



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

FEB/MARCH 2022

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear FUPC Family and Friends,

On January 2 we observed Epiphany Sunday, traditionally the Sunday where the wise men from the East find the young Jesus and bring him gifts. This day is called “Epiphany” because it is the time when these travelers’ journey leads to the revelation of to whom, in the flesh, that star guided them. We talked that day about where, in our lives, we have had epiphanies and what, in our experiences, has guided us to our particular faith community. As we move during this time in the liturgical year from Epiphany into Lent—a time of introspection and contemplation of our spiritual lives—I want to share some of the responses I received that Sunday when I asked you these questions.

What about FUPC invites you, over and over again, to be a part of this church family?

- The Spirit is clearly present*
- FUPC is entwined with my family history... This congregation raised me in part*
- FUPC always accepts me as I am. No matter to what varying degrees I can participate, I’m always welcomed and appreciated*
- Acceptance and integrity of faith*
- Commitment to mission and taking care of others*
- Christian bonds of friendship*
- Service to each other and the community*
- The ongoing community service and acceptance of all people*

These are not all the responses I received, but they are representative. As we move away from the season of Epiphany, I ask you to note the ways in which this faith community invites people to know the presence—the revelation—of Christ. Notice how often the word “acceptance” shows up, and give thanks to God for this community of people who truly work to accept all of God’s people all of the time. Notice words like “bonds” and “entwined” and “each other” that show how this family values connection. And notice words about service and caregiving, which point to an active embodiment of Christ for the world. Let these words themselves be an epiphany for who you are in the body of Christ.

I also asked congregants to share an experience of a personal epiphany. What wonderful responses—responses that show relationship with God and surprise at how God works in the world. Consider some of these responses:

- That God is in all of us AND all of creation. We are vessels of God’s love to one another.*
- ...how connected I can feel to God and his purposes for me even through geographic and social distances.*
- that God can help me through anything*
- the company of the Holy Spirit in every moment*
- [the realization that] God has placed me here in this place and time to serve him and to care for my family. I have been prepared for this moment over the last few years...*

What beautiful expressions of God’s constant presence in our lives! It’s one thing to say we know that God is with us; it’s another thing to experience it in a profound, eye-opening way! Perhaps the epiphany that most resonated with me is from the person who expressed epiphany as “*that God loves me.*” Again, it’s one thing to voice the belief that God loves us all; it’s another—and most powerful—thing to have the realization that God’s love is for ME in particular, not

just the whole world in general, but ME, no matter how loveable or unloveable I might feel.

A couple of people expressed epiphanies that are more practical, if you will. One person talked about coming to understand that *“this church continues even without the people I thought were key to its existence”*—an experience, perhaps, that brings revelation that God works in ways beyond what our human perception allows us to understand. Another talked about an experience at the beginning of the First Iraq war when, after visiting a church for prayer, he was moved to join an antiwar demonstration. *The grace of God was abundant in the scene*, he wrote. What an epiphany of God’s work for justice and peace in the world!

Someone also shared a bit of reflection on what an epiphany is, and I want to share that with you. We often think of epiphanies as a sudden flash of insight, and sometimes they are. But the journey of those wise men to find Jesus took a long time; only when they finally came to the place where Jesus was did they have that insight that this child was not the prince born to be king that they might have imagined. So, I will close with the words of someone who shared with me this wisdom:

I wonder if the term “suddenly” always applies to the epiphany experience. While the “event” may have occurred in a surprising or curiously unexpected manner, the realization of its significance, its life-correcting effect(s) may not occur until later – sometimes (at least in my slow-witted case) much later. I can think of a number of such “epiphanies” in my life in which the “oh-ho” wasn’t realized until long after the event itself. “Oh, THAT was when I began to change course! Etc.” Maybe THEN – the dawning – is the true epiphany?

I guess the point ... is that one should be willing to realize that these special, surprising, “God events” do happen; that they are often sudden and unexpected, but also subtle; that reaction to them should be open and consistent with what one knows is right even though the “compass” is about to be corrected; and that “what just happened” might not always be realized at the moment.

With thanks for all of you,
Pastor Katie

THE RE-ENTRY TASK FORCE HAS SPOKEN...

Because of the continued high number of COVID cases in the county (still close to 200 cases per 100,000), the Re-Entry Task Force has decided that we will continue to worship online through the month of February. Not only does this protect us from possible transmission of the virus in the sanctuary, but also means that we don’t have to bounce back and forth between hybrid and online worship.

As we watch for the predicted downward trend in this latest surge of cases, we hope to be able to return to hybrid worship soon. Watch the bulletin and the church website and listen for worship announcements for future decisions about worship.

Our Lenten class for adults and youth will discuss the book *Looking for God in Messy Places: A Book About Hope – How to find it. Practice it. Grow in it.* The author, the Rev. Dr. Jake Owensby, is the fourth Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana. He has written four books and writes a blog (JakeOwensby.com) through which he “explores the spirituality of everyday life.”

Writer Ann Lamott calls *Looking for God in Messy Places* “beautiful and brilliant stuff” while theologian Brian McLaren says “Owensby...invites us to live with our eyes wide open, finding God in beauty and pain.” In her foreword to the book, writer Diana Butler Bass says this book will “take you through the working-class American South to Nazi Germany and all manner of everyday places, where hope arises in the most unlikely and despairing circumstances.”

This paperback book is available new from the publisher (Abingdon) for \$18.99, from Cokesbury for \$13.99 and Amazon for \$17.69 (all plus shipping). Alibris has plenty of used copies for \$11 to \$13, and Amazon a few for as little as \$10.32 plus shipping. Electronic copies are available for \$10 to \$13. Paper Trail may also be able to order copies. If you have trouble ordering a copy, Richard Lindeborg can get a new copy delivered to you for \$17.69 including shipping.

Please join Pastor Katie as we look in the messy places of our lives for the presence of God. Reading assignments are:

- 3

CONNECT WITH PASTOR KATIE!

Coffee with Katie – 9:00 a.m. on Tuesdays

Coffee will remain online through February; keep your eyes and ears open for updates on location.

Friend me on Facebook! Search for “Katie Palmer” and look for a picture of me! If you send a friend request, please let me know you’ve done so. I’ve gotten many “fake” requests from people posing as folks I know.

Plan a visit! I’d love to visit with you one-on-one in your home or over tea. Let me know if you’d like to schedule a visit.



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.

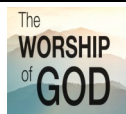
CLERGY RENEWAL GRANT UPDATE

The Congregational Renewal Grant Task Force is hard at work planning the details of the renewal activities that will happen while Pastor Katie is away on Sabbatical over the summer. Our grant, funded by the Lilly Endowment, makes possible workshop and worship leadership from several exciting “professional coaches”—the term we’ve chosen to call those folks who will come in to lead workshops on a variety of spiritual perspectives and disciplines and to share their experiences from the pulpit. Additionally, anticipate Sundays led by lay preachers from among the church family and lay leaders who will introduce you to new ways of seeing worship. You will also have the opportunity to attend weekend workshops led by local leaders to experience new spiritual disciplines that others you know practice regularly.



Mark your calendars for the first professional workshop on May 14. The theme of our renewal time is “Tracking the Word: Embodying the Spirit.” To kick off this time before Pastor Katie leaves for her Sabbatical, we will enjoy a workshop by John Stokes, founder of The Tracking Project, which is based in Corrales, NM. John is “a well-known musician, performer, writer and teacher of tracking. Since 1980 he has worked and traveled extensively in his efforts to bring awareness of the natural world and the integrity of indigenous peoples to interested people around the world” (The Tracking Project website). John will teach us about tracking and its relationship to spirituality. Watch for more information coming later in the spring.

We will have the opportunity to attend workshops by these professional coaches on Saturdays throughout the summer—June 11, July 9, July 30, and August 13. Please plan to join us!



WORSHIP TIDBITS

Often, when I am sitting in my office focused on something (like writing for the newsletter), I will hear a familiar voice talking with Crystal. Sometimes that voice is immediately recognizable, either because it's just one of those voices you recognize easily or because it's the voice of someone who is in the office regularly. On these occasions, I'll say to myself, "Oh, Van must have stopped in to sign checks" or "That's Robin's voice; it must be about time for the B&G meeting." Other times, it's a voice I know but can't place quite so easily. And sometimes, I hear a voice that I don't know at all.

This Lenten season, as we listen to Jesus' voice in the gospel of John, our worship theme will be "I Know That Voice." We'll be asking how we recognize Jesus' voice amid all the distraction and noise of other voices in our lives. I invite you to consider whether Jesus' voice is one you recognize immediately when you hear it, much as I recognize Van's or Robin's when they come into the office; whether it's a voice you know but don't place easily; or whether you really are unable to recognize it at all amid all the competing noise in your life. It's a question well worth thinking about. How DO we recognize and commit to hearing Jesus' voice above all others?

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on March 2. We will hold an Ash Wednesday service at 5:30 p.m. I hope you'll attend. Stay tuned to hear whether we will be worshiping in our hybrid format or only on Zoom.

A NEW LOOK IN THE COLUMBARIUM COURTYARD



We have a memorial plaque along with the columbarium in the courtyard. The wood was weathering so we replaced it with some decorated metal and it looks great and will be low maintenance. The memorial plaque has brass plates with name and birth/death dates of beloved members and friends of our church. If you are interested in having one placed for a loved one, please contact Judy Long (longfam@newmexico.com).



REMEMBER WEEKLY WEDNESDAY DEVOTIONALS!

Pastor Katie (1st Wednesdays), Rod Billingsley (2nd Wednesdays), Pat Halverson (3rd and 5th Wednesdays) and Karyl Lyne (4th Wednesdays). You will continue to find devotionals on the FUPC Facebook page or by clicking on the "Devotionals" link under "Latest News" on our website at lvpresbyterian.org.

Join us for
Worship Online
Sunday at 10:30 am

If you are not on the email distribution list for our Sunday Online Worship bulletin and would like to be, please send an email, (fupc.nm@gmail.com) 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.



CLERK'S CORNER

I find myself mired in details right now. It's as though one set of reports gets done and submitted, and two more show up. It will soon be time to turn over all the 2021 FUPC Session Minutes for annual review. The Presbyterian Church is very orderly in its processes and makes quite clear what needs to be included in a year's set of session minutes. The Presbytery of Santa Fe has a check list of the items that need to be recorded in the minutes. They are things one might expect, like approval of minutes, opening and closing meetings with prayer, declaration of a quorum and members present.

Other items in the minutes are when communion and session meetings will be held, the dates for the election, ordination, installation and training of elders and deacons, and congregational meetings. Minutes record the approval of the annual church budget and the election of the nominating committee. The election and length of terms for the clerk and the treasurer are in the minutes. There is notation of compensation discussions with the pastor and staff. The review and approval of the church member rolls and the annual statistical report to the General Assembly are in the minutes, as well as the evidence of adequate insurance and mission efforts of the church. This list of annual expectations keeps churches and sessions on their toes to schedule and complete all the items of business to be accomplished each year.

The Annual Church Statistical Report is submitted electronically to the General Assembly by way of the Presbytery and reports the gains and losses in members during the year and other demographic information. This year we had seven losses and three gains resulting in 74 active members at the end of 2021. Our average weekly attendance for worship was 53. This report along with the Active Membership List are included in the church's annual report. Once all of the minutes are completed and approved, I create a large single document for all of the session and congregational meeting minutes in chronological order and print it on special archival paper which is then added to the session minutes notebook. Once the document is printed, Katie, as moderator, and I, as clerk, must sign each set of minutes.

In the past, the Presbytery has a meeting of clerks of session on a Saturday, usually in March or April, when we gathered with our minutes notebooks, trade notebooks and review each others' minutes with the check list alluded to above. If items are missing or are incomplete, those are noted on the sheet and by the stated clerk of the presbytery. Last year this meeting didn't happen because of COVID and the clerks were invited to ask either a current clerk from another church or a former clerk to review the minutes. Rudy Laumbach, a former FUPC Clerk of Session, reviewed our minutes, for which I was very grateful. I think this same process will happen this year.

Now you know why I feel mired in detail right now. I'm sure it will pass, but if I look cross-eyed when you see me you'll know why!

—Karyl Lyne
Clerk of Session

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; and to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen



A Thought-Provoking Journey of Faith

The Sunday Morning Bible-Based Class for Adults and Youth is halfway through its discussion of the book *Strength for the Journey: A Pilgrimage of Faith in Community* (1st edition 2002) by Diana Butler Bass.

Butler Bass is an author, speaker, and independent scholar specializing in American religion and culture. She holds a PhD in religious studies from Duke University and is the author of eleven books.

She is associated with Sojourners social justice organization and Red-Letter Christians, a religious movement that attempts to transcend partisan politics. “Red-Letter” refers to New Testament verses and parts of verses printed in red ink, to indicate the words attributed to Jesus.

Goodreads says, “In *Strength for the Journey*, Diana Butler Bass illustrates the dynamic strength and persistence of mainline Protestantism. While many baby boomers left the church, only to come back later in life, Bass was a “stayer” who witnessed the struggles and changes and found much there that was meaningful. Offering thought-provoking portraits of eight parishes she attended over two decades, she explores the major issues that have confronted mainline denominations, congregations, and parishioners during those years—from debates over women clergy to conflicts about diversity and community to scimmages between tradition and innovation.”



The discussions, led by Richard Lindeborg, will run through Feb. 27 and be held from 9 to 10 a.m. on Zoom at the same link as the weekly worship service. The book is available used online for \$5-\$10 including shipping, or Richard can order a copy delivered to you.

Readings for February:

- Feb. 6 Chapter Five: Interim (pp 153-187)
- Feb. 13 Chapter Six: The Open Door (pp. 189-222)
- Feb. 20 Chapter Seven: The Household of God (pp. 223-260)
- Feb. 27 Conclusion: Pentecost (pp. 261-284)

Sunday Class Series after Easter: *What's So Amazing About Grace?*

Starting April 24, the Sunday morning bible-based class for adults and youth will be discussing the book [*What's So Amazing About Grace*](#) by Philip Yancy, the sessions will run through June 12 (probably on Zoom) from 9 to 10 a.m.

This book has been recommended by Karyl Lyne after having been recommended to her by friends who studied it in their adult Sunday school class.

The books (1997 hardbound or 2002 paperback) are available new from Amazon for \$11.01, or second hand for anywhere from one to six dollars. The electronic edition is \$5.99. A few copies are available at competitive prices from Alibris and Abebooks, and Paper Trail may be able to order a copy. Richard Lindeborg can have a copy delivered directly to you for no shipping charge.

The class will be led by Karyl Lyne and Richard Lindeborg.



LITTLE FREE LIBRARY (LFL) AT FUPC

We are needing donations of books again, especially children's books. Although people do leave books in the LFL, I supplement frequently from our stash of donated books. Sometimes to fill it up, sometimes to add variety. I try to keep some fiction, some nonfiction, some romance, travel, young adult and children, etc. Please leave books at the church or on my front porch (769 Diane Ave, blue house).

—Judy Long, a LFL Steward

NEW TREASURER

Late last month, the Session received a letter of resignation from FUPC Treasurer Denise Spicer. Session members accepted this resignation with thanks to Denise for her service. Session has elected Pam Abreu to serve as our new Treasurer. Pam brings years of accounting experience to this position; we are grateful for her willingness to serve in this capacity.



TO JOIN ANY FUPC EVENTS VIA ZOOM

You are 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 chair.



SAVE THE DATE

The Community Life Committee of
The First United Presbyterian Church
would like to invite you to play

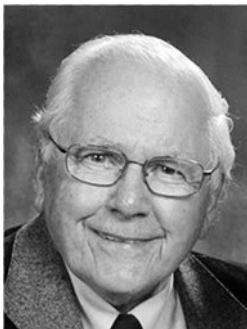
BINGO

on Sunday, February 27 at 3:00 PM.

There will be prizes for each game and lots of fun.
Please sign onto the church's Zoom link to join.

NOTE: *You will receive your Bingo card via email in the next few weeks. For more information contact Nina at 505-425-5239.*

FUPC to Welcome Veteran Minister from Seattle with Roots in New Mexico, SE Alaska and Widely Travelled



Rev. Dr. Robert D. (Bob) Nicholson will be guest minister on Sunday, March 20. He will focus on our Lenten theme, "I Know That Voice." The sermon: "Is that Voice Putting QUESTIONS to us or offering ANSWERS for us?" From Genesis 3:8, and Isaiah 6:8 to THE question in all three synoptic gospels (Matthew 16:13-16, Mark 8:27-29, and Luke 9:18-20) and several other places there are QUESTIONS PUT TO US about hearing that voice. Familiar hymn tunes with contemporary lyrics for today written by the guest minister will be included.

Dr. Nicholson is widely travelled with a varied background that gives him unique perspectives. He has been a USSF soccer referee of a high school varsity soccer match, he is an Eagle Scout (and holds the Silver Beaver), he travelled the USA by train and served on Amtrak's National Committee and has first-hand experience visiting more than 50 retirement communities in 17 states as President of the National Continuing Care Residents Association such as La Veda Llena, Albuquerque and the Neighborhood at Rio Rancho and El Castillo, Santa Fe. He has historical roots in the mission points, schools and churches in the Presbyterian Church in NM such as Menaul School, Chacon, Embudo Hospital, Cuba, Ghost Ranch, Santa Fe, Cowboy Camp meetings, Padre Martinez of Taos and Scouting experience at Philmont Scout Ranch and Tres Ritos Wilderness BSA Camp.

He holds a Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry, McCormick Seminary, Chicago, and served as Adjunct Professor at San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo, California. He has been a minister in Geneva, Switzerland, New York City, San Francisco, Pond Switch/Dickson, Tennessee, Lubbock, Texas and most recently Lake City Presbyterian Church, Seattle. In southeast Alaska he was recently interim pastor at Chapel by the Lake Auke Bay, Juneau and First Presbyterian churches, Petersburg and Ketchikan. He grew up and was ordained to ministry in Dallas, TX, in December 1957.

Bob is a plain-spoken, easy-going, down-to-earth messenger with a sense of humor that, according to one church member, "brightens your outlook on life," "strengthens your faith" and "expands your knowledge of Judeo-Christian principles for daily living."

Please join Pastor Katie, who will be serving as Worship Leader that day, in welcoming Pastor Bob to our pulpit.

Does your nonprofit have an innovative idea but you need a little help getting it off the ground?

Apply for a Mustard Seed Grant

Mustard Seed is a grant awarded by the First United Presbyterian Church, which funds special new and innovative projects. The “seed” money, ranging from approximately \$200 to \$1,500, helps organizations with a project for one-time expenses. Since its launch in 1999, more than \$163,000 has been distributed to 180-plus organizations.

Submission guidelines may be downloaded at

<https://lvpresbyterian.org/main/mustard-seed-2022-proposal-information/>

For more information

Call the church office: 425-7763

or email: carollinder@msn.com or ckh5@me.com

2022 MUSTARD SEED PROPOSALS

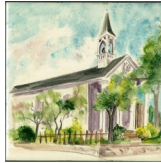
Due Tuesday, March 1, by noon

Mail to: PO Box 37 – Las Vegas, NM 87701

Email: fupc.nm@gmail.com



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 in person and via Zoom

Fellowship Hour following the worship service on Zoom



Samaritan House Food Donations

FEBRUARY and MARCH 2022

Pasta and Sauce and Canned Meats (tuna, chicken, stew)

Coffee and Tea are always appreciated



3rd	Charlotte Wootton	17th	Christie Baskett
	Pauline Dimsey	24th	Claire Weinstein



1st	Jeanette Huling	6th	John Arnold	27th	Jackson Awuzing
2nd	Bob Pearson	14th	Pat Halverson		Jim Croto
	Jan Beurskens	16th	Karyl Lyne		Lorenzo Martinez
5th	Bruce Wertz	17th	Ann Taylor-Trujillo		