

EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Serving to Encourage and Build Up in Christian Faith

Fall 2011

On Earl's Calendar*

In Seattle

The Kindlings Muse Podcast*

Oct. 3: 7 - 8:30 p.m. (Upper Gwinn at Seattle Pacific University)

C.S. Lewis in Wartime

Nov. 7: 7 - 8:30 p.m. (Burke Café, UW)

Science and Christian Faith

Dec. 5: 7 - 8:30 p.m.

What About Miracles?

Jan. 9: 7 - 8:30 p.m.

A New Look at Christian Apologetics

Theological Dialogue*

Letters and Papers from Prison by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Oct. 5: 9 - 11 a.m.

Nov. 9: 9 - 11 a.m.

Dec. 7: 9 - 11 a.m.

Telios Dinner

University Presbyterian Church

The Good Legacy from Matthew 20

Sept. 16

SPU Chapel

First Free Methodist Church

Nov. 8: 9:30 a.m.

Around the Country

First Presbyterian of Tacoma*

The Vastness of the Good News: Acts 17

Sept. 18 (Sunday morning worship)

First Presbyterian of Tacoma*

Three-week series on *The Way of Discipleship: Three Studies on Galatians 5*

Sunday adult class

Sept. 18, 25, and Oct. 2

Sammamish Presbyterian Church*

Studies on the Book of Philippians

Oct. 7: 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Oct. 8: 9 a.m. - noon

Oct. 9: 9 and 10:30 (morning worship)

*Contact info@earlpalmer.org for more information on this event, or go to www.earlpalmer.org/calendar.

We regret to inform you that the Conference on Expositional Preaching, scheduled for Oct. 24-27, has been canceled. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

I've been thinking ...

This July in Oxford was a time to reflect on the life and writings of C.S. Lewis, but there were also ten days when I was able to obtain a reading card to the extensive collection of biblical reference works in the Radcliffe Camera library at the University of Oxford. There I committed my time to research on a commentary that I am now writing on Paul's book II Timothy. What a heartwarming and profound book it is! Near the end of the letter the imprisoned Paul wrote to a young friend named Timothy, here are some of his words: "Be sure to bring with you my books that I left at Troas with Carpus, and above all the parchments, also, don't forget to bring my coat. Luke is here with me now, our friend Trophimus is ill at Miletus. I hope Mark can travel with you, do your best to come before winter ..." (II Timothy 4)

There is something about these words that won me over to the man who wrote them, and to his friend Timothy. They are plain, not too religious, practical, and the kind I would expect a friend to write if he knows you well. They happen to be almost the final written words from the first century champion of the Christian faith, and they go to a young man he thought of as a son, a borrowed son. In this final chapter he will also write, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

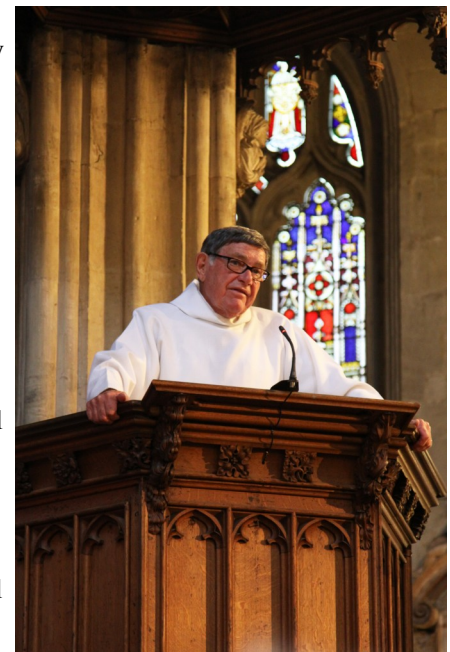
In reading the book they came from, I discover that Paul, who is the mentor to Timothy, becomes a mentor to people of every generation and time because St. Paul is a borrowable friend. All of his letters have this same knowable and personal atmosphere about them. I can see how a reader of Romans might even look at the long list of names in the last chapter for his or her own name.

I am grateful for the connecting that takes place when we read II Timothy and, in fact, the Bible as a whole. We feel included throughout scripture not only because of what we learn about God's truth, love, and faithfulness, but we feel connected to the people of truth and grace, too. As we follow their stories with ups and downs, they themselves become a living part of the whole narrative of law, prophets, songs, gospel records, and NT letters. All of this means that I, as the reader, am invited into a history of real people in real places, which helps me upgrade the importance of my own place and time. I know that people in the story are not really that different than I am, and this makes the Good News they hear - hearable for me, too.

Paul's words become promises that we are invited to claim here and now where we live. He wrote to Timothy: "I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you ... for God did not give us a spirit of fear but a spirit of power and love and a healthy mind. Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner ... you then my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." (II Timothy 1:7-8, 2:1)

I've been thinking this summer about two great writers, C.S. Lewis of Oxford and Paul of Tarsus.

—Earl F. Palmer



Earl Palmer at the Oxford University Church
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John on the Road with Earl ...

C.S. Lewis is truly a giant in the Christian faith and attests to how much good can be accomplished through a life of sincere obedience to the work of the Lord. Lewis thought that through the imagination that has been baptized by the Holy Spirit one may truly seek God, who surely transcends all faculties of reason and logic. Through an imagination that has been sanctified, we, as the body of Christ, can transcend the attendant chaos of this world and live as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. This was the illuminating message at the 2011 Oxbridge conference.

I must admit, the great domes and cobblestone streets of the University of Oxford are quite a place to start a job. I would never have imagined a few months ago that I would stroll around the old haunts of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien (two of my favorite writers) with Earl Palmer for my first post-college job, and yet there I was. It was a good start. The opening worship service was actually my first time hearing Earl preach, and from there I participated in two afternoon seminar sessions that he led. These afternoon teachings on the life and writings of Lewis had a profound and inspiring impact on me. Lewis did not write because he wanted fame; rather he wrote because his imagination longed to speak of God in new ways. As a writer, Lewis had an acute ability to tackle the greatest challenges of humanity in the simplest terms with the most accessible illustrations. As a man, he was utterly devoted to friendship, academic discipline, and above all, Jesus Christ.

Earl communicated the man's greatness in a way that allowed all of us listening to really get inside Lewis's life. The others attending the sessions made for a delightful atmosphere with good questions and conversation. I was a little surprised by how many of these people were very familiar with Earl's work through EPM. Many of them commented on how wonderful The Kindlings Muse has been as a source of both intellectual and spiritual growth in their lives. They all said they appreciate the fact that the podcasts are free, because they are so easy to share with friends.



Earl and John in the Great Hall at Keble College, Oxford

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It brings me great pride to participate in this meaningful work as the fourth study assistant for Earl Palmer Ministries. I graduated last June from Seattle Pacific University with a BA in English, and, put simply, had no clue where I wanted to plant my roots and invest long term. I believe that this year will be a great time of discernment for the next step, while also being an enriching time in and of itself. I look forward to supporting a man who truly champions the message of the Gospel by living the Gospel. Here in Seattle I will also be participating in my own ministry to high school students at First Presbyterian Church of Bellevue. Youth ministry is full of surprises, both joys and sorrows, and I would appreciate your prayers that the Gospel will prevail in the lives of these young people. I am eager to continue benefiting from Earl's mentorship — the vast array of knowledge and insight into ministry — and sincerely thank all followers and supporters of EPM in their partnership to make this possible.

The Kindlings Visits SPU!

The first autumn Kindlings Muse will be held at Upper Gwinn on the SPU campus on Oct. 3 at 7 p.m.. Earl Palmer Ministries is proud to join Dick Staub and Kim Gillnet to consider the book *C.S. Lewis in a Time of War* by Justin Phillips. Lewis presented historic broadcast talks during the Battle of Britain on Right and Wrong, a clue to the meaning of the universe. These talks later became the book *Mere Christianity*. **This is a free event with unlimited attendance, but please register at www.thekindlings.com/events.**



University of Washington
Burke Museum Café

October 3
Seattle Pacific University in Upper Gwinn Commons

C.S. Lewis in Wartime

November 7
Science and Christian Faith: Friends After All
The Language of God, Francis S. Collins
The Two Books Metaphor, Marty Folsom

December 5
What About Miracles?
Miracles, C.S. Lewis
Peace Like a River, Leif Enger

To attend a live event, register at:
www.thekindlings.com/events

Each event is podcast and made available to download at:
www.earlpalmer.org
Under "Resources"

About The Kindlings Muse

Each month The Kindlings Muse @ EPM becomes a podcast, available at www.earlpalmer.org. Thousands of people around the world access these free podcasts for individual devotions on the way to work, small group curriculum, and theological inquiry. It's as simple as the click of a button, and any person—whether a serious believer or a curious inquirer that has never been to church—can learn from these illuminating teachings by Rev. Palmer. Each podcast does cost approximately \$3000 for EPM to produce (personnel, rental space, and recording). Would you or a group of your friends like to sponsor a Kindlings Muse event? If so, mark your contribution "KM Sponsor," and note if you would like acknowledgement of your donation at the event. If you feel led to offer a contribution, see the back page for details. Thanks for your consideration, and remember to tune in every month to The Kindlings Muse @ Earl Palmer Ministries!

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Serving to Encourage and Build Up in Christian Faith

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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.

If you have questions regarding Earl Palmer Ministries and its events, or to schedule an event, visit us at www.earlpalmer.org or e-mail us at 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, e-mail John at john@earlpalmer.org.

Your support makes this ministry happen. As we continue in this fourth 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 at www.earlpalmer.org. On behalf of the EPM team, I thank you.

