



White Rock Presbyterian Church

Overlook

An informative newsletter published by the White Rock Presbyterian Church

August 2015

From the Pastor's Desk



“About Those Young Adults”

For some thirty or forty years Presbyterians have pondered, studied, worried, and prayed over the question of why it is that we are failing to retain

and/or attract young adults. We are not alone, of course: all mainline denominations have agonized over the same question, and the latest survey data indicate that even independent churches and megachurches may be losing their previously overwhelming edge in the young adult retention and attraction arena.

Different analysts have somewhat different answers to these questions, but it is certainly in order to listen to younger voices, and also Presbyterian voices, when they speak. Brandon Gaide, the Pastor for Next Generation Ministries at Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church in Houston, offered some pointers in the June issue of *The Presbyterian Outlook*. Here they are, in his own words.

1. **View young adults more as a marginalized people group and less as younger versions of older adults.** The former perspective permits discontinuity; the latter expects continuity. If young adults are simply older adults who haven't

grown up yet, there will be little by way of accommodation.

2. **Pay special attention to church facilities.** We can inadvertently create obstacles for outsiders with our facilities, particularly for those who are not familiar with the trappings of church. Are shared spaces actually “shared,” or do they look remarkably like grandmother's living room? Are there religious symbols throughout the church that require interpretation? Can the purpose of the church be deduced from signage and markings or is there an expectation that worshippers know this implicitly?
3. **Think harder about worship styles.** We must come to terms with the elements of church history we should preserve and those we just happen to preserve. Should we sing in Baroque-style harmony? Can the average young adult read music? There isn't a singular style that every church should adopt. But if our music style is nothing like the rest of the music young adults love, should it change?
4. **Make less out of being Presbyterian.** This is not advocating we cut ties with our Reformed heritage. Rather, it is an acknowledgment that denominations have become, in many peoples' eyes, synonymous with infighting and self-interests. A loud denominational affiliation can appear factious and narrow.
5. **Be more focused on communicating ethos rather than information.** Churches are often guilty of using print-era strategies in a digital-era world. Churches need to understand that because of its ease of access, information is less important to broadcast. What is not so easily accessed is its

ethos. With what spirit do we make announcements in church, or ads in the newspaper, or on our church website? Can people see our love for God in what we're communicating, or do they just see information?

Pastor Gaide acknowledges that these suggestions are superficial, but offers them in the interest of stimulating conversation (and yes, change) in PC(USA) churches. He is concerned that many of our churches simply lack good information.

What do you think? Are there some ways we might respond to Pastor Gaide's observations and recommendations?

On the journey with you,
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.

Session News

The FOCUS Topic for the July Session meeting was the Triennial Visit of representatives from the Presbytery of Santa Fe Commission on Ministry. This is a regular opportunity for members of the Commission to visit with the Session and the Pastor together, with the Session alone, and with Rev. Guthrie and Nancy in order to stay familiar with the relationships among the Pastor, the Session, and the Congregation. Those of you who were at morning worship on July 19 had an opportunity to meet two members of the triennial visit team; they were joined by a third member for the official visit. There were no surprises during the visit; the visitors will prepare a

report reflecting their observations and share it with Rev. Guthrie and the Session.

The Session has also begun considering how to fill the role of Church Treasurer in light of Terry and Susan Buxton moving away from Los Alamos in the near future. Their departure will leave huge voids to fill.

George Callaghan

Update on New Beginnings Initiatives

The New Beginnings Team and Pastor John continue planning in response to the session-approved initiatives that emerged from the New Beginnings process: (1) new discipleship and spiritual growth ministries; (2) new and intentional efforts at raising the visibility of WRPC in our community and also in preparing WRPC members and friends as evangelists; (3) new collaborative mission projects with other churches in our community.

Stay tuned; more information will be forthcoming soon.

Pastor John

Liturgists Needed!

If you have never served as a liturgist for Sunday worship and would like to give it a try, please see or call Pastor John. He will be glad to work with you. It's a great way to serve God and our congregation!

Pastoral Visits Available!

Any WRPC family wanting to spend some one-on-one time with the pastor is always very welcome to call or see John to set up an appointment. He considers it a joy and privilege to visit!

Worship Accompanist Search Continues

The Worship Ministry Committee continues to search for a worship accompanist. In September the committee will again place advertisements in local publications and also contact music teachers in the Los Alamos Public Schools. Ideas and suggestions from WRPC members and friends are very welcome.

Service News

House of Fellowship Mission Trip and Manny's Toolbox Dedication

The Service Ministry has started planning for a mission trip for the weekend of September 18-20 to the House of Fellowship in the Bread Springs Community near Gallup. During this trip we plan to build several handicap access ramps to homes for needy Navajo elders. In addition, we will be dedicating Manny's Toolbox, a tool-sharing ministry to serve the people of the Navajo Nation in self-help construction projects under the mentorship of Fred and Lorraine Thomas, in memory of Manny Honig. Look for future opportunities to join the work party or to help in preparations for the trip.

Rod McCabe

Rummage and Navajo Taco Sale

The 2015 Rummage and Navajo Taco Sale was a huge success. Thank you to everyone for your participation! The rummage sale brought in nearly \$1800, while the Navajo Taco sale earned around \$850 and was an opportunity to work with our mission partners from the House of Fellowship. In addition, some of our youth had the opportunity to pitch in, and several Young Life youth came and helped us clean up. Several members of the community donated items to our sale and four groups set up their own sale tables in the parking lot. This year we are splitting proceeds among Young Life Los Alamos Summer Camp scholarships, Julie's Helpers Scholarships for young Navajo women, and Operation Christmas Child.

Rod McCabe

Fifth Annual Julie's Helpers Memorial Scholarship Award

The Julie's Helpers Memorial Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the recipient of the 5th annual scholarship, given since 2011 to Navajo women who desire to serve their people and need help funding a challenging academic course of study.

The recipient of this year's \$2,500 Julie's Helpers Memorial Scholarship is the University of New



Mexico sophomore Tinisha Spencer from Mentmore, New Mexico. Tinisha is majoring in athletic training and minoring in dance and was named to the Dean's List for both semesters of her freshman year. She was active in intramural soccer and also served as the Health Chair in her residence hall, where she was active in planning weekly events to improve dormitory life. Tinisha is the first in her family to go to college and hopes to serve the Navajo Nation by being a positive, healthy role model for Navajo youth as she pursues a career of dance and athletic training.

Tinisha traveled to WRPC on July 25 to accept her award. Her visit coincided with WRPC's rummage sale and the Navajo taco sale hosted by the Navajo House of Fellowship. Funds raised from the rummage sale will help benefit future Julie's Helpers Memorial Scholarships. The community attended this fundraising event and many church members and others got to meet and encourage Tinisha as she starts her sophomore year at UNM.

The Julie's Helpers Memorial Scholarship awards funds each year to one or two Navajo women who are seeking to further their college education and then serve the Navajo Nation in a professional capacity. Scholarships are based on academic merit, dedication to serving the Navajo people, and financial need. JHMS has supported nine young Navajo women since 2011, when the fund was started to honor Julie Meadows, a caring member of the Los Alamos community, who died of a brain tumor in 2009. Members of her loving family, her sorority (Alpha Zeta Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi), and her church (White Rock Presbyterian Church) coordinate the scholarship each year. Since 2011, the scholarship has awarded over \$15,000 to Navajo women in the fields of education, nursing, health, nutrition, and engineering. Donations can be made to White Rock Presbyterian Church, designation: Julie's Helpers Memorial Scholarship.

Jennifer Holmes

PW News

Presbyterian Women is on hiatus for the summer. Both the weekly and monthly Bible Study groups will pick up again in September.

We are a small group. However, supporting our mission projects is important to us and we are seeking new ways to continue to support our mission opportunities. If you have an abundance of garden produce you might like to share, please bring it on Sunday to display for others to take for a small donation. Your donations allow us to continue to support Presbytery and a child in India through Child Fund. Thank you for all your support.

Much appreciated are 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 Helper, Old El Paso, Progresso, Ziploc, Avery, and Hefty. You will find a basket in the hallway for your donations. We are also very thankful for your donations of hotel-size shampoos, lotions, etc., as we continue to share with sources in need. Small-size soaps will go in the shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child.

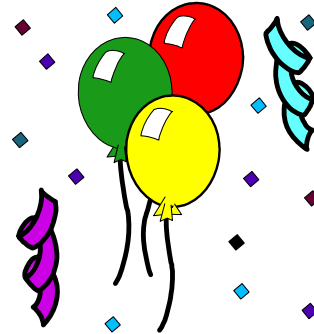
Joyce Berzins

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.

Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Luke (5:31-32)

August Birthdays



Kathrina Clark	4
Jeremy Goettee	9
Jeanette Meadows	9
Joan Barr	12
Bettie Kerr	18

Save the Date!

Distinguished Faith and Science Lecturers Coming to Los Alamos

Deborah and Loren Haarsma, authors of *Origins: Christian Perspectives on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design*, will present a series of three lectures Tuesday through Thursday, August 4-6, at 7:00 pm, at the Church of Christ, 2323 Diamond Drive. The Haarsmas' visit is sponsored by the interdenominational Los Alamos Forum on Faith and Science.

Deborah Haarsma serves as the President of the BioLogos Foundation, which "invites the church and the world to see the harmony between science and biblical faith as we present an evolutionary understanding of God's creation." Previously, she served as professor and chair in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Loren Haarsma is an Associate Professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Calvin College, specializing in biological physics.

Operation Christmas Child

Save Friday night, November 6, for our packing party for Operation Christmas Child.

This year's brochure suggests that when packing a box one might start with a "WOW" toy, such as a doll, soccer ball, or stuffed animal. Then add other fun toys, hygiene items, school supplies, etc. If everyone would buy one or more "WOW" toys for our supplies that would be terrific!

Our other supplies for the boxes are coming along pretty well. We have a good supply of school supplies and stuffed animals. Here are some things we especially could use:

1. **Prayers:** for the children who will receive our boxes, for all the workers involved, and for what you should contribute
2. **Hygiene items:** (remember, no liquids) including combs, hairbrushes, washcloths, soaps, deodorant, toothpaste, and toothbrushes
3. **Clothing items:** including (for boys) underwear and socks (2 yrs to 14 yrs), shirts (10 yrs to 14 yrs), and (for girls) socks (especially for 2 yrs to 9 yrs)
4. **"WOW" toys** or things (especially for 10 yrs to 14 yrs) such as: baseballs, Rubik cubes, small Lego sets, small tools/kits, dolls, and sewing kits
5. **Other Supplies:** hard candy, "Tootsie Pops" (or other suckers), AAA batteries (extras for flashlights), Scotch tape for our packing party and also for wrapping boxes, and large rubber bands (6"-8" total length is good).

Someone has donated money for the soccer balls, but we still need 50 pumps (with needles). We can always use additional cash donations (you can use the "second mile giving," just memo your check for OCC). We need it for the pumps, as well as shipping and handling costs, plus any other items and supplies that we will need.

There are Samaritan's Purse brochures available on the table in the hall with some gift item ideas that show how to pack a shoebox.

Mary Medendorp

Trust You Can Bank On

A bank manager was asking questions to get the information he needed to process a loan. "Do you have any outstanding debts?" he asked the woman making the application. "Any loans that you are paying off?"

"Yes. I have a commitment to my church."

"What I meant was, are you making payments on furniture or a car, for example. Do you have any other loans to pay off?"

"No. I don't have any other indebtedness—only my tithe to my church." She mentioned the amount per month that she had pledged.

"Well, that's fine. But we don't have to include that on this loan application. It's not a legally binding obligation."

"It may not be legally binding, but it is a personal commitment."

"Well, the reason I don't have to include it is because you could pick up that phone and call your church and cancel your pledge if you couldn't keep your commitment."

"That's true. But I'd give up a lot of other things before I'd cancel my pledge. Go ahead and enter it as a monthly commitment."

"Well, okay. It's just that this is unusual. I have never had anyone mention their church pledge in response to this question."

"One thing puzzles me. If I cannot be trusted to keep my pledge to God through my church offerings, why would a bank trust me to keep my commitments on a loan?"

By Mark Bedford of the Ecumenical Stewardship Center, Richmond Indiana. <https://stewardshipresources.org/>

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

1 Cor (12:4-6)

Rev. Sadegh Sepehri

A life of contrasts

Sadegh Sepehri has been a Mission co-worker in Germany since 1998. He serves with the Iranian Presbyterian Fellowship.



Sadegh Sepehri was appointed a mission co-worker in 1998 to serve as a pastor with the Iranian Presbyterian Fellowship in Europe, situated in Berlin, Germany. Serving in this unlikely situation, Sadegh teaches, preaches, and provides pastoral care among the Iranian Presbyterians in Berlin and does evangelism and social work with the Iranian refugees in Germany and Europe.

More than 15,000 Persian-speaking people live in Berlin. Most are refugees who have left home and family and are now living in exile. Sadegh says that there is a great opportunity to go to them, serve them, help them find their way, and, in the process, bring the Word of hope to them.

A native of Iran, Sadegh was 18 when he converted from Islam to Christianity. He joined the Tehran Evangelical Church (Presbyterian) and began working as the chaplain and administrative director of the social service center and in the Clinic of Hope in Tehran, operated by the American Presbyterian Mission. For the following three years he was the chaplain at the Christian Hospital in Tabriz, Iran.

From 1970 to 1991 Sadegh worked for the Iran Bible Society. For the first 9 years he was the administrative and financial director and Bible translator and for the last 12 years he was the executive secretary. In November 1990 Sadegh moved to Germany and was employed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg as an Iranian pastor in Bremen and other

parts of Europe. In 1995 he began a partnership with the PC(USA) as well. In October 1998 Sadegh began his official term in mission with the PC(USA).

Sadegh has a diploma in Persian literature. He took theological classes from the Evangelical Church of Iran and has a degree from the Bible Translators Institute in Karachi, Pakistan. He is a member of the Persian Presbytery of Iran. Sadegh is the father of five adult children: four sons, Djavad, Manouchehr, Mehrdad and Shahram, and a daughter, Nahid.

*With what shall I come before the LORD
and bow down before the exalted God?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousand rivers of oil?
Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
He has showed you, O man, what is good.
And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.*

Micah (6:6-8)

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