



THE GRAPEVINE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SANDPOINT, IDAHO
July/August 2020

From the Pastor...

At its meeting on Tuesday, June 16, the Session approved a last minute request by a local group of high school freshmen and their mothers to hold a peaceful prayer vigil around the Peace Pole on that Friday, June 19 at 5:30 p.m. to honor the lives of people killed by police. The group would then walk silently to other peace poles in town. It was communicated that this was a peaceful prayer walk, not a rally, and the word "march" was too strong of a word because it was a prayer walk, a vigil of solidarity. The Session felt this matched the intention of the Community Peace Garden as a natural gathering place for people to support one another during confusing and painful times. However, following approval by Session, the group then registered the event as an official Juneteenth Vigil and March for Black Lives, and listed three demands in their advertising: 1) to defund the police 2) to invest in black communities and 3) for Donald Trump to resign.

This had not been presented to Session as part of the event. Honoring people killed by police and claiming solidarity with a grieving world is not the same as making demands. After a flurry of Friday phone calls, Facebook Messenger notes, and emails to discuss the discrepancy between what was presented to Session versus what was promoted by the group, the

coordinators pulled the Peace Garden out of that night's event and people who arrived were directed to the Gardenia Center. Since then, the coordinators have sent the Session a note of apology for the miscommunication, accepting full responsibility for the confusion.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) and First Presbyterian Church of Sandpoint are certainly in favor of an open, inclusive society, and white supremacy and racism are not to be tolerated. But we also don't tend to tell people what to think, and are open to a spectrum of political viewpoints. While the Community Peace Garden and Peace Pole are intended as a welcoming space open to all, the vision is one of unity and wholeness, to bring people together in a prayerful place. The Session will be developing a written Policy regarding the Community Peace Garden so groups requesting use will have more information on the intended purpose of that space.

One cannot solve a problem with the same mentality that created it. Albert Einstein said something to this effect. I like to distinguish between reacting and responding. Taking action from a dualistic foundation of reactivity is not the same as responding from a grounded perspective of love that holds the tension of various perspectives. Christ is actively calling humanity to a higher level of consciousness that moves beyond the us-and-them dialectic. May the Peace Garden be a "thin place" where love of God, love of oneself grounded in Essence,

and love of neighbor created in God's image actively transforms lives at a soul-level and higher consciousness. This is a relational ministry of hospitality, where the Peace Garden is for peace.

Peace and All Good,
Pastor Andy



PS. Thanks to the crew that showed up Saturday, June 20 to spread mulch, pull weeds, move rocks, and work hard sprucing up the Peace Garden, including revamping the south section next to the kitchen, washing windows, and cleaning all the rain gutters and downspouts. The grounds look great, and people (and birds and squirrels) visit every day.

The Session Summary

June 2020

Session held its regular meeting on June 16, 2020. Instead of meeting in the Fireside Room, we used Fellowship Hall with its ample room to comply with Covid-19 social distancing protocols. Tables were widely dispersed, sanitizer available and everyone wore masks.

As part of the consent agenda, Session ratified previous email approvals:

Reopen public worship on Sunday, May 31, at 9:30 a.m. (summer schedule),

Observe communion on the first Sunday of the month during the Covid-19 protocols,

Allow small groups to reconvene meetings, observing social distancing and sanitation protocols,

Approve a request from CASA to use Fellowship Hall for training on Wednesday, July 15 and

August 19, from noon until 2:00 p.m. They will follow Covid-19 protocols.

(Clerk of Session Note: Considerable discussion and evaluation preceded each decision toward “reopening” our church programs and facilities. The church staff and session have been diligent in following recommended protocols during our limited use of church facilities due to the Coronavirus Pandemic “shut down” in mid-March. This due diligence will continue to guide our decisions during these uncertain times. Session decided to proceed cautiously, and that communion and congregational singing will be suspended until at least September or October.)

On an extremely encouraging note, Dyno Wahl, Finance and Stewardship elder, reported that current giving as of May 31, exceeds the 2020 budgeted income by almost \$6,000. Expenses are within \$80 of the budget during this same period.

Session approved the following items:

A request from Selkirk Brass to use church facilities for rehearsals. In lieu of a facility payment, they will provide music for worship services as appropriate. (This ensemble performed a Christmas concert in our sanctuary last December.)

A request from Carol Holm, representing several high school students, to use our Community Peace Garden for a remembrance observance on Friday, June 19. (Session approved this activity while agreeing that a formal policy is needed for groups/organizations using the Peace Garden.)

Session discussed the \$5,000 grant from the Idaho Heritage Trust to cover a portion of the costs for repairing water damage on the exterior of the sanctuary. A preliminary bid last year estimated the cost at approximately \$14,000. Sue Helander, Building and Grounds elder, will seek a current bid in order to develop a financial and construction plan.

May God continue bless our church and all who gather to worship with us.

Bill Love, Clerk of Session

Minutes of Deacons' Meeting

June 14, 2020

ATTENDANCE:

Present: Millie Rinker, Victoria Oliver, Margaret Ann Maricle, and
Carol Curtis, Mary Sturgis

Mary Sturgis opened the meeting with prayer.

Minutes of March were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Discretionary Fund	\$ 1753.29
EScript Fund	\$ 260.00
Food Bank	\$ 92.00
Missions	\$ 420.00
Noisy Offering	\$ 382.32
Scholarship Fund	\$ 1,650.00
Pastor's	
Discretionary Fund	\$ 415.98

SESSION REPORT:

Next Session representative will be Victoria Oliver.

ESCRIP AND NOISY OFFERING: Since we are not using the money from eScript and Noisy Offering this year for Kids Alive, Carol Curtis is looking into a need in the community we can contribute to. We will vote on this matter soon.

FOOD BANK: Deacons gave \$500 per email vote.

SCHOLARSHIPS: Voted to give Brandon Casey \$500 for extra college expenses.

MISSION GIVING: Voted to give 3Rd quarter \$300 to Sweet Magnolia.

COMMUNION: For the time being there will be no Communion during church service or for Traveling Communion.

NEXT MEETING: September 13

Margaret Ann Maricle, Secretary

Savannah
By K. L. Huntley

I landed in Savannah, Georgia a few days after the Las Vegas shootings in 2017. I was safely in a suburb of Vegas on that fateful Sunday evening visiting family, however my sweet heart's son, step-sister and husband were at the fatal Harvest Festival which left 60 dead and somewhere around 850 individuals injured. I had known all three of these individuals their entire lives.

Jeff in an instant, as the first bullets struck, knocked down his wife and brother-in-law and covered them with his body. 'No greater love ...that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). A bullet exploded through his back, smashing bone and exiting somewhere in the front of his arm.

My sweet heart's son Ian, after untangling himself and seeing his own hand was just a flesh wound, took off his shirt and made a tourniquet for his brother-in-law's shoulder, undoubtedly saving his life until they could get medical help. For hours and days the cell phones were screaming love and concern across the United States. We all connected in one form or another.

Three days later, I sat looking out my airplane's window on the tarmac, waiting for Air Force One to land as I anticipated joining my High School friends in Savannah. It was interesting to see the airport come to a standstill. Disappointing the president didn't even mention gun control after the largest death toll for a mass shooting in the US.

Needless to say Savannah was a nice respite from the prior, anxiety filled days. My High School club has made it a loose tradition to take trips together and Savannah was their choice for 2017, renting a lovely home for a week in the historic district.

They drink too much!

As we came in late Thursday night there was a notice on our door there was to be a parade the following morning and would we park in the back. No problem. I love a good parade and the next morning woke early to a house of sleeping ladies. I realized I was 'on my own' but could hear folks assembling just down the block so I ventured forth.

As I approached the decorated floats, the girls with their pom poms and the band tuning up I slowly realized I was the only white person there. With my white hair and inability to hold the slightest color on my skin I must have stood out like a sore thumb. It was a homecoming for the local university, complete with a Black Lives Matter float full of young black men! Remember Trayvon Martin four years earlier? The man who shot him was acquitted.

I am definitely out of place but curiosity rooted me on the sidewalk. I caught the eye of an elderly gentleman who seemed to be in charge and walked over to him. "Am I out of place here?" I inquired. "Should I go?" Then I explained to him where I just came from and the family involvement. The man gave me a hug and told me I was totally welcome and to please stay.

Stay I did. Camera in hand with everyone saying good morning to me, laughing and at one point escorting me across the street I was the only white person there I thought, until the police car joined

the parade and I noticed the Sheriff was white. I felt safe with these people accepted and in a sense - loved.

I returned to my girl friends hours later feeling slightly euphoric and wishing they had come with me. However, they were shuffling about the kitchen and dining room just getting their day going.

Savannah is beautiful with so many historic buildings and fascinating history behind each. As we toured the city I discovered a huge Presbyterian Church within walking distance that had been established in 1755. It seemed right up my alley on multiple levels so I talked one friend into joining me and we walked over to the service on Sunday.

The building was totally impressive and the largest Presbyterian Church (with the exception of Edinburgh, Scotland) I had ever been in. Huge white columns, mahogany pews, windows that reached the sky and an organ bigger than my living room. But as the service began I looked around at the congregation. There was only one black couple in the entire packed sanctuary. The population of Savannah is 55% African-American. Where were they? The service felt sanitized, the songs rote and the room cold.

On the walk home my friend and I passed a small, wooden church sandwiched between two larger buildings - or was it embraced. The enthusiastic gospel music coming from within made my heart smile and as we reached the entrance a young ebony woman holding a baby came out. The baby apparently had been upset by something.

We locked eyes and her little hand reached out to me and instinctively we touched. Her mama smiled lighting up her face and the child also smiled and giggled at me as we chatted briefly.

I concluded I had chosen the wrong church that morning.



Christian Education

The Sunday morning Adult Sunday School finished the book, “The Universal Christ” at the end of May. We were meeting during the onset of the virus on Wednesday over zoom just to talk and to see each other, a kind of fellowship time together. As we move through the summer we will not be meeting however if anyone would like to resume those Wednesday meetings please let me know. Just call or email Sharon Anderson.

During the summer we will be looking forward to the fall and answering the question, “What’s next?” One idea is to watch the movie “The Shack” and have time to talk about it, Here is the bigger question, would we like to do something else besides reading a book? When ideas occur to you please talk with Pastor Andy, Judy or Sharon so we can decide how to go forward. If you have been thinking of joining this meeting the fall would be a great time as we will begin something new then. All are invited!!!!

God Bless,
Sharon Anderson
Christian Education

Worship and Music Committee

On Pentecost Sunday, May 31st, we resumed in-person services in our sanctuary. Social distancing is being observed, masks are being worn, hand sanitizer is available at each entrance to the sanctuary, and items have been removed that could possibly cause cross contamination through handling (i.e. bibles, hymnals, donation envelopes, etc.). We continue to utilize Facebook Live as a way to broadcast most of each Sunday service to our broader audience of members and viewers who are not comfortable joining us yet in person, or are unable to be present due to distance. We will continue conducting these modified in-person worship services for the rest of the Summer. We are reviewing how and when to reintroduce the sacrament of Communion and congregation singing. We have adopted a cautious approach to reintroducing practices that could contribute to the spread of COVID-19. Safety is a top concern as we continue to come together to share in worship.

City Beach Service

On Sunday, August 2nd, at 9:30 a.m., we will hold worship service at the Pavilion at City Beach. Everyone should plan on bringing your own lawn chair, or you may choose to sit on the picnic benches that are available inside the pavilion. We will not be doing a potluck brunch but everyone is encouraged to bring your own meal, beverage, and service items. We will be able to eat together, at the appropriate social distance, immediately following the conclusion of our outdoor service.

Thank you!

Mickey

Building and Grounds

Big shout out to all the folks that helped with our church yard clean up day, on Saturday, June 20th. We got a lot accomplished and the yard is looking good. We paid special attention to removing weeds and adding a weed barrier to the South side of the building, as well as drastically reducing our lily population! Many thanks go out to Jim Bellotty, Dan Murphy, Millie Rinker, Victoria Oliver, Marian Cox, Judy Labrie, Carol and Barney Ballard, Cynthia Dalsing, Mary Strugis, Paula Vincent, Pastor Andy and Shawna, Lynn and Dave Pietz, Judy McComish, Bill Love, Don Helander and Ken Callison for the washing of outside windows and other cleaning, and Bart Casey for allowing us to use his dump truck for garden mulch.

Sue Helander





July Birthdays

7 Alexandra Krames

15 Barry Gage

21 Bob Maricle

25 Anna Bates

31 Chuck Bauer



August Birthdays

3 William Bissell

6 Dan Murphy

7 Samantha Bissell

8 Shelley Wogman-Bellotty

9 Jill Murphy

10 Darcy Taylor

22 Terrin Dustman

22 Susie Haskins

27 Shirley Parker

30 Phyllis Meagher

Regular Monthly Events



Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m. and on Facebook live or the sermon archive on the church website

Monday 6:00 p.m. Al-Anon TBD

Tuesday Book Study Group—1:30 p.m.

Contemplative Prayer Group—3:00 p.m.

Choir Practice—postponed for the summer

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

Wednesday 6:00 p.m. Al-Anon TBD

Thursday 12:00 p.m. Al-Anon TBD

7:00 p.m.—Alcoholics Anonymous

Thursday Selkirk Brass practice from 4:00—6:00 p.m.

**Worship At City Beach is Sunday, August 2nd at 9:30 a.m.*

Bring your own lawn chair, lunch, beverage, and table service. While it is not a potluck, even though it is “Bring your own”, at least we are planning to be together on the shores of the beautiful lake.



First Presbyterian Church

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