



God, Speak to Me!

Learning to Pay Attention to God

By PASTOR ERIC O. LEDERMANN

Gary Brennan recently sent me a story that you may have heard before. It's about a man who sat and prayed in a whisper, "God, speak to me." At that moment a meadowlark in a tree nearby began to sing. After a time of sitting there, the man's whispering prayer turned into a yell, "God, speak to me!" A storm was rolling in, and in that moment thunder rolled across the sky. The man looked around and said, "God, if you won't speak to me, then let me see you." And just then rays of sunshine poked through the dark clouds with a stream of light shining down on him. The man grew frustrated. He shouted, "God, show me a miracle!" Not far off there was a party in the park nearby. It was a baby shower. The man looked and saw the mother-to-be, beaming and gently holding her baby still inside her belly. Though he was happy for her, the man grew sad because he just wanted to experience God's presence. He cried out in despair, "Touch me, God, and let me know you're here." A gentle wind began to blow, cooling his skin. A butterfly was fluttering along as it rode the wind. It gently landed on the man's arm. But the man brushed the butterfly away. Despondent at God's lack of response, he got up and walked home.



I have often said that God is always with us, whether or not we are able to recognize God's presence. There are signs all around us, but we have to pay

attention to the subtle details. God is speaking to us through the birds, the clouds, the wind, and even the precious rain we value so much here in the Arizona desert. It's the simple things that reveal God's presence, the story ended with.

I remember preaching a sermon many years ago about hearing the voice of God. I said nothing about audibly hearing God's voice and spoke of all the ways that God speaks to our hearts and souls. After worship an elderly woman came up to me with a tear in her eye and took my hand. She said, "Pastor, I wish I could hear God's voice. But I have never heard it." I did not know what to say. But I replied, "I'm sure you have, you just may not have recognized it as God's voice." I held her hand for a moment, and then she cast her eyes down and walked home.

Every once in a while she would invite me over for lunch or tea, and we would talk. Over the years we got to know each other a little. She asked me why I became a minister. I told her my call story—every pastor gets pretty good at telling their call story. She often asked me to tell the story again. She always asked, "But, how did you know?" After many times, I finally had to tell her, "The truth is, I didn't know. It was just a feeling, and finally decided to start following that feeling to see where it would lead. And here I am sitting at your kitchen ta-

Inside this issue...

Lawn Griffiths Retires, Again, After 33 years	3
Earth Day, Every Day: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle	4
Stewardship Update: Serving Together, Caring for Each Other	5
Graduates Update	6
Religion and Spirituality Both Overlap and Diverge: New Gallup Poll describing dwindling membership in faith communities	7
Race, Reparations & Reconciliation: Co-author of the Belhar Confession says reconciliation is 'not an option'	8
Reinterpreting Biblical Passages Used Against Those Who Are Poor: building spiritual home for those challenging the 'moral complacency of our time'	9
Arizona Faith Network Events	11
Worship Volunteer Schedule	13
June Birthdays and Prayers	14
UPC June Calendar	15

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

Sabbath

Old English *sabat* "Saturday as a day of rest," as observed by the Jews, from Latin *sabbatum*, from Greek *sabbaton*, from Hebrew *shabbath*, properly "day of rest," from *shabath* "he rested." Spelling with -th attested from late 14c., not widespread until 16c. The original meaning is preserved in Spanish *Sabado* and other languages' names for "Saturday." We remember in the creation parable in Genesis 1, after God created everything, God rested on the 7th day. For Jews, Sabbath is on Saturday, Christians rest on Sunday, the day of Jesus was resurrected.

GOD IS SPEAKING

Continued from page 1

ble enjoying a delicious lunch with a beautiful person. It's a gift for which I give thanks all the time."

I wish I could tell you that she told me one day that she finally heard God's call in a bird or the thunder or the wind or in the touch of a butterfly. She never shared that with me. At her funeral, I shared how she always wanted to experience the presence of God. I shared a summary of the sermon I preached several years before. I prayed that she is now experiencing God's presence fully.

I, too, have prayed for a sign that is as clear as day—a Moses and the burning bush moment. It has never happened. And, to be honest, if it did happen I'm not sure if I could receive it. But I have learned from people who are more in tune with God's voice than I am that God is always speaking. God is making God's presence known through breezes and birds and the voices of those around me.

Many of you have spoken God's word to me, though I may not have recognized it at the time. It's often an afterthought for me. At the end of each day, as I look at what happened in my mind's eye, I have begun to notice patterns and feelings. I now believe that there are tender moments every day full of God's voice and presence. I'm just not always paying attention to them. I'm sure there are many more that I miss even in afterthought.

The presence of God is made known to me when I get to see Roann Monson post pictures on her Facebook page of the beautiful flowers in her garden. God's voice speaks in the stories and thoughts that are shared during our Wednesday morning *lectio divina* bible study. I feel God's presence as we gather for worship, even when it's on Zoom—I get to see the faces of beautiful people I cherish; I get to hear the prayers that hang on your hearts. I'm privileged as a pastor to sense the presence of God's spirit when you call me to share your thoughts, feelings, and life with me, and when I get to share mine with you. When my family's deacon calls, God's love comes shining through. At session meetings, when we share at the beginning of our meeting things from our lives that we are bringing into that space, when we share honestly and openly about the work of the church (even when we disagree passionately, but we do so respectfully and humbly), and when we do our exam at the end of our meeting and share when or how we experienced God's presence during our meeting. I am reminded of God's love when I wake up in the morning not feeling rested and my daughter notices and asks, "Dad, do you want me to make you your cup of coffee?"

God's voice is there to be heard. God's presence is there to be experienced. The hard part is learning to pay attention. ■

*Be of good courage
and know that you are loved!*



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MONTHLY CANNED FOOD DRIVE

June 6, 2021, 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

First 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
at the church.**

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

UPC NEWS & Current Events is published monthly. 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**

I'm Retiring after 33 years!

By **LAWN GRIFFITHS**

In the fall of 1987, UPC church member Ruth Mandernach stopped me at church and set up a luncheon meeting with me in downtown Tempe. She was the assistant director of Presbyterian Service Agency (PSA) and asked me to consider service on the board of directors.

At lunch at the old Spaghetti Company downtown, she told me about the organization, founded in 1971, to serve people with mental illness and chemical dependency, as well as providing outreach to the elderly in south Phoenix with a day center. It sounded like something I could do.

At my first meeting in January 1988 near Thomas Road and 24th Street, I met the board including board president Gerry Edson of Memorial Presbyterian Church. I learned more about PSA's work in treatment and supervised independent living.

So began a pattern of monthly meetings, led by executive director Joseph "Joe" Mann. In short order, I was board secretary. Being a writer has long meant the duty of note-taking for organizations falling to me. I was re-elected every three years to the board — ten times. I was president 1996-98, including during its 25th anniversary year in 1996.

PSA began with financial support from the Presbytery of Grand Canyon. At the Big Events each year we had a table to showcase our work. In time, presbytery had to pull back its funding, leading eventually to our dropping Presbyterian from its name and going with PSA Behavioral Health.

UPC would be the source of many other board members: Gerry Edson (later joining UPC), Joan Grey, Bill Raby, Robert Drye, Marjorie McGuirl, Rev. Raymond Kay Brown, and Carol Valentine, though not all serving at once. Later director Joe Mann was a regular at UPC. Several times, I gave Moments for Mission at UPC about the agency.

PSA evolved with changes in the field of behavioral health, most notably adding "Art Awakenings," a program where clients used the arts as valuable therapy. With the federal tobacco settlement, we worked hard on smoking cessation programs. We moved into holistic wellness, permanent supportive housing and integrated health (combining physical and mental health).

In time, we expanded with offices in Tucson, Casa Grande, Yuma, Douglas, Kingman, Bisbee, Bullhead City, and other sites. With a new executive director coming on board in 2019, the agency has undergone many changes, including a

new name that removed the last vestige of association with the Presbyterian Church. It is now called Resilient Health.

In January, after 33 years on the board, I retired. I was the last Presbyterian. I had served longer than any other board member and more than a dozen years longer than any of the 145 employees.

I decided to track down Ruth Mandernach, who had first recruited me. It took some internet tracing, but I found Ruth in Van Nuys, CA. We had a wonderful catch-up conversation. Ruth had left PSA around 1989 when she and Bill moved to Helmet, CA., and Bill took a job as a Sear's assistant store manager. Bill died several years ago of cancer.

Ruth became a Commissioned Ruling Elder and served five years at First Presbyterian Church in Encino, including a year as lead pastor when they were between installed pastors. As a licensed clinical social worker, Ruth was a therapist, supervised therapists, and then became a director of Family Service Programs for The Help Group. She worked with families and intergenerational groups.

I told Ruth that she got a lot of mileage out of one of her recruiting efforts 33 years ago. ■



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Earth Day Every Day

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

By LINDA RISSEEUW

We all know we should recycle; most of us do. But it is time to look at recycling again. Lots of things have changed in the last couple of years.

A lot of what we are used to toss into our blue recycle bins does not go there anymore. Actually this may not be bad in the worldwide state of recycling. The U.S. sent much of its recycle garbage to China and Southeast Asia. They even paid us for it. But as it turns out those countries were not able or could not afford to recycle it either. So what did they do with it? It went either into their landfills or was dumped into rivers where it contaminated the water and flowed out into the ocean to continue contaminating. That did not make us good steward of God's Earth.

So what do we do now? All the cities in the Phoenix metro area recycle to some extent. But the rules have changed, *especially* when it comes to plastic. What each city wants in its blue bin is different.

Plastics are much more restricted. The recycle numbers in the little triangle don't mean much anymore, according to the recycling manager at Tempe Recycling. Generally it is only plastic jars, bottles, and jugs that can be recycled. But they must be clean.

I know, you are thinking about peanut butter jars. Ick. But all you have to do is either wash them when you wash dishes or fill the jar with hot water, squeeze in a little detergent, shake it up good, and the next day it will have cleaned itself.

If a bottle still has a cap, screw it on. Otherwise the little guy just falls out of the recycle machine and goes in the landfill pile. *And do not bag your recyclables* in your blue bins. When they get to the recycling center they will be immediately sorted out as landfill. The main rule is clean and no plastic bags.

You know already where to take the plastic bags: to the designated bins at the grocery store or Target. Easy-peasy.

Paper is still pretty much the same, except no shredded paper.

As for cardboard, the City of Mesa has put real restrictions on cardboard. Mesa only takes corrugated cardboard, not food boxes such as cereal or cracker boxes. Other cities still take the paperboard boxes. *No packing materials*. It should all be cleaned out before recycling.

Why should we be so careful? Because the sorting process at the recycling centers is done by hand on conveyer belts, and the cities are charged for the non-recyclable stuff we send.

The mantra here could be: "When in doubt, throw it out."

The second mantra is "No plastic bags." Plastic bags get caught in the sorting machines and have to be manually pulled



out.

Guess who is charged with the stoppage of the machines? Us.

Here are a few questions I asked of the Tempe recycle manager:

Question: Which number plastics actually get recycled? For the ones that do not, should they go in the trash? I am seeing so much #5. Yes or No?

Response: Generally speaking, Waste Management and some other companies who own the facilities that bale recyclables, do not base recycling on numbers. Right now, they are only accepting plastic bottles, jars, and jugs. For instance, plastic to-go containers are often #1s but they are not recycled at the plant.

Question: Paper recycling. Is there a minimum size paper?

Response: I know no shredded paper. A safe rule of thumb is that it is a standard sticky note size or larger. Otherwise, it just falls through the conveyor belt.

Question: What are some of the areas where we could improve our "accuracy rate" in our blue bins?

Response: Making sure to not bag items and just place them loosely in the bins. No plastic bags or Styrofoam. Clean items only (no jars with food residue in them, etc.).

Question: Are there any ways we can try to convince food companies to switch to recyclable plastics? I am pretty sure the plastics companies themselves would not be interested in our comments.

Response: It is something that has been discussed within the industry and beyond. There has been minimal traction here as it

Stewardship Update

Serving Together, Caring for Each Other

By KATIE RANES

Stewardship Committee Chair

The many ministries of UPC were highlighted in worship on May 16th. We are certainly blessed in the ways members of our community are joining together to participate in the work of God.

Over the years there have been many ways we have connected with each other. In the coming months, we will be part of a new season for the church as we emerge from the year of COVID. You may be missing some of the traditional ways you have served the church. I know the choir members are eager to sing. You may have found

new insights and purpose in the ways we serve each other and God in this year of being physically separated from each other and the physical campus. God may be calling you to a new idea and a new challenge.

As I reflect on our church logo, I see that the hand of God will guide us and our hands will be joined in spiritual work together. I encourage you to again visit our church's website (www.upctempe.org) and pray for all our common work. Review the lists of leaders and staff members. If you are hearing God's call to join in a new or previous effort, reach out to our leaders. All hands are welcome in God's work. ■



There are different kinds of gifts. But they are all given to believers by the same Spirit. There are different ways to serve. But they all come from the same Lord. There are different ways the Spirit works. But the same God is working in all these ways and in all people.

1 Corinthians 12.4-6

ENVIRONMENT

Continued from page 4

needs to have more teeth to make it happen.

Question: Do you see any other alternative? We really push "Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle."

Response: Right now, there is a push to create local and regional recycling plants. By bringing recycling on a larger scale back to the U.S., it gives us more control and a greater ability to recycle more items.

Confused enough, yet? If you go to your city's website I think you will have a good idea of what and how to recycle. On these websites you will find lots of good information about what to do with electronics, household and garden poisonous waste, paints, and lots of other bad stuff that is probably sitting in your garage. And *none* of this stuff should ever end up in the landfill.

Some of your city's websites are listed below.

- www.phoenix.gov/publicworks/residential-recycling
- www.chandleraz.gov/residents/recycling-and-trash/recycling/recyclable-items-list
- www.tempe.gov/government/municipal-utilities/solid-waste-and-recycling/residential-services
- www.mesaaz.gov/residents/trash-recycling

Watch this short YouTube video of what goes on in the recycling plant:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxnxXSg6dmo.

Quite fascinating. ■

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10-03-2014

OH MAN ... THIS SACKCLOTH TOTALLY FIT ME THE LAST TIME I WORE IT

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10-17-2014

IF I'M GETTING SHAVED, WOULD THIS BE SHALVATION?

What Will Our Graduates Be Doing?



Allison Youngs

Allison graduated from Tempe Preparatory Academy on May 27th. She has signed a letter of intent to attend Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington on an academic scholarship. Allison will also compete on the track and field team in high jump and sprints. ■



Kara Asher

Kara graduated from Mountain Pointe High School in the top ten percent of her class. She will attend the University of Arizona Honors College where she will study political science and pursue environmental and social activism. ■



Ruby Trella

Ruby graduated from Corona del Sol High School, earning a 4.0 GPA. She will be attending the University of Arizona this fall to study nursing. Her plans upon graduation is to work for several years, eventually becoming a nurse practitioner. ■



Sidney Robbins

Sidney graduated from Perry High School in Chandler Unified. She will be attending Mesa Gilbert Community College to focus on studying music and business. She plans to then transfer to Northern Arizona University to continue her education. ■



Sam Ledermann

Sam graduated from Corona del Sol High School on May 20th. He plans to take a year off from school to work and gain some life experience before heading back to study computer graphic design and art. ■



Religion and Spirituality Both Overlap and Diverge

Conference speakers mull a recent Gallup Poll describing dwindling membership in faith communities

By **GAIL STRANGE**
Presbyterian News Service

For more than a year now, businesses, schools, and places of worship have been closed because of COVID-19. With renewed hope from a vaccine that would allow the world to return to some type of normal, the world is slowly recovering and reopening. People are finding new ways to understand and inspire spirituality, especially as it relates to civic action and bridge-building.

On Wednesday, the second day of a four-day conference of three national religious communicators groups—the Religion Communicators Council, the Associated Church Press and the Canadian Christian Communicators Association—Gillian K. Gonda, program director for Movement Building for the Fetzer Institute, presented the results of a survey that documents ways religion and spirituality both overlap and diverge. The presentation was a part of the plenary titled “New Portals to Understanding the Soul: Communicating Spirituality and Faith After COVID.”

Panel members Kevin Eckstrom, Chief Communications Officer for the Washington National Cathedral; the Rev. Dr. Trace Haythorn, Executive Director and CEO for the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE); and the Rev. Alicia Roxanne Forde, director of the International Office of the Unitarian Universalist Association, shared firsthand experiences of the ways communicators cover the trends reshaping religion in the public square—especially among Millennials, who increasingly find hope outside religious institutions. Among the questions discussed: How can religious communicators connect people across differences to bolster stronger democratic values and work toward the greater good?

According to the Fetzer Institute, the study sought to better understand spirituali-

ty in the U.S. by asking people how they understand and experience spirituality for themselves and how their spirituality relates to the way they engage with others and their community.

The study included people inside and outside religious institutions, those who consider themselves spiritual and those who do not. It was conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Here’s what we found,” said Gonda. “Spirituality is a complex, diverse and nuanced phenomenon that people of all spiritual and religious identities experience. So, this doesn’t surprise you. It’s an ever-changing concept and it is highly personal, and yet there’s some common themes around it, particularly that everyone experiences this to some degree or another.”

“The second big finding, though, has a lot more implications: The more a person identifies as spiritual, the more likely they are to take civic and political action, and the more likely they are to be engaged in their community,” Gonda said. “The correlations were really clear ... If someone identifies as spiritual, they’re involved in their community to some degree.”

Gonda acknowledged the findings of a recent Gallup Poll that point out that Americans’ membership in houses of worship continued to decline last year, dropping below 50% for the first time in Gallup’s eight-decade trend. In 2020, 47% of Americans said they belonged to a church, synagogue, or mosque, down from 50% in 2018 and 70% in 1999.

But by factoring in findings from the Fetzer Institute study, Gonda says the study shows that the majority of people consider themselves both spiritual and religious



Gillian K. Gonda, program director for Movement Building with the Fetzer Institute.

(70%). Only 16% consider themselves spiritual only. Eleven percent said they were neither, and 3% said religious only.

“So, these two questions were asked, how strongly do you consider yourself religious or spiritual?” said Gonda. “In total, 86% of Americans identify as spiritual to some extent, 73% consider themselves religious to some extent, and of those who considered themselves religious, 97% consider themselves spiritual.”

Another of the key findings was defined as “Animating Action,” which says spirituality is connected with an engaged civic life. People who identify as highly spiritual are more likely to say it is important to make a difference in their communities and contribute to the greater good in the world. They are also more likely to be politically engaged.

The study, Gonda said, surfaced two bridges that connect spirituality and prosocial action: a strong sense of connection to all of humanity and a sense of accountability to a higher power.

Race, Reparations and Reconciliation

Co-author of the Belhar Confession says reconciliation is 'not an option'

By TAMMY WARREN

Presbyterian News Service

In discussing reparations in his book, *Radical Reconciliation: Beyond Political Pietism and Christian Quietism*, co-authored with Curtiss Paul DeYoung, the Rev. Dr. Allan Boesak used the example of Zacchaeus, a greedy little tree-climbing tax collector, from Luke 19:1–10.

If tax collectors in general were hated by the people, Zacchaeus, as chief tax collector, was hated most of all, Boesak said in a webinar, “Race, Reparations and Reconciliation,” livestreamed Monday and sponsored by the Center for Social Justice and Reconciliation of Union Presbyterian Seminary, Charlotte campus.

“I think that Zacchaeus chose that tree not to be in a place where he could see Jesus because of his short stature, but because it was a safe place for him amongst that hostile crowd,” Boesak speculated. “Rather than standing among them and being recognized for what he was, and being beaten up, he found a hiding place in that tree. And that’s why Jesus had to stop and look up, and call him down from that tree, in order to do for Zacchaeus what happened in the story next.”

Boesak shared 10 real, radical and revolutionary lessons learned from Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus acknowledges his personal complicity, experiences remorse, recognizes that those he has harmed have a right to justice through restitution and reparation, Boesak said. Offering justice is “a way of asking forgiveness.” It restores Zacchaeus’ broken relationship with God and others, especially those he has hurt through “arrogance, greed, violence, lust for power and domination.” After Zacchaeus takes action to set things right through tangible acts of reconciliation, not only is he released from the sins of systemic oppression and exploitation, but his whole family and generations to come



Rev. Dr. Boesak (top left) answers questions following his webinar presentation on “Race, Reparations and Reconciliation,” facilitated by Union Presbyterian Seminary associate professor Dr. Rodney S. Sadler Jr. (top right) and assistant professor Dr. Rachel Beard.

are transformed as he takes hold of his new identity as “a son of Abraham.”

Boesak, a South African civil rights activist, theologian and professor of Black Theology and Ethics at Pretoria University, worked alongside Nelson Mandela, who became South Africa’s first democratically elected president, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu to end apartheid in South Africa. Boesak co-wrote the Confession of Belhar, which he drafted in 1982. It is the first confession from the global south to be adopted by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and added to the Book of Confessions by the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

“Reconciliation not only changes the way we feel, it transforms us and our identities as agents of God’s love, God’s justice and God’s reconciliation,” Boesak said. “For us, it means that white South Africans, instead of remaining children of colonialists and imperialists and the bringers of apartheid, can become brothers and sisters and children of the same soil.”

For Christians, Boesak said, “Reconciliation is not an ‘option among other

options,’ where we weigh the risks, consider the probabilities for success or failure; then, with cautious optimism, feel free to choose the path more feasible and more manageable.” Instead, reconciliation is an “obligation,” “a calling,” “a ministry entrusted to us by God in Jesus Christ.”

The question, he said, then becomes: “How have we fulfilled this obligation?”

“Reconciliation, reparation, restoration and transformation have something to do with what the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King talked about so often, in which the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the brave masses enacted so magnificently in the streets of America in the 1950s and 1960s, namely, to save the soul of the nation. Politically, socially and spiritually — that is the ultimate act of reconciliation because it is redemption.”

“That is how I see your work in the United States, as I see ours. It is a work of redemption,” Boesak said. “Redeeming America after 500 years of

See RECONCILIATION on page 13

Reinterpreting Biblical Passages Used Against Those Who Are Poor

Co-founder of Poor People's Campaign building spiritual home for those challenging the 'moral complacency of our time'

By PAUL SEEBECK

Presbyterian News Service

The Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis believes society has gotten comfortable with death—specifically with those who die from poverty.

“Before the pandemic, 700 people were dying every day,” she said, adding, “250,000 people every year gone because of poverty.”

And no one had the political will to anything about it.

As Theoharis began calling for building a movement for those who are poor, she was joined by the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II. Together they cofounded the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. As co-chair of the largest wave of nonviolent civil disobedience in 21st century America, Theoharis, ordained in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), has emerged as one of the nation's leading social movement forces.

As director of Kairos Center in New York City, which is one of the anchor organizations of the Poor People's Campaign, Theoharis helped pull together a

group of poor people and activists — along with theologians, Bible scholars and pastors. Together they began a Bible study called Reading the Bible with the Poor Cohort. Eventually, they helped form a new worshiping community called Freedom Church of the Poor.

“It's place where we can challenge Christian nationalism that blames poor people for poverty and those who are estranged from God,” Theoharis said, “by pitting people against each other with the lie of scarcity.”

Made up of those who are who are multi-religious and non-religious, the worshiping became a spiritual home for those reinterpreting biblical passages that are often used against those who are



The Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis (left) and the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II (right), co-founders of the Poor People's Campaign. PHOTO: COURTESY OF KAIROS CENTER

poor. When the pandemic hit, they began worshiping, praying and reading the Bible together online on their Facebook page. Quickly, people from the networks of the Kairos Center and the Poor People's Campaign and others began to join in.

“We are a new unsettling force that is organizing poor people across all these lines that divide us,” Theoharis

said, “with power potential to disrupt the complacency of our national lives.”

Central to the vision behind Theoharis's work comes from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life, who posited that the Achilles heel of our society was a system that brought together poverty, racism, militarism and ecological devastation.

According to Theoharis, there are 140 million Americans either living in poverty or are one paycheck away from economic ruin. That means that more than one-third of the U.S. electorate is in crisis, which she said, “is crazy.” As Theoharis began to explore who is most impacted, she discovered that demographically 60% of those 140 million are Black, Brown or Indigenous.

“COVID has exposed and spread the deep fissures that exist in our society,” she said.

Raised in a family committed to doing the work of justice and bringing God's reign of justice to Earth, Theoharis now wants to struggle with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in determining what a Christian response to poverty must be.



As co-founder of the Poor People's Campaign, the Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis, director of the Kairos Center, helped form a “Reading the Bible with the Poor Cohort.” Eventually this group of leaders — those who are poor, along with activists, theologians, biblical scholars and pastors, helped start Freedom Church of the Poor. PHOTO: COURTESY OF KAIROS CENTER

WHAT DOES SPIRITUALITY MEAN TO US?

A study of spirituality in the United States

RELIGIOUS & SPIRITUAL

Continued from page 7

Following the presentation of the findings, Forde said, “Our small world here in the United States is on the brink of recovery. And yet we remain mired in grief for the many lives lost due to COVID-19, a grief that is compounded by quarantining.”

“We in the international office know that transformation is personal as such. We’ve hosted prayer circles with partners in England. We’re about to launch a faith formation exploration with our partners in Japan ... as an aid of nurturing and deepening spiritual and faith formation across ... borders and boundaries. We also know, and deeply believe, that social transformation requires institutional change.”

Forde says as such, the Unitarian Uni-

versalist Association is eager to continue working with their U.S.- and Canadian-based congregations and communities of faith to bring an international lens to their organization’s institutional priorities, including immigration justice, climate justice, Indigenous partnerships, gender-based and LGBTQ equity, reproductive justice and voting rights.

“We anticipate depending heavily on video conferencing, virtual gathering spaces and applications ... to form a bridge of connection between our office and our audience,” she said. “Additionally, we’re using these platforms to invite congregations and communities of faith to connect with each other. If nothing else, the pandemic has shown us that our worlds can be brought together and we can work together on mission and faith, regardless of how

geographically dispersed we are.”

Haythorn says ACPE has seen a consistent growth of chaplaincy that the organization has more to learn about.

“In 2019 through the general social science survey, we learned that 20% of the U.S. population had experienced a chaplain in the last two years,” he said. “We noticed too that there’s a consistent growth ... of folks who identify as a chaplain. There’s been a consistent growth dating all the way back to the 1960s to today.”

“There’s a big question of who’s going to care for people’s spiritual needs,” Haythorn said. “We see a lot of student interest. We have seen a consistent growth in clinical pastoral education over the last 25 years.” ■

UPC online ...



www.upctempe.org

... spread the word!



Book Study Series on

REDLINING IN ARIZONA

with Dr. Lois Brown




ARIZONA FAITH NETWORK
Be Together • Talk Together • Act Together

Tue., June 1: 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Join the Arizona Faith Network for a book study series led by Dr. Lois Brown, Director of Arizona State University's Center for the Study of Race and Democracy, on racial justice and redlining. Together we will read the book *Minorities in Phoenix* by Bradford Luckingham and discuss the historical and current trend of racism and racial justice throughout Arizona. Find registration information for this and other events at arizonafaitnetwork.org/calendar.



Military/Veteran Faith-Based Summit
June 9, 2021 | 9:30 - 12:00



Wednesday, June 9, 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

The Arizona Coalition for Military Families is conducting free, valuable online training on Wednesday, May 5 from 1pm to 3:30pm and on Tuesday, May 18 from 9am to 11:30am. The training will include the Resource Navigator Training, which will provide ways for you or a vet you are helping to connect with a wide range of veteran resources (e.g., housing assistance, legal assistance, medical treatment, mental health therapy, etc.) This training is provided by the Be Connected group at the Arizona Coalition for Military Families. Find registration information for this and other events at arizonafaitnetwork.org/calendar.

Want to learn more about the Arizona Faith Network? Subscribe to the newsletter at:
www.arizonafaitnetwork.org/subscribe



Southwest Regional Gathering
June 11, 2021
Friday 6/11 at
11:00 AM Arizona Time
via Zoom

Registration NOW OPEN

Fri., June 11, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

During the 60-minute gathering, you'll receive an update on our 2021 Offering of Letters advocacy campaign, including strategies and stories from our work in the Southwest. You will also have an opportunity to connect with fellow Bread members, and you'll hear ideas for taking action with us this summer.

For more information, sign up for the AFN Newsletter:
www.arizonafaitnetwork.org/subscribe



PROTECT SACRED LAND
Protect the Grand Canyon
Urge Your Senators to Pass the Grand Canyon Protection Act

Protect Sacred Land - Grand Canyon Sign On Letter

As Arizonans and people of faith, we strongly believe in the "Green Rule" and believe it should be followed to protect one of our greatest natural and spiritual treasures: The Grand Canyon. Senator Sinema, Senator Kelly, and Representative Grijalva have all introduced versions of the Grand Canyon Protection Act. We ask that you stand with them in supporting this monumental piece of legislation.

Please sign your name, faith community, or organization to encourage our Senators to pass the Grand Canyon Protection Act today at: <https://form-usa.keela.co/grand-canyon-protection-act-letter>.



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



ONLINE WORSHIP
REGISTER TODAY!

www.upctempe.org/worship

A confirmation email will be sent with a login link that is unique to you!

Services also live streamed to www.upctempe.org/YouTube.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK

(1-800-273-8255)

Talk to someone.

If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the Lifeline network is available 24/7 across the United States.

En Español: 1-888-628-9454
Hard of Hearing: 1-800-799-4889
Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255

MORE THAN JUST COFFEE

CAFÉ
JUSTO

THE DIFFERENCE IS IN THE ROASTING

Discover the Difference

The official coffee of choice at UPC

For sale by contacting the church office

\$10 / lb.

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!

June 2021

Sanctuary Readiness Team..... Larry Seubert

Jun. 6—10th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 5

Liturgist..... Helen Griffin
 Children’s Moment..... Helen Griffin
 Worship Tech..... Jim Niemann

Jun. 13—11th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 6

Liturgist..... Molly Winkler
 Children’s Moment..... Molly Winkler
 Worship Tech..... Pastor Eric Ledermann

Jun. 20—12th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 7

Liturgist..... Dan Abbott
 Children’s Moment..... Dan Abbott
 Worship Tech..... Chris Trella

Jun. 27—13th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 8

Liturgist..... Jean Luce
 Children’s Moment..... Jean Luce
 Worship Tech..... Vacant

July 2021

Sanctuary Readiness Team..... Larry Seubert

Jul. 4—14th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 9

Liturgist..... Vacant
 Children’s Moment..... Vacant
 Worship Tech..... Jim Niemann

Jul. 11—15th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 10

Liturgist..... Katie Ranes
 Children’s Moment..... Katie Ranes
 Worship Tech..... Jim Niemann

Jul. 18—16th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 11

Liturgist..... Jeanette Miller
 Children’s Moment..... Vacant
 Worship Tech..... Jim Niemann

Jul. 25—17th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 12

Liturgist..... Vacant
 Children’s Moment..... Vacant
 Worship Tech..... Vacant

RECONCILIATION

Continued from page 8

invasion, land theft, genocide, epistemicide, enslavement, discrimination and exclusion. After over 4,700 lynchings and after the modern-day lynchings of the Travon Martins, the Sandra Blands, the Tamir Rices, the Breonna Taylors, the Michael Browns, the George Floyds and all the names since George Floyd — too numerous to mention already. After the almost daily crucifixion that womanist theologian Kelly Brown Douglas calls ‘the crucified class of today.’

“Like South Africa, America, unfor-

tunately, instead of offering genuine repentance and remorse, instead of coming with contrition to ask for forgiveness and to make amends with the undoing of justice and the doing of justice. Instead of breaking down the walls of separation and the fortresses of white supremacy, racism, homophobia, transphobia and gender injustice and setting right the harm done by new liberal capitalist exploitation, America is looking for cheap reconciliation — avoiding the costly path of reparation and restoration, hoping that the crumbs falling from the empire’s table will satisfy the hunger and thirst of

these masses for justice and righteousness.”

On Wednesday, May 26, at noon (EDT), Boesak will present another webinar titled “Wrestling with Race: Stories for American Anti-Racists from the South African Struggle.” This webinar is primarily for clergy but open to all. Register to attend the live presentation, which will be archived on the Union Presbyterian Seminary YouTube channel: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wrestling-with-race-tickets-155115284993>. ■

REINTERPRETING

Continued from page 9

“I was doing this organizing work before I realized it was a religious call,” she said. “A saying out of South Africa during their struggle with apartheid taught us that a dying mule kicks the hardest. But the arc of the universe bends towards justice.”

You can join the Freedom Church of the Poor for Sunday evening worship

services on the Kairos Center Facebook page, which begin at 6 p.m. EDT—except for on the First Sunday of the month, which begins at 6:30 p.m. EDT.

In 2012, the 220th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) declared a commitment to this churchwide movement that would result in the creation of 1001 worshipping communities over 10 years. At a grassroots level, nearly 600 diverse new worshipping com-

munities have formed across the nation.

Recently, Freedom Church of the Poor received a \$10,000 seed grant from Mission Program Grants, which are made available through the Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The grants support the transforming work of new worshipping communities and mid councils. ■



2	Caetlin Asher	15	David Morton
5	John Risseeuw		Alan Sands
6	Emily Youngs	17	Diane Hillyard
	Janet Krause	19	Kimberly Liska-Hall
8	Ryan Sands	21	Sarah Mason
9	Jason Godfrey	22	Sandra Simmons
10	Sofie Youngs	24	Evelyn Colby
10	Courtney Niemann		Paul Green
11	Chris Casanova		Elizabeth Steele
12	Ed Horne	29	Theresa Asher
	Dan Abbott	30	Brooks McAllister
14	Anna Gephart		

Prayers of thanks for these beautiful lives!

*If you see a birthday is missing or we have the wrong date,
please let the office know as soon as possible.*

Stay Informed on All-Things-Presby!

PC(USA) News

Available in a daily or weekly digest format. www.pcusa.org/newsupdates

Presbytery of Grand Canyon Weekly E-focus Newsletter

News and views from our presbytery. pbygrandcanyon.org/subscribe-to-efocus.

PC(USA) Office of Public Witness

Housed across the street from the U.S. Supreme Court in what is referred to as “the God Box,” the OPW is the PC (USA)’s advocacy and information center in Washington, D.C. Sign up for OPW Alerts and be an advocate! www.votervoice.net/pcusa/home. Learn

more about the OPW at:

www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/washington.

Presbyterian Historical Society

Organized in 1852, the PHS is the oldest denominational archives in the U.S. and serves as the national archives for the PC (USA) and its predecessor denominations. PHS exists to collect, preserve, and share the story of the American Presbyterian and Reformed experience. www.history.pcusa.org.

The Presbyterian Outlook

An independent magazine covering all things Presbyterian — \$19.95/year, 18 issues. pres-outlook.org

Presbyterians Today

Award-winning denominational magazine published by the PC(USA). Also available in a free twice monthly e-newsletter. *Get a free 1 year subscription!*

www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today



Remember prayer...

- ✘ **Homebound:** Evelyn Colby, Elaine Murray, Helen Alderson
- ✘ **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

June 2021

Tue, Jun 1

Wed, Jun 2
4:00 pm Worship Planning Team

Thu, Jun 3
7:00 pm CE Meeting

Fri, Jun 4
2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Sat, Jun 5
All Day I-HELP (FH, K)

Sun, Jun 6
9:30 am Worship Service
12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart

Mon, Jun 7
4:30 pm ACE Team
7:00 pm Administration Committee
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Tue, Jun 8
1:30 pm ASU Mainline Campus Ministry Meeting
7:00 pm Worship Committee (Zoom P)
7:00 pm Finance Committee

Wed, Jun 9
4:00 pm Worship Planning Team

Thu, Jun 10
11:30 am PGC Theology Reflection Study
7:00 pm MSJP Committee

Fri, Jun 11
2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Sat, Jun 12
All Day I-HELP (FH, K)

Sun, Jun 13
9:30 am Worship Service
12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart

Mon, Jun 14
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Tue, Jun 15
6:30 pm CIO Committee (Zoom P)
7:00 pm Board of Trustees (Zoom U)

Wed, Jun 16
4:00 pm Worship Planning Team

Fri, Jun 18
2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Sat, Jun 19
All Day I-HELP (FH, K)

Sun, Jun 20
9:30 am Worship Service
12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart

Mon, Jun 21
7:00 pm Deacon Meeting
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Tue, Jun 22
7:00 pm Session Meeting

Wed, Jun 23
4:00 pm Worship Planning Team

Thu, Jun 24
11:30 am PGC Theology Reflection Study

Fri, Jun 25
2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Sat, Jun 26
All Day I-HELP (FH, K)

Sun, Jun 27
9:30 am Worship Service
12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart

Mon, Jun 28
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Wed, Jun 30
4:00 pm Worship Planning Team

July 2021

Thu, Jul 1
7:00 pm CE Meeting (Zoom-U)

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

Sat, Jul 3
All Day I-HELP (FH, K)

Sun, Jul 4
9:30 am Worship Service (Zoom-U)
12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart

Mon, Jul 5
4:30 pm ACE Team (Zoom-P)
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Thu, Jul 8
11:30 am PGC Theology Reflection Study (Zoom-U)

Fri, Jul 9
2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Sat, Jul 10
All Day I-HELP (FH, K)

Sun, Jul 11
All Day Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)
12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart
9:30 am Worship Service (Zoom-U)

Mon, Jul 12
All Day Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Tue, Jul 13
All Day Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)
7:00 pm Worship Committee (Zoom P)
7:00 pm Finance Committee (Zoom-U)

Wed, Jul 14
All Day Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)

Thu, Jul 15
All Day Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)

Fri, Jul 16
All Day Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)
2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

Sat, Jul 17
All Day Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)
All Day I-HELP (FH, K)

Sun, Jul 18
All Day Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)
9:30 am Worship Service (Zoom-U)
12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart

Mon, Jul 19
7:00 pm Board of Deacons (Zoom-U)
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

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

UPC NEWS & *Current Events*

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CALENDAR

Continued from page 15

- Tue, Jul 20**
6:30 pm CIO Committee (Zoom-P)
- Thu, Jul 22**
11:30 am PGC Theology Reflection
Study (Zoom-U)
- Fri, Jul 23**
2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)
- Sat, Jul 24**
All Day I-HELP (FH, K)
- Sun, Jul 25**
9:30 am Worship Service (Zoom-U)
12:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart
- Mon, Jul 26**
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)
- Fri, Jul 30**
2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)
8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)
- Sat, Jul 31**
All Day I-HELP (FH, K)

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.