



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

**JULY 2020**

## **PASTOR'S PONDERINGS**

Dear Friends,

As I write this note, I'm sitting at my patio table, listening to birds chirping, flies buzzing, and a hummingbird's wings as it comes close to remind me that the feeder is empty. It's a little toasty out here on the patio; the thermometer reads 83 degrees. It's summer and I'm looking forward to a break next week to enjoy some summertime!

I feel like I have been well-launched into this down time with some stimulating ideas to think about after virtually attending the Faithful Innovation Summit sponsored by Luther Seminary with three members of FUPC's Re-Entry Task Force—Karyl Lyne, Tom Trigg, and D.R. Palmer. Today, following the last session of the Summit, we gathered together on zoom to talk about how we experienced the event and what we want to share with all of you. Look for comments from Karyl and D.R. in another part of this newsletter.

We agreed that the Summit was energizing and inspiring. I wanted to share some of the ideas that I found provocative so that you, too, can be pondering what they might mean for our church family and for our local community. Here are some quotes (and paraphrases when I couldn't catch the exact quote) that I'll continue to think about for a while:

We want to "shape the future before it shapes us." – Rabbi Hayim Herring, *CEO of HayimHerring.com*

"We're giving people spiritual antennae." – Rev. Jane Johnson, Priest at the Beloved Community of Intercession Episcopal and Redeemer Lutheran in Stevens Point, Wisconsin

"We have to love people into the pivot [of innovation]." -- Tessa Pinkstaff, Project Manager and Innovation Leadership Team Member at Luther Seminary

"If the church has a public calling, digital space is one public." – Terri Elton, Associate Professor of Leadership, Luther Seminary

"Fail fast. Fail often. Fail forward." – Bishop Patricia Davenport, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, on experimenting with new ideas

"We're being awakened from our apostolic amnesia...being awakened to why we exist—to share God's love." – Michael Beck, Director of Re-Missioning for Fresh Expressions (Florida Conference of the UMC)

"We worship God, not tradition." – Mark Brandt, Online Campus Minister at Lutheran Church of Hope in Des Moines, Iowa

And finally, all of the leaders agreed (I'm paraphrasing here): Let's unleash people to be the "priesthood of all believers" (that's from Martin Luther) in the world!

With thanks for all of you,  
Pastor Katie





## WORSHIP TIDBITS

On July 12 we complete the “Fishing with Jesus” sermon series with a post-resurrection story from John 21 about a barbecue fish breakfast hosted by Jesus himself.

Watch for something special on July 19...stay tuned to your email and snail mail for details.

On July 26, Pastor Katie will begin a sermon series on the book of Job. What do we make of a book that begins with a righteous man and a bet between God and the Satan—that is, the adversary or trouble-maker? Zoom in to explore this question!

On another note...As you probably know, the early Christian churches met in people’s homes. As we continue to worship together via Zoom, I’d like to invite you to think about how you define sacred space. Each Sunday as we gather, some of us sit at kitchen or dining room tables, some relax in living room recliners or sofas, others are at desks in bedrooms or dens, and some take a more al fresco approach, settling into lawn or deck chairs. What makes a space sacred? What invites God into a place? If we can be the church from our homes, where else can we be the church?

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## 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 9:00. 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? Brew a pot of tea (or other beverage of your choice) and settle in for a visit with members of your church family.

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## THOUGHTS ON FAITHFUL INNOVATION SUMMIT EXPERIENCE

D. R. Palmer: A group of us recently spent two and one-half days at a virtual conference hosted by Luther Seminary. Faith leaders from the U.S. and Canada joined together to learn and discuss how the church might be changing through the catalyst of the pandemic. It was interesting to hear how some churches had similar experiences to ours:

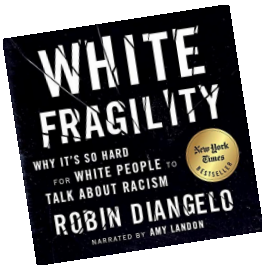
“...wow, the music sounds bad when we all sing – let’s mute and hear from a just a few.” “...wow, we really can’t all chat together in one big room – let’s do breakout rooms.”

We have learned that there are a lot of exciting ways to let the Spirit move in addition to Sunday worship in a building. We are still processing our experience and how it might apply to our church. Look for more to come!

Karyl Lyne: Some weeks ago, Katie invited Session members to join her for something called the Faithful Innovation Summit, which would span two full days on Zoom. Really? Somewhat reluctantly I said, OK. Well, the Summit introduced me to a whole new way of thinking about my relationship with God and what my place in the ‘priesthood of believers’ might be. It suggested that, as a part of this priesthood, each of us must stay alert and actively listen for what God is saying to us.

The Summit introduced us (Katie, DR, Tom and me) to a panoply of creative, energetic, thoughtful and innovative theologians and lay leaders who shared new thinking about what church is and how we do church in a future unlike anything we’ve ever known. We learned new ways to talk about this future, which you’ll be hearing from us. Finally, the Summit showed me that FUPC is way down this road because of Katie’s leadership. We’ve been talking about doing church without a building, community building and reaching out to people in new ways for some time. Katie has led us, seemingly seamlessly, into Zoom worship as though it was planned all along. This pivot (one of those words you’ll hear more of) has been ably facilitated by D.R., to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. SO, if you can’t tell, I found the Summit beyond enlightening!

## SUMMER BOOK CLUB



Join us for our summer book club! Each month, we will read a book and talk about it together. Plan to join us in July with discussion leader Pastor Katie. We will discuss *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo. DiAngelo is an antiracist educator; this book shows up on all the lists of important books in the discussion of race. The book explores white fragility—"the defensive moves that white people make when challenged racially . . . characterized by emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and by behaviors including argumentation and silence," (from the book's back cover). Poet, essayist, and playwright Claudia Rankine says of DiAngelo's book:

[It] brings language to the emotional structures that make true discussions about racial attitudes difficult. With clarity and compassion, DiAngelo allows us to understand racism as a practice not restricted to 'bad people.' In doing so, she moves our national discussions forward with new 'rules of engagement.' This is a necessary book for all people invested in societal change through productive social and intimate relationships.

Please email Pastor Katie ([pastorkatiepalmer@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkatiepalmer@gmail.com)) or call the church office if you plan to attend. The book is available through most online book sellers; cost is between \$11 and \$15. Order now so you will have time to read! We will likely meet via zoom, depending on number of attendees. Pastor Katie will be in touch with those folks who intend to attend to set date and time toward the end of July.

## CLERK'S CORNER



We've reached the end of June and find ourselves still adapting to doing church via zoom and talking with one another on the phone to check in, share encouragement or express concern or have a laugh together. I don't know if you've been by 1000 Douglas Ave. recently, but the stucco is finished and the scaffolding is gone! WOW! Is that fantastic or what? We've been thinking about stuccoing, planning for stuccoing, saving for stuccoing for YEARS and now it's done, and it's beautiful. If you keep watching, from a social distance of course, in the next few weeks you'll see a major transformation in the front and side yards. The Landscaping Task Force is bringing its wonderful plans to fruition with sand, gravel, river rock and plantings. You'll also notice that the wall on the east side of the building has been reinforced for safety, and made a part of the beautiful design of this amazing group of volunteers.

Have you been to worship online lately? We celebrate seeing one another before and after worship, and engage in the holy and meaningful worship of God through word, music and sacrament. Katie never fails to bring us words of comfort, enlightenment and guidance as we face our individual challenges. The committees of the church continue to do their work, and we continue to provide meals to the hungry in Las Vegas. Our Deacons continue to minister to those with health or personal concerns, and we talk about books in Sunday school and the summer book group. We produce this monthly newsletter to keep in touch, and we continue to meet our budgeted responsibilities. SOOOO is the church closed? By NO means! The church is us, each of us, working together to be church in Las Vegas, and we are. Alleluia, AMEN!

### 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.



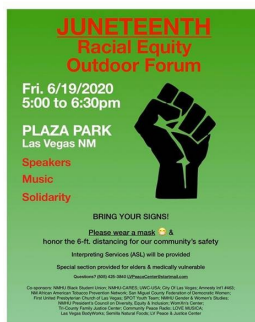
## MISSION & PEACEMAKING

As you will remember, Session requested that Mission & Peacemaking move the PCUSA Catalog of Giving Fundraiser from December to another time of the year to spread the donation requests out more evenly through the year. SOOOOO, Mission and Peacemaking is sponsoring a *Christmas in July* Donation Drive!

We're inviting the membership to support the construction of a Garden Well in a village where there is not a reliable source of clean water. As New Mexicans, we understand the reality of no water. We know water is scarce in many parts of the world. We also understand how important it is to know there is a safe, reliable source of this life-giving flow. If you are able, we hope you'll share what you have in the spirit of Christmas with those who have much less, and donate generously to the Garden Well Project. The cost of a Garden Well is \$1500, so that is our goal. M&P and the people of the village thank you.

—Karyl Lyne, Chair

## JUNETEENTH RACIAL EQUITY FORUM



Your Session voted that FUPC would co-sponsor the June 19 Racial Equity Forum held at Plaza Park. Other co-sponsors included the NMHU Black Student Union, NMHU – CARES, UWC, NMHU President's Council on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and the Tri-County Family Justice Center, among others. I was honored to be asked to speak at this event, along with speakers from UWC, NMHU, the City of Las Vegas and others. More than 200 people attended this event to remember Black lives senselessly lost and to stand up for racial equity. I am grateful to the organizers of this event and hope our community continues to find ways to support the work for equity.



## PRESBYTERY MEETING

The Presbytery of Santa Fe will meet via Zoom on Saturday, July 18. You may remember that this meeting was to have been held here in Las Vegas as part of our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Although we can't meet in person, the presbytery will recognize our anniversary. Additionally, FUPC folks will play a role in leading worship for the presbytery by providing music, reader, and preacher for that worship. Please hold the presbytery and its work in your prayers.

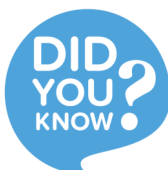


## NEW OFFICER TRAINING

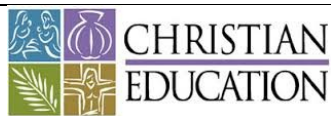
We welcome new officers to the class of 2022: Rosie Lopez and Renee Soderlund to the Board of Deacons and Siobhan Croto, Carol Litherland, and Joyce Litherland to the office of Elder.

Session has scheduled Officer Training for new and returning officers to be held via Zoom on Saturday, July 25, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Our new officers will be ordained and installed during worship on Sunday, Aug. 2.

## “DID YOU KNOW” POSTED WEEKLY



Did You Know items are posted each week in the What's Happening email from Linda? Read to the bottom of the post so you don't miss this information, one more way we are celebrating our 150 years in Las Vegas. You can also check DKY out on the [www.lvpresbyterian.org](http://www.lvpresbyterian.org) website under [Latest News/Did You Know](#).



## JULY CLASS: HOW RELIGION BECAME “JUST A PART OF LIFE”

In July, the Sunday morning class for adults and youth will begin a six-week discussion of the book *Religion as We Know It: An origin Story* by Jack Miles, Pulitzer Prize winning author of *God: A Biography*. The discussion will be led by Richard Lindeborg.

The book draws on *The Norton Anthology of World Religions*, for which Miles is general editor. It deals with how our forebears began to think about religion as a distinct domain, separate from other activities that were once inseparable from it. The author demonstrates that from the beginning Christianity has been a religion inextricably bound to Western thought.

Miles examines how this secular form of study emerged in the West, tracing religious practice in Western civilization as it diverges from more ancient cultures, where religion was integrated into every part of existence.

He argues that it was the birth of Christianity, and its subsequent break with Judaism, that pushed what was to become religion apart from what was to become secular culture in the West, as early Christians detached a set of Jewish “religious” ideas from the rest of the Jewish way of life. As Western influence spread worldwide, this Christian separation of religion from other aspects of custom and culture spread with it, becoming in the end an essentially secular assumption in modern thought and practice.

Miles writes: “. . . Christians did indeed acquire very early and thereafter never entirely lost the habit of thinking of their religion as a separate domain. Once this is conceded, it should come as no great surprise that as a corollary of this habit, they should have adopted early and never entirely lost the habit

**From the jacket:** *Jack Miles has written the perfect first book for religious studies beginners. He starts with the widely held American understanding of religion but ends arguing brilliantly that inescapable human ignorance creates the possibility of welcoming the new, the unexpected, even the religious. Our self-absorbed age needs this book.*—Mark C. Taylor, Columbia University

*The question of the origin of religion has rarely been addressed with the erudition and eloquence of Jack Miles. Drawing on a remarkable wealth of sources across time and place, he offers much for us to ponder in an essay that is at once highly learned and deeply personal.*—Donald S. Lopez Jr., University of Michigan.

**Obtaining the book:** Participants who do not yet have the book can order it and have it shipped directly to their home. Richard can order copies for those who do not do online business for \$8.99, shipping included. Email [ralin-deborg@cs.com](mailto:ralin-deborg@cs.com). Online sources include

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

### Reading Assignments

July 5 Preface, pp. IX – XL

July 12 Preamble: On Starting from Where We Are, pp. 1-6  
Can Religion be Defined? pp. 7-20

July 19 How Christian Europe Learned to Compare Religions (first part) pp. 21-47  
The Social Oddity of the Early Church (p.27-35)  
The Four-Cornered Medieval Map of Religion (p. 36-47)

July 26 How Christian Europe Learned to Compare Religions (continued), pp. 47-71  
The Renaissance Rehearsal of Comparative Religion (p. 47-51)  
Comparative Christianity in the Protestant Reformation (pp. 51-57)  
Toleration, Science, Exploration, and the Need for a New Map (pp. 56-60)  
A New Reference Book Defines a New Field of Study (pp. 60-71)

Aug 2 Broadening the Foundation, Raising the Roof, pp. 73-118

Aug 9 Why Religion, pp. 119-140

(Continued on Page 7)





## WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH B & G

The long-awaited stucco is DONE! The scaffolding that we were beginning to think was a permanent addition to the front of the church is also gone! Drive by and look. Many thanks to Michael Long and Crew.

We had a small shift of priorities as the crew found rot damage to the soffit and fascia boards of the steeple due to a roof leak on the very top roof. So, damaged decking and roofing were replaced, soffit and fascia boards also were replaced and painted. If we had not been stuccoing and painting we wouldn't have found the leak for a while. In case you hadn't noticed we also had the windows and trim painted while the scaffolding was up. If you work in construction you will know that scaffolding is wonderful and necessary but not very mobile.

Also, your B & G crew, - Don, Charlotte, Corky and Robin - took down the west ramp covering in preparation for the stucco.

That's all for now. And as I remember John McCord saying, "I'm a doing." Keep on *a doing*. Be well. Stay safe.

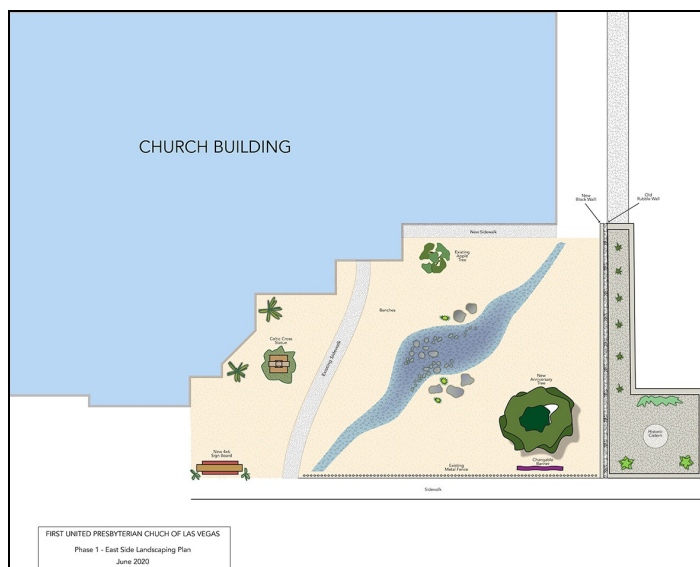
Robin Carlson, Chair



## SEE OUR PROGRESS

The landscaping has begun. We discovered the old rock wall was not stable and therefore built a block wall in front of it. When that is finished, we will backfill that upper level, cover the ancient cistern (about where small elms are) with a large piece of flagstone and rock the area. Probably plantings of yucca and grasses. On Tues June 30, we will begin the earth work on the old lawn area to create a varying size rock "river" to handle drainage and be attractive. Lots of ideas and plans coming soon. Do drive by the church to check our progress and see the finished stucco job. The church may be closed, but all kinds of things continue to happen.

—Your Landscaping Task Force.





## JOB: A MOVING TESTAMENT TO THE CREATIVE ACT OF ENDURING

In August, the class will start a discussion of the book *Island of the Innocent: A Consideration of the Book of Job* by Diane Glancy. The class will be led by Richard Lindeborg. Amazingly enough, Pastor Katie will be starting a sermon series on Job late in July, so this study will fit right in.

There is much mystery surrounding the Book of Job. Who was he? Where was he? What prompts Job's "comforters" to accuse him of wrong-doing as the cause of his suffering? When were Job's words written? How did Job's wife endure her husband's ordeals? And who is innocent among us?

*Island of the Innocent's* narrative dramatizes how the way one looks at something shapes and changes what is seen. Voices of the trials of the Native American interject themselves into the text.

Retail for this book is \$17.95, and that is Amazon's current price. The second-hand online offerings right now are only a \$1 or so less, including shipping. So, Amazon with prime shipping makes sense. Paper Trail may be able to order it also.



### Deacon Ministry

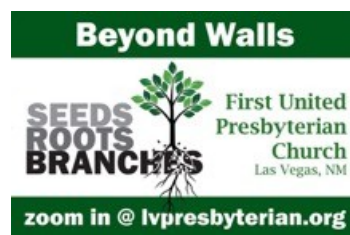
## WHAT IS A DEACON?

The *Book of Order* calls ordained deacons to a ministry of "compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress." (G-2.0201).

Your Deacons in the coming year will be Mary Schipper, Bonnie Trujillo, Juli Salman, Rosie Lopez, Renee Soderlund and Sharon Vander Meer. Each of these Deacons will have a prayer group and each of you will be in one of the groups. This means you will have a direct contact with someone who holds you in prayer regularly, and with whom you may share your prayer concerns and when you would like to have extra care, like meals when you are ill or visits when you could use a shoulder or someone to celebrate or laugh with. Being a Deacon is personal. You will be notified soon of who your prayer Deacon is for the coming year.

Thanks to retiring Deacons Patrick Rucker and Murl Baker. Their tireless work and dedication are examples of what it means to be compassionate witnesses who share the redeeming love Jesus Christ.

—Mary Schipper, Chair

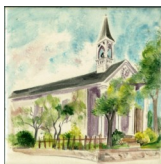


These signs will be appearing in yards around town in the near future, including yours! If, however, you prefer to not to host the sign for a week to 10 days, notify D.R. Palmer. It's okay to say no. This is one more way we are celebrating our 150 years in Las Vegas. The signs are two-sided and mounted on a wire frame, sort of like a For Sale sign.

## First United Presbyterian Church

JULY 2020

1000 Douglas Avenue  
PO Box 37  
Las Vegas NM 87701  
505-425-7763



Website: [www.lvpresbyterian.org](http://www.lvpresbyterian.org)

Facebook: Las Vegas First United Presbyterian (NM)

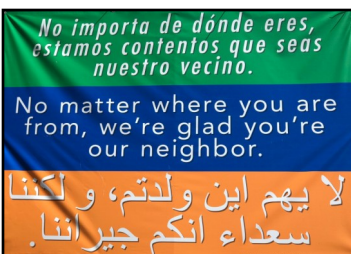
Email: [fupc.nm@gmail.com](mailto:fupc.nm@gmail.com)

### Sunday Schedule

9:30 a.m. - Bible Based Study via Zoom

10:30 a.m. - Sunday Worship via Zoom

Fellowship Hour following the worship service on Zoom



### Our Daily Devotionals

Work a little devotional time into your day! You'll find weekday devotional videos on our Facebook page. (You can also access them through the church website.) 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. And many thanks to Beth Urech, guest devotionalist on June 29 while Pastor Katie is on vacation!



### Deep and Wide

*A Contemplative Service at the  
Old Town Mission*

**Canceled thru July 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.



9 <sup>th</sup>	Sharon Vander Meer
21 <sup>st</sup>	John Detterick
	Bryan Johnson
26 <sup>th</sup>	Murl Baker
27 <sup>th</sup>	Carol Litherland
30 <sup>th</sup>	Randy Campbell
31 <sup>st</sup>	Gordy Thatcher



### Samaritan House Food Donations

**JULY**

Soup

Coffee and Tea are always appreciated