

July 5 Volume 22, Issue 12

First Presbyterian Church

FOCUS

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

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1st Sunday
July

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Reflections

“Growth, Stress, and Conflict”

³⁴ ‘Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. . .
³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Matthew 10:34, 37-39

Jesus’ words, above, are one of the more difficult and uncomfortable teachings for us, at least I hope it is. I become worried when people see this as justification for broken relationships and cutting themselves off from loved ones. The message is about the challenge of change that comes as a result of growth in our relationship with Christ. It was founded on the wisdom of how people actually practice healing and healthy development in relationships.

When we are stuck in relationship patterns, particularly in unhealthy systems, our issues are within ourselves, as well as, in the relationship itself. This is similar to the metaphor of the iceberg, in that two-thirds of the iceberg is beneath the surface. In the same way, the tiny speck we see in our relationships with others is related to the giant plank in our own mind and behaviors. This is made even more challenging when dealing with large, systemic issues like injustice, poverty, and racism. Generally, we focus on the external. We try to identify “the problem” as being a group of bad people who do the bad things. Strangely enough, when we get rid of one set of bad people, another set pops up to take their place. The only way for growth and change is to ask, “What is within all of us that perpetuates these unhealthy relationships?” This is where putting Christ first, in all of our relationships, becomes our source of salvation. Only Jesus can lead us out of the “stuck” places in our lives. The biggest problem is that we have to listen to him.

So if you’re stuck in a broken relationship with a parent or child, with your friend or co-worker, with your community or political groups, you can only make sense of the relationship, and find healing, by putting Jesus first. Initially, this involves a process of confession. Confession is not mining for guilt or blame so that we can dismiss our faults. Confession is to state out loud our authentic and true perception of our problems. Guilt shouldn’t sabotage the practice of confession, because it is only when we have perception and understanding of ourselves that we find opportunities for growth. If we go directly to an emotional reaction of guilt and blame, we make growth impossible. We beat ourselves up and repeat the same mistakes, over and over again.

Confession involves identifying what is true within us. We benefit from unjust systems. We enjoy privileges and advantages that many do not receive. We are not always willing to see people in a “good light” because of various external traits. These are all true. In confession, Jesus leads us in a process of choosing what to work on today. Choose one and ask God to show you the process that will help your growth.

The challenge in Jesus’ teaching is this: do we love the status quo and the comfort of our present situation more than we love Jesus and his teachings. Being honest to Jesus is often hard, particularly when we would rather hide the truth. However, Jesus’ love is for us at all times. Take time to offer your prayers of confession regarding the relationships that are troubling you. Sometimes it helps to write down your prayer, your confession, regarding relationships that are upsetting to you.

The good news is that Jesus is more motivated to create healthy, happy relationships than we are. Christ will lead us from the sword of cutting through the unhealthy and damaging, to the joyful process of healing and wholeness.

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Coming up In Worship

07/05/2020 Communion

Sermon: "Faithfulness and Intelligence"

Theme: Our relationship with God and strength for serving does not lie in what others think of us, but in our knowledge of Jesus.

Purpose: We will learn to better draw our identity and strength from knowing Christ through healthy spiritual practices.

Scriptures: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30 Salvation is through believing in Christ, and through the gift of salvation through grace.
Romans 7:15-25 I do not do what I want, a struggle between will and the spirit of God.

Questions:

What causes us to see ourselves as Christ sees us rather than being focused on the opinions of others? What is the outcome of living our lives worried about what other people "like" about us? How do we maintain healthy balance between caring for the people around us and not being enmeshed in their feelings? What is the difference between sympathy and empathy, and does it really help to have our feelings determined by what other people feel?

07/08/2020 Midweek

Sermon: The Lamp of God's Word

Theme: The Word of God speaks out of love and compassion for us.

Purpose: We will choose to focus on the voice of God rather than our fear or anxiousness.

Scriptures: Psalm 119:105-112 Your word is a lamp to my feet.
Exodus 3:1-6 Moses and the burning bush.

Questions:

Where do we experience holiness or sacred space? How do we identify God's Word for our lives as opposed to other good philosophies or good ideas? How does God's Word have authority or special meaning in our lives over other instruction? What is the difference between receiving God's Word as having meaning and power for us and those who want to argue that God's Word is inerrant? How do we interpret God's Word for us without reducing it's meaning and purpose in our lives?

07/12/2020

Sermon: "The Way We Receive the Message"

Theme: We choose whether to hold onto our control and perceptions or we open our minds to the transforming power of God's love.

Purpose: We will examine our reluctance to bear fruit but the tremendous abundance that comes as we release our pride and fears.

Scriptures: Romans 8:1-11 There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 The crowds come to hear Jesus speak parables of the various soils and what seeds take root.

Questions:

What makes the difference between receiving Jesus' instruction with enthusiasm and bearing fruit in our lives? What is the fruit that Jesus wants to see grow within us? Why are we fearful and resistant to being transformed by the Spirit of God? What keeps us stuck in our places of unforgiveness and bitterness? Why do we blame others for our lack of spiritual growth and failed relationships? How can we move forward as individuals and within our community in growing in love and peace?

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Coming up In Worship (continued)

07/19/2020

Sermon: "The Wheat and the Tares"

Theme: Community means that we are among people who do not necessarily share our maturity, faith, or perspective, but it is up to God to accomplish justice.

Purpose: We will learn to be less anxious about experiencing people who are different from ourselves and challenges to our perspectives and beliefs.

Scriptures: Romans 8:12-25 We have a spirit of adoption so that we may cry, "Abba, Father!" We do not consider the present sufferings as something that will overwhelm.
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 Parable of the wheat and the tares.

Questions:

How should we respond to people who we experience as being toxic or destructive? How should we behave towards people whose faith is in opposition to our own? What is our responsibility in the way we treat people who do not like to be around? What does it mean that God has caused "good" and "evil" to coexist? What does it mean to have a relationship of closeness with God that frees us from fear? How does a strong, mature, and confident relationship with God change the way we relate to people who we dislike?

07/22/2020 Midweek

Sermon: "The Knowledge of God gives us Strength"

Theme: The knowledge of God gives us the strength to be less anxious and less reactive in the relationships we face in the world.

Purpose: We will learn to draw strength from knowing God and to learn the power of silence in difficult times.

Scriptures: Psalm 139:13-18 You formed my inward parts, I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Matthew 12:15-21 Jesus the chosen servant, whom Isaiah foretold as being humble and gentle.

Questions:

How do we learn to keep silence in the midst of conflicts and difficult relationships? What is the value of holding our tongues when there are problem relationships? How do we draw wisdom and strength from our relationship with God to face times of turmoil and hostility? What is the difference between maintaining a non-violent silence, and cutting off communication? How do we develop the strength, maturity, and confidence to practice healthy silence?

07/26/2020

Sermon: "The Spirit Helps Us in Our Weakness"

Theme: The power of faith and knowledge of God is far greater than the things that we perceive to be threats.

Purpose: We will learn how to draw strength from our confidence in God so that we may be healthy in our relationships.

Scriptures: Romans 8:26-39 The Spirit helps us in our weakness because we do not know how to pray, those whom he foreknew he predestined to be children of God.
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 Parables of the Mustard seed, the pearl of great price, and the good and bad fish.

Questions:

What is the power that can be found in our faith? In what ways does our faith do things that are much bigger than our own capability or power? What is meant by a "Mustard seed" faith? What is the confidence in knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus? How does that translate into healthier relationships? How do we focus on what is truly important and will bear fruit in our lives rather than being distracted into meaningless dramas?

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Information @ Church

Thank you -
Dave Weber & John Neville

Sustain Fond du Lac has a goal of encouraging residents and businesses/organizations to join in making Fond du Lac an oxygen oasis for future generations by planting 2,020 trees in the year 2020. ([2020 Trees — Sustain Fond du Lac](#))

Ten trees were planted, this summer, on the property of First Presbyterian Church by Dave Weber and John Neville. Dave and John always take great care of our property and their work continues during the pandemic shut-down.

Thank you for making the church grounds look as beautiful as our building.



Photo by Dianne Weber

Congratulation to
Our New Church Officers

Elders

Class of 2023 Mary Bacon
Jim Dassow
Don Vahlsing
Class of 2022 Debbie Cooley
Brian Conran

Deacons

Class of 2023 Jolene Schry -
(2nd Term)
Carol Smith
Lew Smith

Nominating Committee

Pedro Arellano
Linda Dorn
Carol Wetzel
Kim Braatz

We are blessed to have you as
officers of First Presbyterian
Church.

July 8 - Women in Faith
6:30pm-7:30pm



Trivia Night

Join us on Wednesday, July 8th at
for fellowship, fun and laughs. On
the agenda for the evening is Triv-
ia Night. Come and share what you
know and maybe you will learn
something new! Everyone is
welcome.

Let me know if you have any
suggestions for future meetings.

Join Zoom Meeting
Topic: Women in Faith
Time: July 8, 2020 06:30 PM Cen-
tral Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting
[https://us02web.zoom.us/
j/82290202046?
pwd=YzhFSzlhYWtqNkxBbVBGZm
IsSXFHdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82290202046?pwd=YzhFSzlhYWtqNkxBbVBGZmIsSXFHdz09)
Meeting ID: 822 9020 2046
Password: 070973
One tap mobile
+13126266799,82290202046#,,1
#,070973# US (Chicago)
Dial by your location
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
Meeting ID: 822 9020 2046
Password: 070973

July 22 - Seize the Moment: Learn to Recycle Right



This summer you may be one of the households spending more time at home, than usual. Have you been inspired to sort, discard, and tidy? Do you sometimes have questions about where to go with things you no longer want? This time at home may be a good time to seize the moment and check that you are recycling right.

Join us on Wednesday, July 22, via ZOOM, to update your recycling skills. Learn a bit of how we went from a state with more than 800 landfills, to citizens becoming active in starting recycling programs, to co-mingled recyclables being picked up at the curb, going who knows where. Learn the dos and don'ts of recycling. Consider that this time calls for us to be in better stewards of the resources we purchase, or maybe, refuse to purchase.

In preparation for the Recycle Right presentation on July 22, an opportunity and invitation is extended from UW Oshkosh Sustainability. You can sign up via Eventbrite. You will receive a link to view the 2019 film "The Story of Plastic". It is a film about what to do about the abundant use of, and contamination from, plastic that is of concern for the health and sustainability of people and all of the planet.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/591229148189777/>

On the evening of July 15, a discussion will take place via Zoom. The panelists include a Chemistry alum who is working on indefinitely recyclable plastic, and a College of Business marketing professor who looks at sustainability and consumer choice.

For more information contact Carol Smith at 920.924.6034.



Please click [here](#) to learn more about the new indefinitely recyclable plastic.

ZOOM Information

Seize the Moment:
Learn to Recycle Right

Wednesday
July 22
6:30pm

Topic: Seize the Moment: Learn to Recycle Right
Time: Jul 22, 2020 06:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87466682378>
pwd=RVozZ2tiUUNSUnj5WkJyeHpwa25hdz09

Meeting ID: 874 6668 2378
Password: 187948

Dial by your location
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 874 6668 2378
Password: 187948
Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kcGqWTgr0h>

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

July 9 - Ruby's Pantry



DRIVE-THRU DISTRIBUTION

- Food distribution will take place at **GRACE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**. Please enter on the **EAST** side.
- Pre-registration is **NOT** available. If you have a certificate, print it and bring it with you.
- Only two people per vehicle - they must be receiving food shares (no other family or friends)
- Trunk must be empty
- One pre-bagged food-share per family
- Food will be loaded into trunks by our volunteers
- Do not bring boxes, bags, etc. for food

Where	Grace Christian
When	July 9
Open	4:30-6:00pm
Donation	\$20.00 Cash Only

If you have any questions contact Grace Christian Church at:
920.923.5292 or
rachelrudzik@gccfdl.org

July 27-30 - Virtual Synod School 2020



Synod School has moved online! It is a great opportunity. Click [here](#) to get more information and to register.



Electronic giving opportunities are available at:

www.fdlpresbyterian.org/giving.



Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Every Week

Midweek Podcast



Pastor Jack continues to reach out to us via Wednesday Podcasts. You can find the link to our podcast on our website:

www.fdlpresbyterian.org
under Church News.

Previously aired podcasts can be found under Pastor Jack's Blog and Podcasts.

You are invited to email pictures of your summer walks/drives in the wilderness to be used as a collage before our YouTube video.

Please email:
kbartelt@fdlpresbyterian.org

Thanks,
Kris, Worship Coordinator



Virtual Coffee Hour

A Zoom link will be emailed to you. It's a great time of conversation and fellowship. Won't you join us?



We worship "together" as we practice Social Distancing. Every Sunday, our service is on our YouTube channel. It is also provided in Podcast form.

We have a variety of liturgists, hymns, and special music. And, of course, a special message from Pastor Jack.

The links to our worship service and podcast are posted early Saturday evening on our website:
www.fdlpresbyterian.org

Our YouTube channel can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

We hope you'll be able to watch or listen to our services.



SUBSCRIBE



Our families are involved in variety of ways. They are mailed activity packets, emailed Discovery Time information/activities, etc. The children really enjoy Church School Check In, via Zoom.

These opportunities are have been very well received by everyone!

If you would like to be included in our Family Ministry please email Jennifer, Director of Christian Education:

jzander@fdlpresbyterian.org

TALKback



A Zoom link will be emailed to you.

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Summer Noon Organ Recital Series 2020

Thursdays 12:15-12:45pm



A free-will offering will be taken to support the continuation of the summer organ recitals. The offering also helps to develop programming, events and scholarships to encourage young people to become part of a new generation of organists.

Special Note:

Due to conditions related to COVID-19, this schedule is subject to change. Safety measures such as wearing of masks, social distancing, etc. will be announced at each site per its COVID-19 protocol.

Fond du Lac Area Organists Association

For more information, please contact:

Ken Hill	khill@lifeathope.org	920.539.3977
Kris Bartelt	kbartelt@fdlpresbyterian.org	920.238.5330
Pam Lane	planes@charter.net	920.979.9361

The complete schedule is on page 10.



Christians Serving, Learning and Loving



Thursdays 12:15-12:45pm

Summer Noon Organ Recital Series 2020

Date	Musician	Church
July 16	John Penkoske	St. Paul's Cathedral (Episcopal) 51 W. Division St., FDL 920. 921.3363 www.fdlcathedral.org/
July 23	Brent Nolte	The Former St. Patrick's Church 39 E. Follett St., FDL 920. 246.6471
July 30	Kris Bartelt	Hope Lutheran Church 260 Vincent St., FDL 920.922.5130 www.lifeathope.org
August 6	Rev. Thomas Lijewski - Organ Lindsey Dahlberg - Piano	Shepherd of the Hills Catholic Church W1562 County Road B Eden, WI 53019 920.477.3551 www.sothparish.org
August 13	David Hein	The Former St. Patrick's Church 39 E. Follett St., FDL 920.246.6471
August 20	Benjamin A. Stone	The Former St. Patrick's Church 39 E. Follett St., FDL 920.246.6471
August 27	Brent Erstad	Church of Our Saviour 363 S. Main St., FDL 920.922.0020 www.oursavioursfdl.org
September 3	Kenneth Hill	Hope Lutheran Church 260 Vincent St., FDL 920.922.5130 www.lifeathope.org

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

In June

Deacon

Debby Lorenz
daalorenz@gmail.com

Elder

Noah Baker
baker318@live.com

First Presbyterian Focus

Please send submissions for the Newsletter to:

fdloffice@fdlpresbyterian.org.

Family Resources

- Talking to Your Children about Coronavirus - View [here](#).
- What to Say To Your Child About the Coronavirus - and How To Cope As a Parent - View [here](#)
- Caring for Children - View [here](#)
- How to Talk to Your Kids About Coronavirus - View [here](#)
- Managing Fear and Anxiety During a Health Pandemic - View [here](#)

Prayers and Praises

Continued Prayers for:

Liam A.
Silas W.
Chastity G.
Jesse F.
Pat D.
Mike F.
Dan M.
Lincoln D.
Paige C.
Rhonda B.
John and Carol M.
Ruth S.
Jim and Peg D.
John M.
Kristina A.
Leisa W. - PCUSA
Arnold L.

Prayer Partners

Send prayer requests to
fdloffice@fdlpresbyterian.org

Rejoice: The gift of growing together in the body of Christ.

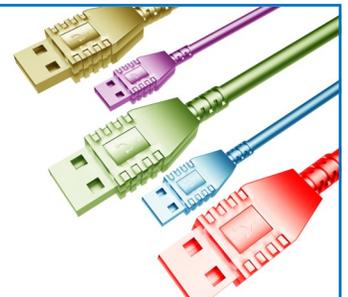
Electronic Ways to Keep in Touch

Website www.fdlpresbyterian.org

Facebook First Presbyterian Church, Fond du Lac

YouTube First Presbyterian Church Fond du Lac

Zoom There is more information on our website: www.fdlpresbyterian.org



Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

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jnjassow@gmail.com



Social Media and Website



First Presbyterian Church, Fond du Lac

www.fdlpresbyterian.org

first presbyterian church fond du lac