



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



### **Pastor's Ponderings**

**MARCH 2019**

On March 6, we will gather to receive the imposition of ashes onto our foreheads and we will be reminded of our need to examine ourselves and to turn from ways of being that are not life-giving. With this Ash Wednesday service, we will enter the season of Lent, during which we commit to continue to reflect on the ways in which we live, to practice disciplines that encourage deeper self-awareness and renewal, and to adopt practices that put us in the habit of giving of ourselves to others.

Some of us will choose to fast, maybe spending time in prayer rather than eating lunch one day a week; some of us will give up chocolate or alcohol or Facebook as a personal discipline to remind ourselves of the ways in which Jesus gave of himself for us and as a way to make room for prayer. I pray that you will pursue such a discipline if it is helpful and meaningful for you.

Your church community, too, will offer opportunities for you to practice the spiritual disciplines of self-awareness and self-giving this Lenten season. I encourage you to commit to these disciplines at whatever level you are able. Let me tell you about these commitments that I'm encouraging you to make.

Commit to a Lenten study. The Sunday class will focus on Joyce Rupp's book, *Open the Door: A Journey to the True Self*. This book asks you to commit to a guided daily devotional time. I will facilitate discussion of the book both in class on Sundays and via a Facebook chat room. Please read more about this study on page 5 of this newsletter. Another study option would be to commit to a private Bible study time.

Commit to attending our Lenten soup and bread lunches rather than eating out or going home right after worship. These simple lunches will afford us time to break bread together—to remember Jesus (I think he said something about doing that whenever we break bread) and to share who we are and what we're up to with one another. And, when you come to lunch, please consider putting the money you'd normally spend at a local restaurant into our One Great Hour of Sharing collection. That money goes to alleviating hunger all over the world. Plan to discipline yourself to give generously!

Establish a discipline of giving so that the hungry in our own community can receive food. The Samaritan House food pantry is always in need of certain foods. The Community Life Committee will designate a different food for us to donate each week of Lent when we come together to eat our soup lunch. I know that I often forget to pick up those extra items listed in our bulletin each month. Let's all make a concerted effort to remember those few extra cans of soup or boxes of mac and cheese when we're purchasing the things we put on our own pantry shelves! (See page 2.)

Our Conversations group will be holding some events to help us learn how to talk to one another across differences. You may react to that kind of event the way Jonah reacted to God's sending him to Ninevah—that is, you may want to run as far in the other direction as possible. But what a powerful commitment to make during the Lenten season of reflection—a commitment to sit down with someone whose opinions are very different from yours and to say, "I want to hear what you can teach me." Commit now to attend. (See page 5 for more information.)

I hope you will seriously consider grabbing hold of these opportunities for spiritual discipline this Lent. Your practice of generosity can put smiles on others' faces. And your practice of spending some time looking deeply inside yourself, though not as easy as putting a few extra items into your shopping cart, can reward you in surprising ways.

With thanks for all of you,  
Pastor Katie



## Worship Tidbits From Pastor Katie

Last month I passed on some information about how the church determines when we celebrate Easter, and I promised that in this month's newsletter I would write about the setting of the date for Christmas. So here goes...

People who read the Bible closely have long realized that a December date probably doesn't jibe with the Biblical account. Remember all those shepherds tending flocks on the hillsides? Although Bethlehem doesn't get, say, Minnesota cold, it does get cold enough that flocks would likely have been corralled in the winter. Of course, the Bible is not a story about the Bethlehem climate, but about the coming of Jesus into the world. So although those wonderful Bible stories might suggest that Jesus was born in the spring, we can't really use those Biblical details to pinpoint his birthday.

According to an article by Andrew McGowan of the Biblical Archaeology Society, December 25 seemed to be fixed for Jesus' birthday in the western church, even though earlier Christians had placed Jesus' birth somewhere in the spring (there are records that report the date in March, April, and May). But by the fourth century, the church seemed to have settled on December 25. We often hear that the date was chosen to coincide with the pagan solar festivals. And certainly some of our Christmas traditions (like setting up a tree) are similar to some early pagan traditions.

But McGowan states that the date was recognized at a time when Christians were trying to distance themselves from pagan traditions, not connect with them or replace them.

So why December 25, if not to assimilate a pagan festival? According to McGowan, it's a matter of simple math. Easter, as we know, was linked to Passover, which in turn was marked as the day Jesus was crucified. According to a third-century historian, the date of the crucifixion would have been March 25. Later church calendars set the Feast of the Annunciation—the day of Jesus' conception—on this date as well, giving voice to the idea that Jesus died on the same date he was conceived. And, of course, exactly nine months after that date, is December 25—the day we celebrate Jesus' birth.

\*With thanks for Andrew McGowan's article "How December 25 Became Christmas" at

<https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-topics/new-testament/how-december-25-became-christmas/>



As we begin our journey towards Easter, we will again celebrate each Sunday of Lent with a soup and bread lunch. There are sign up sheets in Perea Hall.

Along with our soup lunch, Community Life is asking that you bring an item for the Food Bank.

**3/10-** Canned hearty soups, canned stews, hash

**3/17-** Tuna fish, Mayonnaise

**3/24-** Peanut Butter & Jelly

**3/31-** Canned Beans

**4/7--** Macaroni & Cheese



Palm Sunday, April 14th - Potluck Brunch after worship.



Easter Sunday, April 21st - Pastries, coffee & juice following Sunrise Service.



## Observing Lent - Lenten Worship

Get out your trowel, your brush, your dustpan...we're going on an archaeological dig! This Lent, we will be "Digging Deep" as we go on a "Quest for Hidden Treasure." We'll explore some challenging Scripture readings, carefully digging to discover meaning week by week as we look for the Treasure that our readings will lead us to. Join us in worship as we go on this adventure!



I am constantly amazed and inspired by the can-do spirit of our church! Yesterday, 2-24-19, the heat in the sanctuary wasn't working, so Perea Hall was quickly transformed into a sanctuary complete with the Table and communion elements, a flower stand with beautiful flowers, the baptismal font, two music stands for the lectern and pulpit, and hymnals and sign-in sheets. Voila! Have worship, will travel!

Katie's sermon seemed so fitting as it talked about how the disciples were whisked away by Jesus from the feast of fishes and loaves for thousands to a tiny boat on a storm-tossed sea. I felt very close to those disciples as Katie shared what their thoughts and conversation might have been as they feared for their lives and watched, astounded, as Jesus walked to them across the water. We weren't in peril yesterday, but I felt, nonetheless, a bit like we were in that small boat with Jesus very near and our love for each other enveloping us.

Karyl Lyne, Clerk of Session



## Presbyterian Cemetery

What? You didn't know we had one? Well, we do, we really do. It's at the south end of town, a couple of blocks off of New Mexico Avenue. It has a nice view of the Gallinas valley to the south. If you'd like to see it, I'd be glad to show you where it is: give me a call. Maybe you could find the graves of friends or relatives. I have a map with locations of graves. Most graves are identified, but unfortunately, some are not.

There has been some occasional maintenance and "beautification" over the years. Other church members and I have done some work. We had a volunteer work day a few years ago with UWC students.

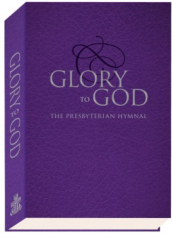
The Session has discussed the cemetery and it is the policy of our church that deceased individuals who are indigent and who have a connection to our congregation may have a burial plot at no charge. (The San Miguel County Indigent Fund pays for the burial.) The Session is still considering the issue of how much to charge for a burial plot for persons who are not indigent. If you have any thoughts on the matter, please contact me or Pastor Katie.

(This is not related to the already established charge for a columbarium niche. Our columbarium still has vacant niches, so if this is something you would be interested in, please contact Judy Long. We do have some columbarium niches for the remains of indigent persons who have a connection to our congregation.)

We expect to have a work day later in the spring or early summer, perhaps combined with a special Sunday worship service.

Van Swan (505-426-4348)

## New *Glory to God* Hymnals



Beginning Sunday, February 3, WAM invites you to purchase a GtG book plate for \$20. It will be placed in a new *Glory to God* hymnal with your inscription in honor or memory of someone special to you or this church, and the church will receive a hymnal free. We need 100 hymnals for the sanctuary and 25 more for the choir. Through some designated donations we have a good start toward our 125 hymnals, but we need your participation to get us to the full number and put *Glory to God* in the pews! We'll keep *Sing the Faith*.

So, you can place your *Glory to God* book plate order (1, 2, 3 or ?) in the memo line on a check to FUPC, and place it in the offering. You also can donate through our Online Giving service. When the book plates arrive, you'll be contacted for your inscription and it will be printed on the book plate. When the hymnals arrive, we'll have a special dedication of the hymnals during worship to, of course, the *Glory of God*!

**What is Per Capita?** Literally, per capita, a Latin term, means "by heads;" and each year all of the nearly 10,000 congregations and mid councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pay per capita fees. To quote from the PCUSA website, per capita is "the tie that binds". Per capita is the primary source of funding for the Office of the General Assembly, and is how Presbyterians mutually and equitably share the costs of coming together to discern the Spirit's leading for the future.

The per capita amount is \$35 per member and is based on the number of members in the previous year. So, FUPC's per capita amount for 2019 is based on the 91 members we had in 2018 and is \$3,185. Of the \$35 per member, \$8.95 goes to the Office of the General Assembly, \$6 goes to the Synod of the Southwest, and \$20.05 goes to the Presbytery of Santa Fe. Per capita is included in our church budget each year and paid by the church. You can make a gift to the church for your per capita by writing a check and notating 'per capita' on the memo line.

Karyl Lyne, Clerk of Session



### We're Online!!

FUPC now has online giving. Electronic gifts are fast and secure, and they reduce administrative costs.

Give anytime, anywhere to your favorite funds using your bank account (no extra fees) or a debit/credit card (incurs a small fee).

- Schedule and manage recurring donations such as Pledges
- Make one-time donations to special offerings - One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost, etc
- Pay for events, programs and other activities

\*\* You can click on the **Donate** button in this article to go directly to the church website donation page or scan the QR code at the end of this article.

You also can give using your smartphone. Just download the app from either the App Store or Google Play. Search for *GivePlus church*. Download it to your phone and you're ready to give. You will be asked to set up your church - just search for us or let your location find the church. That will be your "home church."

If you would like to give electronically and have any questions, please contact the church office.





### Lenten Study

You are invited to dig deep along the road of your own spiritual journey as we read and discuss Joyce Rupp's book *Open the Door: A Journey to the True Self*. Rupp uses the metaphor of a door to invite readers into spiritual growth. Spiritual writer Paula D'Arcy says, "In *Open the Door*, [Rupp's] consistently strong and effective insights and exercises lead the reader step by step into the 'holy site' within."

Each day a short reading leads to a question for reflection and a meditation. Participants should be willing to commit to reading each day and to capturing their reflections by jotting down notes or writing/drawing in a journal.

Books are available in the church office after March 3 for \$7.00, or from Richard Lindeborg. The book is also available for your Kindle for less than \$10. Please plan to read the Introduction, Suggestions for Using the Book, and the Prayer for Openness (pp. 1-13) before the first class on March 10th.

Sunday mornings, 9:30 a.m. March 10 – April 21

**Sunday morning doesn't work for you?** Then join us any time after March 10 in our online chat room. Watch for Chat Room detail , coming soon! Facilitated by Pastor Katie

## START THE CONVERSATION



### How to Start the Conversation

Wondering how to help heal our country's divide right here in our own community? Wondering how to respect someone whose views are radically opposed to yours? There might be a pathway right here in our church. A task force of the Mission and Peacemaking committee has been working for weeks on *How to Start the Conversation*. The committee gathered information from a wide variety of sources on how to talk with people who hold strong opinions in different areas.

The first of several short workshops will be held soon - stay tuned for more info -

We will meet at the Presbyterian Church Perea Fellowship Hall, for a meal of soup, bread, and with love.

Some key concepts for all of these meetings will be:

- Come with a willingness to learn
- Come with a will to listen intently
- Come willing to share
- Come not to persuade, but to understand

Please join us.



The renovation of the kitchen was a big project [in 2010]. Designed by the Kitchen Committee and funded by a bequest from Marilyn Ernest's estate, the Session gave the go-ahead to do as much as possible with the funds available. [In 2012] the finishing touches were installed . . . including stove, refrigerator, freezer and roll-down doors for the service windows. Additional funding came from the estates of Helen O'Brien and Trudy Trivalos. The kitchen was [finally complete in 2014] with a [larger] stove, new floor . . . and a folding door.

--2010, 2012, and 2014 Annual Reports, plus Kitchen Dedication Handout

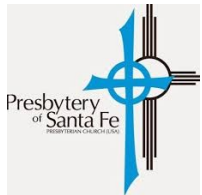
## Old Town Mission News



February has been a busy month for our Old Town Mission Community Center. We have been exploring partnering with Our Lady of Sorrows with their food pantry ministry. The logistics for that particular partnership may not work out, but it is encouraging that they are open to working together with us.

The SPOT Youth Team has planned two Friday Night Fun events to give our youth a fun outlet for all their energy. As you know, there isn't a lot for youth to do here, and it is a problem for them. The first event drew around 70-80 people from both high schools, the United World College, and from the neighborhood. Pat Leahan and volunteers transformed the OTMCC into a kid-friendly "nightclub" with games, music (we have some very talented youth in this town!) and food and drinks. This is a free event for the community. If you are able to help fund this for the future, please call D.R. Palmer (303-775-7259), Tom Trigg (505-426-5821), or Pat Leahan (505-718-6635). Wouldn't it be great if we could do this every Friday!

The Old Town Mission Task Force has formed and is working hard to lay out the long-term plan for financial and programming viability. We have gathered the expenses from the last three years and created an initial projection of financial needs for the next three years. We have identified several sources of grants that might help us. We have talked to local historians, and met with a representative from First Presbyterian in Santa Fe, which is the recipient of a grant they are using to help restore their building. Members of the task force are: D.R. Palmer (chair), Tom Trigg, Jeff Salman, Karyl Lyne, Robin Carlson and Pastor Katie.



## Greetings From The Presbytery of Santa Fe!

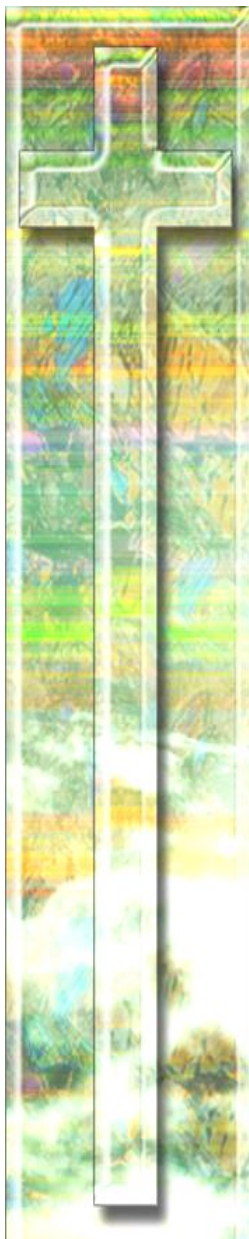
Saturday, 2-23-19, commissioners, clergy and guests gathered at the beautiful John Gaw Meem-designed Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque. It's always fun to see people with whom I have worked on various committees and meet new folks. With 38 churches in the Presbytery and at least 2 people from each one, it's quite a sizable group. As has become standard practice, the meeting opened with the Acknowledgement of Whose Land We are Meeting On.

A number of amendments to the Book of Order from the General Assembly last summer were presented by Stated Clerk Stephen Rhoades and time was allowed for questions and comments for and against the amendments. All of the amendments passed except one having to do with the support of candidates for public office. One half of the 171 presbyteries nationally must approve amendments for them to be adopted.

A highlight for me was the commissioning of 30+ Presbytery of Santa Fe high school youth who will attend Triennium, the summer once-in-every-three-years-gathering of PCUSA youth at Purdue University. Triennium includes workshops, mission work, networking, prayer, music, worship and lots of fun. A number of FUPC youth have attended Triennium in the past. Additionally, these youth, who had written the worship service for the closing of the Presbytery meeting, led us through that worship with prayer, Scripture reading, hymns and a sermon, flawlessly! Our future is in good hands with these youth leaders!

Another highlight was the recognition and commendation of 15 churches in the Presbytery of Santa Fe who participated in all four of the national offerings in 2018. These churches are designated as Four for Four Churches and FUPC is one of them. The national offerings include One Great Hour of Sharing during Lent, the Pentecost Offering, the Peace and Global Witness Offering in October, and the Christmas Joy Offering in December. Additionally, FUPC contributes to the Giving Catalog by funding a village well. The certificate and letter of commendation and thanks will be posted on the Mission & Peacemaking Bulletin Board in Perea Hall for your reading.

Karyl Lyne, FUPC Commissioner



*Lent/Easter Worship*

March 6	Ash Wednesday	
	9:00 a.m.	St Paul's Peace
	12:15 p.m.	United Methodist Church
	5:30 p.m.	First United Presbyterian
April 14	Palm Sunday	
	10:30 a.m.	Worship followed by a potluck lunch
<b>Holy Week</b>		
April 18	Maundy Thursday	
	5:15 p.m.	St Paul's Peace
April 19	Good Friday	
	9:00 a.m.	St Paul's Peace
	12:15 p.m.	United Methodist Church
	6:30 p.m.	Tenebrae Service - First United Presbyterian
Church		
April 21	Easter Sunday	
	6:00 a.m.	Sunrise Service at the Hennslers' home
	10:30 a.m.	Traditional Easter Worship in the Sanctuary

## First United Presbyterian Church

### PO Box 37

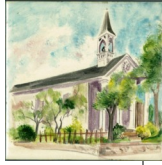
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Website: [www.lvpresbyterian.org](http://www.lvpresbyterian.org)

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



**Samaritan House Food Donations  
For March  
Canned Meats, Tuna, Chicken  
Coffee and Tea are always needed**



Communion is offered each Sunday from October 1 through Pentecost (June 9, 2019) and on the first and third Sundays of each month from June through September. We do not celebrate Communion on the fifth Sunday of a month due to the addition of the Healing Liturgy to the service.



### Deep and Wide

*A Contemplative Service at the Old Town Mission*  
5:15 p.m. – 6:15 p.m. on second and fourth Tuesdays  
at the Old Town Mission.

This is an ecumenical gathering open to all,  
sponsored by FUPC.

Questions? Call D.R. Palmer 303-775-7259



### **March Birthdays**

2nd	Jan Beurskens
	Bob Pearson
5th	Bruce Wertz
6th	John Arnold
14th	Pat Halverson
16th	Karyl Lyne
27th	Jackson Awuzing
	Jim Croto