



THE GRAPEVINE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SANDPOINT, IDAHO
January/February 2020

From the Pastor

2020 has arrived! Not only is a new calendar page turned, but a new decade is opening. The 1900's had the Roaring 20's, which ended in a global Great Depression. Who knows what the 20's of the 2000's will be like? On the national and world stage, there are certainly many challenging dynamics: global warming, catastrophic weather events, geo-politics, violence and greed, wealth inequalities, refugees, and in the United States it's a big election year. Politics will dominate the headlines. One thing the 20's is already doing is getting loud. Stress levels are high, news cycles relentless, divisiveness seems to be getting people more agitated, to the point where even though there are many opportunities and amazing aspects to life, the noise gets the attention. "Noise" is one word to capture our daily bombardment of distractions.

Maybe we need a New Year's Resolution? If "noise" is one thing 2020 is promising, what can we claim as a counter to this, a remedy to help us seek balance and not let life's distractions wear us down? In terms of vocabulary, the opposite of "noise" is "silence." Perhaps this is more than semantics? Silence may be exactly what is needed to not only maintain equilibrium, but to provide a positive way forward. Silence is not something we are inclined to given our overreliance on thinking. Silence is not encouraged in our culture.

Silence is something requiring practice and needs created, carved out, and honored as important.

Silence does something for us that is needed, and it does this as nothing else can. What is needed is a transformed mind, a whole new way of thinking, a more intentional and accurate way of perceiving reality. Silence gets us out of our thinking mind and invites us into the depths of our heart. This heart-zone is not mere emotion, but a spaciousness where we give our soul room to breathe. Our spirit unites with God's Spirit as silence breaks our conformity with patterns of this world and, as the Apostle Paul says, transforms us "by the renewing of our mind" (Romans 12:2). This contemplative stance, based in silence, leads to heart-based, spirit-guided actions.

Carving out time and space for silence is aided by shaping a life through simplicity. I do hope 2020 can become a life-changing year as we learn to embrace and practice simplicity so that silence can change us from the inside as we invite God into our awareness, even amidst a world of noise. Only then can true discernment take place. Like Elijah fleeing to the wilderness, hiding in a cave (which is great imagery for going into the heart space), and hearing the still, small voice of God in a gentle whisper (1 Kings 19:12), we are also called to journey on the Jesus-way to deep silence where only Love abides and we are guarded and led by the Advocate, the Holy Spirit.

Holy New Year! 2020 is held in God's care. May we continue to seek the simplicity of silence to hear God's voice whispering gently in our hearts.

Peace and All Good,
Pastor Andy



THE SESSION SUMMARY
DECEMBER 2019

In addition to Advent and Christmas, December was a busy month for Session. In fact, we began the first day of the month with a special meeting to approve an annual operating budget for 2020. Just a week later, on December 8, we held a Congregational Meeting following Sunday worship to present the budget to the congregation, approve the Pastor's Terms of Call and elect church leaders for 2020.

But wait, there's more. Our regular Session meeting occurred on December 17. We welcomed elders -elect Kathleen Huntley and Paula Vincent to join us. They will be officially ordained/installed during a worship service in early 2020.

During the December meeting, Session approved the following upcoming activities:
Invite the Deacons to the January 21 Session Meeting for a joint training workshop and a Session vote to ratify the election of new leaders.
Amended the 2020 budget to include five percent raises for the accompanist, choir director and finance secretary.

Cynthia Dalsing, Building and Grounds Elder, recently received the good news that the Idaho Heritage Trust awarded our church a grant of \$5,000 for facility repairs. The roof on the north side of the sanctuary is vulnerable to snow and ice buildup due to its shaded valleys. Ice dams have allowed water to seep under the shingles causing dry rot in the wood. The grant doesn't expire until November 1, 2022, so this gives us time to assess the project and raise additional funds as needed.

Stewardship and Finance elder, Dyno Wahl, reported that revenue projections are on target to exceed the 2019 budgeted income. Although expenditures have been slightly higher than anticipated, we should end the year with a surplus.

May God continue to bless our church as we approach the 118th year of serving Sandpoint and the greater community.

Bill Love, Clerk of Session

Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women met December 10th and enjoyed our Christmas potluck and Christmas Carol sing along.

A big thank you to Annie Welle for playing piano and joining us. Christmas cards for the PW shut ins were signed by those in attendance.

PW wants to **thank** everyone who supported our Christmas decoration sale and cookie sale. The unsold decorations were donated to Panhandle Animal Shelter Thrift store and we were given a receipt for \$100. Proceeds from the sale were \$309.15. At the January meeting, membership will decide to whom we will donate.

Besides being delicious, the cookie sale netted \$296 for the Betty Menser Scholarship Fund.

Our next meeting will be January 13th Bag Lunch 11:45, Business Meeting 12:00, Program at 12:30. Tentative program will be the Sandpoint Resource Speaker. February program is to be determined.

Bible study at 1:15 PM will be led by Millie, #5, and February's lesson, #6, will be led by Paula.

All women of the church are considered members of PW. No dues – just good will and fellowship of faith required. Blessings for 2020!

Barbara Rolph

EARTH CARE

If we are trying to apply Earth Care principles in our personal lives, we may be interested in the way general guidelines and specialized tips are similar. One example: after 30 years of research, Cornell Lab and other researchers concluded that the bird population of the US and Canada had decreased by 30 BILLION BIRDS in that 30 years. They recommend some actions to slow the decline (and decrease pollution): plant native plants, avoid pesticides, drink shade-grown coffee, avoid single-use plastic. Some of the other tips from Cornell and Audubon are specific to birds and wildlife: Participate in “citizen science” observations, make windows safer from bird crashes, and keep cats indoors.

You may know of other ways that specific interests and Earth Care principles coincide, such as Mission, human rights, health, etc. Please share your thoughts on this.

Submitted by Marilyn Robertson for the Earth Care Team



The annual Souper Bowl Sunday food-raiser for the Food Bank is coming on Sunday, February 2nd. Vote for your favorite Super Bowl team with food or cash. The team with the most canned goods or dollars wins! Here are some suggestions from the Food Bank: cereal, canned fruit, beans, soup, stew, veggies, and chili, dry beans, coffee/tea, condiments, fruit juice, jam/jelly, macaroni and cheese, pasta, peanut butter, rice, skillet meals, spaghetti sauce, stewed, diced, whole tomatoes, Top Ramen Noodles, tuna and powdered milk. There will be tables set up to receive your donations.

Souper Bowl was begun by a Presbyterian youth group in North Carolina over 25 years ago.

We have participated in it for about eight years. Each year millions of can goods and dollars are donated to local food groups as a result. First Presbyterian donated over \$200 plus can goods last year. Let's match that again this year.

Thank you ahead of time,

Barbara Rolph, Anna Bates, and the Food Bank



JANUARY
Birthdays

January Birthdays

2 Shawna Kennaly

7 Kelsey Windju

10 Mary Sturgis

11 Mickey Quinn

18 Robert Eastwood

19 Jane Fritz

21 Dave Sturgis



FEBRUARY
Birthdays

February Birthdays

1 Victoria Oliver

2 Sarah Casey

16 Gary Pietsch

25 Dyno Wahl

26 Dawn Linendoll

Regular Monthly Events



Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 9:00 a.m. Adult Christian Education

Monday 6:00 p.m. Al-Anon

Tuesday Book Study Group—1:30 p.m.

Contemplative Prayer Group—3:00 p.m.

Choir Practice—5:30 p.m.

PFLAG—Second & Fourth Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday 6:00 p.m. Al-Anon

Thursday 12:00 p.m. Al-Anon

Calendar Announcements

January

- 14 *Presbyterian Women Meeting 11:45 a.m.*
- 21 *Church Officers Training and Joint Session/Deacon Meeting 6:30 p.m.*
- 26 *Annual Meeting after worship*

February

- 11 *Presbyterian Women Meeting 11:45 a.m.*
- 18 *Session Meeting 6:30 p.m.*
- 22 *Presbytery Meeting FPC Spokane*
- 26 *Ash Wednesday 5:30 p.m. soup supper 6:30 p.m. worship*



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