



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

JANUARY 2023

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear FUPC Family and Friends,

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

2022 was a rough year for Las Vegans. At the beginning of the year, we were still tentative about the threat of COVID, but we were seeing a light at the end of the tunnel. Then the spring and summer brought fire and flood, destruction and displacement. Even after the fire was contained and the flooding abated, we knew we faced a long road to recovery as we faced another crisis: problems with our local water treatment facility because of the floods. Barely had we begun to adjust before the surge of COVID, flu, and RSV rushed into the fall and early winter.

And yet, through it all, we knew God's grace—in the way the community came together to reach out to fire and flood victims, in the way we took care and continue to take care of those who suffer illness and loss. We have known the blessing of one another. Let's pray that 2023 offers us continued blessings and fewer crises!

Moving into the new year always makes me think about the passing of time. I remember standing in a classroom during my first semester teaching college freshmen as news of the Space Shuttle Challenger explosion spread across campus. I stood there somehow reminded of the disaster that was JFK's assassination just before my 6th birthday. I had memories of the TV footage of the event. Most of the students who sat in front of me would not be born until five or six years after JFK's death, but the Challenger disaster would become for them a landmark historical event, just as the JFK assassination was for me. It's hard for us to grasp some of these events as they wrap around the timelines of our lives. How many of us rely on credit cards for a majority of the purchases we make? Did you know that the introduction of the credit card, by Diners Club International in 1950, is as far removed from 2023 as the invention of Edison's phonograph in 1877 is? Both are 73 years—26,645 days--away from 1950. Really?

In the first stanza of his poem "Days," Philip Larkin questions the purpose of our days, writing:

What are days for?
Days are where we live.
They come, they wake us
Time and time over.
They are to be happy in:
Where can we live but days?

And so, as we greet 2023, I wish you full days in which you find happiness and the knowledge that God is with you, whatever those days bring.

With thanks for all of you,
Pastor Katie





WORSHIP TIDBITS

Our first worship theme for 2023, "Words from Heaven," is not looking for words you can make from the letters in the word "heaven" (like haven or heave). I hope this doesn't disappoint you. Instead, we'll be looking at how scripture shows us that God has spoken to us in the past, and we invite you to consider how we might receive messages from God today.

We will renew our baptismal vows on January 8 when we celebrate Jesus' baptism.

You are invited to read ahead the scriptures for January and see how they can point to "Words from Heaven."

January 15: Matthew 4:1-17, Jesus tempted in the wilderness

January 22: Matthew 5:1-20, the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount

January 29: Matthew 6:7-21, the Lord's Prayer and Treasure in heaven

D.R. Palmer

Worship and Music Committee Chair



CLERK'S CORNER

As we reach the end of 2022 and I think of all our community has endured this year, I marvel at the steadfastness of our church family's work, creativity, optimism, stick-to-it-tive-ness, love and joy. COVID, the flu and RSV continued to isolate us through the early part of the year, but the Adult Sunday School Class, Sunday Worship and the work of our deacons, elders and committees persisted. We listened to the sheriff's daily fire briefings. We studied maps for the 'ready, set, go' designations for various parts of our area. We packed our cars with what we couldn't leave behind and we drove away. Through it all we've prayed for the ill, grieved with those who lost so much, and carried on with the work of the church. We pray, we worship, we sing, we plan, we discuss, we bake, we zoom, we distribute food, we monitor spending/income, we share our resources with the community, and we continue to do God's work in Las Vegas. We are truly blessed, dear church!

Karyl Lyne

BOOK CLUB DISCUSSIONS

Join Pastor Katie for a series of book discussions over the next few months! Books chosen so far for the new year include:

***The Liberating Birth of Jesus: A Birth Story Able to Reverse Our Planet's Perils* by Lee Van Ham.** Recommended by Ruth Hazelton, this book looks at Jesus' birth stories in the gospels of Matthew and Luke with an eye to demonstrate that these stories show

. . . a worldview that is creation-centered. . . In this worldview, sharing, interdependence, cosmology, and souls that resonate with the sacred Presence give powerful, life-sustaining experiences. With the ecological catastrophes underway, stories in the creation-centered worldview stir our greater capacities as humans. [from the book's cover commentary]

The author directs a U.S. – Mexico nonprofit, Jubilee Economics, focused on OneEarth living. He is a retired Presbyterian pastor.

The book is available on Amazon for \$11.95 (\$2.99 for Kindle edition); from Alibris for \$9.63. Date for this discussion is January 14 at 11:30 in The Gathering Place (east wing). Feel free to bring a sack lunch.

As we move into the Lenten season in late February, Pastor Katie will schedule one or two more book discussions. Dates will be determined by the birth of Katie's new granddaughter, who will be arriving sometime in February! **Sue Monk Kidd's novel *The Book of Longings* will guide one discussion.** This novel imagines the story of Jesus' wife during the time of his ministry. (Many scholars have long thought that Jesus was probably married; it would be quite unusual for a Jewish man in his time not to be.) The story is that of Ana, the wife's character, but weaves Jesus' story in and out of the events in Ana's life.

The Associated Press review of the novel says that Kidd's

. . . painstaking research and artful crafting of setting and character ensure that *The Book of Longings* is not just an extraordinary novel, but one with lasting power. . . [Her] brilliance shines through on so many levels, but not the least in her masterful, reverential approach to capturing Jesus of Nazareth as a fully human young man.

Kidd's book is available through Amazon for \$13.99 (\$11.99 for Kindle edition); from Alibris for \$6.59.

Please let Katie know if you plan to attend so she can prepare for the appropriate number of participants!

LIFTED

World,
oh world...
spinning, spinning
out of control
listen, listen
deep in your soul,
the winds of hope
swirl round and round,
trust, trust...
hear hope in the sound
of kindness in word and deed
touching any and all who need
to be lifted from daily care
and to know deep inside,
the Holy Child is everywhere.

By Sharon Vander Meer

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that our church has space available to rent for events such as meetings, discussion groups, birthday parties or baby showers? Perea Hall is an excellent room for large gatherings and The Gathering Place (formerly the East Wing) has been nicely furnished with colorful rugs, couches, chairs, tables, a coffee maker and microwave. It is ideal for meetings, workshops or maybe book club discussion groups. The Old Town Mission Community Center is also available for rent with the large room suitable for large events like weddings. The middle room at OTMCC has comfy couches, chairs and tables. Rental fees are waived for church members' use, and are very affordably priced for anyone in the community who would like to rent them. Please spread the word if you know of someone looking for space. For information on prices and availability, please call the church office at 505-425-7763.

Crystal Western Ford

A WORD ABOUT THE SPANISH LORD'S PRAYER

The Worship and Music Committee would like to thank everyone for their good work learning the Spanish Lord's Prayer, and a special thank you to Rudy Laumbach for his patient teaching. We sound pretty good these days! And it will only get better with repetition as our tongues get more familiar with phrases like "perdonamos nuestros deudos" and "no nos dejes caer en tentación." We intend that this additional prayer in Spanish will help us demonstrate our connection with and openness to the whole community of Las Vegas, and to honor our shared past.

We would also like to clarify a point about this version of the Lord's Prayer that some Spanish speakers have asked about. It turns out there are several versions of the Lord's Prayer in Spanish, just as there are in English. For example, the Presbyterian Church (USA) includes one version in its *Book of Common Worship* and a slightly different one in the *Glory to God* hymnal. The version we have learned is the version that Rudy and others who grew up in this area learned when they were young. We decided to use this version to honor our elders and our connection to our past. This local version uses the formal style for "You" when referring to God and capitalizes it, for example "venga Su reino" for "thy kingdom come." This formal style was (and is) used when speaking to someone in authority or at a formal occasion. These days, we understand our relationship with God to be more intimate than formal, like "Daddy" rather than "Father", and so other versions of the Lord's Prayer use the familiar style of "you" as in "venga tu reino." We hope this clarification helps you to understand why we chose this particular version of the prayer.

From the Presbytery

Dear Pastors,

We are grateful to all the churches and individuals that donated to the 2022 Medical Debt Relief Fund. We raised \$38,792, which means that over \$550,000 of medical debt will be forgiven in the New Mexico community in the new year!

Thank you for helping us reach (and surpass!) our goal and being a part of this Christmas blessing.

Merry Christmas!

Tiffany



CLERGY RENEWAL GRANT UPDATE



It's coming! The long-awaited time of sabbatical for Pastor Katie and of congregational renewal will take place this coming summer! We are grateful for the funds given in a grant by the Lilly Endowment and for their understanding of our need to postpone because of the fires/floods of this past spring and summer.

The Grant Renewal Task Force is hard at work scheduling leaders and events, planning for worship during this time, and preparing information that the church family and the community need to know about the wonderful opportunities this renewal will afford. Stay tuned for more information, coming soon!



Dear Cafe Justo supporter,

We send you warm greetings from the states of Chiapas and Sonora, Mexico.

Over the past twenty years, the Café Justo Cooperative has produced both excellent coffee and good relationships with each of you. Many of you have traveled to Chiapas to meet the growers and learn about coffee production. Each of you lived in our homes, shared food and fellowship, and formed lasting memories. We have been honored by your presence with us.

Since 2006, the price of a pound of Café Justo has remained the same. Over the past four years we have been able to break even but with increased costs, Café Justo cannot be sustained. We made the very difficult decision to raise our prices starting September 16th 2022:

Regular coffee	increase of \$1/lb
Decaf and blended coffee	increase of \$2/lb

Have you heard the term “shrinkflation?” It refers to the current trend to maintain the cost of a product by reducing the amount in the container. Café Justo is not going to “shrink” you one-pound amount of coffee, however, we have had to consider increasing the cost to you. This has been a difficult process.

Our pledge since the beginning is to be “Justos/Fair” with each one of our Farmers, Employees, and Customers, so these prices will allow us to continue to do exactly that, and cultivating relationships across borders.

Thank you so much for these 20 years of partnership and keeping families together and thriving.

Paz y Justicia!

Cafe Justo S.P de R.L
ATTE

Frontera de Cristo and Café Justo created the “Love Mercy, Do Justice” initiative to provide coffee for migrant shelters across the southern border. Thousands of women and men each week are greeted with a cup of coffee, a meal, and vital medical attention when they are repatriated into Mexico. You can help support this effort with a donation to [Love Mercy, Do Justice](#).

In the meantime, why not buy a bag of coffee from the First United Presbyterian Church of Las Vegas, NM Coffee Project. You will enjoy delicious 100% organic coffee cultivated, roasted, and shipped by the Café Justo cooperative. To order contact Nina Marquez Johns at ninamjohns@gmail.com.



Febe Maldonado,
barista at Café Justo y Mas



First Sunday Class of 2023: Ten Words of Love

The Sunday Morning Bible-Based Class for Adults and Youth will start the new year with discussion of the book *Words of Love: A Healing Journey with the Ten Commandments* by Eugenia Anne Gamble.

From the book cover: “The Ten Commandments are more than a list of ancient rules. Beneath the surface, they offer a profound invitation to healing and transformation. In this unique Bible study, readers will discover that the Ten Commandments are words from the heart of God, given to reconcile creation to Creator and God’s people to one another. In *Words of Love*, Eugenia Anne Gamble dives into each of the Ten Commandments and examines their application for modern-day Christians, going beyond the letter of the law to a spiritual truth pointing us toward wholeness and well-being. “

Eugenia Anne Gamble, a retired Presbyterian Church (USA) pastor, has preached throughout the United States and is a writer who loves to help the Bible come alive in people’s lives. She writes a regular column for *Horizons Magazine* and won the Associated Church Press Award of Excellence for her Bible study called: *Glimpses of Home: Biblical Images of the Realm of God*.

Readers write “Rev. Gamble offers us a fresh look at the life offering promises of God’s words of Love in the Ten Commandments. The commandments, offered to provide a guide for life as God’s people, are as rich today with the promise of life together in God’s world as they were on Mt. Sinai,” and “The Ten Commandments are shown to be not directives from an austere God but rather words for building a solid relationship with God. Her ability with text, theology and timely illustrations makes this a very readable and worthwhile book.”

The class is at 9:00 Sunday Mornings. In-person sessions are in the first classroom upstairs with Zoom access on the same link as the Sunday worship service.

The book is in paperback, \$17.59 new online, with a few copies used for \$12 and up, all plus shipping. E-books are \$12.49 and up. Richard Lindeborg can have a paperback copy delivered to you for \$17.59 including shipping.

The reading assignments are:

- Jan. 8: Introduction and Ch. 1, pp. 1-24 (Exodus 20:22)
- Jan. 15 Ch. 2 and 3, pp 25-64 (Exodus 20:3-4a, 7a)
- Jan. 22: Ch. 4 and 5, pp. 65-104 (Exodus 20:8, 12)
- Jan. 29: Ch. 6, pp. 105-124 (Exodus 20:13)
- Feb. 5. Ch. 7, pp. 125-144 (Exodus 20:14)
- Feb. 12: Ch. 8 and 9, pp. 146-182 (Exodus 20:15, 16)
- Feb. 19, Ch. 10 and Conclusion, pp. 183-208 (Exodus 20:17)

Jump Start Breakfast’s Future is in Doubt

There will be no Jump Start Breakfast on January 8. The meal may not resume until Lent, depending on what other early morning events are scheduled.

SOCIAL MEDIA LIAISON CORNER

On Dec. 4, many people stayed after worship for a potluck lunch, annual budget meeting and the Hanging of the Greens. The Christmas tree was assembled and decorated in the sanctuary and decorations were put up in Perea Hall. It was good to see so many folks enjoying time together.



Nina Marquez Johns and Juli Salman decorating Perea Hall



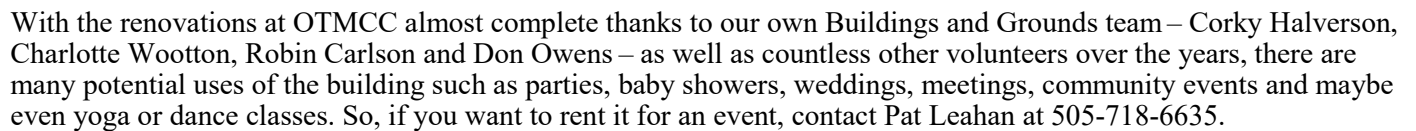
Charlotte Wootton decorating the Christmas Tree

A bake sale and open house was held on Dec. 11 at the Old Town Mission Community Center (OTMCC). It was a big success with lots of goodies baked and sold, \$667 raised for OTMCC and lots of folks got tours of the building. There are more pictures on our website on the OTMCC page here: <https://lvpresbyterian.org/main/old-town-mission-community-center/>

On Dec. 2, I attended the holiday party at OTMCC for the UWC Youth SPOT Team. Pat Leahan, Virginia Mattingly and Irene Encinias were there providing pizzas, drinks and a surprise visit from Santa. I got a chance to talk with some of the UWC students – 14 in total in this program – who are excited to be involved in some Highlands University activities, meeting local business owners and learning about Las Vegas. Through this program, UWC students have played ping pong and basketball with Highlands students and talked and learned a lot from each other. There's a lot to learn when we have so many people from different countries and walks of life in Montezuma and right here in Las Vegas. Pat Leahan is active in promoting the OTMCC and enjoys working with the UWC students. Star Ford has started a disability inclusive youth group at OTMCC focused on drama, storytelling, and games. The group meets every two weeks.

UWC Youth SPOT Team Holiday Party Dec. 2022





MUSTARD SEED GRANTS DEADLINE

All 2023 Mustard Seed Grant applications are due Wednesday March 1st 2023. Please see our website at <https://lvpresbyterian.org/main/mustard-seed-2023-proposal-information/>

First United Presbyterian Church Las Vegas, NM



Renee Soderlund, DR Palmer, Beth Urech, Mark Gillingham, and Pastor Katie Palmer interpreting scripture.



Above: UWC students at the Old Town Mission Community Center listening intently. Right: Session governing body members Karyl Lyne, DR Palmer, Judy Long, Corky Halverson, Carol Linder, and Carol Litherland (Tom Trigg is not pictured).



Finding Wisdom and Guidance through Scripture

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.
They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.
It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

--Jeremiah 17:7-8



Nourishing our Roots to Grow God's Kingdom



With your support, we are Growing and Sharing Our Faith

Whether we are worshiping in the sanctuary or online, participating in bible-based book studies, or participating in the Thursday prayer circle, we are learning about our faith and our role in today's world. In 2022, we hired a social medial liaison (first Sharon Vander Meer and now

Crystal Western Ford) to further engage our community online and raise awareness of our ministry. 2023 also brings the much-awaited time of *Tracking the Word: Embodying the Spirit* through the Lilly Endowment for a National Clergy Renewal Program.



Seeking Justice for All

Our community has faced unprecedented challenges in 2022 with the ongoing pandemic, fires, floods, and continued threat to our water supply. We have opened our doors, pockets, kitchens, and hearts to help heal our community. As a PC(USA) Matthew 25 Church and an ELCA (Lutheran) Advocacy Church we offer support and comfort, create opportunities for renewal to restore vitality, work to end poverty, fight structural racism, and work for social justice.



Building Community

2022 brought several new ways to build community with the creation of The Gathering Place in the east wing (funded by Mustard Seed Grant), a return of lunches, movies, and discussions. Deacons and others provide gifts of hospitality, connection, support, and love by hosting small group gatherings, awarding Mustard Seed grants, distributing food each month through The Food Depot Pop-Up Food Pantry, preparing Samaritan House meals, supporting local soup kitchens, creating ways to meet, learn, work, and play, and supporting the mission and vision of Presbyterian Church USA.

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

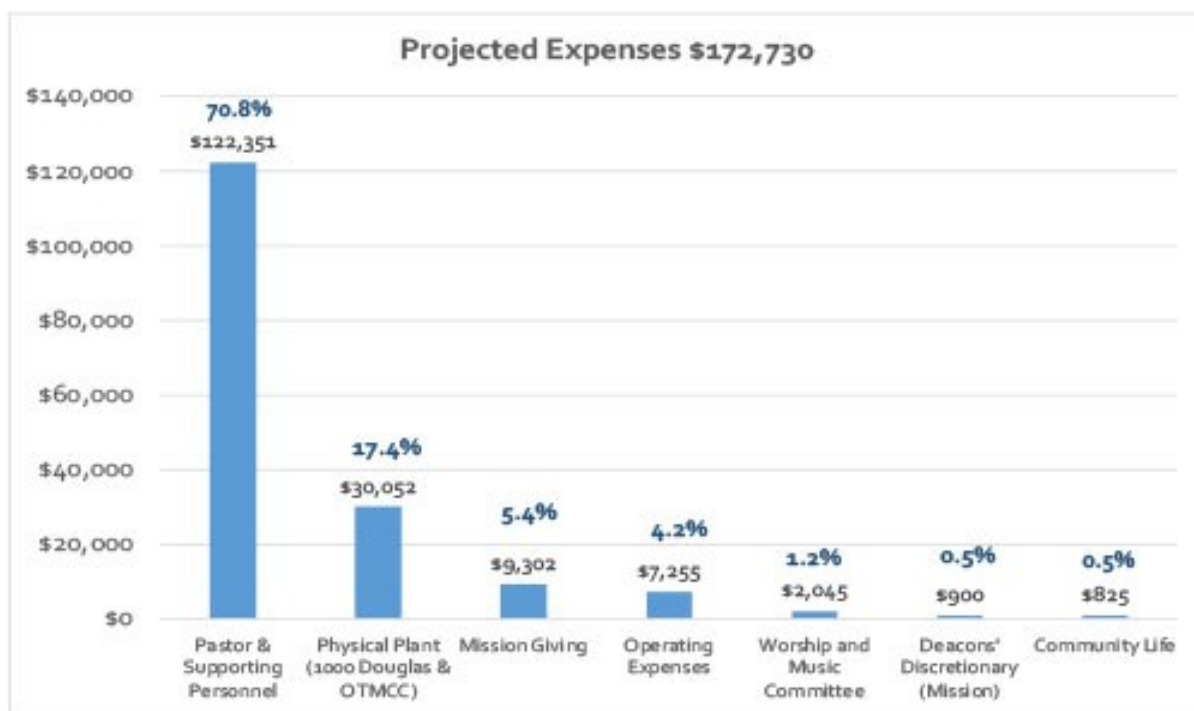
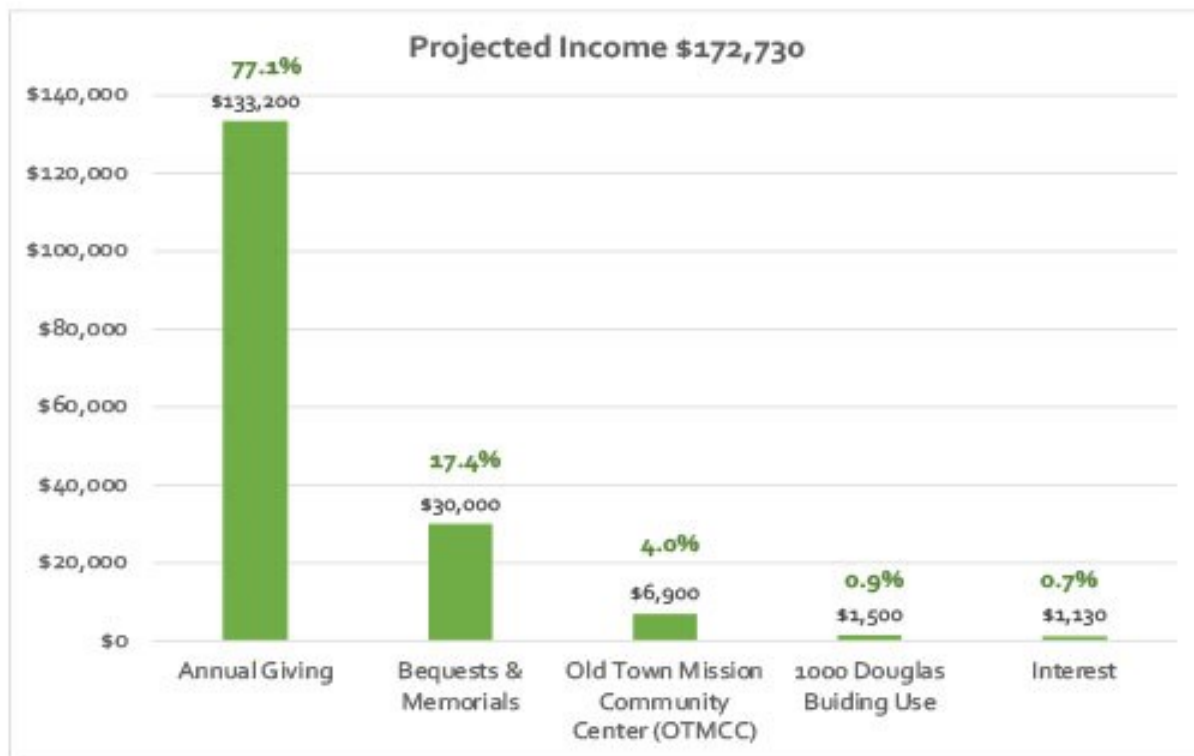
fupc.nm@gmail.com
www.lvpresbyterian.org

Sunday Schedule

9 – 10 Class, 10:30 Worship

Top: Karyl Lyne bringing a message from God. Don Owens, Rudy Laumbach, and Pastor Katie Palmer at the Congregational Retreat.
Middle: Juli Salman, Judy Long, Nina Johns, and Carol Linder ready to deliver cookies to firefighters.
Bottom: Deacons taking care of our church family Bonnie Trujillo, Sharon Vander Meer, Renee Soderlund, Muriel Baker, Nina Johns, and Juli Salman.

2023 Financials



COFFEE WITH KATIE

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. We meet to get to know one another better, talk about the topics of the day, and enjoy bacon and eggs or pancakes or a cinnamon roll! 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

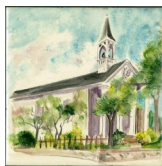
You are welcome and encouraged to worship in the sanctuary, but if you would like to continue worshipping online, here are the instructions to access Zoom:

- 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 pen 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.

First United Presbyterian Church

JANUARY 2023

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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

JANUARY 2023

Peanut butter and Jelly

Coffee and Tea are always appreciated



Jan. 6th
Jan. 8th
Jan. 16th
Jan. 17th
Jan. 18th
Jan. 19th
Jan. 21st
Jan. 29th

Em Krall
Cathy Stauber
Bob Vander Meer
Debra Allen Reid
Fred Salas
Tom Trigg
Don Monnheim
Mark Gillingham