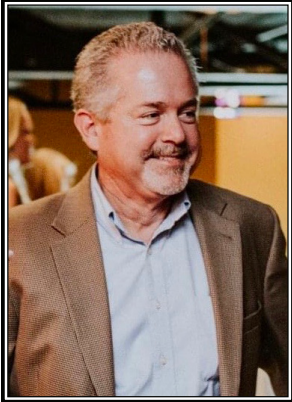


FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
San Luis Obispo

The Kirk

June 2021



The Pentecost season is perfect for getting our hearts and minds in the right place for reopening next month. You heard the story again a few weeks ago: Jesus ascends and leaves the Holy Spirit to empower and embolden his followers. They begin a gospel movement that transformed the world and that continues to bear fruit.

As we think about our first few weeks and months together, it is worth looking back at how Pentecost impacted those early believers. In Acts 2:42-47 we read this:

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Wow. Quite a beginning. They had all been through a crisis—the arrest and execution of Jesus—and were still reeling at the impossible news that he rose from the grave and wanted them to spread the word. How did they respond?

They gathered in fellowship and grew in their faith.

They prayed and shared meals together.

They celebrated the work their community was doing in Christ's name.

They shared everything they owned with people in need (uh-oh).

They managed to find joy and cause for celebration, even in the midst of crisis.

I wonder if this passage has something to teach us.

We've been through a long season of crisis: of a pandemic, of a divisive election and attempted coup, and of a new awareness of the ways racism stains this nation. It has been quite a year.

In July we will reopen, and you will find some things that are different and others that have remained the same. We've learned and continue to learn new ways of being the church of Jesus Christ, and we are going to put those in action when we can be together again. I wonder if the words Luke records in Acts might be a good guide for us. As we come together as this church, empowered and emboldened by the Holy Spirit, we can learn something from those early believers.

My hope is that as we gather, we will grow and pray and share meals together; that we will celebrate the work we have done, and the tasks that lie ahead; that we will give generously from our abundance; and that we will find joy in being together again.

In the first century, God blessed that fellowship by adding to their numbers. What if we are so gracious and joy-filled and Christ-reflecting that people come to us to find out why we are such loving people? What if people come to us because our hospitality meets them where they are, and our love gives them a glimpse of the way God loves them?

What if...?

I can't wait to see you next month.

I can't wait to see how the miracle of Pentecost gets renewed in each and every one of us in this congregation.

I can't wait for the first time someone says to me, "I just dropped in for a Sunday, but people were so welcoming that I had to come back."

The Pentecost season is the perfect time to prepare our hearts and clear our minds for the task ahead. I said this to our session last month, and now I will share it in public:

There is no one I'd rather walk these next exciting steps with than you. Here we go.

CHILDREN'S ED VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

We are so excited to announce we WILL be having one week of VBS this Summer. VBS is scheduled for the week of July 12 - July 16, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Limited space is available so if you know a child or have a child that might be interested, registration will open June 1 through the churches website—www.fpcslo.org. We cannot wait! If you are interested in volunteering or donating items or dollars, watch for details. You can let Jen know anytime or watch for a "Wish List" to come out

in June. There will also be a workday on July 11 to prep, to decorate, and to make sure our spaces are ready to welcome campers back. We also look forward to our other programs starting in the fall.

JULY 12 -16 FOR KIDS AGES 4-5 TH GRADE
9 A.M. - 12 P.M. REGISTER AT FPCSLO.ORG

The kids and their families received a Pentecost devotion and activity ideas as well as some suggestions for family time in the month of May. It has been fun staying connected in new ways, but we cannot wait to actually be in the same space again. Carefully, of course!



If you know anyone who is looking for part-time work with Children and Youth, send them our way. Jen can answer any questions and looks forward to having a Children's and Youth crew again.

Looking forward to summer and easing back into some things!
Children's Ed.

YOUTH

The Youth had an exciting Month of May. We decorated for the May Flower Initiative, added blue ribbons to honor Officer Benedetti and his family, and recorded Youth Sunday. If you missed it, you could watch from the Church webpage—www.fpcsl.org.

We are working on plans for the summer, figuring out what we can do—safely!

We continue to meet weekly and enjoy a meal together and time with scripture. And of course, just being goofy. Cannot have Youth Group without that!



We are excited to have the Youth space back and look forward to getting it set up and figured out. Watch for activities as they pop up. We look forward to inviting friends when we can and staying connected this summer. If you have projects or need help with something, please let us know. We would be glad to help.

Thank you for your continued support!

Youth Ed

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

To the following seniors (over 85) who have a birthday in June:

June 11 - Barbara (Lexie) Daily

June 15 – Jack Springer

June 20 - Vic Buccola

June 26 - Lark Carter

June 29 - Joe Barnett

To everyone else who celebrates a June birthday.

Our church records may be incomplete. If we have overlooked someone, please contact the church office.

by Gloria DeKleine

CONGREGATIONAL CARE CORNER

Please pray for our church family, especially

For Pastor **John D'Elia** as he guides our congregation;

For our **Elders** as they lead our congregation—especially in deciding when to gather for in-person worship, and when to open the church facilities for other events;

For the **Deacons** as they care for our church family;

For **Jen Rabenaldt** and others as they stay in touch with our children and youth;

For the Health Care workers and vaccine providers in our community;

For FPC SLO members, friends, and family who are undergoing treatments for various health issues;

For our church's seniors, especially those who are confined to their homes or care centers as things open to allow personal visits;

For **Robert Benitez**, as well as family and friends of **Carolyne Benitez**, who passed away in April;

For members, family and support personnel serving in the military;

And, for all of us as we serve God wherever He calls us.

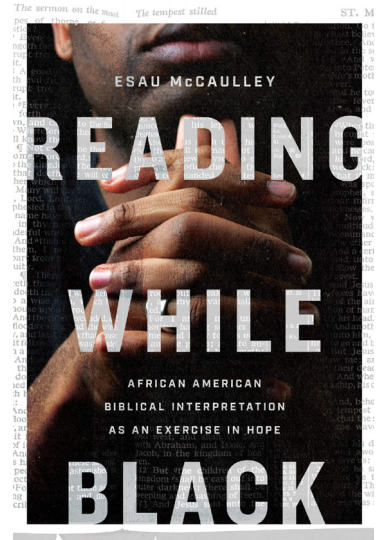
If you have a prayer concern, please call the Church Office at (805) 543-5451 or write me at gdeklin@calpoly.edu.

God bless us all,
Gloria DeKleine

LIBRARY REVIEW

Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope, by Esau McCaulley, is a book that was suggested by Pamalee Brady. It has been added to the library and is available for borrowing.

Reading While Black is a testament to the power and hope of Black biblical interpretation. At a time in which some within the African American community are questioning the place of the Christian faith in the struggle for justice, New Testament scholar McCaulley argues that reading scripture from the perspective of Black church tradition is invaluable for connecting with a rich faith history and addressing the urgent issues of our times. Ultimately, McCaulley calls the church to a dynamic theological engagement with scripture, in which Christians of diverse backgrounds dialogue with their own social location as well as the cultures of others. Reading While Black moves the conversation forward. (Review from Amazon)



Other books on race relations that have been added to the library in the past year include:

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson, 2015

Divided by Faith by Michael Emerson, 2001

Rediscipling the White Church: From Cheap Diversity to Solidarity by David Swanson, 2020

The Color of Compromise by Jemar Tisby, 2019

I'm Still Here: Black Dignity by Austin C. Brown, 2018

Understanding White Privilege, by Frances Kendall, is also in the library. All these books can be found on the book cart in the library.

FRONT PORCH

The staff of Front Porch are excited to have been able to open the facility during the past month, with restrictions of course! A limited number of students can come inside to the coffee house and study areas, but they need to leave after two hours to allow other students access. For over a year, the inside space has been empty. And even though the staff has reached out to students in many creative ways, nothing compares to the in-person contact. As students and staff are able to meet in person and to make connections, the buzz inside Front Porch is powerful. It is a blessing that, as all staff are vaccinated and as many students are, things are beginning to return to “almost normal.”

On the May 15, the staff presented their first “Virtual Open House.” It was a chance to show off the Front Porch, take a tour of the facilities, and hear from some students. It was nice to see some long-time FPCSLO supporters in the audience. A recording of the program, about one hour in length, can be accessed from the Front Porch website at frontporchslo.org. Check it out!

Live tours are now possible. So, if you are interested, please contact the Front Porch staff.

Susan Updegrove

Front Porch Chair

VBS WISHLIST

COMPASSION CAMP JULY 12-16

If you are able to donate any of the following items that would be great. Or, if it's easier to donate money - we can do the shopping. It would be great to have items by the first week of July. Contact Jen (jen@fpcslo.org-or-805-543-5451) to coordinate. Thank you for your support!

River rocks - 2” to 3”

Large piece of plywood or similar - 4' X 8' (ish)

Wooden Dowels - 3 @ 36” , 6 @ 24” , 18 @ 12”

Fabric Markers - all colors

Thank You!

Children's Ed

GOD of COMPASSION,

EVERYONE WE MEET

IS A NEIGHBOR.

teach US TODAY

—HOW WE CAN—

SHOW
COMPASSION

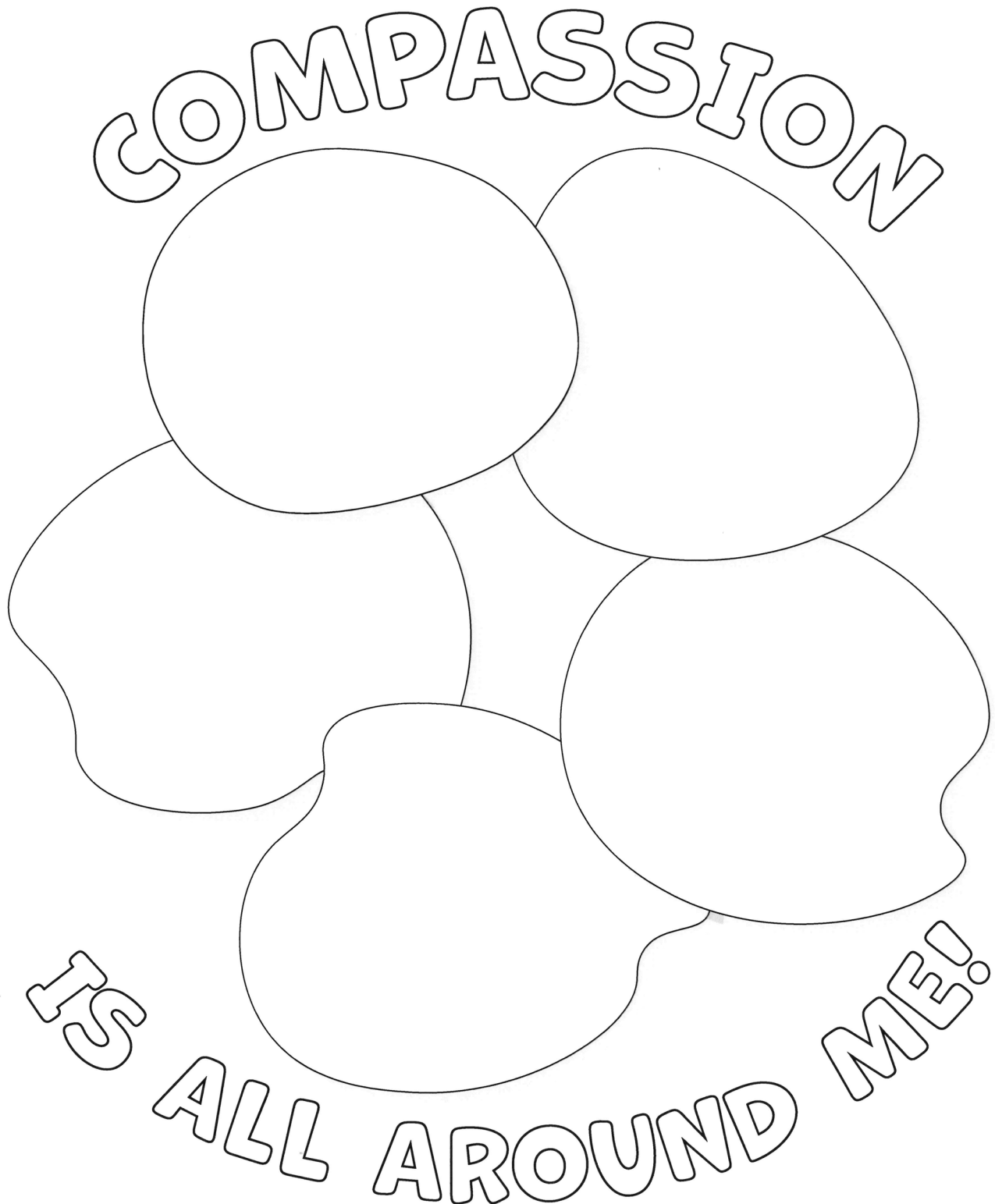
to OUR
NEIGHBORS

EVEN WHEN WE DO NOT LIVE IN THE SAME NEIGHBORHOOD.

AMEN.

COMPASSION IS ALL AROUND ME

Use this activity page to help you and your little ones reflect on your day and how compassion was all around you. **Compassion is “I see your hurt, I feel your hurt, I help ease your hurt.”** Near the end of the day, wonder together about when you felt or showed compassion while at home, during playtime, or with others. Talk about how it felt to give, see, or receive compassion. Place a sticker, draw a picture, or write your thoughts in one shape each day and, at the end of five days, reflect on how compassion was all around you.





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