



# White Rock Presbyterian Church

# Overlook

An informative newsletter published by the White Rock Presbyterian Church

June 2015

## From the Pastor's Desk



### **“Natural. Church Development”**

I am always on the lookout for ideas, concepts, paradigms, thoughts, ruminations, and experiments aimed toward the renewal and revitalization of local churches. There are thousands of books, websites, and programs that have renewal as their objective. Some of these methods have been around for decades and some are new. The Overlook serves as an ideal medium for me to share with you some of the models I have found that, in my opinion, have merit. It is certain that all of these methodologies have limitations and may not work well in every context. Nevertheless, in my experience, they all have at least some features well worthy of consideration.

One of the more established approaches to renewal and growth is by a pastor named Christian Schwarz, who calls his methodology “Natural Church Development.” Rev. Schwarz originally derived his method from a comprehensive survey of churches, in the attempt to identify those practices that appear to promote health and growth in churches. Schwarz presents eight “quality characteristics” of healthy churches:

1. Empowering Leadership—providing means and methods for strengthening leaders from all segments of the church’s membership
2. Gift-based Ministry—helping members and friends to identify their Spirit-given gifts and using them in the service of the church
3. Passionate Spirituality—healthy churches identify and nurture ways to develop commitment and enthusiasm for Christ
4. Effective Structures—church structures, including leadership, worship, mission, and other practices, are continuously reviewed to determine if they are effectively reaching their objectives; if not, they are discontinued in place of new experiments
5. Inspiring Worship—this one is self-explanatory, with the understanding that worshipers have differing ideas of what is “inspiring”
6. Holistic Small Groups—groups in which participants can find intimate community, practical help, and spiritual development
7. Need-oriented Evangelism—sharing the gospel in ways that meet the questions and needs of non-Christians
8. Loving Relationships—healthy churches strive to nurture and strengthen loving (Greek agape) relationships among the church’s members and friends

Schwarz believes that all eight of these “quality characteristics” are necessary in order to grow a healthy church; not a single one, in his view, can be neglected or discarded.

What do you think? Do you agree with this list of characteristics? If not, which ones are unnecessary? If something has been missed, what is it? The value in lists like this one is not necessarily in its automatic application to the WRPC situation and context, but rather in the ways in which the list might be applied and adapted as we continue our discernment toward revitalization and growth. Your thoughts and ideas are always very welcome.

Peace and joy,  
John

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## 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](mailto: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](mailto:officemanager@wrpchurch.com).

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## New Beginnings Update for June

With the adoption of the recommendations from the New Beginnings Team by the WRPC Session in April, the work of implementing those recommendations is now underway. The WRPC Session and pastor will be working on the implementation process continuously, because the process is definitely one of experimentation, review, modification, and more experimentation.

Recall that the New Beginnings recommendations, now objectives, are: (1) intentional disciple-building ministries for our members and friends; (2) intentional efforts to enhance WRPC visibility in the community and a renewed emphasis on personal evangelism; and (3) collaborative mission with other churches in our community.

As noted in the May issue of the Overlook, the disciple-building (spiritual-growth-promoting)

objective will include, as a key component, the creation and maintenance of small groups. Over the summer Pastor John will be working to identify and encourage small group leaders, who will then receive training (led by the pastor), with the goal of kicking off the groups in the autumn. By the way, if the Spirit is nudging you to serve as a small group leader, please by all means speak with Pastor John.

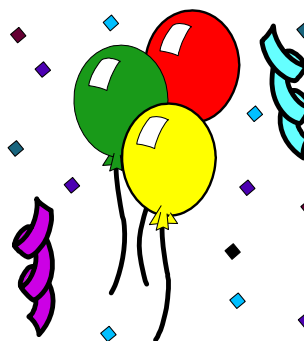
John is working to identify curricula or programs suited for friendship-based, need-oriented evangelism, directed toward our friends and acquaintances. The Presbyterian Church (USA) has one such program that looks promising.

John and other leaders will also be meeting right away with leaders from other local churches, notably including the Santa Fe Korean Presbyterian Fellowship, in order to see what kinds of collaborative mission might be feasible and desirable.

Your prayers are greatly desired as we now begin to implement our New Beginnings objectives. Thoughts, ideas, and help are always welcome.

Pastor John

## June Birthdays



Margie Lehman	1
Reuben Goettee	4
Wayne Meadows	5
Sabrina Kelley	16
Joyce Haven	18

## PW News

Presbyterian Women is on hiatus for the summer. However, we are planning to have a social gathering sometime this summer, perhaps in July.

Weekly Bible Study will continue to meet. Contact Mary Medendorp for details.

We thank everyone for their cookie donations, which were shared with the Crisis Center/Family Shelter in Espanola on Mother's Day. The staff expressed much appreciation for the thoughtfulness, as the residence was fully occupied at the time.

Thinking ahead, in lieu of a fall Mini-Harvest Market, as we have done some years, perhaps sharing excess garden produce (jams, flowers, plants, even baked goodies, etc) with each other on summer Sundays would work better. Small monetary donations to PW for on-going mission commitments could also be accepted.

We continue to collect your donations of product *Labels for Education*, including: Bic, Campbell's, Franco-American, Pace, Pepperidge Farm, Post Cereals, Prego, Spaghetti-Os, Swanson, V-8, and Wolfgang Puck. Also *Box Tops for Education*: Betty Crocker, Bisquick, Juicy Juice, Cheerios, Chex, Green Giant, Pillsbury, Hamburger Helpers, Old El Paso, Progresso, Ziploc, Avery, and Hefty. Complete lists of accepted products can be found online or by the donation basket on the table in the hallway.

Please pray for safe travels and a happy summer with family and friends.

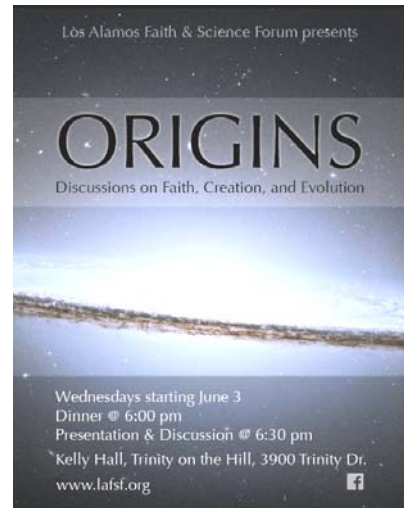
Joyce Berzins

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**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.

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## Discussions on Faith, Creation, and Evolution



For the second summer, The Los Alamos Forum on Faith and Science, a joint effort of about 8 Los Alamos Churches, presents its summer study series starting Wed, June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The series consists of ten weekly study sessions, studying "*Origins: Discussions on Faith, Creation, and Evolution*," by Deborah and Loren Haarsma, both professors at Calvin College. This summer the study will convene in Kelly Hall at Trinity on the Hill Episcopal Church at 6:00 PM on Wednesdays.

Each session includes a light supper; a 30 minute presentation on one chapter of the book by a member of the Forum, and about 1 hour of facilitated "table talk" small group discussion.

The Forum will host Deborah and Loren Haarsma in Los Alamos during the week of August 2-6, when they will visit with a number of groups during the day and present key-note evening lectures on Tuesday – Thursday, August 4-6, at 7:30 at the PEEC Nature Center Planetarium.

The book is available through amazon.com. You can learn more about the Haarsmas at their website:

*faithaliveresources.org/origins*

Our own Journeys in Faith Dialogue is studying the book in preparation for the summer study and you are invited, Thursdays at 7:30 PM at the Reinovsky's home.

Bob Reinovsky

## Save the Date!

### Church Picnic

The annual WRPC all-church picnic is set for Sunday, June 28, following worship, at Rover Park. The church will provide hotdogs, hamburgers, buns, condiments, drinks and place settings. Please bring a covered dish to share. Come and enjoy great fellowship with WRPC friends!

Vernon Kerr

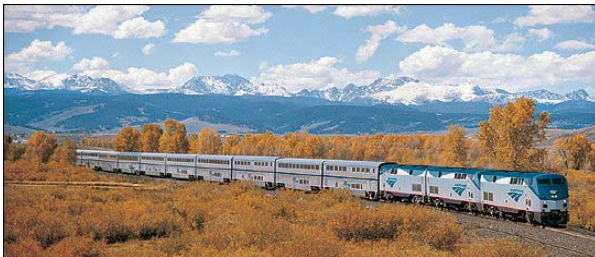
### Rummage sale.

Our annual church rummage sale is planned for Saturday, July 25th. Save your unneeded stuff and keep your eye out for future notifications for when to start assembling your donations at church for the sale.

Rod McCabe

### For Train Buffs

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.

## Stewardship Musings

### “Making a Profit”

J. Clif Christopher is the founder of Horizons Stewardship Company and a highly respected consultant in the field of church stewardship. In 2008 he published *Not Your Parents Offering Plate*, a study of the ways in which stewardship and church finance have changed in recent decades. In particular, Christopher summarizes in just a few pages how the number of charitable organizations has burgeoned over those decades, so that now churches must recognize that their adherents have many more choices when it comes to giving their hard-earned dollars. The relevant question for churches is then, “Why should our saints give to us?”

Christopher writes this:

Please hear me when I say that you are not in business to balance budgets or manage money. You are in business to change lives for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ – that is it. You have no other reason to exist. If you are not doing that, then get out of the way and let someone else have your spot. We are running out of time and losing our donor base by not doing our job. Move over and let someone else run your church and try to make a profit (make disciples).

Christopher and many others who write in the same vein want us to know that time is short (in any number of ways), and we must now be about the business of making disciples of Christ and changing their lives by the power of the Spirit, as we also serve anyone in need around us. WRPC is working deliberately on that transformation, to move disciple-making and service to the center of our purpose and mission. That’s what the New Beginnings process has been about, and that’s what the New Beginnings objectives are intended to produce.

Questions and comments are always welcome.

Pastor John

*“Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.”*

*Acts (5:38-39)*

## Important Contacts

Pastor/Session Moderator:

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

Clerk of Session:

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

WRPC Office Manager

Gillian Erickson, 672-3682  
officemanager@wrpchurch.com

WRPC Webmaster:

Craig Kelley, 672-3133  
kelleys@q.com

Overlook Editor:

Dick Heaton, 662-0028  
rcheaton@hotmail.com

## PC(USA) World Mission Funding Crisis

A number of past moderators of General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (USA) wrote a letter to the churches on April 28, 2015 with regard to a funding crisis for world mission. The letter states that the causes of the crisis are numerous and systemic, including a misperception that weekly offerings from the Presbyterian faithful are sufficient to fund our mission co-workers in the field. In fact, the World Mission Agency Board has always had to rely on “Extra Commitment Opportunity” and “Direct Mission Support” funding. Prior years’ reserves in these categories are almost depleted.

The office of World Mission reports that “a funding gap of \$925,000 in 2016 will likely result in not replacing four retiring mission co-workers and prematurely ending the service of as many as five mission co-workers in 2016. Starting in 2017, the financial gap is \$4.5 million, resulting in the recall of about 40 mission co-workers from the current 162 we have in service.”

The letter from the past moderators also reminds us that

For the last 178 years, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church has engaged in international mission: planting churches, building hospitals, starting schools. We have all traveled to six continents, prayed with and served alongside our mission co-workers, women and men, who answer God’s call for themselves and for their families to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and work faithfully with our global ecumenical partners for reconciliation and peace.

Individuals able to provide additional support for World Mission may click on <http://bit.ly/supportwm> or send a check to: Presbyterian World Mission, PO Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. Checks should be made to “PC(USA)” with “Mission Worker Support” on the memo line.

Thank you for your prayer and financial support for our mission co-workers.

## Psalm 121

A song of ascents.

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,  
from whence cometh my help.  
My help cometh from the LORD,  
which made heaven and earth.*

*He will not suffer thy foot to be moved:  
he that keepeth thee will not slumber.  
Behold, he that keepeth Israel  
shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

*The LORD is thy keeper:  
the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.  
The sun shall not smite thee by day,  
nor the moon by night.*

*The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil:  
he shall preserve thy soul.  
The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy  
coming in  
from this time forth, and even for evermore.*

## Meet Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado Escobar



Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado are mission co-workers with the Presbyterian Border Ministry in Agua Prieta, Mexico, where Mark has served since 1998. As U.S. coordinator of the bi-national ministry, Frontera de Cristo, Mark is responsible, in partnership with Rev. Angel Valencia of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, for the coordination of the six ministry areas of Frontera de Cristo: church development, health, family counseling, the New Hope Community Center, mission education, and the Just Trade Center.

Miriam connects people and organizations across borders and serves as a liaison of Frontera de Cristo with the Center for Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation and Recuperation (CRREDA in Spanish), DouglPrieta Trabaja and the Lirio de los Valles Presbyterian Church. She works with DouglPrieta to help the rehabilitation centers and families of the church, community and schools grow their own food, increasing their nutrition possibilities and connection to God's creation and one another.

Mexico has been described as a land of contrasts. Natural beauty and urban blight and poverty and affluence exist very close to each other. Yet most Mexicans have little chance of attaining an economically prosperous lifestyle. Many impoverished Mexicans come to the United States in search of better incomes. Death from thirst and heat exhaustion are not uncommon as migrants make their northbound trek, and more than 1 million are arrested each year for working in the United States without proper documentation. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been engaged in mission in Mexico since 1872. The PC(USA)'s joint ministry with the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico along the border is a major focus of PC(USA) involvement in Mexico.

Mark and Miriam met when Mark came to Agua Prieta to serve with Frontera de Cristo. Miriam was invited to serve as a mission co-worker under PC(USA) appointment in 2011.

Through Frontera de Cristo Mark brings together people from both sides of the border, building relationships and understanding between them. "I help them reflect biblically and theologically about what it means to be a disciple of

Jesus Christ," he writes, "in light of our spiritual, social, political, and economic connectedness." Together, Mark and Miriam continue a ministry of reconciliation, bringing people together around issues of migration and faith.

Mark looks back at a mission experience in 1994 as foundational for his present ministry. "I left South Carolina to live in Piedras Negras, Mexico," he writes, "to be a mission volunteer at the border ministry site there. I was excited about developing close relationships with Mexican sisters and brothers. The way in which God worked in our lives to bind us together in real love amazed me. I had been proclaimed a child of the covenant at my baptism and was baptized into a community of believers. The reality of how grand this community is didn't become clear to me until I lived and served with Uno En El Espiritu, a church in Piedras Negras, Mexico. I experienced the power of Jesus Christ to break down barriers that we humans erect. Language did not define our relationships, nor did nationality, ethnicity, or social class, for we are hermanos y hermanas en Cristo."

Mark and Miriam's commitment to reconciliation is evident both in their work with Frontera de Cristo and their everyday lives. One night when four families they invited for a dinner party didn't show up, they took seriously Jesus' teaching in the parable of the banquet. They carried the food to the highways and byways of Agua Prieta and fed 100 adults and children who had just been returned to Agua Prieta on a cold winter night by U.S. authorities. That experience was the genesis of a new ministry. "We are no longer on the streets but rather in a building and serve over 18,000 men women and children each year with 40 local volunteers as well as volunteers coming from different parts of Mexico, the United States, and the world," Miriam says.

Mark was ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament on August 23, 1998, in his home church, Clover Presbyterian Church in Clover, South Carolina. He is a minister member of the PC(USA)'s Presbytery de Cristo and is a fraternal member of the Presbytery of Chihuahua (National Presbyterian Church of Mexico).

After graduating from Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina, with a bachelor's degree in history, Mark spent a year as a Volunteer in Mission with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). He graduated from Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, with a Master of Divinity degree in 1998.

Miriam is from the southern Mexican state, Chiapas. She left her home at age 18 to work at the border in the U.S.-owned factories, helping to support her family. She is a member of the Presbyterian Lirio de los Valles congregation in Agua Prieta. She and Mark have been instrumental in the development of the ecumenical group called Healing Our Borders/Sanando Nuestras Fronteras, in which Frontera de Cristo is active.

Mark and Miriam have three children: Cindy Yessenia, Anna Flor, and Nathan.

# June 2015

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

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<i>28</i> 9:15 AM Worship 10:30 AM Coffee Fellowship <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content;">11:00 AM All Church Picnic at Rover Park</div>	<i>29</i> 7:00 PM Prayer Group	<i>30</i>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">May 2015</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Jul 2015</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> </div>				S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31							S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
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