

EARL PALMER MINISTRIES

serving to encourage and build up faith in Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Winter/Spring 2019

I've been thinking ... Joy

Words always catch my attention. One is the Greek word *chara* - joy that appears throughout the New Testament. The literal meaning of *chara* is surprise or merriment. *Chara* became and continues to be a favored word in modern Greece. Even today a person in Athens will often answer the phone with the word "chara." It is a rejoice word that becomes the source for another word, *charis*, meaning grace. Grace is the good surprise of God's love. The love we did not earn but comes with joy. Grace has the surprise of joy within it. Two other words originate from *chara*: *eucharist* for expressing thanks and *charismata* for gift. We see from this the active role of joy in the Biblical scheme of things.

Joy and grace are friendly and favorite words for St. Paul who makes use of joyful grace and agape love together. He writes, "God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). A few sentences later he describes the energetic and expansive power of God's love with the word *grace*. Paul faces up to the threatening reality of evil with its own energy, even with a power that cumulates. He states, "But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Romans 5:20). This abounding increase of grace is the source of joy.

There is cumulative power in grace, the power that can overcome evil as it heals and sets us free. This is the amazing grace that a once ruthless slave ship captain, John Newton (1775-1807), wrote about when he surrendered to the grace and forgiveness of Jesus Christ. In Newton's words, "Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me ... 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved ... and grace will lead me home." This hymn has reverberated through the ages. It speaks to the forgiving love that is able to resolve and heal brokenness.

Joy expresses the self-discovery of one's belovedness. Jesus combined the goodness of grace with the clearness of truth in Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7, 8). Jesus offers water to the people with the invitation "Let anyone who thirsts come to me." (John 7:37) Following this generous promise, in a cruel temptation incident, religious opponents of Jesus accused him as an unfaithful teacher of the Law of Moses. A woman is brought to Jesus and charged with immorality. The crowd is prepared to stone her. They demand to hear judgment words from Jesus and shout, "What do you say?" Jesus will not condemn the woman and remains silent. The crowd melted away and the woman is left alone with the Lord. She experienced forgiveness and our Lord's call to follow the way of righteousness. Following that event, Jesus spoke these words: "I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.... Then you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:12-31). Here we see grace and truth united together. The truth of God's love is revealed in forgiveness and joy comes with the promise of new life.

In *Screwtape Letters*, C.S. Lewis offers a definition of joy with the negative pronouncements of the devilish tempter, Screwtape. Screwtape is alarmed by joy. He describes joy as a "meaningless acceleration in the rhythm of celestial experience quite opaque to us" (Chap. 11). Screwtape is opposed to joy and even the fun experiences of people at play that is closely related to joy because he asserts "it has wholly undesirable tendencies; it promotes charity, courage, contentment, and many other evils" (Chap. 11). For us to understand Lewis's view in *Screwtape Letters*, we need to reverse Screwtape's language. This translates then into a new definition by Lewis: **Joy is a meaningful acceleration in the rhythm of our relationship with God.** Joy has truth in it and energy for sure. Screwtape knew this and feared the acceleration. But not C.S. Lewis. He titled his autobiography *Surprised by Joy*.



(L-R) Keith Black, Don Baird, Gary Nunnelee, Bob Monson, Sue Black. Surprise visit from student ministry! (1956-1964) Friends gathered at First Presbyterian Church Tacoma to hear Earl's sermon.

Seattle

Palmer House Opening

University Presbyterian Church
January 13 following services

The C.S. Lewis Institute Fellows

Lecture in Calvin Lounge at UPC
Feb 9, 2019 10:00 am -11:30 am

U-Ministries Bible Studies

The Greatest Commandment

Matthew 22:34

Jan. 30, Feb. 13, 20, 27 (Mornings)

Covenant Shores Lectures

Witness to Truth and Grace

C.S. Lewis and Dorothy Sayers

March 18, 25 (Evenings)

Word and Worship

The Meanings of Joy

Henry Chapel, The Highlands

March 21, April 18, May 16

7:30 - 8:30 pm

Worship Services

The Promise of God's Love May 19

The Wideness of God's Love May 26

University Presbyterian Church

8:45, 10, 11:30 am and 5:00 pm

Around the Country

New College Berkeley Lectures

Three Studies in Ephesians

First Presbyterian Church

Berkeley

March 9 - 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Worship Services

The Greatest Parable Luke 15

Services at First Presbyterian

Church of Berkeley

March 10, 9:00 and 11:30 am

C. S. Lewis Seminar in

Oxford, England

First session: July 6 - 12

Second session: July 14 - 20

For more info see article below or

call the C. S. Lewis Foundation at

(909) 389-1155

Watch for details at
www.earlpalmer.org
info@earlpalmer.org

- Earl F. Palmer



SPRING 2019
Meanings of Joy

March 21

Whole World in his hands
Ephesians Chapters 1 and 2

April 18

Unforgettable Prayer
Ephesians Chapter 3

May 16

Whole Armor of God
Ephesians Chapter 6

Word and Worship Team: Sue Nixon, Walt Wagner, Heather Whitney, Dale Roth, Brian Coon, and Kay Browleit

Sue Nixon: The Person and the Vision behind Word and Worship

How did you first become connected with Earl Palmer Ministries?

I started going to UPC and sang with the evening worship team when Earl was there. It was a joy to be a part of the services.

What do you love about Word and Worship?

The key is that it's not trying to be anything; it's not church, it is simply what it is. I love the people, and everyone involved comes together to make something special. It's such a joy. Worship for me happens when I carve out the time and come to the space feeling generous and grateful.

How did it begin?

When Earl was leaving UPC, we all marveled at how special the season was and wondered how we could continue a small version of that time together.

What are you looking forward to about this year's Word and Worship?

The time between the sessions makes it sustainable and fresh. We come back together energized and open to what it will become. No doubt Earl will surprise and delight!

How did you choose Henry Chapel for the service?

I liked the setting and the acoustics, and we are grateful to Bruce Hosford, who has made it possible for us to be there. Bruce is such a generous spirit, an integral part of so many good things happening. We pray for him in his health crisis, and that the same generous spirit will hold him and nurture him. He's very humble and has a ripple effect on those around him.

Interview by Tate Busby

Congratulations to Earl and Shirley who enjoyed their 60th wedding anniversary by celebrating with family in Antigua after Christmas and into the New Year!

The Palmer House is Open!

On January 13th the Palmer House was open for members and friends to visit after the morning worship services. A formal dedication ceremony will be held later in February (by invitation for those involved in the project) when Earl and Shirley will be honored. Next up, Earl will be meeting with the University Ministry interns for a weekly Bible study on *The Greatest Commandment*.



Ryan Church (Former director of University Ministries) and Earl at the open house

May 19 & 26: Earl will be preaching at University Presbyterian Church on Romans 4-5

Earl wants you to know about Kim Gilnett. Together with Earl, he has played a major role in bringing people to The Kilns and teaching people about C.S. Lewis over the past years. Kim is a man of many talents and deep faith, qualities he brings into everything he does. He is the senior admissions advisor at Seattle Pacific University, along with marketing associate and involvement in the Fine Arts Department.

Kim Gilnett: A Man Who Makes C.S. Lewis Understandable

What sparked your interest in CS Lewis in the first place?

I became a Christian in 9th grade after attending the American Baptist Church in Longview, Washington. I knew very little about Christianity at the time. In our fellowship room, I found a copy of Lewis's *Mere Christianity*. That book along with the Bible taught me the Christian faith.

What has been your involvement with The Kilns over the years?

I first visited The Kilns in 1985 and received a personal tour from Walter Hooper, Lewis' secretary. In 1993, I was invited by the CS Lewis Foundation to be a staff member for the restoration of The Kilns. Over the next nine years, we worked with volunteers to refurbish the home. I have been back every summer since 1993.

How might you assess the experience people have over their one-week event at the Kilns each summer?

It is a unique program. We walk in the footsteps of Lewis and Tolkien. All of our classes are taught at The Kilns. We worship at Holy Trinity Church, Lewis's parish church. We share several lunches and dinners in Lewis and Tolkien's local pubs. We spend a day in Lewis's Cambridge. It is a rich week of fellowship.

What are the key messages you hear when you read about Lewis and his works?

One of the things Lewis has taught me is the sacred nature of every human being.

Why do you think we need to hear from Lewis in our contemporary world? How is Lewis relevant today?

C.S. Lewis is an incredibly gifted writer. He shares essential Christianity for the common person. We have thousands of visitors to The Kilns every year. I love giving tours of his home because I am honored to personally hear how he has touched so many lives.

Interview by Tate Busby



(L-R) 2018 C.S. Lewis Seminar attendees: Jeff Booth (6th Grade teacher/Shoreline School District) Drew Palmer (freshman UC Berkeley, Earl's grandson), and Kim Gilnett

C. S. Lewis Seminar in Oxford, England: Session 1, July 6 - 12; Session 2, July 14 - 20.

Register on the C.S. Lewis Foundation Website:

www.cslewis.org/event/2018-c-s-lewis-summer-seminars/registration/

Melissa Ries Joins the Earl Palmer Ministries Board

The Earl Palmer Ministries Board welcomes Melissa Reis as a new board member. A St. Louis native, Melissa moved here in 1980 with her husband, Pat Kennedy. Together, Melissa and Pat have four boys, live in Madison Park, and attend St. Joseph Catholic Church. As I listened to Melissa share about her life, I learned that she has a charitable spirit. She grew up learning how to serve others from her parents. The entire Reis family has been on many service trips to Guatemala, giving help to a rural underserved community. Melissa's work on many nonprofit boards, including Full Life Center and Jubilee Women's Center as president, is indicative of her compassion for others. Her initial contact with EPM was on a trip to Israel that Chairman Tony Whatley organized. I asked Melissa what influenced her decision to join the board. "I love listening to Earl," she said. "He is knowledgeable and humble, and the way he relates to people is a gift."

Interview by Tate Busby



Fall 2018 Kindlings Muse with Dick Staub and Earl Palmer

A First Century Book for Our 21st Century

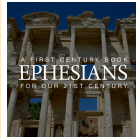
Having taught in Ephesus for at least three years, Paul writes this letter to people he knows well. At its heart the letter is an affirmation of the transforming power of the love of God—its height, width, length, and depth. Join us in this New College Berkeley class on Ephesians. We will explore the text of Paul's letter as well as the book of Acts' narratives about his experiences in this city. Earl looks forward to the time together inside this first century book.

***Note Date and Topic Change!**

Saturday, March 9, 2019, 9am-3pm

First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley

Register at newcollegeberkeley.org/register-now



Update: The Earl Palmer Collection at PTS



Earl with Kenneth Henke (Special Collections director) in the PTS Library climate-controlled archival vault.

The Earl Palmer Collection in digitized format is in its final stages of completion, as the last of the documents are formatted to be in the Princeton Theological Seminary Library. All content will be available to the public for free: sermons, podcasts and writings amounting to more than 3500 files. Many of the physical documents and records will be stored in a climate-controlled vault below the library, for use by scholars, alongside the work of other great theologians such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Karl Barth. All of the documents will be scanned, digitized, and stored safely on PTS servers. Earl will continue to add work to the repository as he continues his ministry, and those works will also be made available. The PTS Library staff has been a phenomenal task force over this long process, and we can't thank the many individuals enough. As we look back on the opportunities we've had through Earl Palmer Ministries, we also look forward to the future of Earl's Legacy through the archival of his work from over 60 years of ministry.



Chip Dobbs-Allsopp (James Lenox librarian) and Evelyn Frangakis (managing director) with Earl at the PTS Library

On the Road with Earl

Princeton Theological Seminary and President Craig Barnes were so generous in inviting Earl and me to the President's Forum on campus in November. We took advantage of the opportunity, and also decided to schedule some other meetings while we were in town. Earl and I departed with three objectives. First, to attend President Craig Barnes' "Presidential Forum." Second, to correspond with the Librarians of PTS concerning The Earl Palmer Collection, and thank them for all they have done on the project. And third, to meet about the final steps in the completion of The Earl Palmer Collection at PTS. Earl and I arrived and had a fantastic tour of the Library given by the PTSL Special Collections Curator, Kenneth Henke.

Michael Gerson (Former White House Chief Policy Advisor and Washington Post columnist) gave a compelling lecture on the dangers of tribalism in America and how the church should model justice and love in culture today. Directly after, a dinner was held at President Barnes' house, where I was also lucky enough to meet other attendees of the forum. The opportunity to make these connections was priceless, and I am so grateful to see first-hand all of the amazing things these Christian leaders are doing across the world and in their communities. We cherished the history of the wonderful town. I enjoyed every moment reminiscing with Earl about his time living there.

-Tate



Earl, and Tate with Michael Gerson at the home of President Barnes.

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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 or email 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, email Tate at info@earlpalmer.org.

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 theological dialogues. Live podcasts through The Kindlings Muse offer regular teaching and conversation for all ages to consider major Christian themes. Word and Worship provides a setting for expositional teaching of the Bible and inspirational music. EPM's wider ministry focuses on encouraging pastors and giving a case for expositional worship.

Your support makes this ministry happen. As we continue in this eleventh year of ministry, we invite you to share in this outreach again with your prayers and your financial investment. To make a tax deductible contribute, please send a check made out to Earl Palmer Ministries, PO Box 85117, Seattle, WA 98145, or via PayPal electronically or by credit card at www.earlpalmer.org.

On behalf of the EPM team, I thank you. *Earl F. Palmer*