



THE GRAPEVINE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SANDPOINT, IDAHO
January/February 2021

From the Pastor

Which baby has more potential in 2021 to help us through the year? Is it the New Year's Baby, the traditional symbol of January 1st coming into time at the stroke of midnight as fireworks start popping? This is the calendar-shift-baby that gets most of the attention, and it seems like people are putting a lot of hope in 2021, expecting a better experience than 2020.

But the church already celebrated the beginning of a new year over a month ago. The First Sunday of Advent, over four weeks ahead of Christmas and well before the chronological calendar shift, marks the start of the liturgical year, the church calendar. Anticipating the birth of Jesus, preparing our hearts to receive the Word made flesh, and celebrating Incarnation; these are the focus of Advent/Christmas/Epiphany at the start of the new year.

The Gregorian calendar was born from the Vatican in 1582, replacing the Roman calendar. Immediately accepted by Catholic countries, it took more than 300 years for Protestants and others to fully adopt the change to the Gregorian calendar, the twelve month variety hanging on your wall.

Interesting both the church calendar and the Gregorian calendar traditionally feature a baby as a symbol of the new year: the baby Jesus, or baby New Year. By the end of the year, the old man of the Gregorian calendar looks worn out and defeated and people are glad to be rid of him. The last Sunday of the church year, by contrast, focuses on the eternal Reign of Christ as the year comes to a close with a climactic sense of fulfillment.

As the Christian year progresses through seasonal cycles of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost, scripture and tradition focus on expectations and challenges of life. They don't confuse sentimentality as they honestly recognize the mix of beauty, complexity, and struggles faced in earthly existence. Christian teachings focus on the depth of connection and relationship that calls us closer to God, Christ, the Spirit, to nature, to others, and ourselves. Our experience of divinity expands as we follow Jesus on his cruciform journey and focus through each season on some aspect of discipleship's calling to joyful service.

For some reason, I find myself a little uneasy with all the assumptions thrown at 2021, and peoples' rising expectations that it be better than 2020. It won't surprise me when Baby New Year 2021 starts showing wrinkles, gains a limp, and is escorted out in twelve months with a sigh of relief.

It continually amazes me at the many ways the baby Jesus grows in wisdom and stature, invites people to follow, shares tough teachings, and empowers disciples "to glorify God and enjoy God forever" (The Larger Catechism). I put my trust in the baby Jesus over Baby New Year. Eternal blessings never fail, no matter what the other calendar has in store for us.

Peace and All Good,

Pastor Andy Kennaly



PASTOR POSITION PIVOTS TO PART-TIME

At the Congregational Meeting on November 22, 2020, the Pastor's Terms of Call were unanimously approved. This involved adjustments to compensation, vacation days, and hours worked each week. As the budget structured, 2021 involves 35 hours per week for the Pastor. This includes nine hours allocated by the Session for the pastor to focus on writing, outside of sermon preparation. 35 hours doesn't sound much different than 40, as the 2021 budget has an almost 10,000 dollar cushion from Covid relief funding granted in 2020.

If you have a matter of Pastoral Care or an emergency, such as going to the hospital, please let the pastor know as soon as possible so you may be spiritually supported by the pastor and church community. Beyond this, the days that are most practical for connecting with Pastor Andy for meetings or office work are Tuesdays and Wednesdays. If you have any questions or want to connect, the church office number is 208-263-2047, and the Pastor's Cell Phone is 208-304-5488, and it is capable of talk or texting. Pastor Andy says the cell phone (Verizon) sometimes doesn't ring, but goes straight to voicemail, so be sure to leave a message so he knows you called, and he will call you back. The call does not show up in recent calls list if you hang up without leaving a message.

The Session, in collaboration with the Personnel Committee, will continue to monitor the need for part-time status, based on membership, budget, and other trends. Conversation will be ongoing in planning effective ministry, which largely focuses on direct involvement of Active Members. With an Active Membership Roll of 75 souls, Sandpoint First Presbyterian Church is a small congregation, like the majority of churches (under 100 members) in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). Small churches cannot do everything, but they can do some things very well, with God's help. Sandpoint First Presbyterian Church continues to reach out into the community and larger world to share God's love in Christ.

AWAKENING TO SPIRIT – A ZOOM RETREAT

First Presbyterian Church of Sandpoint has a history of hosting retreats, which are well received and have a regional reach. With the Pandemic of 2020, retreat planning came to a stop. Because we've become more accustomed to Zoom format through the Adult Sunday school, Tuesday book study and prayer groups, the Retreat Planning Committee is giving this a try. Weaving together some experiences, video, poem, scripture, prayer and mindful movement that point to how Spirit is calling us to evolve, how to access our hearts, how to deepen faith, a retreat offering is in the planning. Participant are asked to have with them a pen, paper, art supplies, and journal. They will receive the Zoom access link and participate in guided meditation and lectio divina, along with other practices. A cushion or yoga mat will be needed for the morning opening section.

Retreat takes place online on Saturday, January 23, 2021

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 45-minute lunch break, then regathering from 12:45 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Cost: \$20 per participant

To sign up, send an email to registration@fpcsandpoint.org, send a \$20 check to the church with "Zoom Retreat" in the memo line, or call Judy Labrie at 208-290-3119 to register or for more information.

TING!

The church internet is utilized more and more with online requirements for meetings and worship. The former internet provider kept dropping out, leaving Pastor Andy stranded in the middle of a book study or trying to post the sermon to the website. The Session authorized changing carriers to TING, a new highspeed internet company utilizing fiber optics. It is being introduced to select small towns in America, and Sandpoint is one of them. They installed their wires underground, and the closest access point near the church is by the Little Free Library of the Peace Garden. TING decided to cover the cost of burying an extension underground along the south property line, then bringing it up to the church building on the southwest corner (behind the dumpster). From there, a wire is attached to the building under the eave all the way to the office window, where it goes inside for connection. The church Wi-Fi name is FPC. If your phone device has access, there is a password that needs entered. Because a Session member suggested this change, under TING's Refer a Friend Program they waived the installation fee. Also, the monthly bill is about 30 dollars less than before, with more reliable service and much faster connection speeds.

SINGING

One of the things scaled back during the Pandemic is singing in groups. Do you have a favorite church hymn or song that you're missing? Please let Pastor Andy know what songs are inspiring to you. He can discuss this with Annie Welle, pianist, perhaps for special music. We can also have a list of songs to sing once restrictions are lifted. Send titles to: pastorandy@fpcsandpoint.org and be sure to include what it is about that song that resonates with you.

THANK YOU FROM PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Thank You to Frankie Clouse for contributing several "historic" photo membership directories, and other documents that will supplement the church history albums. There is also a booklet from 1993, when there was a celebration of 90 years as a church; this includes many humorous stories. The albums and these new materials will be stored in the Fireside Room and can be "checked out" for browsing at home.

Also, Thank You to Virginia Ross who continues to put news clippings and other information into albums. P. W. and our entire church membership appreciate your diligence.

Thanks to those who donated Poinsettias in honor or memory of loved ones, and to the Deacons for coordinating this lovely addition to the sanctuary.

NAME	IN MEMORY OF	IN HONOR OF
Judy Labrie	Kent Labrie & Pete Moon	
Dave and Mary Sturgis		
Shirley and Jack Parker	Our Sisters & Parents	
Cynthia Dalsing and Mark Colburn	Evelyne Colburn	
Paula Vincent	Gladys Schuaithwan	
Victoria Oliver		My Mother, Helen Larsson
Richard Sandall and James Shirrell		



Awakening to Spirit

Saturday, January 23, 2021

10:30 - 12:00 then 12:45-2:30 pm

A Virtual Retreat via Zoom

Advent is past, now what? Gather with the First Presbyterian Church of Sandpoint for an exploration of and opening to the wholeness of divine love.

This time together will include Mindful Movement, scripture reading, poetry, lectio divina and guided meditation.

Suggested Donation: \$20 Scholarships are available.

Location: Your place via Zoom

Register by contacting Judy at registration@fpcsandpoint.org or 208-290-3119.



January Birthdays

2 Shawna Kennaly

10 Mary Sturgis

11 Mickey Quinn

19 Jane Fritz

21 Dave Sturgis



February Birthdays

1 Victoria Oliver

2 Sarah Casey

16 Gary Pietsch

25 Dyno Wahl

26 Dawn Linendoll

Regular Monthly Events



Sunday School 9:00 a.m. on Zoom

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. on 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



Ministers: Members and Friends

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