



White Rock Presbyterian Church

Overlook

An informative newsletter published by the White Rock Presbyterian Church

November 2014

From the Pastor's Desk



My dad was an avid deer hunter. We (Dad, Mom, brother, and I) spent Thanksgiving at a hunting camp in the hill country of Texas. We did this every Thanksgiving for many years. Well, it really wasn't a camp; we stayed in the old homestead house of a friend of my father's. It had propane heat and hot water. I am certain my mom would have opted out of the whole enterprise if it required

sleeping in a tent without bathroom facilities.

After a morning of hunting deer, we would gather like most of the families in our nation to enjoy the usual Thanksgiving feast. After dinner we would get out and about to sit next to the Medina River, which flowed a few feet from the house, to hike a little, to shoot .22 rifles, and to enjoy each other's company. (We had to be careful, however, not to "stir up the deer" as my dad would warn us every year.)

After my brother and I left the house, our Thanksgiving tradition continued. When my brother and I married, our wives joined the tradition. And when we had children, they were also included. After my mom died and my dad remarried, we added stepbrothers and their wives and their children. Some years there were about 30 of us crowded into the little house or sleeping in the barn on cots. The hunters hunted and we all celebrated Thanksgiving.

You will have your own memories of Thanksgivings celebrated when you were growing up, and you may well have Thanksgiving traditions that continue to this day.

We have evidence that the earliest American colonists celebrated days of thanksgiving. President George Washington proclaimed the first nationwide thanksgiving

celebration in 1789, and President Abraham Lincoln made the day a national holiday in 1863.

On the fourth Thursday of November each year, we give thanks. We thank the One who provides all good things, who watches over us without sleeping, who walks beside us in the passage through dark valleys, and who gave his Son over to death, so that we might live. That death is, of course, not the end of the story.

The beginning of Psalm 118 reads like this:

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!

Let Israel say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

Let the house of Aaron say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

Let those who fear the LORD say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

His steadfast love endures forever. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Pastor John

WRPC Contact Information

White Rock Presbyterian Church is located at 310 Rover Boulevard, Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544. The pastor, Rev. John Guthrie, can be reached at 505-709-8207 or by email at jguthrie@wrpchurch.com. Our church office administrator, Gillian Erickson, can be contacted at the church office (672-3682) Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm. You may email her anytime at officemanager@wrpchurch.com.

Letter from the Editor



This November promises to be the first time for a number of years that I don't have any big plans for the Thanksgiving holidays. I'll actually be home without any social obligations, and this has prompted me to think a little about this month and what it has come to mean to so many of us. It seems to me that the month of November has become inextricably tied with, and overwhelmed by, the Thanksgiving holiday. This is not necessarily a bad thing. After all, what other nation has a national holiday devoted to giving thanks for our blessings? Nevertheless there surely is more to the month of November than just Thanksgiving. This prompted me to do a little research on events that have taken place in November. Here are some interesting examples that I found.

- 1859 Nov. 24: Charles Darwin publishes *On the Origin of Species*, which provides the basis for the theory of evolution.
- 1917 Nov. 7: The Bolsheviks storm the Winter Palace in Petrograd, resulting in the overthrow of the provisional government of Russia. The event became known as the October Revolution, or Red October, based upon the Julian calendar date of October 25.
- 1918 Nov. 11: Germany signs an armistice agreement with the Allies in a railroad car in the forest of Compiègne, France, effectively ending World War I. The fighting officially ends at 11:00 a.m. (the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month).
- 1922 Nov. 4: British archaeologist Howard Carter and his men find the entrance to Pharaoh Tutankhamun's tomb in the Valley of the Kings.
- 1947 Nov. 29: The United Nations General Assembly approves a plan for the partition of Palestine, resulting in the creation of the modern state of Israel.
- 1952 Nov. 1: The United States detonates the first large hydrogen bomb at Eniwetok atoll in the central Pacific Ocean.
- 1960 Nov. 1: While campaigning for President of the United States, John F. Kennedy announces his idea of the Peace Corps.
- 1961 Nov. 18: President John F. Kennedy sends 18,000 military advisors to South Vietnam.
- 1963 Nov. 22: President John F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas, Texas.
- 1963 Nov. 23: The BBC broadcasts the first episode of *Doctor Who* (starring William Hartnell), which is now the world's longest running science fiction drama.
- 1967 Nov. 7: President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, establishing the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

- 1969 Nov. 9: National Educational Television debuts the children's television program, *Sesame Street*.
- 1972 Nov. 29: Atari announces the release of *Pong*, the first commercially successful video game.
- 1975 Nov. 9: The 729-foot-long freighter SS Edmund Fitzgerald sinks during a storm on Lake Superior, killing all 29 crew on board.
- 1977 Nov. 20: Egyptian President Anwar Sadat becomes the first Arab leader to officially visit Israel, when he meets Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin and speaks before the Knesset in Jerusalem, seeking a permanent peace settlement.
- 1985 Nov. 20: Microsoft Windows 1.0 is released.
- 1989 Nov. 9: Communist-controlled East Germany opens checkpoints in the Berlin Wall allowing its citizens to travel to West Germany. This key event led to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the eventual reunification of East and West Germany.
- 1993 Nov. 1: The Maastricht Treaty takes effect, formally establishing the European Union.

November is indeed an auspicious month and one can find many more important events that have taken place in November, limited only by diligence and one's personal interests. However, I would like to focus on one especially important date, November 11 and Veterans Day.

Veterans Day is perhaps the forgotten holiday in November. It coincides with Armistice Day and Remembrance Day, which commemorate the end of World War I. While November 11 had been proclaimed as Armistice Day by several presidents after World War I, it was made a legal federal holiday in 1938 by an act of Congress. After World War II it was generally decided that Armistice Day should be expanded to recognize the sacrifices made by all veterans, not just those who served in World War I. Thus, in 1954 Congress officially changed the name from Armistice Day to Veterans Day and it has remained that way since then.

This year, Veterans Day is more relevant than ever. All of our servicemen since the Vietnam War are volunteers and many have served multiple deployments in dangerous combat zones. We owe them a great debt of thanks. In addition, soldiers today often survive injuries that would have meant certain death on past conflicts. As a result we have many veterans among us today with horrendous injuries, including missing limbs, paralysis, traumatic brain injuries, and serious emotional problems. They and their families are too often left to fend for themselves with inadequate or even non-existent medical services or compensation. We should really do better for our veterans. As we approach Thanksgiving, perhaps we should stop and remember the other holiday in November. Our veterans deserve our thanks, our support, and our prayers.

Dick Heaton

Session News

PW News

At the October Session meeting we heard reports on the October meeting of the Presbytery of Santa Fe from Jennifer Holmes (our Commissioner to the meeting), Ken Holmes (who attended the meeting as an interested member of WRPC), and Rev. Guthrie. In addition to much routine business and worship, the meeting included faith statements, discussion on several areas for cooperation among congregations in the Presbytery (and with churches in other denominations), using technology creativity inside and outside the church walls, and stewardship in small churches.

Nelson Capitan of Laguna Presbyterian Church was elected Moderator of the Presbytery, the first Native American to be elected to that post. Jennifer will work to have Nelson Capitan visit WRPC in the near future.

Also highlighted in the Presbytery reports was the work of Janice Heckler, a PCUSA Mission Co-Worker in Madagascar. Janice is an educator working on teacher education in evidence-based learning. She will be in the U.S. for several months before returning to Madagascar; we will try to arrange for her to “visit” WRPC via Skype before she leaves the U.S.

New Beginnings was the FOCUS topic for the latest Session meeting. We expect to have a recommendation from the WRPC New Beginnings Team soon on mission redefinition. Watch for more in the Overlook and elsewhere, after the Session has had an opportunity to digest the proposal. Rev. Guthrie reminded the Session—and we remind you—that the New Beginnings Team is still gathering input and they welcome additional thoughts and insights from the congregation.

Finally, watch for another step in our program to increase the visibility of WRPC in the community. Starting soon and continuing for six months, we will be advertising in the LA Monitor—a complement to our visibility in the LA Daily Post and the continuing Sunday morning service broadcasts on KRSN.

George Callaghan

Music Director Search

The Worship Ministry Team of the Session continues its search for a new Music Director (or alternatively, a Worship Accompanist). Two potential candidates have been informally interviewed, but neither one has felt the WRPC position is quite right for her. An advertisement for the position is now running in the Los Alamos Daily Post, and will appear shortly in the Los Alamos Monitor. Please pray for the search process.

Our First Wednesday Luncheon will be at noon, November 5, at the church. This time lunch will be “BYOBBL” (Bring Your Own Brown Bag Lunch). We plan to help sort and organize donated items for Samaritans' Purse Christmas shoeboxes mission. All are welcome and encouraged to join in Christian fellowship.

The Bible Study/Circle will meet on Thursday, November 20, at 10:00 at the church. We continue with our book, “*Abraham’s Dilemma and the Birth of Three Faiths*,” led by Selma Reinovsky. Come join us.

For the schedule for the weekly Bible study group, contact Mary Medendorp or Joan Barr.

We continue to collect Campbell’s Labels for Education (bar code portion) (soups, Prego, Post, Swanson, Bic, Pepperidge Farm, V8, Glad) and also Box Tops for Education (Betty Crocker, Ziplock, Hefty, General Mills, Pillsbury, Motts, etc.). You will find a basket for your donations on a table in the hallway. There is also a box for donations of your hotel-size extras of shampoos, lotions etc. Thank you for your contributions!

THANKSGIVING BLESSINGS TO ALL!

Joyce Berzins

Go Paperless! Save a stamp! If you would like to receive your copy of the Overlook electronically rather than through the mail, just let our WRPC Office Manager know and make sure she has your correct e-mail address. We’ll send you a PDF file at the beginning of the month. You’ll get your Overlook quicker and it will be in glorious color as well.

New Beginnings Update

The New Beginnings Team (Christine Haven, Bob Reinovsky, Ken Holmes, Jennifer Holmes, Nancy Guthrie, and John Guthrie) has met twice since the end of the small group meetings on September 21. The team is sifting and sorting the many ideas and proposals that arose during the small group meetings. The team anticipates several more weeks of work before any concrete proposals will be ready for consideration by the Session and congregation. Please continue prayer for this critical period of discerning what God has in mind for WRPC. Here is a summary of some (more or less firm) conclusions at this point in the process:

- The small group meeting participants and the NB Team recognize that two years hence (Fall 2016) marks a critical point in the future of WRPC. The pastor's three-year designated term of call will end in January 2017.
- The NB Team recognizes that the normal course for a church in decline is NOT immediate closure when there are insufficient funds to support a full-time pastor. Rather, the most common next step is for the church to call a part-time pastor.
- It is clear that WRPC matches well the demographics of the surrounding neighborhood, apart from being significantly older. (Demographic data also indicate that about 15% of our community is classified as Hispanic.)
- One of the most important decisions coming out of the small group meetings is that WRPC members are unwilling to abandon the "attractional model" of church growth altogether. The NB Team concurs strongly, and efforts to increase our visibility and attractiveness to guests and visitors will continue and increase.
- Of all the options offered by the New Beginnings program (no change, mission redefinition, relocation, restart, parallel start, adoption, closure), the information provided by the group meetings is that WRPC renewal will best be achieved by "mission redefinition."
- The New Beginnings program clearly endorses "local mission" as the most effective way for churches in decline or stagnation to redefine their mission. The question is: What form will that redefinition take for WRPC?
- The NB Team believes that between civil and nonprofit services offered to people in need in our community, there remain few gaps in the safety net. How does WRPC develop a unique (and visible) community ministry given that formal mechanisms already exist for most community needs?
- The congregation is reluctant to abandon current mission activities, in particular House of Fellowship collaboration, in order to refocus on a new local ministry.

The New Beginnings Team and Session greatly value and appreciate your prayers.

Rev. Guthrie

WRPC on KRSN

WRPC worship services continue to air on local station KRSN, 1490 AM at 11:00 am every Sunday. Give the show a listen and let your friends know about it!

November Birthdays



Craig Kelley	6
Allen Robinson	25

Save the Date!

Daylight Saving Time Draws to a Close

Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, November 2. Be sure to set your clocks back one hour before retiring Saturday night and join us for worship on Sunday!

Ecumenical Worship Service

On Sunday, November 2, at 6:00 PM several local churches will gather for worship together at Duane Smith Auditorium. Worship will feature singing, scripture, brief messages, testimonies, and prayer. Come join this multi-church celebration of God's provision and grace!

Christmas Caroling

WRPC members and friends will again go caroling at the state penitentiary on Thursday, December 4. If you were approved by the state corrections department to participate last year, you do not need to repeat the process but Sumner Barr needs your name by November 10. If you have not participated in the caroling project before, your application is due by November 3. See Sumner for details and the necessary application form. Join us for this opportunity to share the joy of Christmas with others.

The Gospel of Luke

WRPC members and friends continue to gather after coffee fellowship every Sunday to study Luke's Gospel. Of all the gospels, Luke is the one most insistent on concern and justice for those at the margins of society. Everyone is welcome. Come join us.

Meet Mission Co-Worker Janice Heckler

Jan Heckler has been a Mission co-worker in Madagascar since 2012 where she serves with the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM). Jan visited the October meeting of the Presbytery of Santa Fe in Ghost Ranch where she met folks from White Rock and many Northern New Mexico churches.

The Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM) has 3.5 million members with congregations throughout the country. The FJKM was founded in 1968 through the union of three churches which arose out of the work of the London Missionary Society, the Paris Missionary Society, and the Friends Foreign Mission Association. It is heavily involved in health and rural development ministries, evangelism, environmental concerns, HIV/AIDS prevention, Christian education, and leadership development. The church has invited Jan Heckler to help its wide-ranging ministries be even more effective. She will assist with planning, goal setting, assessment, and resource allocation.



Madagascar remains one of the world's poorest countries. Eighty-five percent of its population lives on less than \$2 per day. Located in the Indian Ocean 250 miles off the eastern coast of Africa, Madagascar is the world's fourth largest island and is home to many unique species of mammals, birds, and plants. The Malagasy are thought to be the descendants of Africans and Indonesians who settled on the island more than 2,000 years ago. In January 2009 the country's president resigned amid political unrest that turned into violence. Andry Rajoelina assumed power with the military's backing. Just over 40 percent of Malagasies are Christian, 50 percent adhere to traditional beliefs, and 7 percent are Muslim.

While teaching adult Sunday school in 1999, Jan realized that Christ's command to love our neighbors is not restricted by geography. "It was during this time that I was called to his service to work on behalf of people in developing countries, primarily in Africa," she says.

Seeking to be faithful to her calling, Jan developed a small non-governmental organization and donated her time as executive director. In this role, she sought to improve basic education and literacy throughout the developing world.

Jan made seven trips to Africa that lasted an average of 10 months each. She served as a teacher educator in Ethiopia,

Namibia, and Malawi. She also was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Zimbabwe.

"I realized that much of my training and education was needed overseas and that these things could be shared with others," says Jan, who has done graduate work in both psychology and computer science. "The mandate of my service in this form only grew greater as I continued to discover the great value of these things to individuals living in developing countries and also my growing passion to help, fueled by empathetically experiencing these peoples' suffering and discovering their many unmet needs."

Since Jan's faith pointed her toward Africa, she has long wanted to serve through the church. "To serve through the church is one of the greatest honors I can imagine," she says. "It is an opportunity of immense personal and spiritual importance to me."

During her visits to Africa, Jan developed some close relationships with many people on the continent and holds a deep admiration for the tenacity and faithfulness of Africans. "They have touched my soul in a most profound and continuing way, and I know the Lord has made this happen," she says. "I will never forget their resolve and their love of the Lord, and I will never stop trying to help."

Yet she realizes her assignment in Madagascar is not a rescue effort, but a ministry built on mutuality. "This partnership can only be successful when they guide the nature of the delivery of the help received," she says. "This to me is a hallmark characteristic of sustainability. When it works for them, their friendship and their success become part of the many gifts reciprocated."

In addition to her international service, Jan has several years of experience working in education, public health, mental health, and social service positions in Georgia and Florida. Jan earned both her undergraduate and master's degrees in psychology from the University of Florida, and she also completed all requirements for a doctorate in psychology except the dissertation. She studied computer science at Florida State University.

Since 1983, Jan has lived in the Atlanta metro area. She is a member of North Decatur Presbyterian Church.



November 2014

Office hours: T, W, Th, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm +++ 672-3682, officemanager@wrpchurch.com

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