



# White Rock Presbyterian Church

# Overlook

An informative newsletter published by the White Rock Presbyterian Church

October 2015

## From the Pastor's Desk



### "The Church in Cuba: Faithfulness Under Persecution"

On Sunday, October 11, we will welcome Xiomara Arenas, an elder of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Placetas, Cuba. The church in Placetas is the

sister church to the twelve PC(USA) churches in the northern part of the Presbytery of Santa Fe that form the Jicarita Cluster. Most of the Jicarita Cluster churches have a long and faithful Hispanic heritage, but they have been pleased to adopt White Rock Presbyterian because of our close geographical proximity! Xiomara will be visiting people and churches in our area from October 1 through October 13; then she will be off for engagements elsewhere in the US for several weeks.

Jennifer Holmes, Nancy Guthrie, and I met Xiomara during our friendship-building trip to Cuba with other Presbytery folks in April of this year, as we visited Placetas and many other sites. The Placetas church is currently meeting in a converted house, while across the street a spacious church building is under construction. In Cuba progress on church buildings is made as the funds become available, so construction is a slow and uncertain process.

Time and again during our April visit our presbytery contingent met with pastors and church leaders in small church buildings scattered across the north-

central part of the island, and we heard a recurrent story. Very shortly after the Cuban revolution ended in 1959, Fidel Castro embraced Communism, and the practice of religion, while not totally banned, became exceedingly difficult. Party membership, often the route to advancement for professional Cubans, was denied to those who continued to practice their Christian faith. Hundreds of thousands of Cuban Christians, including many pastors, fled Cuba for Florida, Spain, and other places. Most Presbyterian-Reformed churches in Cuba dwindled in membership, along with the dominant Catholic Church and other denominations, too.

In Placetas and other towns on the island, there would sometimes be two or three or four people gathered for worship on a Sunday. Sometimes an ordained pastor would be present, but frequently the few faithful laypeople, typically women, would gather, sing, read scripture, and pray: that would constitute Sunday worship. Such was the situation in Cuba, year after year, for roughly three decades, until Castro relaxed restrictions on the churches in the early 1990's.

Some of those faithful lay people (mostly women) are still living, still serving their churches, still filled with joy at belonging to Jesus. These days many of the Presbyterian-Reformed churches in Cuba are much stronger, with young adults and children and youth present, serving those in need in their communities. And there is much need.

Come worship with us, and meet Xiomara on October 11.

Peace and joy,  
Pastor 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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## Stewardship Season

### Stewardship Season 2015: “Grace Upon Grace”

“From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.” John 1:16.

“Grace Upon Grace” is the theme for the 2015 Stewardship Season for White Rock Presbyterian Church. John reminds us in the prologue to his gospel that life has come into being in Christ Jesus, the life that is the light of all people. The light, he writes, shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never overcome it. In Christ we have the power to become children of God. “From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”

Stewardship of the resources (time, abilities, money, and others) with which we are entrusted by God, is one very important facet of discipleship under Jesus. As stewards of God’s gifts, gratitude is a proper and faithful response for the entrustment of these resources. Furthermore, we have received life eternal and abundant in Christ; what is the proper response to *that* gift? How shall we respond to the priceless gift of Jesus to each one of us, and to all of us, that “grace upon grace?”

Stewardship of financial resources is not about paying the church’s bills. It’s about pledging and giving in response to God’s overflowing blessings on and in our lives, a response to Christ’s “grace upon grace.”

Stewardship Season for White Rock Presbyterian Church will extend from Sunday, October 25 through Sunday, November 15, which is Consecration Sunday.

As for the last two years, worshipers will hear from members of our church whose lives have been fundamentally changed by their encounters with Jesus, and the ways in which these saints have responded with thanksgiving to the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

On Consecration Sunday, the Rev. Floyde Smith will deliver the sermon. At the close of worship that Sunday all WRPC members and friends are encouraged to return a card indicating their estimate of giving for 2016 (commonly called a pledge card). Everyone is invited to the Stewardship Consecration Sunday brunch following worship on that day. Steve and Julie Wallin will once again provide the meal, which is guaranteed to be terrific. The sum of the estimate of giving cards will be announced at the brunch, and we will celebrate your response to Christ’s grace. Please mark November 15 on your calendar, and be sure to reserve that day to be in worship, dedication, fellowship, meal-sharing, and celebration with WRPC friends.

The 2015 Stewardship Committee consists of Sumner Barr, Al Medendorp, Mark Gomez, and Pastor John, who is moderating the committee.

The committee encourages every WRPC member and couple to select a percentage of their estimated income for 2016, and to pledge that amount to God through our church. The committee encourages proportionate, systematic, generous giving, as endorsed numerous places in the Scriptures. A central question is this one: “What percentage of my (our) income is God calling me (us) to give in 2016?” Couples are strongly encouraged to discuss and pray over that question!

Please be in prayer about your pledge of giving to God, through White Rock Presbyterian Church, for the year 2016. How will you respond, in grateful praise, to the grace upon grace you have received as a beloved child of God?

Blessings,  
Pastor John

## Musical Accompanist Search

The Worship Ministry team has resumed its search for a permanent musical accompanist. Email messages were recently sent to the twelve or so music teachers in

the Los Alamos Public School system, and advertisements will run again soon in local online and print media. Please pray for a new, gifted, dedicated musical accompanist for WRPC!

## Session News

At meetings in August and September, the Session has received updates on Presbytery of Santa Fe discussions about redesigning the Presbytery structure to accommodate financial pressures. These pressures have been building for many years, and the restructuring will likely require reducing the hours of paid presbytery staff and relying more on a network of volunteers to accomplish presbytery goals. In August we heard of recommendations for presbytery restructuring which were narrowly rejected by a vote at the June presbytery meeting; in September we addressed a request from the presbytery for further input on the issue. We are working together with Jennifer Holmes, our ruling elder Commissioner to both the June and October presbytery meetings, to articulate our questions, concerns, and suggestions as input to the continuing presbytery discussion.

At our September meeting, we continued to address several critical issues facing White Rock Presbyterian Church. We face the immediate questions of revising our ministry structure so that we have the right leadership for discipleship and evangelism ministries, while we solidify and continue improvements we've made recently to our building and grounds. Another immediate need is to find a new Church Treasurer.

A somewhat longer term but critical matter is planning for what happens at the end of Rev. Guthrie's designated three year term which ends December 2016. If there is to be a change in our pastoral leadership at the start of 2017 we need to make preparations during 2016; and it is time for us to begin those preparations.

George Callaghan

## Reformation Sunday

On Sunday, October 25, WRPC will celebrate the Protestant Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, led by Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin, John Knox, and others. According to tradition, Luther nailed his famous Ninety-five Theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany on October 31, 1517,

the event that is considered to be the beginning of the Reformation.

On October 25 we will again have bagpiper Anthony Puckett with us, a reminder of the ministry of Scotsman John Knox among his people, who became the first Presbyterians late in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Come worship with us on October 25!

Pastor John

## All Saints Day

This year All Saints Day, November 1, falls on a Sunday, and WRPC will on that day remember God's faithfulness to us in life and in death, recall the promise of resurrection for all the faithful, and give WRPC members and friends an opportunity to remember and celebrate the lives of their loved ones who are now at rest. The Lord's Supper will also be celebrated on November 1, a reminder that faithful believers, from all times and all places, are somehow mysteriously present when we gather at Christ's table, including those who have died in Christ. Come worship with us on All Saints Day, November 1!

Pastor John

## Presbyterian Women News

Due to travel and other commitments, the Presbyterian Women will not meet for their First Wednesday Luncheon in October.

For a schedule of the weekly Bible study group, contact Carol Honig.

The Circle/Bible Study will meet Thursday, October 15 at 10:00 am at the church, studying *Abraham's Dilemma and the Birth of Three Faiths*, led by Selma Reinovsky. Come join us!

Mary Medendorp is planning a "sorting and organizing" session of the donations for Operation Christmas Child. More details will be available soon.

Thank you for your Campbell's products labels and Box Tops for Education. A basket for donations is available on the side table in the hallway.

Joyce Berzins

## **LANL United Way Giving for 2016**

The LANL/United Way Giving program will begin on October 19, 2015. Here is some information drawn from the LANL website:

Each year, employees make monetary donations through the Employee Giving Campaign to support the United Way of Northern New Mexico, United Way of Santa Fe County, and other nonprofit organizations. Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS), the Lab's manager, invests through the Giving Campaign by matching \$1 million to the contributions of LANL employees. LANS also delivers in-kind services and other community investments to provide additional support for our neighbors.

Thank you for your giving to God through our church and the LANL United Way Giving program!

## **Operation Christmas Child**

Please reserve Friday night, November 6, for the packing party for Operation Christmas Child!

This year's OCC 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. Please consider buying one or more "WOW" toys for our supplies!

Our other supplies for the boxes are coming along pretty well. We have a good supply of school supplies and stuffed animals. Some things we especially could use include: hygiene items (no liquids), clothing items, "WOW" toys, and other miscellaneous items (such as hard candy, AAA batteries, Scotch tape, large rubber bands, etc.). Please pray for OCC ministries, too!

We can always use additional cash donations. Monetary donations are used for soccer ball pumps, shipping and handling costs, and any other needed items and supplies.

There are Samaritan's Purse brochures available on the table in the church hallway, with some gift item ideas and advice for packing a shoebox.

Mary Medendorp

## **Study of Proverbs Underway**

Everyone is welcome to join the Bible Study group at 11:00 am on Sundays through December, which is currently engaged in study of the book Proverbs. Proverbs prompts us to wrestle with the question, "What does it mean to live wisely before God and in the company of others?" Although written over 2,000 years ago, Proverbs offers continually new guideposts for those who are seeking to live well, at peace with God and others, even in 2015.

Pastor John leads this study. Everyone is welcome!

## **Ruling Elder and Deacon Nominations**

The 2015 Nominating Committee is seeking candidates to serve as deacons and ruling elders. Is God calling you? Please see a Nominating Committee member: Jeff Goettee, Sumner Barr, Selma Reinovsky, or Vickie Teel.

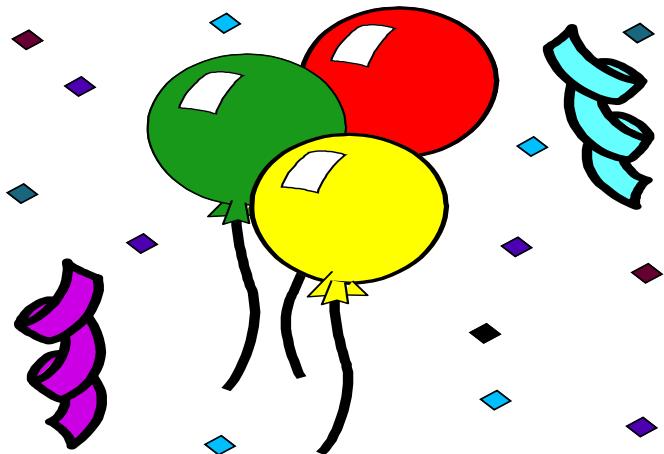
The Nominating Committee is currently working to fill an at-large vacancy in its membership, due to the departure of Glenn Clemons. Volunteers are welcome! A called congregational meeting will be necessary to elect that person.

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## October Birthdays



Kirsten McCabe	7
Cameron Meadows	7
Nancy Guthrie	9
Leith Fujii	18
Linda Burns	22
Dave Clark	23
Christine Torres	30

## Service Ministry

### House of Fellowship Work Weekend

Thanks to everyone for participating in the House of Fellowship Work Weekend, September 18-20, with your donations, food, muscle, and prayers. It was a rewarding weekend of work, fellowship, worship, and making new friends.

On Friday, several members of the work party delivered furniture to a family with 5 children that recently moved from a small travel trailer to a four-bedroom low-income home.

Saturday was spent building a ramp for a needy family near Westminster Presbyterian Church in Gallup, painting Fred and Lorraine Thomas's house, delivering firewood to three families in the Bread Springs area, and fellowshipping over lunch and dinner with several House of Fellowship families.

Most of the work crew was able to attend worship at the House of Fellowship Sunday morning, including a moving dedication of Manny's Tool Box, the new HOF tool sharing ministry started with funds donated to WRPC in memory of Manny Honig. HOF friends provided lunch following worship.

Rod McCabe

## Path to the Center

The Westminster Presbyterian Church of Gallup, which hosted meals for the recent HOF mission-work trip, has constructed a labyrinth on the church property which is open to the public.

Labyrinths have a long history. One of the earliest examples of a Christian pavement labyrinth is found in a fourth century Algerian



basilica. By the Middle Ages this ancient form of support for prayer and meditation was found in a variety of forms in a number of European churches and cathedrals.

Labyrinths should not be confused with mazes. Labyrinths, either pavement or wall drawings, are paths easily followed, to help one focus on God's presence. There is more information available about labyrinths from the Office of Spiritual Formation of the Presbyterian Church (USA) [www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/spiritualformation/pdfs/20minutesabbaths-walking-labyrinth.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/spiritualformation/pdfs/20minutesabbaths-walking-labyrinth.pdf).

There wasn't time during our work day to follow Westminster's labyrinth. Perhaps one day WRPC can build a labyrinth that, along with our prayer garden, we can offer to our neighborhood as a setting for prayer and meditation.

Selma Reinovsky

## Groundskeepers Needed

With the recent departure of dear friends Glenn Clemons and Terry and Susan Buxton, our church grounds could use some tending until the summer season ends. In particular, plants at the front and rear of the building, the prayer garden, and grass next to the prayer garden all need periodic watering in order to keep them healthy and green, especially since the rains have stopped for the time being.

There is no need to sign up: just come and water the plants by hand or using the sprinklers. If you like, bring a book to read. Any time individuals, couples, or families can spare would be greatly appreciated by our entire congregation. Thank you!

## Mission Co-Worker

### Meet Rev. Kathleen M. Griffin

Rev. Kathleen M. (Katie) Griffin has been a Mission co-worker in Argentina since 1998, currently serving at ISEDET (Instituto Superior Evangélico de Estudios Teológicos)

Katie is a mission co-worker in the area of theological education in Buenos Aires. In her first term of service, she taught at a Pentecostal seminary (Seminario Emanuel of the Asociación La Iglesia de Dios – ALIDD). ALIDD is a PC(USA) mission partner. Since 2001, she has taught church history at ISEDET, a university-level Protestant institute.

Katie teaches classes in Church History to students who are preparing to be pastors, and guides undergraduate students through thesis projects in the Church History department.

Katie believes that the aim of theological education is to disciple church leaders so that they, in turn, can disciple others to work for evangelism, reconciliation in cultures of violence, and helping those most affected by poverty, especially women and children. All three of these critical global issues have influenced her work as a church historian in theological education.



ISEDET serves nine Protestant denominations in the Río de la Plata region of South America: Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. Three churches, the Waldensian Evangelical Church of Río de la Plata, the Evangelical Church of Río de la Plata, and the Reformed Churches of Argentina, are also partners in mission with the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Katie is active in ALIDD, where her husband, the Rev. Daniel A. Fratea, a psychologist, is a minister. ALIDD churches are active centers in their communities, sponsoring soup kitchens, clothing closets, sewing workshops, and other outreach activities. In times of natural disasters, ALIDD churches are often the focal points through which ecumenical agencies distribute food, clothing, bedding and other necessary items to disaster victims. ALIDD also promotes a critical (rather than literal) theological education to students at a popular level. Students at the seminary struggle to understand and then teach the biblical message of salvation and liberation within contexts of poverty, abuse, and delinquency.

Since the birth of her second child and the beginnings of her doctoral studies, Katie's teaching has taken place in Buenos Aires. Previously she traveled frequently to extension sites to give intensive workshops. "I miss the traveling," writes Katie, "because it provided me with a constant contact with the reality of the living situations for the great majority of the poor in Argentina."

Katie graduated from Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, with a B.A. in French studies. She taught French at Wayland Academy, Wisconsin for two years. Subsequently she received an M.Div. degree from Fuller Theological Seminary, and a Th.M. from Princeton Theological Seminary in church history. Katie finished her doctoral degree in Church History at ISEDET, studying the life stories of early Argentine Pentecostals in the twentieth century, in March 2015. Katie is a clergy member of Cayuga-Syracuse Presbytery. She and Daniel have a daughter, Noelia Nicole Fratea Griffin, and a son, Brian Daniel Fratea Griffin.

# October 2015

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

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