



First
Presbyterian
Church
MOSCOW, IDAHO

News & Views



Recently I was reading an article in Presbyterian Outlook by Dr. Brian Blount, president of Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. Dr. Blount listed numerous challenges to Christian ministry that reflect some of the challenges of our times. These include, first, "Christian schisms" that indicate "dramatic shifts in how church folk believe God wants them to respond to the changing racial, gender, sexual, political and ecological realities" of our present times.

Second, he notes "church disenfranchisement – the loss of social status" and thus power in the local and national community.

Third, he suggests "church confusion, a disorientation about how spiritual nurturing can or should engage" social and political situations, divisions, and activism.

I might add the increase in lethal, and generally gun related, violence and underlying fear due to painting those 'others' out there as maliciously dangerous. And, I would note that many of the issues Dr. Blount identifies, that is "the changing racial, gender, sexual, [technological, economic,] political, and ecological realities" or perceived changes in these areas, are leading to real anxiety, angst, and anger.

I will admit I identify with Frodo in this quotation from *The Fellowship of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien: "I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Frodo. "So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us." Throughout this book, which develops the quest to thwart a rising evil through the journey of unlikely heroes, there is an interplay of the evil and the good. The consequences of this interplay influence the lives of the protagonists and their adversaries. Each must decide what to do with the time that is given them.

As we read the scriptures that describe Easter morning and the days that followed, we hear described the sadness, uncertainty, and fear the followers of Jesus experienced when it

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Worship at 9:30 a.m.
beginning May 28

From the Pastor *...continued from Page 1*

felt like evil had overwhelmed the good. They are uncertain, even despair, over what to do with the time that was given them. This is generally addressed in these scriptures with an appearance of Jesus. Often, Jesus encourages his followers to be at peace in the face of their fears through trusting in him "and that, with this faith, you may have life in his name." Jesus seems to invite his followers to allow the encounter with the living Christ to offer a way forward. This way forward seems to include the gift of the Holy Spirit to comfort, counsel, and encourage them so that they experience life and share the way to "have life."

Yet, Jesus identifies the reality that he will not appear again in quite the same way once he ascends. Still, he encourages belief, trust, and faith when Jesus notes that he gives, "God's blessing on people who don't see, and yet believe!" These scriptures and this time in the church year is one that reminds me of the hope I have in the surprising gift of forgiving, redeeming, healing love of God in Christ Jesus. I may not even see fully what to do with the time that is given us. Yet, I don't feel I am going blindly off into the darkness of our time, for I believe we are invited to look to Jesus, to recognize how he appears in our life. This appearance may be through his teachings, his life, and his resurrection remembered and relived. His presence with us occurs through the agency of the Holy Spirit and in ways I am not sure I am fully (or sometimes even partially) in tune with. Yet, the church has survived every age and continues in the gathering of followers of Jesus whose faith leads them to attempt to live the way of Christ. Perhaps the world needs the courage of those who know the peace of Christ that goes beyond all understanding and are willing to value and care for others with the surprising gift of forgiving, redeeming, healing love. Maybe we are invited to decide to use the time given us to show this grace in our lives no matter what is going on in the world around us.

Grace and peace,

Norman



Save the Dates! — Lael Summer Vespers Services

June 25, 2023- Vespers service with a VBS theme

July 23, 2023

August 13, 2023

Watch for details in Sunday bulletin announcements and summer newsletter.

Service Time Change

Summer is fast approaching, and that means **Sunday Worship will begin at 9:30 a.m. starting Sunday, May 28, 2023** (Memorial Day Weekend) and will continue through September 6 (Labor Day Weekend).



Sunday School Wraps Up for the Summer

The Sunday morning Bible Project class has ended for the semester. The last day of Sunday School for children will be May 21. The weekday Bible Project groups for men and women are also on hiatus until after Labor Day.

Deacons Monthly Benevolence Offering

The deacons chose to have our congregation give to Sojourners Alliance for our May Benevolence offering. Casey Bolt, the director of Sojourners Alliance, gave the following information about his organization:

“Sojourners Alliance operates an on-site shelter facility for homeless men, women, and families, as well as a permanent housing program for literally homeless individuals and families with a diagnosed disability. Sojourners Alliance also provides short term emergency shelter in area motels and rental assistance to prevent homelessness for those facing an eviction. Its programs offer long-term housing, supplemental food assistance, case management, and referrals to other area agencies in an effort to help its clients become self-sufficient and independent.”

Please support this essential ministry by sending your donation to First Presbyterian Church, memo “May benevolence” or give online through our church at <https://tithe.ly/give?c=982246>

Dinner Together

Join together for a meal and fellowship with members and friends of FPC this summer and fall. Sign up to be placed into a group of 5-6 others (singles and couples are welcome!). Each group will then gather for a meal approximately one time a month for the next six months. How and where to meet is up to each group, with meeting at the church building always being an option. Get to know others in our faith community in new ways by sharing a meal. Please let us know your interest either by signing up with your name and best contact information on the sheet posted on the church office window or via email moscowpresby@gmail.com by May 25th.

FAMILY MINISTRY

Julie (Hopper) Everest, Director of Family Ministry familyministryjulie@gmail.com

May is a hinge month as we complete the school year and begin to transition into rites of passage and summer programming. Looking back, we can see that April was a very full month for Family Ministry, with both seasonal and regularly scheduled activities, and May promises to be quite busy as well.

Holy week, we had young people who helped with candle lighting and extinguishing in the Good Friday service. On Saturday there was an egg hunt, snacks and activities. Attendance was low, but fun was high. Besides silly Easter games, the kids had fun with crafts, including drawing on fake eggs using feathers dipped in ink. Easter morning, breakfast was good and spirits were high among the kids at church. Throughout the morning service, there was a lot of creativity and sticker fun among the quietly industrious children at the back of the sanctuary.

Our Youth Group, which completed the Bible Project Introduction to the Bible series in March, met twice in April, and started a Veggie Tales themed comparison of the Bible text and the story choices of the animators. We started with the first half of *Little Joe*, planning to finish at the second monthly meeting, but between outdoor school and sickness, we had low numbers and decided to postpone watching the video. Instead, our small group had a hilarious game night. We will have two Youth Group meetings in May, and then we'll be getting right up to the end of the school year.

FOON came in like a lamb and went out like a lion in April. An alternate earlier lunch schedule during Holy Week meant we had no pizza, but we handed out treats and water in the parking lot to about 40 students. By the last Wednesday, good weather and word of mouth swelled our numbers to 100. We also received approval from the Presbytery for our grant proposal, which will help finance pizza and cover the cost for other purchases to enhance our FOON program. The five Wednesdays in May will mark the end of the FOON season for the 2023-2024 school year.

We will continue to offer 9:15 a.m. Sunday School through May 21. Our early worship time - 9:30 instead of 10:30 - begins on Memorial Day Weekend. May 28 will inaugurate our season of Stay and Play after church. Over the summer, we will have various yard games to play after church, including badminton, corn hole, croquet, etc. In fact, if you have a favorite game you would like to share, bring it along. This time of play and fellowship is open to all ages, and I hope many of you will join the fun.

Our final Parent Night Out of the school year was on April 28. This service to parents in our church and community has been a mutually beneficial collaboration with the UU Church. Parents can enjoy a few free hours, and the kids have dinner, play and create various crafts. I think the kids see it less as babysitting and more as a chance to have a lot of fun with friends.

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Family Ministry *...continued from Page 5*

Vacation Bible School is now approaching quickly. This year's VBS theme is *Operation Restoration: Mending God's World*, and it will be held June 19-23 from 9:00-11:30. The week's themes are: feed, heal, forgive, pray and rest. Registration forms are available in the church office. Monday of VBS week is Juneteenth, so we will include a celebration of the holiday. Because it is a new national holiday and occurs outside the school year, we are glad to have a chance to include it in our VBS program.

VBS is a group event that includes all ages of folks from our church and community. It is officially set up for kids from age four through those leaving 4th grade, but to make it happen, we will need middle and high school kids, and young and older adults. I'm excited because the content of our VBS this year is applicable to all ages. If you are able to help with VBS, you will have the opportunity to learn along with the kids and grow in your life of faith.



Also, volunteers are needed to help with a variety of tasks before, during, and after VBS. Please look over the list below and consider how you can help make VBS a success and support the children of this congregation and the local community. If you have questions or want to offer your help, you can contact Julie Everest at familyministryjulie@gmail.com or 208-882-0700.

Small Group Leader	Bible Story Leader	Publicity/photography
Worship Leader	Art & Science Leader	Prepare/serve snacks
Drama Leader	Games Leader	Prepare arts & crafts
Drama participant	Service Learning Coord.	Set up or Clean up
Music Leader	Donate Supplies/Snacks	Other help as needed

As we rapidly approach the end of the school year, I want to express my gratitude for all the help and support you give me in our church. Thank you for supporting and encouraging kids and families and for being willing to invest in our local teens. I'm grateful to serve with you all.

~Julie

Finance Report



As of March, 2023

	Month	YTD
Receipts	\$ 26,058	\$124,269
Disbursements	\$30,097	\$89,023
YTD Surplus/(Deficit)		\$35,246
Cash Balance (checking/savings)		\$110,129

Pentecost Special Offering Supports Youth

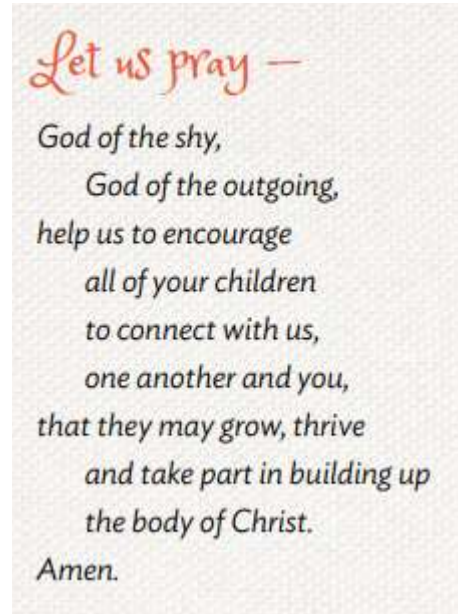
On Pentecost Sunday, May 28, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the church. We will also receive a special offering that will help youth in our church and across the country form a solid foundation of faith. We will create opportunities to help children and youth to have strong and faith-filled lives.

The Pentecost Offering will support local and national youth-oriented programs. Approximately 40% of our offering will be dedicated to youth-related ministry right here in our own community.

The remaining 60% of our offering will go to three Presbyterian Church (USA) programs related to young people:

- ◆ The Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program — a transformative, faith-based year of Christian service for young people, ages 19-30, in 20 sites around the world and in the United States
- ◆ The Ministries with Youth program — helps guide our youth by uniting them in Christ and lifting them up as leaders and messengers of God's word
- ◆ Children At-Risk — devoted to improving education and providing safe havens for children who are at risk

Please generously support the Pentecost offering on Sunday, May 20th. Look for the special offering envelopes in the pew racks, and make your checks payable to First Presbyterian Church, with "Pentecost Offering" in the memo line. Thank you.



BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST.
 — EPHESIANS 4:12, CEB

May 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 12:00 pm– Tuesday sisters group	3 10:30 am– Men’s Bible Project 12:30 pm– FOON 7:00 pm– Choir	4 10:00 am– Women’s Bible Project	5 6:00 pm– Tapestry Choir Concert	6
7 9:15 am– Sunday School 10:30 am– Sunday Worship	8	9 12:00 pm– Tuesday sisters group	10 10:30 am– Men’s Bible Project 12:30 pm– FOON 7:00 pm– Choir Practice	11 10:00 am– Women’s Bible Project	12	13
14 9:15 am– Sunday School 10:30 am– Sunday Worship <u>Mother’s Day</u>	15 7:00 pm– Deacons	16 12:00 pm– Tuesday sisters group 3:30 pm– Prayer Shawl	17 10:30 am– Men’s Bible Project 12:30 pm– FOON 5:00 pm– Praise Team	18 10:00 am– Women’s Bible Project	19	20 Scout Court of Honor
21 9:15 am– Sunday School 10:30 am– Sunday Worship	22 7:00 pm– Session	23 12:00 pm– Tuesday sisters group	24 12:30 pm– FOON 5:00 pm– Praise Team	25 10:00 am– Women’s Bible Project	26	27
28 9:30 am– Sunday Worship <u>Pentecost Sunday</u>	29	30 12:00 pm– Tuesday sisters group	31 12:30 pm– FOON	1 6:00 pm– MDS Graduation	2	3



First
Presbyterian
Church

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First Presbyterian Church

"Growing in Christ"

Through May 21: Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.
Followed by coffee fellowship

Beginning May 28: Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Facebook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/moscowfirstpres>

YouTube: [First Presbyterian Church of Moscow - YouTube](#)

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Pastor Norman Fowler
fpcpastornorman@gmail.com