



Of The World And On Fire For Jesus

Now I've seen many versions of this story on the internet (so I know it's absolutely true); including one with Emperor Constantine of Rome and his personal guard, Charlemagne with the Franks, and now this one with Ivan the great of Russia and his royal guard. Here it is, with excerpts from a sermon by Dr. Wayne Dehaney. Ivan the Great was the tsar of all of Russia during the fifteenth century. He brought together the warring tribes into one vast empire—the Soviet Union. However, Ivan was so busy waging his campaigns that he did not have a family. His friends and advisers were quite concerned. "You must take a wife who can bear you a son." The busy soldier, statesman said to them that he did not have the time to search for a bride, but if they would find a suitable one, he would marry her.

The counselors and advisers searched the capitals of Europe to find an appropriate wife for the great tsar. And find her, they did. They reported to Ivan of the beautiful, dark eyed daughter of the King of Greece. She was young, brilliant, and charming. He agreed to marry her sight unseen.

The King of Greece was delighted. It would align Greece in a favorable way with the emerging giant of the north. But there had to be one condition;

"He cannot marry my daughter unless he becomes a member of the Greek Orthodox Church." Ivan's response was, "I will do it!"

Ivan was a quick student and learned the Orthodox catechism in record time. Arrangements were concluded, and the tsar made his way to Athens accompanied by 500 of his crack troops--his personal palace guard. He was to be baptized into the Orthodox Church by immersion, as was the custom of the Eastern Church. His soldiers, ever loyal, asked to be baptized also. The soldiers, all 500 of them, were to be immersed in one mass baptism. Crowds gathered from all over Greece.

The 500 priests were dressed in black robes and tall black hats. The soldiers wore their battle uniforms with all of their regalia--ribbons of valor, medals of courage. and their weapons of battle.

Suddenly, there was a problem. The Church prohibited professional soldiers from being members; they would have to give up their commitment to bloodshed. They could not be killers and church members too. (Who knew? Love your neighbor has been misconstrued to actually mean not killing them).

After a hasty round of diplomacy, the problem was solved quite simply. As the words were spoken and the priests began to baptize them, each soldier reached to his side and withdrew his sword. Lifting it high overhead, every soldier was totally immersed-everything baptized except his fighting arm and sword.

They could now continue as soldiers and Christians! It's the best of both worlds! It seems absurd, but are we that much different? What part(s) of ourselves have we kept out of the waters of baptism? What sword are we clinging to that is keeping us from becoming better Christians and better stewards to ourselves and for others? From truly being on fire for the Lord?

- Richard Sisk

ANNOUNCEMENTS



2025 LoveJoy Lyceum Book List

5/23/25 The First Ladies by Marie Benedict, Victoria Christopher 6/18/25 Clear by Carys Davies 7/16/25 James by Percival Everett 8/20/25 The Hidden Life of Trees by Peter Wohlleben and/or Overstory by Richard Powers 9/17/25 Blood Sisters by Vanessa Lillie 10/15/25 Absolution by Alice McDermott 11/19/25 Peace Like a River by Leif Enger 12/17/25 Prodigal Summer by Barbara Kingsolver

LYCEUM LINKS FOR MAY

The Lyceum Book Club will meet on Wednesday, May 21, at 7:15 p.m. immediately following Evening Prayer on Zoom. The selection for this month is The First Ladies by two authors: Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray.

Marie Benedict is a lawyer with more than ten years of experience as a litigator. She is also a New York Times and USA Today bestselling author (Carnegie's Maid, The Only Woman in the Room, The Other Einstein, e.g.). Victoria Christopher Murray is an acclaimed author with more than one million books in print. She has written more than thirty novels.

These two women have co-authored a novel about the extraordinary partnership between First lady Eleanor Roosevelt and civil rights activist Mary McLeod Bethune—an unlikely friendship that changed the world.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

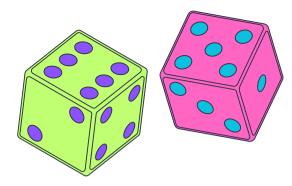
- Sunday Morning Live at 9:00 a.m. led by Richard Sisk is an informal, conversational class that seeks to connect scripture, theology, and faith to our lives and world. This group meets in the Love Room and on Zoom. The current discussion is on The Revelation of John. Sign up at lovejoyupc.org/nextsteps.
- Summer Adult Class on the Gospel of Mark Pastor
 Daniel will begin leading a class on the Gospel of Mark
 on June 1 at 9 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Using
 curriculum by Amy-Jill Levine, we'll be exploring what
 scholars believe was the first Gospel to be written.
 Please sign up so we can order materials for you. Sign
 up on the table in the Narthex or at
 lovejoyupc.org/nextsteps.
- Lectionary Bible Study meets at 10:15 a.m. on Wednesdays. Join pastor Daniel either in-person or on Zoom for a discussion of the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday's worship service.

Hope, Health, and Healing Series:

Mental Health and Recovery, Sunday, May 25 after worship (~11:30) In the first session of this new series, we'll welcome Chris Keck, a Recovery Support Specialist for the State of Illinois. Around half of the population will experience mental health challenges at some point in the course of their lives, meaning that it affects all of us in one way or another. Join us as we work to break the stigma, learn how to find health for ourselves and neighbors, and identify resources available.







Bunco and Lunch Silent Auction, Raffle, Door Prizes

Date: Saturday, May 3 Time: 10:30 - 2:00 PM

Fundraiser hosted by PEO Chapter LW

100% of proceeds go towards Women's

Scholarships and Grants

Location: LoveJoy United Presbyterian Church

Contact: Linda Shugert & Karen Cerny

\$20 per ticket

Grace Camp: Mission Madness

A Place of Grace will host Grace Camp: Mission Madness May 27-30. It is a great opportunity for a family staycation, small church youth mission week (minors must be accompanied by supervising chaperones), seniors looking to participate in communal activities. Opportunities to participate exist in the afternoon and evening at the church as well. Participants may begin registering NOW through the A Place of Grace website: http://www.aplaceofgrace-juliegvillo.net/upcoming-events.html. Email A Place of Grace pastor, Julie Gvillo at juliegvillo.aplaceofgrace@gmail.com for itinerary and cost!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

May Birthday's

1 11

Candis Jacquin Amber Holt

Jake Friederich 13

2 Kelly Slayden

Marilyn Holt 14

3 Debra Goskie

Jaclyn Lindquist 1

Rue Foe Lynn Boston

4

Tim Cerny Waylon Duncan

Michael Carnes

17

21

Kaleb Klette

5

Kaylyn St. Peters Julie Gvillo

22

Linda Frizzell Emilia Huff

Robert Vandalia 24

Ashley Cox

Karissa Joi Chapman 29

Scott Thompson Viktoria Monroe

30

Beth Forrester Alice Carter

10 31

Katie LaMarsh Heather Carnes

Stella Lemasson

Humbert

March 2025 Financial Notes:

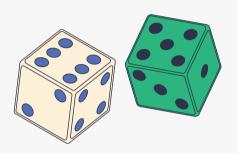
Checking Account Balance as 3/31/2025 \$76,151.14 Savings Account Balance as of 3/31/2025 \$19,323.35 Ending Balance as of 3/31/2025 \$95,474.49

Pledge Income Received:

YTD Pledge total \$54,324.95

Mission Market Fund: The current amount in the fund \$126,840.40. The interest rate is holding at 2.11 %

For questions, please contact Sarah Carnes or Tom Wyatt.



Game Day:

Saturday, May 31 at 1PM in the Fellowship Hall Bring your favorite game and join us!!



Food Pantry Needs: Canned Soup

Poem

I am God

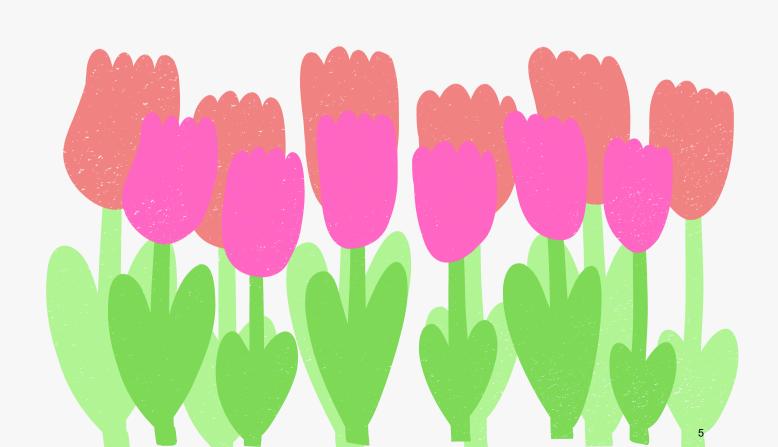
I am the Father
You are my children
I love my children
My children love me
I've sent my son to teach you my
ways
Through him you shall come and
know me
He shall teach you to love
Your sins shall be forgiven
My children come and follow me
I am your father
I am your God



Let us Color a Picture

We have red
We have green
Blue, Yellow, Brown,
Orange, Purple
There is a picture black and white
The picture is dull
Watch the child bring life to the
picture
He shall make it happy
He is adding color to dullness
Let us all be Happy
For Happiness is full of Color

Poet Laureate Herbert J. Peel



ANNOUNCEMENTS



For decades, scripture has reminded Presbyterians that God calls us to welcome and provide for immigrants in our midst

The PC(U.S.A.) stands in solidarity with immigrants, migrants, and asylum seekers affirming that our collective flourishing depends on the safety and security of everyone, including those newly arriving on our shores.

Write Congress today to urge policymakers to reject the "Laken Riley Act" and invest in our nation's longstanding tradition of welcoming immigrants.

Action Alerts are published by the Presbyterian Church's Office of Public Witness, which helps to interpret and advocate the church's social policies in the public square. At the same time, we acknowledge that 'God alone is Lord of the conscience,' and Presbyterians can faithfully disagree on matters of faith and policy.

						2025
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			10:15am -Lectionary Bible Study 11:30am -Lunch Bunch 1 pm - Sewing and Craft Circle 7pm - Evening Prayer	PEO Women's Group Set up in FH	PEO Women's Group Set up in FH	3 PEO Women's Group Annual Trivia Luncheon Presbytery Gathering
8:45am -Choir Rehearsal 9am -Adult Formation: Bible 9am -Adult Formation: Sunday 10:15am -Worship 11:30am -LoveJoy Children & Youth	5 10am - Mat Weaving Group	6 11am - Staff Meeting 6:30pm - Mission and Outreach	7 10:15am -Lectionary Bible Study 11:30am -Lunch Bunch 1 pm - Sewing and Craft Circle 7pm - Evening Prayer	8 6:30pm - Children & Youth CE Meeting	9	10
Mother's Day 8:45am -Choir Rehearsal 9am -Adult Formation: Bible 9am -Adult Formation: Sunday 10:15am -Worship	9am - Food Pantry 10am - Mat Weaving Group 12:15pm - PEO Women's Group	13 11am - Staff Meeting	14 10:15am -Lectionary Bible Study 11:30am -Lunch Bunch 1 pm - Sewing and Craft Circle 7pm - Evening Prayer	15 6pm- Stewardship Committee Meeting	16 2pm- ACE Committee Meeting	17 Church Clean-up Day
8:45am -Choir Rehearsal 9am -Adult Formation: Bible 9am -Adult Formation: Sunday 10:15am -Worship 11:15am -Hope, Health, & Healing Speaker 11:30 am - Fellowship Hour	19 10am - Mat Weaving Group	20 Ilam - Staff Meeting 6pm - Finance Meeting	21 10:15am -Lectionary Bible Study 11:30am -Lunch Bunch 1 pm - Sewing and Craft Circle 7pm - Evening Prayer 7:15pm - LoveJoy Lyceum Book Club	22 6:30pm - Session Meeting	23	24
25 8:45am -Choir Rehearsal 9am -Adult Formation: Bible 9am -Adult Formation: Sunday 10:15am -Worship 11:30am -Hope, Health & Healing Series	26 Memorial Day - Office Closed 9am - Food Pantry 10am - Mat Weaving Group	27 11am - Staff Meeting	28 10:15am -Lectionary Bible Study 11:30am -Lunch Bunch 1 pm - Sewing and Craft Circle 7pm - Evening Prayer	29	30	31 lpm - Game Day



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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