



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

JANUARY 2021

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I can't say that I'm sad to see 2020 go; it's been a rough year in many ways. And yet, things do not magically change as we turn the calendar from December 2020 to January 2021. The pandemic and its consequences are still with us; we still live in a time of political and social upheaval; climate change still threatens our planet. So, how happy is this new year, anyway? How are we to head into it?

I recently ran across a poem by Robert W. Service (1874-1958) called "The Passing of the Year." In it, the narrator looks at an "audience" saying good-bye to the old year and understands that they all see the year differently—some are happy to see it go, others sad that a good year is ending. While many of us might be glad to have 2020 behind us and have high hopes that 2021 will be better, 2020 did offer, amid its challenges, some opportunities and sparks of shaping a new vision for our world. Service ends his poem with thanks where our thanks must always go: to our God, who gives us all our days, some welcome, some challenging. I hope you find the poem thought-provoking.

With thanks for all of you,

Pastor Katie

The Passing of the Year by Robert W. Service

My glass is filled, my pipe is lit,
My den is all a cosy glow;
And snug before the fire I sit,
And wait to *feel* the old year go.
I dedicate to solemn thought
Amid my too-unthinking days,
This sober moment, sadly fraught
With much of blame, with little praise.

Old Year! upon the Stage of Time
You stand to bow your last adieu;
A moment, and the prompter's chime
Will ring the curtain down on you.
Your mien is sad, your step is slow;
You falter as a Sage in pain;
Yet turn, Old Year, before you go,
And face your audience again.

That sphinx-like face, remote, austere,
Let us all read, whate'er the cost:
O Maiden! why that bitter tear?
Is it for dear one you have lost?
Is it for fond illusion gone?
For trusted lover proved untrue?
O sweet girl-face, so sad, so wan
What hath the Old Year meant to you?

And you, O neighbour on my right
So sleek, so prosperously clad!
What see you in that aged sight
That makes your smile so gay and glad?
What opportunity unmissed?
What golden gain, what pride of place?
What splendid hope? O Optimist!
What read you in that withered face?

And You, deep shrinking in the gloom,
What find you in that filmy gaze?
What menace of a tragic doom?
What dark, condemning yesterdays?
What urge to crime, what evil done?
What cold, confronting shape of fear?
O haggard, haunted, hidden One
What see you in the dying year?

And so from face to face I flit,
The countless eyes that stare and stare;
Some are with approbation lit,
And some are shadowed with despair.
Some show a smile and some a frown;
Some joy and hope, some pain and woe:
Enough! Oh, ring the curtain down!
Old weary year! it's time to go.

My pipe is out, my glass is dry;
My fire is almost ashes too;
But once again, before you go,
And I prepare to meet the New:
Old Year! a parting word that's true,
For we've been comrades, you and I --
I thank God for each day of you;
There! bless you now! Old Year, good-bye!





WORSHIP TIDBITS

Many thanks to the Rev. Dr. Dan Saperstein and to our Pastor Emeritus, Rev. Randy Campbell (HR), for filling FUPC's virtual pulpit during my time away. On Jan. 10 we will focus on baptism and will have the opportunity to renew our baptismal vows. As a church in the Reformed tradition, Presbyterians believe in one baptism in the name of the triune God. Renewal is not "re-baptism," but an opportunity for us to remember our commitment to live as those baptized into the family of God.

According to the *Book of Order* of the PC(USA), "[t]he Sacraments are the Word of God enacted and sealed in the life of the Church, the body of Christ. They are gracious acts of God, by which Christ Jesus offers his life to us in the power of the Holy Spirit. They are also human acts of gratitude, by which we offer our lives to God in love and service. The Sacraments are both physical signs and spiritual gifts..." (W-3.0401).

I've often been asked what baptism means in our faith tradition. It's hard to answer that question in a short phrase. But pulling from the *Book of Order* those things that most resonate with me in its explanation of the theology of baptism, I would emphasize that baptism is a sign of God's covenant with us; I would quote these words (W-3.0402):

After he rose from the dead, Jesus commissioned his followers to go and make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them to obey his commands. The disciples were empowered by the outpouring of the Spirit to continue Jesus' mission and ministry, inviting others to join this new way of life in Christ. As Paul wrote, through the gift of Baptism we are "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:11).

By renewing our vows, we remind ourselves of our commitment to be in covenant relationship with God; we remind ourselves that, like those early disciples, we are empowered by the Spirit to continue Jesus' ministry, and we are compelled to invite others to join us in our journey as followers of the way of Christ.

I invite you to explore for yourself what our *Book of Order* [which is Part II of the PC(USA) constitution] tells us about baptism. You can find the *Book of Order* online at https://oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/2019-boo-elec_071219.pdf



Advent is here and it's time to go caroling and drink warm mulled cider and send Christmas cards and wrap presents and bake those cookies we bake only one time a year and go see our families to welcome the Christ Child. Hmmmmmm well it won't be quite that way this year. We're all staying close to home and leave the safety of that place only when we must, and then, masked and gloved. We zoom here and there for this meeting and that one; we worship together, apart, and we contemplate the time when we can once again hug each other and safely breathe the same air. Meanwhile, the work of our church continues.

Recently, the Session approved a house-warming gift to the Samaritan House of eight specially stackable tables for their classroom. These tables will enhance the classes that are planned for that space—life skills, communication skills, job training skills, etc. Also, in service to the Samaritan House, you'll remember the wonderful initiative of Denise Spicer to provide Friday evening meals for the Samaritan House. That outreach has been very successful. An effective and efficient team of people creates recipes, purchases food, prepares food and delivers food every Friday and, now, Monday too. Van Swan schedules the volunteers who cook each week and he oversees what will be prepared and when. This group also gathers from time to time to clean the kitchen.

Meanwhile the Session has approved the 2021 Church Budget, so we can move ahead with plans to continue our online worship presence via a sanctuary camera and computer. The Presbytery has asked FUPC to host the July, 2022, Presbytery Meeting, since it was not possible for us to host in July, 2020. We'll celebrate our 152nd Anniversary then!

So, while this Advent seems a bit different, FUPC continues the work of love and care to our communities! May your Christmas be full of love and the joy of sharing and caring.

Karyl Lyne , Clerk of Session



THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
for Advent and Christmas Worship

We had such wonderful and meaningful worship experiences this past December, with the season of Advent culminating in the fabulous Christmas Eve service. Even though the pandemic restrictions kept us from gathering in person, we rocked gathering virtually over Zoom. There were quite a few people involved behind the scenes to make that happen, and I'd like to recognize them all here. Please forgive me if I've left someone out.

First and foremost, thanks go to Pastor Katie for her insightful and inspiring sermons and her leadership in carrying out the "Yielding to the Potter" theme in the worship structure, prayers, and hymn choice. Thanks also to our Worship Leaders during this time: Beth Urech, Deb Allen-Reid, Sharon Roe, Juli Salman, and to the readers for Christmas Eve: Chad Boliek, Tom Trigg, and Beth Urech.

Thanks to Felicia Flanagan (via Beth Urech), who created the pottery for our advent wreath, and thanks to Charlotte Wootton and Susan Apodaca for the design and execution of that advent wreath display and the communion table decorations. Thanks to Tom Trigg for hanging of the banners.

A huge shout-out to Karyl Lyne for her music interpretation and direction and final sound mix; to Em Krall for her magnificent preludes and postludes, and her superb piano and organ accompaniments; and to the small army of singers willing to share their talents recording alone into a microphone while listening on headphones: Pam Abreu, Deb Allen-Reid, Christie Baskett, Erin Gilland, Mark Gillingham, Judy Long, Karyl Lyne, Rosalie Masoero, D.R. Palmer, Tegan Palmer, and Kent Reid.

Special thanks to our Christmas Eve guest artists: Kevin Thomas, who sang "Prepare the Way, O Zion," and flautist Billie Matthews for "Silent Night, Holy Night."

Huge gratitude to Tegan Palmer for preparing all of the videos to go with all of those musical pieces and for finding the visual images that match the music so perfectly. Thanks also to the myriad members and friends who shared their photos of family, community, nature, nativity sets, and Christmas cheer, so that Tegan could make the videos reflect our community here.

Thanks to all the Zoom attendees for their fellowship before and after the services, and to D.R. Palmer for serving as Zoom host.

The Worship and Music committee offers profound gratitude to all of you.



Thanks to Community Life and the Deacons for the wonderful cookies!!

Thanks to all those who organized the event!!

Thanks to those who baked, bagged and delivered cookies to our church families.

While the cookies were great, the best part was seeing a church friend in person rather than via Zoom.



BRIGHTER DAYS FOR OTMCC

After months with little activity followed by a damaging theft of all of our electronic equipment, news from Old Town Mission Community Center has finally begun to brighten.

Thanks to a young friend of the center, Makane Nakasone, we established a Go Fund Me web page to ask for help in obtaining replacement equipment. Between this page and donations received at the Church we have so far collected \$2650 as of Dec. 18. Our goal is \$5000, which we feel will cover the replacement costs as well as the cost of a system of security cameras and sensors to help prevent future break-ins. Helping reduce the amount needed has been the donation of some computer equipment and a projector, all of which needs to be replaced.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee from the church has been very busy at OTMCC. Their first chore was to repair the ruined side door and wall damage where the thief broke in. The old church sign in front of the building, which was leaning over, was stabilized. In the photo, you will see Corky Halverson as the fearless leader of a half dozen seniors who laid in countless batts of fiberglass insulation above the ceiling of the old Sanctuary. D.R., Corky and Tom have been busy researching and buying new heaters for the two large rooms. These will be more efficient and quieter. They will be controlled by high tech thermostats which can be controlled by smart phone apps without having to trek over to the building at 6 a.m. And finally, JOT and B&G are working on a design for the entrance, which will make the main entryway plain to newcomers as well as safer.

The Joint Operating Team for the Center has begun to plan for activities now that we have some hope for a return to a more normal Fall in 2021. This coming Spring we are going to attempt some online media education for the community in conjunction with the SPOT Youth Team. Once we get the go-ahead from our hardworking public health workers the SPOT Youth Team can start meeting in the Center again. If all goes well, we intend to repeat 2019's very successful Mixer for the community and faculty at United World College. We also want to get back to our periodic Friday Night Fun events for youth and families. We will keep you posted. Thanks to all for your support!



Deacon Ministry

WHAT BEING A DEACON MEANS TO ME

Being a Deacon means working with others to meet the needs of our church family and community in the ways we are able. We are small in number, but mighty in faith. With the help of volunteers, we get a lot done. Even in these Covid times we are kept busy. What we need from our church family is help in knowing when there is a need we may not have on our radar. Call the Deacon of the month or Deacon chair, Mary Schipper if you know of a member or friend of the church who may need a visit, a meal, a prayer shawl or a prayer. We are here to serve.

Sharon Vander Meer

Deacon of the Month, December

505-617-0839



Easy to Attend

STUDY OF HIDDEN CHRISTMAS CONTINUES IN JANUARY

During January, the Bible-based class for adults and youth will finish discussing the book used during the church's Advent study: *Hidden Christmas: The surprising Truth Behind the Birth of Christ* by Timothy Keller (2016).

During the Zoom era, sessions are easier to attend, with no travel time, no dress code, and the ability to eat breakfast during class.

Classes are on Zoom on Sunday mornings from 9:15 to 10:00 a.m. – using the same link as the worship service – and will be led by Richard Lindeborg.

Moving to Bible passages dealing with events after the actual birth of Christ, Keller first writes about the shepherds, who heard good news of the Christ child, the advice to “Fear not,” and the message of, “Peace on earth.” They went to Bethlehem and returned giving testimony that amazed all who heard it.

Next, Keller writes about Mary and Joseph's taking Jesus to the temple to be circumcised, a story that takes a twist when Simeon recognizes the child as the Messiah and reveals His destiny and how it will both create and resolve conflict.

Finally, Keller turns to John's explanation of what the nativity means: How it brings a new fellowship with God and a new sense of joy.

Keller achieves his pastoral goal of teaching Christmas' most important message — “God alone has the life, truth and joy that we lack and cannot generate ourselves”— and in doing so, provides solace for those who seek it. – Reader Review

Since sessions have already started it might be best to purchase a Kindle copy or order a hard copy with expedited shipping. Richard can also order a copy shipped directly to your home.

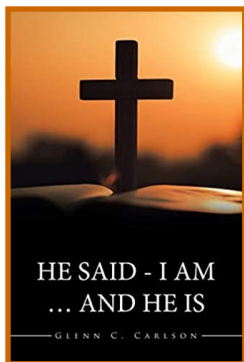
Reading assignments

January 3, Chapter 6 “The Shepherds' Faith,” [Luke and Psalms] pp. 100-115

January 10, Chapter 7 “A sword in the Soul,” [thoughts of many hearts revealed] pp. 116-128

January 17, Chapter 8 “The Doctrine of Christmas,”[the gospel of John] pp. 129-142

STARTING JANUARY 24



Later in January the class will start discussion of the book “*He said – I am ... and He is*” by Glenn C. Carlson, former Navy pilot, media personality and Presbyterian pastor. The book deals with the seven things Jesus asserted he is in the Gospel of John.

The book is available from Xlibris.com in soft cover for \$14.99, for \$11.85 with free shipping from Amazon Prime and as a Kindle book for \$3/99. There are also a few used copies available for \$5 to \$10 with shipping from AbeBooks and Alibris. Reading assignments for the first two sessions (chapter titles):

January 24, pp. vii-10: front matter, “Jesus Different” and “I Am the Bread of Life,”

January 31, pp. 11-19: “I am the Light of the World” and “I Am the Gate for the Sheep”.



NEW YEAR UPDATE FROM TIME, TALENTS, & TREASURE

I have served in several different leadership roles within our church. In August I took on a brand-new role chairing the TT&T Committee. Thankfully, I have been blessed with wonderful committee members.

TT&T is a wonderful mixture of new and old, with Richard Lindeborg, Van Swan, and Mary Schipper having served several years, and us newbies – me, Denice Spicer, and Pam Abreu. Pastor Katie is an always-present *ex officio* member.

When you tell people the committee name, it often requires explanation about what TT&T stands for and what our committee does. Time, Talents, and Treasures was, for as long as I have been a church member, the Interpretation and Support (AKA I&S) committee. People usually think of us as the finance committee. Our goal is to stimulate patterns of giving and spending in the church that build and maintain stability to do God's work in the present and the future. We do this by encouraging faithful offerings of time, talents, and treasures from our members, friends, and committees.

For the last six months we have focused much of our attention on developing our 2021 balanced budget! The Session approved the presentation and narrative budgets for roughly \$193,000. We have been blessed with consistent and generous annual giving and bequests, which allow us to continue to grow faith, seek justice, and build community. The presentation and narrative budgets will be included in the 2020 Annual Report and presented at the February Congregational Meeting. Please come to this meeting with your questions and comments.

We start our TT&T meetings considering scriptures related to our committee charge. I thought I would share these with you as we start a new year and think about planning for the long-term sustainability of our church.

August: You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us (2 Corinthians 9:11)

September: The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. *Corinthians 9:6-7*

October: So Moses gave command, and word was proclaimed throughout the camp: "No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary." So the people were restrained from bringing; for what they had already brought was more than enough to do all the work. *Exodus 36:6-7*

November: He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." 28 But she answered him, "Sir,[a] even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." *Mark 7: 27-28 27*

December: And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel." *Ezra 3:11*

Carol Linder, Chair





If you are using our online giving process, please check the “end date” of your automatic payments. And thanks for giving so generously this year. Contact the church office if you have any questions.



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.



Remember that we have social gatherings via Zoom each week. Here's the schedule:

Sunday morning fellowship following worship. Hang around after the postlude and spend some time chatting with folks!

Coffee with Katie, Tuesday mornings at 9:00. We'll chat over coffee (I prefer tea) and breakfast if you'd like. It's an opportunity to visit together with no agenda, just getting to know each other better.

- Now, about Thursday Teatime...I'd hoped this would give folks who “don't do mornings” or who have Tuesday morning conflicts a chance to visit, but it seems not to be a good time. (It's been a few weeks now since I've had a Thursday afternoon visitor.) After the first of the year, I'll be around a few more Thursdays, but if no one shows up to visit for another couple of weeks, I might cancel this Thursday afternoon time. Please feel free to suggest another time that might work better.



TO JOIN ANY FUPC EVENT VIA ZOOM:



The easiest way to join worship or other FUPC public events is simply to go to our website (lvpresbyterian.org) and click on the “Join Us on Zoom” link.

You can also open your web browser and go to <https://us02web.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 a few minutes before the event so that you can get the Zoom app set up ahead of time.

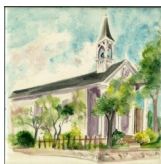
If you don't have a computer but want **to join by phone, call 312-626-7699** and enter the meeting ID number (573-920-0081) when prompted. Please note this is a Chicago number, so if your phone plan does not have unlimited calls, you may incur long-distance charges.

For committee meetings and other non-public meetings, you'll receive a link from your committee chair.

First United Presbyterian Church

JANUARY 2021

1000 Douglas Avenue
PO Box 37
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505-425-7763



Website: www.lvpresbyterian.org

Facebook: Las Vegas First United Presbyterian (NM)

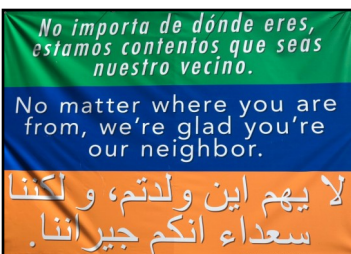
Email: fupc.nm@gmail.com

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



➔ MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

There will be a brief congregational meeting following worship on January 10 to receive the report of the Nominating Committee.



Our Daily Devotionals

Remember that we post a devotional every weekday. Taking a few minutes during the day to devote to your spiritual journey can be a real boost. You can find our devotionals on the FUPC Facebook page or by clicking on the “devotionals” link under “Latest News” on our website – lvpresbyterian.org

Thank you to those who have committed to providing weekly devotionals:

Monday – Pastor Katie

Tuesday – Beth Urech

Wednesday – Rod Billingsley

Thursday – Pat Halverson

Friday – Denice Spicer



We're a
MATTHEW 25
church

pcusa.org/matthew25



Samaritan House Food Donations JANUARY

Peanut Butter and Jelly
Coffee and Tea are always appreciated



4 th	Betty Quick
6 th	Em Krall
8 th	Irene Crespín
16 th	Bob Vander-Meer
17 th	Debra Allen-Reid
18 th	Fred Salas
19 th	Tom Trigg
21 st	Don Monnheim
29 th	Mark Gillingham