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FAITH CONNECTIONS
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LENT 2020: UNCERTAINTY

LENTEN WORSHIP
+ BREAKFASTS
SERMON SERIES
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More on Page 3!

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All-Church Auction & Dinner
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More about an evening of fellowship and fundraising on page 8, including an exciting live auction item!

Third Thursday
Taizé Prayer Service
6:30 PM,
Chapel
Every Third
Thursday of
the Month
Thursday, March 19

What’s new this month? The Daybreakers Study Group, Security Update, Rummage Runway, and more!
Pastor’s Message

“‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.’”

- Mark 1:15

Dear Friends,

Of all the seasons in the Christian Calendar Year, the Season of Lent is my favorite. Perhaps this is because it begins in winter but finishes in spring—like watching crocuses and daffodils appear or hearing the birdsong after long winter’s silence.

Lent is a forty day journey of spiritual discipline reflecting Jesus’ sojourn in the wilderness and his final journey to Jerusalem. It’s a time to be mindful of who Christ is: for ourselves and for our world. For me, it’s a time for intentional, daily prayer; for private time with my Bible; for long walks with Remy our Goldendoodle; and for thinking on things past and things yet to be. There is a holy intimacy on such a journey: a quickening of our inward life, like the greening of the world.

Most often during Lent, I make a solitary journey into the desert wilderness of Anza-Borrego State Park in California, where I am confronted with myself in a vast, unpopulated landscape of eloquent silence. This year, Lent has taken me to another destination: our old house in Naperville which we are preparing to sell after a generation of life there together. Going out to the Bagster or to Goodwill and thumbing through dusty boxes filled with old photos and other memorabilia has made for a different kind of journey: a revisitation of who I once was, even as I let go of that, readying heart, mind and will to take hold of what is, and what will carry our hope for the future. Isn’t that what repentance really means?

Here at church, there are rich opportunities to make such journeys together. Pick up a copy of Magrey deVega’s “Embracing the Uncertain” and listen to the sermon series each Sunday in Lent. Join others in worship and prayer each Wednesday morning at 7:00 AM; enjoy breakfast together, start your day in Christian community. Come to supper each Wednesday evening from 5:30 to 7:00 PM; stay for spiritual discussions using deVega’s book as our guide. Commit to letting go of something you don’t need this Lent—and taking firmer hold of something you do.

Maybe, like the humble crocus, we will find ourselves holding high our brave little blossoms, showing forth the colors of the Kingdom. Maybe, like the birds returning, the world will hear our “good news” singing, too.

With Lenten blessings,

Clinton
Senior Pastor,
Head of Staff

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**WE WORSHIP**

**Sunday, March 1**
9 & 11 AM
Rev. Clint Roberts Preaching

**Wednesday, March 4**
7 AM
Lenten Worship + Breakfast

**Sunday, March 8**
9 & 11 AM
Rev. Clint Roberts Preaching

**Wednesday, March 11**
7 AM
Lenten Worship + Breakfast

**Sunday, March 15**
9 & 11 AM
Rev. Kristie Finley Preaching

**Wednesday, March 18**
7 AM
Lenten Worship + Breakfast

**Thursday, March 19**
6:30 PM
Third Thursday Taizé Service

**Sunday, March 22**
9 & 11 AM
Rev. Clint Roberts Preaching

**Wednesday, March 25**
7 AM
Lenten Worship + Breakfast

**Sunday, March 29**
9 & 11 AM
Rev. Dr. Chip Hardwick Preaching

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*Anza-Borrego State Park*
Lent 2020: Uncertainty

With all the uncertainty in the world today, First Pres will be addressing this uncertainty through the ministry of Jesus and through his own relationship to the Father. Using Magrey R. deVega’s Embracing the Uncertain as a study guide, the pastors will lead discussion groups each Sunday at 10:00 AM and each Wednesday at 7:00 PM throughout Lent. A sermon series will accompany the small group studies and both will be available to all who wish to follow along.

Sermon & Study Series:

March 1, Week 1: “The Uncertainty of Faith”
The Desperate Father, Mark 9:14–29

March 8, Week 2: “The Uncertainty of Forgiveness”
Peter, Matthew 18:21–22

March 15, Week 3: “The Uncertainty of Worry”
The Voice from the Crowd, Luke 12:13–34

March 22, Week 4: “The Uncertainty of Mortality”
Mary & Martha, “John 11:1-44

March 29, Week 5: “The Uncertainty of Surrender”
Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1–10

April 5, Holy Week: “The Uncertainty of Obedience”
Jesus, Matthew 26:36–46

April 12, Easter Sunday: “The Empty Tomb and the Proof of the Resurrection”
You, Matthew 28:1–10

The Daybreakers... (something new in Men’s Ministry at First Pres)

Thursdays, 6:00 AM, South Parlor
Borrowing from Louis L’Amour’s epic Westerns, Daybreakers is a new opportunity for men at First Presbyterian Church. Starting Thursday, March 5 in the South Parlor, Pastor Clint will lead a men’s Bible Study for discussion, fellowship and prayer each Thursday from 6:00 to 7:00 AM. Donuts and coffee will be provided! Very little preparation will be required other than reading the passage for the week and reflecting on a few questions sent out by Pastor Clint the day before.

The group is designed for both working and retired men who are seeking to ground their week with meaningful theological discussions, a growing familiarity with Scripture, non-judgmental fellowship and supportive prayer.
Kindness in the Classroom

Kindness is a key ingredient that enhances positivity and helps children feel good about themselves. Children with a positive outlook have greater attention spans, more willingness to learn, and better creative thinking to improve results at school.

Why should we teach kindness in school?

Teachers have an awesome responsibility to mold the minds and hearts of our children. Cultivating kindness in the classroom improves school culture and supports learning, both academic and emotional. Teaching kindness in the classroom results in:

- More positive attitudes towards others and themselves
- More positive social behaviors and few behavioral problems
- Better academic performance

The best way to promote kindness and caring behaviors in our classrooms is to model them. When we show our students what it looks like and sounds like to be kind, there is a far greater chance they will repeat those modeled behaviors. And it is important to remember that children watch their teachers all the time and listen to everything we say. Essential caring behaviors and kindness are more often “caught” than they are “taught” in the classroom.

Remember, “A little spark of kindness can put a colossal burst of sunshine into someone’s day!” (author unknown). Here at First Presbyterian Preschool we have fun spreading kindness and joy everyday. Make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness and kindness to brotherly love.

On Saturday, March 7 the Preschool will be hosting its Annual Art Fair that also sponsors the Ryan Nyland Toy Drive. The toy drive is for the children at Lurie Children’s Hospital. This is just one example of the way we show the children the value of giving back to those that are in need of a show of love and kindness. If you are interested in donating to this wonderful cause, details about the Ryan Nyland Toy Drive and donations are on preschool.firstchurchlf.org/toy-drive. Please drop off new toys at First Pres on Saturday, March 7, 10:00 – 11:30 AM.

Blessings,

Suzie Brunner
Director of Preschool
Work Trip 2020

For this year’s Work Trip, the high school seniors are heading to Missouri on June 7 – 13! Registration for Work Trip 2020 is **due Wednesday, April 1**.

Please register at firstchurchlf.org/worktrip. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Kristie at kfinley@firstchurchlf.org.

Membership

Last month, we welcomed two new families into the First Pres community. Please say hello to the Andersons and Moorheads when you see them around!

Nancy Anderson

Nancy Anderson was received as a new member on February 2. She and Patrick celebrated their 40\(^{th}\) wedding anniversary on Pastor Clint’s first Sunday. They live in their starter house in Glenview and are “moving on up” in their camping experience from a tent to a pop-up with plans to visit many of the national parks out west. Nancy is an avid reader, especially historical and Christian fiction; she enjoys gardening, biking, hiking and nature in general. They enjoy classical music at CSO in winter, Ravinia and Millennium Park in summer. “The traditional worship service, uplifting music and a sense of family/community are important to us in our church plus having opportunities to serve.” Welcome Nancy and Patrick!

Jamie, Mary Gould, Woods and Mary Bremer Moorhead

Jamie and Mary Gould Moorhead joined the congregation on February 2. They moved to Lake Forest four years ago with their two children, Woods and Mary Bremer. Mary Gould is a native of St. Simons, GA and Jamie grew up in Deerfield. They enjoy running, yoga, bike riding and skiing. Their kids are active in basketball, soccer, taekwando, sailing and gymnastics. The family has loved the community and could see themselves in it. They find value in the Sunday services and love the feel of the church. Welcome Mary Gould, Jamie, Woods and Mary Bremer!
Polarization Recap

Being Good Neighbors in a Red and Blue Land

Fueled by 24-hour cable news and a growing national left-right rift, sociologists tell us that “polarization” has now graduated to “tribalism.” We often entrench ourselves in our own side of polarizing issues, resulting in widening partisan divide in our own communities, congregations, and homes. Rather than seeking relationships, many of us are not talking—or even listening—to each other.

However, through our scriptures and confessions, we know God calls us to a different way of life. Adult Faith Formation has been exploring how we, as a people of faith, can play a leading role in bringing people together in this era of increasing polarization, tribalism and contempt for the “other.” In short, we seek to have FPCLF to be part of the solution to this divisiveness. To that end, AFF has taken several steps:

1. AFF has written a “polarization” overture to the Chicago Presbytery for the 224th General Assembly, the national governing body for PCUSA. (Several other Presbyteries are cosponsoring the document that AFF developed.) The overture calls us to be part of the solution in halting the deliberate, selfish rending of relationships which ultimately drives us away from relationship with God. We propose that leadership in our churches conduct training to strengthen our abilities: to seek to understand the other sides of each story, to find in our hearts empathy where we once felt contempt, to pivot and befriend our neighbors with different viewpoints, to cooperate in civil discussion, and to learn how to best intercede in unconstructive conflict. This overture was approved by Session on December 16, 2019 and by the Presbytery on February 22, 2020.

2. AFF sponsored a workshop program in First Pres last fall to address how we can be faithful Christians in this divisive era. The program, led by Mike McGillicudy, specifically explored how we can be ambassadors of reconciliation. This exploration discovered that many people were struggling with how to talk with family, neighbors, and friends, regarding the current political climate. Some had become alienated from their family and friends, and wanted to find ways to reconcile, or at least begin dialogues with one another.

3. AFF sponsored a program with Allen Hilton regarding polarization on January 25 and 26. All members of the Lake Forest/Lake Bluff community were invited via a mailer. About 30 people attended, with a couple attendees all the way from Chicago in very inclement weather. Several different faiths were represented. There was lively give and take throughout the morning. Everyone appeared to resonate with the challenges our current political climate presents.

Allen then preached at FPCLF on Sunday, January 26, regarding how to hold courageous conversations in this tumultuous time. He held a group discussion after the 9:00 service. Roughly 90 congregants attended. The group discussion addressed a deceptively simple question: what place does politics have in the life of a thriving church?

Questions were encouraged and addressed. Unfortunately, there was not enough time to practice “courageous” conversations or exploration of peoples’ faithful participation in government in Biblical times. AFF is addressing how these can be done in the future, if there is sufficient interest. Also, results from the survey conducted at the end of the talk will be incorporated into AFF’s next steps. Input from the congregation is always welcomed.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.” Matthew 22:37-40 RSV

For more information, contact Pastor Chip at chardwick@firstchurchlf.org.
Confirmation Sunday
Confession Sunday is March 15 at 9:00 AM. Join us as we welcome the 2020 Confirmation Class into Membership. We will celebrate this part of their faith journey in Fellowship after the service in the Great Room.

Youth Group Schedule
March 1, 8, 15, Senior High Meeting, 7:00 PM
Middle School Meeting 3:30 – 5:00 PM
March 22 – 29, No meeting, Spring Break

Calling all Parents and Grandparents!
Book Read Ready or Not: Preparing Our Kids to Thrive in an Uncertain and Rapidly Changing World by Madeline Levine, PhD. New York Times bestselling author explores how today’s parenting and education system is failing to prepare children for their certain-to-be-uncertain futures, and how we can reverse course for lasting adaptability, resilience, health, and happiness. The book is available at the Lake Forest Bookstore. We encourage you to read and discuss it with family and friends. Join us at the Family Action Network’s sponsoring of a presentation by Madeline Levine at the North Shore Country Day School on March 10, 7:00 – 8:30 PM (www.familyactionnetwork.net/events). If you any questions or want to gather a group to discuss, contact Pastor Kristie at kfinley@firstchurchlf.org.

Buildings & Grounds: Security
The Buildings and Grounds Committee is continuing in its life-safety/risk management mission in further documenting procedures and safety plans to protect all church members and visitors. A small B&G subcommittee is developing recommendations for improving campus security and emergency responses. This planning is an extension of our recent ALICE training and Security Action Planning Team sessions now including a review of high probability incidents. The discussion now includes risk management policies and procedures for slips and falls, medical emergencies, fire drills, shelter in place (e.g., storms), and campus intruders. There will be updates as they work through this process.

First Pres is Seeking Candidates for Part-time Custodian:
First Presbyterian Church is looking for an “on call” part time custodian to assist in daily facility and maintenance operations of the church. Must have the ability to lift 50 pounds and the flexibility to be available on days, nights or weekends - monthly hours would vary due to church activities and staff scheduling. If you are interested and would like more details about the position, please contact jobs@firstchurchlf.org.
All-Church Auction & Dinner
Saturday, March 7

Opening Hearts and Homes for Mission
We will gather in the Great Room for the auction and fellowship, then depart for dinner at various First Pres members’ homes, as Jesus and his apostles were hosted in the disciples’ homes. All proceeds will go to First Pres Mission partner grants. We look forward to seeing you on March 7!

LIVE AUCTION ITEM - ONE AND ONLY! Dinner at the Manse with Clint and Deb Roberts
Four lucky couples can join Clint and Deb Roberts for dinner in their home. Kathy McFarland will be the Chef du Jour; Geoffrey Luce will be providing the wine; and Session members will serve the meal.

Form a syndicate! You could form a group of eight people and have a designated person bid on your syndicate’s behalf. The winning price could be equally divided. This dinner will be scheduled for a later mutually agreed upon date.

March Featured Mission Partner:
Beacon Place
Beacon Place was established in 2012 to bring about transformational change for the Waukegan area’s most needy families. The neighborhood community center offers homework and tutoring support, as well as parent enrichment. Programs are designed to uphold participants’ dignity, give people the targeted help they want and need, but also requires a commitment from participants to give back. This creates a partnership that goes beyond a hand out and becomes a true hand up. The center also recognizes that change is difficult if people are hungry so food, nutrition and health are also critical components of all programs.

For more information, visit beacon-place.org.

Souper Bowl of Caring
Last month, the high school seniors collected donations after worship for Souper Bowl of Caring, where donations go to Beacon Place, the agency the youth selected. It was a great success! Thank you for your generosity!
The Dakota Partnership 2020 Mission Trip

Join Pastor Clint and Pastor Kristie on a mission to serve Native American children and their families with the Gospel in word and action.

From June 20–26, our Pastors will join with other Presbyterians and friends across Chicagoland to journey to Sisseton, South Dakota, home of the Wahpeton Sioux People. Partnering with other churches in the Presbytery of Chicago, the YMEN of North Lawndale and a local biracial Assembly of God church along with Native American Presbyterians from the Reservation, the week will focus on a four-day VBS program serving 200+ children and daily construction projects supporting the six Dakota Presbytery churches on the Reservation itself. Motel accommodations are provided in town as well as two hot meals and a bag luncheon daily at our host church, Family Life. Both individuals and entire families may sign up to attend! See Pastor Clint for more details or visit knoxpres.org/dakotapartnership. Scholarships are available.

Mission Statement:
To enhance and enable the development of Christian values in Dakota and other Native American communities by cultivating positive and enduring relationships, developing mutual understanding, and building self-esteem. We do this through actions which restore hope, encourage healthy values, promote responsible behaviors, and enhance the worship experience.

Value Statement:
We serve Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
We respect Native American Spirituality and values.
We love one another as children of God.
We honor God’s ownership of the land and its resources.

Save the Date!
Saturday, April 18
Details to follow.

Spring Sale:
Saturday, May 2, 2020
Please sign up to help us setup for the sale!

Sign-Up at firstchurchlf.org/rummagevolunteer by Friday, April 3!

As part of the Rummage Ministry’s 70th Year Celebration, we will have ONE worship service on Sunday, April 26 at 10:00 AM when we recognize past and present rummage volunteers before kicking off setup week at 11:30 AM. All are invited to join us in honoring our volunteers and helping set up for the sale!
Session Highlights from the February 23, 2020 meeting by Mary Watanabe, Clerk of Session

At its February 23, 2020, Stated Meeting, session:

- Led by Marty Vander Velde, reflected on what Philippians 2 says about our roles as servant leaders;
- Heard Moderator Roberts’ report about the upcoming Lenten series of sermons and study groups, based on Embracing the Uncertain, a book by Magrey R. deVega;
- Reviewed the Lenten worship schedule, starting with Ash Wednesday services at 7 AM followed by a service at 5:30 PM and 7 PM; worship and breakfast will be held each Wednesday at 7 AM; Easter sunrise service will be in the Memorial Garden;
- Learned that Pastor Finley would be imposing ashes on the foreheads of people at Lake Forest Hospital on Ash Wednesday;
- Was encouraged by Clerk Watanabe to sign up—online or with Mary—to serve communion on March 1, April 5, and May 3;
- Was informed of the DayBreakers men’s ministry group, which, led by Pastor Roberts, will hold a retreat in September and will start regular study groups on Thursday mornings from 6-7 AM beginning March 5;
- Was invited to join a mission trip to the Dakota Sioux Reservation in South Dakota, with other Presbyterian churches and a variety of ethnic and age groups, which Pastor Roberts has been involved with for 18 years; the Dakota Partnership encourages both families and individuals to join in the service trip;
- Filled out forms that will help Long Range Planning and Governance choose a consultant and plan a retreat for session this year;
- Was overjoyed with the fine selection of new elders, deacons, and ACNC members-at-large, each with excellent gifts and talents to share with the church community;
- Heard about the March 7 All Church Auction, which will begin in the Great Room and online for the silent auction, followed by dinner in homes; middle school students and work trippers will serve appetizers;
- Approved changing our Sunday worship schedule to one service at 10 AM, on April 26 to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of Rummage; this is Set-up Sunday and all chair people and workers will be recognized during the worship and the reception;
- Was reminded of the retirement reception for Donna Birney at 10 AM on March 1;
- Heard a recap of the Annual Congregational Meeting by Pastor Roberts;
- Learned that Pastor Hardwick will lead a Done in 60 Minutes on Spiritual Practices on March 1;
- Was reminded that a third phase of ALICE (active shooter) training will soon be available;
- Approved a new system to keep the church membership rolls up to date;
- Reviewed Mission’s new, more efficient, bicameral subcommittee organization;
- Were made aware of the March 15 Pop-Up Easter sale, which will also be Confirmation Sunday with a reception in the Great Room; and the Rummage Runway event in April;
- Were grateful to learn that our Seminary Intern, Jim Cochrane, will be starting a Middle School Youth Group that will meet at 3:30 PM on Sundays;
- Declared the Wednesday night suppers, Trivia night, and the children’s musical huge successes;
- Remembered many members who are sick, in rehab, or grieving.
Deacons

John McNicholas, Moderator

Bill Allen  Dan Fietsam  Beth Jones  Sherry Trenchard
Paul Bergmann  Davis Gramza  Marcy Kerr  Gale Strenger Wayne
Dorothy Chantler  Peg Gronau  Susan McDowell  Shawn Ward
Meredith Clawson  Sharon Haltom  John McNicholas  Tina Young
Scott Crawford  Nancy Hamming  Susan Milanak  
Susan Daly  Hild Hoogcarspel  John Noble  
Wendy Darling  Dick Johnson  Coco Stevenson  

Elders

Mary Watanabe, Clerk of Session
Rita Fossell, Assistant Clerk of Session

Mike Adams  Membership, Finance: Endowment  
Jim Bertram  Adult FF  
Renee Borkowski  ACNC, LRPG  
Missy Burger  Mission: Rummage  
Roger Burgis  Finance, Budget, Endowment  
Peter Elliott  Worship & Music  
Ed Hamming  Buildings & Grounds, Worship & Music  
Bruce Keith  SST  
Jim Kingsley  Youth & Young Adult FF  
Geoffrey Luce  Mission  
Robert Miller  LRPG  
Geoff Murray  Stewardship  
Barbara Schulz  SST, Mission: Evangelism  
Jim Seymour  SST  
Marty Vander Velde  Children FF  

Staff

Suzie Brunner  Director of Preschool  
Jim Cochrane  Seminary Intern  
Rev. Kristie W. Finley  Associate Pastor  
Patrick Goymerac  Accountant  
Rev. Dr. Charles B. Hardwick  Interim Associate Pastor  
Stewart Kerr  Director of Mission  
Rev. Kent Kinney  Parish Associate Emeritus  
Jan McNicholas  Director of Business Operations  
Guillermo Montufar  Custodian  
Susan Noble  Director of Children’s Music  
Kane Quilos  Director of Communications  
Rev. Clinton G. Roberts  Senior Pastor, Head of Staff  
Catarino Rodriguez  Custodian  
Sarah Seccombe  Director of Children’s Faith Formation  
Alisa Steady  Administrative Coordinator  
Dr. Thomas Tropp  Director Of Music and Arts  
Dr. Barry Wenger  Organist, Director of Handbells  
Cymbre Westburg  Financial Associate  

ACNC - All Church Nominating Committee       
FF - Faith Formation       
LRPG - Long Range Planning & Governance       
SST - Staff Support Team
SATURDAY, MARCH 7
All-Church Auction & Dinner 2020
WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE!