



Sharing the Love of Christ

First United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

PO Box 37

1000 Douglas Avenue

Las Vegas New Mexico 87701

SEPTEMBER 2022

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear FUPC Family and Friends,

Last month I wrote about my fascination with clouds during this rainy season. That fascination has only grown; we've had so much opportunity to view all kinds of clouds this summer—the big fluffy ones, the heavy dark ones, the wispy ones and the ones that squelch the sparkle out of everything as they stretch across the whole sky. But really, they are quite ordinary most of the time. As clouds go, they are pretty common -- as are the wildflowers and fruit on trees and a myriad of other things. But being present enough to really notice such things leaves me with special gifts of happiness and amazement at the ordinary.

I think the same gifts can be ours, too, when we grow fascinated with one another, when we ask someone how they're feeling today and get an honest answer; when we answer that question with honesty and vulnerability. We begin to see those people with whom we take time to connect in a different way. Maybe it takes them off of the pedestal we've put them on and makes them more approachable; maybe it deepens our appreciation for who they are and what they've experienced; maybe it allows us to understand them better.

It's worth taking the time to study such things—the ordinary clouds or flowers or buildings that surround us and the ordinary people who show us the many images of God's people made with the diversity of God's imagination.

Mary Oliver's poem "Mindful" expresses this feeling of fascination with the ordinary. You'll find it below. I hope it resonates with you.

With thanks for all of you,
Pastor Katie

Mindful
by Mary Oliver

Every day
I see or I hear
something
that more or less

kills me
with delight,
that leaves me
like a needle

in the haystack
of light.
It is what I was born for –
to look, to listen,

to lose myself
inside this soft world –
to instruct myself
over and over

in joy,
and acclamation.
Nor am I talking
About the exceptional,

the fearful, the dreadful,
the very extravagant–
but of the ordinary,
the common, the very drab,

the daily presentations.
Oh, good scholar,
I say to myself,
how can you help

but grow wise
with such teachings
as these–
the untrimmable light

of the world,
the ocean's shine,
the prayers that are made
out of grass?



WORSHIP TIDBITS

Beginning in September, we'll look at the many ways some well-known Biblical characters responded to God's call in their lives and what we might learn from their responses. Specifically, we'll spend time with Jesus' disciples and then go back to the beginning to spend time with Noah, Abraham, Joseph, and Moses in the books of Genesis and Exodus.

Here's a look at the readings for "Responding to God's Call":

September 4	Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11
September 11	Genesis 6:5-22; 8:6-12; 9:8-17
September 18	Genesis 12:1-9
September 25	Genesis 39:1-23
October 2	Exodus 14:5-7, 10-14, 21-29

CONGREGATIONAL RETREAT



On Saturday, Sept. 24, we will hold a congregational retreat beginning at 9 a.m. We hope to see all of you there!!

This day of fellowship and conversation about our church community will give us some much-needed time together following all that we've dealt with as a community. It will be a time to reconnect, to enjoy a nice meal together, to play some "poker" and other games, and to envision together what God is calling FUPC to do.

There is no cost for this retreat. To register, sign up in the narthex on Sunday mornings or call the office and tell Crystal you'd like to sign up.

SEE YOU THERE!

AND JUST FOR FUN AND TO CHEER EVERYONE UP!





CLERK'S CORNER

I am happy to report to you that the FUPC Clerk of Session Minutes have been reviewed and no exceptions or omissions were found. YEA! Once again, this year's clerks of session were asked to find someone who could review their session minutes, who either is or has been a clerk of session. Last year Rudy Laumbach, who is a former FUPC Clerk of Session, reviewed the minutes. This year I asked Crystal Fort, who is the Clerk of Session for Mora Presbyterian Church, to review the minutes. She did review them and gave her review to Stephen Rhoades, Stated Clerk of the Santa Fe Presbytery, at the July Presbytery Meeting in Las Vegas. I received the certification sticker in the mail a few days ago and will place it in the minutes.

The Lilly Grant Task Force is contacting the presenters who were scheduled to come to FUPC this summer to see if they will be able to come at the same time next summer. You'll remember that Katie had planned to take a well-deserved sabbatical this summer, but chose not to because of the losses to our community from the fires and floods. So, that is underway. There will be information coming out about that program and I hope you'll put the dates and times on your calendars and invite others to join us for our "Tracking the Word, Embodying the Spirit" series in the summer of '23.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the volunteers who have jumped in to work at the Food Depot Mobile Food Pantries on the 2nd Friday of each month at Rodriguez Park. Not surprisingly, FUPC members have stepped up to take leadership roles in organizing the volunteers. Mary Schipper and Carol McComber lead the greeters/registrars; Judy Long and Charlotte Wootton lead the food loaders; and Tom Trigg and Corky Halverson lead the traffic controllers. On May 13, we served 200 households. On June 10, we served 116 households. On July 2, we served 244 households, and on August 12, we served 240 households. As we approach wet and/or snowy weather, we will have to find a site that has asphalt or concrete paving. If you have ideas about where we could do that, please let me know. In the meantime, come join us for the Sept. 9 Mobile Food Pantry food distribution at Rodriguez Park at the west end of Grant Street at 8:30 a.m.

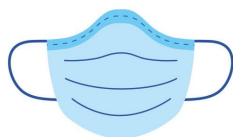
Karyl Lyne
Clerk of Session

UWC GET AWAY FAMILIES SUNDAE SUNDAY

On Sunday, September 11, from 3-4:30 p.m., there will be a Sundae Sunday event at the United World College to meet students who are participating in the Get Away Family program. For families who have been assigned a student(s), this will be an opportunity to meet and chat with one another. For those who do not have a specific student assigned to them, you are welcome to come and learn about the Get Away program, meet staff and students and enjoy a nice afternoon at the UWC campus.

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.



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.



**FROM THE DEACONS --
CURRENT PRAYER GROUPS**

MURL BAKER 505 429-0670
Richard and Susan Lindeborg
Pauline Dimsey and George
Carrol and Bob Pearson
Bruce Wertz
The Spicer Family
Caroline Rackley
Don Owens
Jeremiah Street
Lin Chibante
Juli and Jeff Salman
Fred Salas
Paul Bonchi (OTM custodian)

NINA JOHNS 505 426-5802
Jan and Frank Beurskens
Pat and Corky Halverson
Trudi Samuelson
Bonnie and Art Trujillo
June Stallsmith
Judi Ruprecht
Niki Sebastian and Jackson Igondou
Rudy Laumbach
Marie Weinrich
Betty Kretz
Renate Rendon
The Geng Family
Ken and Carol Litherland

JULI SALMAN 505 429-0290
Katie and D.R. Palmer
Frank Hager
Carol and Peter Linder
Duffy Peterson & Elizabeth
Mary Schipper and Tom Trigg
Elisa White
Renee Soderlund and Jerry
Renee Buchanon, Alistair
The Erin and Brett Gilland Family
Nina Johns and Larry
Robin Carlson and Les Jones
Pam Abreu and Jimmy
Willie Ryan & Jane Warsaw
Michelle Ulibarri
Mary Johnston

RENEE SODERLUND 505 429-1885
Susan Apodaca and Charlotte Wootton
The Croto Family
Em Krall and Cathy Stauber
Judy and Michael Long
Bob and Sharon VanderMeer
Rosalie Lopez
Van Swan
Maxine Thatcher
Lillian Hoika
Crystal Western Ford
Kathy Franken
Pablo Hernandez

BONNIE TRUJILLO 505 425-3972
Murl Baker
Theresa DeHerrera
The Connie and Diego Trujillo Family
Willie Lansing
Bryan Johnson
Christina and Nicky Litherland
Maridell and Don Monnheim
John Arnold and Bernadette Lujan
Lydia Palomino
Bill Neis
Jeanette Huling
Lorenzo Martinez
Linda Cunningham
Gay Veit

SHARON VANDERMEER 505 617-0839
Chad Boliek
Randy Campbell
Kevin Johnson
Karlene Martinez
Deb and Kent Reid
Shirley Sandoval
Linda and Gene Solyntjes
Mark Gillingham and Beth Urech
The Weinstein Family
Karyl Lyne
Ann Taylor Trujillo and Andy
Bob & Mary Rose Henssler
Gail Malley
David Anthony



Sunday Morning Class: The Uniqueness of *Song of Songs*

The last Sunday of August, the Sunday morning class for adults and youth began discussing the book *Song of Songs: A Biblical–Theological, Allegorical, Christological Interpretation* by James M. Hamilton Jr.

A reviewer comments that 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 New Testament church or between God and God’s covenant people (Israel). Rarely do you see those who will try to wed these interpretations together. But that is exactly what James M. Hamilton, Jr. does.

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

Robert Alter, a life-long Biblical translator and scholar, has capped his life’s work with release of his 3-volume commentary on the entire Hebrew Bible, based on his own translation (2019). The section on the *Song of Songs* appeared in Alter’s *Strong as Death is Love: Song of Songs, Ruth, Esther, Jonah and Daniel* (2015).

In his introduction to *Song of Songs*, Alter says the book stands out as delicate yet frank celebration of young love, without reference to God, covenant or Torah. In it are among the most beautiful love poems that have come down to us from the whole ancient world.

Elaborate theories have been proposed about the poems. They may have come from an oral tradition, but the written text indicates a relatively late date of composition (4th c. BCE). Parts may be wedding poems, but most celebrate love, not marriage. Several have an urban setting, but most are set in gardens, forests, vineyards, rolling hills or mountains.

Alter notes that Solomon is mentioned mostly to draw a contrast between lush natural settings and the luxuries of the royal court. He says attribution of the book to Solomon is strictly editorial, following a practice of crediting late Biblical books to famous figures from earlier Israelite history. The narrator of most of the poems is the beloved, not the king, prince or other lover.

Alter says much of the book’s enchantment and sensual richness come from metaphorical language. We often cannot tell whether the scene is indoors or out. The reader (or listener) is expected to know exactly what the narrator is talking about, but the delicacy of expression is sustained by a “harmonious continuity”.

Hamilton’s 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 a copy for you from Amazon and have it delivered to your home with free shipping.

The classes are from 9 to 10 a.m. in hybrid mode: Via Zoom on the same link as the worship service and in person in the church’s teleconference center on the second floor of the 1000 Douglas Ave. building. Enter through the East Wing door and follow the signs through Perea Hall to the stairs.

(Continued on Pg. 6)

Reading assignments are:

Aug. 28, Preface and Ch. 1: The Song of Songs in Biblical Theology (pp. 11-34)

NO CLASS September 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

Oct. 9, Ch. 6: Praising the Rejected One (pp. 97-110); SoS Ch. 5

Oct. 16, Ch. 7: Are the Vines in Bloom? (pp. 111-123); SoS Ch. 6

Oct. 23, Ch. 8: Reconciliation (pp. 125-134); SoS Ch. 7

Oct. 30, Ch. 9: The Meaning and Application of the Song (pp. 135-145); SoS Ch. 8

*SoS = Bible *Song of Songs*

CLERGY RENEWAL GRANT UPDATE



Be sure to mark your calendars! Pastor Katie's sabbatical and FUPC's time of renewal are coming up beginning next spring. Pastor Katie and D.R. have scheduled the sabbatical for May 24 – Sept. 5, 2023. The Renewal Grant Task Force is working now to re-schedule dates with the professional coaches who graciously agreed to postpone their time with us because of the fires that our community faced this summer. We'll announce the new dates as soon as we have them.

You'll remember that the sabbatical will encourage us to spend time "Tracking the Spirit," and we will kick off this time of renewal by hosting professional tracker John Stokes in May, before Katie and D.R. leave. John will teach us about tracking and its connection to spirituality.



A WORD ABOUT FIRE RECOVERY

With the help of FEMA, a joint San Miguel/Mora Counties Long-Term Recovery Group has been formed. The group has established a board of directors, which is at work putting together committees. These committees will address needs assessment, unmet needs, behavioral health, resources, spiritual/faith-based needs, public relations/communications, and construction. Should you be interested in serving on one of these committees, let Pastor Katie or Carol Linder know so that they can connect you to the group.

NEWS FROM TTT COMMITTEE

Because you give, we are

Growing and Sharing our Faith through

Pastor Katie, Em Krall, the Worship and Music Committee and the Tech Crew bringing us Sunday morning worship in the pews and on Zoom

Exploring the Faith Sunday morning classes

Crystal Western Ford's FUPC Happenings weekly announcements, prayer concerns, and ministry opportunities

Maintenance and upgrades to 1000 Douglas and the Old Town Mission Community Center

Facebook Devotionals

Support of the Presbyterian Theological Education Fund that funds schools (\$1,844, 1% of our 2022 annual budget)

Seeking Justice for All through

Christmas in July which raised \$1500 for a Garden Well

Weekly meal preparation feeding Samaritan House patrons

Mustard Seed grants like this fall's Abriendo Puertas program for parents of students at the Luna Preschool and the Literacy Council of Northeastern New Mexico Book Fair on Sept. 17, 2022

Equal Exchange and Just Coffee program

Building Community through

Fellowship time after Sunday worship

Coffee with Katie on Wednesday mornings at Charlie's

Deacon Prayer Shawl Ministry, cards, meals, phone calls to our church family through the Deacon flocks

Congregational Renewal Retreat on Saturday Sept. 24, 2022

Mustard seed grant to the Las Vegas NM Chess Club who will be hosting a tournament at ARMAS on the Highlands University campus on Sept. 17, 2022.



Shout Out for Work at the Old Town Mission Community Center

A huge shout out to the Building and Grounds (B&G) committee (Corky Halverson, Charlotte Wooten, Robin Carlson, and Don Owens) for their amazing work on the Old Town Mission Community Center. B&G is committed to ensuring that this space will be available for community outreach and ministry on the west side for years to come. This year we are looking forward to SPOT youth programming, community meetings, and events.

In June, the Session designated an additional \$14,500 from undesignated bequests and memorials which was matched by private donations to complete work on the building. Renovations include new flooring and refinishing throughout, repairing the roof to prevent leaks, painting inside and out, yardwork, and creating additional storage.

Carol Linder

Chair, Time, Talent, and Treasure

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS COMMUNITY LIFE?

Many of you may have heard that the Community Life Committee (CL) disbanded this summer. Here's the backstory.

CL is a very active committee of this church. If there is food, fun, and/or community involvement it's usually because of CL.



- Cookies at Christmas, CL.
- Dinners for 6 plus 2, CL.
- Church picnics and retreats, CL.
- Fellowship after church, CL.
- Bingo on zoom, CL.

These are a few of the many, many things that CL has a hand in.

Due to illness, new job, increased family responsibilities and burnout, the five current members of CL cannot lead the committee any longer. Many of us have been on the committee for years, especially through Covid and the fires. No committee can function without leadership. We have willing workers to continue to be on the committee, but no chair.

So... Any suggestions on how to continue the vital work of this committee? Temporarily, Deacons have taken over some of the tasks, and they already have Deacon work to do. If you have ideas or want to volunteer, contact Judy Long or Pam Abreu.



TRUSTEE UPDATE

Trustees are responsible for ensuring that we have adequate insurance coverage for our facilities. We also manage our investments, endowments and bequests to ensure that we are able to fulfill our mission.

Recent actions:

- We increased our lessors risk classification coverage to our Brotherhood Insurance Policy for both our facility at 1000 Douglas and the Old Town Mission Community Center at 1405 Chavez St. to cover liability from lessors to 1000 sq ft (was previously 500 sq ft). Lessor's risk liability protects the church in the event a tenant brought the church into a suit if they suffered property damage or bodily injury.
- Individuals leasing our facilities on an ongoing basis may be required to obtain a certificate of liability insurance naming the church site as additionally insured. The trustees will make this determination on a case-by-case basis.
- Last fall, following recommendations from our financial advisor John Bender, we began adjusting our Vanguard investments to diversify our portfolio between a money market account and three separate funds. The plan was to move the majority of our portfolio over a six-month period of time into funds but we postponed these transfers because of the volatility of the stock market. We have been fortunate that our Vanguard investments have weathered the last six months fairly well with a decline of 5.6%.

July 31, 2022	\$268,312.71
May 31, 2022	\$268,549.00
December 31, 2021	\$284,390.39

Trustees: Carol Linder, Tom Trigg, and Judy Long

CONNECT WITH PASTOR KATIE! - now on Wednesdays!

Plan to join Pastor Katie for good conversation, coffee or tea, and maybe a pastry or some breakfast on Wednesdays, 8:30 a.m., at Charlie's. The more the merrier!



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.

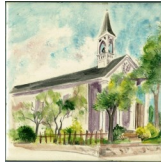


TO JOIN ANY FUPC EVENTS VIA ZOOM

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



Samaritan House Food Donations
SEPTEMBER 2022
Canned milk and canned vegetables
Coffee and Tea are always appreciated



- 13th Ed Roe
- 15th Sharon Roe
- 21st Lydia Palomino
- 22nd Aubrey Weinstein
- 28th D.R. Palmer
- 29th Frank Beurskens