

Earl Palmer Ministries  
 PO Box 85117  
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# EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

1 Thessalonians 5:11

*Serving to Encourage and Build Up in Christian Faith*

www.earlpalmer.org

Winter 2009

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1 Thessalonians 5:11

*Serving to Encourage and Build Up in Christian Faith*

## Board of Directors

Scott Hardman, Chair  
 Richard Greiling, Treasurer  
 Frank Haas  
 Susan Hutchison  
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## Mission Statement

Our mission statement for EPM comes from 1 Thessalonians 5:11: "Serving to encourage and build up in Christian faith." These words from the Apostle Paul are the guideline for our mandate as we seek to share the Good News of Jesus Christ here in Seattle and in the places where the Lord guides us.

Your prayer for this ministry is greatly appreciated. Thank you to those of you who have made a donation. Anyone who would like to make a tax-deductible donation to EPM may send a check to Earl Palmer Ministries, PO Box 85117, Seattle, WA 98145-1117. Checks can be made out to Earl Palmer Ministries. If you would like to donate electronically, you can do so on our Web page at, www.earlpalmer.org.

If you have any questions regarding Earl Palmer Ministries and its events, or to schedule an event, please visit www.earlpalmer.org or send an e-mail to info@earlpalmer.org. If you know of others who would enjoy receiving this newsletter or if you prefer not to receive this mailing, please respond accordingly by e-mailing kurt@earlpalmer.org

## On Earl's Calendar

### In Seattle

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

January 5: 7-9 p.m.  
 February 2: 7-9 p.m.  
 March 2: 7-9 p.m.

#### **Theological Dialogues**

January 6: 9-11 a.m.  
 February 3: 9-11 a.m.  
 March 3: 9-11 a.m.

### In Washington, D.C.

#### **National Presbyterian Church Sermon**

**Series:** St. Paul and His Friends/The Early Christians and the Cities They Loved  
 January 11, 18, 25  
 February 1, 8, 15  
 March 1

#### **C. S. Lewis Institute and National Presbyterian Church** jointly sponsor five evenings of lectures and readings titled

"Caught Off Guard: The Life and Writings of C. S. Lewis."  
 January 14, 21, 28  
 February 11, 18

### And Also...

February 21, 22: **Welch Lectures**, Tulsa, Oklahoma  
 March 6, 7, 8: **Laymen's Leadership Forum** in Naples, Florida

## A New Era of Ministry

Earl often said that he didn't believe in retirement. Some of us heard that. So, with the announcement by Earl that he planned to leave his post as senior pastor of University Presbyterian Church two years ago, a group of people came together with a vision for extending his ministry beyond his official "retirement." Work began at that time to form Earl Palmer Ministries. Over time, EPM became official with the establishment of a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization to provide guidance and support for this vision. A statement of purpose set the direction as follows.

Earl Palmer Ministries exists for the encouragement of theological and biblical wholeness among Christian laity and pastors. It seeks to model faith, love and hope, and biblically centered loyalty to Jesus Christ as the starting place of all that we seek to be and do so that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is advanced. The inspiration for this model is the successful wider ministry of John Stott after his retirement as Rector of All Soul's Episcopal Church in London.

A Board of Directors was created with Scott Hardman, Chair; Richard Greiling, Treasurer; and Frank Haas, Susan Hutchison, Gordon Stephenson, and Tony Whatley as members. For the near future, the board has arranged for office space at Talaris Center, near the University of Washington.

*Continued on page 3*

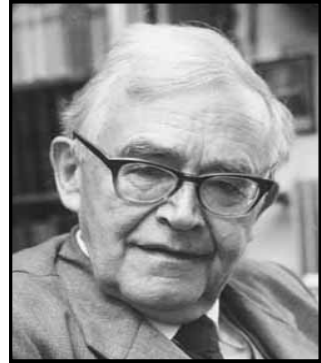
**I have been thinking about ...** St. Paul's words in I Thessalonians 5:11, "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up as you are doing." But, how do we encourage and build up? We have to begin with the very goodness of God's love and faithfulness that we have been given to share. That grace and truth has within it the power to build up, to encourage, and to give hope as we experience the Lord's presence in each of our own lives. Thank God, it is this Gospel of Jesus Christ that enables us to be encouragers of people in the places where we live, whether in the Washington by Mt. Rainier or the Washington called D.C. by the Potomac River.

Shirley and I have been finding that this goodness at the core of our faith has a durable and winsome significance about it that people welcome and respect when they see it. This exciting relevance has made these past months joyous and challenging for our life in the two Washingtons. In both places, the people we have met have been as encouraging to us as I hope we have been to them.

—Earl F. Palmer

## From a Young UW Scientist

If Earl Palmer had never become a pastor, he could have easily made a career out of literary criticism. Once a month, The Kindlings Muse invites intellectuals to gather at the elegant Burke Museum Café at the University of Washington to listen to Earl's reflections on Christian literature. From Blaise Pascal to C. S. Lewis to William P. Young, we get to hear Earl's insights on the writings and personal lives of influential Christian writers.



Karl Barth, 20th century theologian, the focus of Earl's Theological Dialogue that takes place once a month for pastors and laity in Seattle.

One of the more memorable discussions centered on the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Earl related to us Bonhoeffer's heroic break with Nazi Germany and his subsequent (and unjust) imprisonment, leading to a collection of writings known as *Letters and Papers from Prison*, which include some of Bonhoeffer's most poignant insights on Christian faith.

While The Kindlings Muse event offers us the chance to listen to Earl, the Theological Dialogue offers us the opportunity to interact with him one-on-one. I have been blessed and honored to be invited to a monthly group discussion of Karl Barth's book *Dogmatics in Outline*—a group consisting of other pastors, theologians, and somehow ... me! (I am working on my Ph.D. in microbiology at the University of Washington, so Earl refers to me as the "scientific theologian.") Again, Earl's insight and knowledge of Karl Barth has not only shed light upon Barth's teachings, but it has revealed to us the underpinnings of Earl's own personal theology. Listening to and exchanging ideas with other intellectuals about Christian theology—and getting to know Earl better personally—has been a truly rewarding experience.

I can honestly say that The Kindlings Muse event and the Theological Dialogue are two things I look forward to every single month. From day one, Earl Palmer Ministries has been a tremendous blessing in my life.

Alex Berezow

**The Kindlings Muse** is a live audience conversation between Earl and Dick Staub that is recorded and then made available by podcast. The program takes place on the first Monday of every month at the Burke Museum Café and is open to the public. To join the live audience, you need to register: Put the words "Palmer Registration" in the subject line of your e-mail addressed to: [reservations@thekindlings.com](mailto:reservations@thekindlings.com). Include 1) the name and date of the event for which you are registering, and 2) your name and number of guests along with your e-mail address. **Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and each program begins at 7 p.m.**



**January 5: How Does Forgiveness Work?** Books to read: *The Forgiveness of Sins* by Charles Williams, and *Dogmatics in Outline, chapter 23*, by Karl Barth.

**February 2: A Novelist as a Biblical Interpreter.** Books to read: *Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt*, and *Christ the Lord: The Road to Cana*, by Anne Rice

**March 2: Christ and Culture: The Christian Inside or Outside.** Books to read: *The Culturally Savvy Christian* by Dick Staub, and *Christ and Culture* by H. Richard Niebuhr

## Just Off the Press ...

Palmer, Earl F., "The Church in a Windy Place" in *The Presbyterian Outlook*, Nov. 17, 2008. Page 27.

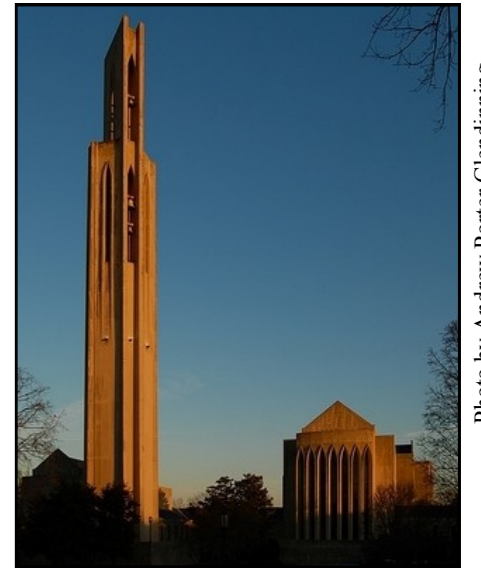
"...we need to remember that the Christian church itself is a mission field. The turbulent line of history goes through the church and therefore we should not be surprised, nor should we become disoriented, by the fact that every cultural wind and advocacy of society as a whole is a challenging reality in the daily life of the Christian Church. Our tasks are to stay faithful to the Biblical witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, to listen to all who bring their concerns and hurts with them, to share the hope in Christ that is greater than we are and is by God's grace able to integrate the parts of our lives that sometimes seem to us to be fragments. Jesus is the Redeemer who heals brokenness and who draws us together in his forever family. ... since the Gospel can be affirmed in the local church, then why should I leave this windy place for another windy place?"

## EPM to Washington, D.C.

As of Nov. 2, 2008, Earl has been the Preaching Pastor-in-Residence at National Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C. In fulfilling the mandate of Earl Palmer Ministries, he has committed to serve in this historic position/post until mid-June 2009. With a legacy of 200 years of outreach to those who live and work in the nation's capital, Earl calls the congregation of this church a "warm-hearted and deeply committed company of believers." He also comments that he "feels privileged to serve with a superb team of pastoral associates who have added to the joy of this ministerial call."

Living a bicoastal life is a challenge for Earl and Shirley. Earl spends most of his time in Washington, D.C., where he not only preaches on Sundays but teaches at most of the mid-week Wednesday church events/services. He crosses the country each month for EPM events The Kindlings Muse and the Theological Dialogues held in Seattle, Washington.

(Earl's NPC sermons can be accessed through [www.earlpalmer.org](http://www.earlpalmer.org) by selecting National Presbyterian Church.)



The National Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C.

Photo by Andrew Porter Glendinning

## Kurt on the Road with Earl



Earl and Kurt at Laity Lodge Leadership Retreat near San Antonio, Texas. October 26, 2008.

One of the more remarkable experiences of my life has been this great new opportunity to work as Earl's study assistant. As such, I travel with Earl, edit various publications, and act as editor of this newsletter. This fall I traveled with Earl to various locations where he was a guest speaker: Princeton Theological Seminary, Laity Lodge (the picture to the left), and Denver Seminary. As a prospective seminarian, these trips are quite influential in my knowledge of Christ and learning about how to communicate the Gospel. As all of you know, Earl is an incredible preacher, and I couldn't imagine a better teacher and mentor. Although profound moments occur frequently during our travels, some of the most memorable times spent with Earl are when we are simply sharing a meal and talking about nothing in particular. I wake up each morning remembering how blessed I am to have this job and am often reminded of Earl's first sermon at NPC on Nov. 11, 2008, where he referred to the Sermon on the Mount: "A career is a wonderful house but not a good foundation. The church is a wonderful house, that's what we call the house of the Lord, not a foundation. Jesus Christ is the foundation." My involvement with EPM thus far constantly reminds me that Jesus is the foundation.

## A New Era ...

Since Earl had committed to stay at UPC until his successor was called and an overlap of two weeks occurred, EPM was in a waiting phase. This timeline was finalized on October 19 when Earl preached his final sermon at UPC. Then EPM was launched.

In these pages you will get a feel for the activity that has generated from this initial vision. To help facilitate that vision, a study assistant, Kurt Heineman, and an administrative assistant, Nancy Holder, were hired. And in Earl's words: As for me, I expect to engage in active ministry as the Lord leads. My vision is 1) to support/encourage pastors individually in their calling and mentor seminarians as they prepare for ministry; 2) to provide a regular forum on contemporary discipleship themes open to university students and others who are interested; 3) to come alongside established ministries locally, nationally, and internationally in a teaching role as opportunities arise/invited; and 4) to continue, personally, in my commitment to the ministry of writing that communicates the Christian faith.

Scott Hardman, Chair of Earl Palmer Ministries