

EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Serving to Encourage and Build Up in Christian Faith

Winter 2010

On Earl's Calendar

In Seattle

The Kindlings Muse Podcast

March 1: 7 - 8:30 p.m.

April 13: 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Theological Dialogue

March 2: 9 - 11 a.m.

April 13: 9 - 11 a.m.

In Washington, D.C.

The National Presbyterian Church Sermon Series

*In Faithful Hands: Good News of
the Book of Revelation*

Jan. 17 - April 4

NPC Wednesday Night Series

*Life in the Spirit: The Formation of
Christian Character*

Jan. 13 - March 31

The Kindlings Muse Podcast

Feb. 23: 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Georgetown University

InterVarsity Student Group

Feb. 25: 7:30 p.m.

International Justice Mission Staff

March 11 & 25

Around the Country

Annapolis Chaplains & Faculty

*Retreat C.S. Lewis: The Man and
Christian Mentor*

Annapolis, Maryland - Feb. 26-27

First Presbyterian Church

C.S. Lewis: A Mentor to Christians

Tacoma, Washington - March 3

New College Lectures

Paul's Greatest Letter: Romans

Berkeley, California - May 21-22

Around the World

First Century Voyages: Antarctica

Expedition to the White Continent:

Creation, Jan. 26 - Feb. 8

Asia Lecture Trip

Hong Kong, Beijing, China, Chiang

Mai, Thailand, April 20 - May 6

I've been thinking ... This year has been stretching for me in just about every direction I turn. Preaching at The National Presbyterian Church continues to stretch my mind and heart as I am forced to learn from the Biblical texts and then share the Gospel in this era in which the Christian faith must compete in the public square.

Then, speaking each month for *The Kindlings Muse* at the Burke Museum Café on the University of Washington campus has stretched my mind and challenged me to think about and explore Christian themes in light of writers such as G.K. Chesterton, Alexandr Solhenitsyn, and even Mark Twain. The scope of theological challenge has continued for me as well. A few months ago, I participated in a working conference in New York where pastors, theologians, and scientists endeavored to explain and celebrate how science, with its rigorous curiosity, is a friend rather than a foe of our faith in Jesus Christ.

Over the past several months, I have had a brand new opportunity for stretching with the active engagement and dialogue across lines of faith. Back in Washington, D.C., I meet with the young interfaith (Jewish, Christian, and Muslim) scholars of the Buxton Initiative. These informal meetings have helped me to better understand and respect the historical religious journey of each belief system. I have been encouraged by our discussions.

As I think about my ministry in these years of my life, I remember what I learned when Daniel and I participated in a two-day leadership event with the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust in Vancouver, Washington. There I was reminded of the importance of models in Christian leadership and especially how senior leaders are needed to mentor younger colleagues and share between generations. I pray that I can meet this challenge as I continue to be stretched. *Stretching, yes!* But comforting, too, because of the good people I keep meeting who are becoming my friends in this new season. With 54 years of ministry behind me, I continue to be stretched. And for this I am grateful.

—Earl F. Palmer

Looking Ahead - Oxford, England 2010

A C.S. Lewis event is being planned for friends of Earl Palmer Ministries on Sept. 9-12, 2010, in Oxford, England. During these four days we will explore the life and legacy of C.S. Lewis through lectures and visits to the places familiar to him: his home, church, and university. Information regarding cost for the time together is expected to be available by the end of March. Space is limited to 40 persons with paid reservations by the end of May. If you are interested, contact Daniel at daniel@earlpalmer.org.



FROM THE EPM BOARD

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15

It has been my honor and privilege to serve on the board of Earl Palmer Ministries since its inception in August 2007. In the 20 years I have known Earl, the image of him as pastor, teacher, and friend is best described in Paul's letter to Timothy: a man "who correctly handles the word of truth." Earl has shared his insights from his diligent study of the Bible with churches, classes, and seminars in all parts of the world. It is remarkable for us on the board to stand alongside him in this phase of his life of ministry.

As Earl approaches the completion of his assignment as Preaching Pastor-in-Residence at The National Presbyterian Church, we eagerly anticipate the fulfillment of his vision to conduct classes and seminars to teach and encourage pastors in the principles and practice of expository preaching. Equally important is his and Shirley's intention to work with pastors and their spouses to help them develop balanced lives in the midst of the demands of ministry. We are profoundly grateful to have the opportunity to see God working in the life and ministry of Earl.

—Treasurer Dick Greiling

Questions ... and coffee with Earl

The three fellows at the Buxton Initiative have been meeting with Earl monthly since we started our fellowship this past September. It is a rare opportunity to sit in his living room, drink his perfectly brewed coffee, and ask him virtually any question related to faith. His openness and enthusiasm for teaching has led to many interesting conversations, and he has shown us his nuanced, insightful, and loving interpretation of scripture.



At the Yellow House in Washington, D.C.

As fellows for the Buxton Initiative in Washington, D.C., we work to foster understanding among people of different faiths and worldviews through candid dialogue and authentic relationships. Three recent college graduates of different faiths work together, educate one another on their faith traditions, plan lectures about important contemporary issues regarding our faiths, and work on community outreach efforts.

in relation to Christianity and Judaism, his interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount, and his theological and pragmatic perspective of homosexuality. These topics are challenging – two hours is never enough – especially with the added complication of several faith perspectives.

Our meetings with Earl have enhanced the conversations we have every day about the differences between the Abrahamic faiths. The topics have ranged from the idea of ritual

In September, we were honored at the larger public meeting of the Buxton Initiative for Earl Palmer to share his thoughts on the Holy Trinity, which is a fundamental aspect of Christianity that can be difficult for Christians and non-Christians to grasp. His words were complemented by Suhail Khan, who discussed the Muslim perspective of the Trinity.

—Sarah, Rizwaan & Teryn

George Washington: The Man, The Seasons of His Life Journey, His Greatness as an American Leader

Our history books tell of him as a courageous soldier and our nation's first president, but what was it about George Washington that made him great? Why was he such a strong leader, and what do we know about his faith journey? Listen via podcast at www.earlpalmer.org as Earl and Dick Staub discuss in our nation's capital what it was about George Washington that set him apart in a time of need.



University of Washington
Burke Museum Café

February 23 (In Washington, D.C.)

George Washington
His Excellency, Joseph J. Ellis
George Washington's Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior

March 1

Dorothy Sayers: *The Whimsical Christian*
Christian Letters to a post-Christian World,
Dorothy Sayers

April 13

C.S. Lewis and the Meaning of Prayer
Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer, C.S. Lewis

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

Each event is podcast and made available to download at:
www.earlpalmer.org
OR
www.thekindlings.com
(search: Earl Palmer Ministries)

Daniel on the Road ... and at Home with Earl

It's been an exciting year partnering with Earl in ministry. Traveling with Earl has been a huge highlight and growing experience for me. What I've noticed about this job is that even when I'm not physically with Earl, I'm still learning more about him and about theology in general. I'm in Seattle most of the time, and two of my projects include editing Earl's sermons from NPC along with uploading Earl's old sermons from his Berkeley days in the 1970s and 1980s onto our Web site (it's true - log on and you'll find them on our sermon player). In these tasks, I've had the chance to really go in depth and think critically about each scripture from many of his sermons. I've enjoyed hearing Earl's clear passion for the Word and, as Paul says in I Corinthians 13:13, hear Earl continue to focus throughout the years on the faith, hope, and love we have through Jesus Christ.



After some fun and games with my Bible study

Another highlight of mine has been my freshmen boys Bible study through the high school group at University Presbyterian Church. I'm having a great time getting to know them as we work through various parables in the New Testament. I'm especially looking forward to deepening these relationships through a mission trip to Los Angeles that I have the privilege of joining them on later this month.

A Scent of Water

God must be sure of himself
because where I live
there are few fences
to surround and gather in people like me

And so we choose our own way to go
following ideas in our own heads
But where the way arrives we're not sure
And when the air dries out
Water that tastes good is not easy to find

Just in time
the scent of an early rain
and its stream
invites all who are thirsty
to come and drink and to stay awhile.

When I look back
I'm sure
the water is what made the difference -
And it was not a moment too soon for me.
God must be very sure of himself and the scent of water.

Earl Palmer, UPC Pastor Emeritus, was privileged to give the sermon at UPC on Jan. 3, 2010. The main text for that Sunday was Ephesians 1:3-10: "God destined us in love to be his sons and daughters through Jesus Christ." The Old Testament text was **Job 14:7-9** ("Even a fallen tree will put forth shoots at the scent of water"), which inspired Earl's most recent poem at left that he also shared. The sermon explored how Jesus Christ draws men and women to Himself from wherever we are in our life journeys.

Follow Earl's Sermon Series at NPC
"In Faithful Hands: The Good News of
the Book of Revelation" by logging on at:
www.earlpalmer.org
or
www.natpresch.org

Just Off the Press ... Palmer, Earl F., "Time" in *The Presbyterian Outlook*, Nov. 23, 2009, page 23.

Our Lord did not want his disciples to speculate about the timing of the boundary either of their own lives or of history itself. When we think it over, we realize that this exhortation is wise and realistic advice in our favor. *Keep awake therefore, for you do not know what day your Lord is coming... Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.* Matthew 24:42,44. The discipleship teaching throughout the New Testament is clear; we are to live in obedience to the Gospel as present tense Christians wide awake and carrying on the ministry that God has given us to do, leaving the time boundaries in His hands. We should not worry about shortness of time issues nor about the time it takes to invest the gifts of God's love and faithfulness in the lives of people here and now. There is time, and time is on our side because we work and live within the hours, days, weeks and years that belong to the Lord of time ... St. Augustine put time in its right place: "O God who art ever at work and ever at rest may we be ever at work and ever at rest." Because of Christ we are not a people of timetables or charts or predictions but a people of relationships with God and with each other. We leave the future in God's hands. We might as well because the future is in His hands whether we leave it there or not.

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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 Daniel at daniel@earlpalmer.org.

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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. Presently, EPM's wider ministry focuses primarily on Earl's post as Preaching Pastor-in-Residence with The National Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C.

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

