



Sharing the Love of Christ

First United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

PO Box 37

1000 Douglas Avenue

Las Vegas New Mexico 87701

FEBRUARY 2023

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear FUPC Family and Friends,

As we enter into February, we will encounter red and pink hearts and other Valentine's Day images everywhere we go. This year, D.R. and I will get a special Valentine's Day gift. Our new granddaughter is scheduled to be delivered by C-Section on Feb. 15. What better gift to fill up hearts during Valentine's Day week?

Perhaps you have memories, as I do, of elementary school Valentine's Day parties, for which all the children decorated and hung paper lunch bags and then put those cute little valentine cards in each other's bags. Later, we would eat heart-shaped cookies while we opened all the cards in our bags, which we got to take home.

Well, I don't send valentines to all my friends anymore (although I do send them to my children and grandchildren), but it's rather nice to have a special day that reminds us to be open about our love for one another and to recognize God's amazing love for us. I am drawn to this poem by the 13th century Persian poet Rumi. What a wonderful way to describe God's love!

Defeated by Love

The sky was lit
by the splendor of the moon

So powerful
I fell to the ground

Your love
has made me sure

I am ready to forsake
this worldly life
and surrender
to the magnificence
of your Being

As we celebrate Valentine's Day, I wish for you an awareness of all the ways you are loved and especially of the powerful love of God, who invites us to "surrender to the magnificence of [God's] Being."

With thanks for all of you,
Pastor Katie

BOOK CLUB DISCUSSIONS



Was Jesus married? We don't read in Scripture that he was, but many scholars argue that he would have been, as an arranged marriage at a fairly early age was simply the way things were done in Jesus' culture. Certainly, by the time he entered his public ministry when he was 30, he would have taken a wife. The novel *The Book of Longings* by Sue Monk Kidd assumes Jesus' marriage and tells the story of his wife. Please join Pastor Katie for a discussion of this novel on Saturday, Mar. 12, at 11:30 a.m., in The Gathering Place (east wing). You're welcome to bring a sack lunch if you'd like.

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.

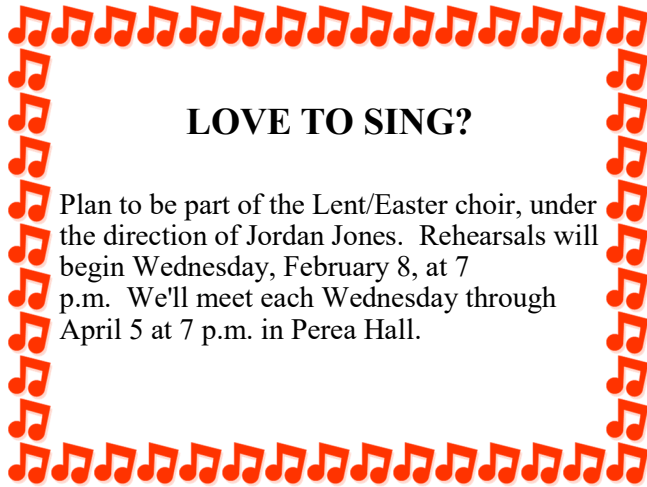
Please let Katie know if you plan to attend so she can prepare for the appropriate number of participants!

SAMARITAN HOUSE NEEDS YOU!



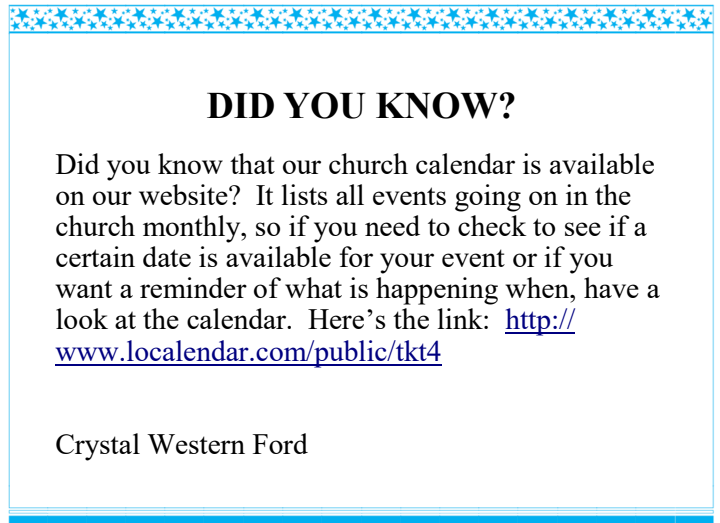
The Board of Directors and the staff of Samaritan House (SAM) are committed to growing into a vibrant agency, ever more able to serve the needs of those who are experiencing homelessness and poverty in our community. To do that, SAM needs YOU.

Please consider donating a bit of your time to help on one or more of the committees that keep SAM moving forward. These are not board positions, but volunteer positions on the various committees that make things happen. SAM has openings on its Special Events committee (help bring exciting fundraisers, open houses, and other events to fruition!), its Program Committee (help design activities and programs for SAM's Day Center guests), and its Thrift Store Committee (help with the oversight and evolution of the local Thrift Store). To volunteer, contact Pastor Katie or call Director George Lyon at Samaritan House, 505-454-1390.



LOVE TO SING?

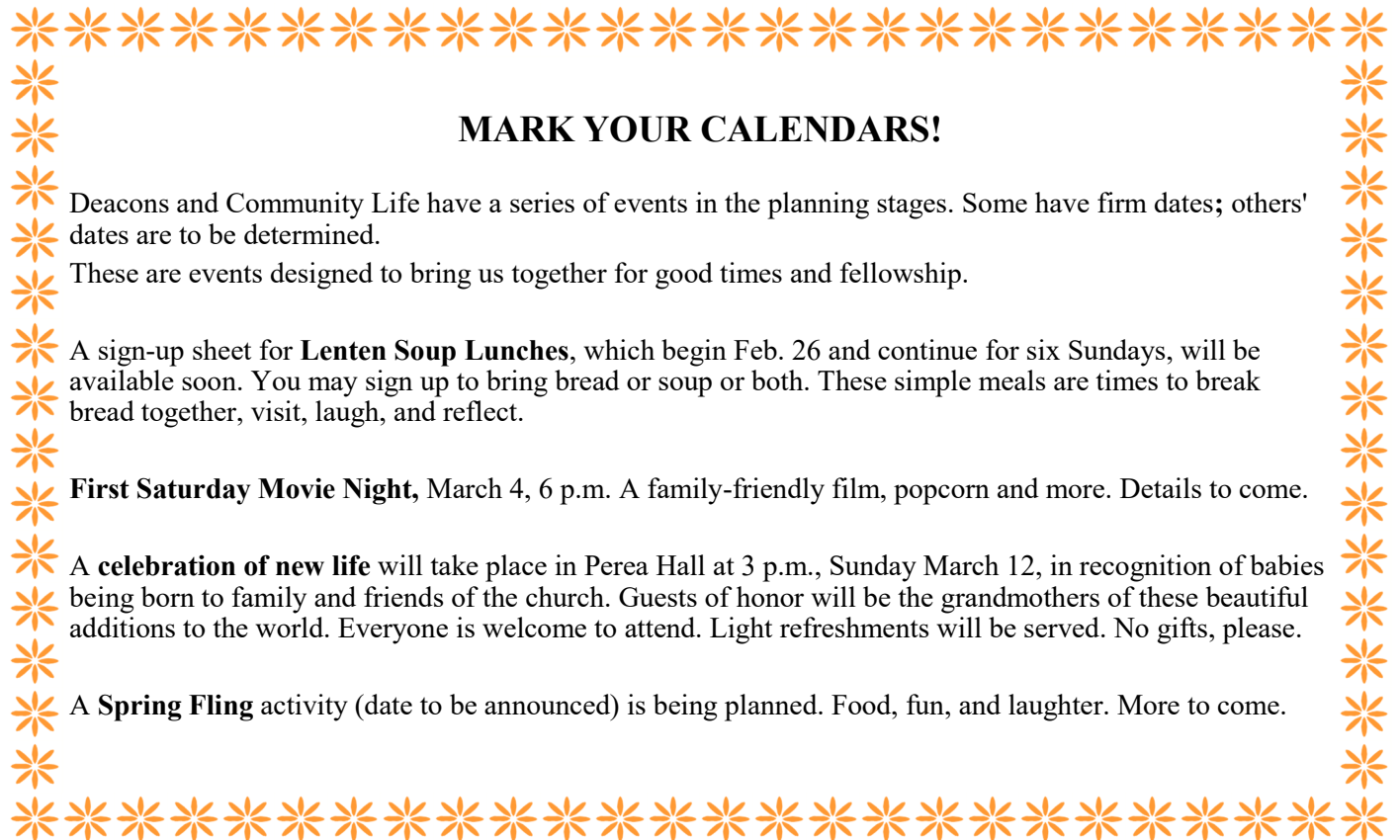
Plan to be part of the Lent/Easter choir, under the direction of Jordan Jones. Rehearsals will begin Wednesday, February 8, at 7 p.m. We'll meet each Wednesday through April 5 at 7 p.m. in Perea Hall.



DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that our church calendar is available on our website? It lists all events going on in the church monthly, so if you need to check to see if a certain date is available for your event or if you want a reminder of what is happening when, have a look at the calendar. Here's the link: <http://www.localendar.com/public/tkt4>

Crystal Western Ford



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Deacons and Community Life have a series of events in the planning stages. Some have firm dates; others' dates are to be determined.

These are events designed to bring us together for good times and fellowship.

A sign-up sheet for **Lenten Soup Lunches**, which begin Feb. 26 and continue for six Sundays, will be available soon. You may sign up to bring bread or soup or both. These simple meals are times to break bread together, visit, laugh, and reflect.

First Saturday Movie Night, March 4, 6 p.m. A family-friendly film, popcorn and more. Details to come.

A **celebration of new life** will take place in Perea Hall at 3 p.m., Sunday March 12, in recognition of babies being born to family and friends of the church. Guests of honor will be the grandmothers of these beautiful additions to the world. Everyone is welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be served. No gifts, please.

A **Spring Fling** activity (date to be announced) is being planned. Food, fun, and laughter. More to come.

CLERGY RENEWAL GRANT UPDATE



It'll be here before we know it—the time of Congregational Renewal! The Task Force members, who are working hard to make sure everything is in place for a fabulous time of renewal activities and worship, are getting excited about the many opportunities the church family and the whole community will have to explore new ways of spiritual connection during this time.

Task Force members include Pastor Katie, who is working with the group to plan for the Congregational Renewal and, of course, attending to the details of her sabbatical; Kathy Franken, Karyl Lyne, Mary Schipper, Renee Soderlund, Linda Solyntjes, Van Swan, and Crystal Western Ford. Please don't hesitate to contact a Task Force member if you have questions.

And mark your calendars NOW for May 6 and 7, when we will kick off this time of renewal with a program from Tracker John Stokes, Director of The Tracking Project. John will be presenting a program on Saturday, May 6, to help us learn how to do some tracking, better understand the spiritual dimension of animal tracking, and connect that knowledge to our Congregational Renewal theme, "Tracking the Word: Embodying the Spirit." John will also be with us for worship on Sunday. Stay tuned for more details.

After John's visit, we'll have a couple of weeks to familiarize ourselves with the plans for our summer of renewal before Katie and D.R. leave town on their sabbatical. As we enter into the time of renewal, we'll experience a variety of worship leadership. First up, on May 28 will be Sharon Vander Meer, who will be preaching on how journaling can help us track our spiritual path. How fitting that Sharon's message will come on Pentecost, when we hear how the Spirit used language to bridge communication gaps among God's people and to open their eyes to the Spirit within them!

RENEWAL PROMO TO KICK OFF SOON

The Congregational Renewal Promotional Task Force has been busy for the last few months creating materials and getting ready to advertise our summer renewal events. The group consists of Karyl Lyne, Sharon Vander Meer, Crystal Western Ford and Beth Urech. Materials such as brochures and posters are in draft form as well as a soon-to-be released addition to our current church website that will list all information relevant to the summer events. Keep an ear out for radio ads on KFUN in late spring!

-Crystal Western Ford



Sunday Class: Four Commandments to Go

During February, the Sunday Morning Bible-Based Class for Adults and Youth will wind up its discussion of the book *Words of Love: A Healing Journey with the Ten Commandments* by Eugenia Anne Gamble. Gamble, a retired Presbyterian Church (USA), minister analyses 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.

The class is at 9 a.m. Virtual attendees can use the same Zoom link as for the weekly worship service. Actual attendees should enter the church through the west wing door, grab a cup of coffee in Perea Hall and proceed up the stairs to the first classroom on the second floor.

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:

- 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)

Lenten Study: A Takeoff on the Psalms

The Sunday morning Lenten study this year will be based on the book *Finding Jesus in the Psalms: A Lenten Journey* by Barb Roose. Sessions will be at 9 a.m. in the first classroom upstairs. This paperback book is readily available new or used from many sources. Richard Lindeborg can also have a new copy sent to your home for \$17.99, shipping included.

Roose served on staff at Cedar Creek Church in Perrysburg, Ohio, for 14 years on the executive leadership and teaching teams. She is the author of multiple books and Bible studies, including her current releases: *Winning the Worry Battle: Life Lessons from the Book of Joshua* and *Joshua: Winning the Worry Battle*. Since 2005, she has been speaking to audiences in the US and abroad, including national platforms such as the Aspire Women's Events, She Speaks Conference, and the UMC Leadership Institute.

From the Publisher: "Barb Roose guides the reader through a meaningful encounter with the Psalms through the season of Lent. Combining an interpretation of the Psalms with real life stories, the study moves through the familiar words of Psalm 23 toward the painful cries of Psalm 22 uttered by Jesus on the cross. The study includes reflections on the life of King David and the original context of the writings, along with connections between the Psalms and the life and death of Jesus the Messiah."

From the Author: "The Psalms provide a perfect framework for experiencing Lent through the verses that were Jesus's own scriptures, offering both him and us strength and wisdom in a painful and redemptive season. The Book of Psalms hums with the heartbeat of our humanity with divinely inspired words that find purchase in the tenderest places in our hearts when our human words or wisdom fails us."

The reading assignments are:

- Feb. 27** "Introduction" and Ch. 1: "Why Do We Need to Find Jesus in the Psalms?" (plus Psalm 2 and Romans 8)
- Mar. 5** Ch. 2: "Finding Jesus with us in Our Hard Places" (plus Psalm 16)
- Mar. 12** Ch. 3: "Finding Jesus as Our Shepherd" (plus Psalm 23 and John 10:1-18)
- Mar. 19** Ch. 4: "Finding Jesus as Our Hope" (plus Psalms 100 and 110, and Hebrews 7)
- Mar. 26** Ch.5: "Finding Jesus as Our Strength" (plus Psalm 69, Matthew 26, and John 18)
- April 2** Ch. 5: "Finding Jesus as Our Savior" (plus Psalm 22, Matthew 27, and John 20) and "Conclusion"

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.

zoom



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.

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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

9:00 a.m. - Bible Based Study via Zoom
10:30 a.m. - Sunday Worship in person and via Zoom



Samaritan House Food Donations
FEBRUARY 2023
Pasta and Sauce
Coffee and Tea are always appreciated



- Feb. 3 Charlotte Wootton
- Pauline Dimsey
- Feb. 17th Christie Baskett
- Feb. 22nd Soledad Gilland
- Feb. 24th Claire Weinstein
- Feb. 28th Athena Gilland