

COVID-19 Death Milestone Leads Christian Leaders to Pray

Member communions of the National Council of Churches pray, offer words of hope

By **MIKE FERGUSON**
Presbyterian News Service

Member communions of the National Council of Churches contributed to “Words of Comfort, Prayers for the People,” a 21-minute video released on [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#) on February 26, 2021.

“I sincerely hope,” said the Rev. Dr. Jim Winkler, the NCC’s president and general secretary, “this is the last major milestone we’ll need to mark.”

The NCC video features the prayers of denominational leaders and pastors and concludes with words of hope from the NCC’s chief operating officer, the Rev. Dr. Leslie Copeland Tune.

“Send your healing power to this land and throughout the Earth,” said Bishop Teresa Jefferson-Snorton, Presiding Bishop of the Fifth Episcopal District in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, “that this virus may not have the victory

but that we will always look to you as our source and our strength.”

The Rev. Dr. Michael Livingston, a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pastor serving as the interim senior minister at The Riverside Church in New York City, asked God for “the wisdom, courage and strength to do our part to care for one another and keep one another safe. Lift those who suffer from the fear of death, from beds of discomfort to the new light of day, to the

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~The Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer

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*This issue of the
UPC NEWS & Current Events
is brought to you by...*
the word...

Equity

From Latin *aequitate*, meaning “equality, uniformity, symmetry, fairness,” and Old French *equite* (13 c.). However, it has been suggested that “equity” is not the same as “equality.” Imagine a 5’ tall fence and two people who want to look over it. One person is 6’ tall, the other is 5’ tall. There are two wooden boxes nearby, each about 3 inches in depth. Equality would demand each gets a box. But equity means the shorter person gets both boxes in order to help them see over the fence, because the taller person does not need either box.

PRAYER

Continued from page 1

joy of simple pleasures: good work and holy communion in the one human family in which we all belong.”

“God of all who lives and breathes: What words work now that over 500,000 Americans have died from a single virus?” asked the Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ (and former conference minister for the UCC Southwest Conference in Arizona). “Do we call this grief? Trauma? Despair? Can we speak to you of anger and pain and emptiness as this virus steals the breath from so many?”

“Every word fails,” Dorhauer told the Almighty. “Listen then not to our tears, our trembles, our tossing and turning through another sleepless night, our sighs too deep for words. Quiet the rage embodied in our shivers of grief, our spasms of anguish and our shudders of fear. End this nightmare, this scourge, this deathly infestation and abide with us through our season of mourning.”

“For the families of the 500,000 dead, there’s no medicine, no vaccine or inoculation for the pain that the bereaved suffered because of the loss of their loved ones,” said the Rev. Dr. Gina M. Stewart, senior pastor of Christ Missionary Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. “It is only fitting and appropriate to pause and remember those suffering around the world.



The Rev. John C. Dorhauer, general minister of the United Church of Christ.

May their hearts be encouraged by the words of the psalmist, that the Lord is close to the brokenhearted.”

The NCC’s Copeland Tune concluded the prayer time with a message of hope.

“It has been a tough season of grief, lament and mourning, but we are not alone,” Copeland Tune said. “Our faith reminds us that God is with us and will never leave us or forsake us regardless of what we go through. We also have each other.”

“We hope this time of prayer has blessed and encouraged you. We also hope you will join us as we continue to pray for one another ... knowing that God hears our cries and will answer.”

“May God cover us and keep us, establish us and fortify us,” Copeland Tune said, “both now in our hour of great need and in the days to come.” ■

MONTHLY CANNED FOOD DRIVE

FEBRUARY 28, 2021

Fourth Sunday of each month! Drop off at church!

Food pantries are often short of money and protein foods. The pantry at Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA) needs your contributions of:



- tuna
- beans
- canned meats
- ramen noodles
- canned vegetables
- soups

Drop off food donations to the Church Office.

Financial contributions may be sent to the office (make checks out to “TCAA” with “Food Pantry” in the memo).



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Tempe, Arizona 85282

(480) 966-6267

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Office Hours

Tue. & Thu.: 11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Wed. & Fri: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

(Closed for lunch 12:00 p.m. -1:00 p.m.)

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Submissions of announcements, stories, op-eds, and reflections on recent events at UPC are welcomed.

Requirements:

Announcements: 500 words or less

Articles/Reflections: 1200 words or less

Letters to the Editor: 750 words or less

Submissions may be edited for content, grammar, and space available.

Send submissions

by the 20th of each month to:

newsletter@upctempe.org

Essay

Resilience



By THE REV. BEV PHILLIPS

“Resilience is about how we maintain some sense of what ‘True North’ feels like for our well-being, even when we are feeling stretched thin or even tossed to and fro by life.”

This quote is from the January/February issue of Presbyterian Women’s *Horizons Magazine* in an article written by Anna Kendig entitled “Finding the Heart of Our Resilience in Trying Times.” The magazine arrived in my mail box on a day when I felt stretched thin and tossed to and fro. Her words made me ask two questions: what is resilience, and do I have any?

She writes that resilience focuses on efforts of truth-telling, spiritual boundaries, embodiment, and pacing our lives in a sustainable way. These aspects of resilience are habits, not feelings. So we can practice resilience. We can make a habit of it.

The most resilient woman I have ever known is my sister, Peg, whom you all have prayed for over the years. Here is her story in brief.

When Peg and her husband, Charlie, could not have children they decided to adopt a child. The first availability the agency had was a brother and sister, ages five and two, who were alcohol syndrome children. Their birth parents were neglectful and Chad and Pattie

suffered greatly. Peg and Charlie did all they could for them at great emotional cost to themselves. They are resilient.

When Patti was seventeen she moved to Seattle after her idol, Curt Cobain, died. She lived under bridges and in empty houses for years before she came back home. Peg was resilient.

Chad was in his thirties and running his own business when he was in an accident that left him severely brain damaged. They brought him to their home, but his care was more than they could manage. Peg spent years, and I do mean years, on the phone trying to find a place that would take care of him. She was resilient and found a good place for him to live.

Four years ago Charlie was diagnosed with stage four lung cancer. Again, my resilient sister made appointments for treatments and for doctors and took Charlie wherever he needed to go. He was as determined as Peg, and today the tumor has not grown and he is regaining strength. Peg and Charlie are resilient.

All of this is not to say that Peg was always happy and cheerful about what faced her, but it is to say that she came back from being stretched and tossed to and fro and did what she had to do. That is resilience!

I hope I have written a good picture of resilience in this essay. That was my first question. My second one was: “Am I resilient?” Some days I am. Some days I am not. It has helped me to read the *Horizons* article and to tell you about it. It is comforting to know that resilience is something I can practice and learn. We all need resilience in these days of being stretched and tossed to and fro. ■



The Rev. Mark Adams, co-coordinator at Frontera de Cristo Presbyterian Border Ministry, leads one of many tours of the U.S.-Mexico Border. PHOTO: COURTESY OF FRONTERA DE CRISTO

PW Monthly Mission Focus March-April

By SUE SCHNEBEL

Our UPC Presbyterian Women (PW) continues its mission work for March and April with a focus on Frontera de Cristo (Border Ministries), a Presbyterian border ministry located in the sister cities of Agua Prieta, Sonora, and Douglas, AZ. They work with churches, presbyteries, and secular organizations on both sides of the border to do justice and walk humbly with God.

Donations collected may support six ministries which include: a community center that provides educational, cultural and development activities; mission education focusing on building relationships and understanding across borders; a migrant resource center that provides basic humanitarian needs; family ministry which includes Bible School, women’s workshops, marriage workshops and parenting classes; and church development and a health ministry offering cancer screenings, dental hygiene and preventative education.

UPC has always been most generous in supporting Frontera de Cristo. Should you wish to support our mission focus, checks can be made out to “UPC PW” with “Frontera de Cristo” in the memo line, and dropped off at the church office or mailed to Jan Felton at 13651 S. 36th Way Phoenix, AZ 85044. As always, PW would not be able to our good work without your continued generosity. ■

SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 2021

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN IN THE PRESBYTERY OF GRAND CANYON



Jesus answered, The first is, "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength."
The second is this "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
Mark 12: 29-31

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
JyungIn (Jenny) Lee
Moderator, Presbyterian Women



OFFERING
Frontera De Cristo
Mark Adams, speaker

Installation of Presbyterian Women Leaders
Worship with Communion

Registration Information

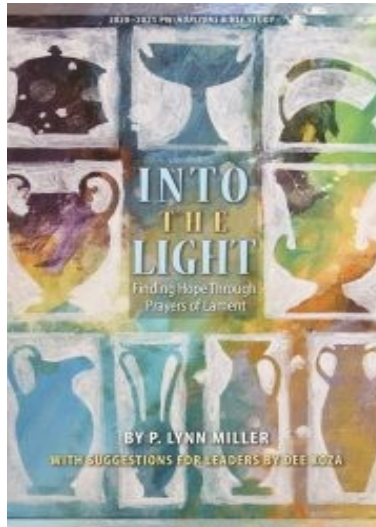
Zoom meeting link will be emailed from your church PW Moderator or circle leaders. You may also send your name, church, and email to
Beverly Roselieb broselieb@cox.net or 480-816-9544.

Presbyterian Women News

PW Annual Fat Sunday Celebration (Feb. 14) Cancelled

UPC PW looks forward to their annual Fat Sunday Celebration where the congregation can gather for a sumptuous brunch and participate in a Silent Auction. This wonderful event provides almost \$1,000 in revenue for PW that helps us meet our mission goals.

However, as we remain in safety mode, we regret that this celebration will be canceled. Should you wish to donate to help with the shortfall, checks can be made out to UPC PW with "Fat Sunday" in the memo line. Your donations may be dropped off at the PW mailbox at church or mailed to Jan Felton at 13651 S. 36th Way Phoenix, AZ 85044. As always PW would not be able to our good work without your continued generosity. ■



PW Bible Study
Into the Light
4th Mondays
of each Month
on Zoom

Feb. 22 & Mar. 22
7:00 p.m.

Via Zoom
Meeting ID: 878 8400 9892
Passcode: 139

UPC Presbyterian Women Make a Difference in Haiti

By ROY GUST

During the COVID-19 pandemic a group of UPC women have continued to produce Days for Girls (DfG) reusable feminine hygiene kits for distribution by our mission partners in Haiti, Harmony Ministries.

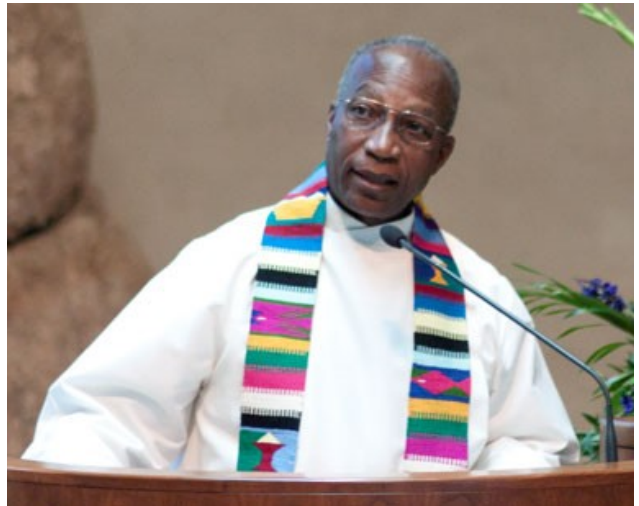
Under the direction of Helen Griffin the ladies devised a "progressive production plan" that allowed each participant to carry out a step in the project and then hand the work off to the next volunteer, all the while maintaining 'social distancing'. They purchased fabrics and supplies, marked and cut fabric, sewed kits, made carrying bags for the kits, and packed and shipped the kits to Florida to be forwarded to Pastor Luc and Harmony Ministries in Haiti. Helen commented "Henry Ford would be proud [of our plan]."

The amazing UPC women who worked on the project included Cheri Hardy, Jan Felton, Zoe Pohlit, Jo Lewis, Suzanne Niemann, Debbie Sands, Kathy Wagner, Harriet McAllister, Jo Maloney, Sue Schnebel, Shelly Moe, Barbara Smith, Diane Hillyard, Mary Brennen,

Chris Casanova, and Helen Griffin.

We had an opportunity to talk to Ronide Deratus, Pastor Luc's wife, before she left for Haiti in December. She was very appreciative for the 80 kits the UPC women made and excited to distribute them when she conducts women's health clinics. She also used them during training sessions on making the kits locally at Harmony's mission sites in January. She promised to send photos of the training sessions and DfG kit distribution which we will share when we receive them.

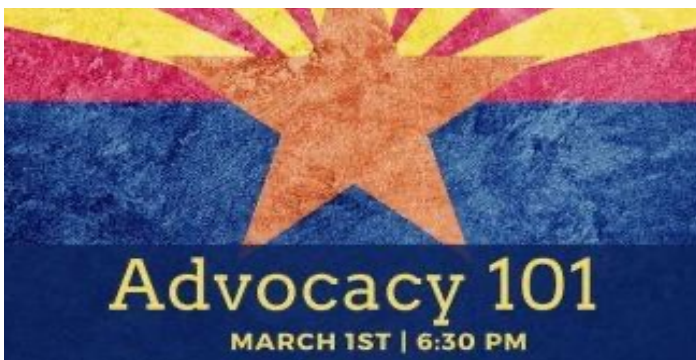
We had an opportunity to communicate with Pastor Luc recently. He shared that COVID-19 has not been out of control in Haiti (approximately 10,000 cases and 239 deaths reported as of this writing, out of a population of 11.3 million). Harmony's schools are in session and he is holding church services at all four mission sites. Nevertheless,



Pastor Luc Deratus, founding ministry of Harmony Ministries in Haiti, speaking at Pinnacle Presbyterian Church. PHOTO: PINNACLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

political unrest, gang violence, kidnappings and a constitutional crisis continue to plague Haiti eleven years after the 2010 earthquake.

Please join us in praying for Pastor Luc and the people of Haiti. If you are interested in personally supporting the mission of Harmony Ministries in Haiti, please contact Roy Gust at gustben@msn.com. ■



Join people of faith for an introductory overview of how to advocate for issues you care about at the Arizona Legislature. You will learn how to navigate, access and connect with current Arizona lawmakers and elected officials. Sponsors and partners will also give important updates on their efforts for Hunger Related issues and Criminal Justice Reform. Attend this free one-hour workshop and to become an advocate today! Open to the community.

The workshop is sponsored by the Arizona Faith Network, Bread for the World, and Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Arizona (LAMA). The trainer/facilitator is Angie (Geren) Burleson, founder and project director of Arizona Recovers/AZ ACE Consortium. Angie has extensive experience advocating for addiction, mental health, trauma and social justice issues in the Arizona State Legislature. For more info and registration, go to www.arizonafaitnetwork.org and scroll down to upcoming meetings and events.



Join the National Council for Jewish Women for Arizona's Virtual Advocacy Gala, honoring City of Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego, City of Tucson Mayor Regina Romero, and Flagstaff's Coral for Arizona, for their commitments to the safety and health of their communities. The featured speaker will be founder and editorial director of TEDWoman and the first woman president and CEO of PBS, Pat Mitchell. Also, a special guest appearance by Jane Fonda, award-winning actor, activist, and author of *What Can I Do: My Path From Climate Despair to Action*. Register at ncjwazgala.com.



Join racial justice and interfaith leaders for a video and discussion on the redlining and its history and impact in Arizona. This conversation is open to all. Leaders from the Civil Rights era to today's Black Lives Matter Movement will join us for conversation and panels. For more info and registration, go to www.arizonafaitnetwork.org and scroll down to upcoming meetings and events.



Join Aigerim Kamzina, Biodesign Center for Immunotherapy, Vaccines and Virotherapy, Grad Teaching Assistant at Arizona State University for a brief presentation on the history of COVID-19 and the development of the vaccine. Learn why it is important for all people to receive the vaccination and how to promote the vaccine in your faith community. Hosted by the Jewish Community Relations Council, Sema Foundation, and Arizona Faith Network. For more info and registration, go to www.arizonafaitnetwork.org and scroll down to upcoming meetings and events.

Want to learn more about the Arizona Faith Network? Subscribe to the newsletter at:

www.arizonafaitnetwork.org/subscribe



Montlure is rooted in the beauty of creation, providing a safe and nurturing space for all, in order to connect lives through transformation, restoration, and faith exploration.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!



SUMMER 2021 DATES

OVERNIGHT CAMP

SENIOR HIGH June 6 - 11

JUNIOR HIGH June 13-18

JUNIORS July 5 - 9

TRAVELING DAY CAMP

EAST VALLEY June 21 - 25

First Presbyterian Church, Mesa

We have been working hard to develop a safe camp experience for our campers in 2021! Our Council and staff have been following all updated information regarding camp programs with COVID-19 precautions as set forth by the CDC, the ACA (American Camping Association), and Arizona state health services, and we are moving forward with plans to be in-person with campers this summer.

Camp will look a bit different this year (such as masks, smaller camp "pods", social distancing when possible, enhanced cleaning protocols, limited shared resources, health screenings, updated check-in processes, and more). However, we are confident that taking these safety measures is worth implementing so we can have a summer, together in person. Please see an update on some of our health and safety procedures at montlure.org/covid-19. As always, please email camp@montlure.org for questions and concerns.

We look forward to seeing ALL our campers this summer!

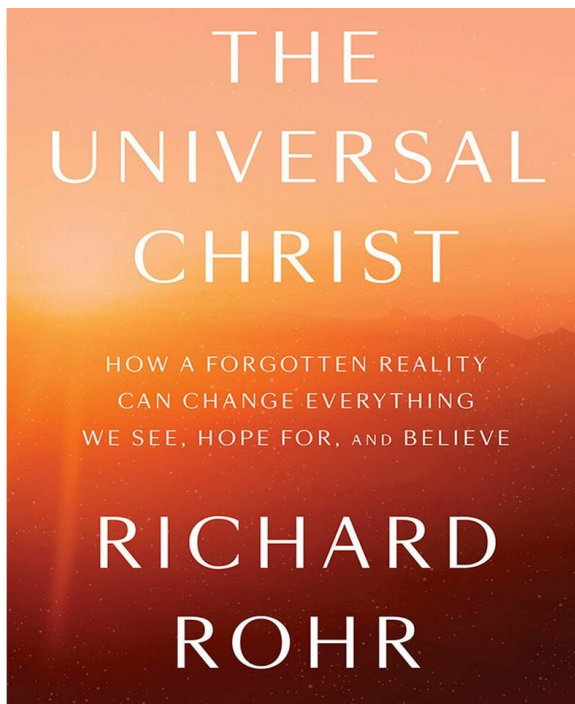


DETAILS: MONTLURE.ORG

REGISTER: MONTLURE.CAMPBRAINREGISTRATION.COM

QUESTIONS? CAMP@MONTLURE.ORG

Adult Christian Education



**Sundays,
Feb. 21—Mar. 28
11:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.**

“God loves things by becoming them,” Rohr writes, suggesting that Jesus’ life was meant to declare that humanity has never been separate from God, except by our own choice.

In this Lenten series, Pastor Eric will facilitate discussions around some of the major themes and points Richard Rohr makes in his book. Not required to read the book (though, it is thought provoking).

(Classes will be held in the same Zoom as Sunday morning Worship. If you haven’t already registered, go to: www.upctempe.org/worship)

Committee on the General Assembly (COGA) Meets to Set Plenary Dates for 225th General Assembly in 2022



By **RICK JONES**

Office of the General Assembly, PC(USA)

The dates for the 13 committees of the 225th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to gather in-person in 2022 have been set. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) voted on Thursday to hold the meetings over a two-week period, June 19 – July 2, 2022, in Louisville, Kentucky.

Early in December, COGA approved plans for a hybrid assembly that will include both online and in-person gatherings. The assembly committees will split the time during the two-week schedule to consider church business.

Some COGA members expressed concern regarding overlap with other denominational meetings such as the Worship and Music Conference to be held at the Montreat Conference Center.

“It’s inevitable that the summer of ‘22 will be a big jubilee summer, where we all get back together in a safe way,” said Wilson Kennedy, who facilitated the COGA working group focusing on future assembly gatherings.

Kerry Rice, deputy stated clerk of the Office of the General Assembly, says staff has not reviewed the church

calendar for potential conflicts, adding that the time set aside for committees will require fewer people to be involved.

“The weeks we set aside will look very different than the traditional eight-day assembly and will not be a ‘ya’ll come’ for these committees,” he said. “The committee times will be focused on commissioners and advisory delegates that have business before them. I’m not sure we will have the same level of conflict that we might have during a traditional GA.”

All plenaries will be held online except for an initial quorum gathering. Early next year, COGA will determine the dates for the plenaries. OGA staff say they have confirmed the availability of hotels during the period.

The assembly was initially scheduled to be held in Columbus, Ohio. The move is expected to save the church more than \$300,000.

COGA also voted to form a 12-person design team to assist OGA staff in planning the 2022 assembly. The team will consist of COGA members, the stated clerk, a Youth Advisory Delegate and a former GA moderator, among others.

The Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PC(USA), provided his vision for the next assembly in Louisville.

“Louisville, like every city, is plagued with its own struggles. None are free from deprivation, brokenness and pain.

There is no way of being free from engaging that,” he said. “In past assemblies, we’ve been inside buildings and big arenas, and yet there is a sense of calling people outside to engage the communities we are a part of.”

Nelson said that now is the time for transformation within the denomination.

“We cannot be all things to all people, but we can be a very present help in times of trouble,” he said. “One of the things I hope will be different at this next assembly is the engagement in the life of this community.”

Nelson says he hopes to empower people at General Assembly to do more than pass policy, but to also engage in their own communities’ needs and issues.

“I’m convinced in this time of history, there is a need for a real sense of re-evaluating who we are in the 21st century,” he said.

COGA members asked the clerk to provide his vision in writing so they can best determine how to move the vision forward.

“The next General Assembly will not remain in this form forever and ever,” said Robin Pugh, COGA member. “We will do the best we can, because this is the form that the church needs right now, but we might make more changes in the future. We need some framework to show the direction in which we are going.”

“The clerk’s vision of an assembly is not just about passing resolutions, but taking action and that is very exciting,” said COGA’s Dave Davis.

COGA also heard a year-end report from the Merger and National Unity working group. Eliana Maxim reported that the group has gone as far as it can go until the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board completes its own evaluation. She added that group members will continue to have conversations with the PMAB over the next six to eight months. ■

PC(USA) Joins Call for Wider Global Production of COVID-19 Vaccines and Treatments

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The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is joining hundreds of other groups calling for intellectual property rules to be lifted to enable wider distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and treatments. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE VIA UNSPLASH)

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The Hard Work of Becoming More Just and Equitable

As APCE introduces its statement about race and intercultural issues, it offers its membership eight webinars

By PAUL SEEBECK
Presbyterian News Service

After years of difficult work, the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE) has a new justice and equity statement. APCE's Diversity Task Force, which developed the statement, hopes it will help the organization in its effort to become more diverse.

The statement was developed to guide APCE and its members understand who they were and what they should become as a predominately white organization. The task force is using the statement to introduce a series of eight webinars produced for APCE by Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training.

Crossroads, which partners with organizations and institutions to dismantle systemic racism, began working with APCE in the fall of 2019. At that point, Susan Young-Thornton, moderator of APCE's Diversity Task Force and the consultant for spiritual formation with the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, said the team, which had been meeting for nine months, was "floundering a bit."

"We were trying to find a way to break open the discussion that needed to happen with APCE leadership around diversity and inclusion," she said.

Feeling they needed someone from outside the organization to provide APCE leadership with some perspective, the task force began to consult with Crossroads' national program manager, Jessica Vazquez Torres.

Through a partnership with the PC (USA)'s Office of Christian Formation, the APCE Coordinating Council and the Diversity Task Force had their first training with Crossroads in the fall of 2019, leading eventually to the creation



Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training
Dismantling Racism, Building Racial Justice in Institutions

We, the **Association of Presbyterian Church Educators**, value faith formation for all ages, stages, and walks of life. As we continue to learn and grow as baptized people, we acknowledge a lack of diversity in our organization. As followers of Jesus Christ, we admit we fall short in acting upon what we hear, not listening to *all* voices at the table. We acknowledge that our actions, both implicit and explicit, have stifled these voices long silenced. Jesus calls us to inclusiveness, which we seek to embody as we wrestle with how to achieve *diversity, equity, and justice*.

- We define **diversity** as creating and preserving a place at the table for all of God's children regardless of color and its racialization, gender and/or sexual identity, ability, denomination, economic circumstance, culture, nationality, or other barriers to participation.
- We define **equity** as the good fruits of God's intention, striving to bring special attention to those who have traditionally been treated unequally and unjustly.
- We define **justice** as giving support and comfort to the "least of these" – the outsiders, the powerless, and the voiceless.

APCE statement spells out how the organization is seeking to achieve greater diversity, equity, and justice.

of the webinars. Through the remainder of 2021 there will be further coaching and consulting as APCE moves toward becoming a just and equitable organization.

Early on in the conversations, Vasquez Torres told the task force that APCE would remain a white organization unless it shifted its focus.

"She said we needed to work at becoming more just and equitable," Young-Thornton said, "and then we could become more diverse."

Hearing this, the task force began to work on helping APCE leadership understand how broad diversity was — and that it was about more than race and color.

When dealing with justice and equity issues, Young-Thornton said diversity includes sexual orientation, gender

identity, economic status, clergy vs. laity, geography, culture and ableness.

She remembers what happened in 1997 when APCE changed its bylaws to include multi-cultural representatives on its governing board, a change that was about race only.

"But there was a certain naivete about wanting to become more diverse and about how to do that," she said. "We kept thinking it would happen because we wanted it to without deeply reflecting on the ways we operate because of our whiteness."

Over the years, representative slots for African American, Asian, Hispanic and Native Americans were often

APCE

Continued from page 10

and Native Americans were often unfulfilled. In 2018 Young-Thornton heard that an Asian representative finally asked APCE leadership, “Why am I here serving the organization? I don’t understand what I’m doing. It doesn’t make sense to me.”

“Inviting one to the table doesn’t necessarily make one feel welcome, other than offering them a chair,” Young-Thornton said. “We were excluding people, even as we said we wanted to include them.”

Recognizing the need to really listen to what the diverse voices were saying, APCE leadership formed the Diversity Task Force, asking its members to look at

what APCE had been doing in its diversity efforts and what the organization needed to change. This ultimately led to its partnership with Crossroads.

Describing APCE as a “good-hearted and well-intentioned organization,” Young-Thornton sees the task force statement as “one of repentance while being aspirational.”

“It’s an attitude of ‘this is what we have done or left undone,’” she said, “moving from where we have been and where we are not yet to a more just and equitable organization.”

As task force member Danna Larson, who has been at this work a long time, likes to say, “The work of the Diversity Task Force is really about disruption.

We’re looking to disrupt the ways we have always functioned to find new ways of doing and being as an organization.”

As a way of introducing the justice and equity statement to the wider church and to get feedback, the diversity task force shared the statement during one of the roundtable discussions at APCE’s recent annual event, “Anything but Ordinary Time.”

In addition, the task force held three workshops around:

- *Having difficult conversations about race*
- *Making difficult decisions, including LGBTQ+ people sharing their coming out stories*
- *Taking action around economic justice.* ■

Embracing the ‘Holy Saturday’ Phase of the Pandemic

What dreams are waiting to be resurrected?

By **DONNA FRISCHKNECHT JACKSON**

Presbyterians Today

We are in the phase of the pandemic that I call the “Holy Saturday” phase — that day before Easter’s resurrection celebration that is shadowed with the lingering grief of yesterdays gone by and the uneasiness of a still uncertain future. It’s a phase in which through our mourning we start finding the courage to honestly answer the question, “What have we learned in a year of pandemic living?” Our answers might be the very thing that help us step into resurrection’s new day.

For me, I learned never to take toilet tissue for granted. I learned that if the water is too hot, it will kill the yeast and my attempts at breadmaking will fail miserably. I learned that if I want a garden this year, I need to order seeds early because the gardening trend of 2020 shows no signs of abating as people continue to seek healing in the soil for



PHOTO: COULEUR ON PIXNIO

their anxious souls. Yes, seed shortages were right up there with toilet tissue and flour. But mostly — and more importantly — a year of pandemic living has taught me to stop ignoring my dreams all because they might require too much work or seem impossible to achieve. Nothing is impossible with God, right? I mean, really, aren’t we called to be resurrection people?

Honoring my dreams is what led to

the incredulous question my husband asked me the other day: *And what exactly do you plan on doing with all these seeds?* It was a fair question as I opened the box UPS had delivered and rifled through packets labeled parsnips, turnips, beets, broccoli, corn, pumpkins, cucumbers, butternut squash, peas, onions and much more. There were also herbs mingling with the vegetable seeds,

See **HOLY SATURDAY** on page 13



I-HELP

Until there's a place called HOME

UPC now hosts I-HELP every week, Friday through Sunday. Our faith partners and Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA) help provide meals. UPC provides meals the third Friday and the following Saturday of each month.

For info on volunteering, contact Jill Russell, Bonnie Henry, or Cathy Richardson



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(1-800-273-8255)

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MEXICO

Worship Volunteer Schedule

Most of what happens at UPC would not happen if not for an actively involved membership! Below is the schedule of worship volunteers for the next couple of months. If you are listed and have a conflict, you are asked to please find a replacement and then contact Ruling Elder Sada Reed, co-chair of the Worship Committee.

To volunteer or get on one of the rotations, Sada Reed! Thank you!

March 2021

Sanctuary Readiness Team.....Larry Seubert

Mar. 7—3rd Sunday in Lent

Liturgist.....Joni Jacobs
Children's Moment.....Joni Jacobs
Worship Tech.....Jim Niemann

Mar. 14—4th Sunday in Lent

Liturgist.....Joyce Godfrey
Children's Moment.....Joyce Godfrey
Worship Tech.....Chris Trella

Mar. 21—5th Sunday in Lent

Liturgist.....Nancy Martin
Children's Moment.....Nancy Martin
Worship Tech.....Mike Williamson

Mar. 28—Palm Sunday

Liturgist.....Molly Winkler
Children's Moment.....Molly Winkler
Worship Tech.....Chris Trella

April 2021

Sanctuary Readiness Team.....Larry Seubert

Apr. 1—Maundy Thursday (with Mission del Sol)

Liturgist.....Faye Gardner

Apr. 4—Easter Sunday

Liturgist.....Fred Boyd
Children's Moment.....Fred Boyd
Worship Tech.....Vacant

Apr. 11—Gifts of Women Sunday / 2nd Sunday of Easter

Liturgist.....Presbyterian Women
Children's Moment.....Presbyterian Women
Worship Tech.....Mike Williamson

Apr. 18—3rd Sunday of Easter

Liturgist.....Mary Danforth
Children's Moment.....Pastor Eric Ledermann
Worship Tech.....Chris Trella

Apr. 25—4th Sunday of Easter

Liturgist.....Joyce Godfrey
Children's Moment.....Joyce Godfrey
Worship Tech.....Mike Williamson

HOLY SATURDAY

Continued from page 11

along with a few pollinator-friendly flowers to keep the bees happy and healthy. It was perhaps too much for just my husband and me to consume, too much for my little garden of raised beds to accommodate, and too much watering and weeding than I had time for. "Open a roadside farm stand?" I answered half-jokingly, with the emphasis on "half."

Ever since I was a girl growing up in a New Jersey suburb across the river from Manhattan, I had dreamt of owning a farm. Childhood dreams, though, have a way of fading with the passing years. But when my first call was to a rural church in upstate New York, which then led me to owning five acres in Vermont, that dream in my heart began beating again. It would be a lot of sweat equity to plant all these seeds. My raised garden beds wouldn't be sufficient. I would need to till new plots of land, which wouldn't be easy in soil that was riddled with rocks. "You have no idea what

you're getting yourself into," my husband said softly, shaking his head.

He's right. I don't fully understand the huge undertaking it will be to create my farm, but do I really want to walk away from my dream? Especially a dormant dream that is awakening with a slew of bright possibilities for this pastor to minister to others in ways beyond the confines of a traditional church call?

Ministry possibilities include sharing my bounty with neighbors whose creaking knees prevent them from growing healthy food. There's an old general store being turned into a community center in my little hamlet. On the refurbished porch I can envision baskets of veggies free for the taking. Herbs could be dried and made into tea and packaged for the old saints of my community who have always been generous in sharing a cup of friendship. Flowers can be arranged into bouquets, tied with a ribbon and a hangtag that reads: "Beautiful blessings from Old Stone Well Farm." Yes, "Old Stone Well

Farm" is the name of my fledgling farm, which does indeed have an old stone well. I can see it now: ministry right where God has planted me and, with hard work, perseverance and a lot of prayer, ministry that will bloom in a new way beyond a Sunday morning gathered in a building.

What have we learned in a year of pandemic living is a question we need to ask ourselves as well as our congregations, because the answers might reveal dormant dreams that have begun to reawaken. Will we know exactly what we are getting into if we dare to live out those dreams? Probably not. But that's OK. What we do know is God, who brings to life what was once dead, is with us. Imagine how your resurrected dream might change the world.

Donna Frischknecht Jackson is editor of Presbyterians Today. The rototiller needed to start tilling all the new ministry possibilities she is dreaming of is currently on backorder. ■



Prayers of thanks for all these beautiful lives!

If your birthday is missing or we have the wrong date, please contact the office so we can update our records.

- 1 Bill Shelden
- 5 Allison Johnson
Lauren Horne
- 7 David Hardy
- 9 Nick Vale
- 14 Dana Prestly
- 19 Bev West
- 20 Jey Young
Doug Hawkins
Katie Casanova
Fred Boyd
- 24 Margaret Branson
- 25 Kayla Horne

Newsletter Submissions

Poems, Stories, Reflections

UPC actively seeks submissions. Did you have a particular “God moment” you’d like to share? Send stories, information, letters to the congregation, photos, and announcements for the *UPC News & Current Events*.

Send submissions to:
newsletter@upctempe.org
and be sure to review the

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<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today>

Presbytery of Grand Canyon Weekly E-focus Newsletter

News and views around our presbytery, and words of wisdom from our presbytery leadership
<https://pbygrandcanyon.org/subscribe-to-efocus>

Let us remember in our prayers...

- ✘ **Homebound:** Evelyn Colby, Elaine Murray
- ✘ **Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)** in the U.S.
- ✘ **Communities** bearing the weight of violence in their streets and neighborhoods
- ✘ **All affected by COVID-19**, especial those who are hospitalized and their families, and the families of those who have died.
- ✘ **Medical personnel** and first responders on the front lines of battling COVID-19
- ✘ **Indigenous People** who are especially suffering under the weight of COVID-19 and hundreds of years of subjugation.
- ✘ **Teachers and students** as they continue online and in-person.
- ✘ **All of creation**, and for the strength to stand up for environmental conservation
- ✘ **Elected & community leaders**, that they can bring peace to our nation and world
- ✘ **Military personnel**, stateside and abroad
- ✘ **Peacemakers/Mission Workers**, particularly the Rev. Leslie Vogel and the Rev. Mark Adams, Jocabed Gallego, and all at Frontera de Cristo.
- ✘ **Our nation and world**—praying for peace
- ✘ **Immigrants**, especially those separated from families
- ✘ **UPC Officers:** elders, deacons, trustees
- ✘ Those who are **suffering & are marginalized**
- ✘ Those struggling with **mental illness**

UPC Calendar

Submit corrections, additions, or deletions to the church office at (480) 966-6267 or upc@upctempe.org.

Check online for updates or to subscribe on your computer or device:

www.upctempe.org/calendar

March 2021

Mon, Mar 1

- 7:00 pm Administration Committee (Zoom-U)
- 8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Wed, Mar 3

- 9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (Zoom-U)
- 4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)
- 5:15 pm UPC Social Hour (Zoom-U)
- 6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (Zoom-P)
- 7:00 pm Choir Practice (Zoom-P)
- 7:30 pm UKIRK @ ASU (Zoom-U)

Thu, Mar 4

- 11:30 am PGC Theology Reflection Study (Zoom-U)
- 7:00 pm CE Meeting (Zoom-U)

Fri, Mar 5

- 2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
- 8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Sat, Mar 6

- All Day I-HELP (FH, K)

Sun, Mar 7

3rd Sunday in Lent

- 8:45 am Children's Bible Time (Zoom-P)
- 9:30 am Worship Service (Zoom-U)
- 11:00 am Adult Christian Education Class (Zoom-U)
- 12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart
- 3:00 pm Youth Fellowship (6th-12th grades)

Mon, Mar 8

- 7:00 pm ACE Team (Zoom-U)
- 8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Tue, Mar 9

- 1:30 pm ASU Mainline Campus Ministry Meeting (Zoom-P)
- 7:00 pm Worship Committee (Zoom P)
- 7:00 pm Finance Committee (Zoom-U)

Wed, Mar 10

- 9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (Zoom-U)
- 4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)
- 4:30 pm Staff Meeting (Zoom-U)
- 5:15 pm UPC Social Hour (Zoom-U)
- 6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (Zoom-P)
- 7:00 pm Choir Practice (Zoom-P)
- 7:30 pm UKIRK @ ASU (Zoom-U)

Thu, Mar 11

- 7:00 pm MSJP Committee (Zoom-U)

Fri, Mar 12

- 2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
- 8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Sat, Mar 13

- All Day I-HELP (FH, K)

Sun, Mar 14

4th Sunday in Lent

- 8:45 am Children's Bible Time (Zoom-P)
- 9:30 am Worship Service (Zoom-U)
- 11:00 am Adult Christian Education Class (Zoom-U)
- 12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart
- 3:00 pm Youth Fellowship (6th-12th grades)

Mon, Mar 15

- 7:00 pm Deacon Meeting (Zoom-U)
- 8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Tue, Mar 16

- 6:30 pm CIO Committee (Zoom-P)
- 7:00 pm Trustee Meeting (Zoom U)

Wed, Mar 17

- 9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (Zoom-U)
- 4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)
- 5:15 pm UPC Social Hour (Zoom-U)
- 6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (Zoom-P)
- 7:00 pm Choir Practice (Zoom-P)
- 7:30 pm UKIRK @ ASU (Zoom-U)

Thu, Mar 18

- 11:00 am Tempe Interfaith Fellowship (Zoom-P)
- 11:30 am PGC Theology Reflection Study (Zoom-U)

Fri, Mar 19

- 2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
- 8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Sat, Mar 20

- All Day I-HELP (FH, K)
- 10:00 am PWP of the Grand Canyon Spring Gathering (Zoom-PW)

Sun, Mar 21

5th Sunday in Lent

- 8:45 am Children's Bible Time (Zoom-P)
- 9:30 am Worship Service (Zoom-U)
- 11:00 am Adult Christian Education Class (Zoom-U)
- 12:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
- 3:00 pm Youth Fellowship (6th-12th grades)

Mon, Mar 22

- 7:00 pm PW Bible Study (Zoom-PW)
- 8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Tue, Mar 23

- 7:00 pm Session Meeting (Zoom-U)

See CALENDAR, page 16

Location/Room References:

(CH)-Choir Room (CR)-Conference Room/Office (COR/Rm7)-Community Room (FH)-Fellowship Hall (HSR)-High School Room (MSR)-Middle School Room (K)-Fellowship Hall Kitchen (L)-Lounge (MR)-Meeting Room (N) Nursery (PO)-Pastor's Office (Rm#)-Room Number Indicated (S)-Sanctuary

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CALENDAR

Continued from page 15

Wed, Mar 24

- 9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (Zoom-U)
- 4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)
- 5:15 pm UPC Social Hour (Zoom-U)
- 6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (Zoom-P)
- 7:00 pm Choir Practice (Zoom-P)
- 7:30 pm UKIRK @ ASU (Zoom-U)

Fri, Mar 26

- 2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
- 8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Sat, Mar 27

- All Day I-HELP (FH, K)
- 8:00 am Congregational Workday

Sun, Mar 28

Palm Sunday

- 8:45 am Children's Bible Time (Zoom-P)
- 9:30 am Worship Service (Zoom-U)
- 11:00 am Adult Christian Education Class (Zoom-U)
- 12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart
- 3:00 pm Youth Fellowship (6th-12th grades)

Mon, Mar 29

- 8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Wed, Mar 31

- 9:00 am Lectio Divina Bible Study (Zoom-U)
- 4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)
- 5:15 pm UPC Social Hour (Zoom-U)
- 6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice (Zoom-P)
- 7:00 pm Choir Practice (Zoom-P)
- 7:30 pm UKIRK @ ASU (Zoom-U)

Quick Links

- **Sunday morning worship** at 9:30 a.m. (to attend via Zoom, register at www.upctempe.org/worship), followed by fellowship breakout rooms!
- **Get the Weekly Update Email:** Make sure you're in the loop with all the latest info! Sign up at: www.upctempe.org/email.
- **Days for Girls Mission:** For training and lending a hand contact Helen Griffin (helen.e.h.griffin@gmail.com)
- **Deacons:** Contact your neighborhood deacon if you have a particular need or just want to chat.