



Vacation Bible School will be June 22 through 25th. This year our Vacation Bible School will be held at the Methodist and Episcopal churches. Rome will be our theme for the event. Keep in mind volunteers are welcome and can be helpful in several ways.

## The Open Door

First Presbyterian Church

1410 NE Veterans Blvd.

Miami, Ok. 74354

Pastor: Reverend Dr. Helen Hutchison



### The Way by Ann Weems

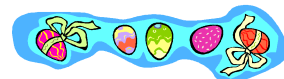
The way to Jerusalem looks suspiciously like highway 40,  
And the pilgrims look suspiciously like you and me.  
I expected the road to Jerusalem to be crowded with holy people...

Clerics and saints...  
People who have kindness wrinkled in their faces and comfort lingering in their voices,  
But this is more like rush hour...  
Horns blowing, people pushing, voices cursing...  
This is not what I envisioned!

O God, I've only begun and already I feel I've lost my way.  
Surely this is not the road and surely these are not the ones to travel with me.  
This Lenten Journey calls for holy retreat, for reflection, and repentance.

Instead of holiness the highway is crammed with the cacophony of chaos.  
Is there no back road to Jerusalem?  
No quiet path where angels tend to weary travelers?  
No Sanctuary from the noise of the world?  
Just this?  
Can this hectic highway be the highway to heaven?

It seems like I have heard the statement many times, "Is it really almost time for Easter again?" It is not hard with the business of daily lives and the continuing of joyous activities and dealing with life's stresses that time seems to move very quickly. But maybe that is why the blocking off of days to be holidays is so important. It gives us a chance to remember (for I know we seldom often stop) in the midst of driving from one appointment to the next to consider stories of God's holy people and the way that God inserted Godself into their daily lives and activities. That is one reason I love Holy Week: Maundy Thursday where we will honor the Jewish Seder service (which retells the story of Moses leading the people to freedom and looks at where in our world today freedom is missing) which was part of Jesus' last supper, we will fellowship with dinner and celebrate communion; the Good Friday service, where we remember the seven last words of Jesus in a service of Darkness; and the Celebration of the Empty Tomb on Easter morning. These are all parts of God's story. As Ann Weems describes so well in her poem "The Way" sometimes we need the holiday just to remind us to take God's story with us wherever we go. May the wonder of surprise and of God's ability to make life out of death go with you this Easter Season.



*The First Presbyterian Church  
1410 N.E. Veterans Blvd.  
Miami, OK 74354*

**NICE TO KNOW**—The Sunday night Alcoholics Anonymous “Desire Twelve Step Study Group” will have its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary on April 4, 2009. The group was started, with support from our church, by six recovering alcoholics that just wanted to meet regularly to study and discuss the principles of AA in order to maintain their sobriety and improve their spirituality. Two years later the group had a regular attendance of about 20 people. The members applied for and were granted a charter by AA World Wide Services. Its name was derived from AA’s third tradition, “The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.” At that same time the group voted to have open meetings. This vote allowed people with addictions to substances other than alcohol to attend. Recognizing that there were people trying to recover and couldn’t attend meetings because they had no child care, the group also voted to be open to attendance by children. Our Church allowed the children to use the Bee Bags to help occupy the children during meetings. Currently the group has an average attendance of about fifty people with the diseases of alcoholism and drug addiction. Sixty two adults and 3 children attended the last meeting of February. Adhering to the AA tradition that requires each group to be self-supportive the Desire Group contributes financially to the church to cover the cost of utilities.

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**Happy Birthday First Presbyterian Church**



As I write this it is in anticipation of the celebration of our church’s 110<sup>th</sup> birthday. When you receive it, the celebration will be past! We had a wonderful congregational dinner on March 15. Dolly Gray and Sandy Ankenman played piano duets of music from the “olden days.” We always enjoy their music. Then Nancy Gee, Judy Abel, and Melba Cordell read a program written by Betty Dean of anecdotes from the past in our church. It was interesting and many of the readings were humorous.

March 29 is the actual birthday. On that day, worship will be a celebration and will be followed by cake in Fellowship Hall. We as a church have a rich heritage. More about the celebration next month.



**April 5 Palm Sunday**—A Passion Play by our Drama Team will be performed during worship.

**April 9 Maundy Thursday/Seder 6:00**  
 Seder comes from the term for “order.” The book of Genesis tells us that God orders all creation. Though we affirm this is so, we must confess we often cannot sense God’s ordering presence. Our own habit of trying to control things for ourselves gets in the way. Paradoxically, the more we seek to control things, the more they spin out of control. The Jewish Seder is one of the holiest Jewish holidays and is a dinner where God’s bringing the people out of slavery in Egypt is celebrated and places where we need God in our world is acknowledged. We celebrate this Seder to again remember God’s saving acts, and we add our Christian understanding to the Seder by connecting with Christ and the last supper and celebrating communion and God’s saving act through Christ. Part of the Seder service is recognizing places where God is needed in our world and as we gather around a table full of food we remember those in our community who do not have food to eat. So, along with your dish to share (please note we will begin the evening with the Seder service and be eating about 45 minutes into the service so please know the dish you bring will be sitting for that time) and your own dishes (plates, cups and silverware so that we can be mindful of the amount of trash we are throwing into the environment) please also bring items to place into our grocery cart for the new Ministerial Alliance Food Bank.

**April 10 Good Friday 7:30**  
 A Tenabrea service, where we remember the seven last words of Jesus in a service of Darkness.

**April 12 Easter 9:00**  
 Come for an Easter Breakfast, an Easter egg hunt for kids and a scavenger hunt for upper elementary and junior high and then an Easter worship service.



**YOUTH NEWS** - It is that time of year when we begin to plan for the summer. This summer we have many opportunities for children and youth. Older elementary children and Junior high School Students are encouraged to go to Dwight mission summer camp. The church office has the Dwight mission brochures and there are many in our congregation who like to donate to a fund to help and pay for the cost of camp. Kim is organizing those two groups so that there will be one Junior High group going down for a week and one elementary school group for one week. Please take time in the next couple of weeks to connect with Kim and fill out the registration forms. The senior high will be going on a mission trip to Chicago. Any one in the church who would like to help with the cost of camp please speak to Helen.

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**It's easy! It's relaxing!**  
**It's Our Presbyterian Connection.**  
Sunday, April 19th from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Ankenman Ranch. We plan to just visit and enjoy each other. Bring a friend or two and join a historic barn tour or ride over to the other ranch and see the new baby calves. There is a tire swing for the kids. Anyone have a croquet set? That would be a perfect game for all ages! The drinks will be provided. Bring a package of cookies if you like. Also, bring your lawn chairs. Need a ride? We will have a signup sheet for the Presbyterian Bus to pick you up! Let's get **CONNECTED!**

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## Holy Week Community Worship Services

- Monday** April 6, First Assembly of God (Pastor Geoff Buffalo)
- Tuesday** April 7, All Saints Episcopal (Pastor Phil Shyers)
- Wednesday** April 8, First Christian (Casey Hollingsworth)
- Thursday** April 9, First United Methodist (Father Carl Kerkemeyer)
- Friday** April 10, Sacred Heart Catholic Church (Rev. Bob Barker)



## First Presbyterian Church History Update

The history of our church from our centennial in 1999 until the present is published and ready for sale. As most of you remember, we published our history of the first hundred years. Many of you have copies. We printed extra ones but they were ruined by the church fire. This history brings the story to the present. Our secretary, Pam Blalock, is a wonder!! With our new color copier, she has published a wonderful book with color pictures on almost every page. The books sell for \$10. They can be purchased from a member of the Heritage Committee, Betty Dean, Nancy Gee, Melba Cordell and Judy Abel, after worship, from Pam in the church office on weekdays or by mail order. If we need to mail them to you, please send \$12. We hope you really enjoy them.

The profit from the sale of the books will be used to print and frame the pictures of all of our ministers, at least all that we have. Do any of you have even a good snapshot of Don Kruithof? We have one likeness but it is not very good.

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**SESSION NEWS**— On March 14 the session held its annual retreat to have a chance to set priorities for the coming year. We had a list of things that we thought were going well in the church, a list of ideas of ways we would like to improve the ministry and mission of First Presbyterian Church and picked the top three for the session and congregation to work on in the upcoming year:

1. Look at Wednesday Night programs: the C.E. committee has done a great job over the past 4 years keeping an active Wednesday evening of education, fellowship and worship. We are now looking at what are ways to improve. Please, if you have ideas or suggestions about the Wednesday evening activities and how we can provide worship, education and fellowship for our church and the community, speak to Pastor Helen or Session committee chairs Susan Russell, Carol Carden and Jeanne Fleming.
2. To balance the budget. We are blessed to have many activities going on in the church and many missions in the community. It continues to be a challenge to search for ways to keep our strong ministry and mission going and to have a balanced budget.
3. Build a port or garage to protect the bus from the weather.

The session is working on these items as well as the regular session responsibilities. Please know that they would welcome any assistance in accomplishing these goals, or other ways that we can improve the Ministry and Mission of First Presbyterian Church.



2nd—Melba Cordell  
 4th—Tom Cordell and Darlene Nolte  
 6th-Dulcinea Wenzel  
 8th-Thelma Carey and Waymeth Cantrell  
 9th-Michelle Bolton  
 12th- Michael Leggett  
 16th-Sarah Mirjanich  
 17th- Ruth Butler  
 18th-Misha Grissom and Jake Gray  
 22nd-Michael Bolton  
 23rd-Sarah Lomax  
 24th- Elia Rendel



**USHERS DUTIES FOR APRIL**

**Ushers**— Victoria Vazquez and Kathy Prince  
**Coffee Host**—Jeraldine Wilcox  
**Communion Preparer:** Janie Clay



# April 2009



| Sun                                                                                                   | Mon | Tue                                                            | Wed                                                                | Thu                                         | Fri                                                                       | Sat                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                      |     |                                                                | 1 5:00-Youth Power<br>5:15-Chime<br>6:00-Kum ba yah<br>7:00-Choir  | 2 7:00-Men's Breakfast                      | 3                                                                         | 4                                                                                     |
| 5 <i>Palm Sunday</i><br>9:30-Sunday School<br>10:00-Choir<br>10:30-Worship/Com.                       | 6   | 7 10:00—Tuesday morning class<br>2:00- Bible Study at Allgoods | 8 5:00-Youth Power<br>5:15-Chime<br>6:00-Kum ba yah<br>7:00-Choir  | 9 <i>Maundy Thursday</i><br>6:00—Seder Meal | Church Office Closed<br>10 <i>Good Friday</i><br>7:30-Good Friday Service | 11                                                                                    |
| 12 <b>Easter</b><br>9:00-Easter Breakfast<br>9:30-Sunday School<br>10:00-Choir<br>10:30-Worship       | 13  | 14 10:00—Tuesday morning class                                 | 15 5:00-Youth Power<br>5:15-Chime<br>6:00-Kum ba yah<br>7:00-Choir | 16                                          | 17                                                                        | 18                                                                                    |
| Loose Offering to Deacons<br>19 9:30-S. School<br>10:00-Choir<br>10:30-Worship<br>3:00- OPC Ankenmans | 20  | 21 10:00—Tuesday morning class<br>7:00- Session mtg.           | 22 5:00-Youth Power<br>5:15-Chime<br>6:00-Kum ba yah<br>7:00-Choir | 23                                          | 24                                                                        | 25                                                                                    |
| 26 9:30-Sunday School<br>10:00-Choir<br>10:30-Worship                                                 | 27  | 28 10:00—Tuesday morning class                                 | 29 5:00-Youth Power<br>5:15-Chime<br>6:00-Kum ba yah<br>7:00-Choir | 30                                          |                                                                           |  |

