

May 2, Volume 23, Issue 09

First Presbyterian Church

FOCUS

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

In This Issue

Reflections	Page 2
Coming Up in Worship	Page 3-4
Confirmation	Page 5
Information @ Church	Page 6-7
Every Week	Page 8
In May	Page 9
Praises and Prayers	Page 9
Electronic Ways to Keep in Touch	Page 9
Contact Us	Page 10
Social Media, YouTube, Website	Page 10

1st Sunday
May

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

“Learning to Live with our Fear”

¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love.

1 John 4:17-18

Most of us remember the quote from FDR “*So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is...fear itself — nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.*” President Roosevelt’s circumstances meant that the fear was to not move with boldness against an overwhelming threat. Our issue is that people are moving out of fear, often with boldness. In our case, our biggest fear is for people to not be reckless, as they live with their anxiety.

One of the problems is that some of our fears are invisible. Some of those invisible things are very real, however, like viruses and hatred. Some of those unseen things are unreal such as conspiracy theories and falsehoods. One of the traits we need is to question and discern what is true and factual. Then, with legitimate concern, to choose what is the appropriate level of risk for our lives.

Nearly a year ago I was introduced to the term “risk budget.” This is not a financial budget, but a personal level of risk for which one may engage safely and comfortably. I tend to be interested in statistics and probabilities, so this immediately made sense to me. As you look at activities and plans, you can calculate your probability of exposure to various risks (in the case of the webinar I was viewing, it was the spread of Covid-19). Then you must determine the level of risk with which you feel comfortable – 5% or 10% exposure. What I have come to realize is that this is the source of so much of the stress many of us are feeling. We know that we have had times that our exposure has been more than what our comfort for risk allows. A simple way to say this is that our lack of control occasionally causes us to feel vulnerable and powerless. What makes this interesting is that our experience of being out of control tends to last beyond the time that we experienced the risk. So, even when we are safe, it’s going to take some time to feel secure again.

This disparity is hitting a great number of us at this time. We are slowly finding it safer to do more activities, but the majority of people are not rushing into them. We can safely gather with other vaccinated people in small groups, but many are reluctant to do so. There is a strong indication that while some are ready to move back to engaging in more activity, many people are not ready to take those steps.

What many people do not realize is the time and preparation required to produce our virtual presence, particularly the YouTube videos and Zoom experiences. We are trying to transition to a blended presence: maintaining our virtual ministry, for those less eager to return to church, while introducing some in-person worship, in the near future. The logistics of worshipping together will be much simpler when the vaccination rate has reached 75%, which is forecasted to be the beginning of July. That means that Sunday, July 4, 2021 has been selected as our tentative target date, to worship in the sanctuary.

In the meantime, please keep the church and its leadership in prayer. We have managed to remain strong and have been able to expand the church’s ministry this past year. We have fared much better than many of our sister congregations and have had success in developing our virtual ministry. We are now trying to figure out how to maintain at least some virtual presence that will continue to be effective and meaningful (which requires a significant number of hours of work) and to restore in-person worship that will be safe, while meeting the needs of our congregation.

We believe that through the gift of the Holy Spirit and God’s grace we will be successful.

Peace,
Pastor Jack

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Coming Up in Worship

05/02/2021 Confirmation Sunday

Sermon: "Those who Love Know God"

Theme: The clear sign of maturity and wisdom in Christ is the capacity to practice the love of Christ.

Purpose: We will affirm the foundation of love in our relationship with Christ.

Scriptures: 1 John 4:7-21 Those who know God love others for God is love.
John 15:1-8 Jesus said: "I am the true vine." As we abide in him we bear fruit.

Questions:

What is the nature of the love which is essential to being able to know God? How do we learn and practice that love in our relationships? What is our message for those who have come to put obligation and guilt above their commitment to love? How do we learn to make love central to all our relationships? What is the process by which we develop a covenant of love? What is the difference between the practices of Christian love and emotional affection or attachment?

05/05/2021 Midweek Devotions

Sermon: "Do not Be Troubled, Do Not Be Afraid"

Theme: We are called to learn to find strength in the wisdom of the Advocate and to draw our strength from the knowledge of God that flows from the Father.

Purpose: We will seek to live in connection to God's love and presence.

Scriptures: John 14:18-31 Jesus promises not to leave the disciples "orphans" and promises the Advocate.

Questions:

How do we enter into the relationship with Jesus that frees us from fear and anxiousness? What practices are needed in order that we may experience the connection with God through the Advocate? In what ways does the promise of Jesus never leaving us orphaned actually work to provide us peace and security? What does this mean for us as we deal with the challenges and stresses of our lives?

05/09/2021

Sermon: "Jesus' Friends"

Theme: We are called to be in a relationship with Jesus of listening, partnership, and love from which our way of living and treating others is empowered.

Purpose: We will examine our relationship with Christ.

Scriptures: 1 John 5:1-6 Everyone who believes in Christ has been born of God. We conquer the world through our faith.
John 15:9-17 If we love God we will keep Christ's commandments to love one another.

Questions:

What does Jesus mean when he says that he no longer calls us servants, but calls us friends? What does it mean to be a friend of Christ Jesus? In what ways does our understanding of what it means to be Christian change when we move from serving out of an obligation to living out a loving friendship? How do we become full of the love that Jesus showed in offering forgiveness to the world so that we may be free from judgment, guilt, or fear? How does one develop a faith that enables us to lay our life down as servants of God?

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Coming Up in Worship (continued)

05/12/2021 Midweek Service

Sermon: "The Word of God in our Hearts"

Theme: We need to practice placing the Word of God in our hearts and on our minds.

Purpose: We will consider how we practice learning scripture.

Scriptures: Deuteronomy 11:18-21 You shall put these words of God in your heart and bind them as a sign on your hand.

Questions:

What does it mean to put the word of God into our "heart and soul?" What practices do we need to develop so that we can find the meaning and use of the Word of God? How do we deal with the things we don't understand or find boring? How do we practice growing in wisdom and knowledge of God's Word for us?

05/16/2021 7th Sunday of Easter

Sermon: "Struggles with Relationships"

Theme: We learn and grow through the struggles and stresses of relationships as we seek to find direction from God and understanding that enables us to heal.

Purpose: We will accept and own our difficult relationships.

Scriptures: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 The disciples decide how to deal with the betrayal of Judas and their numbers.
John 17:6-19 Jesus prays for the disciples and the trials that they will face.

Questions:

How do we deal with relationships which become hurtful or difficult? What does it mean to be a loving Christian while working through problem relationships? How do we develop maturity through the process of working through difficult relationships? How do we manage experiences of betrayal or personal attacks and maintain our healthy relationship with Christ? In what ways can we be better equipped to grow through problem relationships?

05/19/2021 Midweek Service

Sermon: "Sorrow Will Turn into Joy"

Theme: The work of Christ through the resurrection transforms the things that overwhelm and frighten us, such as death, into signs of God's victory.

Purpose: We will learn the process of grief.

Scriptures: John 16:16-24 Jesus tells the disciples that he will be gone from them, and uses the illustration of "labor pains."

Questions:

How do we learn to grieve? Or do we simply allow the process to happen naturally? What might we do in order to grieve in more healthy ways? What is it that people do that tends to make it harder for us to process our sorrow and loss? What happens if instead of going through our process of grief we simply deny our feelings? What is the way in which our sorrow becomes a source of real joy?

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Information @ Church

Liturgists Needed

Here's What You
Need to Know



EMAIL ADDRESS

To receive liturgy copy
To email recording back to
Worship Coordinator-
kbartelt@fdlpresbyterian.org

VOICE RECORDING APP

On smart phone or tablet
(Apps are free from Google
Play or iTunes.)

DEADLINES

Wednesday Liturgy due
Tuesday End of Day
Sunday Liturgy due
Wednesday End of Day

ZOOM Communion Worship

(First Sunday of the Month)
The individual who records the
liturgy for the Podcast/YouTube,
is asked to read the liturgy "live"
during ZOOM worship.

If you have any questions, please
email:

kbartelt@fdlpresbyterian.org.

Pronunciations:

<https://biblespeak.org/>

Liturgist opportunities
are available !

May 2 - Confirmation



The 2020-2021 Confirmation Class met via Zoom throughout the year following the "safer @ home" requirements. The students have completed their confirmation responsibilities, were examined at the May Session meeting and received into membership at that time.

As is the tradition in our church, the Confirmation Class has prepared a worship service to share with the congregation. This year the students have prepared the May 2 worship service in two formats: one for YouTube and one for the 9:00am Zoom worship.

We would like to invite you to join the Confirmation Students on May 2 for their leadership of the 9:00am Zoom Worship Service. At our 10:00am Zoom Coffee Hour, we will celebrate the Confirmands and their sharing of the word.

Won't you join us to honor our students at Zoom Coffee Hour? We rejoice as these young people, along with their Faith Partners, continue their journey as Disciples of Christ.

Congratulations to the 2021 Confirmands

Confirmands

Liam Anderson
Eli Braatz
Elise Clarenbach
Henry Hayes
Carson Langille
Jaeda Rehn
Sydney Vander Ark

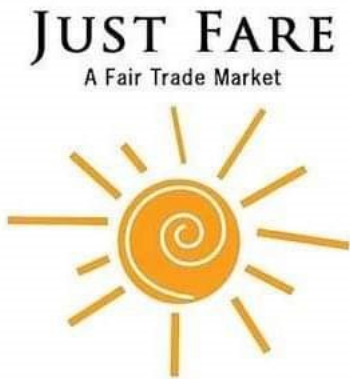
Faith Partners

Joanne Marchionda
Dave Erickson
Sheryl Brown
Lew Smith
Scott Polacek
Carol Wetzell
Jolene Schry

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Information @ Church

May 8 - Just Fare Event



On Saturday, May 8, First Presbyterian members, and friends are invited to a Community Shopping Event (CSE) at Just Fare Market. Just Fare Market was originally launched at First Presbyterian church by church and community members in 2007. A CSE is an opportunity for the congregation to shop at this Fair Trade enterprise. A CSE is also a way that Just Fare gives back to non-profit organizations by returning 15% of sales by church

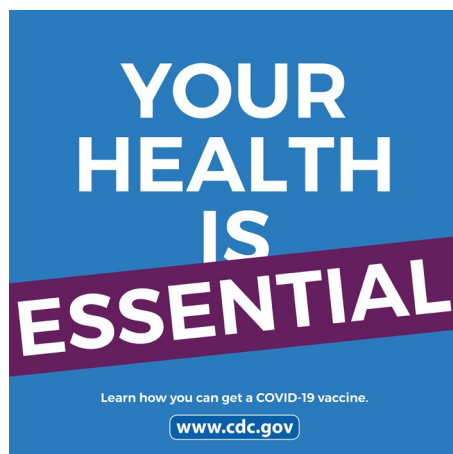
members, on that day, if sales are at least \$500.

Purchases can be made online, at www.justfare.org, during the 24-hour period of May 8. You can pick up your online purchases, that day, or when the store is next open. (Delivery could be arranged within the city, if needed.) If you order online, please put First Presbyterian in the Memo to help us keep track of the sales of church members. Shoppers might like to look at Just Fare's online inventory, before coming to shop, to get an idea of items to consider for purchase. **The store will be open from 10:00-3:00 for church members.**

Ruth Holstein and Carol Smith will be handling the sale. To limit the number of people in the store, at any one time, we ask that you limit the number of people, from your family, to come shopping. **Masks are expected to be worn in the store.**

Just Fare, as other local small businesses, has been badly impacted by the pandemic. What is most needed for this business to survive is for the community to rediscover the unique, ethically sourced products from small-scale artisan and farmer groups.

We welcome your help.



May 5 - PYA



Join us Wednesday, May 5, at 7:30pm. We will meet virtually, via ZOOM.

We will check in and play some games. A Zoom link will be emailed to PYA families.

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

May 12 - Women in Faith



Join us for Women in Faith on Wednesday, May 12. We begin at 6:30pm.

This month we are having 'Show and Tell.' Show and tell about a favorite thing! A piece of family history, favorite book, a pet, a room in your home, flower bed in your yard, etc.! You could show the item or a picture of the item. We want to see it!

Let me know if you have any suggestions for future meetings. Contact Jennifer if you need the Zoom link.

We hope you can join us!

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

May 13 - Ruby's Pantry



- Food distribution will take place at **GRACE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**. Please enter on the **EAST** side.
- **On-line pre-registration is now available.** Please go to www.rubyspantry.org to reserve a time slot for a food share using a credit or debit card.
- 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	May 13
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.

May 19 - Virtual Bingo



Day Wednesday
Date May 19
Time 6:30pm

Please click [here](#) to register.

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

Won't you join us?

May 20 - FPC Families



Join us on Thursday, May 20, at 7:00pm, via Zoom, for FPC Families.

We will check in, laugh and talk. This month, we'll talk about past and present family traditions, such as yearly measuring height on the door frame, birthday traditions, secret handshakes, bedtime rituals, holiday traditions/meals, etc.

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

Transition Team

Even if you are vaccinated, masks are a sign of respect to those who are not. Remember the commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." We have a great opportunity to show Jesus' love through faithful wearing of a mask.

We thank you for your continued prayers, your understanding and support. We pray that our fight against the virus continues to be strong and we hope that we will be worshipping together again very soon.

For your reference, here is the link to our metrics (Fond du Lac County Dashboard soon will be updated to include percentage vaccinated) [\(Click HERE\)](#).

If you have any questions for us, please submit them using this link [\(Click HERE\)](#)

Transition Team: Kristina Arellano, Mary Bacon, Kris Bartelt, Debbie Cooley, Deb Harrison, Pastor Jack Harrison, Sandy Vahlsing

Session: Mary Bacon, Debbie Cooley, Jim Dassow, Nancy Hilbert, Laurie Leestma-Christie, Don Vahlsing, Clerk of Session Dave Erickson, Brian Conran

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Every Week

Midweek Podcast

Pastor Jack continues to reach out to us via brief devotional podcasts on Wednesdays. You can find the link to our podcasts on our website:

www.fdlprebyterian.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 Sunday
- Podcast 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 May

Deacon

Debby Lorenz
daalorenz@gmail.com

Elder

Deb Cooley
tdcooley@charter.net

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.
Gib D.
Arnold L.
Ruth S.
Joyce J.
Lincoln D.
Jesse F.
Silas W.
Roland H.
Carol M.
Julia A.
Leisa Wagstaff
Jerry and Mary H.
Bonnie and Jack H.
Chastity G. and Joan S.
Mary B. - On the death of her mother
Kay M. - Recuperating from an auto accident

Prayer Partners

Send prayer requests to
fdloffice@fdlpresbyterian.org

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

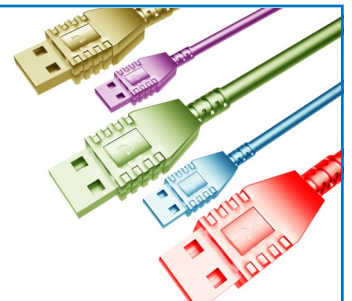
Electronic Ways to Keep in Touch

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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Deb Zorn
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Custodian Assistant

Elders on Session

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Amber Summeril
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Social Media and Website



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www.fdlpresbyterian.org

first presbyterian church fond du lac

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