



## Sharing the Love of Christ

APRIL 2017

First United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

1000 Douglas Avenue

Las Vegas New Mexico 87701

### Pastor's Ponderings

Last month I encouraged you to commit to a Lenten discipline. Several of us have been meeting to discuss the Lenten study book. This has been valuable discussion for me and I hope for others. I know that others of you have chosen a more individual way to observe Lent, and I trust your discipline has been meaningful for you. I would certainly be open to hearing about it, should you want to share.

And now we are heading toward Palm Sunday and Holy Week, and once again I'd like to play the role of encourager. It is tempting to move from the upbeat celebration of Palm Sunday directly to Easter morning without attending the Maundy Thursday or Good Friday service. This is not surprising; who doesn't want to move from upbeat to even more upbeat? We know the story. Why remember in detail those last couple of days of Jesus' life; why see his suffering?

But, in fact, it's important to observe the suffering because we are called to suffer as well. Oh, I don't mean you should flog yourselves or that you should live in gloom and doom. But we are called to see the suffering in the world, to show compassion (which means "suffering with"), and to develop tender hearts so that we want to work to alleviate suffering. We are called to recognize that Jesus' suffering on the cross came about because he had the courage to suffer with the poor, the hungry, the imprisoned, the excluded.

We are called to "walk the talk," as they say or, as we have said this season, to "Get on the Road" with Christ.

If we skip over those services that prompt us to look at Jesus' suffering, we may miss out on the enormity of Easter. These services remind us that:

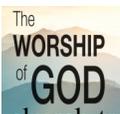
- Jesus was not a divine entity pretending to be human. Jesus was fully human, God incarnate—a God who chose to "become flesh and pitch his tent among us" (the literal translation of John 1:14).
- Jesus suffered with and for us. The least we can do is spend time remembering that suffering.
- As Christians, we walk the road Christ shows us. Sometimes this means seeing great suffering. Sometimes it means that we, ourselves, suffer as we try to emulate Christ. We do sometimes need to be reminded of this reality.
- Rebirth in Christ requires that we go through a kind of death—the death of the old self as we open ourselves to the enormous possibility of a new way of life. Holy Week reminds us of this.

Contemplative and author James Finley says, "If we are absolutely grounded in the absolute love of God that protects us from nothing even as it sustains us in all things, then we can face all things with courage and tenderness and touch the hurting places in others and in ourselves with love."

Read that quote again carefully. God's love "protects us from nothing"—we suffer loss and pain and broken hearts. But God's love also "sustains us in all things," allowing us to deal with the pain that comes our way. Jesus, who most certainly knew God's steadfast love, was not protected from suffering. He was, however, sustained through it. More than that, he showed us that, in God, resurrection is possible.

And so let's remember, together, the story of Holy Week on Maundy Thursday at St. Paul's Peace and on Good Friday here at FUPC.

With thanks for all of you,  
Pastor Katie



**Worship Tidbits from Pastor Katie**

During Holy Week, we have the opportunity to attend various worship services and those services have names that don't always make sense. Perhaps this month's Worship Tidbits can clarify some of the church traditions of Holy Week (also known as Passion Week), which is the liturgical week during which we celebrate Jesus' final days before the crucifixion. "Passion" means suffering, and it is during this week that we turn our attention to Jesus' suffering on the cross. The week begins with Palm Sunday, when we celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The Gospels tell us that Jesus is hailed as he enters the city. The name "Palm Sunday" comes from the Gospel accounts that tell us people lined the road with palm branches—the treatment given a king.. The week ends on the somber notes of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

"Maundy" comes from the Latin word for commandment, and observes Jesus' commandment to love one another. Traditionally, communion and washing of the feet occur during the Maundy Thursday service. At their last supper together, according to the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), Jesus commands the disciples to remember him when they eat and drink. In the church, we think of this as the "institution" of the communion rite. In John's Gospel, the last supper does not include an institution of communion, but instead the command to serve one another, which Jesus demonstrates by washing the disciples' feet.

Good Friday seems like it should instead be called "Bad Friday"—the day on which we commemorate Jesus' death on the cross. And in some places it is called "Mourning Friday." It seems likely that the name originally given to this day was "God's Friday," which somehow morphed into Good Friday. Our Good Friday service will be a Tenebrae (meaning shadows or darkness) service in which we'll symbolically observe the darkness of this day as we extinguish candles throughout the service. And then, at the beginning of the next week, EASTER or RESURRECTION DAY! Have you ever wondered why it's called Easter? No one is really sure, but Easter falls on or near the day of an early pagan festival that is said to honor the goddess Oestre. The early church often "co-opted" pagan holidays, and so it's possible that Easter, arguably the most important day of the Christian liturgical year, carries the name of a pagan goddess. And, if you've ever been curious as to why Easter falls on a different day each year, it's because it's based on the lunisolar calendar. It always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon that comes after the vernal equinox (which the early church set permanently as March 21).



**Mustard Seed Grant Proposals**

We had 18 requests and funded or partially funded 10 of them. This is an important part of our mission and evangelism for the church. If you would like to serve on the committee, contact Carol Linder.

- After School 4-H program in Pecos \$300
- Amistad Y Resolana, grass roots recovery and neighborhood program \$930
- Cub Scouts Pack 60 \$200
- Helping Hands, Mora agency to make more accessible distribution of commodities \$750
- Hermit's Peak Water Shed Alliance to sponsor a first Gallinas River Festival \$500
- Los Pueblos Community Council for community art and music classes for kids \$300
- Meadow City Academy of Music for start up in Las Vegas \$750
- NMHU Chess Club for a community chess club at ARMAS \$690
- Samaritan House, pilot program for Shelter Resident Assistant \$1000
- Wagon Mound-A Veteran Affair to begin rehabbing a building & teach youth skills \$750

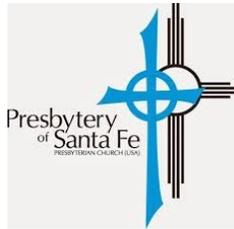
**Total Awarded \$6,170**



The church directory is available online through your smart phone (iPhone or Android) and also via email. If you would like a copy emailed to you, please request one via email from the church office and if you'd like to have access via your smart phone, email a request to the office for that also.



It is the custom of this church to have Lenten Soup Lunches after worship during Lent. With soup and bread served, this is a sacrificial meal for which we are invited to make a donation to One Great Hour of Sharing instead of going out for lunch. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is one of the four special offerings of the year along with Pentecost, Global Witness and Peacemaking, and Christmas Joy. OGHS gives to ministries that provide relief to those affected by natural disasters, food for the hungry and support towards the self-development of poor and oppressed communities. Specifically, 32% goes to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, 36% to Presbyterian Hunger Program and 32% to Self-Development of People. Community Life and Mission and Peacemaking hope you will give generously to these efforts at the Lenten Lunches. The final lunch for this Lenten season will be on Sunday, April 9th (Palm Sunday)



### Presbytery of Santa Fe Meeting Report

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church Albuquerque, NM

February 25, 2017

The presbytery experimented with a new meeting format based on the order of worship. That is, business items were interwoven with elements of worship with the idea that in doing the work of the presbytery we also worship the God who, through our congregations, chose us to do that work.

So, the first part of the meeting was **Gathering of the People**, which began with a prayer, call to worship, a hymn, proceeding with the quorum, approval of docket, introductions, welcome and approval of the consent agenda. Next came **Listening for God's Word** with scripture, sermon, excerpt from the Belhar Confession and the Faith Journey of Taos 1<sup>st</sup> new pastor. **Responding to God's Word** included a number of reports and voting on the 16 Proposed Amendments to the Book of Order. The last section was **Sent Out in Jesus' Name**, which included Prayers of the People, Announcements, Communion, a hymn and the charge and benediction. I must admit I was a bit dubious about this blended format, but can tell you that it worked beautifully. The worship elements kept reminding us through the day why we were doing the business we were doing.

There are two things that stand out for me from this meeting, in addition to the format described above. First is the wonderful musical setting of the Belhar Confession by William R. Miller, Director of the St. Andrew Choir, which was preceded by a short reader's theatre prologue and our unison reading of an excerpt from the Confession. Dr. Miller is happy for other congregations to use this music, so I will be getting the score to present here at FUPC.

The second item was the presentation, discussion and voting on the 16 amendments to the Book of Order. As many know, there are often changes to the Book of Order proposed by the General Assembly every two years. Last summer the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly (2016) approved 16 amendments to the Book of Order and recommended them to the presbyteries for their vote. If approved, these amendments will change the Constitution of PCUSA.

A workshop was held on Friday evening for anyone who wanted to review the proposed changes and have questions answered. We were fortunate to have Rev. Joyce Lieberman, a member of the Presbytery of Santa Fe and a member of the PCUSA staff in Louisville, present to talk about the changes and answer questions. On Saturday, amendments were presented by Stated Clerk Stephen Rhoades. In written materials available on line at [www.pc-bix.org/](http://www.pc-bix.org/), for each amendment there is a section on 'background and rationale', and one on 'advice from the advisory committee on the Constitution'. Questions were answered and arguments for and against were made. Each voting member of the presbytery voted on a paper ballot listing the amendments.

A number of amendments changed the title of Teaching Elder back to Minister of Word and Sacrament. A major part of the change was a complete rewrite of the Directory for Worship, a project that has been in progress since 2005! Indeed, the wheels of worship turn slowly, too.

I am always amazed and proud of the thoughtful, respectful and orderly ways in which the presbytery does its work. As it turned out, the Presbytery of Santa Fe approved 13 of the 16 amendments. I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your commissioner to presbytery.

Karyl Lyne



## Buildings and Grounds Update

This is just to let you all know what is happening and being done by your Buildings and Grounds Committee. The members on the committee are Corky Halverson, Don Owens, Patrick Rucker (Secretary), Norman Spicer and Robin Carlson (Chairperson).

On Monday the 20th of March we had a work day scheduled at our Douglas Ave Church in the morning before our meeting at 1:00. There were so many things accomplished that day, some little, some big. We kept plugging away at the things that came up or had been on our "to do list" for a while. Things like fixing the door closure, fixing the trap door in the bathroom, changing out a battery on a smoke detector, patching and touching up of paint in the Fellowship hall ( done by Cathy Wentz). The covered walk way by the west door has a damaged panel in it so that was measured so it could be ordered and replaced. A dead bolt was replaced, locks were checked. All this was accomplished by your committee plus one.

We have another work day scheduled for the OTM on Monday April 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am -3:00 p.m. (just before our monthly meeting). This is to spruce up the front entrance now that we have 2 new doors installed by Michael Long and crew. We would like to fix the molding on the raised panels on the sides of the new door and paint that front outside entrance before Easter. The other item that is on the agenda for that day is to try and find and fix the leak in the roof of the kitchen.

There are always things that come up before a work day that were not on the schedule but everyone is welcome to come and help. Whether it is clean-up, spruce-up, or just to dmire a great building.

Many thanks to my hard working committee members; it is a real treat to work with this bunch.

Robin Carlson



## 2017 Presbyterian Women Birthday Offering

"God Provides" is the theme for this year's Birthday Offering for PW.

Ever since 1922 the Presbyterian Women's Birthday Offering has helped fund nearly 100 major mission projects that improve the lives of women and children around the world. We continue to need broad, consistent support from Presbyterian women and others in order to continue funding mission projects like the ones selected for 2017. This year we will answer the call to show Jesus' love to the world by offering our prayers and financial support to three projects that support the critical need for shelter, health care and water in the areas they serve:

1. First-Hand Aid's Rural Clinic Development Initiative, which provides health care to people living in rural communities in Cuba. This project will build, fund, stock, and staff six medical clinics housed in long-existing Presbyterian Churches located in rural Cuba where needs are great and supply is limited.
2. Family Justice Center (FJC) of Georgetown and Horry counties' Safe Haven for Victims of Domestic Violence (South Carolina), which will provide shelter for victims of domestic violence. FJC currently operates a shelter which only has room for 11 people, but this PW grant will assist in constructing a new domestic violence shelter.
3. Navajo Water Project (New Mexico) which will eventually provide water systems to 205 families at the Smith Lake Navajo Reservation.. The grant will enable the project to start by providing a running water system to 40 families, providing each household with a cistern, pump, sink, shower and all pipes for the installation of their water system.

For more detailed descriptions see the poster on the west hall bulletin board. Offering envelopes are available in the Narthex or from Joyce Litherland. The last date to submit gifts is June 4th. Give as you have been blessed, generously and as led by the Holy Spirit. All women of the church are members of PW.

*"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." -*  
 --Hebrews 4:16



### Sunday Class Takes Up an Overview of Christianity in the World

The Bible-Based Class for Adults and Youth will be resuming its study of the three major Abrahamic religions on the Sunday after Easter – following up on its two series on Judaism and Islam with a new series on Christianity. The text for this series is *Christianity: A Very Short Introduction* by Linda Woodhead. Both pocket sized books and larger print copies will be available soon. Class sessions will be at 9:30 a.m. Sundays in the session room from April 23 through June 11, with a recess on Sunday May 28.

Exploring the cultural and institutional dimensions of Christianity, and tracing its course over two millennia, Linda Woodhead provides a fresh, lively, and candid portrait of Christianity's past and present. Addressing topics including the competition for power between different forms of Christianity, the churches' use of power, and its struggles with modernity, this new edition includes up-to-date information on the growth and geographical spread of Eastern Christianity, reflecting the global nature of Christianity in our ever-shifting contemporary culture.

At a time when Christianity is flourishing in the Southern hemisphere but declining in much of the West, this Very Short Introduction offers an important overview of the world's largest religion.

Linda Woodhead is Professor of Sociology of Religion at Lancaster University. Her research interests lie in the entanglements of religion, politics, and economy, both historically and in the contemporary world. Between 2007 and 2013 she directed the Religion and Society Programme <http://www.religionandsociety.org.uk>, the UK's largest ever research investment on religion. Her books include Religion and Change in Modern Britain, A Sociology of Religious Emotions, and The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion is Giving Way to Spirituality.

### Being a Church Treasurer: Complexity and Simplification

*(part one of a series of articles on the duties of a treasurer)*

What is it that makes the job of today's church treasurer so daunting? Could it be that the job is that much bigger than it was years ago? Or do all the labor saving systems now available to a treasurer make the job seem more complex?

The bad news is that being a treasurer involves a lot of different tasks – broken down in the chart below into twelve major areas. It is a list that has scared away many a prospective treasurer.

The good news is that two thirds of the tasks in the chart can be delegated. All the shaded tasks can be handled by our Office Manager or contracted out. That leaves only four tasks for the treasurer.

Projecting Income and Expenses	Setting up Financial Software	Reconciling Accounts
Preparing a budget	Keeping track of donations	Preparing monthly payrolls
Creating and interpreting monthly financial statements	Paying bills electronically or by check	Filing Federal and State tax returns
Preparing an annual report	Training others in procedures	Correcting errors

The treasurer's best friends are :

**The members of the Interpretation & Support Committee**, who are great helpers in completing two shaded tasks in the first column – projecting income and expenses and preparing a budget.

**The church Office Manager** who uses Church Windows to do the shaded tasks in the second column -- setting up financial software, keeping track of donations, and paying bills electronically or by check. She can also print out the financial statements shown in the first column.

**A bookkeeping and payroll service business**, which takes care of the shaded tasks in the third column -- reconciling accounts, preparing monthly payrolls, and filing federal and state tax returns.

There are as many ways to be a church treasurer as there are churches who have or need treasurers. Some churches contract out none of the treasurer functions, some contract out payroll and taxes or only taxes. Some have present or former professional bookkeepers or bookkeeping teachers doing the job. Some have business owners as treasurers to capitalize on the treasurer's experience in finances. How the job gets done requires each church to match the tools available to the talents and experience of its treasurer.



**First United Presbyterian**

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Facebook: Las Vegas First United Presbyterian (NM)

Email: [fupc.nm@gmail.com](mailto:fupc.nm@gmail.com)

**Sunday Schedule**

8:30 a.m. - Jumpstart Breakfast  
 9:30 a.m. - Bible Based Study  
 10:30 a.m. - Sunday Worship  
 Fellowship Hour following the worship service

**FUPC 2017 Lenten Schedule**



**Adult and Youth Class**, discussing Walter Brueggemann’s *A Way Other Than Our Own: Devotions for Lent* on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. If you’d like a copy of the book, please contact the church office. The price is \$8.00. There will be a class on Easter Sunday.

**Lenten Soup and Bread lunches** on Sundays following worship. We suggest that you consider this a “sacrificial meal” and make a donation to One Great Hour of Sharing in place of going out to lunch that day. The final lunch for this Lenten season is Sunday, April 9th.

**Holy Week Worship Schedule**

- **Wednesday, April 12** - Lenten Taize Service, 12:15 p.m. - FUPC Sanctuary
- **Maundy Thursday** Service with Foot Washing, followed by an Agape Meal  
 Thursday, April 13, 6:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s Peace
- **Noon Good Friday Service** - Friday, April 14, 12:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church
- **Good Friday Tenebrae Service** - Friday, April 14, 7:00 p.m. at First United Presbyterian Church
- **Easter Sunrise Service** - Sunday, April 16, 7:00 a.m. at the Mission Church
- **Easter Breakfast** following Sunrise Service at First United Presbyterian Church
- **Easter Egg Hunt** following breakfast at FUPC
- **Easter Worship Service** - Sunday, April 16, 10:30 a.m. at First United Presbyterian Church



<b>April Birthdays</b>	
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Carol Linder
4 <sup>th</sup>	Trudi Samuelson
10 <sup>th</sup>	Alexander Ditton
21 <sup>st</sup>	Art Trujillo
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Frank Hager
24 <sup>th</sup>	Carrol Pearson
30 <sup>th</sup>	Judy Long
	Rebecca Geng



**Samaritan House Food Donations  
 For APRIL  
 Boxed Potatoes or other Entrées**