

March 7, Volume 23, Issue 05

First Presbyterian Church

FOCUS

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

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1st Sunday
March

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Reflections

Called to Freedom . . . But -

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. ¹⁴For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ¹⁵If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.
Galatians 5:13-15

There are times when we need to assert ourselves, to be direct in our communication and advocate for ourselves. However, if we are pushing for an ego booster, fighting to be first in line, or acting out of selfishness, then any gain we may receive will be harmful. We see this repeatedly when people have been "fighting" for their right to not be restrained by laws or directions that are intended to benefit the common good.

There are many times when individuals have needed to go to their employer and argue for a raise. They bring evidence of their pay in comparison to others, what they could receive if they worked elsewhere, and their continued work history. That type of self-advocacy does not diminish anyone and, when in a listening mode, the employee may learn what is missing from their performance to better insure a raise (or employment elsewhere), in the future. Or, they may make their point and see financial benefit. This is an example of advocating while maintaining a "love of neighbor."

Unfortunately, we are seeing a repeated pattern of selfish egos and personal attacks that lead to meaningless conflict. Several times I have heard people say, "I thought this was America!" as they push for an individual behavior without considering how their behavior will impact others. The Constitution begins, "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity..." The foundation of our country is not about being able to force your will on others, but being able to negotiate freedom in a way that benefits the common good, and *especially* to do no harm to one's neighbor.

To put it another way: wear the mask. Maintain the social distance. If you are not emotionally attached, or intellectually convinced, of the severity of the pandemic, then do it because you believe in Christ Jesus and what the bible teaches. Unless directed otherwise by a physician, get the vaccine when you are able. There is more than enough documentation to show that it is safe and effective.

It isn't about personal liberty, or about political power, or even about individual freedom. It is about whether you are going to be loving towards your neighbor, as instructed by Jesus and the bible. Or whether you are going to be a servant of egotistical selfishness. This is one of the few times when it isn't that tough. We show our faith in Christ in the way we treat others. Preventing them from dying is clearly the loving thing to do.

Peace,
Pastor Jack

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

03/07/2021

3rd Sunday of Lent (Communion)

Sermon: "God Promises to Correct Us"

Theme: As we open our hearts to the wisdom of the cross, we are corrected from the foolishness which leads to so much alienation and brokenness in the world.

Purpose: We will examine how the suffering of the cross calls us to wisdom in our relationships.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 The cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but the wisdom of God is a strength for those who are open to learning.

John 2:13-22 Jesus drives out the money changers and cleanses the temple.

Questions:

What causes us to endure the same conflicts and issues repeatedly? What do we need to do in order to learn and grow from our suffering? How do we learn wisdom? Why are so many relationships full of turmoil and brokenness? What can we do to be supportive of growing in understanding and compassion? How do we move past the places where we are unable to learn and grow? What needs to be driven out of our life in order that we may move forward?

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Message: Love and forgiveness are the path to living differently.

Theme: Forgiveness is a practice that has to be learned and embraced in order to experience the freedom of love and release from personal bondage.

Purpose: To discover practices of forgiveness.

Practice: "I choose forgiveness"

Scriptures: Ephesians 4:17-32 Take off the darkness of sin and put on Christ, do not allow evil to come out of your mouth.

Matthew 5:21-26, 43-48 Practice forgiveness and release others from their debts. Love all people and be perfect.

Questions:

Do we really understand what forgiveness means? How do we learn to practice real forgiveness that is liberating and healing? Why do we try and substitute self-restraint and denial for real practices of release and forgiveness? How do we learn to forgive while we allow ourselves to work through our hurt and anger? What is needed in order that we can grow in the practice of forgiveness? How do we experience real power of forgiveness in our lives?

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

03/14/2021

4th Sunday of Lent

Sermon: "A Promise of Grace"

Theme: God offers us unconditional love that frees us from our prison of sin and bondage to our past.

Purpose: We will learn to receive grace and practice living by that same grace.

Scriptures: Ephesians 2:1-10 By grace we have been saved, not the results of our works, but out of kindness in Jesus Christ.

John 3:14-21 The son of Man must be lifted up as the bronze serpent was lifted in the wilderness. God sent the son out of love, for salvation.

Questions:

How do we learn to truly practice grace and forgiveness for ourselves, others, and for the world? What does it take to develop ability to not hold onto offenses and accounts of the wrongs that are committed against us? What is the process by which we reorient our minds and our hearts towards letting go of past offenses? What do we need to do to move from being dominated by past memories and resentments to embracing present opportunities for love? What is a true lifestyle of grace?

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Message: God has given you all you need.

Theme: God has already provided us what we need to be joyful and fulfilled as we learn to rejoice and give thanks for the gifts that we have already received.

Purpose: We will shift our focus from envy and jealousy to gratitude.

Practice: Gratitude instead of grievance.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 10:6-13 We must not put Christ to the test but hold onto the faithfulness of God.

John 8:12-20 Jesus was teaching that he is the light of the world, whoever walks with him is never in darkness.

Questions:

How does envy and jealousy cause us to think that what we lack is outside of ourselves? In what ways do we convince ourselves to stay in a rut because of things that are outside of our control? How does our perception of lack and our sense of suffering disadvantage cause us to be unable to embrace opportunities to experience love and peace? How is it that our fear comes to dominate our spiritual life? What do we need to do to see ourselves as blessed with possibilities for joy and wholeness?

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving



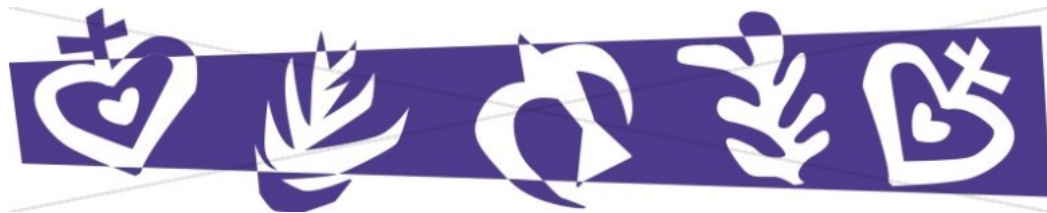
Moving from Darkness into Light

A Lenten Journey

We are ready to move from darkness into light, from fear and bitterness into wholeness and joy. You can join us on our Lenten Journey, at any time.

The schedule is as follows:

Lenten Service and Devotions	03/10/2021	6:00pm	"Love and Forgiveness are the Path to Living Differently"
Lenten Service and Devotions	03/17/2021	6:00pm	"God Has Given You All You Need"
Lenten Service and Devotions	03/24/2021	6:00pm	"Seek to Know God Daily"
Maundy Thursday	04/01/2021	6:30pm	"Washing Feet and Being Cleansed"



Virtual Activities During Lent

Soup Supper	5:00pm	Every Wednesday
Lenten Service	6:00pm	through March 24
Lenten Practices	6:30pm	

If you are on our email list a ZOOM link will be emailed to you.
Otherwise, a link is available on our website:
www.fdlpresbyterian.org, under Church News.

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Ongoing Information

May 1 - Scholarships

Each year the Scholarship Committee is blessed to be able to award scholarships to our youth. The Scholarships are made available through generous donations from members of our church.

Scholarship recipients must have demonstrated a commitment to the church, have completed high school with average grades or above and will be enrolled in an accredited secondary educational institution. The church is very thankful to families supporting the Memorial Scholarships.

Guidelines for all Scholarships:

1. Recipient must be a member of our church.
2. Recipient must have demonstrated a commitment to the church. This commitment has been defined as meeting the following criteria in the past calendar year:
 - church worship attendance a minimum of twice in the past calendar year
 - nurturing faith development in an activity of the Serving, Loving or Learning Teams (educational opportunities, mission activities, virtual worship participation, virtual coffee hour, bingo, etc.) at least twice in the past calendar year.
 - Recipient is enrolled in an accredited college or university.

Questions about participation can be directed to Mrs. Zander: jzander@fdlpresbyterian.org

The [application form](#) is available online and should be completed and submitted electronically by May 1, 2021. Interviews with all applicants may be scheduled to complete the process.

The Transition Team

The team is working on our phased plan. As milestones are met, we will communicate that plan. If you have any questions, please submit them using this link ([Click HERE](#)). For your reference, here is the link to our metrics (Fond du Lac County Dashboard will soon be updated to include percentage vaccinated) ([Click HERE](#)).

We will be praying, singing and worshipping together at church once again. The church will persevere. God will not abandon us. Wherever we are, God is with us. Nothing on earth can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Thanks be to God!

Faithfully - The Transition Team

- Kristina Arellano
- Mary Bacon
- Debbie Cooley
- Deb Harrison
- Sandy Vahlsing

Staff

- Pastor Jack Harrison
- Kris Bartelt

Guide for Safely Returning to Worship

When:
Vaccination rates are 70-85+%
Viral Transmission
- Cases <1/100K
- Positive Tests <5%
Then:
Implement our hybrid, phased plan to return
- Face masks mandatory
- Physical distancing
- Low-touch environment
- Outdoors or increased air exchange
- Shortened time of service
- No or minimized singing
- Focus on sanitizing high-touch surfaces
- Sign-in with sanitized pens, track attendance
- Have a fallback plan for outbreaks
- Communication plan



There is an impending crisis in our community, and you may be able to help.

If you haven't already, please consider donating some, *or all*, of your stimulus money to St. Vincent DePaul. SVDP can place your money where it is needed the most. **One Hundred Percent of the donated money goes to help those in need, as there are no administrative fees!**

Here's how you can help:

- You can mail your check to (Write "Save a Home" on the memo line):
St. Vincent DePaul
Attention: Hartzheim
330 N. Peters Ave.
Fond du Lac, 54935
- If you have a Paypal account, you can donate electronically on the SVDP website by clicking [here](#).
- You can deliver a check directly to their store
- You can send a check to the church office (Write "Save a Home" on the memo line) Your check will be forwarded to St. Vincent DePaul

Your donation will only be used to pay rent or utilities bills.

Please pray about this opportunity to be part of the healing that our community will need in the months to come.

The Serving Team

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Information @ Church

March 10 - Women In Faith

March 11 - Ruby's Pantry

March 17 - Virtual Bingo



A friend is someone who reaches for your hand but touches your heart.

Join us for fun and fellowship on Wednesday, March 10 from 6:30-7:30pm on Zoom.

We will start our time in the Lenten Practices room. Then, we will check in with each other.

If you have any questions, contact Jennifer.



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	March 11
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

If you are interested in volunteering, at Ruby's Pantry please complete an application at: www.rubyspantry.org.



Day **Wednesday**
Date **March 17**
Time **6:30pm**

Please click [here](#) to register.

A ZOOM link will be emailed to you, **after you register**.

Won't you join us?

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Information @ Church

March 18 - FPC Families



Join us on Thursday, March 18 at 7:00pm, via Zoom, for FPC Families. It's a time to check in, laugh and talk.

Bring your "walk up music" or your current "theme" song.

Contact Jennifer for the Zoom link or if you have any questions.

Thank You from ADVOCAP -



Thank you for your generous donation. We truly appreciate it!

Thank you, thank you, thank you for the generous gift of \$150.00 for our Head Start families.

Blessings to all! Again, thank you for supporting our Head Start families.

Thank You -
Warming Shelter
Participants



Dear Good and
Faithful Servants,

Just a short update on our dinner at the Salvation Army Warming shelter Saturday February 20, 2021. It was warmer than it had been on previous evenings, so the numbers were down a bit. Patrons started trickling in as we were leaving. We had plenty of food and left some for the late comers.

We had wonderful donations from: Carol Smith, Charlotte Thiel, Deb Cooley, Gail Kamphuis, Gwen Kober (Charlotte Thiel's neighbor), Mary Robotka, Mary Ellen McMeen, Mike Petersen, and Nancy Hilbert.

The food items included: cookies and dessert bars, deviled eggs, baked beans, cheesy California veggies, chocolate chip cookies, potato salad, brownies, fresh fruit, sloppy joes, fried rice, macaroni and cheese with bacon, fried chicken, and potato wedges.

Deb and Andy Lorenz helped with setup, serving and cleanup. Thanks to Don Vahlsing and the Serving Team for making this mission possible.

Very inspiring for us and a big thank you to all who participated.

God Bless you all,
Steve and Shin Ae Zeigler

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

One Great Hour of Sharing – A History

written by Alyssa Sabel by request of the Serving Team

Did you know that One Great Hour of Sharing was founded in 1946 by Henry Knox Sherril? The goal was to raise one million dollars in one hour for World Relief. In 1949, church leaders worked together to promote this. A show called "One Great Hour" was broadcasted on major networks. The show featured President Truman and popular musicians and actors of the time.

One Great Hour of Sharing releases stories about a fish named Gracie to educate children about disaster relief, poverty, and hunger. These are all major targets for OGHS. Using fish banks are a fun way to get children to interact and see that they can make a difference. The reason we do fish banks is because of the symbolism between fish and Jesus: Jesus multiplied fish to feed the people. World hunger is a focus one of One Great Hour of Sharing.

You can donate to OGHS through the fish banks, but you can also donate from your own home. You can use mobile giving by texting "SHARING" to 56512 or you can call 800-728-7228. You can donate online at pcusa.org/give-oghs. Write Fond du Lac First Presbyterian Church in the comments section so our church knows you donated. If you'd rather donate by check, write OGHS in the memo line and mail it to:

Presbyterian Church (USA)
PO Box 643700
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15264-3700

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving



Feed My Starving Children Fond du Lac Mobilepack

It is with great sadness that we inform you that we will be postponing the Fond du Lac MobilePack Event until 2022. With the uncertainty of the Pandemic, we felt the best option would be to postpone it until next year.

While Feed My Starving Children is not currently holding MobilePack events, they continue to pack at their permanent sites (socially distanced) and via machine packing. Thus, there is still a continued need for funding. We are greatly committed to the event and to the Feed My Starving Children organization. We encourage you to continue to support the organization, and to pray for them and the recipients of the food.

Last week the planning board of the Fond du Lac Mobilepack met to discuss the needs of Feed My Starving Children and the funds that we have already raised. With such great need in the world, we have decided to release the majority of our 2020 Mobilepack funds to Feed My Starving Children. These funds will be used to help children now!

We encourage churches and other benevolent groups to continue to support Feed My Starving Children with prayers and support during this time of uncertainty. We will have an update, this fall, on the fundraising efforts for our 2022 Mobilepack.

The need is great. [Thank you from Haiti](#).



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.



Online giving is easy, convenient and secure. You can use a credit card, a debit card, electronic check or electronic funds transfer, through your bank. You can change or cancel your amount at any time.

Click [here](#) to get your questions answered and to set up your account. We think you'll be pleasantly surprised at how convenient it is!



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.



Welcome to an exciting faith-filled year of educational opportunities at the First Presbyterian Church. Sunday School is full steam ahead at 10:00am, every Sunday! We meet via ZOOM.

Each week we will offer a virtual education hour that will include Talkback and Church School for children and youth.

We will begin our education time together, all ages. Then, we will separate into groups for Talkback, and Church school.

Watch your email for more information and a Zoom link!



Virtual Coffee Hour

A Zoom link will be emailed to you. It's a great time of conversation and fellowship.

Opportunities for Worship

- YouTube Every Sunday
- Podcast Every Wednesday
Every Sunday
- Radio Sunday
- ZOOM 1st Sunday of the Month

Information on Worship, and many other activities can be found on our website:

<http://www.fdlpresbyterian.org>

TALKback



A Zoom link will be emailed to you.

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

In March

Deacon

Les Mier
lmsrtrains@gmail.com

Elder

Brian Conran
odosou@mac.com

First Presbyterian Focus

Please send submissions for the
Newsletter to:

fdloffice@fdlpresbyterian.org.



If you need prayer, or know someone who does, please contact the church office at:

fdloffice@fdlpresbyterian.org.

Prayers and Praises

Homeless and disbursed people, particularly those who are positive for the Covid-19 virus and struggling to find shelter

Pat D.
Dan M.
Peg D. - in process of moving to Illinois
Gib D.
Arnold L.
Ruth S.
Joyce J.
Lincoln D.
Jesse F.
Silas W.
Chastity G.
Roland H.
Carol M.
Jerry and Mary H.
Bonnie and Jack H.
Chastity G. and Joan S.
Leisa Wagstaff – PCUSA Worker

Prayer Partners

Send prayer requests to
fdloffice@fdlpresbyterian.org

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

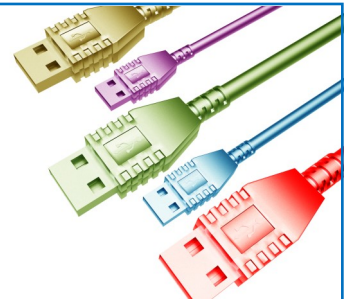
Electronic Ways to Keep in Touch

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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Social Media and Website



First Presbyterian Church, Fond du Lac

www.fdlpresbyterian.org

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