



Sharing the Love of Christ

First United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

PO Box 37

1000 Douglas Avenue

Las Vegas New Mexico 87701

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

JULY 2021

Dear FUPC Family and Friends,

Be glad in the Lord and rejoice!

On Friday, June 18, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham lifted all pandemic restrictions in the state of New Mexico, effective July 1.

On Wednesday, June 23, the FUPC Session, following guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Gov. Lujan Grisham's action, approved the recommendations of our Re-Entry Task Force beginning in July. These recommendations include:

- Douglas Avenue and Old Town Mission buildings to be re-opened for normal activities
- 3 feet of distancing recommended in the sanctuary
- Masks not required for those who are fully vaccinated, but people are welcome to wear masks if they are more comfortable doing so
- People who are vaccinated may sing hymns
- Masks required for people who are not vaccinated, on an honor system
- Sunday morning class can meet in person and use a laptop to zoom in folks who want to remain online
- Sunday morning breakfasts can resume, using appropriate preparation techniques
- Sunday morning fellowship can resume at the discretion of the Community Life Committee with fans on and doors open
- Contact tracing will be continued for now

Friends, this is good news for us. With the adoption of these recommendations and with our hybrid format in place, all can worship where they are comfortable. We do stress that, if you have not been vaccinated, you'll need to wear a mask and refrain from singing. And, as always, please protect yourself and others by staying home if you have a fever or any symptoms of illness, whether that be a cold or something more serious.

If you know those who have been unable to worship with us online, please pass on the news that we look forward to seeing them on site very soon!

The Re-Entry Task Force will continue to follow updates on the virus, the number of cases, and the news of variants of the virus, and will of course take necessary steps to make safety a priority.

I look forward to seeing you, both on the Zoom gallery and in the church building. Know as well that if you have business at the church, the office is now open with new hours going forward: Monday – Thursday, 9 a.m. - noon.

On another, personal note, I will be on Study Leave from June 28 – July 4 and then on vacation through July 13, when we will be in Denver to help out as Tegan recovers from a July 7 surgery. Please pray that the surgery will go smoothly and her recovery quickly.

With thanks for all of you,
Pastor Katie



WORSHIP TIDBITS

I want to use this month's "Worship Tidbits" to celebrate all of those who not only enabled Zoom worship to happen, but to continually improve over the last 15 months. My first thanks are for all of you who continued to make up our worshipping community. Even if you had never heard of Zoom before, you learned how to use it, you helped each other, you were gracious and understanding with the learning curve and effusive with your thanks, and you showed up to praise God and to connect with your church family. Some of you grew to like worshipping this way; some of you didn't. But your commitment to worship brought you back again and again.

Next, but certainly not second, I thank all of those who made Zoom-only worship happen for 66 weeks. Lots and lots of people were involved and, as we worked toward improving the worship experience, the number of people involved grew. So if you were a Zoom worship leader, thank you. If you recorded musical tracks, thank you. Both of these lists—worship leaders and singers—are very long. If you were a Zoom host, thank you. If you shared photos, thank you. If you helped decorate the sanctuary or the outside of the church so that we would have photos for liturgical seasons, thank you. If you were a guest preacher on Zoom, thank you.

And to those who did the trouble-shooting, the experimenting with new ideas, and who were there virtually every single week, thank you: to Karyl Lyne, for directing music in a whole new way and for sound mixing; for Em Krall, for ensuring that accompaniments got recorded early enough each week for the singers to record; for D.R. Palmer, who carried the biggest chunk of the technological load; and for Tegan Palmer, who not only prepared music video for much of those 15 months, but who volunteered to record our hymns until we figured out how to do that ourselves.

THANK YOU!!



Not long after the pandemic limited our ability to be out and about, someone asked me if FUPC could have a frequent online presence—like, perhaps, daily devotionals. As we are able to return to worship in the sanctuary, we want to maintain that online presence for anyone who finds the devotionals meaningful. You can find these weekday devotionals on the FUPC Facebook page or by clicking on the "devotionals" link under "Latest News" on our website at lvpresbyterian.org. These devotionals provide a short time out from the bustle of our daily activity to spend time focused on our spiritual journey.

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

Monday – Pastor Katie

Wednesday – Rod Billingsley

Friday – Denise Spicer

Tuesday – Beth Urech

Thursday – Pat Halverson



COFFEE WITH KATIE GOES LIVE!

Pastor Katie will be away for a couple of weeks, but when she returns, let's go to Charlie's! Beginning July 20 at 8:30 a.m., Coffee with Katie at Charlie's will resume!



CLERK'S CORNER

This month I want to give a shout out to our wonderful Buildings and Grounds Committee. They are SOOOO on top of things. As those of you who have been in the sanctuary recently know, B&G has built an AV Center at the back of the sanctuary to top all AV centers. It houses the sound board, which controls the microphones on the pulpit, the lectern and above the choir loft. It houses the computer equipment to operate the in-sanctuary monitors as well as Zoom for online worshipers. In addition, it houses the miles of wires, cords and cables necessary to make it all run.

The Center is an enclosure with a long desk to hold the equipment, and space for the three technicians who operate the equipment. The sanctuary side of the five-foot-high enclosure echoes the arched window motif on the wooden panel behind the cross at the front of the sanctuary. Robin Carlson designed and built the enclosure. WOW! Beautiful and functional, Robin.

I think other members built the expansive desk. In any case, what could be an eyesore is a beautiful addition to the sanctuary. Thank you, Buildings and Grounds! Now, if that is not enough, B&G has also installed the new security systems in both the Douglas Avenue building and the Old Town Mission. I expect this group will come up with some more projects soon, so keep your eyes on them!

In appreciation,
Karyl Lyne
Clerk of Session



BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS

Our Little Free Library is doing a booming business of sharing books. We especially need more children's books. They go really fast. Then Young Adult and always fiction. All books accepted, except textbooks and outdated travel guides. You can drop on my front porch (769 Diane) or leave in church office. (Mon-Thurs 9-12). What a mission for us, encouraging literacy and education. Thanks.

Judy Long

“Praying”



It doesn't have to be
the blue iris, it could be
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
small stones; just
pay attention, then patch
a few words together and don't try
to make them elaborate, this isn't
a contest but the doorway
into thanks, and a silence in which
another voice may speak.

Please say, “Yes!”

Our new Worship Leader Coordinator is Ann Taylor-Trujillo. Please consider saying "Yes!" to Ann if you get a call requesting that you be Worship Leader one Sunday. Thanks to Ann for serving in this way.



SimpliSafe Alarm Systems Installation

As Trustees, Judy Long, Tom Trigg, and Carol Linder oversee our church property. Session approved SimpliSafe as the best option to protect our resources at the April Session meeting. Tom Trigg and members of the Building and Grounds committee have been working hard to set up the system. Installation is almost complete on 1000 Douglas, and equipment and cameras will be installed soon at the Old Town Mission. If you are a frequent visitor to the church you may see the cameras, entry detectors, and glass breaking sensors. Don't be surprised that you may set off the alarm if you are in the building when we are not expecting your presence!



A Good Friday Devotional Exercise with Meaning All Year Long

The Sunday morning Bible-based class for adults and youth is now discussing *The Hope of Glory: Reflections on the Last Words of Jesus from the Cross*, a book by Jon Meacham, Pulitzer Prize winning biographer and author of *The Soul of America* and *American Gospel*.

The series started June 13 and runs through Aug. 15, with a break on July 4. Classes are still on Zoom for now and rescheduled for 9 to 9:50 Sunday mornings to allow attendees time to get to the worship service at the church if they wish. The Zoom link is the same as for worship.

The subtitle of the book refers to “The Last Words of Jesus from the Cross,” often stated as the “seven last words.” In scripture, each of the “words” is a phrase (or two). For each saying, Meacham composes an essay on the origins of Christianity and how Jesus’s final words created a foundation for “oral and written traditions that upended the order of the world”.

There is no class on July 4th, but the remaining reading assignments for the series are:

July 11 – The Third Word: “Woman, behold thy son! Behold thy mother!” pp. 55-60

July 18 – The Fourth Word: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” pp. 53-71

July 25 – The Fifth Word: “I thirst.” pp. 73-80

August 1 – The Sixth Word: “It is finished.” pp. 83-91

August 8 - The Seventh Word: “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” pp. 93-97

August 15 – Epilogue: Even unto the end of the world. pp. 99-107

The book is available from Amazon.com new (\$13.77) or used (from \$1.61) in hardback (plus shipping) and on Kindle (\$11.99). Other online vendors, such as Alibris.com and AbeBooks.com, have a few new and used copies for competitive prices. Paper Trail may be able to get copies fairly quickly as can Richard Lindeborg.

Christian History: Not Just Popes, Kings, and Reformers Anymore!

From Aug. 23 through Halloween, the class will discuss *A People’s History of Christianity: The Other Side of the Story*, by Diana Butler Bass.

As one reader commented, Butler Bass turns history into a treasure chest of memory by challenging the usual *Christ, Constantine, Calvin and Christian America* narrative into a story of lesser-known people who loved God and their neighbors, often in amazingly remarkable ways.

Butler Bass finds plenty of examples of ordinary church people who lived with a full-hearted devotion to God and often heroic ethical actions to benefit both neighbors and even enemies. Her book provides church people with a way to retrieve exemplary practices from this communion of the saints.

The book is available used from Amazon for as little as \$.99 hardback and \$2 paperback (plus shipping) and from other online vendors, such as Alibris.com and AbeBooks.com for competitive prices. Paper Trail may be able to get copies fairly quickly as can Richard Lindeborg. Order by the end of July to be safe.

Advocacy



The Mission and Peace Making Committee have advocacy as part of their program. Some may wonder, “Why would advocacy be part of a church program?” A dictionary definition of advocacy is: *The act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a case, idea, or policy; active support.* Meanings for advocate include those who plead for a cause etc., but also *One that pleads in another’s behalf, an intercessor.*

At times people, under any kind of stress, emotional, economical, or because of their race, gender orientation or other situations, do not have a voice, or their voice is not heard. It is our human responsibility to be aware of such situations and speak out. Our advocate voices can be heard for individuals as well as causes.

It is sometimes amazing how powerful our voices can be. A person was in jail for a misdemeanor and his sentence kept being extended. He kept missing court dates because the notices were being sent to his post office box. Once that was straightened out he still was not released because the treatment center in Roswell was full. His advocate asked if they could try for a treatment center in Santa Fe. The next week he was released.

Walking with someone through complicated policies offers such support. An advocate can ask the same question as an oppressed person and receive a polite answer whereas the oppressed person may be ignored or turned away.

Political policy makers need to hear from their constituents. How can they honestly represent their districts if they do not know what they believe and how they feel?

Our faith calls us to learn more and speak out on issues affecting our vulnerable neighbors and the forces threatening creation. Our national churches lead us to work through political channels on behalf of the following biblical values: peacemaking, hospitality to strangers, care for creation, and concern for people living in poverty and struggling with hunger and disease.

A few years ago the ELCA NM Advocacy office invited its church partners to join them in becoming more aware of advocacy opportunities. We became an advocate church by agreeing to pray for and contact our legislators and congresspeople, attend the annual fall advocating conference, Bishop’s luncheon, agree to have an advocate specialist visit our congregation.

Both PC (USA) and the ELCA have strong advocacy components inviting members to be involved in ministry to eradicate poverty, end systemic racism and bring tangible resources to impact communities. Perhaps you receive e-mails on issues to contact your government officials. We are urged to remember Mathew 25: “When did I see you, Lord?”

If you have ideas about how to and if M&P should try to engage the congregation more actively, please contact our chair person, Carol Litherland or Pat Halverson.



Update from Time Treasure and Talents Committee

Session decided to discontinue the use of a third party, ADP, to handle our payroll, saving us \$1,800 per year. Payroll will be handled internally starting this month using our Church Windows software and processed by Associate Treasurer Denice Spicer with Pam Abreu serving as a backup processor.

Session approved the recommendations made from the 2020 Annual Review of Finances at the June 23, 2021 meeting. TT&T will work to ensure that these recommendations are implemented and policies and procedure manuals are updated to reflect new policies. I have included the summary statement below.

A team of two members from the TT&T committee completed a review of the financial books and found no evidence of malfeasance.

Overall, there is room for significant improvement in the posting, tracking and presentation of FUPC finances. Alignment with FASB (Financial Accounting Standards Board) and adherence to GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Practices) would more accurately represent and maintain the financial status of the church. A thoughtful restructuring of the chart of accounts including clarifying renaming of the accounts, with numbering that remains constant, would enhance and simplify understanding reports. The establishment of various procedures to safeguard against errors and omissions is recommended. Church Windows has a suite of reports that can be utilized and customized for Session and Committees to improve budget management and understanding; however, this is dependent on the use of industry standards when entering bookkeeping data.

The FUPC Policy and Procedures manual, “A Living Document, Revised Sept. 12, 2020, Approved by Session Feb. 25, 2020” states: “Record-Keeping: FUPC must keep adequate records that conform to standard business practices. The practical rationale in record-keeping is to create a record of events that will adequately inform someone not involved in the original event to be able to reconstruct the initiation of that event, its subsequent management, and its conclusion.” This team determined this goal is not being achieved consistently.

Kudos and thank you:

Crystal Western Ford, Treasurer Mary Schipper, Associate Treasurer Denice Spicer, Pam Abreu for continued work on church financing.

Pastor Katie and Karyl Lyne (belatedly) for attending Presbyterian Stewardship workshop in April

Denice Spicer for attending Presbyterian Foundation’s “Do’s and Dont’s of Narrative Budgets” online session on May 19



ONLINE GIVING REMINDER

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 Friday for the service along with a message from Pastor Katie.



WEEKLY SOCIAL GATHERINGS VIA ZOOM

Let's Get Together!

Remember that we have social gatherings via Zoom each week:

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.



TO JOIN ANY FUPC EVENTS VIA ZOOM

You are now welcome to worship in the sanctuary, but if you would like to continue worshipping online, here are the instructions to access 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.

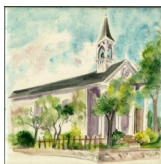
If you don't have a computer but want **to join by phone, call 312-626-7699** and enter the meeting ID number (573-920-0081) when prompted. Please note this is a Chicago number, so if your phone plan does not have unlimited calls, you may incur long-distance charges.

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

First United Presbyterian Church

JULY 2021

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



Website: www.lvpresbyterian.org

Facebook: Las Vegas First United Presbyterian (NM)

Email: fupc.nm@gmail.com

Sunday Schedule

9:00 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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Thank you to those who have committed to providing weekly devotionals:

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Tuesday – Beth Urech

Wednesday – Rod Billingsley

Thursday – Pat Halverson

Friday – Denice Spicer



Samaritan House Food Donations

JULY 2021

Soup (any kind)

Coffee and Tea are always appreciated



9th	Sharon VanderMeer
21st	Bryan Johnson
26th	Murl Baker
27th	Carol Litherland
30th	Randy Campbell
31st	Maxine (Gordy) Thatcher