



THE GRAPEVINE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SANDPOINT, IDAHO
 May 2021

From the Pastor...

What a blessing to gather in worship and plant a tree, a new flowering plum along North Fourth Avenue. On April 18th, we took turns to put soil around the roots, and many people shared in this sacred act. One life gives energy, focus, and care toward another life; this is always a sacred act rooted in love. As a worshipful community, the Body of Christ, part of the great cloud of witnesses, we took action to express our call as Christian environmental stewards.

This also included blessing the garden beds. Five raised beds made of cedar boards now hold soil and promise of growth for future crops of food. What seemed like a narrow, somewhat neglected and forgotten part of the church property is now lovely and inviting. Two of the smaller beds located near the catering patio also feature bench tops. People in the Community Peace Garden can sit while they share conversation surrounded by flowers and veggies.

It will take a couple months for this growth to happen. A watering system will be installed. Plants and seeds selected, then put into the soil. Growth happens on its own time and cannot be forced or coerced. Slow growth allows time for sweetness to take shape. But growth does come. Perhaps you've noticed the "spring green" color of the season? The grasses, bushes, and trees offer an intensity to the green hue. Chlorophyll is cranking up, flooding new, sprouted leaves with photosynthesis energy activated with each added minute of the sun.

In some ways, change seems to accelerate this time of year. In only a month and a half, we'll be at the longest day and shortest night. The grasses and flower sprouts will soon go to seed and then die back. "The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God endures forever," says Isaiah 40:8.

The Community Peace Garden is no stranger to slow, yet steady, progress. Based on a design plan, one feature after another is added as we are able. No need to go in debt; we pay as we go and are gifted with funds.

May 2, 2021 marks 10 years of my call as pastor to First Presbyterian Church in Sandpoint. 10 years ago, my family and I moved from the church camp in Minnesota. Shawna and I are originally from Washington State, with two of our three sons born in Idaho, and it was good to get back out West and closer to home.

In some ways, 10 years goes slow. It takes a while to develop plans like the Community Peace Garden, with a walking prayer labyrinth and other the features of the design. On the other hand, it feels like yesterday members of the church helped us scrub the kitchen at the house we moved into, so we could paint before we unpacked the moving boxes.

Ministry happens on its own time and cannot be forced or coerced. I appreciate the authentic care of this congregation, both toward me and my family, and in the hospitality and welcome shown to the larger community. This church has an openness about it, an intentionality in not only preaching good news, but to show that news is really good, practicing love in action toward other people and all God's creatures and the Earth. That's the hope of ministry; that what we do in brief moments will have long-term

benefit for the spiritual health of the world. As we move into the year ahead, may what we do now glorify the Living Christ in ways that matter for generations to come.

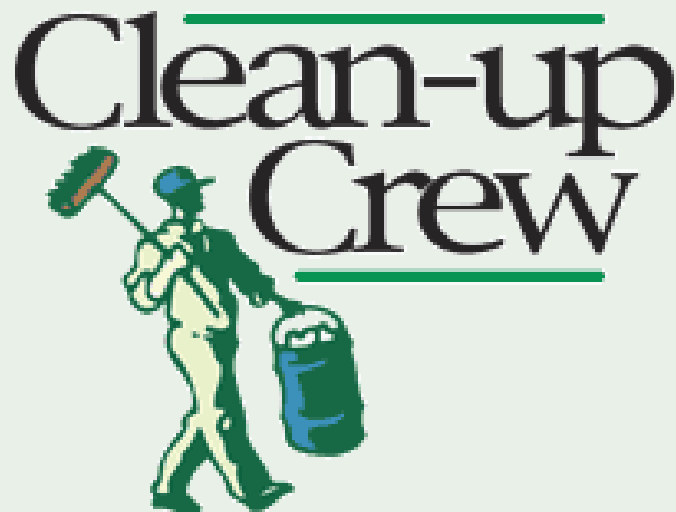
Peace and All Good,

Pastor Andy Kennaly



HIGHWAY CLEAN UP

Mark your calendar: Saturday, May 8th is the Highway Clean Up, as our other date was rained out by April showers. We will meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Westmond Store in Cocolalla to cover the one-mile stretch of Adopt-A-Highway program along route 95. Bring your work gloves. Vests and trash bags are provided by the state. Contact Sylvia Humes (poppy3942@gmail.com) to sign up, because we need to know ahead of time how many will come. Plus, there is lunch afterwards featuring delicious soup and bread. Come join others to be stewards of creation as we pick up along the road.



THE SESSION SUMMARY

MAY 2021

Session met on April 20, 2021, using a hybrid virtual/in-person format. While most gathered social distancing in Fellowship Hall, a couple elders joined via Zoom conferencing. This arrangement allowed Don Deters to attend the meeting while enjoying the Bavarian-themed village of Leavenworth, Washington.

We welcomed the Rev. Steve Neuder to the meeting. He recently began serving as the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry liaison to our church. Steve will moderate our September session meeting while Pastor Andy is on study leave.

Recognizing the hybrid trend of in-person/virtual Sunday worship services, Session approved purchasing equipment to enhance live-streaming of our services. While not cheap at just under \$8,000, Presbytery offers grants to assist churches with this type of upgrade. We will use the Memorial Fund to cover the remaining costs.

Thanks to finance elder Paula Vincent's efforts, we once again received a 2021 loan/grant from the Payroll Protection Funds program. Last year's grant of approximately \$9,000 offset revenue losses from loose offering, facility rental and retreats – all a direct result of pandemic restrictions.

During our monthly review of the current COVID-19 health protocols, Session agreed to reopen our facilities to outside groups. We will require them to disinfect tables and other surfaces and encourage social distancing and masks. These groups seldom interact with other church activities so there will be minimal contact with our members.

Several of these groups have been using our building for many years as they quietly and efficiently serve the community with their mission. Those who benefit from these groups have suffered from a lack of companionship and support for well over a year during this time of pandemic restrictions. We welcome them back to the sanctuary of our facility.

Dave Pietz announced that the Bike and Build tour has been cancelled for the second straight year. We regret not hosting these cyclists who advocate for affordable housing as they pedal across America.

Remember to wear red for Pentecost Sunday on May 23; whether you join us in person or remotely.

Bill Love, Clerk of Session

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Spring Clean Up, Saturday May 1st 9:00—1:00

Summer is just around the corner, the next few months will be busy getting our yard ready for Peace Garden gatherings. We are actively trying to reduce the amount of maintenance in the garden beds by mulching and planting more native plants that don't require as much water. Bring your gardening gloves, a shovel or hand shovel, water bottle and bag lunch. We will break at 12:30 to have our lunch in the garden.



ADOPT A PLOT

One way you might consider to help flower beds at church is by adopting a plot. Adopting a small area would allow you the flexibility of tending your space at a time that is convenient for your schedule. Plots needing a willing caregiver will be available mid-May. Please visit the garden after worship on Mothers Day, to see the different plots available.

The final version of the new stair railing was installed in the Sanctuary near the piano. This newer version replaced the foot pads with new foot pads to accommodate for larger lag screws to better secure the floor.

Sue Helander



LIBRARY

Book added to our church library: **BRAIDING SWEETGRASS**
by **Robin Wall Kimmerer**

I learned about Braiding Sweetgrass in 2020, as I trained to be a certified Master Naturalist. This book “spoke” to me. Since then, I have loaned it to friends, purchased copies for family members, and continued to enjoy and learn from it.

Robin Wall Kimmerer, a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, and a Distinguished Professor of Environmental Biology at State University of New York in Syracuse, is also a mother. Robin weaves all three of these experiences together: observing nature in all its wonder as a mother of two young daughters, tying in legends from her people, and explaining it scientifically. She shares the process of making maple syrup; cleaning a pond of its algae, and the incubator it provides for many tiny invertebrates; harvesting pecans and other edible wild plants; and the weaving of baskets from a pungent smelling wild sweetgrass. I hope you will enjoy it as I have.

Lynn Pietz



THANK YOU, EDUCATORS!

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

We are pleased to announce Session has approved Worship Services to continue to be in-person, and online. We ask all in-person attendees to continue to observe physical distancing protocols. Masks are encouraged, but are no longer required. Communion by sharing of the bread will take place the first Sunday of each month.

If you would like to share your musical talents during Worship, we are looking for volunteers. Please contact Mickey Quinn at mickeykwq@yahoo.com or Pastor Andy, if you are interested. Save the Date! On Sunday July 25th we will hold Worship outside at the City Beach Pavilion. This year we will encourage attendees to bring their own sack brunch/lunch, beverages, and table service items.

Thank you
Mickey Quinn



FINANCIAL UPDATE

We give Thee but Thine own, whate'er the gift may be; all that we have is Thine alone, a trust, o Lord, from Thee".

Do you ever get a song running through your head over and over? That happened to me as I was reviewing financial information for the church this week. The melody and words were from a familiar hymn, "*We Give Thee But Thine Own*", that we often sang as an offertory refrain in the church of my childhood. Curious about its origin, I looked up the hymn's history and found Schumann is credited with composing the melody in about 1850 and William W. How with writing the lyrics in 1864. The lyrics were inspired by one of David's prayers of praise as recorded in 1 Chronicles 29:14.

As the tune played spontaneously in the back of my mind, I couldn't help but think of our current congregation at FPC of Sandpoint and the many ways the members and friends of the church demonstrate this same giving from the heart that is described in David's prayer:

----*Commemorating love shared to connect with the community* (Session approved up to \$1000.00 from the memorial fund for any remaining expenses in developing the raised garden beds.)

----*Joyful giving to support the church's mission* (Pledges, donations and miscellaneous income given through April 18th totals \$54,532 dollars and represents 37% of the annual revenue needed to meet the budget.)

----*Mission outreach* (In addition to the quarterly allocation of \$300 to the Deacons for missions; \$3096 or \$36 per active member was gifted to the Presbytery. Other mission gifts included \$600 to the Synod and \$250 to the General Assembly.)

--- *Prayers of praise and thanksgiving* (FPC of Sandpoint received a second loan as part of the federal Cares Act. It is anticipated this loan will be forgiven at a future date resulting in a grant of about \$9500. Session approved use of these funds to meet payroll costs for all staff even though the church has revenue losses related to the pandemic and restrictions on some church functions.)

Thanks to all for generously sharing your time, talent and financial gifts. May you have a song in your heart!

Paula Vincent

ALTERNATIVE ORTHODOXY STUDY

Dear Friends

You are invited to join friends and members of the First Presbyterian Church of Sandpoint in a provocative study by Fr. Richard Rohr, PSF, called Embracing an Alternative Orthodoxy—the Legacy of St. Francis. We will be using a workbook and the companion DVD published by the Center for Action and Contemplation. It's a 5-session study on Tuesdays from 6:30—7:45, April 27 and May 4, 11, 18, 25 at the church. The sessions will also be accessed via Zoom if there are non-local folks who register. There is no fee however registration is required so we can pick the best way to gather.

The series as described on the Center of Action and Contemplation site this way:

The DVD presentation invites us to explore a Christian faith informed by contemplation, mysticism, compassion, justice and centuries of rich Christian history. In five video segments (each about 30 minutes), Fr. Richard explores Atonement Theology, Eco-Spirituality, The Cosmic Christ, Orthodoxy and Mysticism Over Moralism.

The group will watch and listen as Fr. Richard stimulates thoughtful, heartfelt discussion with a group on the video. There is a Participants' Workbook available for delving more deeply into each session's theme.

For more details or to register, contact Judy at (208) 290-3119 or registration@fpcsandpoint.com.

Blessings,

The FPC Christian Education Team

EARTH CARE TEAM

CELEBRATING SPRING

The Earth Care Team, Food Bank volunteers, and others from the community are celebrating the recent construction of raised garden beds. The primary goal is to provide some vegetables for the Bonner Community Food Center. The gardens and the planting of a Flowering Plum tree were dedicated and blessed after our Earth Day Worship on April 18.

In spring, and throughout the year, we continue recycling of paper and other items used in the church. We encourage you, at home to “reuse, repurpose, and recycle” to conserve resources. Sandpoint residents have the option of “Single Stream Recycling”. County residents can take these items (to separate containers) to Pacific Steel & Recycling: newspapers, office paper, cardboard, tin cans, & aluminum cans, but no plastic and glass. You county residents could check with a friend in town to possibly add your glass & plastic items to their blue bin. We all need to continue to find new ways to use less single use plastic. (A company called “Mighty Fix”, and others, sell “Stashers”, which can replace plastic zip-lock bags, & in some cases, even be washed in the dishwasher, for truly long-term use.) Lets continue the celebration of Spring and Earth Day.

Marilyn Robertson, for the Earth Care Team





May

BIRTHDAYS

May Birthdays

- 1 Mary Bauer
- 7 Virginia Ross
- 8 Jim Shirrell
- 9 Don Helander
- 12 Brian Casey
- 16 Jack Parker
- 18 Ted Farmin

Regular Monthly Events



Sunday School 9:00 a.m. on Zoom

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. and Facebook

Monday - Al-Anon TBD

Tuesday Book Study Group-1:30 p.m. to 3:00p.m. on Zoom

Contemplative Prayer Group-1:30 p.m. to 3:00p.m. on Zoom

Choir Practice - postponed

PFLAG - TBD

Wednesday - Al-Anon TBD

Thursday - Al-Anon TBD

Alcoholics Anonymous TBD



First Presbyterian Church

Ministers: Members and Friends

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