



Sharing the Love of Christ

First United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

PO Box 37

1000 Douglas Avenue

Las Vegas New Mexico 87701

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

JUNE 2021

Dear FUPC Family and Friends,

On the morning of Joyce Litherland's memorial service, D.R. and I drove together to the church and entered through the east door into the office wing. When we reached my office door, D.R. unlocked it for me (my hands were full), and we stepped through the doorway. As we did, we looked at each other and passed a knowing look. The last time we had arrived at the church building together in preparation for a service was 63 weeks before. It felt both familiar and new, the same and different. That memorial service, celebrating the life of our community's beloved Joyce, would be the first hybrid service streamed from our sanctuary. On Sunday, June 6, we will begin using this hybrid model for Sunday morning worship.

What is hybrid worship, exactly?

Hybrid worship allows some folks to be in the sanctuary in person, while those who are not local or who, for whatever reason, would prefer to continue online worship to do exactly that. For those who worship from the sanctuary, most things will feel familiar, although there are some things that will be different. (More on that below.) Those who worship online will have an experience very similar to any of our Zoom services—a camera will close in on the pulpit and on the lectern, so that the preacher and worship leader are on the screen. On communion Sundays, it will focus on the table and the celebrant. Members of our tech crew will move between the preacher/worship leader and the recorded music videos, Scripture readings, and liturgy just as we've done on Zoom. Once we've done this a couple of Sundays with the worship leader and me in the sanctuary, we'll be able to Zoom in worship leaders (Sharon Roe is tentatively scheduled to do this on June 20 if we don't discover any tech issues) and even guest preachers.

What does it mean for worship participation?

If you want to continue to worship via Zoom, great! Zoom in just as you always have, and pay attention to the bulletins you receive so that you are prepared for communion Sundays and other services that might ask that you have something with you (like communion elements or oil for anointing) when you Zoom in.

If you want to worship in person, please plan to let the office know by noon Thursday before the Sunday service that you want to do that—at least until we have the equipment installed in Perea Hall that will allow us to have folks worship from there, too. Once that equipment is installed, we shouldn't have any problem seating (and distancing) those who want to be in the building.

Although capacity limits for religious services are generous, distancing and masking recommendations are still in place. So, if you worship with us in the building, you will be asked to:

- wear a mask;
- enter through the main double doors to the sanctuary;
- be guided to a seat by an usher to maintain social distancing;
- have your name checked off a list (if you are a member) or sign in with your name and phone number for contact tracing purposes;
- refrain from singing aloud (we will continue to use recorded music with videos);
- on communion Sundays, pick up a packet of bread and a cup of juice as you enter (the juice can be placed in the pew cup holder and the bread next to you on the pew until time for communion);
- leave following worship as directed, maintaining distance from those not in your family group;
- forego fellowship time in Perea Hall for the time being.

Of course, we all hope that it won't be long before we won't have to worry about distancing, masking, and joining together for coffee and goodies. But for now, we must keep in mind that not everyone has chosen to have the vaccine, young children are not yet being vaccinated, and recommendations are still in place to help us watch out for one another's well-being. I know most of us have heard from the CDC that those who are vaccinated needn't wear masks, but let's all agree to err on the side of caution and to support those who should still wear a mask by masking up together. While it's true that our county is doing quite well in terms of COVID cases and vaccination rates, we'll continue to do what we can to take care of each other.

With thanks for all of you, Pastor Katie



WORSHIP TIDBITS

Summer is always a challenging time for pastors in terms of worship planning. In many communities, both pastor and congregants plan vacations for those summer months, so attendance fluctuates and guest preachers are welcomed. Liturgically, there are no “big events” to plan towards—no Advent leading to Christmas, no Lent leading to Easter, no Eastertide leading to Pentecost. Just 12-15 months of what is liturgically known as “Ordinary Time” (not because it’s commonplace, but because it is counted by Sunday when the church is not in any special season), punctuated by vacations, summer activities, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. (While it is still Ordinary Time until Advent begins, most churches have focused seasons beginning in early fall, when children return to school and the church kicks off its fall worship and Sunday School season.)

The summer looming before us as we enter June is particularly challenging for me this year as we move to hybrid worship and the reality of some uncertainty about how that will go. Will there be a glitch or two? Probably. There are glitches with traditional worship, too; they are just a little easier to cover. I remember some of those glitches when I was new to Las Vegas. I remember it taking me a while to get the rhythm of the Prayers of the People going and a couple of times when I wasn’t quite familiar enough with the communion ritual used here, especially when communion was passed in the pews. But those glitches are just a reality for those of us who are mere humans, right?

At any rate, the worship theme for the end of May and for June is “The Church at Work,” which will be a bit of an eclectic mix acknowledging the work our congregation is doing in this transition period. It will look something like this:

May 30 – Our last all-Zoom worship, focusing on how God has shaped us during our 63 weeks of COVID Zoom Time. We’ll have our traditional 5th week healing service, too. (Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

June 6 – We will celebrate a new way of worshipping as we move to the hybrid service and we will dedicate the beautiful new AV center that Buildings and Grounds Committee members made for us. We will also feast at Christ’s table as we share communion. (Scripture: Isaiah 43:18-21)

June 13 – We will give thanks for new opportunities with our new hybrid service and new ways to share and grow as God’s people (Scripture: Psalm 146, Luke 17:11-19)

June 20 – We will commit the work of the church to work for justice and liberation of the oppressed as we recognize Juneteenth. (Scripture: Psalm 78:1-8)

June 27 – We will commit to follow where the Spirit leads us. (Scripture: Tentatively Acts 16:9-15)



SMALL GROUP GET TOGETHERS (SGGT)

Small Group Get-Together Sign up by June 4

Our small group summer outdoor social times were such a success last year that Community Life would like to organize them again for June and July of this year. We would limit each group to six people (including the hosts), and suggest that people bring their own food and drink like last year. Still staying safe and having a time to socialize in person. Hosts would get a list of the people in their June and July group and then plan a time that works for all. If you are interested, please let Judy Long know by June 4. If you can host that would be great, if not, plan to sign up to be included in a get-together. See you outside in June and July.

Judy’s contact information: Longfam@newmexico.com, phone 505-429-0379



Clerk of Session

CLERK'S CORNER

I think you all know that the Presbyterian Church as a denomination keeps records that stretch into the dim past. FUPC has a large book where the Session minutes are kept until they are microfilmed, and a Church Register where the names of everyone who has ever been a member is listed, when they joined, if they were an elder or deacon, when; and when they left the church or died. These books are entrusted to the Clerk of Session who enters all of this information in the appropriate place. These records really come in handy. A few weeks ago, a person from a small church in northern New Mexico contacted the church office asking for a letter of transfer from FUPC to their church. I got the Church Register down off the shelf and looked back to find the name of the person, when and how she joined FUPC, that she had been ordained as a deacon, when she served and when she had been removed from the roll of active members. I was able to write a letter of transfer for this person and to wish her well in her new church home. Likewise, Katie asked me to find when Joyce Litherland had joined FUPC and when she was ordained as an elder for an article for the Presbytery. It's rather nice to know that these records track our church lives, I think.

Additionally, this month Van Swan found a document named Presbyterian Wartime Service Commission, which reads, "This citation of honor is awarded to the First Presbyterian Church of Las Vegas in recognition of distinguished service to God and human through participation in the Wartime Service Program of the General Assembly for 1944-1945." The document is signed by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, the Moderator of PCUSA and the Chairman of the Presbyterian Wartime Service Commission. It bears the seal of the General Assembly of PCUSA. We'll find a way to put these documents on display where everyone can read them.

Clerk of Session

Important Notice – Please Read

ONLINE GIVING TIPS

Did you know that your online contribution to the church has a STOP DATE???

Tom and I discovered this the hard way...

If you have set up automatic donations from your bank to the church, they may have stopped on their own.

If you have not received a confirmation of giving from your bank, or on your monthly statement, you might want to go to the church home page and find the DONATE button at the bottom.

Log in to your account. On the "my scheduled transaction" line, there is an "action" button on the right side. Press that to access a new page, which will have a "donation end date" at the bottom. Be sure that box is BLANK. If there is a date present, your payment was stopped as of that date.

Your donations are very much appreciated!!!

DAISY TIME



By Marjorie Pickthall

See, the grass is full of stars,
Fallen in their brightness;
Hearts they have of shining gold,
Rays of shining whiteness.

Buttercups have honeyed hearts,
Bees they love the clover,
But I love the daisies' dance
All the meadow over.

Blow, O blow, you happy winds,
Singing summer's praises,
Up the field and down the field
A-dancing with the daisies.

In Memory of Joyce Litherland

WHY DO MEMBERS OF THE MISSION & PEACEMAKING COMMITTEE URGE US TO PRAY FOR PALESTINE AND ISRAEL?

Our church has formed many connections with that area in the last decade, which have deepened our understanding and concern. We conducted a year-long study, using materials produced by the Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church USA, studied “Chosen?” by the biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann, hosted a fundraiser for Hand in Hand schools in Israel and welcomed Nora Carmi, a Palestinian Christian and International Peacemaker.

Let’s look at background: In 70 CE, almost all Jews were driven out of Israel by the Roman Empire, and remained a tiny minority until well into the 20th century. By 1946, under British control, the population of Palestine was 60 percent Muslim, 7 percent Christian and 33 percent Jewish, although Jews owned only 6 percent of the land.

As Britain sought to end its control, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution in 1947 to partition Palestine, giving a new Jewish state 56 percent of the land. The Jewish population consolidated its military advantage, declared independence in 1948, and in the process displaced 750,000 Palestinians and destroyed 531 villages. Following that war of 1947-49, and the war of 1967 and subsequent actions by Israel, the remaining Palestinian lands of the West Bank and Gaza are under Israeli military occupation.

Laws of war state that an occupying power has certain obligations. Thus, Israel is forbidden to annex occupied territory, to move its citizens onto Palestinian land, to destroy property, seize natural resources such as water, or impose collective punishment. Israel consistently violates all these rules, and thus may be guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

In 2009, Palestinian Christians produced the Kairos document, detailing the suffering of all Palestinians under occupation and asking of Christians throughout the world, “Are you able to help us get our freedom back, for this is the only way you can help the two people attain justice, peace, security and love?” U.S. churches, including PCUSA, responded with a confession and call to action. Among the actions urged upon us are to “pray fervently and persistently” for justice and to engage in education and awareness and political advocacy. And so, we have and will continue to pray for Palestine and Israel.



FINAL CLASS SESSION ON BIBLICAL RESPONSES TO THE PANDEMIC

The Sunday morning Bible-based class for adults and youths is skipping May 30 and will wind up its discussion of N.T. Wright's book *God and The Pandemic: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and its Aftermath* on June 6. The reading assignment is Chapter 5, "Where do we go from here?" pp. 52-76.

Next Class Series

Last Words: Essential Truths. A New Take on a Devotional Exercise

The next book for discussion by the Sunday morning Bible-based class for adults and youth is *The Hope of Glory: Reflections on the Last Words of Jesus from the Cross* by Jon Meacham, Pulitzer Prize winning biographer of George H.W. Bush, Thomas Jefferson, and Andrew Jackson, and author of *The Soul of America* and *American Gospel* among others.

The series runs from June 13 through Aug. 15, with a break on July 4. Classes are presently from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m., Sunday mornings using the same Zoom link for Sunday worship, but could be changed to in person classes or hybrid classes at any time.

The subtitle of the book refers to "the last words of Jesus from the cross," often stated as the "seven last words." In scripture, each of the "words" is a sentence, with the third "word" usually translated as two sentences. As stated in the book jacket, "Meacham . . . captures how these words epitomize Jesus' message of love, not hate; grace, not rage; and, rather than vengeance, extraordinary mercy. For each saying, Meacham composes an essay on the origins of Christianity and how Jesus' final words created a foundation for oral and written traditions that upended the order of the world."

As one reader commented, "Meacham gives us something new, real and intimate insight into his faith and the power of that faith to inspire and transform. And as with his other books, he also makes it clear just how much we are shaped and influenced by words spoken and actions taken long ago. This was a delightful read – one that I will revisit and contemplate for some time."

Reading assignments for the series:

June 13 – Prologue: In the Beginning, pp. 3-31

June 20 – The First Word: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." pp. 33-44

June 27 – The Second Word: "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be in the kingdom of heaven." pp. 47-52

No Class July 4

July 11 – The Third Word: "Woman, behold thy son! Behold thy Mother!" pp. 55-60

July 18 – The Fourth Word: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" pp. 53-71

July 25 – The Fifth Word: "I Thirst." pp. 73-80

Aug. 1 – the Sixth Word: "It is finished." pp. 83-91

Aug. 8 – The Seventh Word: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." pp. 93-97

Aug. 15 – Epilogue: Even unto the end of the world. pp. 99-107

The book is available from Amazon.com new (\$15.95) or used (from \$5.99) in hardback (plus shipping) and on Kindle (\$11.99). Other online vendors, such as Alibris.com and AbeBooks.com, have a few new and used copies for competitive prices. Paper Trail may be able to get copies fairly quickly as can Richard Lindeborg.

FUPC TURQUOISE SURVEY RESULTS

Thank you to all those who completed the recent turquoise survey as we prepare to move to a hybrid service. We had a total of 19 responses, 16 online, 2 mailed in, and 1 other. Below are the results. You can still give us your input at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QMTHMBN>

The re-entry task force (Pastor Katie, Karyl, Tom Trigg, Carol Linder, and Linda Solyntjes, recently replaced by Crystal Western Ford), Buildings and Grounds committee (Corky Halverson, Robin Carlson, Don Owens, and Charlotte Wootton), and Tech Team (mostly D.R. Palmer and Jeff Salman) have been working hard to ensure that we are in a position to safely meet the spiritual needs of our church family. Please feel free to contact Carol Linder (carollinder@msn.com, 505 429-2139) if you have any questions and concerns.

At this point in time, how likely are you to attend a gathering in the sanctuary following the state-mandated guidelines (e.g., socially distanced, masked, reduced numbers)?

- 8 Very Likely
- 5 Likely
- 1 Neither likely or unlikely
- 4 Unlikely
- 0 Very Unlikely

Comments: depends on health; It has been convenient to attend via Zoom and not need to drive into town. I would probably do a combination of Zooming in sometimes and driving in sometimes; Might try it out. Also have to meet personal pod agreements; Long needed; Very likely if I am in town; until we can sing together, prefer zoom

At this point in time, how likely are you to attend a gathering outdoors following the state-mandated guidelines (e.g., socially distanced, masked, reduced numbers)?

- 10 Very Likely
- 5 Likely
- 2 Neither likely or unlikely
- 1 Unlikely
- 0 Very Unlikely

Comments: I'm an outdoor person :); If I have a ride; Have done one recently

Which activities have you participated in during the last five months? (check all that apply)

- 19 Sunday morning worship
- 16 Sunday morning fellowship time following worship
- 5 Sunday school
- 4 Coffee with Katie via Zoom
- 7 Facebook devotionals
- 14 Committee meetings
- 5 Phone or email conversations with Deacons or Elders
- 0 None of the above

Comments: none

If you have participated in our Sunday morning worship services via Zoom, how would you characterize your overall worship experience?

- 5** Very fulfilling
- 12** Fulfilling
- 1** Neither fulfilling or unfulfilling
- 1** Unfulfilling
- 0** Very Unfulfilling

Comments: I miss one-on-one interactions. I am not really a group kind of person.
love the lack of distraction and close focus, creativity and ease of attendance

Overall, how do you feel First United Presbyterian Church is fulfilling your spiritual needs?

- 11** Very satisfactory
- 4** Satisfactory
- 2** Neither satisfactory or unsatisfactory
- 0** Unsatisfactory
- 0** Very unsatisfactory

Comments: none

Optional: Have you been vaccinated?

19 yes!

TT&T Activities

Time, Treasure, & Talents

2020 Financial Review

Denice Spicer and Pam Abreu with support from Linda Solyntjes and Crystal Western Ford

ADP to Church Windows payroll transition starting July 1

Denice Spicer and Pam Abreu, approved by Session

Stewardship Development and Education

Van Swan, Richard Lindeborg, Carol Linder

2021 Monitoring of Inflows and Outflows

Mary Schipper, TT&T, Session, and Committee Chairs

Sustainability Planning (exploration of building use and alternative sources of income)

All committee members



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](#) 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.



WEEKLY SOCIAL GATHERINGS VIA ZOOM

Let's Get Together!

Remember that we have social gatherings via Zoom each week:

Sunday morning fellowship following worship. Hang around after the postlude and spend some time chatting with folks!

Coffee with Katie, Tuesday mornings at 9:00. We'll chat over coffee (I prefer tea) and breakfast if you'd like. It's an opportunity to visit together with no agenda, just getting to know each other better.



TO JOIN ANY FUPC EVENT VIA 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.

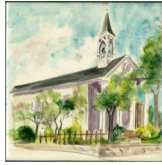
You can also open your web browser and go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5739200081>. If you haven't been on Zoom before, you'll see instructions for downloading the Zoom app and allowing your camera (if you have one) and microphone to be used by Zoom, and then the meeting will open.

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 committee meetings and other non-public meetings, you'll receive a link from your committee chair.

1000 Douglas Avenue
PO Box 37
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505-425-7763



Website: www.lvpresbyterian.org
Facebook: Las Vegas First United Presbyterian (NM)
Email: fupc.nm@gmail.com

Sunday Schedule

9:30 a.m. - Bible Based Study via Zoom
10:30 a.m. - Sunday Worship via Zoom
Fellowship Hour following the worship service on Zoom



Our Daily Devotionals

Remember that you can find our weekday devotionals on the FUPC Facebook page or by clicking on the “devotionals” link under “Latest News” on our website at lvpresbyterian.org. These devotionals provide a short time out from the bustle of our daily activity to spend time focused on our spiritual journey.

Thank you to those who have committed to providing weekly devotionals:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Monday – Pastor Katie | Tuesday – Beth Urech |
| Wednesday – Rod Billingsley | Thursday – Pat Halverson |
| Friday – Denice Spicer | |



Samaritan House Food Donations

JUNE 2021

Flour and Sugar
Coffee and Tea are always appreciated