

## Sharing the Love of Christ

First United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

PO Box 37

1000 Douglas Avenue

Las Vegas New Mexico 87701

### PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

OCTOBER 2020

Dear Friends,

As you might know, D.R. and I have had some landscaping done at our house. The “new stuff” is mostly rocked and mulched areas; we’ll add some trees and plants, if not this fall, in the spring. One big piece of our new landscape is that we’ve put in a labyrinth, and we’re very excited about it!



Labyrinths are an ancient symbol of wholeness that go back more than 4000 years. They show up on pre-historic rock carvings all over the world, including on Native American carvings here in the southwest part of the U.S. They have been linked to Christianity since the Middle Ages when they started to be included as walking paths in cathedrals. Of 80 cathedrals built in the Middle Ages, 22 of them included labyrinths. The most well-known is probably the one on the floor in the nave of the Chartres Cathedral in France (see photo, left), which was completed in 1220. It is a 13-circuit labyrinth just over 42 feet in diameter.

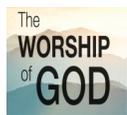
These medieval labyrinths became popular as a way to do pilgrimage. New converts to Christianity were expected to do a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but during the Crusades such travel was quite dangerous and very expensive. (One had to pay for body guards!) Consequently, the church allowed people to walk the labyrinth as a pilgrimage exercise; the labyrinths were sometimes referred to as the “path of Jerusalem.”

Labyrinths are popular today; many churches and public spaces have them, including over 100 health care facilities in the country. Walking the labyrinth has been shown to lower heart rate, reduce stress, and induce relaxation. Of course, many walk the labyrinth as a spiritual or prayer discipline.

D.R. and I love the spiritual discipline of the labyrinth and so, when we ended up with such a large yard, we thought that having our own would be a great idea. I’m thankful every time I walk it and every time I see it through the kitchen window. Our labyrinth is in the pattern of the Chartres or medieval labyrinth. It is seven circuits (36 feet in diameter) and can be walked in as little as 15 minutes (or much longer, depending on the walker). We’d like to invite you to come walk it if you’d like—any time during daylight hours on **Wednesdays** or **Thursdays**. You needn’t let us know you’ve arrived; just enter the backyard through the gate on the **north** side of the house and follow the path to the entrance of labyrinth.

I’m indebted to a few different websites to confirm this information about labyrinths, including Wikipedia, that of The Labyrinth Society, and *Guideposts* video, as well as WebMD. (I’d learned this stuff a while ago, after all—had to refresh my memory!) On page 4 of this newsletter, you’ll find some ideas about how to walk a labyrinth, but remember there is no right or wrong way. A labyrinth is not a maze; there is one path in and the same path out, symbolizing our journey to the center of things and our return to the world. Do give it a try if you’re interested. Know that it might take a few times walking the labyrinth to get the feel of this spiritual discipline.

With thanks for all of you,  
Pastor Katie



## WORSHIP TIDBITS by D.R. Palmer

We've been doing a lot of learning and designing to prepare for "Hybrid Worship" where some of us are worshipping via Zoom, some are present in the sanctuary, and some are in Perea Hall. The details may change, but we currently envision creating an "A/V Area" at the back of the sanctuary including two computers and the existing sound board. In addition, we'll have a remote-controlled camera that can be mounted either on the cross-beam at the south end of the sanctuary or on the east wall, to give us a good view of the row-arrangement and the round-arrangement, respectively. We will also have a large screen in Perea Hall connected to the A/V Area with a cable under the floor.

If you are in the sanctuary for worship, you will see the Zoom meeting on the sanctuary monitors. We will be able to continue to have worship leaders (and even preachers) participate from a remote location using Zoom, assuming they have a good internet connection.

If you are remote for worship, you will see the Zoom meeting on your own computer or phone, and you will see video from the sanctuary camera when the local worship leader and local preacher are speaking. The camera will zoom in on the pulpit or the lectern or a wide shot of the chancel, depending on what is happening during worship.

If you are in Perea Hall, you will see the same video on the large screen as the remote Zoom participants will see.

We anticipate using this system while we are under COVID-19 restrictions but also after we are all back together. We would like to continue to offer Zoom connectivity for remote folks and those who can't come to the physical building. We'd like to see our online presence continue and expand, gathering interest from the community at large. The large screen in Perea Hall can be used for overflow at weddings and funerals, and also for renters and others who are not using the sanctuary but need a large screen for their group.

D.R. Palmer and Jeff Salman are working on this design, consulting with others who have experience. Session has approved this project, so we plan to start implementation soon.

### WE ARE NOW A MATTHEW 25 CHURCH!



What does that mean? Matthew 25:31-46 asks us to actively reach out to those in need—to feed the poor, offer drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, take care of the sick, and visit the imprisoned. This designation as a Matthew 25 congregation means that we have made a commitment to focus on one or more of these efforts: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, eradicating systemic poverty.

Posters in the church will proclaim our Matthew 25 commitment. If you want to know more, visit <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/>. Mostly, commit to help us live out the Matthew 25 vision by pledging to help us be as vital a congregation as we can be, to undo racist structures, and to end systemic poverty.



## SOME OF OUR BIGGEST PROJECTS DON'T COME FROM ANNUAL GIVING

Our big projects this year (stucco and landscaping) were handled as non-budgetary items.

Off-budget expenditures usually come from bequests—the result of estate planning or other transfers of assets by members or friends of the church. In recent years, we have received several bequests with no restrictions. Remodeling the kitchen, stuccoing the church, new furniture for Perea Hall, and the current landscaping project all came from bequests. Some other bequests have stipulated their use to establish endowments—gifts that provide income but cannot be liquidated.

If you choose, you can still make a gift during the year in addition to your “routine” annual giving. These extra gifts usually go into the general fund, but can be designated for a particular use. You can easily contribute by clicking on the Give tab at [lvpresbyterian.org](http://lvpresbyterian.org) (there are instructions on the website for first-time users).

Gifts can be given for any of a variety of reasons. Maybe you came into some unexpected money that you want to share. Maybe you have a special interest in a program or project of the church and want to support that project. You can even earmark them to go into our bequest fund, to be used for future large projects or emergency situations.



### 2020 THANK OFFERING OF PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Since 1888, Presbyterian women have expressed their deep sense of gratitude for God’s blessings in their lives by giving back to people in their communities and around the world. Through the Thank Offering, we can help fund programs that provide education, relief from disasters, safe housing, cooking instruction, training for justice and advocacy work, and much more.

A 2020 grant was given to Catholic Charities in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe to build programs that provide learning help for refugee youth and equip parents to guide and advocate for their children.

If you would like to donate, please do so during October-November. Please mark your check “Thank Offering” in the memo line. You can also donate online.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of the Thank Offering and Presbyterian Women

Joyce Litherland

#### A NOTE FROM ELISA’S SISTER

Pastor Katie received this note from Elisa White’s sister Theresa:



*I just wanted you to know that my sister Elisa is now in her beautiful new home and is all settled in. She has a 24/7 caregiver in the home with three other residents to keep her company. Our goal to get her placed has finally happened and we could not be happier with her current situation. The caregivers are kind, patient, and very loving. She no longer has access to a computer so she will not have access to Sunday service. If you could let everyone know that she is well, happy, and healthy, I would appreciate it. Thank you for all your support through this very challenging time. I could not have done what I have without having all of you there supporting Elisa and I. I am sure she will stay in touch via mail. So keep an eye out for her letters! Thank you again. –Theresa*

If you’d like to send Elisa a note, her new address is:

2588 SW Grotto Circle  
Port St. Lucie, FL. 34953

## WALKING THE LABYRINTH



Following are some ideas about how to walk the labyrinth, but remember it's an individual thing.

If you find yourself wanting to walk when someone else is already on the path, it's possible for a couple of people to walk it at the same time. Allow one person to get a few minutes' head start before the second begins. If you meet each other on the path, simply step aside to

let the other person pass. Keep in mind that this is a meditative discipline, so don't expect to chat.

You'll notice that, in each part of the process, these ideas about what to do can contradict each other because different people have different goals as they walk. Decide what works for you; try out a few different ideas.

As you enter:

Start by facing the entry and pausing to set an intention, say a prayer, let a question rise to your consciousness, or bring an image to mind.

Clear your mind as much as you are able and enter the labyrinth as a "blank slate."

As you walk:

Concentrate on your steps and let everything else fall away.

Use a mantra to help you focus. I sometimes use, "Holy Spirit, come to me."

Develop an awareness of your surroundings by stopping at every turn or every 10 steps and looking around yourself.

Dance. Pray. Sing (if you're alone).

In the center:

Sit or stand, whichever is comfortable for you.

Breathe deeply, perhaps with a breath prayer. For example: "I breathe in light; I breathe out darkness."

Check in with your feelings.

Continue focusing on your mantra.

Say a prayer—of thanks, of need, of lament, of joy.

Just be.

As you walk out:

Continue considering your intention, prayer, question, or image

Use the same or a different mantra.

Again, notice your awareness by stopping and looking around.

Dance. Pray. Sing (if you're alone).

Just walk.

After you exit:

Note how you're feeling, then return to your day.

Offer thanks to God and to the labyrinth.

Take a few minutes to think about or articulate your experience.

Journal or write a poem.



Announcing our first-ever Autumn Fellowship Parade. On Saturday, Oct. 24, from 2-3 p.m., you're invited to participate in this festive drive/honk/wave by. You may drive your car or ask to be one of the stops.



Contact Siobhan Croto, any Community Life member, or Pastor Katie for more details!

**WHO ST. PAUL WAS TRAINED TO BE AND WHO HE BECAME—BY THE MAN IN BLACK**



The Sunday class for adults and youth will soon begin a discussion of *Man in White*, a study of St. Paul by country singer-songwriter Johnny Cash. Classes begin Oct. 11 and end Nov. 22.

Cash identified deeply with the Apostle Paul. The Man in Black was led to pen this historical novel about the life of Paul before and after his conversion, according to Christianbook.com.

His entry on Wikipedia informs us that much of Cash's music, especially that of his later career, echoed themes of sorrow, moral tribulation, and redemption.

It continues, “Cash was raised by his parents in the Southern Baptist denomination. A troubled but devout Christian, Cash has been characterized as ‘a lens through which to view American contradictions and challenges.’”

A biblical scholar, Cash penned his novel, *Man in White*, in 1986 and in the introduction writes about a reporter, who, interested in Cash's religious beliefs, questioned whether the book is written from a Baptist, Catholic, or Jewish perspective. Cash replies, “I'm a Christian. Don't put me in another box.”

In the mid-1970s, Cash and his wife, June, completed a course of study in the Bible through Christian International Bible College. He often performed at Billy Graham Crusades. At a Tallahassee Crusade in 1986, June and Johnny sang his song *One of These Days I'm Gonna Sit Down and Talk to Paul*.

He recorded several gospel albums and made a spoken-word recording of the entire New King James Version of the New Testament. Cash declared he was “the biggest sinner of them all,” and viewed himself overall as a complicated and contradictory man. Accordingly, Cash is said to have “contained multitudes,” and has been deemed “the philosopher-prince of American country music.”

A reader summarizes, “*Man in White* is a portrait of six pivotal years in the life of St. Paul. Cash weaves a fascinating story of the apostle's single-minded, zealous persecution of the early Christians and his dramatic conversion on the road to Damascus.

The class will be using the hardcover version. Used hardcover copies (HarperCollins 1986) are available through Alibris, AbeBooks, Amazon and other dealers for \$5.50 to \$12 including tax and shipping. Those who do not shop online can have Richard Lindeborg order a copy to be drop shipped to your address. A modern paperback version is also available, with different pagination.

Reading assignments are:

- Oct. 11 Introduction** (study of 1st Century temple life; Paul’s place in Cash’s beliefs; Ezra Carter’s (d. 1975) books--Josephus and other sources; process of writing, 1977-1986) pp 1-16
- Oct. 18 Prologue** (Jerusalem: Apostles’ preaching, young Saul’s anger and opposition, their trial and flogging) pp. 21-56
- Oct. 25 CH 1 The Vow: AD 32** (Trial and stoning of Stephen; Paul’s commission) p. 32-56
- Nov. 1 CH 2 The Fast** (Tarsus, Saul’s education, contact with followers of Jesus, growing sense of mission) pp. 59-85
- Nov. 8 CH 3 The Purge** ( Synagogue of the Isles of the Sea, the scourge, the Feast of Weeks, Saul criticized as over-zealous) pp. 90-114
- Nov. 15 CH 4 The illumination** (The road to Damascus, the house of Ananias) pp. 114-143
- CH 5 The Wandering** (Escape from Damascus trip To Mancherus) pp. 147-169
- Nov 22 CH 6 Revelation** (Sinai, vision of the destruction of the temple) pp. 174-183
- CH7 The Fellowship: AD 40** (Jerusalem, Barnabas, Peter, Paul starts under escort, for Caesarea) pp. 174-183
- Epilogue: AD 70** (Destruction of the temple, earlier persecutions in Rome, deaths of Peter and Paul) pp. 224-225

# CROP HUNGER WALK

ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME



## TEAM UP FOR CROP HUNGER WALK #20

We are celebrating 20<sup>th</sup> CROP Hunger Walk in Las Vegas, and the 51<sup>st</sup> year of CROP Hunger Walks nationally. As many of you know, our own Carrol Pearson was responsible for bringing CROP Walk to our community. Our church continues to lead the local planning team with Karyl Lyne as our fearless leader and representatives from Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Sorrows, the City of Las Vegas, Highlands University, Luna Community College, and others.

Join our team for this year's virtual walk at <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/lasvegasnm/>

We are taking action this year to help families living with hunger. We're asking everyone who can to help First United Presbyterian Church reach these two goals:

- 1) more meals for the growing number of people who need them in our community, and
- 2) more food security around the world.

Last year, we raised \$10,573 with 210 walkers and 21 business sponsors! This year we hope to raise \$11,000 with 300 participants.

Twenty-five percent of the funds raised support the work of *Comedor de San Pascual* Soup Kitchen and Pantry, the Las Vegas Community Soup Kitchen, and the Samaritan House.

The remainder of the funds supports the global work of Church World Service (CWS) to empower communities in more than 30 countries worldwide.

Please join or donate to our team today to make these goals a reality!

First United Presbyterian Church

<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/lasvegasnm/FUPC>

## MORE ADDITIONS TO LANDSCAPING

The landscaping task force is almost finished with its job. The plantings are in, two new benches have been added, lots of new sidewalk, and the new church sign is up and proclaiming our presence in the community, especially at night when the automatic lighting shows up the sign. Please drive by and take a look. We will see how the plants fill out and possibly add more next year. Notice the Tatarian Maple "Hot Wings" in the front yard, planted in honor of our 150<sup>th</sup> birthday. It should give us lots of color and interest.

The Landscaping Task Force, Tom Trigg, Jeff Salman, Charlotte Wootton and Judy Long, have worked hard to create our new face to the community. Thanks to all. And a shout out to Michael Long who did lots of the paid work as well as donating much time, manpower and great ideas.





**JOIN US TO DISCUSS THE FILM A SOCIAL DILEMMA**



This must-see film is by Emmy-award winning filmmaker Jeff Orlowski. The Sundance Institute says this about the movie:

Set in the dark underbelly of Silicon Valley, *The Social Dilemma* fuses investigative documentary with enlightening narrative drama. . . . Expert testimony from tech whistle-blowers exposes our disturbing predicament: the services Big Tech provides—search engines, networks, instant information, et cetera—are merely the candy that lures us to

bite. Once we're hooked and coming back for more, the real commodity they sell is their prowess to influence and manipulate us.

You can watch this 93-minute film on Netflix or YouTube. Frank Beurskens will lead a discussion of the film via Zoom (same link as worship) on Tuesday, October 20, at 6:30 p.m. Among the questions we'll ponder is this fascinating one: What impact does social media have on the concept of Truth—is it now an economic concept rather than a philosophical or moral one?

**CONTINUED BOOK DISCUSSIONS?**

When we began our "Summer Book Club" meetings in June, I had not thought about whether we would extend these gatherings into the fall. We've had good attendance at these events discussing books that address issues that matter to us as individuals and as people of the Church and have branched out to a couple of discussions about film as well.

Perhaps we can proceed rather informally? If you're reading a book you'd like to discuss with others, let us know and we can get the word out and set a date for a discussion via Zoom.

I'm reading Ibram X. Kendi's book *How to Be An Antiracist*. If you've read it or would like to and want to discuss it, let me know and we'll set a date!



**21 DAY RACIAL EQUITY HABIT BUILDING CHALLENGE  
NOVEMBER 1-21**

The Session has committed to doing the 21 Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge the first 21 days of November. We welcome and encourage all members of our congregation to participate. You can find out what's involved and find all the resources to do the challenge on the following sites: 1.) The Black Lives Matter website has a page with resources for becoming anti-racist, and the 21 Day Challenge is laid out there <https://www.lafirstumc.org/black-lives-matter-resources-for-becoming-anti-racist> and 2.) Alternatively, you can follow the more detailed challenge on Dr. Eddie Moore Jr.'s website <https://www.eddiemoorej.com/21daychallenge> as he is the original creator of the challenge with options of what to read, watch, listen, or notice each day. Each of us can chart our own course, track and reflect following our choices of which resources to engage. At the end of the 21 days we plan to get together and share our reflections since part of the challenge is to "pray for the places you are challenged and for those you are learning about whose lives may be different than yours."



## CLERK'S CORNER

FUPC has a document called the Policies and Procedures (P&P) Manual, A Living Document. It contains mostly descriptions of how we do the work of the church. Sections include FUPC Statements of Mission, Vision and Values; Committees of the Session; Governance Procedures; Facilities Use; Preparation for Ministry as a Ruling Elder or Deacon; Church Office as a Call to Service and Ministry. Five appendices include Essential Documents of the Church, FUPC Bylaws, Forms & Deadlines, Officers & Employees of the Church, and the Finance and Accounting Manual.

The P&P is a 'living' document because the ways we do our work change from time to time. A new banking regulation may require us to change how money is accounted for, or the name or number of members of a committee change, or a committee is given new responsibilities, etc. All of these items pass through the Session for approval, but do not require action by the congregation. However, they need to be recorded so that future leaders of the church know the 'new' ways the work of the church is accomplished.

This can be contrasted with the Bylaws, which are the internal 'laws' saying who we are, our structure and governance. The Bylaws can be changed only by the action of the congregation. For instance a congregational vote changed the term of Nominating Committee members from 1 to 2 years (1/2 in alt years); and their election at the Annual Congregational meeting in June, so terms coincide the other church officers. A new proposed change, for the vote of the congregation and an update to FUPC Bylaws, will allow remote meeting and voting (of Session and congregation) when circumstances warrant, confirmed in the minutes of said body.

The last update of the P&P was 12-19. Since then, the Interpretation & Support Committee has become the Time, Talent and Treasure Committee and developed a Financial & Accounting Manual. Also, the P&P now notate FUPC's status as a Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-NM Advocating Congregation as of 3-19, and of FUPC as a sponsor of the New Mexico Health Security Campaign. We are a living, evolving body, and our documents must reflect and record those evolutions. Updating the documents is a responsibility of the Clerk of Session-completed!

Karyl Lyne, Clerk of Session



## HISTORICAL OLD BLUE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SIGN

Our Session has decided there is no place for this sign in the new landscaping and signage. Does anyone want the sign or have good ideas on how to repurpose it? Robin could spruce it up. Neither the OTM or the cemetery people can use it. If there are no takers, it will be disposed of gently and permanently. Contact Judy Long ([longfam@newmexico.com](mailto:longfam@newmexico.com)) or 505-429-0379)



If you are not on the email distribution list for our Sunday Online Worship bulletin and would like to be, please send an [email](#) to the church office requesting that your name/email be added. The bulletin is emailed on Thursday or Friday for the service along with a message from Pastor Katie.



### Chocolate Anyone?

Karen Topping has chocolate bars on sale from the Equal Exchange inventory here at the church! If anyone is interested in buying some, please text/call her at 505-617-5315 and she'll be happy to meet and sell them to you at prices varying between \$1 to \$2.



Giving Online is easy to use. If you use a credit card, there is a small extra charge. However, if you have the donation come directly from your bank there is no other charge. Thanks to those of you who regularly use Online Giving for both recurring and one-time donations. Quick and easy You can connect to the site via our website or click on the Donate button below.



Contact the church office if you have any questions.



### LET'S GET TOGETHER

Remember that we have three social gatherings via Zoom each week. Here's the schedule:  
Sunday morning fellowship following worship. Hang around after the postlude and spend  
**Let's Get Together!** some time 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 relax and visit together.

Thursday Teatime, Thursday afternoons at 3:30. Not a morning person? Want some more time to visit? Brew a cup of tea or grab a soda 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>

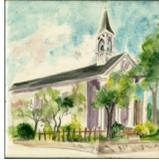
If you haven't been on Zoom before, you'll see instructions for downloading the Zoom app and allowing your camera (if you have one) and microphone to be used by Zoom, and then the meeting will open.

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.

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 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



Need some inspiration to better attend to the world or some thought-provoking ideas to ponder? Check out a daily devotional. They are short (usually under 10 minutes) and offer a variety of ways to pay attention to God's work in the world and to live in more faithful ways. You will find them on the church's Facebook page or you can link to them via the website. Many thanks to those who share their wisdom and inspiration through these devotionals! I want to especially thank Carol Linder for her devotionals; she has decided that her crazy schedule doesn't allow her to continue. Beth Urech will step into the Tuesday slot this month. Continued thanks for those who offer these devotionals to us!

Monday – Pastor Katie  
 Tuesday – Beth Urech  
 Wednesday – Rod Billingsley

Thursday - Pat Halverson  
 Friday – Karyl Lyne



- 3<sup>rd</sup> Linda Cunningham
- 6<sup>th</sup> Rod Billingsley
- 7<sup>th</sup> Chad Boliek
- 12<sup>th</sup> Katie Linder
- 13<sup>th</sup> Siobhan Croto
- 18<sup>th</sup> Lisa Weinstein
- 19<sup>th</sup> Renee Soderlund



**Deep and Wide**

*A Contemplative Service at the  
 Old Town Mission*

**Canceled until further notice**

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



**Samaritan House Food Donations**

**OCTOBER**

Peanut Butter and Jelly  
 Coffee and Tea are always appreciated