



Sharing the Love of Christ
First United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)
PO Box 37
1000 Douglas Avenue
Las Vegas New Mexico 87701

JUNE 2020

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear Friends,

Can you believe it's summer? Somehow, perhaps because of our last several weeks under stay-at-home restrictions, it just doesn't seem possible. And yet, we're about to turn the calendar to June. That turn of the calendar makes me think of two things this year: summer vacations that won't be happening and time I spent deep in the stories of other people and places through books I devoured each summer as I was growing up.

We were to make a mad dash to Colorado this weekend to visit with friends from Boston and then return to Denver at the end of June to spend time with our daughters, their partners, and our grandchildren. We knew at the beginning of the year that our vacation late this summer to celebrate a big wedding anniversary wasn't going to happen, but we were dreaming about where we might go instead. Now, of course, none of these trips will be happening at all. I'm sure we're not alone in facing these kinds of changes in our plans. It's a source of sadness; I'm especially sad that I will not be able to hug my daughters, swirl grandchildren around in a swimming pool, hold one-year-old Hope's hands as we walk through a park, or curl up on the couch with a lap full of children, reading books.

Already missing those storybooks shared with grandchildren, I remember lazy summers filled with books when I was a kid. The public library in my hometown was one of my very favorite places. From the time we were maybe nine or ten, my friend Georgia and I would meet at a corner about three blocks from each of our houses and walk to the library, which was just over a mile away. On a hot summer day, nothing felt better than walking into the air-conditioned Carnegie library (the first one in Kansas), with its smell of old books and polished wood and the high ceilings that felt just a little lower than the sky outside. We'd linger in the stacks of books, carefully choosing and then checking out as many as we were allowed (or at least as many as we could carry). Then we'd take them outside and sit in the shade of the big stone statues flanking the broad steps that met the city sidewalk. We'd ponder which book got the honor of being first to enter our imaginations and begin reading. After all, we couldn't possibly wait until we got home to dig in! Those books provided hours of escape into new places and relationships with people who were real only in the imaginations of those who created them and those who read them into life. Jane Eyre, of course. Mary Lennox. Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler. Chantal, the heroine after whom Georgia swore to name a daughter someday. (Alas, Georgia had two sons.) Those days seemed so long and the books were so rich and the escape into new experiences so real and complete. Of course, I still love books, but find that days don't seem so long and books call a little less loudly at the end of a day spent reading and writing, and the escape sometimes feels less complete.

Perhaps my thoughts of missed vacation trips and lazy summer days reading books are sending me a message. We will not be experiencing the trips we'd imagined, but we will take vacation time. The vacation turned staycation can include Zoom visits with grandchildren and virtual walks with them while on the phone. It can include time to dive into a project or two I've really wanted to do but just don't have the big blocks of time for. And it will especially offer some lazy time losing myself in books that capture my imagination with characters that grab my heart and messages that provoke my mind and soul. All in all, not a bad way to fall into a Sabbath rest.

How will you find rest and renewal this summer?

With thanks for all of you,
Pastor Katie





WORSHIP TIDBITS

As we move into summer worship, we will take some time on June 7 for lament. Having celebrated Pentecost and the coming of the Spirit at the end of May, we will open ourselves to the ways in which the Spirit not only guides us toward fullness of life, but opens our eyes to see. Much of what we see is, of course, lovely and delightful. But the Spirit also shows us the pain and suffering of the world so that we might know where we are called to carry God's love and promise of new life.

There is certainly much to lament at this point in time. As I write this, statistics show over 5.5 million confirmed COVID-19 cases worldwide with more than 350,000 deaths—over 100,000 of those in the U.S. But, of course, this disease is more than statistics. These statistics translate to the suffering of God's people, people called Grandma and Gramps, Mama and Dad, Sis and Brother, Aunt, Uncle, Cousin, Best Friend, Partner, Boss. Not only disease, but divisiveness and racism and sexism and homophobia greet us every time we pick up a newspaper or magazine or turn on the news or open our social media screens. People are fearful and angry; they are feeling lonely and isolated.

We need space in which to cry out to our God, "How long, O Lord?" We need to lament our complacency and our grief. And we need to pray for healing.

If you have special prayers or a particular lament you'd like named during this service of lament, please email them to me (pastorkatiepalmer@gmail.com). As you prepare to zoom in for this service on June 7, please have near you a few drops of oil (cooking oil from your kitchen is fine), perfume, or water as we will anoint ourselves with the powerful assurance that God hears and holds us.

Having taken time to express our lament, we will be "Fishing with Jesus" as we delve into some Bible stories that involve fishing and eating the catch.

LET'S GET TOGETHER

Remember that we have three social gatherings via Zoom each week. You can download the app on your computer or you can call in by phone. Here's the schedule:

- Sunday morning fellowship following worship. Hang around after the postlude and spend a few minutes chatting with folks!
- Coffee with Katie, Tuesday mornings at 9. We'll chat over coffee or whatever you're drinking at your house. (I'll probably have a nice cup of tea.) It's an opportunity to check in on each other and share stories.
- Thursday Teatime, Thursday afternoons at 3:30. Not a morning person? Need some more interaction? Fix yourself a nice cup of tea (or other beverage of your choice) and settle in for a visit with members of your church family.

TO JOIN ANY FUPC EVENTS VIA ZOOM:

Open your web browser and go to <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/5739200081>

If you haven't been on Zoom before, you'll see instructions for downloading the Zoom app and allowing your camera (if you have one) and microphone to be used by Zoom, and then the meeting will open.

If you are new to Zoom, we recommend going to the link above sometime before the event so that you can get the Zoom app set up ahead of time. It takes a few minutes.

If you have the Zoom app, you can use the link above or you can just open the app, click Join, and enter the meeting id. **The meeting ID for all public church events is 573-920-0081.**

If you don't have a computer but want **to join by phone, call 312-626-7699** and enter the ID number when prompted. Please note this is a Chicago number, so if your phone plan does not have unlimited calls, you may incur long-distance charges.



SUMMER BOOK CLUB

Over the summer, we will offer a summer book club. Each month, we will read a book and talk about it together. Plan to join us in June with discussion leader Pat Halverson. Information below.

Please join us in a group discussion of the book *Creating a World that Works for All*, by Sharif Abdullah. The author grew up in grinding poverty in Camden, NJ. Every part of life presented a challenge. Yet he earned a college education, a law degree, and had a successful law career. However, there was still a yearning to do more to help society. He is the founder and current president of Commonway Institute, dedicated to the creation of a society reflecting our deepest spiritual values.” The book offers ways each person can help change the world by responding to things in their own little circles. Pat Halverson will have two extra copies of the book at \$4.25 each. Thrift Books has them.

We will plan for a June 24 meeting with numbers of people and the reigning COVID-19 regulations directing our venue and perhaps place. The first discussion will dictate the number of times we meet – one to three.”



Deacon Ministry

LOVED BY GOD

A Message from the Deacons

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8

We have the gift of grace, the treasure of salvation, not because of who we are, but because of who God is. We know life is hard. This gift isn't one of ease and comfort; it is one of commitment and faith. God's love for us makes us whole. Without him we are empty vessels waiting to be filled. Be filled with love, faith, hope, and compassion.

If you have a need, joy or concern, please share with your Deacon. In this time of isolation, there are many ways to stay connected. You can watch the Sunday service on the church website at www.lvpresbyterian.org. You can also navigate the website and learn some things about the church you may not know or want to know more about.

Stay safe.

—Your Deacons

Mary Schipper, Chair
505-429-0285



CLERK'S CORNER

Many of you know that the Presbytery of Santa Fe has a wonderful historical resource in the Menaul Historical Library. The Library is supported, in part, by churches in the Presbytery. FUPC donated in the past, but somehow hasn't recently. However, the Session approved a \$100 donation to the Library, which has been sent. If you would like to donate, send your check to Menaul Historical Library, 301 Menaul Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87107.

I also want to give a shout out to Katie, our pastor, for her calm, even, thoughtful, caring and inclusive leadership during this time in our church's history. I have had calls recently from members of other churches asking what FUPC was doing about worship and when we were going to go back to worship in our building. I have answered that we're not going back until the end of summer possibly, depending on the virus statistics, and guidance from the presbytery and the governor. What! these folks said. "Don't you miss being together in the sanctuary," they asked. "Of course we do," I answered, "but there is something far more important here than relieving our slight discomfort at having to worship via computer or phone." It's about life and death, nothing less. Only one of us has to carry the virus to make us all sick. Do we really want to bet on those odds? The majority of our congregation is in the high-risk category. While we're a little uncomfortable at having to learn new technology and not sit in our fifth-row-center-aisle-pew-seat and hug our friends and share each other's air, I think I'll learn that technology. Katie is working very hard to be available to all of us, and to make our worship experience as worshipful, prayerful, instructive and inspiring as possible. Thanks for your leadership, Katie.

Karyl Lyne, Clerk of Session



MISSION & PEACEMAKING

We want to let you know that the PCUSA One Great Hour of Sharing Offering taken during Lent for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance 32 percent, Presbyterian Hunger Program 36 percent and Self-Development of People Program 32 percent, yielded \$971.13. As always, this congregation is very generous and we thank you. The next national offering is on Pentecost Sunday, May 31, and supports the YAVs (Young Adult Volunteers) 25 percent, guiding youth ministries 25 percent, advocacy for children at risk 10 percent and youth projects 40 percent, right here in Las Vegas. If you have an idea for youth ministries here we should consider, please let members of M&P know.

Also, members of M&P attended the Church World Service (CWS) Town Hall last Sunday, May 17, to learn about doing CROP Hunger Walks in the time of COVID-19. Many CROP Walks are held in the spring and we heard the wonderfully creative and innovative ways to 'walk with those around the world who have to walk' for food and water. Las Vegas celebrates its 20th year of CROP Walks this year and the planning team is already at work on how we can have a fun and successful Walk this year to support the work of the Las Vegas Soup Kitchen, the Samaritan House, Comedor de San Pascual Soup Kitchen and hungry people around the world. Stay tuned!

—Karyl Lyne, Chair



SAMARITAN HOUSE COOKING TEAM

Denice Spicer, Manager

Van Swan, Scheduler

Pam Abreu, Chef Consultant

Cooks and Bottle Washers: Murl Baker, John Arnold, Bernadette Lujan, DR Palmer, Tom Trigg, Mary Shaw, Charlotte Wootton, Mary Schipper, Jan Beurskens, Karyl Lyne, Patrick Rucker, Judy Long, and Karen Topping.

The pandemic has been tough on our fellow Las Vegans. We're a poor community, with about 30 percent of families living in poverty. With the loss of jobs because of pandemic restrictions, these families have been hit especially hard. They didn't have much in the way of financial reserves to tide them over a rough patch. Support checks come once a month and that must be used to pay rent, utilities, and other bills, leaving many relying on charity for their daily food.

Samaritan House gives out food in two ways. They give out commodity-type groceries twice per week. (Before the pandemic, it was twice per month.) They give out a box or large sack of food to 40-60 families per day on Tuesdays and Fridays. The food comes from donations from local grocery stores and from the Santa Fe Food Bank.

In addition, Samaritan House also gives out breakfast, lunch, and supper, every day of the week, including holidays. They are the only service in town providing meals seven days per week, three times per day. They give out about 40 meals per day. At present, Samaritan House can do no cooking, but only hand out prepared food. This can be pre-wrapped food such as snack food, or it can be food donated by people like us. With the pandemic restrictions, none of the "customers" eat inside. All the meals are dispensed at the door. The sacks or boxes of commodity foods are taken out to the customer's car – "curb-side service".

The Cooking Team continues to prepare meals for them, as we have been doing for the last 18 months. We continue to make a hot meal on Friday evenings, which the Samaritan House serves out in take-out containers. On Monday evenings, we make sandwiches with a side vegetable and a dessert. Very simple, but easy for them to serve, easy for us to make, and we try to maintain a balanced nutrition.

With the increased demand, we will be bumping the end of our budget, so if you have any spare money just lying around collecting dust, send a check to the church office and direct it to Samaritan House Cooking Team.

We can always use volunteers. Give us a call.

—Van Swan



150th ANNIVERSARY

The 2020 Celebration festivities may be delayed until 2021 because of the pandemic; that doesn't mean we can't celebrate our 150th Anniversary this year and next. The 2020 planning committee has a couple of items in the works:

- Watch your mailboxes for a small gift to remind us all of our new logo and the 150th anniversary and the importance of planting seeds.

In a few weeks, something will start showing up in your yards! We won't spoil the surprise. Keep your eyes open!

—D.R. Palmer, Committee Chair



TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE COMMITTEE UPDATE

At our recent meeting, the Committee reviewed a sample of the financial transactions of the church for 2019. This includes both payments and receipts. A team of selected church members, who have no responsibilities for making decisions about payments and receipts and do not have any responsibility to handle money (such as taking the deposits to the banks or counting the offering plate), are given this job each year.

We are required to do this review of finances by our own By-laws and also by the PC(USA). We could do a formal audit by hiring an outside accountant, but we are allowed to do it in house. This saves the church an estimated \$4,000.

Our review showed no serious discrepancies, but the team did recommend tightening up some of our procedures to minimize potential for mistakes. The committee has also recently updated the Financial and Accounting policies and procedures, and some of the changes will help in this area. Many of the changes are as simple as clarifying a confusing form.

Another one that we felt was important is to actually fill out the forms. A number of you (especially Committee Chairs) will appreciate the following reminder: Linda will not accept a request for payment without a receipt or invoice and the correct completion of the Check Request form. Simple, but we need to get it done. Some simple things will be streamlined. Most of those are very common sense.

Come to one of our meetings sometime. We'll show you a good time. All of our committees in this church are hard-working and full of smart and talented people. I've been more and more impressed as time goes on.

—Van Swan, Co-Chair





WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH B & G

This month we should see some progress with the stucco. If you are attending the Zoom church services you would have seen a picture of our church with the old stucco out front. It was a kind of shock to see it - at least for me. Is that because I am so used to seeing the front with scaffolding attached? HOPEFULLY SOON the new look will be a united color. Then I will have to get used to another new look. That is all right, I can do it! How about you? Thanks for all of your support and patience.

Robin Carlson - Chairperson

Did You Know?



Logos, an afterschool program for children, ran from the fall of 1996 through May 2004. The outreach program was a joint venture with St. Paul's Episcopal Lutheran and Methodist churches working closely as partners providing teachers and volunteers. My daughter Katie joined the program as a kindergartner in the fall of 1997 when we moved to Las Vegas and the program was under the direction of Rev. Liz Graham. *Logos* was a major factor in our decision to join the Presbyterian Church. I took over leadership in the fall of 1998. That year the program for K – 5th grade was expanded to include a Peanuts group for pre-kindergartners of teachers, so our son Charlie was able to participate as a three-year-old along with Leah and Taylor Vettters, daughters of Rev. Michelle Vettters. We later expanded the program to include youth through 8th grade. *(A favorite memory from Carol Linder)*

From Juli Salman (parent and teacher) about Logos: I loved working with Joan Boliek and the younger kids. She was so resourceful and creative and taught me a lot about being patient and being able to adjust expectations on the fly. We made a large cardboard, life-size tree in the center of our classroom one year. All our lessons were taught under the tree which morphed for each season and holiday. Joan was a wonderfully inspirational person and I still miss her.

***Logos left a lasting imprint on the adults and youth involved. From Molly Salman (participant):* I remember when Michelle taught us to “clown around”. You had to come up with your clown identity. I’m pretty sure I was a grumpy clown... not too far off from my real-life identity! Can you identify the “clowns” in this photo? They’re all grown up, now.



If you have a favorite memory, photo (or both) to share as part of DID YOU KNOW, please send to fsvandermeer@gmail.com. Source material for DID YOU KNOW comes largely from a timeline of the church created by Richard Lindeborg. Logos information provided by Carol Linder.



SUNDAY CLASS CONTINUES MISTER ROGERS, MOVES ON TO *RELIGION AS WE KNOW IT*

During June, the Sunday morning Bible-based class for adults and youth will finish its discussion of the book *The Simple Faith of Mister Rogers: Spiritual Insights from the World's Most Beloved Neighbor* by Amy Hollingsworth. The discussions are led by Richard Lindeborg.

The book is a story about how the author, a Christian writer of a fairly conservative bent came to know Fred Rogers, the famous television host, who also happened to be a Presbyterian minister of a fairly liberal persuasion. The book is as much about how the author came to appreciate Mr. Rogers' theology as it is about describing his "simple" faith.

Readers have said:

"Her focus was what they shared about their Christianity."

"[This book is f]or fans of Mister Rogers and people that long for a kinder, gentler version of Christianity than what we see sold in America today. We could all stand to be nicer and a better neighbor to our fellow man. Mister Rogers simply pointed the way to a life of service and love, bound together by faith in the Almighty creator of the world, who taught us how to love."

"Some books are designed to be clever or entertaining. This book is beyond either of those. It is nourishing. While you could read it all in one sitting, it may be wise to read a chapter at a time and reflect on each one. Beautifully done, wonderful, and gentle."

See the May newsletter for information on how to get a book for this series.

Classes are from 9:15 to 10:00 Sunday mornings on the same Zoom link as the worship service.

Remaining reading assignments are

June 7	Ch. 3. The Wondrous Work of the Holy Spirit - pp. 33-46 Ch. 4. The Best Gift: Your Honest Self - pp. 53-69
June 14	Ch. 5. Who Is My Neighbor? - pp. 75-88 Ch. 6. The Power of Forgiveness - 98-105
June 21	Ch. 7. The Least of These - pp. 113-126 Ch. 8. Difficult Times - pp. 129-145
June 28	Ch. 9. Heading Toward Heaven - pp. 151-161 Epilogue - 163-165 – pp. 163-165

In July, the class will begin a 6-week discussion of the book *Religion as We Know It: An origin Story* by Jack Miles, Pulitzer Prize winning author of *God: A Biography*.

This from the publisher: *The author writes about how our forebears begin to think about religion as a distinct domain, separate from other activities that were once inseparable from it. Starting at the birth of Christianity—a religion inextricably bound to Western thought—Miles reveals how the West's "common sense" understanding of religion emerged and then changed as insular Europe discovered the rest of the world. In a moving postscript, he shows how this very story continues today in the hearts of individual religious or irreligious men and women.*

The book draws on *The Norton Anthology of World Religions*, for which Miles is general editor. One reader said that *Religion as We Know It*, "may be the briefest and most accessible" of Miles' books.

Reading Assignment for the July 5 class session is the preface, pp. IX – XL

With the church shuttered for the duration of the pandemic, it is best that people who plan to attend this class order their own copies and have them shipped directly to their homes. Richard can order copies for those who do not do online business for \$8.99, shipping included. Email ralindeborg@cs.com.

Availability of books for July:

Amazon: Kindle \$8.54, used paperbacks starting \$4.31 plus shipping, new paperbacks for \$8.99 plus shipping.

Alibris: Used paperbacks starting at \$4.31 and new paperbacks for \$10.07 plus shipping.

Abe Books has used paperbacks starting at \$4.31 plus shipping and new paperbacks starting at \$10.81.

Classes will be at 9:15 on Sundays on Zoom, through the same link as the worship service.

First United Presbyterian Church

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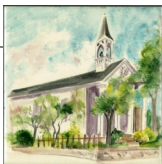
Sunday Schedule

8:30 a.m. - Jumpstart Breakfast:

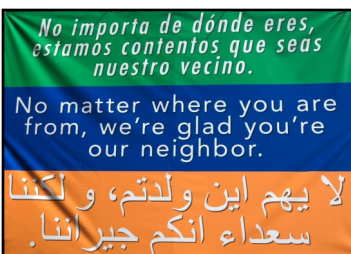
9:30 a.m. - Bible Based Study

10:30 a.m. - Sunday Worship

Fellowship Hour following the worship service



JUNE 2020



Our Daily Devotionals

Work a little devotional time into your day! You'll find weekday devotional videos on our Facebook page. They are short (no longer than about 10 minutes) and offer a variety of ways to pay attention to how we see God at work in the world. Many thanks for those faithful witnesses who provide these devotionals for us: Pastor Katie, Carol Linder, Rod Billingsley, Pat Halverson, and Karyl Lyne.



Deep and Wide

*A Contemplative Service at the
Old Town Mission*

Canceled thru June 2020

Questions? Call D.R. Palmer 303-775-7259



Communion is normally offered each Sunday from October 6 through Pentecost (May 31, 2020) and on the first and third Sundays of each month from June through September. We do not celebrate Communion on the fifth Sunday of a month due to the addition of the Healing Liturgy to the service.



8 th	Patrick Rucker
10 th	Rosalie Lopez
15 th	Charlie Linder
16 th	Rudy Laumbach
18 th	Bonnie Trujillo
21 st	Kent Reid
25 th	Sean Croto
29 th	Ken Litherland



Samaritan House Food Donations

JUNE

Flour and Sugar

Coffee and Tea are always appreciated