

# EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

1 Thessalonians 5:11

*Serving to Encourage and Build Up in Christian Faith*

## Summer/Fall 2016

### Looking Ahead

#### In Seattle/Western Washington

##### **The Kindlings Muse Podcast\***

(Walker-Ames Room, Kane Hall, UW)

Sept. 12, Oct. 3, Nov. 7, Dec. 5: 7-8:30 pm.

##### **Theological Dialogue for Lay Teachers and Pastors \***

*Pilgrims Progress* (Bunyan, 1678)

Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 6, Dec. 13

##### **Bible Class: The Book of Romans (Chps. Nine, Ten, and Eleven)**

First Presbyterian Church of Tacoma

Oct. 30, Nov. 6, Nov. 13

##### **Word and Worship**

The Highlands Chapel

March 23, April 27, May 25 (2017)

#### Around the Country

##### **ERRC 30th Anniversary Dinner**

Berkeley, CA Sep. 18

##### **Diocese of Florida/Bishop's Institute: Dietrich Bonhoeffer as Pastor, Teacher, and 20th Century Hero**

Jacksonville, FL

Sept. 23, 24, 25

##### **C.S. Lewis: Letters to Children**

Tonto Verde, AZ

Jan. 16 (2017)

##### **Princeton Seminar on Exposition of the Bible: Part 2**

Princeton, NJ

May 3, 4, 5 Wed. - Friday (2017)

#### Around the World

##### **C.S. Lewis Study Week in Oxford, England**

July 16-22 and July 24-30 (2016)

\*Watch for details at [www.earlpalmer.org](http://www.earlpalmer.org)

\*For more information, email [info@earlpalmer.org](mailto:info@earlpalmer.org)

\*Please email [stephen@earlpalmer.org](mailto:stephen@earlpalmer.org) for registration details

**I've been thinking** ... Have you noticed how many times we describe our lives using roadway words? Robert Frost's best known poem, "The Road Not Taken," tells of two different roads in a yellow wood: "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I - I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference." I loved this poem for its main thought until I realized that Frost was partly wrong to credit a road itself, as the "all the difference" marker in a life journey, some difference for sure but not all the difference. It is what happens on the road that makes the most difference. It is how you handle the road you are on. In 1945 a show tune by Oscar Hammerstein II and Richard Rodgers was by far more profound. At a key moment in the life of a young widow they gave to the musical a roadway song with danger, loss, hope, and courage all crowded together. "When you walk through a storm hold your head up high and don't be afraid of the dark...walk on with hope in your heart and you'll never walk alone." ("Carousel")

Roads are important. Some we do not ourselves choose and others we might. The question with the most permanent importance is this: Can we find our way with integrity and hope on all kinds of roads? Jesus' first recorded teaching as a Rabbi in Mathews' Gospel is the Sermon on the Mount (Mathew 5-7) and that teaching is a roadway sermon. He follows the tradition of the Old Testament Psalms where roads are bluntly described for what they are: some are dangerous; some are pleasant and some are heartbreaking. In Psalm 119 the whole of the Hebrew alphabet from 'aleph' to 'tau' is employed as an acrostic Psalm. Psalm 119 shows how a man or woman can live within God's will (Torah) on every kind of road.

The first word of the Psalm is the 'aleph' word "blessing." *Ashre* is the Hebrew word and it means to find the way to walk. The word becomes the starting point of the whole psalm: "Blessed are those who seek the Lord with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in His ways" (Psalm 119:2). Jesus the teacher takes the same approach in his opening nine blessings of the Sermon on the Mount. He describes with very few words roadway realities and the freedom for human choice. In this way he sets the stage for his own teaching on challenges his disciples face on the different kinds of roads that make up human stories. Listen to these nine right way blessings: You are on the right way (1) when you seek healing of your spirit; (2) when you grieve because you lost someone you love; (3) when you are meek; (4) when you are hungry and thirsty for truth; (5) when you are merciful; (6) when you have a cleaned heart; (7) when you are a peacemaker; (8) when you are punished because of truth; and (9) when false things are said of you as was said of the Prophets of old and as said of the teacher of the blessings.

"Blessed are the meek" is a beginning place for finding the good way. The English word "meek" may hinder the meaning because we tend to echo "meek" with "mild" and then wrongly assume it is a weak word. But the word was not thought of in that way in first century usage. The word 'meek' was used to identify an animal that can be trained, such as a horse. So meek actually

describes a trainable horse that results in the strongest horse and one not easily panicked on a dangerous journey - all because of training. Jesus is using this word to describe a man or woman who is teachable and therefore is able to learn meanings and reason and the differences between what is of primary and of secondary importance. Jesus adds the best rewards to the teachable ones "for they will inherit the earth." This blessing just might be the most foundational one not only in our ability to think clearly in every realm of living but also in our discovery of what being a disciple of Jesus means. If we learn from Jesus as guide and teacher, we experience even more; He is the one who washes our hearts clean as Savior; He grants peace so that peacemaking is possible. And it all begins on an ordinary road because learning from Him has made all the difference.

*-Earl F. Palmer*



Nathan Taylor M.D. and son Jesse with Earl at New College Berkeley, April 23, 2016

## Put on Your Calendar for the 2016-2017 Season!



Come join us in Kane Hall.  
**The Walker-Ames Room**

is located on the 2nd floor of Kane Hall at the University of Washington.

To attend an event, please register at:  
[www.thekindlings.com/events](http://www.thekindlings.com/events)

Each event is podcast and made available to download at:  
[www.thekindlings.com](http://www.thekindlings.com)

Please visit The Kindlings Muse page at [www.earlpalmer.org](http://www.earlpalmer.org) for detailed directions and instructions on parking, or email [info@earlpalmer.org](mailto:info@earlpalmer.org).

**Dates and Time:**  
7-8:30 pm.

9/12/16 **St. Paul's Greatest Chapter**  
*1 Corinthians 13*  
by St. Paul

10/3/16 **He Got It Right**  
*George Herbert: The Complete English Poems*  
Penguin Classics Version

11/7/16 **The Story of Amazing Grace**  
*John Newton*  
by Jonathan Aiken

12/5/16 **The Deception of Power**  
*That Hideous Strength*  
by C.S. Lewis

## Reflections on the Theological Dialogues by Ken Sunoo...

*I have had the pleasure of participating in the Theological Dialogues every year since its inception. I love Earl's style of leading these discussions: offering background information to clarify the context, reading the text to hear the author's words, and then asking probing questions to guide our discussion. I love the diverse background of the group of people who attend and the camaraderie that has built up among us. Finally, I love the warm hospitality Earl and Shirley extend to this group, from opening up their home for our meetings to the delicious treats Shirley prepares for our enjoyment. I continue to be drawn to the Theological Dialogues because both my mind and my soul are fed.*



\*If you would like to be a part of the Theological Dialogues, please contact [stephen@earlpalmer.org](mailto:stephen@earlpalmer.org). For more details about the Theological Dialogues, please visit <http://earlpalmer.org/events/theological-dialogue/>.

Part of the 2016 Theological Dialogues Group: Peter Strong, Ken Sunoo, Earl Palmer, Gary Barckert, Ed Buffalow, Stephen Michel, and Matthew Hunnewell



## Earl Palmer Returns to Florida!

On September 23-25 Earl Palmer will be back in Florida, joining the Bishop's Institute for Ministry and Leadership at Camp Weed to lead a weekend on the life and work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. In September of 2015, Earl led the institute in a study of the life and work of C.S. Lewis.

### What is the Bishop's Institute?

It is a training event launched by the Episcopal Diocese of Florida to teach and build up members of the church. Their purpose is to provide "quality education at the local level for the training of priests, deacons, and lay leaders, and to provide continuing education for both clergy and laity."

\*For more information, please email [jhodsdon@diocesefl.org](mailto:jhodsdon@diocesefl.org) or call (904) 356-1328.

Mandi's Chapel, located at Camp Weed near Live Oak, Florida. The weekend with Earl Palmer will be held at Camp Weed.

## What They Said About the 2015 Exposition Seminar at Princeton

- Somehow, Dr. Palmer manages to be both in-depth and straightforward at the same time. When walking through 2 Timothy, he drew out the layers of meaning of every verse in a way that stuck with me months after the seminar. I just finished using my notes from the seminar as a 10-week leadership intensive for my church. The seeds planted in Princeton in November have borne fruit here at my church in Washington, D.C.

- *Rev. Rachel Landers Vaagenes*, The Georgetown Presbyterian Church

- The Exposition Seminar held at Princeton Theological Seminary sponsored by Earl Palmer Ministries had a profound impact on my preaching ministry. Since November our church has been on fire during the preaching moments because of the fresh insight I gain in understanding how the different versions can be helpful in interpreting a text. I'm excited to learn what Earl Palmer Ministries offer next.

- *Pastor Herbert L. Johnson Jr.*, Freedom "A Church Without Walls" Rockford IL



Michael Denham, Director of Music at National Presbyterian Church, teaching at the Seminar.



Earl and Reverend Darrell Armstrong of Shiloh Baptist Church responding to audience questions.

- The Seminar on Expository Preaching was a fantastic time of learning for me. Earl's methodical breakdown of II Timothy over the course of two days taught me so much about expository preaching. I think the crux of expository preaching is allowing the book to speak for itself (as Earl is always quick to point out). It requires a certain degree of curiosity about the text combined with a willingness to wrestle with it and seek answers. An expository preacher is centered on the Word of God, and his or her sermon never strays too far from that center. It is a very earthy approach to the Bible because the expositor is simply allowing the original authors to speak for themselves and deliver their own message without too much outside interference. Also, I was struck by Michael Denham's teaching on how the worship service surrounds the text.

- *Stephen Michel*, Study Assistant, Earl Palmer Ministries

## News Flash!

The November 3, 4, 5, 2015 teaching event The Joy of Teaching Exposition of the Bible held at Princeton Theological Seminary is now available in full video format on our EPM website. Please visit [www.earlpalmer.org](http://www.earlpalmer.org) for more details.

\*The filming of these teaching videos welcomes your support. Mark these contributions - "video project." You can donate online or mail us at PO Box 85117, Seattle, WA 98145-1117

## Don't Miss This... The 2017 Exposition Seminar

**What:** The Joy of Teaching Exposition of the Bible: Part 2

**Where/When:** The Center for Continuing Education at Princeton Theological Seminary on May 3, 4, 5, 2017

**Who:** Earl Palmer and Michael Denham will guide us in practical steps of study and planning for effective teaching, and preparing for ways of worship that surround the teaching of the Bible.

**Details:** For registration details and more information, check our EPM website in the fall of 2016.

**On the Road with EPM** ... It is hard to believe that my year with EPM has already come to a close. It has been a year of incredible growth in both my relationship with God and with the community around me. I have learned so much this year from Earl and Shirley about what it means to dedicate your life to serving others and walking out your faith wherever you go. My time with EPM was well spent, and I will look back on this year with a heart full of gratitude.

Two EPM events that had a profound impact on me were the Kindlings Muse and Word and Worship. Attending the Kindlings Muse has instilled in me a desire for learning and expanding my "intellectual" horizons. It has been a joy listening to Earl and Dick discuss the work of famous authors like David Brooks or Dorothy Sayers. I have never wanted to pick up a book more readily than after a Kindlings Muse.

Word and Worship on many levels has challenged my faith and walk with God (in a positive manner). Earl's short but informative sermons pushed me to go deeper in my faith and to read the Bible more in-depth. It was through those Thursday evening services that I recognized that I needed to take more time in the Word and explore the depth that is there. With that being said, the events challenged both the head and the heart and shined a light on areas where I needed to grow. I will be forever grateful for that.

- *Stephen Michel*, Study Assistant 2015-2016



Stephen and EPM Board Member Dick Greiling at Word and Worship, May 26, 2016.

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Seattle, WA 98145

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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) or email us at [info@earlpalmer.org](mailto:info@earlpalmer.org).

If you know of others who would like to receive this newsletter, or if you would prefer not to receive this mailing, email Stephen at [stephen@earlpalmer.org](mailto:stephen@earlpalmer.org).

## Mission Statement

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 monthly 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 primarily on encouraging pastors and giving a case for expositional worship.

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Your support makes this ministry happen. As we continue in this eighth 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, or electronically via PayPal or credit card at [www.earlpalmer.org](http://www.earlpalmer.org).

On behalf of the EPM team, I thank you.

*Earl F. Palmer*