



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



September 2020

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast

Pastor:

Rev. Dr. Jerry Carpenter

Session members:

Class of 2020

Jane Els and Dan Wilson

Class of 2021

Sandy Corder and Kelly Holloman

Class of 2022

Patricia Fields and Slade Weaver

Treasurer

Ronny Knight

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PASTOR'S PAGE: REV. DR. JERRY CARPENTER

Fall is in the air. It has felt so good recently to go out early in the morning for my walk and feel a bit of coolness in the air. I love autumn. It is my favorite season of the year. Autumn is a kaleidoscope of color with leaves of different shades being brilliant for a time and then falling to the ground for us to take care of. Autumn is a festival of the senses...pumpkin flavored everything around us for us to taste and smell and enjoy. It is sounds of geese flying above as they make their way south for the winter months to come. It is the touch of sweaters as we retrieve them from storage and begin to put them in now and then on cooler days. Autumn is a feeling, an invigoration of spirit as well as body. Autumn is the renewal of mind even as we begin to prepare for the winter.

It is exciting to experience a cold front when it comes through. The day may begin warm or sultry but soon that line passes that separates hot air from cold and then, as if the cold air had a mind of its own, it settles around us and makes itself at home. Years ago we had what we called "Blue Northers" where the sky would turn a steely blue as the cold air approached. I have not seen that in a long time but I wonder if we still stand alert to the incoming of such a change.

The sermons for September are going to relate to change in our lives. Confession, forgiveness, duty, challenge are topics for consideration weekly. How do we forgive when we have been offended? How often must we forgive if someone offends us often? How do we feel about latecomers to the faith? Are they accepted fully as we think we are? Which is more important—saying you will fulfill a request or acting doing what is required? All these questions are for consideration each Sunday. Join us either in person in worship on Sundays at 11 a.m. or via Facebook Live if you cannot get to the sanctuary. You will find a warm welcome either way.

Your church Session has been busy behind the scenes making sure our worship space is sanitized and that we have what we need for weekly worship. They will meet again on September 13. There will be a congregational meeting on that day also after worship to elect persons for the Nominating Committee to help choose new Session members and a Trustee. We will meet in person in the sanctuary for that meeting.

I hope to see you as soon as you feel comfortable returning to our sanctuary for worship. We have been having 15-25 persons in worship weekly. It is good to see persons again after such a long absence. We are still wearing our masks throughout the worship service and using hand sanitizer. You are a valued member of our congregation and we long for the day when we may all be together and fully able to touch and speak and not worry about disease.

SERMON TITLES FOR SEPTEMBER:

- Sep 6 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Matthew 18: 15-20
“Making Things Right”
- Sep 13 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Matthew 18: 21-35
“Calming the Storm”
- Sep 20 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Matthew 20:1-16
“Deathbed Confessions”
- Sep 27 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
Matthew 21:23-32
“Words or Deeds?”

September birthdays & anniversaries:

(Please notify the office if I do not have your birthday)

2 Doris Carpenter

3 Annv. Kettleison

8 Carolyn Hylton

9 Annv. Poe

15 Elizabeth Drennan

23 Hurschel Thomas

26 Katelyn Drennan

27 Donna Campbell

28 Molly Lennon

Attendance:

August 2—14

August 9—14

August 16—20

August 23—19

Notice of Congregational Meetings

- A congregational meeting has been called for September 13 following worship to elect a Nominating Committee to serve September 2020 - August 2021. This committee will nominate two church members to recommend to the congregation to serve on the Session and one member as Trustee for the class of 2023. As per the Book of Order and our own Manual of Operations, the Session appointed two elders, Jane Els and Dan Wilson, to this committee. Three additional members from the congregation at large will be elected. This is only a one year commitment and after September/October the committee will only meet if a Session member or Trustee is unable to fulfill his/her term and needs to be replaced. Please consider serving your congregation in this way.
- A congregational meeting has been called for October 25 following worship for the purpose of hearing elder and trustee nomination recommendations from the Nominating Committee and for electing 2 elders and 1 trustee to serve for the class of 2023. Nominations will be recommended from the committee, but nominations from the floor will also be open. If you plan to make a nomination, please make sure in advance of the meeting that the person is willing to serve and understands the duties he/she will be accepting.
Current Session members, Jane Els and Dan Wilson, and Trustee Molly Lennon will roll off this year.



Jane's Journey

As I write this, Hurricane Laura is headed toward the Texas-Louisiana border while Hurricane Marco is right behind her headed for the Louisiana-Mississippi border. People are evacuating in cars and busses and doing what they can to get out of harm's way—all in the middle of a Covid-19 pandemic. In the coming days the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance will send teams into the affected areas to set up camps for volunteers who will come from churches all over the US.

I worked for PDA after Hurricane Katrina hit 15 years ago. And when I read Matthew 16:21-28 it reminds me of the volunteers who came to help rebuild the Gulf Coast. When I read about taking up your cross, I picture the men and women from all over the US who might have worn a cross necklace or driven a church van with a cross logo on the side or even worn their church's t-shirt while they worked. Or maybe taking up a cross meant picking up a hammer or other kind of work tool. One of the most memorable quotes I heard was the pastor who said he would come and bring chainsaws but was told that wasn't enough, the devastation was worse than he could imagine; there was nothing left, he would have to bring everything, he would have to bring tents to live in while they worked and kitchens to cook in and beds to sleep in. So the concept of the Volunteer Villages was born. That's what "taking up your cross" means to me. Sometimes you have to take everything.

And it comes naturally to deny yourself when you see a person in need. I met so many volunteers who came from all over the country to help, usually people who took their vacation time to spend a week working on a house. I met a couple of churches from South Carolina and Georgia who came because they had experience with hurricanes and knew how much help and what kind was needed. These folks would work a solid day then come back to the camp covered in either sheet rock dust or paint and I could see that they were bone-tired but they had such a look of love in their eyes. And it was because their work had been done in the name of Christ.

But taking up your cross can mean something else, also. It can mean taking a risk. The people who got in their church vans and drove to Louisiana to help re-build the Gulf Coast took a risk to their health: sore backs, bum knees, cut fingers. However, by and large, the greatest risk was extending your heart to strangers. Because you can fall in love with the people you meet while you are helping them.

Once you hold out your hand in kindness you don't realize you are opening up a little part of your "self"—of "you" to being vulnerable. It won't work if you don't do it that way. You have to leave yourself exposed. That's how being a friend works.

I made one particular friend in Mississippi during my time at PDA. And every hurricane since I call her and make sure she knows that she is welcome to evacuate to my house.

Deny yourself. Take up your cross. It's not always hard once you get into it.

Feeding the Spirit

Many of you know I study Ayurveda and yoga, these two Eastern arts have taught me a tremendous amount about being a better Christian. On one topic, specifically, the learning has been particularly illuminating. This topic has been the idea that food profoundly influences how you feel, think, and even behave.

“You are what you eat”, is taken to a level that is both liberating and terrifying. Personally, it has been liberating and I’ve spent years slowly making changes in my eating habits so that I can be a better person.

I am terrified, though, when I look out on the landscape of foods eaten by my peers and others in my environment. It simultaneously breaks my heart and frustrates me that folks don’t have enough information to make great choices... and they become angry, anxious, or depressed individuals.

I’ll share a small piece of the wisdom I have been taught:

Every food on Earth has the ability to do one of three things – rev you up, slow you down, or make you feel great. These properties in Sanskrit are, respectively, Rajas, Tamas, and Sattva. We definitely need all three of these in our diet, but we need a lot more of Sattva than the others.

Everyone has had a cup of coffee or tea to get us going or eaten something comforting to calm us down sometimes. You’ve probably also experienced food that just makes us happy to be alive sometimes. Too much of one or another of these foods can lead to an imbalance and influence all folks around you.

Let’s take a quick trip into each one...

Rajasic Food – Revs you up

Rajas foods are stimulating foods that have an excess of spices and flavors that make them hot (spicy), salty, sweet, or bitter. Tempting foods like chocolate and coffee (bitter), cheese (salty), sodas and cookies (sweet), and extra spicy sauces can all be Rajasic. Modern science says a lot of these items get you moving due to extra calories and carbs or through stimulant ingredients.

Too much Rajas food can make our temper close to the surface, anxiety more pronounced, and make us ego driven. Not enough, and you lose your ambition and are mentally drained.

Tamasic Food—Slows you down

Tamasic foods are overly processed foods that are difficult to digest. These foods make you want to just sit and relax. Even more, they can really lead us down into some dark places like greed, materialistic cravings, and general disregard for others’ feelings. Deep fried foods, chips, foods preserved with vinegar, hotdogs, ham, preserved lunch meats, as well as hard liquor are all Tamasic.

Too much Tamas and you lack motivation, are distracted and become very focused on yourself. Without Tamas, though, we don’t have the ability to be content, calm, or to relax.

Sattvic Foods – Feel good foods

Sattvic foods are foods that are fresh, natural, and lightly seasoned. Luckily, there are lots of great tasting Sattvic foods you are probably already eating. Whole grains and legumes like rice, lentils, oats, and beans are all Sattvic. Freshly picked (and organically grown) vegetables and fresh fruits are too.

Sattvic foods help us become positive, compassionate beings with control over their thoughts and emotions. It is difficult to make them upset or angry and they are not easily fatigued physically or mentally.

Basically, once a food is taken from the condition that God delivered it to us – from the ground, vine or humanely raised animal – and it gets processed and packaged to sit on a shelf in the grocery store, it usually becomes either Rajasic or Tamasic.

While we need all three types of foods, we should eat a predominant amount of Sattvic foods with a little Rajas and Tamas thrown in. Eating this way, I feel, helps us become better Christians – from the inside out.

Submitted by Sandy Corder

September 2020 Revised Common Lectionary for Sundays and Festivals

Sunday, September 6 (Proper 18)

Exodus 12:1–14

Psalm 149

Romans 13:8–14

Matthew 18:15–20

Sunday, September 20 (Proper 20)

Exodus 16:2–15

Psalm 105:1–6, 37–45

Philippians 1:21–30

Matthew 20:1–16

Sunday, September 13 (Proper 19)

Exodus 14:19–31

Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b–11, 20–21

Romans 14:1–12

Matthew 18:21–35

Sunday, September 27 (Proper 21)

Exodus 17:1–7

Psalm 78:1–4, 12–16

Philippians 2:1–13

Matthew 21:23–32



Upcoming PW Meetings/Devotionals

Sep 8: Meet @Els house in Pickton

Nov 3: Alice McGregor presents her trip to Israel

Mark your calendars now and plan to join us!

If this changes for any reason, Jane will notify you personally

September 2020

First Presbyterian, Contacts, Holidays In United States

Sep 2020 (Central Time - Chicago)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
	Ed Russell		Doris Carpenter virtual Presbytery	Annv. Kattison		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Communion	Labor Day Offices closed	Carolyn Hyton	Annv. Poe			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Congregation mtg session		Elizabeth Brennan				
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
			Hurschel Thomas			Katelyn Brennan
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
Donna Campbell	Molly Lennon			Olivia Holoman		