



Sharing the Love of Christ

First United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

PO Box 37

1000 Douglas Avenue

Las Vegas New Mexico 87701

MAY 2022

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear FUPC Family and Friends,

I am still seeing the sanctuary and the cross decorated with spring flowers and am enjoying the promise of tulips in my yard, doing some yardwork, and anticipating planting some wonderful flowers I bought (including some black petunias) for my front porch planters. I know I won't get to enjoy them for too long before I leave for my time of sabbatical, but I so enjoy choosing them, planting them, and seeing them every day. There's something about losing myself in the beauty of the shapes and colors and smells of flowers that reminds me of the beauty God gives us no matter what else is going on in the world. There's something about tending living things that grow from the ground, something about seeing how you can plop a petunia or a pansy into a pot of dirt and watch it grow new petunias and pansies! This is one of the ways I connect with the beauty of the Spirit.

This summer, while I am away, you will have the opportunity to participate in the many ways others connect with God and embody the Spirit in their lives. Our renewal theme, "Tracking the Word: Embodying the Spirit" speaks to the principle that has guided the Renewal Grant Task Force in planning for the activities funded by the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal grant. You will have the opportunity to take part in Saturday workshops a couple of times each month to learn about and experience ways in which others experience the Spirit. From crafts to Tai Chi, from American Sign Language to photography, members of our church family will introduce you to and ask you to participate in some of the things that give them spiritual connection. These workshops happen on fourth Saturdays. Other Saturdays will offer you the opportunity to participate in workshops led by professionals who will share the ways they connect. Beginning with tracker John Stokes, who will talk about tracking as a spiritual exercise, we'll have the chance to experience the Spirit in ways that we might not otherwise consider. In addition to tracking, our professional guests will offer experiences with Scriptural drama, music, dance, and storytelling. Please plan to attend; it's not very often we have the gift of funds available to provide these opportunities!

On Sundays throughout the summer, worship will be mostly lay-led and will again emphasize the ways in which members of our church family connect to God. What better way to connect not only to God, but to each other, than by sharing in what touches our souls? Some Sundays will ask you to perhaps step out of your comfort zone and worship in an experiential way rather than by listening to a sermon. Remember: it is through such experiences that we build bonds among ourselves and that we may find new ways to experience God. I encourage you to support those who have stepped forward to lead during this time and to open yourselves up to new ideas about worship.

One of the hardest things about leaving for sabbatical is knowing that you will all be having these wonderful experiences that I won't get to share with you. But what wonderful stories we will have to share with one another when D.R. and I return! We'll be doing that in lots of ways, but especially during our congregational retreat, which is scheduled for September 24. This day-long event will allow us to hear about each other's renewal-time highlights and to ask where we go from that point. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the day-long retreat.

With thanks for all of you,
Pastor Katie

A WORD ABOUT THE FIRE

Foremost on most of our minds right now is the devastation of the fires burning so close to us. I considered focusing on the fire in my "Pastor's Ponderings," but honestly, I have no words, other than to say that God walks with us and especially with those who are dealing with loss and uncertainty. Who knows what news of the fire we will have before this newsletter gets to you in a few days? There are things we can do, the most important of which is to pray for and offer support for those who have been evacuated. A visit, a shared meal, an opportunity for them to talk (if they want to) about this experience can be very meaningful.

Of course, we can offer donations to the Donations Center and monetary gifts to help fire victims as well. You'll find the latest information available to us below. May all evacuees know God's comforting presence at this time. –Pastor Katie

The following is the resource list as well as the current list of donations needed:

<https://www.nmhu.edu/hermit/>

Socks and underwear (all sizes)
Diapers and Depends (all sizes)
Shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, and other toiletries.
Toilet paper
Small bottles of Tylenol, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, allergy medicine
Feminine products, bras, breast pumps, nursing pads
Baby formula, baby food, baby wipes, baby soap and lotion
Combs and brushes
Laundry detergent and Lysol spray and wipes
Cereal and individual milk cartons
Non-perishable foods
Gatorade/Powerade (sugar-free and regular) Capri Sun and water
Dish soap
Disposable bowls, plastic cutlery, foil, paper towel rolls
Dog and cat food
Reusable tote bags
Instant Oatmeal packets
Gatorade
Coloring Books and crayons
Blankets - the throw size
Bath towels
Snacks - granola bars, etc.
Any canned goods
Canned milk
Pancake mix
Cups of Soup

The Donation Center is at Calvary Church, 2310 7th St. in Las Vegas. If you want to volunteer, show up at the Donation Center and tell them you're there to volunteer. Hours are currently 8 a.m.- 6 p.m.



CLERGY RENEWAL GRANT UPDATE

LET RENEWAL BEGIN!



May brings tracking, commissioning, and journaling as we venture forth into our time of congregational renewal. On Saturday, May 14, between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m., John Stokes, tracker, will conduct a tracking workshop, which will involve walking outside in nature as he shares his skill as a professional tracker. From 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., John will share tracking with those who may not care to or be able to walk outside. Finding the tracks of FUPC in this community and pondering future tracks we want to make in the community are central to our renewal time, so John's guidance to us is key. We'll be encouraged to consider not only FUPC tracks, but our own personal tracks as we journey. John will tie these practices to spiritual growth as he leads worship on Sunday, May 15. Focused table talks will follow worship over a potluck meal when John will lead us to understand how wilderness tracking skills can help us discover our spiritual tracks. We'll plot our tracks on maps and journal as we go. Please bring your own water, snacks, hat, and sunscreen for these workshops.

The worship service will be followed by our first potluck in over two years! Be thinking about what favorite dish you would like to bring to the potluck to share with our congregation. Community Life will provide the beverages.

On Sunday, May 22, there will be a commissioning service during worship where Katie will commission Rev. Randy Campbell and Rev. Pat Halverson to serve as the pastors for FUPC in her absence, and she will commission the congregation to carry on the work of the church while she is away. On Sunday, May 29, Sharon Vander Meer will lead us in worship as she shares her love and practice of journaling as a spiritual practice in "Faith Between the Lines".

These services and activities prepare us for the very interesting and diverse opportunities that await us in June, July, and August. Do put the schedule of events on your refrigerator door or home bulletin board, so you don't miss any of them! Share the schedule with friends and family and invite them to participate too.

Watch for a Congregational Summer Renewal brochure that will be coming out soon.

Karyl Lyne
Renewal Grant Task Force





WORSHIP TIDBITS

It has been my experience as a preacher—and the experience of other preachers I know—that people will respond to a given sermon in ways that make me realize that they heard something they needed to hear, even if it wasn't necessarily what I thought I said. The truth is, we hear in our own contexts in such a way that we filter what we hear through our state of mind when we hear it. And so it is no surprise that when I did my initial worship planning for the month of May, knowing that it would be my last month to be in the pulpit before my sabbatical, the context in which I heard the Scripture was exactly that—what will I want to say to the FUPC family in the weeks before I leave? What will it be like for me to be out of the pulpit for 15 weeks? What will it be like for the congregation to have very different worship experiences for that length of time? And so, as I read the texts from the Epistle to the Philippians from the Narrative Lectionary for these last few weeks of the Easter season, I read them in the context of sabbatical and renewal.

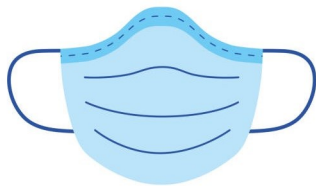
Easter is the perfect season for this time of renewal to begin. What better time to enter into something new, something uncertain, something perhaps challenging and unexpected than the season during which we recognize God's power to create us anew, to bring us to new insight and understanding? And so, as we enter into the season of May worship, here is where Scripture will take us as we prepare for a renewal time in which we will be "Tracking the Word: Embodying the Spirit."

May 1 – We will discuss Philippians 1:3-11 and will think about the "good work" that God has begun here.

May 8 – We'll take a look at Philippians 1:12-18a and 2:1-4 as we think about being emboldened to better proclaim God's steadfast love and about better understanding the interests of others.

May 15 – We welcome guest speaker John Stokes, founder of The Tracker Project. John will present a workshop for us on Saturday, May 14, as we enter into our renewal period and consider tracking as a metaphor for seeing where God's Word leads us.

May 22 – We'll rejoice in this renewal opportunity we've been given and, for me, sabbatical as we read from Philippians 4:4-7. We will—all of us—be commissioned for this experience: D.R. and I, as we leave Las Vegas for our sabbatical travel; Randy Campbell and Pat Halverson, who will serve as clergy while I am away; the Session and staff who will oversee church operations; and all of the church family, who commit to bringing their support, interest, and love to those who will be leading workshops and worship during this time of renewal. Indeed, we look forward to rejoicing in all the ways God brings God's people to embody the Spirit in our lives!



MASKS IN CHURCH

Masks are now optional in the church building. If you feel more comfortable continuing to wear a mask, please do. Should circumstances change, we will update this policy.



OLD TOWN MISSION COMMUNITY CENTER

What a hope-filled and scary Spring we are having. The flowers are popping out at the same time we are suffering from a disaster in the form of devastating fire. God is present to us in both, somehow! Even while all this is happening, we are also blessed with new things happening at Old Town Mission Community Center.

Nearly twenty volunteers conducted the first Mobile Food Pantry distribution of commodity and non-commodity food to the community on April 8 in the parking lot of our Center. While we served somewhere around 50 customers that day, we expect the numbers to rise as more people learn about it. The Santa Fe Food Bank did an excellent job of training our volunteers before the crowd started to gather. Our plan is to continue these distributions monthly on the second Friday of the month but with a change in location. We have gotten permission from the City of Las Vegas to use Rodriguez Park at the end of Grant Street for our future events. There is much more space there and fewer traffic control issues. Please contact Karyl Lyne if you'd like to volunteer!

Thanks to George Dimsey for all his work as Custodian/Watchman for the Center over the last several years. George has asked to resign to attend to his own health and that of his two sisters. We are fortunate to have hired another of our neighbors in this position. Paul Bonchi lives next door to George and comes to us highly recommended. Paul is an experienced maintenance man and custodian. He is also skilled in carpentry and plumbing. Paul has already offered to help with refinishing the wooden floors, something with which he has personal experience at his own home. He also loves being able to play ping pong in the Assembly Room when it isn't being otherwise used! Say hello to Paul the next time you are over there.

Lastly, you should know about the continuing improvements to the Center, both outside and in. Work has begun on the redesigned roof over the kitchen. Soon we will have a protected area over the entry door, supported by carved posts as well as a roof with an adequate pitch to prevent leaks. There has been some more patching of exterior plaster done as well. Inside, the repainting is progressing nicely. The new color scheme can be seen in the Assembly Room, and it is very tasteful. The Middle Room is next, and Buildings and Grounds has already started patching any defects in the walls. Corky Halverson has done a preliminary pass over the Assembly Room floors and removed most of the old varnish. All in all, things are becoming more and more professional looking. Thanks to all who are putting in many hours of work!

Tom Trigg
OTMCC

LET'S RECYCLE GLASS ITEMS!



The FUPC Community Life Committee is collecting glass bottles and jars, colored or clear, for the months of April and May. We will be working with a local glass crushing venture and our own landscaping committee to use the glass in a landscaping project. If you are able to wash the bottles and jars and get the labels off, it will be appreciated. If you are not able to remove labels, we can arrange to do it; however, please rinse out any jars or bottles. We will have a few boxes at the church for collection, and are willing to come pick up your glass from you. Call

Pam at 505-429-3053 to arrange for pickup.

There will be two workdays to remove labels; one on May 19 (Thursday) from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. and again on June 4 (Saturday) from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. in Perea Hall. Please come if you are able to help with this!

MEMORIES DON'T BURN

By Kayt C. Peck
Poet Laureate for Las Vegas, New Mexico

I see it clearly in my mind's eye ... my mother's music box,
Faded green with a patina of age.
The music played, sometimes erratic, the price of time on metal fingers.

Lovely

Then the flames, also seen by my mind's eye,
Imagination of a horrid reality.
I wonder when it melted—when music was silenced forever.

Did it happen when the whole house lost the battle,
Collapsing into ashes?
Did it happen earlier, a precursor to the full disaster?

The memory did not burn ... not of the music nor my mother's
gentle smile

The wildfire could not rob me of that.
Memories don't burn.

Not even the memory of my father's surprise,
A leather shop visit to a saddle hand-made for me.

Flames took the saddle, not the memory.

I feared it would take my neighbors, those who stayed,
People I love.

But for discretion being the better part of valor in evacuation,
It could have taken me.

It could take the deer that greeted me at the kitchen window
On a bright spring morning.
It could take the turkey named Randy
Who gave me hours of laughter.

But memories don't burn.

To rebuild, to grasp life from the jaws of despair.
To create more memories in a new life.
To continue to grow the treasure of experience and love.

A wise choice because
Memories don't burn.



CLERK'S CORNER



My goodness, things are rolling along in planning for the Summer FUPC Congregational Renewal Schedule. While Katie is on sabbatical, we're going to have many opportunities to 'step out of the box' to experience spiritual growth in some unexpected ways like woodworking, doodling, photography, bottle painting, acting, writing and the list goes on. The theme of this renewal time is Tracking the Word: Embodying the Spirit. As you know, FUPC was 150 years old in 2020 and has made many 'tracks' in Las Vegas. It continues to make tracks and now it's time to pause and see where we have made tracks, and where we want to make tracks in the future. SOOOOO... the hope is that the workshops will encourage us all to experience things we might never have considered before and be open to where the Spirit takes us in our individual and collective journeys. The worship services, led by both clergy and lay leaders, will also be a bit different from what we are accustomed to. All of the activities and worship services are free of charge and open not only to FUPC members, but to anyone who wants to come. Share the information with your family, friends, and acquaintances, and invite them to come with you.

I want to thank everyone who helped launch the Mobile Food Pantry (MFP) on April 8 at the OTM Parking Lot. We had 14 volunteers (both FUPC and others) and served 60+ households in 50+ cars. This food distribution will occur every second Saturday between 9:30 am and 11 am. HOWEVER, the location will be Rodriguez Park at the west end of Grant Street going forward. We're grateful to the City of Las Vegas for allowing us to use this MUCH larger space. If you want to volunteer to help, let me know. It is our understanding that as the word gets out, there will be many more households and cars to serve. We're also grateful for the Santa Fe Food Depot Staff for their help, guidance, and food. It is a blessing that we can provide food to those who need it. The next MFP will be Friday, May 13, at Rodriguez Park. Volunteers need to be there at 8:30 am.

Also, the east wing of the church has been cleaned and extraneous items removed, so the space can host a variety of gatherings. There will be a task force to plan uses and schedules for the east wing, so if you'd like to be a part of that work, let Mary Schipper or a member of Session know. Going forward our worship services will be hybrid and the Tech Team is looking for more members. So, if you're hiding your techie light beneath your computer, let DR know that you'd like to help run tech for worship. Finally, FUPC will host the Presbytery of Santa Fe Meeting Saturday, July 16, from 10 am to 3 pm. We expect between 80 and 100 folks from the presbytery (northern New Mexico) to be here that day, and the Deacons will serve a catered luncheon. We'll need greeters, tech team folks and food servers, so if you'd like to help, let me know. If you've never experienced a Presbytery meeting this is a great time to do so. There will be a business meeting in the morning, lunch, break-out groups, and worship. I hope to see you there.

Karyl Lyne
Clerk of Session
FUPC Commissioner to the Presbytery of Santa Fe



GROUP SEEKS NEW WAYS TO UNDERSTAND, RECEIVE, LIVE OUT GRACE

The Sunday Morning Bible-Based Class for Adults and Youth is discussing the book *What's So Amazing About Grace* by Philip Yancey. The sessions, led by Karyl Lyne and Richard Lindeborg, will run through June 19 from 9 to 10 a.m.

The class will probably be hybrid, with sessions in the audio-visual classroom upstairs in the church and on Zoom. The book has been recommended by Karyl after having been recommended to her by friends who studied it in their adult Sunday school class.

Yancey has written more than 30 books, most of them still in print. He started his career working as an editor and then publisher for Campus Life magazine and moved on to a second career as a freelance writer.

He calls himself a pilgrim, still 'in recovery' from a bad church upbringing, searching for the possibility of a faith rooted in grace instead of fear. He thinks Grace is the one thing the church can do better than anyone.

This From Readers

"I thought I knew Grace but I did not. The stories in it do make for an interesting history lesson. I have to say this book is transforming my paradigm about being a Christ follower. Philip Yancey was a recommended read from a friend – and I have pretty much decided I like his writing style and what comes across as honesty to himself about his own life and the experiences he has had trying to follow Jesus' teachings himself."

"Grace is perhaps THE most powerful force in the world today. It has the power to not only change us but to change the course of world history as it did with Christ and has done many times down through the ages. Grace short-circuits the cancer of hate, it frees us from the slavery of resentment, it cuts us loose from the violent cycle of revenge, and it opens the door to God himself. What other attitude in action delivers so much?"

"Yancey also points out the danger of mixing politics and religion. Though the book was published in 1997, it rings hauntingly true today: so...while a coziness between church and state may be good for the state, it is bad for the church... The state which runs by the rules of ungrace, gradually drowns out the church's sublime message of grace."

"Yancy has the courage – and the humility – to stare straight-faced at both church and society and describe in plain English what he sees, and why God cares."

The book is available second hand in hardback or paperback from Amazon (for \$5-10 including shipping or on Kindle for \$7.99) or other online dealers such as Alibris and Abebooks. Paper Trail may be able to order a copy. Richard Lindeborg can have a copy delivered directly to you for no shipping charge.

Reading Assignments:

May 1, Ch. 4-5, pp. 45-72	May 29–NO CLASS
May 8, Ch. 6-8, pp. 75-107	June 5, Ch 14-15, pp. 177-210
May 15, Ch. 9-10, pp. 109-138	June 12, Ch. 16-18, pp. 213-251
May 22, Ch. 11-13, pp. 141-175	June 19, Ch 19-20, pp. 253-282



TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE COMMITTEE

Building Use Subcommittee Formed

We are fortunate to have amazing facilities at 1000 Douglas and the Old Town Mission Community Center (OTMCC). For many years we have explored how best to use all our footprint to do God's work in today's world. The coronavirus pandemic put a damper on programming and activities, especially The SPOT youth programming at the OTMCC, and events in Perea Hall, the East Wing, and the upstairs classrooms. While our commercial kitchen has been regularly used over the past two years by our Samaritan House meal prep team, our space is underutilized and has been for longer than the pandemic.

Girl scouts are regularly meeting on Saturdays in Perea Hall. Several other groups, including PEO, Master Gardeners, and San Miguel Democratic Women have recently used our facilities. We even have a couple of groups renting our sanctuary for upcoming concerts. The Mustard Seed Committee awarded \$1500 to revamp our East Wing to make this space more welcoming for community gatherings.

The Time, Treasure, and Talent committee has assumed responsibility in updating our building use policies, primarily because we are charged with ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of our congregation. A subcommittee comprised of Van Swan, Richard Lindeborg, and myself will be exploring our policies, who and what we charge to whom and why. We will also explore opportunities for groups to use our space on a regular basis throughout the week. If you are interested in joining our subcommittee, please let me know.

Carol Linder

Chair, Time, Talent, and Treasure



FROM OUR WEBSITE

These three words describe us pretty well. We help plant seeds for new community services, as well as seeds of faith. We have deep roots in this community and our Presbyterian heritage. And we branch out beyond our walls to work and worship together with our neighbor, the other, the suffering, and the rejected.

Check out our website at <https://lvpresbyterian.org/main/seeds/> to find examples of how we are putting these three words into action within our community and beyond.

CONNECT WITH PASTOR KATIE!

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

Meet Katie at Traveler's Café (if possible, in the back on the comfy sofas) to share coffee, tea, maybe a croissant or scone, and good conversation.

Keep an eye out for information on Coffee with Pastors Randy and Pat over the summer.



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.

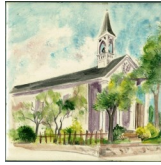
HEARING DEVICES AVAILABLE

Remember! There are hearing assist devices available at the AV Center for use during worship for those who need them. First come, first served. Just ask one of the tech crew members.



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.

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
MAY 2022
 Rice and Beans
 Coffee and Tea are always appreciated



3rd	Leslie Jones	24th	Bernadette Lujan
4th	Gene Solyntjes	26th	Susan Apodaca
12th	Bud Geng	31st	Don Owens
20th	Robin Carlson		Pablo Hernandez