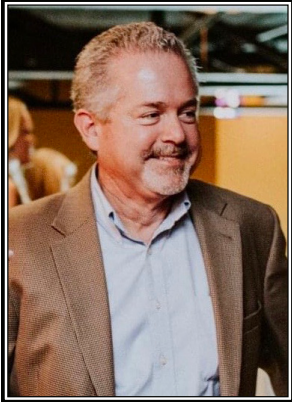


**FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**  
*San Luis Obispo*

*The Kirk*  
August 2020



Grace and peace to you as we continue in this new journey of finding connection and closeness, in a world where distance and separation are required. You are all a part of how we're finding a new way to be the church of Jesus Christ, and I'm glad to be traveling with you.

Among the many things I love about being back at First Pres SLO is seeing words from the prophet Micah on the message board when I drive up Marsh Street.

The whole passage actually includes a few verses of setup:

6 With what shall I come before the LORD  
and bow down before the exalted God?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
with calves a year old?  
7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with ten thousand rivers of olive oil?  
Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?  
8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.  
And what does the LORD require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy  
and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:6-8)

In other words, God is far more impressed with the ways our faith leads us to treat other people, than with how extravagantly we can follow rules and worship traditions. That should be encouraging, because...

There's no denying that the Bible can be a confusing book sometimes.

The stories are set in a different time and culture. The values don't always match up with ours. Sometimes there are events and practices that offend us, which makes it hard to know where we can find teaching in the Bible that matters for us—that applies to our lives.

But there are a handful of passages in the Bible that give some pretty clear instruction on how our lives are supposed to be—what they're supposed to look like—what we're supposed to be doing.

Sometimes we get so caught up in trying to hear God's voice or wait for some kind of sign from him about our lives. Or when that doesn't happen we can think that we're in the clear, that we're off the hook somehow until God can muster up enough volume to say something out loud.

Well, while we're waiting for lightning bolts and stone tablets, there are a few passages of Scripture that tell us pretty clearly what to do in the meantime. One of them is right out there on our message board.

'And what does the Lord require of you? To do justice and love mercy and walk humbly with our God.'

That one is so clear that we often forget it's even in the Bible.

It's not twelve plagues  
or Ten Commandments  
or even seven woes.

It's three things—three things that sum up what God wants from us.

Three things that define what God's call is on our lives.

We're called to do justice: working to make sure our systems are fair and that everyone has everything they're entitled to.

We're called to love mercy: making sure we're prepared in our own lives to give people more than they deserve. (Hint: we do this because God has already done it for us.)

We're called to walk humbly with God: remembering who we are and whose we are.

That's our call—our assignments as followers of Jesus Christ.

Richard Mouw is a Christian philosopher and the former president of the seminary I attended. Years ago he wrote a little book titled 'Called to Holy Worldliness', about our responsibility to engage the world around us in faith. Here's part of what he wrote:

'We must carry out this assignment with the zeal and spirit of self-sacrifice that have been typical of missionaries. For those who have been willing to follow through on their Christian commitment, no matter what the cost, the goal has never been simply success or personal happiness or worldly acclaim.

The goal has been that of obedience itself, in the knowledge that the God who gives the call to act

obediently is also the one who sent his own son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.'

The goal for us—even when it seems too hard for us to do—the goal for us is that obedience. The call on each of our lives is to do justice, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God, and (while we're at it) to be fishers of all people.

That's a tall order, but with God's help it can be the measure for everything we do individually and as a community of faith. Jesus is calling—all that's left is for us to answer.

We're going to talk more about this over the next few months. Stay tuned, and stay safe and healthy.

Pastor John

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## THANK YOU FROM ALLEN AND PEGGY ESTES

Many thanks to our wonderful church family! We received many meals, cards, visits, phone calls and consistent prayer while we have mourned the loss of our son. We felt Christ's love as never before, which has been helpful in mending our spirits. Thank you all for your care of us and truly wrapping us in His love.

Peggy

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## PEACE MAKING & SOCIAL JUSTICE

There have been many protests against racism in the past weeks. To help us better understand the issues, we recommend the article Dismantling Structural Racism, found on the Presbyterian Church (USA) website, to be very informative and helpful. Just go to:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/racism/>

# CHILDREN'S ED

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

We handed out the July VBS Kits and were overwhelmed with the response. We actually had to turn people away because we ran out. That was really hard to do, but we are grateful that this new way of doing VBS is working. We will host one more kit pick up on August 10, in the Church parking lot, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. August's theme will be "God's Great Big Beautiful World" We have enjoyed reaching out to the community in this way and pray that this small gesture touches the lives of the children - and their families. We will be sharing as many VBS experiences as we can at the end of the Summer. Watch for "the share" in worship.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for our kids, families, and the Children's Ed Committee!



# YOUTH

Things have been busy with the Youth this past month! We are continuing to enjoy doing Youth Group on Zoom every Sunday at 7 p.m. It has been a joy to catch up and be silly before we start lesson. We continue to have two Minecraft Nights, and have added a Second Minecraft Realm for the Youth. Both Youth Group and Minecraft Night are open to all youth, so please let us know if you would like to join! My email is [stephanie@fpcsl.org](mailto:stephanie@fpcsl.org).

## Youth Schedule

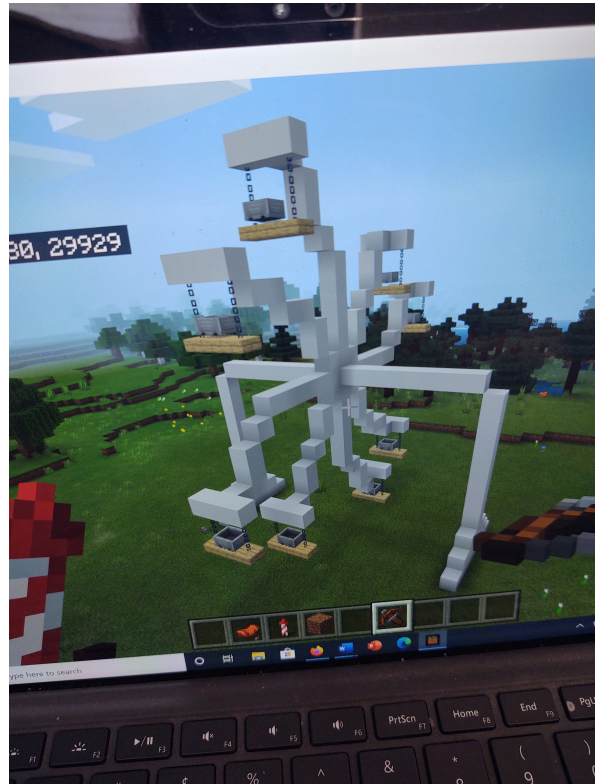
Minecraft Night: Wednesday at 5 p.m. and  
Saturday at 4 p.m.

Youth Group: Sunday at 7 p.m.

We look forward to continuing to adapt to our new normal, to make the Youth Program the best it can be.

Stephanie Vigil

Youth Intern



# CHRISTIAN ED COMMITTEE

Because we have so many wonderful resources in our Church Library - we would like to offer a way for you to check out books in a safe way. If you know of a book that you would like to borrow, please let Jen know. Jen will coordinate with you a time and day to pick up the book(s) in the Church parking lot. Audrey will be sharing suggestions for books dealing with current issues. You can reach Jen at ...  
jen@fpcsl.org - or - 805-543-5451. Enjoy!

## LIBRARY REVIEW

There has been an expression of interest on the topic of race relationships. This is a list of the books on race relations that are in the church library and are available for lending through contact with church staff. There are also six books that have been newly added and are also noted on this list. These books will be available when this Kirk is published.

# BOOK BROWSERS

Book Browsers is starting our 20-21 year of book discussions on Sept. 1. We will be meeting in Zoom meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 7 pm. These are the books we will be reading this year.  
Sept. The Giver of Stars by Mojo Moyes  
Oct. The Story of More by Hope Jahren  
Nov. Midnight in Chernobyl by A. Higginbotham  
Dec. The Other Einstein by Marie Benedict  
Jan. Dreaming in French by Alice Kaplan  
Feb. Say Nothing by Patrick Radden Keefe  
Mar. The Daughter's Tale by Armando Correa  
Apr. That Churchill Woman by Stephanie Barron  
May Water From My Heart by Charles Martin

Questions: Please contact Diane Shervem at dshervem@charter.net or 805-459-9844.

Author	Title	Year
Baptist, Edward	Half Has Never Been Told, The	2014
Berrigan, Philip	No More Strangers	1965
Blackmon, Douglas	Slavery By Another Name	2008
Brown, Austin C.	I'm Still Here: Black Dignity *	2018
Cannon, Katie G	Katie's Canon	1995
Emerson, Michael	Divided by Faith *	2001
Guglielmo, Thomas	White On Arrival	2003
Kendall, Frances	Understanding White Privilege	2006
King, Martin Luther Jr.	Letter From Birmingham City Jail	1963
Linthicum, Robert	Transforming Power: Biblical Strategies for Making a Difference*	2003
McNeil, Brenda & Richardson, Rick	Heart of Racial Justice, The	2004
Parks, Rosa with Reed, G	Quiet Change	1994
Perkins, Spencer & Rice, Chris	More Than Equals	2000
Rice, Chris	Grace Matters *	2002
Stevenson, Bryan	Just Mercy *	2015
Swanson, David	Rediscipling the White Church: From Cheap Diversity to Solidarity*	2020
Thurmond, Howard	Luminous Darkness, The	1965
Tisby, Jemar	Color of Compromise, The *	2019
Townes, Emilie (Ed.)	Troubling in my Soul, A	1993
van der Bent, Ans J.	Breaking Down the Walls	1986
asterisks * - new additions to library	Dewey Decimal # 305.8	

# CONGREGATIONAL CARE CORNER

Please pray for our church family during this difficult pandemic, especially

For **Pastor John D'Elia** as he serves as our pastor,

For our **Elders** as they lead us during this challenging time,

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 care givers in our community,

For those people worried about their jobs and businesses,

For 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 during this time of isolation,

For members & family & support personnel serving in the military,

For the families and friends of **Beverly Jamgs, Nobuko Ohgi, Barbara Frank, David Bauer, John Estes and Ben McRee** who passed away during the last two months,

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.

by Gloria DeKleine

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

To the following seniors (over 85) who have birthdays in August:

John Stechman – August 1

Ruth Bostrom – August 24

**And to everyone else with an August birthday!**

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

by Gloria J DeKleine

## ONLINE GIVING

Over 30 contributors to First Presbyterian Church San Luis Obispo are using online giving, either doing so via DONATE/GIVE NOW on the church website or the quick response code.

In June 2020, the online giving totaled over \$9,000.

THERE IS ANOTHER WAY TO USE ONLINE GIVING.

Introducing: Give + Church



You can get this free app from the APP Store or Play Store.

It is easy to set up just by selecting First Presbyterian Church after entering 93401. As with the other online giving methods, you can give once or set up recurring donations.

For full details go to the Frequently Asked Questions on the Church Website. Or, for more information contact Asst. Treasurer, Bert Townsend: 805-748-4380 or [churchtreasurer@fpcslo.org](mailto:churchtreasurer@fpcslo.org).

# ENDOWMENT

## CREATE A LASTING LEGACY

### FPCSLO ENDOWMENT FUND RECOVERED DURING THE SECOND QUARTER

All of us following the news and our nest eggs know the investment market took a nosedive during the first quarter. Likewise, there was a steady rebuilding during the second quarter. The church's endowment is no exception as the total recovered to about \$6,000 less than the January 1 value, including the new Marysue Wilson Chapman Bell Choir Fund.

Our Endowment Committee oversees the funds, always seeking to grow the endowment for the long term future benefit of First Pres SLO and its missions. The Endowment has indeed grown from \$392,728 in 1999 to \$664,642 at the end of June.

The total amount (or principal) of these gifts is invested in a balanced growth fund with the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation. Most years, a pre-determined percentage of the Fund's value is withdrawn. The money we allocate is made available for the diverse needs of our church, both unusual opportunities and regular expenses. In 2019, 4% or \$20,765 and for 2020, 4.5% or \$28,049 has been allocated from the ENDOWMENT FUND in accordance with the purposes of the original gifts. In total, \$269,815 has been allocated since 1999.

If you are currently doing tax or estate planning and/or feel led to include a gift to the First Presbyterian Church of San Luis Obispo in your financial or estate planning, please contact any member of Endowment Committee: Don Green, Jerry Kaml, Bert Townsend, Dorothy Truesdale, Roger Verity, or Virginia Walter (Chair).

You can now donate electronically by credit/debit card or fund transfer from your bank. Use the DONATE button on the church website, fpcslo.org or use the quick response code at the end of this article. See the introduction of the GIVE+ Church app in this issue.



Even a modest gift will make a difference.

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

This next Bible Study is very timely. "Into The Light ...Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament," by Lynn Miller, with ongoing lesson guides by Dee Kota.

Why Lament??? Why bother to lament....because it helps us communicate with God; broadens our prayer lives; connects us to the world and the God who loves it and us; helps us focus on the actual situations that lead us to lament; and is an opportunity to confess our faith in God whose promises are trustworthy.

We will have nine lessons to learn more about this process and all the blessings we will receive. Books are \$10.00 and are available through your Circle Contact person or call Dorothy 805-541-6779.

In 2021 the Presbyterian Women Churchwide Gathering will "REJOICE IN HOPE." The Gathering will be held on August 5-8 in St. Louis Missouri

A timely theme in our lives today. More information will be provided at a later date or at [www.presbyterianwomen.org/gathering](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/gathering).

Many stories exist about the troubles in our homeland. Most of our troubles have been blown out of proportion on some issues. The major problem is the Coronavirus, which keeps us all apart to be able to address some of the issues, however, we know God is in charge of it all.

We can help with our obedience - Hebrews 6: 19 says "We have this HOPE, as an anchor for the soul firm

and secure,” hope comes to us through our Lord Jesus and we can use our faith in this and open our hearts to all people as we get back to our ‘normal’? or ‘regular’ lives.

This all reminds me of two articles in the September/October 2019 issue of the PW Horizons magazine. One was written by a Native American at their PW National Gathering with the theme. "WE HAVE THIS HOPE." The focus is on Jesus as our anchor and supporting one another is restorative and inspiring. Our own Kayenta Navajo Rev. Norma McCabe and her daughter were workshop leaders.

The other article was written by an African American woman on “ Decentralizing Whiteness in a Multiracial Society.” This article is four pages long, but it is an eye-opener on so many issues that we as white people have in our relationships to the African American. One paragraph on ‘Whiteness and the Mainstream’ reads “To be white means to have experiences of centrality, being thought of as a standard.

Engaging the topic of race has given rise to many terms over the years —diversity, initiatives, inclusion, anti-racism — and other terms. The term racial equality speaks to these ideas and also the belief that whiteness should not be the sole norm.” This article was written by Stephanie M. Patterson.

If anyone would like a copy of the entire article, I will be happy to copy it and send it to you.

Dorothy Truesdale,  
Moderator

# PROPERTY

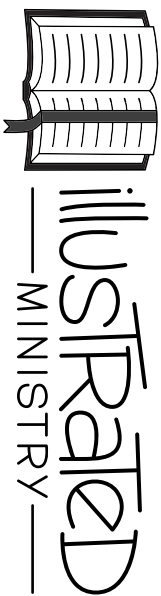
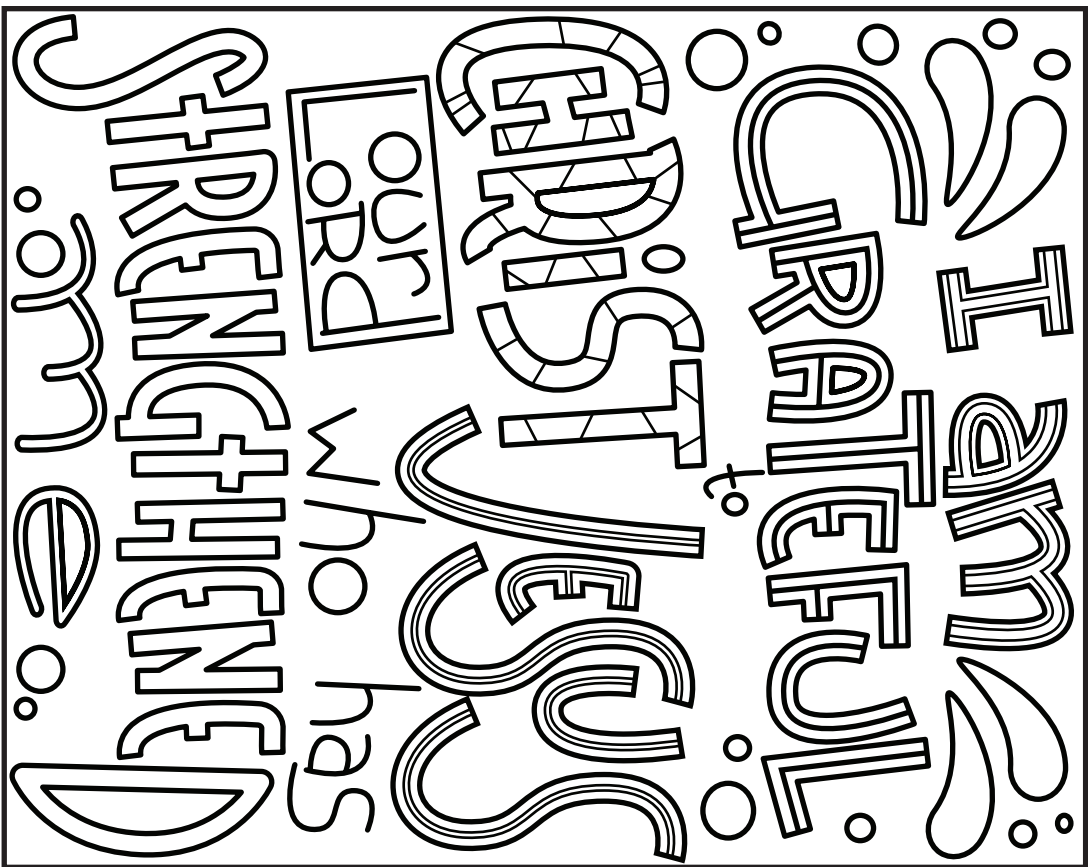
Hart Bldg. Drains Repaired. The 92 yr old downspouts on Hart Bldg were replaced to stem the flow of rainwater into the offices. Structural supports, downspouts and leader-heads installed. Thanks to all the workers for protecting our wonderful Hart!

Eric Griffith & Tim Smith





# COLOR IN THE WORDS



Suggested for use on September 15, 2019 based on the RCL.  
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# CHILDREN'S WORSHIP • BULLETIN

Activities based on Psalm 14, 1 Timothy 1:12-17, Luke 15:1-10.





# DRAW IT

In Paul's letter to Philemon, he asks Philemon to do something hard - show love in a situation that was difficult to show love. Draw a picture of where you could show love, even if it's hard.

# UNSCRAMBLE IT

Who and what does the Psalmist say God is for the poor? Hint: It's a form of protection and strength! Unscramble the words to find out!

--- E H T --- D O R L S I R H T I E ---

--- G U F E E R ---

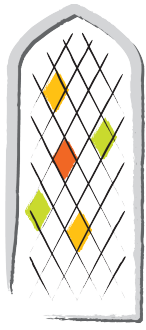
# DOODLE AREA

Draw someone you want to pray for.

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JULY SESSION MEETING

- Welcomed Rev. John D'Elia as the Interim Pastor.
- Planned series of Coffee Gatherings via Zoom.
- Restructured the office staff for maximum efficiency.
- Made tentative plans for occasional outdoor services.
- Considered the evolving question of when to reopen.

This is your church session in action!  
For more details please contact the church office.



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