



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

MARCH 2024

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

On some days, it feels very much like spring already. On those days, the temperatures are mild, the air smells fresh, the birds sing merrily, and I see green sprouts of grape hyacinths and leaves of iris poking through last year's leftover growth. It reminds me that I need to get out and start doing some yardwork! And of course, nothing reminds us more of the rebirth of Easter than those signs of spring.

Easter arrives a bit early this year—right at the end of March. It comes and proclaims resurrection.

And yet, our world feels heavy. As I talk with people, as I read the news, as I watch what goes on around me, I see that heaviness. I see weariness and distraction. I see sadness and worry—both close to home and about what is happening in our country, in our world. And so, during this Lenten season as we approach the new life of resurrection, the new life that lifts us, with Christ, into hope, I offer this poem, “A Better Resurrection” by Christina Rossetti. May it speak to you and may you, as the poem does, invite Jesus into the struggle.

With thanks for all of you,
Pastor Katie

A Better Resurrection by Christina Rossetti

I have no wit, no words, no tears;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numb'd too much for hopes or fears;
Look right, look left, I dwell alone;
I lift mine eyes, but dimm'd with grief
No everlasting hills I see;
My life is in the falling leaf:
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a broken bowl,
A broken bowl that cannot hold
One drop of water for my soul
Or cordial in the searching cold;
Cast in the fire the perish'd thing;
Melt and remould it, till it be
A royal cup for Him, my King:
O Jesus, drink of me.

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk:
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk;
My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud nor greenness can I see:
Yet rise it shall—the sap of Spring;
O Jesus, rise in me.

WORSHIP TIDBITS



We are in the middle of Lent and of our Lenten focus on “Stops Along the Way,” during which we take some time each Sunday to stop with Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem and to the cross. The Worship and Music Committee members hope you are finding these encounters with Jesus meaningful.

As reported last month, we will share services during the season with St. Paul’s Peace and First United Methodist churches. As we move into Holy Week on Palm Sunday, we will gather together for an Ecumenical Liturgy of the Palms before heading to our own respective sanctuaries for Palm Sunday worship.

Later that week, when we arrive at Maundy Thursday, our different clergy and churches will host Holy Week services. See the schedule on Page 3.



- Palm Sunday, March 24, 10:30 a.m. - Ecumenical Liturgy of the Palms at 8th and National, followed by pilgrimage walk or drive to individual church services
- Maundy Thursday, March 28, Noon - Stations of the Cross at St. Paul’s Peace
- Maundy Thursday, March 28, 7:00 p.m. - Service at First United Methodist
- Good Friday, March 29, 7:00 p.m. – Stations of the Cross at St. Paul’s Peace
Tenebrae Service at First United Presbyterian
- Easter Saturday Vigil, March 30, 7:00 p.m. - St. Paul’s Peace
- Easter Sunday Worship – Sunrise, 6:15 a.m. at the Old Town Mission Community Center
– 10:00 a.m. at St. Paul’s Peace
– 10:30 a.m. at First United Presbyterian

MARCH MADNESS: GOING DEEP IN DISCUSSION*

When we think of March Madness, we automatically think NCAA basketball. Did you know that phrase was first used in 1939, at the time of the first tournament, with only eight teams competing? Evidently, the phrase was coined by a high school official, Henry Porter, in Illinois. He said, “A little March madness may complement and contribute to sanity and help keep society on an even keel.” I have no idea what that sentence means in the context of basketball. In fact, it seems that the phrase didn’t “stick” with the NCAA Tournament until a CBS broadcaster started using it in 1982. He claims he got it from car dealership ads.

But in terms of “contributing to sanity” and “keeping society on an even keel,” nothing helps like deep conversation about things that matter, things we find ourselves pondering. So, let’s have our own little March Madness—a time of deep discussion about big religious questions like “Who was/is Jesus, really?” “Does hell exist? Does heaven?” “What does it mean to be Christian in 2024?” “Can I call myself Christian if I don’t believe in a virgin birth or a physical resurrection?”

I doubt we’ll come up with definitive answers, but the questions are worth pondering with others who are thinking about them.

Feel free to bring a sack supper or come at 5:30 and enjoy a soup and bread supper. Dates are March 6 and March 27.

Hope to see you there. –Pastor Katie

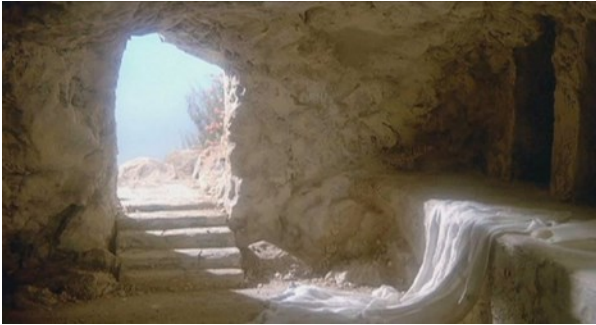
HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday, 3/24, 10:30 am – Ecumenical Liturgy of the Palms at 8th & National, followed by pilgrimage walk/drive to individual churches

Maundy Thursday, 3/28, 7 pm – First United Methodist

Good Friday, 3/29, Noon – Stations of the Cross at St. Paul’s Peace

Good Friday, 3/29, 7 pm – Tenebrae Service at First United Presbyterian



EASTER

Saturday Vigil, 3/30, 7 pm – St. Paul’s Peace

Easter Sunday Worship:

Sunrise, 6:15 am – Old Town Mission

10 am – St. Paul’s Peace

10:30 am – First United Presbyterian

11 am – First United Methodist

JOIN PASTOR KATIE FOR A DISCUSSION-RICH ADVENT STUDY!



The Sunday morning class members are having good discussions of Diana Butler Bass’ book *Freeing Jesus*. There’s still time to join us! Bass is a Christian historian and writer of eleven books on religion in America. She has also written for many other publications, from *The New York Times* to *The Christian Century*. Bass calls *Freeing Jesus* a “theology memoir.” According to the book’s cover, the most frequent question Bass is asked is “How can you still be a Christian?” Reading on:

It is a question that many people ponder as they wrestle with disappointment and disillusionment in their church and its leadership when they try to fit Jesus into a one-size-fits-all box. But while many Christians have left their churches, they find they cannot leave Jesus or their faith behind.

Looking back over her life, Bass shares . . . how her experience of Jesus has changed over the years—viewing him at different times as friend, teacher, savior, Lord, way, and presence. *Freeing Jesus* then explores the historical and theological backgrounds behind the multitude of ways Christians have experienced Jesus.

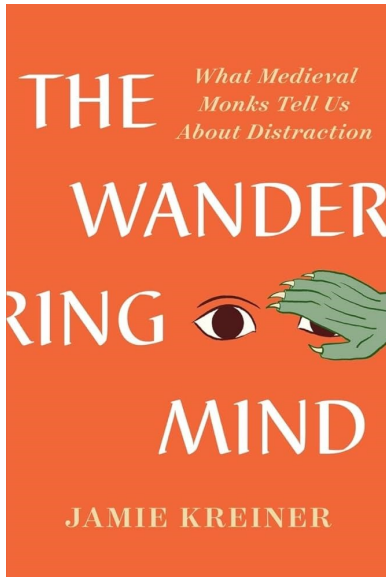
Class meets at 8:45 on Sunday mornings in the Session Room through March 24. The book is available from Amazon for \$14.39 plus shipping; from Alibris for \$12.45 plus shipping; and new and used from other sellers as well.

Reading assignments (pagination based on hardcover copy) for March are:

- March 3: Chapter 3, “Savior,” pp. 65-113. Before reading, jot down what it means to you for Jesus to be a savior.
- March 10: Chapter 4, “Lord,” pp. 115-160. Before reading, jot down what it means to you for Jesus to be Lord.
- March 17: Chapter 5, “Way,” pp. 161-215. Before reading, jot down what it means to you for Jesus to be the Way.
- March 24: Chapter 6, “Presence,” pp. 217-256 and Conclusion, “The Universal Jesus,” pp. 257-268. Before reading, jot down what it means to you for Jesus to be a Presence.



CLASS TO DISCUSS APPLYING TECHNIQUES OF MEDIEVAL MONKS TO AVOID DISTRACTION



The Sunday Morning Class for Adults and Youth will resume the Sunday after Easter (April 7) with discussion of the book *The Wandering Mind: What Medieval Monks Tell Us About Distraction* by Jamie Kreiner.

According to the publisher, this book is a revelatory account of how Christian monks identified distraction as a fundamental challenge—and how their efforts to defeat it can inform ours, more than a millennium later.

Kreiner is Professor of History at the University of Georgia. Her work on the early Middle Ages examines the politics, ethics, and scientific sensibilities of those underappreciated centuries.

This book would be most meaningful to people who want to focus their religious devotions, but it would also benefit anyone who wants to regain some focus in their regular life, i.e., limit distractions.

The hardcover book is available new from Amazon for \$15 (half price) or used for \$9.75. Used prices at dealers such as AbeBooks and Alibris are competitive (prices plus shipping). A longer description of the book is available from Richard Lindeborg at RALindeborg@cs.com.

Sessions will be at 8:45 a.m. in the session room or on Zoom. The reading assignment for the first session is the introduction and Chapter 1, “The World”.

BOOK OTMCC FOR YOUR NEXT GATHERING



The Old Town Mission Community Center (OTMCC), 301 Socorro Street, is now offering space for free or reduced cost for public-interest events. The recently renovated space seats up to 100 people and is ideal for dances, performances, classes, large meetings, art, movement, and body work

Pictures and more info here:

<https://www.lvpresbyterian.org/old-town-mission-community-center/>

Request sponsorship with Star at starluciaford@gmail.com, or 505-246-8490.

MARCH 2024

ERNIE COUCH & REVIVAL



IN CONCERT AT
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Wednesday, March 13th • 6:30 p.m.
715 National Ave. • Las Vegas, NM

Follow Ernie, Memphis and Jason on Facebook  and at www.erniecouchandrevival.com

Mark Your Calendars for Lenten Happenings

Please join us on **Wednesday, March 6 at 5:30 p.m.** in the Fellowship Hall for a Lenten Soup Supper. A modest meal of soup and bread will be shared as we reflect upon the sacrifices made by Jesus for our sake.

On **Wednesday, March 13**, the Methodist Church will be hosting a Southern Gospel Concert at **6:30 p.m.** All are welcome.

Wednesday, March 20, our congregation is invited to Lenten Supper at St. Paul's Peace Church at **5:30 p.m.** There will be a Taize service and an "Inquirer's Conversation".

We will be hosting a second Lenten Soup Supper on **Wednesday, March 27 at 5:30 pm.** Katie will be leading a "March Madness Deep Discussion". If you can help by providing soup or bread for this meal, please contact Deb Reid.



Deb Reid
pethyena@gmail.com
(505) 331-9125



Inquirer's Conversation
Why lent? Why Church? Why now?

Wednesdays during Lent

Light meal: soup/salad

Open Discussion to ask your questions.

"Taize Style" Meditative Service

St. Paul's Peace Episcopal/Lutheran Church

St Paul's Peace purpose and mission is to offer God's love to all people through worship, fellowship, and prayer; and in service to others.

We welcome all people from all walks and conditions of life.

Guild Hall/Children's Chapel

Wednesday, February 28th

And

Wednesday March 20

At 5:30pm

Sunday Services at 10am

810 8th Street, Las Vegas NM

**GOING AWAY
PARTY FOR
JUDY AND
MICHAEL LONG**

**FEBRUARY 25,
2024**



Thanks to all who attended, brought the delicious food, and assisted in making the Judy and Michael Long farewell pot-luck such a success. Special thanks to Carol Linder and Crystal Western Ford who did the work of setting up, organizing the layout of the food, and keeping hot dishes hot and cold dishes cool. Additional thanks to Peter Linder (a master of efficiency prepping items and getting them through the dishwasher) and to all others who assisted with clean-up This was a "many hands make light work" effort!



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 \$200 to \$1,500, helps organizations with a project for one-time expenses. Since its launch in 1999, more than \$170,000 has been distributed to 180-plus organizations

**Submission guidelines may be downloaded at the link below,
or Scan the QR code**

<https://www.lvpresbyterian.org/mustard-seed-2024-proposal-information/>



For more information

Call the church office: 425-7763 or email

Cordell Halverson: ckh5@me.com

Carol Litherland: ctlitherland@nmhu.edu

**MUSTARD SEED PROPOSALS
Due Monday, March 18, 2024 by noon**

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

Email: fupc.nm@gmail.com





MUSTARD SEED KICK STARTER

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which someone took and sowed in his field; and this is smaller than all other seeds: but when it is full-grown it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches. Matthew 13:31-32

The Mustard Seed project at First United Presbyterian Church took its purpose from this bible verse. With a little help, projects can blossom and grow, assisting others to “build nests.” Since 1999, the church has annually given out grants focusing on one of these areas: youth participation/benefit; mission within or beyond the community; community/church related projects.

In 2023 the following grants were awarded: five youth-related groups, four arts programs, two community grants, and one grant for seniors, for more than \$5,400 awarded to help these groups grow and give “shade” to others in the Las Vegas community. FUPC feels that the Mustard Seed Program can make a difference. Anyone wishing to make a donation to the Mustard Seed Program may send a check to FUPC with Mustard Seed on the memo line and mailed to P.O. Box 37, Las Vegas, NM 87701.

It is now time to work on grants for this year. Applications may be found on the church website or picked up at the church office, 1000 Douglas from 9-1:30 Monday-Tuesday or 9-12 Thursday. Grant proposals must be returned by March 18, 2024.

COFFEE WITH KATIE

Join Pastor Katie for Coffee with Katie every Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesdays at Charlie's. Enjoy good conversation, a cup of tea or coffee, and maybe a cinnamon roll!

ONLINE GIVING REMINDER



If you are using our online giving process, please check the “end date” of your automatic payments. Scan the QR code to the right to make a donation online. 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 Sunday service.



TO JOIN ANY FUPC EVENTS VIA ZOOM

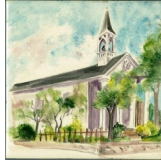


You are welcome and encouraged to worship in the sanctuary, but if you would like to continue worshipping online, here are the instructions to access Zoom:

- 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 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.

First United Presbyterian Church

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 in person and via Zoom

10:30 a.m. - Sunday Worship in person and via Zoom



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