



Sharing the Love of Christ

First United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

PO Box 37

1000 Douglas Avenue

Las Vegas New Mexico 87701

AUGUST 2022

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear FUPC Family and Friends,

As I write this, D.R. and I are on our way home from Rio Rancho, having attended a James Taylor concert there last night. I'm sure many of you are familiar with Taylor's music and the many tunes we listened to on the radio and cassette tapes in the '70s—"Sweet Baby James," "Carolina in My Mind," and probably his most beloved song, "Fire and Rain." We heard all these live last night (although "Fire and Rain" was saved for the first encore) as well as Taylor's great blues/rock piece "Steamroller Blues" and many others. But one song, with which I was less familiar, particularly caught my attention. I was really struck by "Secret O' Life," whose first verse is:

The secret of life is enjoying the passage of time.
Any fool can do it, there ain't nothing to it.
Nobody knows how we got to the top of the hill.
But since we're on our way down, we might as well enjoy the ride.
(<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/jamestaylor/secretolife.html>)

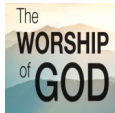
"The secret of life is enjoying the passage of time." As I get older, that's something I try to be more intentional about. It's also something I'm not as practiced at as I'd like to be. My to-do lists are usually long and I can find it difficult to set aside the to-dos and just enjoy. It hasn't always been that way. I remember lazy summer days when I was growing up: cloud gazing, playing with friends, listening to the transistor radio, riding my bike. I remember lazy winter days: reading books, playing games, playing with friends, listening to the radio. But I'm definitely out of practice of simply enjoying the passage of time.

Being on the road back to Las Vegas helps with that. I sit here in the passenger's seat thinking of all of you, but also enjoying the way time, sun, and miles play with the clouds, which have been magnificent the last several days. (Have you noticed?) The interplay of clouds and hills makes it seem possible to run up one of those hills and right into a cloud castle. Little puffy clouds dot the blue: a small fish following a bigger one through the sea; a large bird with outstretched wing; a baby elephant with a wrinkled trunk floating on an inflated raft. The shadows on the hills shift with the curves in the road, showing both the relative bigness of hills, clouds, and sun, but also the way my perspective, my viewpoint, can make a difference.

"The secret of life is enjoying the passage of time." We can bury ourselves in to-dos, rue that time marches on and with it, change (sometimes unwelcome change) happens. Or we can take time to sit back and see the sea turtle and polar bear in the clouds connected by a condensation trail. For now, I'm going to sit back and enjoy the passing of this time on the road and, when I get back to the more mundane to-dos, approach them from the same perspective as I'm seeing animals—both mythical and real—play in the sky. I will practice enjoying the passage of time as I create something on the page, as I cook a meal, as I plan for a class. And I'll try to work into my days some time to listen to the radio and watch the clouds.

I wish for you this secret of life—enjoying the passage of time.

With thanks for all of you,
Pastor Katie



WORSHIP TIDBITS

On July 31, Pastor Katie will begin a sermon series on the book of Ruth. This four-chapter book tells the story of a woman named Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth. These women endure grief and loss, a wilderness journey, acclimation to a new normal and, finally, joy. There is much for us to learn from these faithful and courageous women in the context of our time. Please plan to walk with Naomi and Ruth on their journey as we explore these themes that still speak to us today.

CONGREGATIONAL RETREAT



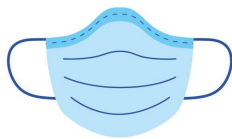
We are having an all day **All-Church Retreat on Saturday September 24**, from 9-5, with a catered leisurely lunch in the middle of the day. A time to gather and see where we are and where we want to be going as a church community. Some laughter as well. Please plan to come. More information to follow.



A WORD ABOUT THE FIRE

With the fire now largely contained, our attention has been focused on the flash floods that have caused problems on burn scars. I've spoken with many people whose property has suffered damage—fences down, debris left by floods on burn areas and in rivers and streams. We are aware, too, of the danger posed by flash flooding and hold in our prayers the family and friends of the people who died in a flash flood west of Las Vegas recently.

But day by day, many of us are feeling more “normal” around us. Let's remember, though, that for so many, whatever will be a new normal is still far away. As we learned from the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance representatives at the presbytery meeting on July 16, it is common after a disaster—like fire and flood—for those not deeply affected to forget that others still need their support. Let's continue to be aware that there are needs out there and do what we can to meet them. It might mean continued donations or financial support, or it might mean inviting someone to have a cup of coffee or a meal with you.



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.

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.



CLERK'S CORNER

WHEW! Goodness, FUPC continues to go and go and go, like the Energizer Bunny! Kudos and many thanks to the greeters, furniture movers, tech crew, folks who cleaned the church, Tom for his beautiful picture board on OTM, Em and others who helped with the Presbytery of Santa Fe Annual Meeting we hosted on July 16. I want to give a special shout out to our Deacons who served muffins and coffee Saturday morning, and a super lunch at noon to the 80 or so folks who attended.

The theme of the meeting was Lament to Hope. Certainly, there is much to lament in our world, and yet with the dawn of each new day God brings hope to the world. In break-out groups we were invited to share what about our church communities brings us joy. This was easy for me because there is so much about FUPC that brings me joy — the kindness, care, laughter, energy, creativity, dedication, and intentionality of the members of our church brings me great joy. We were also invited to share what we are wondering about as we move into the current reality. My group never got to this second question, but I think it has merit and perhaps one we should talk about sometime in break-out groups. During worship, one member shared the loss of eight of her family members to COVID. Our own Carol Litherland shared the loss of her home, barn, other buildings, and their contents to the fire. We lamented with them and the many others who have suffered such devastating loss during this time. I found the following prayer from the Presbytery meeting very hopeful. I hope you will too.

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.
 The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision.
 We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
 of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
 Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying
 the Kingdom always lies beyond us.
 No statement says all that could be said.
 No prayer fully expresses our faith.
 No confession brings perfection.
 No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
 No program accomplishes the Church's mission.
 No set of goals and objectives includes everything.
 This is what we are about.
 We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
 We water seeds already planted,
 knowing they hold future promise.
 We lay foundations that will need further development.
 We provide yeast that produces effects
 far beyond our capabilities.
 We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
 This enables us to do something and do it very well.
 It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
 an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.
 We may never see the end results,
 but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.
 We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs.
 We are prophets of a future that is not our own. Amen.

Karyl Lyne,
 Clerk of Session

FROM THE DEACONS

Book of Order, G-6.0401–02 on the duties of Deacons: It is the duty of deacons, first of all, to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress both within and beyond the community of faith. They shall assume such other duties as may be delegated to them from time to time by the session, such as leading the people in worship through prayers of intercession, reading the Scriptures, presenting the gifts of the people, and assisting with the Lord's Supper. *Book of Order*, G-6.0401–02

A 2006 article in *Presbyterian Today*, further expands on the character and work of Deacons. Read more at www.presbyterianmission.org/what-we-believe/deacons.

Some of the ways your Deacons serve include Prayer Shawl ministry, preparing and serving food for different occasions, visiting the sick, actively praying for every member of the church, providing social opportunities for members to gather and get to know one another better, and reaching out to serve the greater community.

Everyone who is a member or friend of First United Presbyterian Church is part of a prayer group. That means you are prayed for regularly by name.

The Board of Deacons consists of Murl Baker, Nina Marquez Johns, Juli Salman, Renee Soderlund, Bonnie Trujillo and Sharon Vander Meer.

Sharon Vander Meer, Chair



**Rough Rider
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**Attention Las Vegas, Mora, Springer
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at Luna can contact Cindy Branch at 505-454-2541
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Sunday Morning Class: Out of China and Back to the Holy Land

In August the Sunday Bible-Based Class for Adults and Youth will continue its series of discussions based on the book *The Lost Sutras of Jesus: Unblocking the Ancient Wisdom of the Xian Monks* by Ray Riegert and Thomas Moore. The series is led by John Arnold.

John is a former Church of Christ minister who has devoted much of his life to comparative religious studies. The recent discovery of Persian Christianity's interaction with Buddhism and Taoism in China has been a subject of special interest to him. He is an active Taoist and practices and teaches Taoist movement arts like Tai Chi in our community.

Reading assignments are

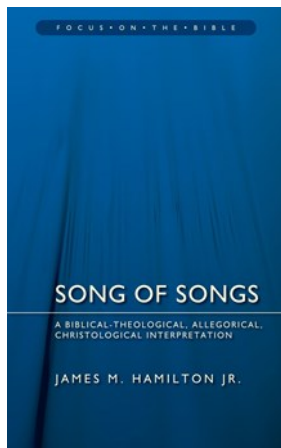
- Aug. 7 – Part II, fifth through eighth chapters – pp. 71-95
- Aug. 14 – Part II, final four chapters – pp. 96-119
- Aug. 21 – Part III: The Soul of the Scrolls – pp. 120-136

The books are available from Alibris new for as little as \$2.99 and used for as little as \$.99 plus shipping; used from AbeBooks for as little as \$2.50 to \$6.50 plus shipping; and new in paperback from Amazon for \$9.84 plus shipping or used for under \$6 including shipping. Paper Trail may be able to order a copy. Richard Lindeborg can have a copy delivered directly to you for no shipping charge.

Song of Songs: Literal or Allegorical?

The last Sunday of August, the class will begin discussion of *Song of Songs: A Biblical–Theological, Allegorical, Christological Interpretation* by James M. Hamilton Jr.

Reviewer Comments: “Second, maybe, to the book of Revelation, Song of Solomon (or Song of Songs as some put it) provides some of the most challenging issues when it comes to the interpretation, teaching, preaching, and application of the book. Though the book is part of the 66 inspired canonical books of the Bible, there are many who have never, and will never preach or teach from the book.



“Thoughts on how to understand Song of Solomon are usually divided between those who view it strictly as a picture of human love between a man and a woman, between Christ and the (NT) church or between Christ and His covenant people (Israel). Rarely do you see those who will try to wed these interpretations together. But that is exactly what Hamilton does.

“So how does Hamilton overcome the long history of disapproval for the allegorical interpretation? He points to none other than Scripture itself. In the preface Hamilton writes, “Gradually I came to the view that if Moses can treat the covenant between Yahweh and Israel as a marriage, and Hosea can write a prophecy in which he himself represents Yahweh and his wife Gomer represents Israel, Solomon could have done the same.”

“Further, Hamilton points out that the Apostle Paul does the same thing in Galatians 4:21-31 and with the marriage between a man and a woman as compared to Christ and the church in Ephesians 5 (29, 31). Hamilton wants us to see all three of these lenses in harmony together rather than disharmony.”

Hamilton is a professor of Biblical theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY, and has been preaching pastor or senior pastor at various churches.

He's written numerous books including *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, a popular-level commentary on Revelation, and a commentary on Ezra-Nehemiah.

This book is a part of the Focus on the Bible series, a 53-book series of commentaries the publisher says "are packed with contributions by top evangelical scholars and pastors, and designed to be readable for ordinary Christians, reliable for in-depth study of the Bible, and relevant for daily Christian life.

"For each section of the Bible, the Focus on the Bible commentaries summarize the passage of scripture, including the intentions of the authors, the historical and cultural environment, and the questions and issues raised by a particular passage. But most importantly, the Focus on the Bible commentaries bring you into the heart of the Bible, by explaining Scripture in an accessible way that makes sense for daily Christian living."

The book is available in paperback for as little as \$7.39 from Amazon, \$7.43 from Alibris, and \$8.81 from AbeBooks. New copies are available from Amazon or the publisher (Christian Focus Publications) for \$14.99 (all prices plus shipping). Richard Lindeborg can order copy for you from Amazon and have it delivered to your home with free shipping.

Reading assignments are:

- August 28, Preface and Ch. 1: The Song of Songs in Biblical Theology (pp. 11-34)
- NO CLASS Sept. 4
- Sept. 11, Ch. 2: The Exemplary King (pp. 35-51); SoS Ch. 1
 - Sept. 18, Ch. 3: The Flower and the Fruit Tree (pp. 53-65); SoS Ch. 2
 - Sept. 25, Ch. 4: Like Columns of Smoke from the Wilderness (pp. 67-79); SoS Ch. 3
 - Oct. 2, Ch. 5: The Consummation of the Covenant (pp. 81-96); SoS Ch 4

Readings refer throughout to chapter and verse of the Bible text.

CLERGY RENEWAL GRANT UPDATE



The dates of the congregational renewal for 2023 are May 24, 2023-September 6, 2023. The Renewal Grant Task Force will soon be scheduling professional and local coaches!



Treasurer Pam Abreu shot this photo of attendees at officer training giving "in the form of a question" answers to Presbyterian Jeopardy led by Pastor Katie and D.R.

CONNECT WITH PASTOR KATIE! - *Let's try a different day!*

Over the last few weeks, Charlie's has been closed on Tuesdays. Additionally, Katie has spoken with a couple of people who have a scheduling conflict on Tuesday mornings. SO, Coffee with Katie will move to **Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. beginning Aug. 3, at Charlie's.**



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, (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.

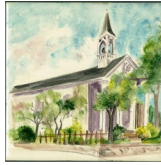


TO JOIN ANY FUPC EVENTS VIA ZOOM

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.

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

AUGUST 2022

Dry (Powdered) Milk

Oatmeal or other dry cereals

Coffee and Tea are always appreciated



- 1st Crystal Western Ford
- 3rd Rustie Mountjoy
- 4th Carly Trujillo
- 6th Renate Rendon
- 8th Estella Estrada
- 10th Jeff Salman
- 12th Van Swan
- 15th Amos Estrada
- 24th Mary Schipper
- 26th Shirley Sandoval
- 29th Celina Trujillo
- 30th Linda Solyntjes