

ADVOCATE

First Presbyterian Church
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Westerville, Ohio 43081-2103
614-882-3155 Phone
www.westervillefirstpresbyterian.org

April 2021



Worship During Holy Week

First Presbyterian Church will be holding three worship services during Holy Week this year.

Thursday, April 1 7:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Livestream

We will be livestreaming our Maundy Thursday worship, which will include the Lord's Supper. As we have been doing communion during this pandemic, I will conduct the communion liturgy from the sanctuary, and all who want to participate can do so from their homes. At-home participants will need to get their own grape juice or wine and piece of bread or cracker. I hope that you will join us in this very special evening.

Sunday, April 4 9:00 a.m. Easter Outdoor Worship Service

At 9:00 a.m. on Easter morning, we will hold a worship service celebrating the Resurrection outdoors on the church grounds. Participants are invited to park in the city parking lot and bring their own chairs. The covid protocols of mask wearing and social distancing will be required. Todd and Kim Wise will provide some uplifting Easter music, and Rev. Gauen will give a brief message. We will not be celebrating communion as part of this service. If the weather does not cooperate, we will cancel this service.

Sunday, April 4 10:15 a.m. Easter Video Worship Service with Communion

We will broadcast our regular Easter Worship Service via Facebook at 10:15 a.m. on Easter Morning. We will have communion as part of this service, and worshippers are invited to prepare their own elements of grape juice and bread or crackers.

Session Moves Toward Resuming In-Person Worship

At the March 8 Session meeting, the elders decided that at the next Session meeting on April 12, they will commit to a date when we will resume in-person worship services. With the rollout of the vaccines and the covid numbers going down, there is definitely light at the end of the tunnel, and we expect that in-person indoor activities will resume before too long. The Session has set up a task force that is putting together a plan so we will be able to reopen successfully when the time is right.



Our reopening will continue to be guided by information from the CDC, the State of Ohio, and the Presbytery. And as has been true for this past year—the health and well-being of our congregation and the community will be at the forefront of our thinking. When we do choose a date, we will publish it and the protocols so that the entire congregation will know what is going on. Of course, should the trajectory of the pandemic change, we will be flexible enough to change our plans as well.

When we do resume in-person worship in our sanctuary, we will continue to livestream our services because not everyone will be ready to return to the sanctuary. This will also be a benefit for our members who are traveling or who are home sick. The Session will send out a special email about the decision and procedures what will need to be followed. Stay tuned.

Please Join Us!



In the meantime, we are continuing to livestream our worship service at 10:15 a.m. every Sunday. The photo on the left shows what happens behind the scenes.

An easy way to access this service is to go to the church's website (www.westervillefirstpresbyterian.org). Click on “virtual services” in the left column. On the next screen, click on the word “HERE” at the end of the first paragraph. That will take you to our Facebook page. You can also access recordings of previous services on this page. An audio recording of the worship service is placed on our website shortly after each service, and Rev.

Gauen's printed sermon is sent in a daily email on the following Tuesday.

During the week, people are welcome to come to the sanctuary for individual meditation. The sanctuary will be open from 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Mondays through Wednesdays. All we ask is that you call ahead of time and schedule your visit with our church's administrative assistant, Olivia Hodorowski (614-882-3155).

Sanctuary Flowers

Have you ever donated flowers to grace the sanctuary during the Sunday service? After the service, you can ask for the flowers to be delivered to you, or you can donate them to bring cheer to a church member who is facing challenges. Either way, it's a win-win!

We have openings in April, May, and June. You can call Olivia at the church office or email administrativasst@fpcw.us to place your order. The cost is \$33.00. Thank you!



Join the Zoom Coffee Hour

We will continue our Zoom Coffee Hour in April. 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. Bring your own cup of coffee and cookies and spend 5 minutes or 30 minutes conversing with your fellow worshipers on Sunday morning.

Graduate Recognition Sunday, May 23



The Christian Education Committee will recognize our graduates on Sunday, May 23. If you or your child will be graduating from high school, college, or graduate school this year, please let us know so that we can include you, and them, in our graduation celebrations. Call the church office, 614-882-3155, by 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 6, and leave the graduate's name and the graduation school.

Help Us Learn More About Each Other!

Do you have a hobby or a volunteer activity that might interest—or even inspire—others? Please tell me about it so I can share it in the *Advocate*. We've done this before and discovered some intriguing interests among our members, from stocking the shelves at WARM to making homebrew. It's time to learn more about each other! Send me an email to let me know about yourself, a friend, or a family member. I'll contact him or her and find out the details. Thanks! Linda Barr

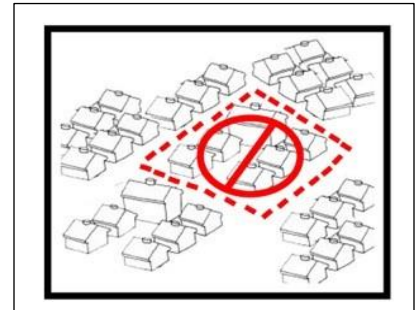
Race Relations Today...and Yesterday... and Tomorrow?

Tuesday, April 6, 7:00-8:30 pm

All are invited to join the Outreach Committee to begin a church-wide discussion of race relations in our country, our community, and our church. The Outreach Committee believes it is important to offer a forum to our congregation for open dialogue and discussion about the social injustices of racism and the state of race relations today.

While we hope to explore a number of social justice issues over time, we all know of the discussion and debate that has emerged recently around race relations and racism in our lives. Is racism real? Is it overstated? Is it understated? What can history tell us? Do we need to do something? Or not? Our conversations may lead to actionable conclusions. Or they may not. The Outreach Committee thought we should just come off the sidelines and begin talking a bit.

To start us off, our own John Robbins has agreed to lead a zoom discussion on Tuesday evening, **April 6, 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm**. John is known to be one of our great storytellers and will share much history of practices such as “redlining” in Westerville, based on his knowledge of actual events from our church’s rich history. *Redlining* refers to the practice of limiting or refusing loans and other services to people who lived in a certain geographic area, sometimes outlined on a map with a red line. Often the people living in those areas were minorities.



All are invited to sit at John’s knee for this special evening via Zoom. John’s stories and presentation will lead to questions, answers, and general discussion, sure to enlighten us all. You may join using this Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86943061939?pwd=bzBULzViZ1dXNmhicWt1SzU0a1puZz09>

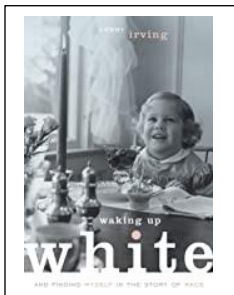
Meeting ID: 869 4306 1939 Passcode: 899816



Exploring More about Racism

As another way to explore the issue of racism, you are invited to suggest books, or movies, you have read/watched that helped deepen your understanding of racism and how it affects us all. Below are some suggested books from our members. (The summaries were gleaned from Amazon.) Please do share other titles that might expand our members' understanding of how we can help reduce—or unwittingly contribute to—racism. Email or mail them to Linda Barr.

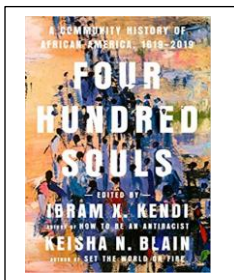
From Jane McMeekin:



Waking Up White by Debby Irving

For twenty-five years, Debby Irving sensed inexplicable racial tensions in her personal and professional relationships. As a colleague and neighbor, she worried about offending people she dearly wanted to befriend. As an arts administrator, she didn't understand why her diversity efforts lacked traction. As a teacher, she found her best efforts to reach out to students and families of color left her wondering what she was missing. Then, in 2009, one "aha!" moment launched an adventure of discovery and insight that drastically shifted her worldview and upended her life plan. In *Waking Up White*, Irving tells her often cringe-worthy story with such openness that readers will turn every page

From Mary Lee Jones:

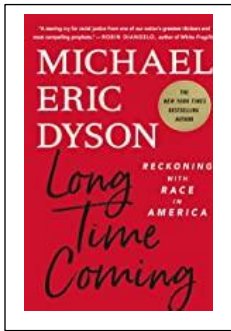


Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America—1619-2019 by Ibram X. Kendi

Four Hundred Souls is a unique one-volume “community” history of African Americans. The editors, Ibram X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain, have assembled brilliant writers, each of whom takes on a five-year period of that four-hundred-year span. The writers explore their periods through a variety of techniques: historical essays, short stories, personal vignettes, and fiery polemics. They approach history from various perspectives: through the eyes of towering historical icons or the untold stories of ordinary people; through places, laws, and objects. While themes of resistance and struggle, of hope and reinvention, course through the book, this collection of diverse pieces from ninety different minds, reflecting ninety different perspectives, fundamentally deconstructs the idea that Africans in America are a monolith—instead it unlocks the startling range of experiences and ideas that have always existed within the community of Blackness.

This is a history that illuminates our past and gives us new ways of thinking about our future, written by the most vital and essential voices of our present.

Also from Mary Lee:

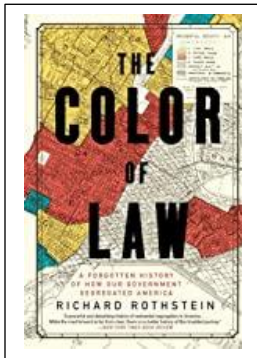


A Long Time Coming: Reckoning with Race in America

by **Michael Eric Dyson**

A Long Time Coming grapples with the cultural and social forces that have left our nation in the brutal crucible of race. In five beautifully argued chapters—each addressed to a black martyr, from Breonna Taylor to Rev.

Clementa Pinckney-Dyson, trace the genealogy of anti-blackness from the slave ship to the street corner where George Floyd lost his life—and where America gained its will to confront the ugly truth of systemic racism. Ending with a poignant plea for hope, Dyson’s exciting new book points the way to social redemption. *Long Time Coming* is a necessary guide to help America finally reckon with race.



The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our

Government Segregated America by **Richard Rothstein**

Widely heralded as a “masterful” (*Washington Post*) and “essential” (*Slate*) history of the modern American metropolis, Richard Rothstein’s *The Color of Law* offers “the most forceful argument ever published on how federal, state, and local governments gave rise to and reinforced neighborhood segregation” (William Julius Wilson). Exploding the myth of de facto segregation arising from

private prejudice or the unintended consequences of economic forces, Rothstein describes how the American government systematically imposed residential segregation: with undisguised racial zoning; public housing that purposefully segregated previously mixed communities; subsidies for builders to create whites-only suburbs; tax exemptions for institutions that enforced segregation; and support for violent resistance to African Americans in white neighborhoods. A groundbreaking, “virtually indispensable” study that has already transformed our understanding of twentieth-century urban history (*Chicago Daily Observer*), *The Color of Law* forces us to face the obligation to remedy our unconstitutional past.

What's in Your Future?

If you are a high school senior or a matriculating college student in a bachelor degree, associate degree, or similar level of education, and a member of our church, it is time to think about applying for a First Presbyterian Church of Westerville education scholarship.

Scholarship applications are available by contacting Pastor Mark. Applications are due on **Monday, May 24**, and the scholarships will be awarded on Sunday, July 11.



To be considered for a 2021 scholarship, you must submit all of the following requirements to the Scholarship Committee, c/o the church, by May 24:

- A fully completed application form
- Two letters of recommendation, one academic and one personal/character
- A copy of your recent grade transcript

Incomplete applications will not be considered. An application for a scholarship may be submitted every year you are a student, but a maximum of two annual scholarships will be awarded per applicant.

We encourage all who are considering post high school education to take advantage of the church's scholarship program. For further information about the program and to be sent an application form, contact Mark Gauen at pastormark@fpcw.us.

Name and Address Directory Update

The Deacons will be reaching out to our members to ensure we have the most current information for the name and address directory. With the ongoing restrictions for Covid-19, we will not be doing a picture directory at this time. Please be ready to provide/update the following information:

- Name - including all family members
- Address
- Email address - you may provide one for each member as desired, or just one for the family
- Phone - please advise if you are giving home or cell phone, and update if you have discontinued previous numbers (some have chosen to only have cell phone). Also advise if it is an unlisted number.
- Birthday for each family member - just month and day if preferred (birth year for children would be helpful)

Our goal is to have all updated information completed by April and produce a hard copy directory sometime in late spring/early summer.

Sunday School



We are providing a virtual Sunday school program for the children via YouTube at 5pm on Sunday evenings. Please join us for fun and a lesson. This month we will be introducing a new friend, Aelia, who will help in the fun.

Scrabble Fun

Someone very good at Scrabble figured these out:

When you rearrange THE EYES, you get THEY SEE.

THE MORSE CODE becomes HERE COME DOTS.

DORMITORY becomes DIRTY ROOM.

ASTRONOMER becomes MOON STARER.

SLOT MACHINES becomes CASH LOST IN ME.

THE EARTHQUAKES becomes THAT QUEER SHAKE.

ELEVEN PLUS TWO becomes TWELVE PLUS ONE.

And last but certainly not least:

PRESBYTERIAN becomes BEST IN PRAYER!

(original source unknown; forwarded through a long series of emails)

Event Update

Still on hold:

Backpack Bounty
Manna Café
Vegetarian Dining Group



Reaching Out to Refugees

We're back in contact with the Community Refugee and Immigration Services (CRIS) and may soon know when we can help a refugee family get settled in Columbus. You are welcome to attend a Zoom planning meeting on April 6 at 3:00 p.m. Please let Linda Barr know if you'd like to participate.

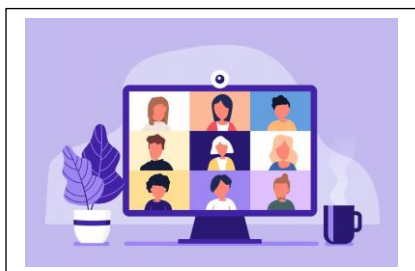
Dine Out/In with Nine: Friday, April 9, 7:00 pm

You are invited to the Dine Out/In Zoom church event on Friday, April 9, at 7:00 pm. We each handle our own food by picking up or getting delivery from our favorite restaurant OR by making our own dinner at home. If you want to be notified of the Zoom link for this wonderful fellowship time, please email or call Bob Place or Jim Hines. Join us on Zoom at any time from 7 to 8:30 and leave when you need to. It is so good to see friends there. If you have not tried us before, please join us this time.

Zooming is easy – at 7:00 pm on April 9, 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 need one. You can also attend a Zoom meeting using a smart phone.

Ladies Afternoon/Night on Zoom

Monday, April 5, 2:30 pm, and Tuesday, April 20, 7:00 pm



Now the ladies of the church have two opportunities to get together—despite the pandemic. You are welcome to attend both!

Please let Diana Westfall know that you are interested. On the day of the meeting or before, she will send you a link so you can join in via Zoom.

Another Perspective

The following was written by Rev. Francis Grimke, pastor of the Fifteenth Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C.:

“Another thing that has impressed me, in connection with this epidemic, is the fact that conditions may arise in a community which justify the extraordinary exercise of powers that would not be tolerated under ordinary circumstances. This extraordinary exercise of power was resorted to by the Commissioners in closing up the theaters, schools, churches, in forbidding all gatherings of any considerable number of people indoors and outdoors, and in restricting the numbers who should be present even at funerals. . . . There has been considerable grumbling, I know, on the part of some, particularly in regard to the closing of the churches. It seems to me, however, in a matter like this it is always wise to submit to such restrictions for the time being. . . . The fact that the churches were places of religious gathering, and the others not, would not affect in the least the health question involved. If avoiding crowds lessens the danger of being infected, it was wise to take the precaution and not needlessly run in danger, and expect God to protect us. And so, anxious as I have been to resume work, I have waited patiently until the order was lifted. I started to worry at first, as it seemed to upset all of our plans for the fall work; but I soon recovered my composure. I said to myself, Why worry? God knows what He is doing. His work isn't going to suffer. It will rather be a help to it in the end. Out of it, I believe, great good is coming. All the churches, as well as the community at large, are going to be the stronger and better for this season of distress through which we have been passing.”

Rev. Grimke wrote this in 1918, during to the Spanish Flu epidemic. Grimke also wrote this in 1918:

“During these terrible weeks, while the epidemic raged, God has been trying in a very pronouncedly conspicuously and vigorous way, to beat a little sense into the white man's head; has been trying to show him the folly of the empty conceit of his vaunted race superiority, by dealing with him just as he dealt with the peoples of darker hue.”

These 100-year-old insights were shared by Dr. John Witvliet, professor of Church History at Calvin Theological Seminary.



ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

Activity	When	Where	What
<p>The Sunday Adult Class (Adult Seminar)</p>	<p>Mondays 4:00-5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Zoom Meetings -If interested contact Tom Jonard</p>	<p>This class, now meeting on Monday afternoons, is reading <i>Grounded</i> by Diana Butler Bass, Phd in religion. She is a columnist for the <i>Washington Post</i> and <i>NY Times</i>. As a follow up to her book <i>Christianity After Religion</i>, she writes in <i>Grounded</i> about the radical change in how people locate God in their created environment and practice faith in the global community. Contact Tom Jonard for the link.</p>
<p>Shelter-in-place Bible Studies</p>	<p>Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30 am Wednesdays, 7:00-8:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Zoom Meetings -If interested email Pastor Gauen at pastormark@fpcw.us</p>	<p>For the Season of Lent, we are exploring the “I Am” statements of Jesus in the Gospel of John. Statements such as “I am the Bread of Life” and “I am the Good Shepherd” help us to understand Jesus and our relationship to him.</p>
<p>4th Monday Discussion Group</p>	<p>4th Mondays, 7:30 – 9:00 pm</p>	<p>Zoom Meeting -If interested, email Pastor Gauen at pastormark@fpcw.us</p>	<p>This group meets monthly to discuss matters of faith and life. Our next gathering is on Monday, April 26.</p>
<p>Circle 4 Women</p>	<p>3rd Thursdays, 11:00 am</p>	<p>Zoom Meeting -If interested, email Pastor Gauen at pastormark@fpcw.us or call Elaine Foley.</p>	<p>Our Presbyterian Women’s group meets monthly for fellowship and Bible study. Led by Elaine Foley. Our next class will be on Thursday, April 15.</p>



Pastor's Page

"So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body." – I Corinthians

15:42-44

Dear Friends:

The other day someone reminded me that this will be the second Easter that we have celebrated under the pandemic lockdown—not that I needed reminding. It was a painful, but necessary decision to close down the church building last year, and it has been difficult for our church leadership as they struggled with the question of when to resume in-person worship many times over the past year. Each time the issue came up, the Session has opted for caution, not wanting to risk anyone's life and not wanting to put more stress on our health care system.

Now, as we approach our second Easter in lockdown, we are finally seeing the possibility of resuming in-person worship. The Session has seen what we all see—that people are getting vaccinated, and the Covid numbers are trending downward. The Session has formed a re-opening task force that is busy preparing for that reopening day. And the Session has committed to setting a date for reopening at the April 12 Session meeting. When that date will be has yet to be determined, but the elders feel that enough information will be available to make that call. And, of course, the dynamic uncertainties of the virus may cause the Session to reconsider any decision.

When we do get together, things won't be like they were, at least for a while longer. We will need to wear masks, we will need to socially distance, and we will need to change our worship format. We will also need to keep broadcasting our service for those who won't be able to join us yet. It will be awkward and for some, it might not feel like worship. It will all take some adaptability on all our parts, but then, we have had a year's worth of adapting—so we are good at it.

What it will be is worship: worship of the God who loved us so much he sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Easter is when we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus, but every Sunday, worship celebrates the Resurrection in one way or another. Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, tells his readers that the resurrected body will not be like our earthly body. It will be different, better, glorious. When we are finally able to resurrect our in-person worship services, we will find them to be different. I hope that we will find them to be better and glorious as well.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark L. Gauer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark