hear a sudden loud sound: the stone table breaks. Aslan is alive. He explains, "There is a deeper magic still which the wicked witch did not know ... that when a willing victim who had committed no treachery is killed in a traitor's stead, the table will crack." The harm intended for Edmund, who had agreed to do things that jeopardized others and had put him under the power of the deep magic, is taken on by Aslan. Aslan takes Edmund's place and sets him free. In the words of Saint Paul to the Corinthians, "The old passed away, behold, everything became new."

Tolkien took hold of one word he had himself fashioned by the combination of two words. He combined

the Greek *Eu*, a prefix that means "good," together with *catastrophe*, which means "collapse," even "widespread upheaval." From the story inside that language choice, Tolkien explains his faith in the same way as he would narrate a vast and complete myth of the marvelous. He states, "and among the marvels is the greatest and most complete conceivable *eu*catastrophe. The Birth of Christ is the *eu*catastrophe of man's history. The Resurrection is the *eu*catastrophe of the story of the Incarnation...It has pre-eminently the 'inner consistency of reality'." (Tolkien, *Essays* presented to Charles Williams, p. 83) Tolkien reminds: "Whereas stories exist in our imagination like grand myths, this story of the *eu*catastrophe is true. It actually happened.... In this year 2020, how would I describe stories that my language imagines? If my words do harm through intimidation and divide one from another, do I need holy interruption? There is a safeguard for our integrity and sanity in Jesus's simple words that help us discern false stories across all ideological spectrums that appear in half sentences of Twitter, Facebook, and even political rallies. Our Lord's greatest commandment provides a weight scale like a healing interruption in our favor to discern what is right and what is wrong. (cont'd on page 3)



Earl, pictured above with Pastor Mark Bassett, at a weekend event at Redeemer Presbyterian Church.



"It is always a privilege to have Earl preach at UPC. Earl and I served together for 17+ years at UPC! I love this man and respect him so much as a preacher and teacher. He is simply extraordinary. He preached a particularly challenging and encouraging sermon as we started the new year of 2020." — *Tim Snow, Associate Pastor at UPC*

## Word and Worship SPRING 2020 *Three Studies in the Book of James*

**March 19: James 1**  
The Good Testing of Faith  
**April 9: James 2**  
The Royal Law of Love  
**May 21: James 5**  
The Patience of Prayer at Work



Word and Worship provides a space for worship and personal reflection through music, prayer, and exposition of texts from the Bible. Located at the Florence Henry Memorial Chapel at the Highlands in Shoreline, Washington, this hour together includes music led by a talented group of musicians and a bible study led by Earl Palmer.

The Word and Worship Team with spouses at the Palmer's home celebrating together over brunch: Bill Levey, Dale Roth, Cathy Wagner, Dave Broweleit, Matt Whitney, Earl, Annie Roth, Walt Wagner, Shirley Palmer, Kay Broweleit, Tomo Morita, Brian and Liz Coon, and Heather Whitney. (Missing for photo: Sue Nixon) (L-R starting back row)

*The key to this service is that it's not trying to be anything; it's not church, it is simply what it is. It's such a joy. Word and Worship for me means coming to the space feeling generous and grateful.* — *Sue Nixon, Word and Worship Team Leader*

Earl preaches at First Presbyterian Church of Bellingham, March 15, at 10 a.m. on John 13  
Sermon title: "Empower Servant Leadership," as part of the church's ongoing series.



### New College Berkeley Seminar

"Saint Paul's Greatest Book," Three Studies in the Letter to the Romans. In this annual seminar by the beloved Reverend Earl Palmer, we will focus on Chapters 5, 8, and 12 in Paul's Letter to the Romans. This life-changing writing is key to the Good News, not only for Paul's time but especially for us today. Join us in this New College Berkeley class as we explore the text of Paul's letter. Earl looks forward to our time together inside this 1st Century book that we will enjoy learning from in our century.

**Saturday, April 25, 2020. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.**  
First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley,  
Visit [newcollegeberkeley.com](http://newcollegeberkeley.com) to register

### With gratitude we want to thank . . .

those who have contributed to the fund for *The Princeton Theological Seminary Award for Excellence in Expository Preaching and Teaching in honor of Earl F. Palmer*, expositor. As of January 30 the account has received \$113,216 which makes the goal of \$125,000 to support one student within reach. We encourage you to consider a donation over the next months to add a second award with plans for distribution the fall of 2021. Stay tuned for updates! Contributions should be sent directly to PTS marked for "Earl Palmer Award/Preaching." Give online at [www.ptsem.edu/give/ways-to-give](http://www.ptsem.edu/give/ways-to-give) or mail to:

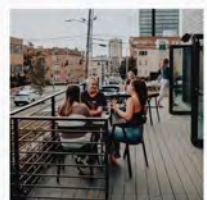
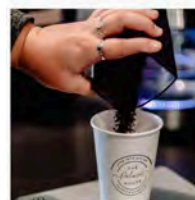
**Attn: Department of Advancement**  
P.O. Box 821 64 Mercer Street  
Princeton, NJ 08542-0803

## The Palmer House

The Palmer House is in full operation after one year since completion! With a coffee bar, worship nights, Young Life college events, and surprise concerts, there's something for every student. As the names were not made public of those who made this place of ministry to university students possible, we want to extend our overwhelming gratitude - you know who you are. Thank you for your financial contributions that now provide a wonderful third place of Christian community where students can gather and share their faith. In Christ's love, *Earl and Shirley*

**Up next, Earl joins University Ministry Interns in February with "Bible Studies on Christian Character"**

*"I'm excited to be able to learn and discuss with Earl ideas of what it looks like to be strong Christian men and women in today's society. Learning from someone with so much life experience is always valuable, and I'm looking forward to the studies we get to do together."* — *Trevor Noirman, University Ministries Intern*



## Words Make the Story ... continued from page 1

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matthew 22:37-40)

Goodness has the power against words that create stories of hate in a world that is desperate for love. The Lord, who interrupted the turbulent line of history, commands us to love one another. To realize what the rescue entails and do what we are commanded to do is the *all-important* story we need to tell. This starts with the words we use. And in so doing, we let people know, Aslan is on the move! — Earl

### “There was only one lion, but he was swift of foot”... A Morning Well Spent!



More than 300 people gathered on a Saturday morning in January for fellowship hosted Earl Palmer Ministries to listen to Earl draw theological insights from *The Chronicles of Narnia* and to consider themes relevant to our lives today. Earl writes: “Thank you to those of you who attended the January 11 event *A Morning with Stories of the Marvelous: The Chronicles of Narnia*. Your presence made it all happen.”

If you weren't able to attend, visit the “videos” page at [earlpalmer.org](http://earlpalmer.org) to watch the whole morning!

## At Sea with Earl

In late October and early November, Earl honored his commitment made over a year ago to give a series of talks aboard a private charter that was to sail along the Mediterranean coast of Spain. Shirley and I were included to be of help to Earl for the journey. I listened to Earl as he spoke with energy and enthusiasm for an hour every morning on the seven books of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, as requested by the host, taking all of our shipmates on another adventure alongside our odyssey over the waters. I met so many amazing people, and every day was filled with engaging conversation. Some people were curious as to why we would be reading “children's books” for Earl's lectures, and it was remarkable to see their presumptions go out the porthole once we really dove into the stories. It was no surprise when after six lectures, the group gave him a standing ovation. I will never forget Earl's truly moving narration of *The Horse and His Boy*. Parallels between Earl's messages and our interactions during the trip were abundant. Discovering the foreignness of a trip like this was not unlike the many points of view we get to see throughout the Narnian tales. I realized that a lion, humans, and even mice could all tell stories that help us understand each other and ourselves better. I'm so thankful for the time of discovery that we had on our journey! And of course, I'm also thankful for my two perfect travel buddies! — Tate



## Announcement! Now on our website, hear Earl reading aloud his poem with music composed by Kari Medina inspired by Earl's “I Know a House”

I know a house that took me in to send me out  
And I keep finding this house in all  
of the places in my life as if it were as itinerant as I

My first memory of this place I call a house  
is of friendly fragrances  
the smell of evening suppers & coffee  
brewing, sometimes of old wooden doors that  
are out of fashion & sometimes the new  
aroma of children laughing

I came to know the people of this house  
who took me in to send me out  
because they taught me here about the  
owner of the house and in time I learned his name

I always loved best of all the main room  
right at the center in this house  
a room that always seems vast in size to me with its  
grand sounds solemn and joyous and the flood  
of color on both sunny and cloudy days

I learned the memory of a royal past because of this  
house and like a waterfall cataract of some  
mysterious river that flowed around its open  
door I felt the powerful surprise of hope and resolve

I know this house and wherever I go I find  
it either settled in or precariously perched  
yet always the house that takes me in to send me out

“I Know a House” was written to honor the churches of  
my life. It is a poem that begins with early memories of  
the little community church in McCloud, California,  
where I grew up as a boy. — Earl

Watch for more poetry read aloud by Earl at  
[www.earlpalmer.org/poetry-and-music](http://www.earlpalmer.org/poetry-and-music)

# 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*

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### Board of Directors

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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. 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.

If you have any questions regarding Earl Palmer Ministries and its events, or to schedule an event, visit us at [www.earlpalmer.org](http://www.earlpalmer.org), email us at [info@earlpalmer.org](mailto: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](mailto:info@earlpalmer.org).

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](http://www.earlpalmer.org).

On behalf of the EPM team, I thank you.

— Earl F. Palmer

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## Exposition in Ministry

The award honors and recognizes the role that biblical studies play in the preaching/teaching ministry. Grounding in such studies keeps the focus of ministry and life of the church on the centrality of Jesus Christ. Recognizing a student in training for pastoral ministry who has shown excellence in expository preaching and teaching hopes to be an encouragement. Such recognition values the importance of exposition in ministry and fosters its use.

## Earl Palmer and Princeton Theological Seminary

Earl Palmer, Distinguished Alumnus (1999) is very grateful for his years as a student at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he learned the theological importance of biblical studies. The spiritual influence he experienced then has had a major influence on his own life. As pastor and trustee, he has also observed the impact that Princeton Seminary has had on other students. Over the years, Earl has followed the graduates and has been impressed by the role they have filled in sharing the Gospel and in serving the church worldwide.



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## How to Contribute

We ask you to consider giving to the endowment fund and partner with us to encourage expository preaching with the world's future leaders in ministry. If you would like to share in this vision, give directly to Princeton Theological Seminary with "Palmer Award for Excellence in Expository Preaching & Teaching" on the memo line. To give online, visit the "Ways to Give" page at [www.ptsem.edu/give/ways-to-give](http://www.ptsem.edu/give/ways-to-give), or send checks to the address below. All funds will be distributed to students by the seminary.

Tony Whatley,  
Chairman of Earl Palmer Ministries

### EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

*servicing to encourage and build up faith in Christ*

If you have any questions,  
contact Tate Busby at: [info@earlpalmer.org](mailto:info@earlpalmer.org)  
or call (206) 524-3250 or visit [www.earlpalmer.org](http://www.earlpalmer.org).

To learn more about  
Princeton Theological Seminary and all it has to offer,  
please visit [www.ptsem.edu](http://www.ptsem.edu).

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Princeton Theological Seminary  
Attn: Department of Advancement  
P.O. Box 821  
64 Mercer Street  
Princeton, NJ 08542-0803



## THE EARL F. PALMER AWARD FOR THE JOY OF EXCELLENCE IN EXPOSITORY PREACHING AND TEACHING



*An award to be presented  
to students at  
Princeton Theological Seminary  
in training for pastoral ministry*



## Earl Palmer Ministries Announces a Campaign . . .

to raise funds to create an endowment at Princeton Theological Seminary to establish an award for excellence in the joy of teaching and preaching through exposition of the Bible in honor of Earl F. Palmer, expositor.



## This is an opportunity for you to partner with . . .

Earl Palmer Ministries (EPM) and to provide a financial grant to two students in training who have been chosen by faculty for their demonstration of excellence in expositional preaching and teaching. Awards will be made in the students' final year at Princeton Seminary to support their ministry forward.

## Why an Award?

In supporting this award, Earl Palmer Ministries hopes to encourage students to strive for excellence in using this approach for building ministry and to recognize that there is joy in discovering the Bible through exposition.

## Why an Endowment?

An endowment creates a permanent legacy at PTS. This approach will allow the funds to grow and represents contributions that will be given to the seminary for the purpose of investment to increase the principal. This will provide additional funds in the future and support awards in perpetuity.

## What is the Financial Target?

Earl Palmer Ministries has set a goal to raise \$250,000 to support a 4 percent draw that will allow a \$5,000 award to each of two students per year. As the endowment grows, additional awards for more students may be possible. The plan is to keep the principal intact and use the investment income for the financial awards.

## What Ensures Accountability?

All contributions are to be made directly to Princeton Theological Seminary and will be acknowledged by receipt as charitable gifts. PTS will track the endowment and report annually to EPM. In accordance with the vision, PTS faculty will select the recipients of the award. The seminary will also manage the funds and disperse them directly to the students.

## A Shared Mission

Earl Palmer Ministries seeks to serve, encourage, and build up faith in Christ inspired by the words of Apostle Paul . . .

“Therefore encourage one another and build up each other . . .”

*1 Thessalonians 5:11*

Princeton Theological Seminary prepares women and men to serve Jesus Christ in ministries marked by faith, integrity, scholarship, competence, compassion, and joy . . .

*Princeton Seminary taught me how to rightly handle holy scripture and how to proclaim it as the Word of God. For forty years I have used the insights I learned in our classrooms. Forming preachers continues to be one of our seminary's great contributions to the church.*



M. Craig Barnes  
President  
Princeton  
Theological  
Seminary