

# ADVOCATE

**August 2020**

First Presbyterian Church  
41 West College Avenue  
Westerville, Ohio 43081-2103  
614-882-3155 Phone  
[www.westervillefirstpresbyterian.org](http://www.westervillefirstpresbyterian.org)

614-882-2421 Fax

## Survey Results

So what did our survey show? Below is a summary of the 125 surveys we received, with the percentages rounded off:

1. What is your attitude toward returning to in-person services?  
24% would return at the first opportunity.  
24% would return at the first opportunity, but with some concerns.  
45% may wait several additional weeks.  
7% not sure
2. What would encourage you to attend an in-person service? Select all that apply.  
Response selected by nearly everyone: "The number of virus cases in Ohio is decreasing."  
Next most popular: "A vaccine is available."  
Also chosen often: "Other churches are offering in-person services."  
Each of the other choices was selected by 1% or fewer members.
3. Would having children in the sanctuary affect your decision to attend?  
79% do not have children who attend with them.  
12% said no.  
9% said yes.
4. Would you feel comfortable if the sanctuary were...  
filled to capacity: very few responses  
¾ full: 12%  
½ full: 36%  
¼ full: 29%  
None of these: 21%
5. Would you be willing to attend in an overflow room or at a second service?  
67% yes  
10% no  
23% not sure



6. Would you be willing to wear a face mask while you are in the church?

98% yes

A few responses no

7. What is your age?

52% 70+

29% 50-69

18% 30-49

(plus a few who are younger)

8. Before the pandemic, how often did you attend?

73% weekly

14% irregularly

12% once or twice/month



9. How are you staying connected with the church? Select all that apply.

49% watch the service livestreamed on Facebook on Sunday mornings.

25% watch a recording of the livestreamed service later in the week.

9% listen to the audio recording on the church's website.

56% read a copy of the sermon sent by email or US mail.

10. How else could the church increase your comfort level for in-person services?

Write-in responses included:

- offer more, smaller services, perhaps at different times/days or outside
- move cookie time outside
- make face masks and hand sanitizer available/required; take temperatures
- maintain social distancing
- continue to sing, but with masks; don't sing

11. What else worries you about returning to in-person services?

Write-in responses included:

- unknowingly transmitting the virus to others
- that some people will not wear a mask
- my kid's behavior

## Sanctuary Flowers

Church members are continuing to donate flowers for Sunday mornings. These flowers grace our live-stream service and then are delivered to someone who might need a spiritual boost. (Or they are delivered to the donor's home for their enjoyment.) Thanks to all those who have been donating the flowers. If you would like to donate our Sunday flowers, we have three open dates in October and five open dates in November. Please call Olivia at the church office (614-882-3155) to place your order and make a donation. The cost is \$33.

## Join the Zoom Coffee Hour after the service on Sundays



Many of us are missing the in-person worship and are glad that we can at least watch the service live each Sunday morning. But what many of us still miss is the coffee hour. Well, we are about to remedy that! We are starting the First Presbyterian Church “Zoom Coffee Hour.” Each Sunday morning, Diana Westfall will post a link on Facebook for a coffee hour gathering that will start right after the worship service ends. Sharon Davis will serve as our initial “Welcomer,” but we will be looking for other “Welcomers” for the future. Bring your own cup of coffee and cookies and spend 5 minutes or 30 minutes conversing with your fellow worshippers on Sunday mornings before you go make your lunch.

As with any new endeavor, some bugs will have to be worked out, but we are excited by the idea. Please join us!

## “Ask Mark About GA” Thursday, August 20 at 7:00 p.m.

At the end of June, Pastor Mark Gauen served as a commissioner to the 224<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA), which was held virtually because of the pandemic. Pastor Mark will hold a question and answer session about this GA via a Zoom videoconference on Thursday, August 20, at 7:00 p.m. He will share some of his impressions of the GA and then answer questions that you may have about what the GA was like and about its actions. You are welcome to ask about the ‘Resolution on Racism’ passed by this General Assembly (included in last month’s *Advocate*) or any of the other GA actions. News about the General Assembly can also be found on the Presbyterian Church (USA) website ([www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org)). If you are interested, contact Mark (([pastormark@fpcs.us](mailto:pastormark@fpcs.us) or 614-288-4389). Space will be limited, but if there is enough interest, he will hold another session later.

During the GA, Pastor Mark kept a diary of his experiences. First came days of training, study of the issues facing our denomination and the world at large, small-group Zoom meetings, Bible study, worship, a focus on mission work, and the election of two co-moderators for this year’s GA. Here is some background on the new moderators, who both offer diversity, commitment, and a deep desire to serve the church:

Gregory Bentley is pastor of Fellowship Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama, and is endorsed by the Presbytery of North Alabama. Elona Street-Stewart is synod executive for the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and is endorsed by the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.

Street-Stewart and Bentley both cite their own heritage and the dramatic influence of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on their lives, and on those like them, as the foundation of their desire to serve the wider church with “a hope that combines faith and justice into a life of service. Our personal experiences teach so much about who we

are, and they are key to building relations across the church, across our differences, across our experiences through the hope of the Matthew 25 initiative,” Street-Stewart observed. “We believe it will take all that we are, individually and collectively, to continue to take on the important work God has for the PCUSA to do.”



“I am very excited about partnering with Elona,” Bentley said. “Together, we embody both the pain of our collective past and the possibilities of a preferred future... a future of vitality and fruitfulness in the church. God is doing a new thing in the PCUSA and I am grateful to be a part of it.” Adds Street-Stewart, “What we talk about in the church today, what challenges us in society today, are not just issues, but people and relationships. Our opportunity today is to personify what the gospel is about, for all the people it is about.”



... The personal stories of Bentley and Street-Stewart have shaped the inclusive message they will bring to the role of co-moderator. “God has used the Presbyterian Church in a mighty way to mold and shape me into the person God created and called me to be,” Bentley recalls. “At a time when the state of Alabama was only required to provide for schooling up to the fifth grade, my maternal grandmother, Virginia B. Howze, was able to finish high school because of a mission school founded by the (then-) Northern Church. My mother, Juanita B. Hathaway graduated from the only Historically Black College founded by the (then-) Southern Church, Stillman College, of which I am an alum as well. It was the PCUSA that taught me how to blend head and heart, to nurture the ‘learning and the burning.’”

Street-Stewart is a descendant of the Delaware Nanticoke tribe, whose ancestral home was just across the Chesapeake Bay from the convention center in which the 224th General Assembly was to be held. “Even before becoming Presbyterian, this church nurtured me, welcomed me, educated me and encouraged my voice. It is through these decades of service that my voice, and with me the voices of ‘All my Relations,’ emerged to speak from truth so often overlooked. Gregory and I represent the people who have been a part of this church from the beginning—but often not in roles that have allowed them to bring their full selves.’ Street-Stewart is the first Native American moderator of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Finally, Mark wrote in his diary, it was time for “heavy lifting day”:

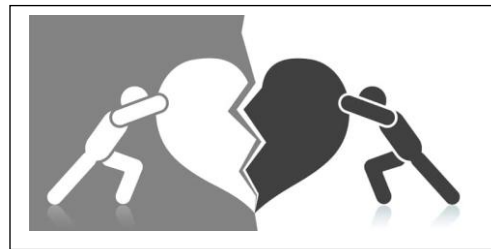
The real work of the General Assembly began today. Three significant issues were addressed: Native American issues, the Covid-19 Pandemic, and Racism. Two reports on the status of Native American churches and ministries were set to be pushed to the 2022 General Assembly, but our Ga pulled them out and addressed them as part of our business. Most critical, to me at least, was the report on the status of Native American church buildings. Dozens of Native American congregations worship in buildings that have fallen into great disrepair. They will require tens of thousands of dollars each to do these repairs.

When asked why these congregations have let their buildings fall into disrepair, the answer was “there are no doctors and lawyers in these congregations.” In other words, we in suburban churches can expect that there are at least a few within our congregations that have the means to provide the extra, significant gifts they provide for things like roof repair and boiler replacement. In most Native American congregations, the members only have the means to pay the pastor and keep up with the utilities. Our GA charged the denomination to set up a fund so that Presbyterians

from all over the country could contribute to the repairs needed at these Native American churches.

The GA also addressed the injustices caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. In particular, the GA called all of our churches to stand with each other during the crisis. Some churches are managing to get through this ordeal in rather good shape while others are struggling. Our GA asked all of us to find ways to care and support each other as Presbyterians. In so doing we will not only share the burden, but we will realize that God continues to be at work, even in the midst of the pandemic. This GA also acknowledged that the church is called to address the injustices brought to light by this pandemic and to help our society address the issues that make this pandemic so much harder on some. This GA set aside October 25, Reformation Sunday, as a day of prayer for responding to the challenges of Covid-19.

By far, the most significant action of this General Assembly was in response to the crisis of racism in our society. Even though most of the business of this GA was routine approvals, time was set aside to address the issue of the present moment and this GA took that time and ran with it. In nearly five hours of discussion and debate, this GA made a strong statement on racial justice for the church. A rather mile motion was put forward by the GA planning committee, but this GA would have none of it. A substitute motion was introduced and eventually approved. It began with these words:



*“This 224th General Assembly of the PC(USA) declares that Black lives matter; that our country’s most important institutions have been built to sustain white privilege, to protect white lives and white property at the expense of our siblings of color; and that the church, through ignorance, denial, and in some cases deliberate action, has participated in this injustice. We have been slow to face the reality of systemic racism. We have been slow to acknowledge the pain of our fellow Presbyterians, of our fellow Christians, of our fellow citizens, and of those who have come to America for a better life, whose value has been judged by the color of their skin. We pledge to join hands and hearts with our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) siblings to actively confront and dismantle systemic racism in our church and in society at large, and to work for a more just, merciful, and peaceful country that allows all of God’s children to flourish.”*

Following this opening, the statement made a series of recommendations to the churches and the presbyteries. It declared that we should educate ourselves on racial issues so that we may better understand what is happening in our country and that we in the churches and in the presbyteries should take actions aimed at dismantling systemic racism in our society and even in our churches. Given the limits of our particular GA gathering, this was probably as much as we could do, but certainly, the hope is that this statement will push all Presbyterians to work for a more just society.

If you would like to read more of Pastor Mark’s diary, he’d be glad to share the link!

## Update on 29 West College – July 17, 2020

According to Dave Collinsworth, Westerville's City Manager, Westerville City Council had the first reading of Ordinance 2020-16 on July 1. This ordinance authorizes the City Manager to enter into a lease agreement with First Presbyterian for the construction of a parking lot. The ordinance will have a second and third reading in September and, assuming adoption by Sept. 15, will be in effect on October 15. At that point (October 15), First Presbyterian and the City can execute the agreement and move forward. From a timing standpoint, we're going to target Sept. 23 for Planning Commission and October 1 for Uptown Review Board's review.



The new parking lot will provide 37-38 public parking spaces. The site plan will include a wall feature on College – similar to the entrance wall to City Hall. Smart Parking Sensors would additionally be installed at the time of construction, ***allowing for the notification to the public when the parking lot is reserved for Church use only (Church services, weddings, funerals, etc.) or for other appropriate reasons.***

### Time Table

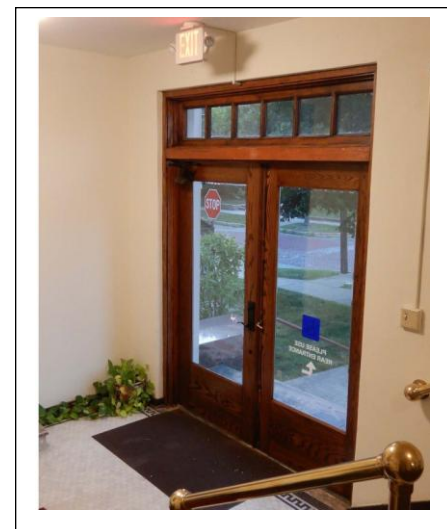
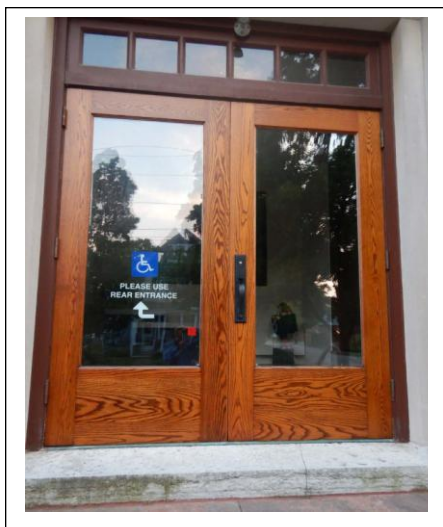
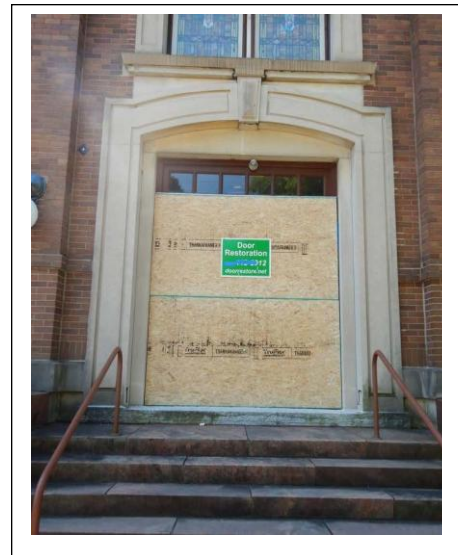
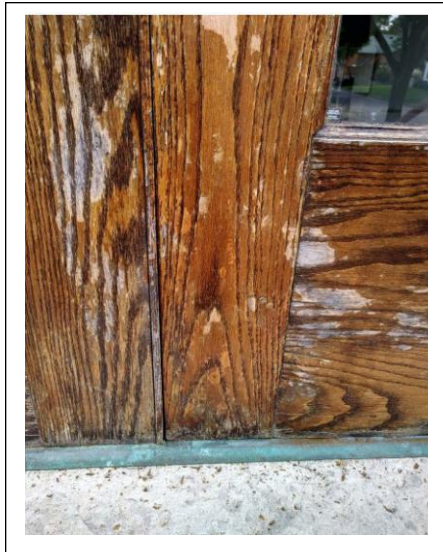
- July 1 – First Reading of Ordinance 2020-16
- Summer 2020 - City design consultant refines renderings for site plan, including entry feature/wall; images shared with and approved by church.
- September 1 – Second Reading of Ordinance 2020-16
- September 15 – Third Reading of Ordinance 2020-16
- September 23 – Planning Commission consideration of site plan
- October 1 – Uptown Review Board consideration of demolition / site plan elements
- October 2 – January 1 – Complete design work and construction drawings
- January 2021 – Bid work with Street Rehab B project
- January 31, 2021 – Deadline for demolition of structures by Church
- First Quarter 2021 Award Bid
- Mid-August 2021 – Parking lot available for public use

Jim Hines



## Our Front Doors Are Refinished!

The top photo on the left shows some of the weather-related damage to our front doors. The photo beside it shows the plywood barricade erected after the doors were removed so they could be professionally refinished. The bottom two photos show the doors beautifully restored, inside and out. Since we are not using the front doors now, this was the perfect time to have them refinished. Be sure to drive by the church and admire our “new” doors! Thanks to the Administrative Services Committee for getting this done!



## Items Needed for the Mobility Assistance Program



We are continuing to loan out walkers, wheelchairs, and other items from our Mobility Assistance Program (MAP). However, we need two items that are in high demand and short supply:

- **Walker**, folding, with 2 front wheels
- **Shower Bench Seat**, double-wide with back (2 legs go inside the bathtub, 2 legs stay on the bathroom floor)

If you can donate either of these items to the MAP program, that would be a big help! You may bring them to the church during regular office hours or call John Cameron to arrange a pick-up.

## Church Picnic! Sunday, August 2, 5:30 pm



Don't miss the next church picnic, Sunday, August 2, 2020, this time at 5:30, when the weather is likely to be cooler. Come and sit in the side yard at the church or stay in your car. Bring your own food, drink, chair, blanket, etc. (Just like the Father's Day picnic.) We are happy to announce that Kim and

Todd Wise will entertain us with some lively music.

Pastor Gauen will make sure the social distancing circles are ready. The church will be open for bathroom use. Be sure to wear a face mask (except when eating, of course)!

If there is inclement weather on August 2, we will move the picnic to August 9. We will announce this with an email message.

We welcome the time to see each other and catch up!



# Event Update

## Still on hold:

Reaching out to Refugees  
Backpack Bounty  
Manna Café  
Vegetarian Dining Group  
Ladies' Night Out



## Dine In with Nine: Friday, August 14, 7:00 pm, your home!

On the second Friday of the past two months, we have had a great time, eating at home but still gathering together, thanks to Zoom. This month, on Friday, August 14, we will do the same.

On that day, we will each order from our favorite restaurant and pick up our meal or have it delivered at home (or cook at home). Then we will have a Zoom gathering to discuss our choices and catch up with our church friends.



Zooming is easy – at 7:00 pm on August 14, click on the email link that we will send you. Then click on “Open Zoom.” It helps if you have a camera on your computer, but you do not have to have one. You can also attend a Zoom meeting using a smart phone. Contact Jim Hines or Bob Place to get help or to say you’re in!



## **Blessing of the Animals Service** **Sunday, August 23, at 7:00 p.m.** **The Church Lawn**

This is one church tradition that works in the age of social distancing. Bring your pet to our "Blessing of the Animals" service on Sunday, August 23, at 7:00 p.m. All pets are welcome but must be kept under your control at all times (leashes or cages required). You can also bring a picture of your pet to be blessed. And you are welcome to come even

if you don't have a pet.

Animals are an extension of the family and very much beloved by their owners. By honoring the significance of these special family members, we provide joy and comfort to their owners - and the pets benefit as well. And we are reminded that God created all the creatures of the earth.

We will meet on the east lawn of the church for the service. All participants are asked to bring their own chairs along with their pet. We will wear masks and stay socially distanced. Bringing a water bottle for you (and your pet) is also a good idea. If it rains, the service will be rescheduled.

Did You Know:

### **Jack Anderson Receives Professional Honor**

Our own Jack Anderson has been elected to the Bellweather Hall of Fame. The Bellweather League is a not-for-profit that identifies and honors men and women who have demonstrated significant leadership in, influence on and contributions to the medical supply chain from healthcare providers, healthcare product manufacturers and distributors, group purchasing organizations, consulting firms, educational institutions and media outlets. Jack was one of eight honored in this year's class. In their press release, they said this about Jack:

*Jack R. Anderson remains as dedicated and devoted to service and serving others today as he did when he began his career nearly five decades ago. In fact, a motivation and passion to serve percolates through his veins. To him, service isn't so much an occupation but a lifestyle, a calling. Whether leading a hospital supply chain where he was one of the earliest adopters of surgical case cart systems, automatic replenishment systems and even desktop delivery for office supplies; developing and negotiating contracts for regional and national GPOs; launching professional associations; or managing his consultancy, Anderson consistently kept the customer in front of his mind's eye.*

Congratulations, Jack, on your well-earned award.

## Quests of Our Lamb

In the July *Advocate*, our lamb appeared on the Church Directory ready to set out into the world in search of adventure and “the new normal.” Shortly after that photo was snapped, the lamb left Westerville and eagerly headed for sun and sand along the Atlantic Coast of Florida. There, it experienced a deserted beach on which neither social distancing nor face masks were necessary. Here our lamb spent a pleasant day under the beach umbrella absorbing the rays and the view of the ocean as it played in the sand, but alas, like many of us back here at home, it missed the companionship of friends and family and opted to move on.

Where our lamb is headed, we do not yet know, nor do we know when it will arrive; but as soon as that information is available, we will share it.



You are invited to offer suggestions as to the lamb’s travel and experiences, as well as suggest a name for our traveler by sending your ideas to John McElhaney. To date, no travel suggestions have been received, but the following names have been proposed: PURITY the Lamb, LOVE the Lamb, Ramalamba, Lambakin, Ewegene, Abrolamb, and Chop. Feel free to cast your vote!

# Youth Activities

## Church Camp

Which camp program is most appropriate for your child(ren)? We have a great opportunity to preview summer camp in a way that is safe and fun. Each child will have the opportunity to get a glimpse into what summer camp is like. Please check it out here: <https://campchristian.virtual-camp.org/>

For our older children, I hope you have had an opportunity to check out the summer camps for your age group. If not, please check out this site for your age-group camps and what they might entail next year.

## Vacation Bible School

Unfortunately, we have decided not to host VBS this summer due to the virus. However, you are welcome to attend an alternative online VBS called “Bolt.” To get more information and sign up for the week of your choice, click on this link: <https://gocurriculum.com/bolt-vbs>. The cost is \$25 per family. Questions? Please contact Pastor Mark or Heather Hicks.

## Boredom Busters

For middle and high-school youth, each of my daily emails includes a “Boredom Buster.” These include fun things, as well as “mission” type projects. We also meet via Zoom each Wednesday from 1--1:40pm. Our Zoom meetings involve games and activities we can do together. We would love to touch base with your youth group member. Please keep an eye out for the Zoom code number in the daily emails so you can join us.

Blessings to you all, Rev. Heather Hicks

## Ladies Night on Zoom

**Thursday, August 13, 7 pm, or Tuesday, August 18, 7 pm**

Are you tired of being at home with no girlfriends to talk to? Are ready for a night away from the kids? I think we could all use a get-together SOON! Unfortunately, COVID-19 has kept us apart, but we are not going to let that stop us. Heather Hicks will be hosting a Zoom Ladies Night. Bring your favorite beverage and prepare to have some fun as we fellowship together and possibly play some virtual games. Heather can host only 12 ladies at a time, so we will be splitting it up. Please choose a night to join us: Thursday, August 13, at 7pm or Tuesday, August 18, at 7pm

Please RSVP to Heather by August 9. We want to make sure we have enough in each group, or we will have to reschedule. Can't wait to see all you lovely ladies! Watch for Zoom instructions in the daily message.

Offered by Jim Hines, who received this story from a high school classmate:

## **Subject: Lesson from a Prayer Before Breakfast**

A while back, I read a story of a visiting pastor who attended a men's breakfast in a rural farming community.

The group had asked an older farmer, decked out in bib overalls, to say grace for the morning breakfast. "Lord, I hate buttermilk", the farmer began.

The visiting pastor opened one eye to glance at the farmer and wonder where this was going. The farmer loudly proclaimed, "Lord, I hate lard." Now the pastor was growing concerned.

Without missing a beat, the farmer continued, "And Lord, you know I don't much care for raw white flour." The pastor once again opened an eye to glance around the room and saw that he wasn't the only one feeling uncomfortable.

Then the farmer added, "But Lord, when you mix them all together and bake them, I do love warm fresh biscuits. So, Lord, when things come up that we don't like, when life gets hard, when we don't understand what you're saying to us, help us to just relax and wait until you are done mixing. It will probably be even better than biscuits. Amen."

Within that prayer, there is great wisdom for all when it comes to complicated situations like we are experiencing in the world today.

Stay strong, my friends, because our LORD is mixing several things that we don't really care for, but something even better is going to come when HE is done with it. AMEN!

## **Offered by Janet Withers:**

A young black man asked his minister why their people had to suffer so much poverty, hardship, and oppression. "Why doesn't God do something?" he wailed.

"He has," said that wise pastor. "He has created you."

And so, Desmond Tutu, the archbishop of South Africa, became the answer to his own question.



# Adult Growth and Development

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN			
Activity	When	Where	What
<b>The Adult Class</b>	<b>Mondays,</b>  3:00-4:00 pm	<b>Zoom Meeting</b>  -If interested contact Tom Jonard at <a href="mailto:tjonard@usa.net">tjonard@usa.net</a>	The Sunday Adult Class, now meeting on Monday afternoons, is reading and discussing Richard Rohr's book <i>The Universal Christ</i>
<b>Shelter-in-Place Bible Studies</b>	<b>Tuesdays,</b> 9:30-10:30 am  <b>Wednesdays,</b> 7:00-8:00 pm  <b>Thursdays,</b> 1:30-2:30 pm	<b>Zoom Meetings</b>  -If interested, email Pastor Gauen at <a href="mailto:pastormark@fpcw.us">pastormark@fpcw.us</a>	We are continuing our study on the Book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah was a prophet during some of the most tumultuous times in the history of Israel, which makes his message particularly important today. All three sections will cover the same passage each week.
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Monday Discussion Group</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Mondays,</b>  7:30 – 9:00 pm	<b>Zoom Meeting</b>  -If interested, email Pastor Gauen at <a href="mailto:pastormark@fpcw.us">pastormark@fpcw.us</a>	We are looking at the formation of the Bible through the book <i>Inspired</i> , by Rachel Held Evans. Led by Rev. Gauen. We will meet on the fourth Monday, August 24, at 7:30 pm.
<b>Circle 4 Women</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays,</b> 11:00 am	<b>Zoom Meeting</b> -If interested email Pastor Gauen at <a href="mailto:pastormark@fpcw.us">pastormark@fpcw.us</a> or Elaine Foley	Our Presbyterian Women's group meets monthly for fellowship and Bible study. Led by Elaine Foley. Our next class will be on Thursday, August 20.

# Pastor's Page



Dear Friends:

We are in an unprecedented time in our world—a pandemic, a recession, a racial reckoning, a polarized political landscape, an environmental crisis—did I leave anything out? The pandemic particularly has caused the church to change its methods in the interest of health and safety. Live-streamed worship, Zoom meetings, and no hospital visits are all commonplace now. We don't see each other on Sundays anymore, let alone hold hands with each other in prayer. This is all part of what one writer called "The New Abnormal." This "New Abnormal" is a strange place for everyone, especially church goers.

This upended world has caused Christians to re-appraise what it means to be the church in our world today. Churches all over the globe are doing some deep soul-searching as they try to determine where do they go from here. Since our church is going through the same thing as every other church in the world, I thought that we might do well to revisit what it means to be the church, Presbyterian style. Fortunately, we have a prescription for what the church is all about in our constitution, which is the Book of Order. It is called the "Six Great Ends of the Church."

The six Great Ends were developed back in 1910, and while they have been reworked slightly over the last century, they have a timeless quality that makes them a good place to anchor our understanding of the church in any age and under any circumstance. They are Presbyterian, although I suspect that church goers from most denominations would find common ground with most of them.

The six Great Ends of the church are:

- The proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind*
- The shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God*
- The maintenance of divine worship*
- The preservation of the truth*
- The promotion of social righteousness*
- The exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world*

I thought that I would spend the next six weeks addressing each of these "Great Ends" in my sermons and see how they might guide us as a church, and as individual Christians, through today's troubled waters. We may be entering the "New Abnormal," but we are not doing it alone. We are guided by the long history of the church and by the ever-presence power of the Holy Spirit.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark L. Lauer". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Mark