

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—ELKO NEVADA 1559 SEWELL DR., ELKO, NEVADA 89801 775-738-3430



#### *Tom's Corner*

This month I am choosing to share a daily meditation by Ricahrd Rohr of Albuquerque, New Mexico. I do this part because of a sermon I preached recently on Faith and Doubt. I hope you enjoy this article and are challenged by it.

#### *An Open and Growing Heart*

Like “prayer,” “religion,” and so many other words, the word “faith” means different things to different people. As we recover the lost tradition of contemplation, here are some clarifications for what I mean by “faith” and why, understood in a non-dualistic way, faith is not blind assent, or even reasoned assent, but an essential part of spiritual transformation. Faith points to *an initial opening* of the heart or mind space from our side. Foundationally, this is all that faith is, but its effects and implications can be enormous. Faith is our small but necessary “yes” to any new change or encounter. Such an opening or re-opening is necessary to help you make fresh starts or break through to new levels. You normally have to let go of the old and go through a stage of unknowing or confusion before you can move to another level of awareness or new capacity. This opening up and letting go is largely what we mean by faith, and it explains why *doubt and faith are correlative terms*. People of great faith often suffer bouts of great doubt because they continue to grow. Mother Teresa experienced decades of doubt, as was widely reported after her death. The very fact that the media and people in general were surprised by her experience demonstrates our very limited understanding of faith. The movement through unknowing is necessary in all encounters, relationships, or intellectual breakthroughs, not just with the Divine. Human faith and religious faith are much the same except in their object or goal. What sets us on the wrong path was making the object of religious faith “ideas” or doctrines instead of a person. [1] Our faith is not a belief that dogmas or moral opinions are true, but a faith that Ultimate Reality/God/Jesus is accessible to us—and even on our side. Jesus was able to touch and heal people who trusted him as an emissary of God’s love, not people who assessed intellectual statements and decided whether they were true or false. Faith is more *how* to believe than *what* to believe.

God’s Peace and joy to each of you,

*Rev. Tom Holslag - Interim Pastor*

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|-------------------|--|
| • Interim Pastor  | Tom Holslag  |
| • Melissa Fonder  | Director of Family Ministries .....<br>fm.elko.firstpres@gmail.com<br>familyministries@elkofirstpres.org |
| • Bertha Lister   | Office Manager   |
| • Caren McBride   | Financial Secretary  |
| • Jim Hill        | Organist   |
| • Brandolyn Thran | Pianist  |

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| • Patty Fisk            | Choir Director   |
| • Bertha Lister         | Desert Pulpit Editor   |
| • Church Office         | 775-738-3430   |
| • Church e-mail address | <a href="mailto:fpchurch@frontiernet.net">fpchurch@frontiernet.net</a><br><a href="mailto:info@ElkoFirstPres.org">info@ElkoFirstPres.org</a> |
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## Director of Family Ministries



**VBS is August 7-11 from 8:45 to 12:15**  
(Volunteers, please plan on 8:30 to 12:30)  
**with an "Ice Cream Pigout!" and VBS Children's Concert**  
**August 11th at 6:00 for friends and family to attend.**

### Sunday School

We are still looking for people to teach our Children's Sunday School Class. We would like to have a rotating schedule of teachers. Please let Melissa know if you are interested.

Sunday School starts at 9:00 on September 17th. This is also the first day of 10:15 Worship services.

Our Sunday School Curriculum for 2017-2018 is:

### **"Seasons of the Spirit - Encore"**

It is a Lectionary-based, online curriculum. All materials will be printed at the church. For those who would like to make a donation to defray the costs of the curriculum and printing, a \$10 donation would be very appreciated. We will be offering three levels of classes from this material:

1. Elementary (Children 3 years old through 5th grade)
2. Jr/Sr High & College (Students 6th grade through College)
3. Adult classes will be offered of "Seasons of the Spirit".

In the fall, Kristi Glass and Becky Schaffner will be team teaching an adult class titled

### **"We Saved You A Seat: Finding and Keeping Lasting Friendships"**

College students are welcome to join adult classes if they'd like.

### Children's Church Kids 4 Years Old through 2nd Grade

Please let Melissa know if you would like to be in the rotation to teach Children's Church this fall.

### Youth Kids 6th Grade and Up

August 6th is our final Sunday feeding the homeless for the year. We will leave the church at 11:45 to get to the VFW (where we serve) by noon. Everyone 16 and older is welcome to come help out.

The Youth Group meets every Tuesday night from 6:00 to 8:00 at the church. Please let Melissa know of any kids in 6th grade through 12th grade who might like an invitation to join us as we start planning our 2017-2018 school year.

### Who's Doing What In August:

	<u>Children's Message</u>	<u>Children's Church</u>
<b>August 6</b>	Youth/VBS Promo	Heather Norero
<b>August 13</b>	Melissa Fonder	Becky Schaffner
<b>August 20</b>	Becky Schaffner	Bev Klem
<b>August 27</b>	Heather Norero	Malissa Bisson

Yours in Christ,  
**Melissa Fonder**

## Notes from the Keys by Brandolyn Thran August 2017

*“Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.” Proverbs 28:13*

*“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:8-9*

At the third Mission Study Meeting the group was openly sharing about how our church could “do church different” with the hopes of attracting new and younger attendees. The topic of our current order of service brought up a discussion regarding the Prayer of Confession.

For several weeks, I continued to ponder the discussion; my hope here is to help ‘defend’, for lack of a better word, the Prayer of Confession and maybe help others consider the importance of why we must look at the ugly side of us (sin) *before* we can step into grace (pardon) and the rest of the service.

From the logistical aspect of our service, it is very important to recognize, understand and internalize that the Prayer of Confession is immediately followed by the Assurance of Pardon. Therefore, while we do start the service focusing on sin and what we have done wrong, we don’t stay there, we quickly move to Pardon. This reflects the exact process that is required of redemption. We must repent first, to be redeemed. If we skip the repentance, we don’t get to be redeemed.

Trust me, I can fully appreciate the desire to skip the reflection part, to skip the part that requires me to get humble and admit to myself that I am a dirty rotten sinner. God already knows it, so it really isn’t a surprise to him, but to hear myself say it, ouch --- that hurts!!! The Prayer of Confession makes me look at myself and see that part of me that I don’t want to see, the parts that I work so hard to hide with my smile, nice clothes, a clean car, a good job...you know...all those earthly things we do. Yes, it is a smack in the face...like the lyrics from a favorite song “I’ve cussed on a Sunday, I’ve cheated and I’ve lied, I’ve fallen down from grace, A few too many times” (My Church by Maren Morris), the Prayer of Confession cuts to the core, quick! Granted, some Sunday’s the Prayer is more aligned with my struggles than others, but regardless, the important act of acknowledging that I am a sinner and the need to get humble before God is important. Then, and this is the beautiful thing that we sometimes forget to appreciate as much as we should, we don’t stay there, we don’t end the service there – we are allowed to self-reflect just a bit, so on those Sunday’s when we aren’t aligned with the written Prayer we can get our own two cents in, and then -- we are granted pardon!! Praise the Lord!!

If we removed the Prayer of Confession and the Assurance of Pardon, we would be denying ourselves the opportunity to get in our right place with God. We would be denying ourselves repentance and redemption! When (if) churches take away the very humbling acknowledgement of our human ways (sin), it runs the risk of becoming a “feel good church”.

Humility is required, albeit often uncomfortable; humility helps us silly humans remember to let God be God, and me be me. When we skip over humility, the confession of our sins and the acknowledgement that we require forgiveness, what might the consequences be? We must be careful to not only focus on the sin, the Confession, because it does not stand alone, it is followed by the Pardon; we don’t get to skip straight to grace. My hope is that we do not remove what makes us uncomfortable, but that we learn to step in to that sacred space of humility and witness the redeeming power of our Lord.



## **GIFT OF STOVES FOR A VILLAGE COOK UP HEALTHY SOLUTIONS WITH BIOGAS STOVES**

This gift allows you to purchase a biogas stove for one of our project families, or you can show your generosity by buying 20 stoves — enough for an entire village.

Your gift of a biogas stove: Trains families in using biogas equipment Provides a cleaner, healthier living environment. For most families in the places where Heifer International works, cooking usually means gathering firewood by hand, which often depletes the soil and robs the environment of its trees. In addition, smoke inhalation in poorly ventilated homes often leads to chronic lung and eye diseases.

A biogas stove is a better option. It runs off methane gas captured from animal waste, and burns cleanly, reliably and efficiently. This is not only better for the environment, it is more sustainable and healthier for families feeding their children.

## **Joy to the World Basket**

### **Bring Joy to the World with Your Gift**

The Gift of Joy to the World includes two sheep, four goats, one heifer and two llamas. Your donation will also fund training on the animals' feeding and care. The Joy to the World Gift Basket helps people by: Providing wool for blankets and clothing to keep families warm Enriching crops with fertilizer, producing better yields Sustaining families with enough rich milk to feed dozens of people Raising money for food, clothing, medicine and school tuition The Joy to the World Basket meets several needs at once, providing wealth, nourishment, warmth and a means for farmers to become self-sufficient. This gift reflects our determination and our belief that no challenge is too great if we come together. Join us in ending hunger and poverty for good.

This Gift Provides:

Milk

Nutrition

Steady, Dependable Income

Passing on the Gift

Fertilizer

Clothing and Blankets

Warmth



## **MISSION**

The Mission Committee has sent \$300.00 to support FIRM. This information is from their website [FIRMinc.org](http://FIRMinc.org)

Since 1994, Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM) has been meeting needs of refugee communities in Fresno. They serve mostly the Hmong, Laotian, Slavic, African and Syrian people groups, which represent over 60,000 people in Fresno County. This mission is “Sharing Christ’s love to build communities of hope with New Americans.”

They do this in many different ways, through both their holistic ministry and Gospelcentric ministry departments. They provide wrap around services for children all the way up to the elderly and are always pursuing new ways to meet the diverse needs of the people groups they serve. Their services span from an after-school program, to advocacy work, to mental health programs, to community gardens and much, much more!



## **"We Saved You a Seat"**

### **For a New Sunday School Class**

### **This Fall About Friendship**

Rebecca Schaffner and Kristi Lyn Glass will be leading an (in) Real Life sponsored Adult Sunday School class this fall called "We Saved You a Seat." Teens are also welcome to attend. The class is about how to find and keep friendships. The series is a follow-up to the Adult Sunday School classes on friendship that Kristi led at FPC a few years ago.

Each session will feature a video presentation followed by discussion. Participants will use a study guide during the week for more in-depth learning and introspection about friendship challenges.

The class will start Sept. 17th, during the 9-10 am FPC Sunday School hour, and it will be at least 7 Sunday sessions long. An additional 5 sessions may be added to the schedule by including video presentations from the fall (in)Real Life "Friended" event to be held in Nashville, TN, and available for in-home viewing via simulcast.

The first 10 people to reserve a seat for this Sunday School series will receive a free interactive study guidebook. After the first 10 books are reserved, the book will cost each participant \$12.99 plus shipping and tax. Contact Kristi at 775-738-3520 or [Kristi@KristiLynGlass.com](mailto:Kristi@KristiLynGlass.com) if you want to sign up, and she will reserve you one of the free study guides or place a study guide order for you.



For more information, see <http://www.lifeway.com/n/Product-Family/We-Saved-You-A-Seat> and <http://www.incourage.me/2017/06/big-news-introducing-real-life-friended.html>

## **CLERK'S REPORT**

Congregational Meeting July 9, 2017

Nominating committee presented nominees to complete vacated terms

Elder: Victor Godina (Class of 2018)  
Patty Fisk (Class of 2019)

Deacon : Heather Norero (Class of 2018)  
Robbie Nickel (Class of 2018)

The officers will be installed / ordained as required at Sunday worship service.

By Law changes were approved allowing the Session to be a total of twelve with a Youth acting as a liaison. (Youth can be nominated as a regular Elder). Deacons will be a class of 6 (18 serving on board) plus one youth Deacon. These changes were made to be more reflective of our church needs.



**Skylar Merschel** was awarded the John Carpenter scholarship, Elko Federal Credit Union, and the Kiwanis Scholarships.

**Leon Reyes** competed in the 16th annual Elko Senior Olympic Games.

**Leon and Kathy Reyes** celebrated their 50 wedding anniversary on July 2.

### Jeff and Christi Boyd returning to visit Elko

Jeff and Christi Boyd, Presbyterian Mission workers in Africa, will be at First Presbyterian on August 6. They will preach that Sunday and we will host a potluck brunch after the service. They will share more about their ministries in Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Madagascar, Niger, Rwanda, and South Sudan during the brunch. On Monday and Tuesday, they will teach the children during VBS.

### Building and Grounds Committee

The Buildings and Grounds Committee is in need of some more handymen and women! Please let the church office if you are willing to volunteer to help this committee keep our building and grounds in good condition.



Save  
the  
Date

*On August 27th, we will  
recognize and celebrate the  
people of this congregation  
who have been members for  
50 or more years.*

Save  
the  
Date

### CHURCH DIRECTORIES

There is a sign-up sheet on the counter in the office for anyone interested in purchasing a Church Directory. They are ordered in units of 25 to keep the cost at \$10 each. We will order when we have enough interest.

### T G I S

(Take Groceries In Sunday)

### Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation



The Mission Committee is collecting non-perishable food items to be distributed to local non-profit organizations. These organizations may now have a greater need since families with school-aged children won't benefit from school meal programs. **Please check expiration dates** and place your donations in the container in front of the church office. Thank you for your previous contributions.

### OUR MISSION

We are called to do God's work both for ourselves and as a church family and for others in the community. We believe God calls the First Presbyterian Church of Elko to:

- . Nurture programs that emphasize faith development and strong Christian Values.
- . Commit to develop strong inter-group communications and organizational structure.
- . Commit to membership growth through friendliness, tolerance and by developing programs that meet individual, family, and community needs.
- . Encourage each member's gifts and talents to be used for full participation in church activities.
- . Proclaim our faith and strengthen outreach programs to our community.
- . Continue to support the Presbyterian Church, USA, and global ministries.

## FELLOWSHIP HOUR

- 08/06 Mike & Susie Jones, Roberta Gallegos, Larry & Evalyn Plumb, Lee Reiersen.
- 08/13 Jim & Bonnie Hill, Penny Pruitt, Brian & Jo Arthur, Bill & Ann Nisbet.
- 08/20 Melissa Fonder, Sally Winsley, Doris Toothman, Brian & Barbara Pearson.
- 08/27 Jim & Jenny Byars, John & Faith Daniel, Priscella Mason & James Niday, Bill & Janet Strickland.



**You will also need to help set up and clean up**  
*Everyone Welcome!*



### BIRTHDAYS

- 08/02 Laura Petersen  
08/02 William Strickland  
08/04 Buck Boyce  
08/05 Alice Daniel  
08/05 Karen Kump  
08/08 Braeden Anderson  
08/09 Gene Schain  
08/09 Faye Carrillo  
08/12 Susan Freitag  
08/14 Barbara Pearson  
08/15 Kathy McLeod  
08/15 Judy Bondo  
08/17 B.J. Hurley  
08/18 Lorelee Justus  
08/25 Alex Byars  
08/25 Jaxon Tomera  
08/25 Marv Churchfield  
08/27 John Hobbs  
08/31 Linda Moseley



Please call the church office if you don't  
see your birthday listed.

**Per Capita is \$40.00 per member**



In order to cut costs we are asking all **non-church groups** using the Xerox machine to pay for any copies made on the church Xerox machine. The cost is 10 cents a copy. Thanks for helping to keep costs down.



### **First Presbyterian Church VBS—2017**

Come join us for a week of free fun, games, and learning for children 3 years old through entering 6th grade. Registration forms available in the church office.

**August 7th—11th**  
**8:45 to 12:15**

# August – 2017

20SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		<b>1</b> 1:00 Hobby Group  6:00 Youth Group	<b>2</b> 9:00 Tai Chi 9:30 Bible Study 5:45 Cub Scouts	<b>3</b> 12:00 Al-Alon 5:30 NAMI	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> <u><b>Communion</b></u> Boyds Preaching 9:30 Worship Music & Worship meeting Youth feeding the Homeless	<b>7</b>  <b>VBS</b>  6:00 Boy Scouts	<b>8</b>  <b>VBS</b>	<b>9</b>  <b>VBS</b>	<b>10</b>  <b>VBS</b>  5:30 NAMI	<b>11</b>  <b>VBS</b>  6:00 VBS Ice Cream Social	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 9:30 Worship Hilda Pecorado preaching Mission Meeting 12:00 Youth Studies	<b>14</b>  5:00 Cub Scouts 6:00 Boy Scouts	<b>15</b> <u><b>DEADLINE FOR DESERT PULPIT ARTICLES</b></u> 1:00 Hobby Group 6:00 Youth	<b>16</b> 9:00 Tai Chi 9:30 Bible Study 4:30 Webalos 4:30 Lions 6:30 Wolves/Bears Scouts	<b>17</b> 12:00 Al-Alon 5:30 NAMI 5:30 Tigers Cub Scouts	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 9:30 Worship <b>Deacons meeting</b> <b>12:00 Youth Studies</b>	<b>21</b>  6:00 Boy Scouts	<b>22</b> 1:00 Hobby Group 6:00 SESSION 6:00 Youth Group	<b>23</b> 9:00 Tai Chi 9:30 Bible Study 4:30 Webelos 5:30 Wolves/Bears Scouts	<b>24</b> 12:00 Al-Alon 5:30 NAMI 5:30 Tigers Cub Scouts	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9:30 Worship C.E. Meeting 50 Year membership celebration 12:00 Youth Studies	<b>28</b>  6:00 Boy Scouts	<b>29</b> 1:00 Hobby Group 6:00 Youth Group	<b>30</b> 9:00 Tai Chi 9:30 Bible Study 4:30 Webelos 5:30 Wolves/Bears Scouts	<b>31</b> 12:00 Al-Alon 5:30 NAMI 5:30 Tigers Cub Scouts		