



# White Rock Presbyterian Church

# Overlook

An informative newsletter published by the White Rock Presbyterian Church

December 2015

## From the Pastor's Desk

Terrorists strike in Paris, taking the lives of 130 and injuring over 360. In Baghdad the associated attack takes 27 lives and leaves 65 injured. The related attack in Beirut costs 43 lives and injures more than 200. The flood of desperate refugees from Syria continues to grow, now with over 4 million refugees; half of them children. ISIS/ISIL/Daesh continues its barbaric occupation of parts of Syria and Iraq, executing thousands of civilians of all faiths, and often filming those executions for shock effect. The war in Syria drags on, with perhaps as many as 300,000 deaths to date, including children; there is no foreseeable end to the carnage and suffering there. Daesh brings down a Russian airliner, killing all 224 aboard. The conflict in Afghanistan continues, with radicals still controlling large parts of the country; civilians continue to suffer. The tensions in Ukraine remain, with over 4,000 deaths to date, and thousands more wounded; civilians are also wrapped up in the violence.

For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onwards and for evermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.  
(Isaiah 9:5-7)

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Pastor John

## Advent 2015

The 2015 Advent Season for WRPC has the theme "In the Darkness, Light." Advent begins on Sunday, November 29 and runs through Christmas Eve. The themes of the Sundays of Advent are these:

**Sunday, November 29** - Unexpected  
**Sunday, December 6** - Tender Mercies  
**Sunday, December 13** - These Stones  
**Sunday, December 20** - Scattered

**Come. Watch. Wait. Wonder.**

## Engage Starts in January!

We will begin *Engage*, the PC(USA)'s evangelism study, on Sunday, January 10, and the study will run for eight to ten weeks, depending on some options available. The New Beginnings Discernment Team and the Session of WRPC strongly encourage the participation of all WRPC members and friends in this unique, challenging, and potentially transformative study. A new focus on evangelism emerged from the New Beginnings planning process, and that focus is evident in the formation of a new WRPC ministry with the same name. (Bob Reinovsky is the coordinator for the new Evangelism Ministry.)

Please plan to join us, beginning January 10, after worship and coffee. Join me in praying that the Holy Spirit will use *Engage*, along with other means, to move WRPC to a greater commitment to both evangelism and discipleship in the months to come.

Here's some good information from the *Engage* curriculum designers:

**A cultural storm has wreaked havoc on the religious landscape. Our churches are standing, but where are the people? Who will build new bridges to those who live all around our churches?**

**What should congregations do?**

***Engage*, a new evangelism approach helps churches become relevant again. As congregations learn how to share their faith they attract people who join them in following Jesus. Together they join in God's mission of transformation in their neighborhoods and communities.**

***Engage the gospel* by reclaiming our story that real and lasting life comes from a relationship with Jesus. Through Jesus we experience God setting things right and**

restoring a broken creation. ***Engage* helps people in the church live into their own stories of transformation and the life-changing power of God's redemptive mission described in Scripture. Sharing this story of God's forgiving love and grace is *the foundation* of being a useful bridge again for a broken world to . . .**

***Engage in discipleship* by forming followers of Jesus who are nurtured in their faith and equipped for God's mission in the context of a disciple-making community. The Great Commission is not about making members but making disciples. Through worship, prayer, Scripture, fellowship, and spiritual practices, we are encouraged and challenged to live Jesus' way. It is out of *this structure* of being a vibrant disciple that we are able to . . .**

***Engage in God's mission* by preparing people in the church to become missionaries in their neighborhoods and communities. God's forgiveness, the freedom we have in Jesus, is for the purpose of inviting others into a relationship with God, who brings healing, reconciliation, and restoration that transforms our lives, communities, cities, and culture. As we share our faith, working with God for justice and mercy, we become *an extension* of Christ in the world.**

Pastor John

## Singing Carols at the State Penitentiary

WRPC members and friends will be singing Christmas carols for inmates at the state penitentiary on Thursday, December 10. Sumner Barr is coordinating this annual event; see or call Sumner for more information.

## “Grace Upon Grace” Update

For the 2015 season of stewardship, WRPC adopted the theme “Grace Upon Grace,” taken from John 1:16, “From his fullness, we have all received grace upon grace.” (The one referred to here is Christ, the Messiah.) WRPC members and friends were encouraged to consider their own response to that grace upon grace, of which all of us are recipients.

The season began on October 25 with a personal testimony by Joyce Haven, in which she described her own journey of stewardship, punctuated at times by suffering and hardship. George Callaghan urged us in another talk to consider “stepping up” our current level of giving, and especially encouraging giving that is proportional to income.

Pastor John delivered a sermon which emphasized the dangers of money and possessions, as Jesus saw them, as well as another take on proportional giving, and finally, gratitude to God as the primary motivation for generous giving. Guest preacher Floyd Smith related his own experience of being blessed, in unexpected ways, by simply giving generously as he had been taught from his childhood. Floyd reminded the congregation that we cannot receive if our hands are clenched shut.

The season reached its climax with a barbecue luncheon prepared by Steve and Julie Wallin, on November 15. There are still a few families from whom we are expecting “Estimate of Giving” cards for 2016, but as of November 23, here are the results which faithful “Treasurer at a Distance” Susan Buxton (serving for a time) has recorded and estimated:

- ✧ 20 families/individuals have returned Estimate of Giving cards
- ✧ 10 of those families/individuals have increased their commitment above 2015

- ✧ There are 5 new pledging families/individuals
- ✧ The total pledge commitment is \$91,984
- ✧ The net increase for those who pledged for 2015 and again for 2016 is \$9,984
- ✧ Based on the numbers for 2015, WRPC can expect from those who have not yet returned an Estimate of Giving card, plus those who give regularly without pledging, \$24,310 in 2016
- ✧ The estimate for loose plate income for 2016 is \$1,200
- ✧ Other sources of income, such as fees and interest, should yield about \$3, 128
- ✧ Thus, the total estimated income for 2016 is \$120,622
- ✧ The same figure for 2015 is \$124, 266 (as recorded in the 2015 budget)

Given the loss of some very generous families during the course of 2015 (due to relocation), the Stewardship Committee and the Session are very pleased with the results of “Grace Upon Grace.” The committee looks forward to the receipt of a few outstanding Estimate of Giving cards, and the completion of the 2015 season of stewardship.

I am thankful for your faithful expressions of discipleship during this season, for your understanding of what it means to be disciples of Christ. Your pledging and your giving are not directed to White Rock Presbyterian Church, but to the living God who loves us, saves us, and sustains us. Thank you, faithful saints.

Pastor John  
Moderator, Stewardship Committee

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### WRPC Contact Information

White Rock Presbyterian Church is located at 310 Rover Boulevard, Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544. Contact the church office at 672-3682 or [office@wrpchurch.com](mailto:office@wrpchurch.com).

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## Session News

### December 2015

At the November Session meeting Bob Reinovsky, on behalf of the Budget & Finance Team, led us through discussion of a preliminary target for 2016 expenses, representing needs and opportunities for the coming year. This discussion was a first step in preparing an operating budget which will be shared with the congregation at the 2016 Annual Meeting. The Session discussed new and continuing programs, and spent quite a bit of time on Mission spending philosophy and goals. The discussion left the B&F Team with input for consideration as it continues its work on the budget, and left the Session members with several budget philosophy questions and a request for further input to the B&F Team before its next meeting.

The Session also reviewed the initial responses from WRPC members and friends through their Estimates of Giving on Consecration Sunday, November 15. The response of the WRPC family on Consecration Sunday was encouraging, and the Session looks forward to having a more complete picture of finances for 2016 very soon.

Session News last month highlighted Session decisions about a revised array of Ministries for WRPC, and the Session members who had agreed to lead those Ministries. We also noted that there might be some changes in Ministry titles to better reflect the intent and scope of each one. At the November meeting the Session made some name changes, and the agreed list of Ministry names, with the leadership repeated here, is this:

Evangelism led by Bob Reinovsky. “Evangelism” is an unsettling word for many Presbyterians, but it is a clear Christian responsibility. Watch for an opportunity starting in January to learn more about evangelism in practice.

Discipleship led by Joyce Haven and Pastor John. This name replaces “Equipping” and reflects the ministry of making disciples of people of all ages.

Worship led by Pastor John. This name is clear, straightforward and unchanged.

Buildings and Grounds led by Rod McCabe. This name replaces “Support” and better reflects the scope of this ministry.

Fellowship led by Vernon Kerr. This ministry, whose name remains unchanged, promotes stronger connections among the members and friends of the congregation.

Mission led by Jeff Goettee. This name replaces “Service” and before that, “Witness.” The Session believes the new name better describes the role of the ministry in reaching outside our family to meet spiritual, emotional, and material needs in our community and in the world.

The Session also decided that we will try to discipline our references to the leadership groups for each Ministry as TEAMS, in order to avoid the dread COMMITTEE label. You can help us with that! We also want to remind ourselves constantly that each ministry includes all of us.

George Callaghan

## Christmas Eve

The 2015 Christmas Eve Service for WRPC is set for 7:30 p.m. and will be a Service of Lessons and Carols. The service will feature readings from the Old and New Testaments, including the Christmas story from the Gospels. The theme of the service is “Great Joy.” And yes, we will light candles!

Child care is provided, and refreshments will follow worship. Bring a friend!

## Called Congregational Meeting

The Session has set a called meeting of the WRPC congregation for Sunday, December 6, immediately following worship, for the purpose of electing an at-large member of the 2015-2016 Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee has nominated Nancy Guthrie to fill the current at-large vacancy on the Committee, and the Session has expressed its approval of that nomination. As always, nominations may also be made from the floor, with prior assent of the nominee.

## Small Groups for Discipleship Growth

Yes, they are coming! Starting with probably only two or three, but (God willing) growing in number over the course of 2016, these groups (typically 3-8 individuals) will meet primarily in homes, most often weekly, in order to promote growth in discipleship and dedication to Christ. A renewed focus on discipleship is another of the initiatives identified by the New Beginnings Discernment Team and endorsed by the WRPC Session.

I am looking for individuals or couples who are especially excited about forming or being part of a discipleship group. Please let me know.

Pastor John

## A Message from Leith and Carol Fujii

Our mission agency is the Presbyterian World Mission, and our financial support (salaries, medical insurance and pension, as well as education and travel allowances) is administered by this agency. The finances that World Mission allocates to us, as well as approximately 160

other mission co-workers, comes from individuals and church bodies, both in as well as beyond the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). When we were sent to the mission field 17 years ago, World Mission was sufficiently funded through the connectional contributions and endowments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and we were not required to have funds personally designated to our account.

Over the years, those funds have been depleted or substantially diverted to other causes. This has resulted in the situation in which this year it was necessary to recall 11 very valuable co-workers from their fields of global service. When we recently met with our agency, we learned that current mission co-workers' terms of service must be reviewed in April 2016, and reappointments will be pending the outcome of contributions in 2015. In plain language, what this means is that we and our agency need to be prepared to make further decreases in our company of co-workers if significant changes in funding don't happen.

What does this mean for us personally? Well, being recalled in 2016 is a very real possibility. But we aren't anxious as we join with our colleagues in World Mission in simply asking partners to prayerfully consider making and/or increasing their financial support/investment in the mission. As we do this, let's never forget that our God who is at the head of His Kingdom Mission owns all things and doesn't need our financial offerings (Psalm 50:10); and at the same time, He has entrusted these resources to our stewardship. We therefore each have the wonderful "response"-ability and privilege to wisely invest in the Pearl of Ultimate Worth: the Kingdom of God (Matt. 13:45). May God guide us in this exciting task!

You can give to the Fujii's ministry through the church (just write Fujii on the memo line) or through the Presbyterian Mission Agency online: [www.presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200343/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/donate/E200343/).

## A Note from the Budget and Finance Committee

White Rock Presbyterian Church is enormously blessed by the generosity of its members and friends. Not only do you share most generously in contributing to the General Fund through our annual stewardship ministry, and all throughout the year, but many of our members and friends regularly and frequently support the ministries of WRPC through generous in-kind donations ranging from food and supplies for fellowship activities, to small (and large) purchases in support of our gardens, grounds and facility, to school and office supplies, to materials and supplies for our mission activities, and many more. That wonderful generosity stretches what we can do with our General Fund budget, including extending our mission and care ministries, but it also means that we do not actually know what it costs to support the life of the church.

While giving thanks for all that in-kind generosity, and trusting that the Spirit will call members and friends to continue that support, prudence (Proverbs 3:21) suggests that we make appropriate efforts to measure the amount of that generosity, and to appropriately acknowledge and thank the givers. To do so, we need to ask your help in recording those in-kind contributions.

We understand that “paperwork can be too complicated, and not worth the effort,” so through the work of Susan Buxton (who continues to help us, remotely, in financial matters) and Gill Erickson, we now have a really simple way to collect this data. In the church office you will soon find a box into which you can simply drop receipts for in-kind purchases, or even a handwritten note, for purchases for which you do not seek reimbursement. Gill will do the rest. All we need is your name on the receipt, and a few words about the nature of the in-kind donation

(for example, “snacks for Sunday fellowship”). If you know a budget code, you may write that also, but it is not necessary. With this information we can record these donations and provide you with a receipt that you can use for your own accounting and tax purposes.

Of course, if you would like to be reimbursed for purchase that can be done as in the past. Simply fill out one of the pink reimbursement request slips, attach the receipt and leave it for Gill. Nothing changes in this process. Thank you.

Bob Reinovsky, Moderator  
Budget and Finance Committee

## Fishing in Paris

The Missional Presbyter (formerly known as the Presbytery Executive) of the Presbytery of Santa Fe is the Rev. Dr. Sallie Watson. Sallie publishes an email periodical which she calls “Missional Ponderings,” and which is available to anyone who would like to receive it. For information, please call or email Pastor John.

In her most recent edition of “Missional Ponderings,” Sallie writes this:

Of all the news coverage over the weekend, I was especially drawn to a story in the *New York Times*. One of the *Times* reporters was walking in Paris on Saturday morning, the day after the bombings. In his walks he encountered a gentleman fishing alone in the Seine River. The reporter asked the fisher how it was that he came to be fishing in that place on that day. The fisher responded that he lived in a small town outside Paris, and ordinarily enjoyed fishing in a river closer to home. But on this day, he said, he felt the need to come and fish in Paris.

## A Tribute – and a Challenge

After the Paris bombings of 13 November, CNN published a statement by Antoine Leiris who lost his wife Helene Muyal in the violence. He wrote this:

Friday night you took away the life of an exceptional human being, the love of my life, the mother of my son, but you will not have my hatred.

If this God for whom you kill so blindly has made us in His image, every bullet in the body of my wife will have been a wound in His heart.

So I will not give you the privilege of hating you. You want me to be frightened, that I should look into the eyes of my fellow citizens with distrust, that I sacrifice my freedom for security. You lost. I will carry on as before.

I saw her this morning. Finally, after nights and days of waiting. She was as beautiful as when she left on Friday evening, as beautiful as when I fell madly in love with her more than twelve years ago.

There are only two of us, my son and I, but we are stronger than all the armies of the world. Moreover, I have no more time to grant you; I must go to Melvil who is waking up from his nap. He is just seventeen months old. He will eat his snack like he does every day, then we will play like we do every day, and every day of his life this little boy will affront you by being happy and free. Because you will not have his hatred either.

## Bell Ringers

The Salvation Army seeks bell ringers for the White Rock Smith's store on particular days through December 23. If you would be willing to ring a bell for a two-hour shift, please call the church office to find out about available times to

serve. Funds raised by bell ringers are used to help Los Alamos residents with basic needs such as heating bills, food, and shelter.

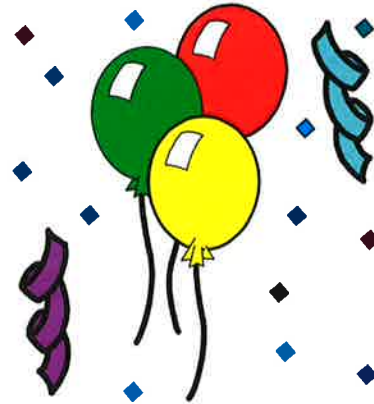
## Treasury Notes Contributions & Donations for 2015

To receive credit in 2016 for your 2015 contributions and pledges, please deliver your final contributions for 2015 to the church office no later than 12:00 noon on Thursday, December 31. The church office is open Tuesday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon, excluding holidays. Or you may mail your contribution, postmarked in 2015.

You may also submit to the office a list of items you have donated to WRPC in 2015, either valued by you or valued by purchase receipts. We will prepare a donation report for your tax records. Thank you!

2015 Contribution Statements will be mailed in January.

## December Birthdays



Honglin Zhang	6
Ann Heaton	23
Megan Kelley	28
Mary Diaz	29

# Ruling Elder and Deacon Nominations

The 2015-2016 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.

## Meet Richard and Debbie Welch



Richard and Debbie Welch have been Mission co-workers in [Guatemala](#) since 2013. They serve with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala.

As educational consultants for indigenous peoples, Richard and Debbie Welch's first responsibility is to establish relationships with presbyteries serving the indigenous membership of the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Through these relationships, they help indigenous people gain access to primary, vocational, and theological education. Based in Guatemala City, they seek to build bridges between Guatemalan education projects and U.S. supporters of Guatemalan education.

Richard and Debbie's call to mission has its roots in what they call "a curious interest" in their Inland Northwest Presbytery's mission partnership in Guatemala. "Over time it slowly grew into a passion and excitement about the transformative impact the partnership was having on our presbytery, our partners, and on us personally," Richard says.

Richard and Debbie appreciate the thorough orientation about Guatemala they received before making their first visits with their presbytery. "Against that backdrop, we encountered our indigenous partners," Richard

recalls. "Experiencing their infectious commitment to Christ, their church, and their extended communities of faith touched our hearts on that first visit. It continues to impact us whenever we're there."

Richard and Debbie are firmly committed to the concept of mission in partnership. They want the church in the US to learn how churches in developing countries grow and prosper amid scarce resources and adverse circumstances.

"Our hope is that our relational skills and organizational gifts will help facilitate greater childhood, vocational, and theological educational opportunities among our partners, and that these opportunities provide a potential path out of poverty," Debbie says.

Prior to entering mission service, Richard worked for 26 years for Triumph Composite Systems, Inc., an aerospace manufacturing company in Spokane, Washington, where he was a senior manager. He holds a bachelor's degree from Whitworth College in Spokane.

Debbie was the church administrator at Knox Presbyterian Church in Spokane, where she and Richard are members. She also is a graduate of Whitworth College.

## 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



# December 2015

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

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