



Sharing the Love of Christ

First United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

PO Box 37

1000 Douglas Avenue

Las Vegas New Mexico 87701

AUGUST 2020

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear Friends,

I recently spoke to someone who predicts that we are in for an early, snowy winter. I don't know if that's true, but in the four years I've been here in Las Vegas, I have not seen so many days in a row of clouds, heavy rain, and cooler-than-usual temperatures. I have begun to wonder if the sky, too, is saddened by the things going on in the world.

On a sillier note, I am seeing social media posts comparing the year 2020 to a variety of unpleasant things. For instance, if it were a slide, it would be a vegetable grater with the rough side up; if it were a drink, it would be colonoscopy prep. It has been a rough year that we are now more than halfway through. There's little doubt that we will continue to deal with realities that are causing suffering and division among people. The pandemic is not going to disappear. I expect political divides to widen, at least until the November election is behind us. And, while I am hopeful that the protests that have drawn attention to racial inequities in our country will lead to reform of racist systems, the social tensions are revealing the kind of deep racism I'd hoped were behind us.

Friends, in the midst of these deep divisions, please remember that we are called to be one in Christ. I know it can be especially difficult to be called at this time to stand for unity and for the needs of those marginalized in our society. But we are called to do so, with love and respect.

We are also called to love ourselves. Self-care during this time is important and it's very hard for some of us. So...unplug when you're feeling overwhelmed. Take a walk or a nap. Watch a favorite movie. Allow yourself to cry for the world. Opt for doing something you enjoy over mopping the floor or dusting the furniture. Call a friend and talk through what you're feeling. Zoom in to a social gathering with church family (like Coffee with Katie) or schedule your own with your closest friends and family. Spend time in prayer and in Scripture. Remember that you are God's beloved child.

With thanks for all of you,

Pastor Katie

Come, Rest Awhile by Lucy Maud Montgomery

Come, rest awhile, and let us idly stray
In glimmering valleys, cool and far away.

Come from the greedy mart, the troubled street,
And listen to the music, faint and sweet,

That echoes ever to a listening ear,
Unheard by those who will not pause to hear-

The wayward chimes of memory's pensive bells,
Wind-blown o'er misty hills and curtained dells.

One step aside and dewy buds uncloset
The sweetness of the violet and the rose;

Song and romance still linger in the green,
Emblossomed ways by you so seldom seen,

And near at hand, would you but see them, lie
All lovely things beloved in days gone by.

You have forgotten what it is to smile
In your too busy life come, rest awhile.



WORSHIP TIDBITS

We have been worshipping online now for over four months. I know many of us are missing the sanctuary. I encourage you to consider what you miss about being in the sanctuary. Then call your attention to the questions I raised last month in this newsletter: What makes a space sacred? What invites God into a place? You may notice that, each Sunday as we gather on Zoom, I put on a stole as we move from greeting one another to my welcome to worship and then I light a candle during the prelude. I encourage you to also adopt a ritual that will help define the space from which you “zoom in” as sacred. Say a prayer as your computer is connecting. Light a candle. Put a cross and/or Bible near you. Use on your table a placemat or tablecloth that you dedicate to use especially for worship. Remind yourself that the space in which you worship, like the sanctuary, is sacred because God is with you there; it is the place in which you meet some of your sisters and brothers in Christ, the place in which God’s Word is proclaimed.

That Word comes to us from the book of Job throughout August. This book is particularly appropriate as we ask – as does Job – why innocent people suffer. As we see the number of deaths from COVID-19 continue to rise, this question is on our minds. It can be easy to say that we might have better contained the virus, that we could be better containing it now; that is all true. Nevertheless, the question persists because we know that the more than 650,000 people who have died from COVID and the millions who have suffered through it did not deserve this suffering, nor did their families. What, then, do we make of suffering and of God’s role in it? Join us in worship to consider this question.



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 July 20!



FUPC SPIRITUAL NEEDS SURVEY

The Re-Entry Task Force is asking for your feedback about how well we’re meeting your spiritual needs during this time, and also about your feelings regarding the possibility of in-person gatherings. If you’ve not already done so, please fill out the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8NHJBZ8>

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. 2



SUMMER BOOK DISCUSSION

Participants for the discussion of our July book – *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo – did not all receive books in time to schedule the discussion in July. We will meet via Zoom on Thursday, Aug. 6, at 6:30. If you thought about joining us but didn't get the book on time, you might check into borrowing a copy. It'd be great to have you.

Our August/September book (trying to be realistic here!) will be *One Coin Found: How God's Love Stretches to the Margins* by ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) Pastor Emmy Kegler. The book invites us into the journey of Kegler, a queer woman who struggled with her place in the church. It will give us an opportunity to talk not only about the struggles that LGBTQ+ folks can experience in the church, but also to look at Biblical passages that are sometimes used to deny inclusivity.

This beautifully written memoir is described with these words:

Emmy Kegler has a complicated relationship with the Bible. As a queer woman who grew up in the church, she knows too well how Scripture can be used to wound and exclude. And yet, the stories of Scripture continued to captivate her. So she set out to fall in love with the Bible, wrestling with the stories inside, where she met a God who continues to seek us out – appearing again and again as a voice, a presence, and a promise. Kegler shows us that even when we feel like lost and dusty coins, God picks up a broom and sweeps every corner of creation to find us.

Please email Pastor Katie (pastorkatiepalmer@gmail.com) or call the church office if you plan to attend. The book is available through most online book sellers both used and new; cost is between \$8 and \$15. Order now so you will have time to read! We will likely meet via zoom, depending on the number of participants. Pastor Katie will be in touch with those folks who plan to attend to set a date and time.



2020-2021 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

As we enter a new term for the Ruling Elders on our Session, their committee assignments have changed. Please contact a committee chair if you have questions or suggestions for their committee.

- Buildings and Grounds - Corky Halverson
- Clerk of Session - Karyl Lyne
- Columbarium - Judy Long
- Community Life - Siobhan Croto
- Joint Operating Team - Tom Trigg
- Mission and Peacemaking - Carol Litherland
- Mustard Seed - Carol Linder and Corky Halverson
- Nominating - Joyce Litherland
- Personnel - Deb Allen-Reid
- Time, Talent and Treasure - Carol Linder
- Worship and Music - D.R. Palmer
- 2020 Task Force - Joyce Litherland

TO JOIN ANY FUPC EVENTS VIA ZOOM:

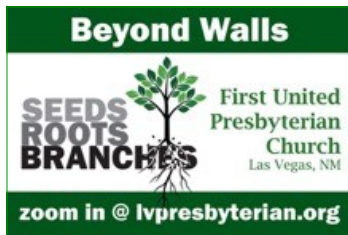
Open your web browser and go to <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/5739200081>

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.



BEYOND WALLS – TRAVELING YARD SIGNS

Have you seen this sign around town? We are sharing our new logo and our website to let folks know that First United is continuing its ministry even during the pandemic. We are beyond the walls of our church building, and we are working to go beyond the walls that are dividing us in this country. We have five yard signs that are traveling around to members' and friends' yards to get our presence known.

–D.R. Palmer, 2020 Planning Committee



Deacon Ministry

WHAT DO THE DEACONS DO?

Here's the short list but it boils down to serving where one can to help when needs arise. Sometimes it's washing dishes or serving meals; sometimes it's sitting with someone who is lonely or hurting. Anyone who has ever served as a Deacon enters into that service with an open heart and a compassionate listening ear.

Each month one of your six Deacons serves as Deacon of the Month. That individual doesn't do all the work, but coordinates to make sure it gets done. Duties include accompanying Pastor each month to distribute Communion to homebound members, taking care of the Altar table, preparing communion on scheduled Sundays as designated by the Pastor and the Worship and Music Committee, coordinates meals to congregants as needed in times of illness, death, or baby's birth – as examples, coordinates visitation to homebound, nursing homes, and hospital in cooperation with Prayer Group leaders, provides or coordinates transportation for those who may need rides to doctor or other health care visits, also in cooperation with Prayer Group Leaders.

Each Deacon has a Prayer Group. The role of the Prayer Group leader is to – pretty much – do that! Pray regularly for each member. Additionally the "Deacon in charge" of each group stays in contact with individuals by sending birthday cards or periodically sending "thinking of you" cards, email notes, or calling to let members know they are being prayed for and that their Deacon is available to assist when possible.

Most everyone is familiar with our Deacons' Prayer Shawl ministry in which handmade shawls are blessed by the Pastor and congregation and then given as needed to those who are ill, in need of comfort, and occasionally as a thank-you for service to the church.

Occasionally Deacons provide light snacks and beverages, and assist with set-up, serving and clean up of receptions held in Perea Hall following funerals or weddings or other celebrations of life.

This year, in addition to returning Deacons Mary Schipper, Juli Salman, Bonnie Trujillo and Sharon Vander Meer, we welcome two new Deacons, Rosie Lopez and Renee Soderlund.



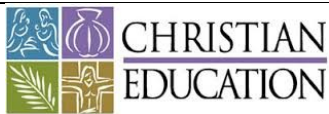
Thank you all for the cards, calls, emails and texts upon the death of my father-in-law, Norman Weinstein. We were prepared, but as you all know it is still hard. My prayers are with you all for health, both mental and physical. It had been a hard four months for everyone.

–Peace be with you all,
Lisa Weinstein



"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 website under [Latest News/Did You Know](#).



ADULT/YOUTH CLASS TRANSITIONS TO CONSIDER THE BOOK OF JOB

In the first two Sundays of August, the Sunday morning class for adults and youth will conclude its discussion of the book *Religion as We Know It: An origin Story* by Jack Miles. Reading assignments are:

- Aug. 2 Broadening the Foundation, Raising the Roof, pp. 73-118
- Aug. 9 Why Religion?, pp. 119-140

On Aug. 16, the class will start an eight-week discussion of the book *Island of the Innocent: A Consideration of the Book of Job* by Diane Glancy. This series, led by Richard Lindeborg, comes on the coattails of Pastor Katie's sermon series on Job late in July.

The Author writes: "The title of this book only appears in the King James version of the Bible— 'When men are cast down, then you shall say, "There is a lifting up, and he shall save the humble person. He shall deliver the island of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of your hands.'" (Job 22: 29-30).

"Who has clean hands when even pride was found in the upright Job? And where is the island of the innocent?"

This from the publisher: "There is much mystery surrounding the Book of Job. Who was he? Where was he? What prompts Job's "comforters" to accuse him of wrongdoing 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. There is Custer riding toward the Little Bighorn. There is a Native American doll in a museum, taken from a battlefield in western Nebraska after the massacre of Ash Hollow. There is Job, sitting in his yard chair in discomfort, among the falling leaves and his three friends.

"And finally, Jehorah. Only Diane Glancy could create the missing story of Job's wife, unsilencing this biblical character and endowing her suffering with meaning. Here is Jehorah in "Job's Wife" (Part Eight): "What next? What next?—I wrote in my book of sorrows. I keep a journal asking God what he is doing. Once I start it's hard to stop. I was expecting more boils on Job. More death—more ever-ready friendly visits. But after them—who was left?— I ask you. where is my broom? My head? My battle-ax?"

The reading assignments for this series are

- Aug. 16 Part One, pp 1-19
- Aug. 23 Part Two, pp. 23-38
- Aug. 30 Part Three, p. 43-74
- Sept. 6 Part Four, p. 77-88
- Sept. 13 Part Five, pp. 91-119
- Sept. 20 Part Six, pp. 125-142
- Sept. 27 Part Seven, pp. 147-161
- Oct. 4 Part Eight: Restoration and Notes, pp. 165-203

Getting the Book: Retail for this book is \$17.95, and that is Amazon's current price. The second-hand online offerings from Abe Books, Alibris and Amazon are as much as \$3 or \$4 less (including shipping) Paper Trail may be able to order it also. Richard Lindeborg is willing to order copies and have them drop shipped directly to your home.

THE CELTIC CROSS: A CHRISTIAN SYMBOL FOR THE AGES



The wonderful new Celtic cross in the churchyard draws its inspiration from crosses in churchyards in the British Isles. Santa Fe sculptor Kevin Sears, following comments by church's landscape team and Session, came up with a simple and timeless Celtic cross carved from Indiana limestone.

Celtic crosses come in many forms. Some are plain, while others are quite ornate.

According to various sources, the Celtic cross motif predates Christianity by at least 3,000 years. It appears in the form of heavily sculpted, vertically oriented, ancient monoliths which survive in various locations on the island of Ireland. A few of the ancient monuments were evidently relocated to stand in some of Ireland's earliest churchyards or to mark parish boundaries, probably between 400 CE and 600 CE, as Christianity was popularized throughout much of the island.

In Irish legend, a popular tale credits Saint Patrick with the design of the Celtic cross. The tale goes that St. Patrick combined the Christian cross with the sun (or possibly the moon). This was an attempt to highlight the importance of the cross by combining it with a known Celtic symbol of life. However, we now know that this style of Cross predates St. Patrick

Ringed crosses created in a Christian context first appeared in association with Christianity in Ireland in the 9th century and were probably introduced to Scotland, Wales and parts of England by Irish Christian missionaries.

Vikings influences in the late 11th century resulted in appearance of metal work, including ringed crosses imitating Scandinavian styles. The Picts shared modern Scotland with a zone of Irish cultural influence on the west coast, including Iona, providing the connection between Irish Celtic crosses in stone and metal when the Presbyterian tradition arrived in Scotland.

The late 19th century brought a Celtic revival of which monumental Celtic crosses for graves and other memorials are probably the most enduring examples. This revival spread well outside areas and populations with a specific Celtic heritage. Celtic ornamentation has also been used as a style of architectural decoration, especially in America around 1900, by architects such as Louis Sullivan.

Celtic Crosses have four quarter-circles cut away at the four points where the horizontal and vertical beams meet. It is also a common trait that the lower vertical section is wider at the base than at the point where it meets the center, while the other sections are usually rectangular. The circle has come to be thought of as symbolizing God's eternal love.

Traditional Irish crosses are rarely unadorned, particularly when they appear on headstones and other objects within the compounds of Irish Christian institutions. Such crosses often feature depictions of people. Distinctly Celtic designs such as Celtic knots and the Celtic Tree of Life have found widespread favor today. Our new cross takes a simpler, more modern approach.

It is a great addition to our churchyard.

Article by Richard Lindeborg



KUDOS AND THANK-YOU'S FROM THE TREASURER

Your continued **GENEROSITY** has made my job this year incredibly blessed, and easy. For this, I am deeply grateful. Most financial officers, during these unprecedented times, have not had such an easy “go” of it.

Our Balance sheet, as we have completed the first half of 2020, is strong, and our expenses have been blessed with adequate income to cover them. We have not fallen into the abyss of red ink. Once again, on behalf of the entire church community, our Pastor, and our Session, I commend you on your faithful giving.

The unswerving dedication of our Office Manager, Linda Solyntjes, who has worked steadily throughout, has also kept me sane, and assured, that we are being responsible stewards of God's money.

So, **KUDOS**, to all you generous givers to God's work, here in Las Vegas, and beyond.

—Mary Schipper, Treasurer

WE'RE NOT DONE, REALLY?

Check out progress on the hardscape in the front of the church. The rock – little to giant – has been laid, the old bench removed, the new rock wall finished, and the Celtic Cross placed on its pedestal. We even checked after a heavy rain and the water ran and pooled in the rock river. Gone the next morning, as planned.

A lot of work from Michael Long and crew, Gabriel Salazar and crew and Landscape Task Force (Judy Long, Tom Trigg, Charlotte Wootton and Jeff Salman). The movable letter, lit sign is ordered, the new benches are ordered and the concrete work of new sidewalks and installations will happen in mid-August. Specimen plants, shrubs and trees are being chosen and will be planted in September. All glory to God.

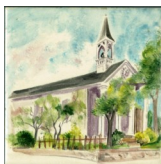
—Landscaping Committee



First United Presbyterian Church

AUGUST 2020

1000 Douglas Avenue
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505-425-7763



Website: www.lvpresbyterian.org

Facebook: Las Vegas First United Presbyterian (NM)

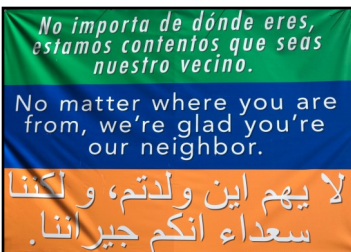
Email: fupc.nm@gmail.com

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

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3 rd	Rustie Mountjoy
4 th	Carly Trujillo
6 th	Renate Rendon
10 th	Jeff Salman
12 th	Van Swan
24 th	Mary Schipper
26 th	Shirley Sandoval
29 th	Celina Trujillo
30 th	Linda Solyntjes
31 st	Ruth Hazelton



Deep and Wide

*A Contemplative Service at the
Old Town Mission*

Canceled thru August 2020

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

Samaritan House is looking to fill a few job openings; let's help spread the word! They are hiring a Guest Advocate, Maintenance Worker, and Thrift Store Associate. For more information, call Samaritan House at 505-454-1390.



Samaritan House Food Donations AUGUST

Dry Milk, Oatmeal and other dry cereals
Coffee and Tea are always appreciated