

# EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

1 Thessalonians 5:11

*Serving to Encourage and Build Up in Christian Faith*

**Spring/Summer 2013** I've been thinking... about the importance of tradition and traditions, which

On Earl's Calendar

In Seattle

**The Kindlings Muse Podcast\***

(Walker-Ames Room, Kane Hall, UW)

Oct. 7: 7 - 8:30 p.m. – *Water from A Deep Well*

Nov. 4: 7 - 8:30 p.m. – *Journey of a Pessimist to Faith in God*

Dec. 2: 7 - 8:30 p.m. – *Jesus of Nazareth: Who of His Interpreters Do We Trust?*

**Theological Dialogue\***

*The Screwtape Letters* C. S. Lewis

October - March 2013/14

**Understanding Faith and Doubt**

Sammamish Presbyterian Church

October 11-13

For more information visit [spconline.org](http://spconline.org)

Around the Country

**Touchstone of Reality: C.S. Lewis as Friend and Mentor for Today**

New College Berkeley

May 18

For more information visit [newcollegeberkeley.org](http://newcollegeberkeley.org)

**The Marks of Character: II Timothy**

First Presbyterian Church Starkville, Mississippi

June 9-11

Contact: 662-323-1994

**I Know a House: II Corinthians 4 and 5**

Laity Lodge, Texas

June 13-16

Contact: [amjjack@laitylodge.org](mailto:amjjack@laitylodge.org) or 830-792-1230

**St. Paul and the Cities He Loved**

Mt. Hermon Conference Center: Legacy Conference

Aug 19-23

For more information visit [mounthermon.org](http://mounthermon.org)

Oxford, England

**C. S. Lewis Seminar in Oxford, England**

First session: July 6 - 12

Second session: July 14 - 20

For more info call the C. S. Lewis Foundation at 1-888-CSLEWIS (1-888-275-3947)

\*For more info email [info@earlpalmer.org](mailto:info@earlpalmer.org)  
OR visit [earlpalmer.org/events](http://earlpalmer.org/events)

naturally brings up the meaning of past tense/present tense. We all know that one present tense marker of today is an atmosphere of emergence and immediacy because of the possibilities of instant and universal communication. Therefore we rarely write letters or wait for letters. The new letter writing for many is texting, voice messages, and sometimes Facebook or Twitter.

One result of immediacy is that we are able to collect our thoughts quickly as well as the information and thoughts of others. These present tense markers are so real and compelling that it makes me ask if past experiences and discoveries have a role to play on how we think, act and believe today about the way we do things - in our people to people relationships, families, churches, and even in worship. But when an actual moment of deciding about one pathway or another confronts me and those around me, we hesitate, even stumble in deciding about where to put our feet down and what way to go. When that moment happens we realize that we need more than contemporary skills of immediacy. We need more complete clearheadedness skills.

First century writer/pastor, St. Paul, has help for us in a letter he wrote to Christians at Philippi. At the start of that letter he prays to the Living Lord for his friends and his concern is decidedly present tense: "That your love may overflow here and now with the good fruit of righteousness" (Phil. 1:3-11). Paul then prays that they will think clearly: "With knowledge and full insight to determine what is best..." He uses three words to describe this clearheadedness: the first is *ἐπιγινώσκω* (gnosis) the word is intensified with the prefix *ἐπι*, which means "knowledge in every direction," past and present. For Paul there are no advantages to ignorance whether of the past (history) or the present (computer science). Everything we learn is a skill we need at each moment of deciding. His second word is *εἰσθεσιδ* (into thesis). This is the insight word that describes a knowing that seeks out the deeper meanings. It also is a skill of past and present discoveries combined. The third word is sometimes translated "discernment." It is *διαφερω* (diaphero), which in ordinary Greek usage means *common sense*, a skill for the roadway. Paul prays that his friends learn the competence of being streetwise. Put together, these "knowing" words make up the architecture of wisdom.

One more word ties the prayer together and that word is a past tense/present tense word. It is the word *remember*. He begins the whole prayer with that word. We are to remember each other with gratitude and best of all to remember that Jesus Christ is at work in our lives. "He who began a good work in the whole journey of our lives will continue it..."

Paul has helped me answer the question of the continuity of tradition, which is the intentional memory of the learning and discovery of earlier people of faith and added to that the value of immediacy. I need both in every part of my life: in relationships, in the finding of pathways, and in worship, faithful to the Living Lord. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. I remembered these words recently when Shirley and I, en route to an adventure where I was to speak, stopped to visit the first Christian church completed 1540 A.D. established in the Americas. I found these Greek letters - Chi Rho (XP) and Alpha and Omega, meaning Jesus Christ, beginning and end.



At Cathedral de Santa Maria la Menor  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

~Earl F. Palmer

## Confirming My Call to Move Forward



Dexter at Princeton Theological Seminary

shown me the importance of deep and meaningful community. My time with Earl Palmer Ministries has facilitated a fuller understanding of my call to ministry.

This winter I took one class at Fuller Theological Seminary titled “Intro to the New Testament: Gospels and Acts,” with the support and encouragement of Earl Palmer Ministries. The class stimulated my brain and my heart. We had passionate yet gentle conversations about Jesus and what he means for us as the church today. What resonated most deeply with me was Jesus’ ministry to the lost and the marginalized. These discussions helped me focus on Jesus’ calling in my life: to go and love the people on the margins.

As part of my study assistant responsibilities, I am encouraged to be involved in a ministry outside of Earl Palmer Ministries. Beginning last summer my wife, Liz, and I dove into the young adult community at University Presbyterian Church with the hope of seeing people our age get connected to UPC through community. My generation is often on the edges of the church looking for their place in the larger church body. They are fresh out of college and are starting new jobs, sometimes in a new place. It can be a tumultuous time and the thing that draws them to church and keeps them involved is community. So our primary involvement in the ministry to young adults at UPC has been creating and leading two small groups of young adults. Forming these small communities has filled me with deep joy because I had a chance to live out my call within a church that I love. My experience at Fuller has helped affirm my calling. My time at UPC has

-Dexter Kearny, Study Assistant

*This fall, Liz and I will be attending Princeton Theological Seminary to work towards our Masters of Divinity degrees and continue to discern our calls to ministry.*

### Total Help for Total Need

#### *Institutes of the Christian Religion* by John Calvin

Last fall, my initial thought was of perhaps drowning in Calvin’s “Institutes,” a 2+ inch, 1000+ page book published 400+ years ago.

As the Theological Dialogue group, our get-togethers are special times when we gather and discover God’s truths in a new light, invigorated by discussing them with one another. Every year we tackle a different book and author. Relationships have developed around our common interest in the topics.

With the Calvin book, we were treated to Earl’s clear summations of “Institutes,” distilled into easily understood themes. I found myself captivated by the sessions and ended up reading further into sections unassigned, feeling deeply enriched, taking in Calvin’s clear statements of God’s grace and our total depravity.

I’m an amateur yet felt welcomed by the group. As Earl delightfully reminds us: “We are all amateur theologians.”

*Peter Strong, Coastal Transportation, Inc.*

*(Pictured fourth from the left)*



Part of our Theological Dialogue group after a great discussion over cookies and coffee.

### By Request: A Poem by George Herbert

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| When God at first made man,<br>Having a glass of blessings standing by,<br>Let us (said he) pour on him all we can:<br>Let the world’s riches, which dispersed lie;<br>Contract into a span. | So strength first made a way;<br>Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honour, pleasure:<br>When almost all was out, God made a stay,<br>Perceiving that alone of all his treasure<br>Rest in the bottom lay. | Yet let him keep the rest,<br>But keep them with repining restlessness:<br>Let him be rich and wary, that at least,<br>If goodness lead him not, yet weariness<br>May toss him to my breast |
|--|--|---|

George Herbert (1593-1633) was one of the two poets we considered at the Kindlings Muse on March 4, 2013 in our reflections on Holy Week.



**Come join us  
in Kane Hall!**

**The Walker-Ames Room**  
is located on the 2nd floor of Kane  
Hall on the University of  
Washington.

#### **October 7**

Water From a Deep Well: The Importance of Tradition for Today

*Water from A Deep Well* by Jerry Sittser  
*St. Francis of Assisi* by G. K. Chesterton

#### **November 4**

Journey of a Pessimist to Faith in God  
The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot

#### **December 2**

Jesus of Nazareth: Who of His Interpreters Do We Trust?

*Gospel of John: A Commentary* by F. Dale Bruner  
*Faith Seeking Understanding* by David Marshall

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).





Ken Sunoo and Earl at Wallingford Presbyterian Church

## A Friendship Over the Years

I've known Earl Palmer since I was a student at the University of California in the mid-1980's. At the time, Earl was the Senior Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley. He had a profound influence in my decision to enter Princeton Theological Seminary in the fall of 1988.

At Berkeley, I also got to know Shirley Palmer because she led the Summer Ministries program (similar to Deputation at UPC). I was sent to work with Arab World Ministries in Marseilles, France and Morocco, the summer of 1988.

Earl officiated at my wedding in 1992, and when my wife Deb and I were installed as Co-Pastors of Wallingford Presbyterian Church in 1998, Earl preached the sermon at our installation service.

Wallingford Presbyterian Church held its Centennial Celebration on Sunday, February 12, 2013 with a packed sanctuary. It was a truly memorable day as we thanked God for his faithfulness through the years. It was especially meaningful to

me that both Earl and Shirley were able to attend this service, with Earl preaching the sermon.

After 15 years of serving as the Pastor at Wallingford, I have embarked on a new journey of faith this spring. I am now serving as the Co-Executive Director of *Wellspring*, a ministry to help second-generation Asian-American young adults strengthen or reestablish their connections to the Church. *Ken Sunoo is one of the charter members of Earl's Theological Dialogue and the group reader.*

- Rev. Ken Sunoo

### Touchstone of Reality:

#### C.S. Lewis as Friend and Mentor for Today

Earl will travel to Berkeley, CA to speak on the life of C.S. Lewis on May 18. The event will be held in the sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Please register at [newcollegeberkeley.org](http://newcollegeberkeley.org).

### Understanding Faith and Doubt

Join us for a special weekend!

Sammamish Presbyterian Church, October 11-13.

Earl will lead the congregation through a study on the topic of Faith and Doubt.

Please visit [spconline.org](http://spconline.org) for more information.



### The Presbytery of Seattle Service of Ordination



**E. Kurt Heineman  
April 22, 2013**

Kurt chose these words to open the written program: "It is not we who can sustain the Church, nor was it our forefathers, nor will it be our descendants. It was and is and will be the One who says: 'I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' As it says in Hebrews 13: 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.' And in Revelation 1: 'Which was, and is, and is to come.' Verily He is that One, and none other is or can be."

-Karl Barth

Kurt Heineman, our first study assistant at the very beginning of EPM, was ordained as a Presbyterian Minister on April 22nd. He is shown above giving the benediction at the close of the service. Kurt's friends and family and a large delegation of members from the South Minister Church in Des Moines where he now serves, were present for this significant marker in his ministry journey. The text he chose for his ordination service was Matthew 28: 16-20, the great commission and promise of Jesus Christ. For you, Kurt and your wife Katie we claim that good promise of Jesus "remember I am with you always..."

-Earl Palmer



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PO Box 85117  
Seattle, WA 98145

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## Board of Directors

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## Staff

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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 Dexter at [dexter@earlpalmer.org](mailto:dexter@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. EPM's wider ministry focuses primarily on encouraging pastors and giving a case for expositional worship.

Your support makes this ministry happen. As we continue in this fifth 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.

