



“MISSION & PEACEMAKING RECOMMENDS”

Book on Modern Food Adds Background to Study

We are eating a diet of food that is having us for dinner, according to Michael Pollen in his new book *In Defense of Food; An Eater's Manifesto*. He lays out a case for how our diet has changed in the past 60 years, or so, and how it has made us fatter and more diseased but less nourished. Ironically "nutritionism", the ideology that has broken down whole food into components of nutrients, played a major part.

The book contains three sections, "The Age of Nutritionism", "The Western Diet and Diseases of Civilization", and "Getting over Nutritionism". In the first, Pollen defines Nutritionism and chronicles its rise and explains how it has changed our diet more in sixty years than in five millennia. Then he focuses on the resulting impact in our lives defined in terms of the diseases that it has brought into them. Finally, he offers a prescription for what, how and when to eat.

The key to this situation started when we began breaking our whole foods down into their nutritional components. This moved the focus from one on foods to one on nutrients and gave rise to the chemist version of 'food'. The argument was that as long as we are getting the proper amount and balance of nutrients, we don't need to concern ourselves with the whole food. Unfortunately, as we have begun to realize, we don't have enough information about what amounts and combinations (including how they are combined), of nutrients contribute to our health and well-being. Pollen then takes us through the industrial food chain and shows how the application of these assumptions got turned into big business and determines what ends up on our dinner plate.

This change has had a deleterious effect on our health. In one of the most striking examples in recent memory, Pollen reports on a survey in which displaced Aboriginals suffering from many 'western' diseases were replaced from the city (and a 'western' diet) to their natural environment only to find that all symptoms of the 'western' diseases disappeared within a very short time. From here, he looks at diet and it's relationship to disease and comes up with some interesting findings.

Finally, Pollen fleshes out the tagline of the book, "Eat food, mostly plants, not too much" in a series of prescriptions on diet and eating. These are not a recipe of what to eat but more of a set of guiding principles. For instance, try avoiding foods that contain more than five ingredients or foods that contain ingredients that you cannot pronounce. These are certain to have come from a factory rather than a farm. The author does not prescribe a meatless diet nor one based solely on organic foods. His advice is practical, easy to understand and apply.

Pollen is an experienced journalist and author and knows how to engage the reader. He lays out his arguments logically and with grace. He relates to us with personal experiences from his childhood. At 225 pages, the book is an easy, but important read. I would encourage you to read it and consider applying the material in your own life; I certainly intend to .

- Steve Ediger

THANKSGIVINGS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Church Members/ Participants

Selma Mathews
Robert Jones
Allen and Joan Lovekin
Trudy Trivalos
Helen O'Brien

Family/Friends

Carissa Joseph
Mike Dolan
Suzanne Bush
Ofelia Pacheco

Worldwide and Local Community

Staff and residents of the
Cold Weather Shelter
Victims of violence
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La Voz de la Gente de Dios

FUPC WELCOMES ASSISTANT

In order to support our Pastor during this phase of his treatment the Personnel Committee has negotiated a contract with Rosemary Pierson, a familiar face to most of us. Rosemary will assist by attending some of the numerous meetings each month, going out on pastoral visits and other things. She has provided the following biographical information for us:

Rosemary Pierson first came to Las Vegas in 1983 to serve her first parish, Peace Lutheran Church. She served in the parish for three years before launching into a whole new direction. Very interested in healing, she began to study various modes of healing work and got a master's degree in counseling at NMHU. She also studied massage therapy which she has been practicing all these years. She also does some counseling. Occasionally, she gets to preach or do a wedding or funeral. She very much considers herself a minister in the wider sense of the word; a "freelance minister" might be the title. Being a stay at home mom has brought her great joy and satisfaction. Her work studio is adjacent to the house which allowed her to be at home. She is excited to be given this opportunity to work more closely with all of you. The Presbyterian Church is a great group of people!

Welcome Rosemary! We look forward to working more closely with you over the next few months.

REVEREND FUN OGCI, INC.



BEING RATHER CLUMSY, HAROLD OFTEN ENTERTAINS ANGELS UNAWARE

WATER FAST FEEDBACK

On Saturday morning of the liquid fast, I found myself happily making coffee. As I was pouring the water into the coffee pot, I remembered the fast. It really brought home to me how automatic our patterns of behavior are. I was making coffee without thinking what I was doing. After that I found myself stopping to examine what I was doing all weekend. The exercise caused me to begin to examine many habits, especially those related to food and drink. I really did enjoy, in a whole new way, the cup of coffee I had at noon at the church at the end of the fast.

Karyl Lyne

I Thought I Could

When the water only fast was proposed I thought, "no problem." I love water and drink a lot of it anyway. So how hard could 40 hours of just water for my liquid be. I started off Friday night just fine and when I woke up Saturday morning I realized with some horror that meant NO COFFEE. I went an hour drinking water and reading the paper all the while struggling with the lure of my every morning cup of hot coffee. Finally I admitted my addiction and had one cup. My thoughts were more about addiction than solidarity at that time. As the day and evening progressed I did think more about all the choices we have to drink and how lucky we are to have clean, cold water as well. I had no trouble giving up all other liquids except water. Just that pesky coffee.

Judy Long

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WARNING: CHANGE AHEAD!

SOME THINGS THAT WILL BE DIFFERENT IN FUPC IN 2010

We can't expect things to always stay the same for us all the time. If nothing changed, life would be very secure but also very boring. Change challenges us to grow in understanding and faith. As the old hymn "Be Still My Soul" states, "In every change He (God) faithful will remain." Trust that God is with us, at work in us and in changing situations, is at the heart of our faith. So, here are some major changes that will be happening in 2010. We can expect many more, unseen at this point!

1. Rosemary Pierson, former Lutheran Pastor (see her article on page 2), with Session approval, will begin working part-time at the church. She will be assisting Randy with worship, pastoral and administrative duties during the second half of his chemotherapy, taking over when he's laid low by side-effects. We hope the way will be clear for her to begin Monday, January 4 and continue through the end of May, 2010, when the chemo will be

over and the final surgery accomplished.

2. Our beloved treasurer, Joyce Litherland, will be officially turning the books over to Amos Estrada, Interim Treasurer, at the first of the year. Joyce and Ray both have been attending to the church finances faithfully for thirty years or more. Words cannot express our gratitude for their loving, care-filled service to the segment of Christ's Body named First United Presbyterian Church of Las Vegas. Joyce will continue to serve the church by chairing the I&S Committee, serving on the Session and leading Presbyterian Women, plus much more.

3. Tom Trigg, the World's Best Church Secretary, will be retiring around the end of May, 2010. It's hard to imagine the office without Tom, but he really deserves some well-deserved rest and free time. If anyone knows someone just like Tom who's looking for a job, please let the Personnel Committee know immediately. Personnel is creating a job-description and will be circulating it soon.

4. The Holy Conversations Team will conclude its work in March, 2010, and make a series of recommendations to the Session for approval and implementation. The whole congregation, including YOU, are important parts of this process. You'll have opportunity to read the Summary of the Team's findings and respond to it. You'll also have the chance to talk about what vision you have for the church in the next few years.

Please join in the congregational dinner and Holy Conversations discussions after the Annual Meeting on January 31.

Other, less clear changes will probably be happening in 2010, too, including changes to the kitchen and formation of a Mission Church Usage Task Force to plan how that wonderful space will best serve God's people, to God's glory. As we move into 2010, "God is with us. We are not alone".



PRESBYTERIAN WORLD

News About the PC(USA)'s International Mission

Mission Crossroads, "a Web-based wisdom community for Presbyterians passionate about mission," is growing in membership and content. "More than 750 people have joined since we launched the site last April," says Lis Valle, Presbyterian World Mission's associate director for Equipping the Church for Mission Involvement. "It's a place to share ideas about mission, coordinate efforts and form groups around particular interests." The site also contains links to online resources as well as information about books and other print publications. Mission trip leaders, mission committee chairs, mission network members, mission personnel, World Mission staff, and members and leaders of various Presbyterian-related mission groups are among those who have joined Mission Crossroads.

PC(USA) mission workers Larry Sthreshley and Jim McGill, along with Medi Kodak, a community development leader with the Presbyterian Community of Congo, and others have developed a water program in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The program involves cisterns, wells and spring-capping and also includes supporting a local technical team and organizing and training water committees to establish maintenance programs for the water sources. In Congo about 30 percent of all illness is related to contaminated water. The goal is to have clean water available to at least 80 percent of the people living in health zones served by Congolese Presbyterians



The life of First United Presbyterian Church continues to evolve every day and it never ceases to amaze me all that our church does. Joyce has been the Shepard of our money for a long time. I'm sure that if you ask her, she will tell you exactly how many years she and Ray have been treasurer.

As we begin this New Year with great expectations, I find myself taking on the position of treasurer with its great responsibility. While I am somewhat nervous about such a daunting task, I am also excited about the challenge. I will be bringing our church's books into the brave new world of technology. All of our transactions will be tracked by Peachtree Accounting. With the dawning of this new program, I hope that I can streamline the books to make the job a little easier, and I will be relying on the expertise of our financial secretary along with our office manager to spread the duties, and of course, I will have Joyce to fall back on when I need her help.

This transition will be challenging not only to me, but to everyone in our church family. New procedures will be put into place to fit into the Peachtree system, and all of us will have to be patient with the implementation. It is a work in progress and I am always open to suggestions and criticisms (constructive of course).

Pray for all of us on the financial team that we can make the transition work well.

In Christ,
Amos

A GIVING PRESBYTERY

Once again, Santa Fe Presbytery was listed in the top ten presbyteries in mission giving – in this case basic mission support by average per member. Of the 10 presbyteries at the top (out of 173), Santa Fe was fourth with per member giving of \$19.09. In the category of special offerings, Grand Canyon was listed as 8th in total dollars (\$219,983) and all three presbyteries were listed in the per member giving to special offerings – Sierra Blanca fourth at \$16.39, Grand Canyon fifth at \$14.06, and Santa Fe eighth at \$13.72.

Santa Fe was recognized in another category for total mission giving average per member – second in the country with a total of \$41.13.

Congratulations to all three presbyteries for their faithful stewardship!

Jan

Jan DeVries
Synod of the Southwest

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE ADDS NEW ELEMENTS

New Worship Elements in the Sanctuary

The Worship and Music Committee hopes you have noticed the new banners that grace the front of the sanctuary this season, and the new white table runner on the communion table. The vibrant blue banners feature the Christmas star at the center of a cross. Below the star figure on one banner is a crown and on the other are four lighted candles. These figures are white on the blue background. Certainly the symbolism of the royalty of God's Son coming to earth as the King of Kings to bring hope, joy, peace and love are beautifully depicted. The blue color is often associated with Christ's mother, Mary.

The white table runner features two panels of inset lace at either end of the runner. Woven in to the lace in oval windows are the Greek letters Alpha and Omega—the beginning and the end—and the Chi (X) and Rho (P), signifying Christ. We hope you will take a moment to look at the runner and appreciate the beauty of the lace and its meaning for us.

Thanks to All of the Musicians

I want to take a moment to thank all of the singers, ringers, accompanists, substitutes and directors who have so generously and graciously given of their time this year. We are so blessed in our congregation to have so many talented musicians. Their energy, enthusiasm, dedication and talent make my job a joy and delight. Thanks to each of you.

Karyl Lyne, Director of Choirs





- 1/3 Second Sunday after Christmas—Communion
 Preacher John Detterick
 Liturgist Gay Veit
 Piano Fred Salas

- 1/10 Baptism of the Lord
 Preacher Rose Cavalcante
 Liturgist Ray Litherland
 Piano Em Krall

- 1/17 Second Sunday in Ordinary Time— Communion
 Preacher Rosemary Pierson
 Liturgist Cody Romero
 Piano Fred Salas

- 1/24 Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
 Preacher Rev. Liz Graham
 Liturgist Jeff Salman
 Piano Em Krall

- 1/31 Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
 Preacher Ray Kersting
 Liturgist Bob Vander Meer
 Piano Em Krall

Deacon of the Month
Sharon Seto

Elder of the Month
Gay Veit



Dear Friends – Happy New Year!

In this time of transition from one year to the next, may the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. That “grace and peace” are the consistent factors in transitional times, times of change, times of stress. Without confidence in the faithfulness of God, trust in God’s unending Presence, the constant grace and peace made known through Christ, life becomes terrifying, at least for me. When I begin to trust too much in myself, tricked by my mind into thinking that it all depends on me alone and is spinning out of control, much of my energy directs itself into negative emotions like fear, worry, feelings of anxiety and being under pressure. This is very unhealthy and life-limiting for someone like me, on chemo-therapy, probably for everyone else, too.



In the most recent issue of the monthly publication “Context”, I found this quote: “Karl Rahner (German priest and theologian) insisted that when we are human in the fullest sense we are ‘God’s existence in the world’”. This is an amazing thought. It provokes the question, “How can we be human in the fullest sense?” What example do we have of a person like this? The one being who was “human in the fullest sense” was Jesus Christ. Christ lived life in total dependence on and obedience to God, confident in the unbroken connection he had with Creator God, whom he called “Abba”, or Daddy. Jesus certainly was “God’s existence in the world”.

My only New Year’s Resolution for 2010 is to be more “human in the fullest sense”, with God’s help. Knowing that I won’t be completely successful, I still resolve to live all life in the awareness of God’s gifts of grace and peace revealed in Jesus Christ. This means I’ll have to keep my trickster mind in check, paying attention to those subtle thoughts it produces which lead me toward panic. This is not easy.

Changes, transitions, new stresses will come to all of us and to the church in 2010, all part of life as God created it. With each potential stressor we face, we have the chance to be calm in the confidence that God is with us and dare to be fully human, like Jesus, and “God’s existence in the world”.

*May God bless you
in 2010 and always,
Randy*

HOLY CONVERSATIONS TEAM READY WITH REPORT

Executive Summary Outlines Findings

Committee Members: Carol Linder (Chair), Randy Campbell, Gay Veit, Connie Trujillo, Robin Carlson, Steve Ediger, and Tom Trigg

Holy Conversations is a spiritual planning process our church is using to define our future. We invite the congregation to join *Holy Conversations* as we enter the next phase. In recent years the church has engaged in long-term planning to revisit and further energize our mission. Now we are augmenting this process with Gil Rendle and Alice Mann's *Holy Conversations – Strategic Planning as a Spiritual Practice for Congregations* as a guide.

The long-term planning began retreats in 2006 and 2007 that led to the official Provocative Proposals. In early 2009, the Synod of the Southwest with contracted Stephanie Lutz Allen, a consultant in Church Strategic Planning, to run a clustered consultation with as many churches as wanted to participate. The Session formed a Holy Conversations team with a mandate to lead the congregation toward living into and implementing the four Provocative Proposals. To simplify and make the proposals easier to remember, the team developed SCORE as an acronym:

S pirituality	Improving the spiritual life and resources in our church and community.
C ommunity	Making our community a better place in which to live.
O rganization	Making our organizational structure more flexible and productive.
R eaching out & e vangelism	Conducting more effective evangelism.

The Holy Conversations team has spent six months discovering information about our congregation and community. Below are the highlights of our discovery about our church.

- Over half of our congregation lives within the local community. Although Las Vegas is the geographic center of our congregation, some drive as much as 30 miles to worship with us.
- Our membership and attendance records reveal that we have an even distribution of age groups. However, 40% of our congregation is over 60. This impacts many aspects of our church life including worship, programming, and activities.
- Attendance at Sunday worship has declined in the last three years. This is a reflection of loss of population in the Las Vegas community and of national trends in mainline church membership.
- Over 50% of the members have joined in the last 10 years showing vibrant membership.
- Involvement in church leadership and support is very high and fairly evenly distributed among the congregation including both members **and** friends.
- Our church building has had 2 major expansions in the past 17 years to serve the congregation and community. However, not all spaces in the church are used to their fullest capacity.
- One of our longest ongoing projects is the restoration of the Mission Church. A loyal task force augmented with volunteers like United World College students has led this. Rio Gallinas Charter School and Las Vegas Children's Dance Theater use the Mission Church almost daily. The congregation will soon consider its future mission.
- Thirteen different groups or functions from AA to Peace and Justice as part of our community outreach as well as 23 of our own church programs use the space. New Horizons, the kitchen, and the fellowship hall are used almost daily.
- First United Presbyterian Church thrives on mission.
 - We are the highest per-capita givers to Presbytery of Santa Fe mission.
 - We have given birth to community service organizations that then become independent.
 - We sponsor cross-border mission events, usually through Presbyterian Border Ministry.
 - We welcome, host, and learn from missionaries who visit as part of our mission life.
- We have strong relationships with St Paul's Peace and Methodist churches. These interactions strengthen our ties within the community and make it easier for us to be successful with local mission efforts.
- We use a variety of approaches to keep the lines of communications open within our church family and wider community. This enables us to maintain relationships on a daily basis.

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Report....Continued from page 6

We interviewed 17 people from the Las Vegas Community, including individuals from the city government, university and colleges, city school systems, local pastors, businesses, and community members. Below are the highlights of our discovery from our community interviews.

- Perceived trends and unmet needs in the community were:

Crime	Housing
Lack of jobs	Cost of Goods
Uncaring City Government	Lack of care for those less able
Apathetic private sector	lack of family support
Education	Lack of care for elderly/disadvantaged

The prevalent attitude of those interviewed was that it was someone else's job to do these things.

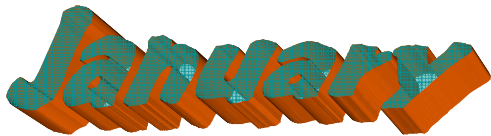
- Despite the phrasing of our interview questions that encouraged negative responses, we also received many good ideas and joys about our community.
- Many people were aware of our church, but surprisingly most public officials were not aware of church and our mission in the community.
- Among those aware of our work, impressions ranged from knowing that the church existed to amazement of its progressive attitude. Tom McDonald, editor of *The Optic*, thinks our church is the "best hope in town of bridging the gap between the historical social divide."

In conclusion, the Holy Conversations team found that we are a vibrant, diverse, and active church located in a fractured community with many unmet needs and challenges. We were surprised by the public officials' lack of awareness about our ministry.

Our call as a church is to use the information in this Discovery report to discern God's design for our future. Please join us in this call. We are seeking your input to ensure that we have all the information necessary to live into and implement SCORE.

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ESSENTIALS OF EMERGING CHRISTIANITY

A list created by Richard Rohr, printed in Radical Grace, January-March 2010 issue

1. Jesus is a model for living more than an object of worship.
2. Affirming peoples' potential is more important than reminding them of their brokenness.
3. The work of reconciliation should be valued over the primacy of judgments.
4. Gracious behavior is more important than right beliefs.
5. Inviting questions is to be valued more than supplying answers.
6. Encouraging the personal search is more important than group uniformity.
7. Meeting actual needs is more important than maintaining institutions.
8. Peacemaking is more important than power.
9. We should care more about love and less about sex.
10. Life in this world is more important than the afterlife (which would then take care of itself, and we would recognize eternity is God's work anyway and something we now nothing about.)