



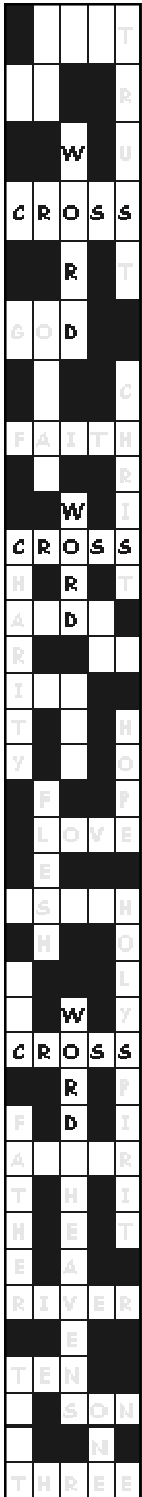
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THE NEWSLETTER OF NORCROSS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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APRIL 2006

Norcross, Georgia



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Matt's Musings

Holy week is one of the most sacred weeks of the church year. It is a time of contemplative reflection, meditation, and prayer. It is a time of grief. It is a time of joy. It is a time of preparation. It is a time of revelation.

Holy week is one of the most sacred weeks of the church year. It begins on Palm Sunday, this year 9 April. This year NPC has something unique, special,

and something I think you will remember for years to come in store for you on Palm Sunday. The choir has been preparing a Passion Music Presentation. At the same time, Tanya and some willing actors and actresses have been preparing a series of monologues from some of the key players in the Passion event. The Drama and the Music will be integrated and presented during our Celebration of Worship on Palm Sunday. It promises to be a very meaningful event.

On Wednesday, we will gather again for supper and have our first VBS planning meeting. We will also be stuffing eggs for the Easter Egg hunt, which we will do before and after the meeting. It is a time of preparation in more ways than one.

Holy week is one of the most sacred weeks of the church year. On Maundy Thursday, we will do something new this year. We will meet as usual at the church at 7.00 P.M. We will worship. We will celebrate the Lord's Supper, as is our custom. It will be a serious, somber evening. We will strip the nave, which is the term for taking away the things that make the sanctuary look beautiful. Then, for those that want to stay, we will have a foot-washing to end the service. We do this on Maundy Thursday because this is the night Jesus washed the disciples' feet. The reason we will do it at the end of the service is because we know that some of you, just by reading this, are already nervous. You don't have to stay for the foot-washing. You are invited to, even if it makes you uncomfortable. Uncomfortable goes with the week. But you are welcome to come for the service and leave before the foot-washing, if that is what you want.

Good Friday will find us back at 7.00 P.M. for another quiet service. We will read and meditate on the death of Christ. Holy week is one of the most sacred weeks of the church year.

And on Easter Sunday, we will celebrate resurrection. We will begin, as we have, with a casserole brunch. Come anytime after 9.00 A.M. with something for breakfast in tow. No Sunday School on Easter, just food, fun, and fellowship. Worship will begin with Contemporary elements at 10.30, as usual. At 11.00, we will move into our Traditional elements of worship, including communion.

I hope you will find Holy week experiences filled with contemplative reflection, meditation, prayer, grief, joy, preparation, and revelation.



NORCROSS Presbyterian Church

Be Well,

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus.
- I Corinthians 1:4 (NRSV)



Easter Flowers!



This year, flowers for the Easter Cross will be handled a little differently. The “Ladder” Cross will be placed in its usual spot Easter morning, however, instead of collecting money at church and then buying flowers for you to take home, I would like for *you* to purchase the flowers and bring them to the cross. Your gift of plants will be donated to the church, and planted on the church grounds. If your plant is dedicated in memory of someone or something, it will be noted on a card and placed in the plant while it is displayed on the cross. Think of the fun you and your family will have selecting just the perfect flower to represent your loved one and to grace God’s house!

Plants that would work well as additions to the landscape at church may or may not be in bloom, but can still be purchased. Carol MacGregor has proposed the following: azaleas, hydrangea, late daffodils, chrysanthemum, shasta daisies, daylilies or other lilies are appropriate.

We also need more butterfly bush.

Please consider participating in this Easter Gift to God’s House!

Thanks,
Tanya Carroll



Easter Brunch



Join church families and friends for Easter Brunch on Easter morning. Serving from 9:15 and continuing until worship time. Bring a favorite breakfast dish to share. Come early, in between, or late, but come as we celebrate our Risen Lord and fellowship together on this most special of mornings. Questions?

*Please contact
Carol MacGregor at (770) 840-9250.*



Annual Easter Egg Hunt to be held Easter Morning following worship!



The Easter Egg Hunt will be held in the church front yard on Easter Morning following the worship service. All children from toddlers through 5th grade are welcome. So bring a friend to Easter Services and don't forget you Easter baskets!

Donations of individually wrapped candy are needed again this year (please, no chocolate). A donation basket is available in the narthex. On Wednesday, April 12th following dinner, we will stuff the eggs.

Everyone always enjoys this activity, so both youth and adults are invited to come and help get the eggs ready for the big hunt.



NPC Annual Fish Fry
Saturday, April 29, 2006
4:00pm



Returning for the second year - our own live Dixieland Band, NPFFPB (Norcross Presbyterian Fish Fry Preservation Band).

Tickets: on sale Sundays and Wednesdays beginning Sunday April 2nd;
\$ 8 per adult (12 and up),
\$ 5 per child (ages 6 – 11, 5 and under free)
\$30 family cap.

Please purchase tickets early and no later than Sunday April 23rd, so that the cooks can order the right amount of food! Note that after April 23rd, ticket prices will increase to \$10 adult and \$6 child and family discounts will no longer be available.

The 2006 Fish Fry menu includes the following:

- Fried Catfish
- Fried Chicken Nuggets (please indicate when buying ticket)
- Hush Puppies
- Red Beans and Rice
- Corn on the Cob
- Cole Slaw
- Dessert (bring some to share)
- Cold Drinks, Water, Lemonade

Note that due to increasing costs, boiled crawfish are not part of the 2006 menu; we do hope to bring this item back to a fish fry in the future.

Outdoor games are scheduled to begin at 4:00 while the food is cooking! Eating begins at 5:00. The NPFFPB will provide music while food is served and may play after dinner (perhaps with a little encouragement!?!).

If you would like to help with this big event, please contact Larry Fluehr or Diane Lewis. Cooks, kitchen helpers and setup crew are still needed! Everyone is asked to bring a dessert to share. Marc Karasek will lead the cooking team and Ken Birmingham will coordinate band rehearsals. Thanks also to the Men's Group for signing up for a cleanup day in April for the pavillion area and walkways behind the church.

Presbyterian Women

**by
Carol MacGregor**

April is retreat month for Presbyterian Women in Georgia. There are two to choose from! The 2006 Rock Eagle Spring Retreat is April 21-23. Linda Morningstar will lead in considering "Pattern and Rhythms: Receiving the gift of Order in Chaos." The weekend includes some new and different workshops. Callaway Gardens is the site for the 2006 Spiritual Spring Retreat of women in Greater Atlanta Presbytery on April 29 and 30. The leaders and workshop choices are very inviting as well as the setting of Callaway Gardens. Full information and registration forms are posted on the "PW" bulletin board in the church corridor, or you may call Carol MacGregor at (770) 840-9250 for more information.

NPC Men's Group

**By
Tim Rado**

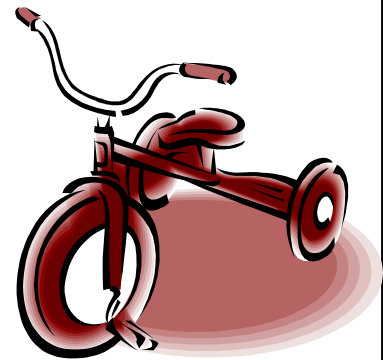
The NPC men's group held their first fellowship meeting on Friday, March 24th. They had a cookout at the home of Matt Fry followed by a general meeting and their first quarter Texas Hold Em championship. Congratulations to the first quarter champion, George Tatro, who will hold the championship belt until our next meeting in May. Second and third place went to Matt Fry and Walter Cochran respectively. We had a great evening of fun and fellowship with a total of eighteen men in attendance.

We will be doing a service project at church on Saturday, April 22nd. We will be clearing and fixing up the patio area out back in preparation for our annual fish fry on April 29th. Please join us if you are interested in helping out. We have many things in the planning stages and would love for all the men of NPC to get involved. If you have any questions please feel free to call Tim Rado at 770-339-8499 or on his cell at 678-414-3378.



NPC Childcare will hold a Trike-a thon on Friday, April 28th to benefit Saint Jude's Children's Hospital. Three children in our congregation, Kayla Fry, Luke Harris, and Calvin Bernardo, may be asking for your support of this event during the week of April 24th.

Happy Pedaling!



Vacation Bible School



Come be a treasure seeker!

Vacation Bible School this year will be June 11th-15th. We will need many volunteers to help make it a success. If you have helped in the past and had so much fun that you want to help again, or if you have thought about helping and think this is your time, please contact Paula Smith (770-368-8385) or Linda Smith (770-476-4037).

Witness and Evangelism 2006 Budget News

One of the tasks of the WE committee is to disburse the church's 10% "First Fruits" offering. This 10% is from the offering plate every Sunday and does not include special offerings like the Christmas Joy Offering, One Great Hour of Sharing offering or Mother's Day offering. Here is the 2006 benevolences budget:

Benevolences	Budget %, 2006
Presbytery of Greater Atlanta – Shared Mission	30%
Norcross Cooperative Ministry	13.3%
Rainbow Village	13.3%
Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity	13.3%
Clifton Sanctuary Ministries – Clifton Night Hospitality	10%
NPC Discretionary Missions (Pastor)	5.5%
PDA – Diaster Relief	4%
Thornwell Home and School	3%
Presbyterian Answer to Hunger (PATH)	3%
World Vision – Child Sponsorship	2%
W&E Committee Undesignated	2.5%

Any concerns or questions? Contact Cynthia Correa, Diane Lewis, Carol MacGregor or Johanne Valentine.



Rainbow Village Charity Golf Classic



One of Rainbow Village's main benefit events each year is the Rainbow Village Charity Golf Classic at Laurel Springs Golf Club in Suwanee. This year's date is **Monday, May 8th**, and foursomes are invited to enter. Brochures with full information are on the literature table at church. Rainbow Village can be contacted about this event as well at www.rainbowvillage.org.

A Minute for Mission:



Our One Great Hour of Sharing poster shows an Indian woman taking a break from her work in the hot sun, turning her face to the sky to drain the last drops of water from a cup. Her posture—face upturned, throat wide open to the blessed relief of something cool and wet—speaks of a powerful physical thirst. That's a kind of thirst most of us have known, though probably not as regularly as the women in this poster do. But probably, to God's eyes, our spiritual thirst is almost as obvious—the kind of thirst that Jesus told the woman at the well his living water would quench forever.

Is there a connection between the physical thirst of the world's poor and the spiritual thirst of the world's affluent? Simply asking the question probably starts us off on a guilt trip: "Are you saying that I'm somehow responsible for her thirst? All these facts I read about how a family in the developing world uses in one day what I use in one flush of the toilet suggest you think I should feel guilty." Well, yes and no. Guilt may not be exactly inappropriate—it's certainly true that we Americans do use a lot more water (and food and energy) than our share, whatever that is. But guilt is not a particularly helpful place to end up.

No, let's try to look at both kinds of thirst with the same kind of compassion. Addressing the woman's physical thirst is simple, though not always easy—you give her, in Jesus' words, a cup of cold water. If you want to prevent the constant recurrence of unnecessary thirst, you help her find a source of clean water. But when we try to quench spiritual thirst by consuming more water, we only aggravate it. Because our spiritual thirst and hunger derive from our separation from God and our reliance on our own resources, we deepen them every time we try to quench them by consuming more. Seen with God's eyes of compassion, we must be a terrible sight to behold—a people desperately pouring the equivalent of salt water on our own parched throats, succeeding only in making ourselves bloated and thirstier still.

One of our faith community's traditional prescriptions for this fever of consumption is the fast, based on the common-sense principle that today we call the first rule of holes: you don't get out of them by digging. We're not here today to talk about fasting, even though the practice has long been associated with this time of year. But it's worth thinking about some of the goals of fasting, which include freeing ourselves from compulsion, accepting hunger and thirst as natural states that we can choose to attend to or live with, and restoring the twin recognitions that we are dependent on grace for everything and that everything we have is an expression of God's grace. Maybe remembering those goals can help us seek more fruitful paths to quenching the thirst of our souls.

The good news here is that, regardless of the causes of our different thirsts, the solution to both is again relatively simple though, again, not easy. If giving up some of our compulsion to consume frees us to give more of our resources to the poor people of the world, we will end up freed of a burden and this woman may find the resources to ensure there's always a cup of cold water when she needs it. And we find anew, as we always seem to find, that in sharing God's love with others, it comes alive to us in a new way. Shared, it becomes the living water we have been seeking that truly refreshes our deepest thirst.

Today, as we contemplate our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing, gifts that will help offer a cup of cold water to thirsty people around the world, let us joyously offer of ourselves that neither our brothers and sisters around the world nor we may be tormented by our different thirsts.

**BEST WISHES TO OUR
APRIL
BIRTHDAY CELEBRANTS**



- 3 Amanda Helmstetter
- 3 Alicia Villalobos
- 4 Tanya Carroll
- 6 Nancy Hogan
- 8 Helen Harris
- 12 Martha Correa
- 15 Kelly Bartlett
- 16 Jessica Lankford
- 16 Grace Helmstetter
- 18 Stephanie Currier
- 20 Nathan Smith
- 28 Melissa Plyler
- 29 Matt Fry
- 29 Roger Greenway