

Messenger Light

April 27, 2021



Matthew's Sabbatical (Part I)

Church Office Hours

Monday—Thursday

8:00am to 2:00pm

Our staff members can be reached individually by phone or email between 8am and 2pm, Monday through Friday:

Matthew Miller

505-764-2902

Stephanie Urban

505-764-2903

Frank Yates

505-681-0625

Carolyn Rhodes

505-764-2906

Libby Whiteley

505-764-2924

Niccole Pierre-Williams

505-764-2911

Sharon Baca

505-764-2900

If you have an after-hours emergency, you can reach Matthew through our Helpline at 505-764-2910

**First Presbyterian Church
(USA)**

215 Locust Street, NE
Albuquerque, NM 87102

505-764-2900

www.firstpresabq.org

Some of you may know that I am scheduled to leave on a three-month sabbatical following Sunday worship on May 29th, returning to the office on the Tuesday following Labor Day. I was originally supposed to be taking this sabbatical during the summer of 2020, but you can guess what happened. It's what happened to so much of whatever any of us had planned for 2020: COVID. So, now that I am finally going to be able to take this much needed time away from full-time ministry, I wanted to share with you the focus of that time away.

On the shelf in my library, is a book that was given to me upon my graduation from seminary. It came from The Rev. Dr. William A. Baine, who was pastor of the church in which I spent my formative years as a child/youth, the Green Mountain Presbyterian Church in Lakewood, CO. Dr. Baine had retired to San Antonio, TX; not far from Austin, where I attended seminary. We had the chance to reconnect while I was in Texas. The book was one from his very own library and came with a typewritten letter on yellow paper tucked inside the front cover. In it he explains that he thought this particular book might be of interest to me as he recollected my participation in what he called "The Gospel in Drama" at the Green Mountain church. These experiments, as he called them, were efforts to offer dramatic selections from plays or musicals that had particular resonance with the good news of our faith. They took the place of the sermon in our Sunday worship, with some interpretive observations along the way. At the time, all I wanted was to be on stage. I loved the play of stagecraft and was eager to be given a chance to do that in church - not as something on the side, but in the main worship life of our community. Looking back, I'm sure that was one of the early seeds of what would become my call to ordained pastoral ministry. The book, printed in 1943, was Dorthy L. Sayers' *The Man Born to Be King*. It's a cycle of twelve plays on the life of Jesus that was first offered for broadcast over BBC radio.

While this sabbatical will certainly allow me time for rest and renewal with my family, it will also give me time to re-immers myself in the world of live dramatic performance. In part II of this Messenger series, I'll share with you some of what I'll be exploring and why. The idea for this sabbatical all began when a parishioner shared a travel magazine with me that had a story about the staging of the Mystery plays. If you don't know what those are, I'll give you a rundown in two weeks. And I'll talk about how it got me thinking about how the church might continue to make effective use of the dramatic arts to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love in new and imaginative ways.

~ Rev. Matthew Miller

Calendar for the Week

Friday, April 29th

- Root Wedding rehearsal in the Sanctuary at 5:30pm

Saturday, April 30th

- Mural painting in the North parking lot, 9:00am-1:00pm
- Root Wedding in the Sanctuary at 2:30pm

Sunday, May 1st

- Fellowship Choir rehearsal at 8:00am in the choir room
- In-person Fellowship Hall Worship Service at 8:30am
- Adult Sunday School at 9:45am via Zoom/In-person in Kerygma Room
- Youth Group at 9:45am in CE Room 220
- Through the Bible Class at 9:45am in CE Room 219
- Godly Play Sunday School (ages 3 through 5th grade) at 9:45am in-person in CE Room 217 and on Zoom
- Chancel Choir rehearsal in F.H. at 10:30am
- In-person / Livestream Sanctuary Worship Service, 11am, featuring the Albuquerque Girl Choir

Monday, May 2nd

- Bell Choir rehearsal in Upper East Transept, 1:00pm
- Women's Chorus rehearsal in F.H. at 6:00pm

Tuesday, May 3rd

- Prayer / Book Study Group at 12:00pm via Zoom
- LaDonna Hopkins Memorial service at 1:00pm in the Sanctuary and via Livestream to our YouTube channel

Wednesday, May 4th

- Personnel Committee Meeting at 6:30pm in Kerygma
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:00pm – 8:30pm in F.H.

Thursday, May 5th

- Albuquerque Girl Choir Rehearsal, 4:00pm in Choir Rm
- ABQ Pipes and Drums Rehearsal, 6:00pm in F.H.

Saturday, May 7th

- Deacon Retreat in F.H. from 9:00am-1:00pm

Sunday, May 8th

- Fellowship Choir rehearsal at 8:00am in the choir room
- In-person Fellowship Hall Worship Service at 8:30am
- Adult Sunday School at 9:45am via Zoom/In-person in Kerygma Room
- Youth Group at 9:45am in CE Room 220
- Through the Bible Class at 9:45am in CE Room 219
- Godly Play Sunday School (ages 3 through 5th grade) at 9:45am in-person in CE Room 217 and on Zoom
- Chancel Choir rehearsal in F.H. at 10:30am
- In-person/Livestream Sanctuary Worship Service, 11am, with Celebration of 50-year Members

Calling All Graduates!

As we approach the end of another school year, we would like to honor all graduates in our church congregation. If you, or a loved one, has or will be graduating this year, please contact the church office at 505-764-2900 so we can honor their achievement!

Online Giving Options

FPC works in our ministries to reach out to members of the church and our greater community. You can send contributions by mailing checks to the church:

First Presbyterian Church

215 Locust Street NE, Albuquerque, NM 87102

You can give online at www.firstpresabq.org, click on the yellow "Give Online" button in the menu bar. Follow the instructions in the new window that opens to make your donations.

MinistryOne App Visit the App Store on your smart phone to find "Church by Ministry One." Use this app to donate quickly and securely, and access our YouTube channel for videos and sermons.

Men's Fellowship Breakfast

The Men's Fellowship Breakfast will have its May gathering on the 10th in Fellowship Hall at 7:30am. If you plan to attend, please sign up for breakfast in the church office so we may ensure enough food for everyone.

Tech Savvy Volunteers Needed!

We are still looking for volunteers to help on Sunday mornings from 10:30am to 12:30pm with our Livestreaming equipment. Volunteers need to be comfortable multitasking and working with computers. Niccole will conduct training with the computer and video equipment, so experience in audio/visual work is not necessary. If you, or someone you know, is interested, please consider volunteering for our online ministry. Contact Niccole in the church office at 505-764-2911 or via email at niccolepierre.williams@firstpresabq.org.

MORE Feedback Wanted

During the first week of May, the Personnel Committee will meet with Church Administrator, Carolyn Rhodes, to provide her evaluation and again, we would like to hear from you. You might consider making note of a couple of things that you feel the staff member does well and a couple of things you would like to see the person change or start doing. Please provide your written comments to Elder Barbara Seaton at your earliest convenience. The comments must be signed and can be left in Barbara's mailbox, located in the hallway across from the church office.

Reminder: We are always accepting donations to our Rio Grande Food bin (canned/dry food) and to our HopeFound box (household supplies). These ongoing ministry partners are always in need of extra supplies!



OFFERING — of — LETTERS to Congress

Alicia Cisneros, a mother in New Mexico, works two low-income jobs, without complaint, because she wants her children to flourish. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, a check arrived each month as part of the expanded Child Tax Credit. The money ensured there was nutritious food on the dinner table. A continent away in Uganda, Esther Okwir looks at her son Rodgers with joy. She is thankful for the nutrition assistance that is helping him thrive. He is beating the odds in a country where the death rate for children under age 5 is among the worst in the world.

These women share a common struggle and hope to see their children healthy and happy. They also share in the benefits of Christian advocacy that strengthened anti-hunger programs.

Each year, people of faith write letters and emails to their members of Congress who have the power to impact the policies and programs that can end hunger. Your letters are more important than ever. Growing inflation and the expiration of vital anti-hunger benefits means more children are expected to experience food insecurity this year. Globally, hunger is on the rise, with famine looming in multiple countries.

By taking part in Bread for the World's 2022 Offering of Letters, you will help make nutrition for mothers and children a priority in our own country and abroad. Together, and through God's loving mercy, we have the power to help. When we turn our faith into action, God uses our voices.

"Faith-based advocacy is part of our Christian heritage. It goes back to Moses advocating to Pharaoh and on up to recent times with leaders like Martin Luther King Jr."

—Pastor Eric Hanson, Faith Lutheran Church in Andover, Iowa



Photos by Anne Thurrow



breadfortheworld
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. For nearly 50 years, Bread for the World members have helped win support for bipartisan measures that address the causes of hunger. Each year, thousands of churches from many faith traditions take part in the Offering of Letters.

Join Bread for the World's collective voice for an end to hunger. Please take a few minutes to write your members of Congress. Urge them to make nutrition a priority and to increase funding for nutrition programs that enable mothers and children to grow and thrive. Additional samples letters can be found in print and email format at bread.org/ol.

SAMPLE LETTER

Sen. _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

[Date]

Dear Senator _____, or Dear Representative _____,

More than 12 million children in the U.S. are not getting enough to eat. You can reduce child hunger by making permanent the refundable tax credit expansion and by reauthorizing child nutrition programs.

Access to adequate and safe nutrition is vital to growth and learning, especially in the first 1,000 days of a child's life.

Specifically, I urge you to:

- Expand free school meals to additional children through the Community Eligibility Provision Program and extend Summer EBT nationwide.
- Make the one-year expansion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC) permanent, fully refundable, and available to families regardless of their children's immigration status. Otherwise, an estimated 9.9 million children are at risk of poverty.

Children are the heritage of the Lord (Psalm 127:3), and as Christian, I believe we all carry responsibility for their well-being and future. I urge you to strengthen the nutrition programs that give our nation's children the opportunity to flourish.

[your name]
[your address]
[city, state, ZIP]

Please bring your letters to the church by
Sunday, May 15, 2022.



breadfortheworld
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

425 3rd Street SW, Suite 1200
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How the West was Sung

Albuquerque Civic Chorus
Spring 2022 Concert

Saturday, May 14, 2022 6:00 P.M.
First Presbyterian Albuquerque • 215 Locust St NE

Sunday, May 15, 2022 3:00 P.M.
Rio Rancho Presbyterian Church • 1004 24th St SE

Tickets \$10.00 in advance or \$15.00 at the door

Explore America through songs from Native American and Hispanic traditions to cowboy ballads, musicals and television westerns.

Calling All Volunteers and Artists!

If you haven't already noticed the "drawing on the wall" outside A Child's Garden preschool, we have officially begun creating the mural to celebrate the school's 50th anniversary. But in order to bring this vision to life, we need your help. Through the month of April, we are seeking volunteers from our ACG families and our FPC congregation and friends to come out and paint the mural with us. Don't worry, you don't have to be a professional—we will have supervisors guiding our volunteers and have outlines and reference images for everyone's use. Our goal is to finish work on the mural from 9:00am to 1:00pm on Saturday, April 30th.

If you would like to help out, please contact
Niccole at FPC at niccolepierre.williams@firstpresabq.org
or Mary at ACG at marymatteucci@firstpresabq.org.

Albuquerque Girl Choir Spring Concert

May 21, 2022 3:00pm
First Presbyterian Church Sanctuary

The Albuquerque Girl Choir has sung continuously for over 30 years. We range in age from 6 year olds through high school and come from all areas of the city. Many of our singers have gone on to major in vocal performance and music education as well as sing in all-state choruses.



This is our first indoor performance in over two years. It's a joy to rehearse and sing in this magnificent facility. Please join us for refreshments after the concert.