



White Rock Presbyterian Church

Overlook

An informative newsletter published by the White Rock Presbyterian Church

May 2015

From the Pastor's Desk



"The Resurrection and All That"

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. (Mark 16:1-8)

Mark's account of the resurrection is by far the briefest among the gospels, and is unique by the absence of any postresurrection appearances of the risen Christ. On

Easter Sunday we considered the implications of this rather puzzling end to Mark: what does it mean that the women ran away in fear, and said nothing to anyone?

Paul writes in First Corinthians, chapter 15, that if Christ has not been raised, our faith is futile, we are still immersed in sin, and those who have died in Christ have truly perished. There are many points of doctrine and theology on which Christians can and do differ. By now those differences are a part of the fabric of Christianity, though I, for one, will never be at ease with the multitudinous ways in which we are divided. Even so, it is undeniably a precept of traditional, orthodox Christianity that the Lamb of God was indeed raised as the gospels claim, other Scripture affirms, and our creeds state without equivocation—a physical, bodily resurrection. And yes, every scholar and every believer admits that the “how” of that event remains hidden in mystery.

The resurrection defines us, identifies us, marks us, binds us, and claims us. We are able to call ourselves Christians, disciples of Christ, only because of the resurrection. So we, as for generations that precede us, are able to employ the ancient statement and response, with conviction and with joy:

Christ is risen!
He is risen, indeed!

Pastor John

This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance, ... that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe. (1 Timothy 4:9-10)

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.

Session News

The FOCUS topic for the April Session meeting was the report and recommendations of WRPC's New Beginnings Team. The report, with three recommendations for revitalization, renewal, and growth for White Rock Presbyterian Church, was given to the Session in March with opportunity for study before our April meeting.

The report was also made available to members and friends of WRPC in March. If you haven't seen a copy and would like one, please contact the church office or George Callaghan.

You'll recall the origins of our New Beginnings process early in 2014 and continuing in a series of six facilitated meetings of members and friends from August through September, 2014. Those meetings explored our history, current circumstances, and possible ways forward to a healthier church. After those meetings a dedicated team met from October 2014 to January 2015 to explore the many recommendations that came from the group meetings and prepare a set of recommendations to the Session. The report made in March had three recommendations for action starting now:

- The initiation of ministry and programs to promote the continuing spiritual development of ruling elders and the membership at large
- Continuing efforts to raise the visibility of WRPC in our community and new efforts at evangelism in the community

- The initiation of conversations with other churches in our community in order to develop ecumenical mission projects for the future

The Session endorsed all of these recommendations and discussed how to begin following them.

The experience of most churches in spiritual development suggests that small groups with medium-to-long lives and regular meetings are the most effective approach and the Session supports that approach, while recognizing the practical difficulties that represents. We will look for ways to make small, regular small group meetings the focus of spiritual development for our church. Improved community visibility efforts have begun and will continue. Evangelism is tough for us Presbyterians—at least in the traditional forms we think evangelism takes. Look for opportunities soon for evangelism training at WRPC, no doubt with some fresh perspectives on how to do evangelism. Ecumenical mission projects should build on a special strength of our family; we will probably first explore such possibilities with the Santa Fe Korean Presbyterian Fellowship and with Grace Vineyard.

We are deeply indebted to the New Beginnings Team for their hard work in molding the varied input from the WRPC family into a coherent set of recommendations and analysis for Session consideration. Team members are Christine Haven, Bob Reinovsky, Jennifer Holmes, Ken Holmes, Nancy Guthrie, and John Guthrie.

Watch for changes coming from our New Beginnings efforts and don't hesitate to contact John Guthrie and other Session members to learn more about what's coming.

George Callaghan

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Ephesians 4:19-20)

New Beginnings Initiatives

1. PROMOTING SPIRITUAL GROWTH (Discipleship Development)

It is pretty much universal among all individuals and organizations dedicated to church renewal and revitalization that an essential component of these projects is a focus on the spiritual growth (or discipleship development) of those who are already a part of the congregation: its members and friends. In other words, if the church wishes to see growth in numbers and vitality, it must pay attention to the discipleship journeys of those who are already a part of the church. Only the Holy Spirit can produce growth in discipleship and dedication to Christ, but the Spirit can and does use intentional ministries of particular churches to produce that growth.

While Bible studies and worship are important, even critical elements of the process of growing in Christ, generally such development requires regular, frequent contact with a small group of fellow Christians on the journey, following him. So it is that the most visible and important component of the first of the three initiatives that have come from the New Beginnings process will be the organization and commissioning of small groups dedicated to sharing, study, prayer, and support. Small group ministry is not new to WRPC; groups were organized and launched in our church several years ago.

Small group ministry is acknowledged even by its most ardent proponents as being difficult to initiate and maintain, primarily because of the busy lives of contemporary church members. Furthermore, among WRPC members and friends there is the unique challenge of significant travel for both business and pleasure. The Session and pastor are certain that God can do all things, including using us to create and maintain these small groups.

The pastor will begin work immediately to organize the small groups. In some cases existing groups can be converted to groups dedicated to the development of discipleship. In most other cases the groups will need to be new. In all cases the groups will need to meet weekly throughout the year. Groups may have as few as four members or as many as eight. Some groups may be entirely female or male. Each group may meet on any day and at any time that works best for its members. Groups will generally meet in homes, but

the church building is also available. The pastor will provide outlines for group meetings, curricula for group study, and training for group leaders.

The Session and pastor acknowledge the busy schedules of our members and friends. If this new small group initiative was not considered essential to the renewal and redevelopment of our church, we would not ask for the investment of precious time. We are convinced that the investment is necessary. It may prove best to kick off the groups in the fall, after the (even more) busy summer season is over. Please pray for the new small group ministry and look forward to more information soon.

2. EVANGELISM (Sharing the Good News)

Jesus makes the call to evangelism pretty clear in his Great Commandment:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
(Matthew 28:19-20)

“All nations” can also be translated, “all peoples.” Not only are we commanded to go and make disciples so that they may share Christ’s salvation, but the work of calling others to follow Christ builds up the church, and our church, for his mission in the world. We all acknowledge that the future viability and health of WRPC is dependent on growth, not only in discipleship, but in numbers of disciples.

One aspect of this new evangelism initiative is already in place, that is, attempts to make our church more visible in our community. Through a revised website, a new Facebook page, a new weekly radio ministry, postcard mailings, advertisements in the Los Alamos Monitor and Daily Post, and in other ways, we have been working over the past year or so to raise the visibility of our church in our community. These methods, and others, will continue. New suggestions are very welcome; please see or call Pastor John.

In spite of Christ's commandment to us, we Presbyterians are generally not the most natural or comfortable evangelists. Even the word scares us some; we call it the "E" word. The difficulty with evangelism is that we face the possibility of rejection or harming a relationship that we value. Those fears are understandable. However, we have the example of Paul and so many others who boldly proclaimed the good news of abundant, eternal life in Jesus. The question is this: Do we have a message of good news to share, or not? And if we do, shouldn't we make every effort to do it?

In order to allay some fears about the ministry of evangelism (in respectful, caring ways), the pastor will provide training for the entire congregation. There are several training programs for respectful, friendship-based evangelism currently available for use by churches. One of these will be adopted for use by WRPC, with training probably held on Sundays at 11:00 o'clock, when most WRPC members and friends are on the church campus. Bible study will be suspended for the length of the initial evangelism training. Subsequent training will certainly be necessary and provided.

There is more information to come. Please pray about this new initiative.

3. COOPERATIVE MISSIONS (with Neighboring Churches)

The third initiative rising out of the New Beginnings process is an effort to discover and engage in missions collaboratively with other churches in our community. In other words, the initiative calls us to actively look for ways that we can carry out service to our community (and possibly our region, nation, and the world) in cooperation with other nearby faith communities.

How did this initiative manage to come to prominence among all the many commendable recommendations from the fall 2014 small group meetings? First of all, the New Beginnings Team and the Session recognize that we may be able to carry out new ministries more effectively if we can join together with other Christians. Secondly, mission connections with other churches could very well yield other types of connections, leading to overall strengthening of all of the collaborating churches. Who knows what God

might be able to do when we make friends and forge bonds by working together in mission?

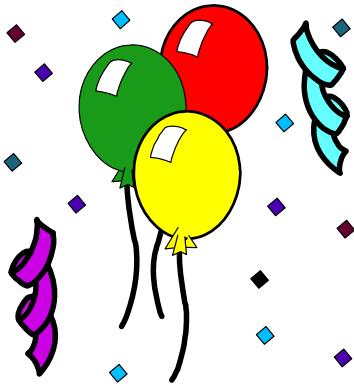
There are some twenty-five active churches in Los Alamos and White Rock. (This fact explains, in part, why renewal and revitalization are so difficult in our context: there are many strong, faithful, Spirit-led churches in our community.) It is certain that some among these would be interested in some sort of collaborative mission with WRPC. In return, we might look for collaboration on House of Fellowship ministry, rummage sales, Operation Christmas Child boxes, and so on. In return, we would look for ways and means through which we could join in ongoing mission projects of our collaborating churches. The New Beginnings Team and the Session remain fully aware that WRPC congregants have very busy schedules: partnerships will be initiated with prayer and the best discernment we can manage.

One particular church that will be approached very soon is the Santa Fe Korean Presbyterian Fellowship, led by Pastor Kang Kook Ro. At this time we are not sure in what mission the Korean Fellowship is engaged but our intention is to find out right away. We can imagine some tremendous benefits to both congregations from collaborative mission. Another likely candidate for immediate contact is Grace Vineyard Church, which shared our building for a while some years ago. Potential collaborations are not, by any means, limited to these two churches. Conversations will begin immediately. Please pray.

Pastor John

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.

May Birthdays



Ken Holmes	15
Lori Kelley	15
George Callaghan	18

PW News

In lieu of the usual First-Wednesday Potluck Luncheon at the church, we plan to meet for lunch at The Blue Window at 11:30 on Wednesday, May 6. This will be the last First-Wednesday luncheon until September. For your reservation please contact Linda Burns or Joyce Berzins.

For meeting times for the weekly Bible Study group, contact Mary Medendorp.

The Thursday Circle/Bible Study group will meet on Thursday, May 21 at 10:00 o'clock at the church, continuing with the study of *Abraham's Dilemma and the Birth of Three Faiths*, led by Selma Reinovsky. This will be the final meeting until September.

Our annual home-baked cookie sharing with the Crisis Center Family Shelter in Espanola will be at Mother's Day time. Anyone wishing to participate by donating two or three dozen favorite fresh-baked cookies may bring them to the church or to Selma Reinovsky, Linda Burns, or Joyce Berzins on or before Sunday, May 3. Cookie tins are available in the church kitchen for your convenience. These cookies are a real treat and very

much appreciated by the residents and staff at the Shelter. Many thanks for your sharing.

Thanks also for your donations as we continue to collect Box Tops for Education and Campbell's products labels (bar code portion only). Look for a basket (along with the box for your hotel-size hygiene extras and lightly used or new soft toys) on the table in the hallway.

Joyce Berzins

Save the Date!

Lunch and Harvey Exhibit

The Out-to-Lunch Bunch has a special event planned for Sunday, May 3, following Bible Study: a trip to Santa Fe for lunch at the Zia Café, followed by a tour of the Fred Harvey exhibit currently at the New Mexico History Museum. Vernon Kerr will share some of his mother's memories as one of the original Harvey Girls!

Presbyterian Women Cookie Outreach

The Presbyterian Women will deliver cookies to the Crisis Center before Mother's Day. If you would like to join in, please bring your homemade cookies to the church by May 3.

Presbyterian Women Luncheon

The final PW Wednesday luncheon before the summer break is set for the Blue Window on Wednesday, May 6 at 11:30 am. Please contact Joyce Berzins or Linda Burns to let them know if you are able to come, or if you have questions.

Camp Loma Verde Cleanup Day

Camp Loma Verde has set its 2015 Cleanup Day to be Saturday, May 16, at 9:00 am. We are expecting more information from the presbytery office soon. If you would like to participate, please call the church office and we will share the information we have.

Pentecost

Please wear lots of RED on Pentecost Sunday, May 24, as a reminder of the red in the "tongues, as of fire" that came to rest on the disciples gathered in Jerusalem that day!

All Aboard!

Are you a train buff? Do you enjoy a train-ride – just for the fun of it? Have you ever enjoyed a stay in a historic hotel – not the Holiday Inn Express?



AMTRAK's South West Chief

If the answer to any of these questions is “Yes,” you might consider joining an informal fellowship outing during the summer of 2015. We are gauging interest in a weekend, train-ride adventure to Winslow, Arizona on some convenient summer or fall weekend. The trip might, for example, involve a Friday afternoon/evening train ride from Lamy to Winslow, two nights in the newly reopened Harvey House La Posada Hotel in Winslow and an early morning return on Sunday to Lamy. For geology and natural history buffs Meteor Crater, Petrified Forrest and the Painted Desert are within about a 1 hour of Winslow, by car, and you can always spend time just “...standing on the corner in Winslow, Arizona” for leisurely down-time. Train fare is currently \$57 per person each way (AMTRAK coach) and rooms at La Posada are \$119-\$169 per night. Certainly different itineraries are possible. Contact George Callaghan or Bob Reinovsky.

2015 Rummage Sale?

We are looking for a lead coordinator for a rummage sale in 2015. The August 2014 Rummage Sale was, by all measures, a big success. The sale was hard work and took many hours of time. However, nearly everyone in the church family contributed to this effort through prayer, sale item contributions, purchases, preparation, and contributions. The rummage sale also involved participation from members of the House of Fellowship (HOF) and a White Rock Baptist Church youth group cleanup crew. In addition, we used the rummage sale as an opportunity to reach out to the community of White Rock through mailings to each WR residence advertising the sale and offering space to individuals for their own sales. As a result of the

postcard advertisement, quite a few people from the community supported the sale by dropping off sale items, as well as by coming to the sale. Through this effort we were able to raise \$2,700 that was split between LA Cares, the Crisis Center of Northern New Mexico, and the HOF firewood ministry. Please consider whether this is an effort you can help coordinate in 2015.

Rod McCabe.

Important Contacts

Pastor/Session Moderator:

Rev. John Guthrie, 505-709-8207
jguthrie@wrpcchurch.com

Clerk of Session:

George Callaghan, 505-984-1868
callaghanch@aol.com

WRPC Office Manager

Gillian Erickson, 672-3682
officemanager@wrpcchurch.com

WRPC Webmaster:

Craig Kelley, 672-3133
kelleys@q.com

Overlook Editor:

Dick Heaton, 662-0028
rcheaton@hotmail.com

Tribute to Mother

*A picture memory brings to me;
I look across the years and see
Myself beside my mother's knee.
I feel her gentle hand restrain
My selfish moods, and know again
A child's blind sense of wrong and pain.
But wiser now,
a man gray grown,
My childhood's needs are better known.
My mother's chastening love I own.*

John Greenleaf Whittier

Meet Doug Tilton

Doug Tilton is a Mission Co-worker in South Africa.



About Doug's Ministry:

Doug currently serves as regional liaison for Southern Africa, helping to strengthen the mutual ministries of the PC(USA) and its partner churches and institutions in six countries: Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. Regional liaisons maintain regular contact with the PC(USA)'s partners, exploring ways of working together and building the capacity of the global church to bear witness to the good news of Christ's redeeming love for all humanity. Doug provides support for other PC(USA) mission personnel in the region and helps to connect PC(USA) presbyteries and congregations with their counterparts in Southern Africa.

Regional liaisons play an increasingly important role in building and advancing mission partnerships and helping Presbyterians to identify appropriate ways of working together with partners around the world. "Our church is changing, and so is our approach to mission and partnership," Doug writes. "One of the most dynamic developments of recent years has been the growth of direct presbytery and congregational links between the United States and other parts of the world. Another important development is the emergence of mission networks to enable those involved in partnerships to exchange experiences and insights and to learn from one another. Regional liaisons can assist these efforts by providing relevant information and analysis, facilitating communications, and troubleshooting problems."

Serving as a regional liaison has given Doug a deeper appreciation of the importance of ministries of accompaniment. "Wherever I go, I am often surprised and profoundly moved by the ways in which God works through the mutual recognition, affirmation, and encouragement shared among brothers and sisters in faith from different parts of the world," remarks Doug. "It is humbling to visit a church where people have walked for several hours to welcome you, to share fellowship, and to celebrate together our common humanity and faith."

Regional context

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) partners with at least eight related churches in Southern Africa. While Southern Africa is rich in mineral wealth and other natural resources, income from those assets are not enjoyed by the vast majority of the people. South Africa has by far the largest and most advanced economy in Southern Africa. Its per capita income and gross domestic product are many times that of all other Southern African countries. PC(USA) partner churches in Southern Africa work to improve the economic plight of their people and tackle the challenges of the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases of poverty.

About Doug

Doug was commissioned as a mission worker in 1992. He was initially assigned to work with an ecumenical agency engaged in peacemaking and community development in a semirural area on the tropical upper south coast of KwaZulu-Natal, just south of Durban in South Africa. From that vantage point he witnessed South Africa's inspiring transition from minority rule to nonracial democracy. During the country's first democratic elections in 1994 Doug served as the provincial administration and financial officer for the KwaZulu-Natal Electoral Observer Network, the structure established by church and civil society organizations to provide electoral education and promote a free and fair poll.

For the next 10 years he was assigned to the South African Council of Churches (SACC), working first as a researcher in the Council's Parliamentary Office in Cape Town and later in the General Secretariat in Johannesburg. From the time of its formation in 1968, the SACC was one of the leading voices calling for democracy, human rights and social justice in a land that was long blighted by institutionalized racial discrimination. After 1994 the SACC sought to help a new society address the social and economic legacies of apartheid, including poverty, inequality and racism.

Doug's interest in Southern Africa and his involvement in the antiapartheid movement began while he was an undergraduate at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. He graduated from Macalester with a B.A. in history, political science and economics. He was a Rhodes Scholar at Brasenose College, Oxford, where he received an M.Phil. in politics in 1985 before working for a year as legislative coordinator for the Washington Office on Africa in Washington, D.C. In that position he facilitated the office's advocacy work on Southern Africa issues, including its support for the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. Doug returned to England and received a D.Phil. in politics from Wolfson College, Oxford. From 1995 to 1997 he was again based in Washington, D.C., as a PC(USA) mission specialist assigned to do policy analysis and communications for the Washington Office on Africa and the Africa Policy Information Center.

May 2015

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

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