



# The Trumpet

The Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Carson City

Vol. 56 No. 07

September 2019

## *From the Pastor's Desk*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we go through this season of transition, do you ever wonder what the inevitable changes mean? For example, do you ever wonder if where we are going is still faithful to God's call? Or, do you wonder if the changes indicate that we have been out of God's will? How can you know if you are in a congregation that is pleasing in God's sight? How do I know the church to which I belong is on the right path? These questions can be really tough for people – either when things change internally or when they look around in our culture where options are as abundant as brands on grocery store shelves.

During the Reformation the question of choosing the right church could be a matter of life and death. Things were in upheaval; certainty had vanished. Whereas the Roman Catholic Church was seeking to retain its position of authority within societies, Reformers were challenging practices they viewed as abusive and erroneous. It could be confusing for the ordinary person to understand the issues, why they mattered, and how to navigate among the competing claims for loyalty.

John Knox and Reformers in Scotland put together an explanation of how believers might discern what is – and what is not – a true church (or, in their parlance, “kirk”). They identified three “marks” or traits that must be present. They wrote in a document known to us as The Scots Confession:

“The notes of the true Kirk, therefore, we believe, confess, and avow to be: **first, the true preaching of the Word of God**, in which God has revealed himself to us, as the writings of the prophets and apostles declare; **secondly, the right administration of the sacraments** of Christ Jesus, with which must be associated the Word and promise of God to seal and confirm them in our hearts; and **lastly, ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered**, as God's Word prescribes, whereby vice is repressed and virtue nourished. Then wherever these notes are seen and continue for any time, be the number complete or not, there, beyond any doubt, is the true Kirk of Christ, who, according to his promise, is in its midst.”

Over the next couple of articles, we are going to look at these three. This month, we begin with the first: the true church can be known by the true preaching of the Word of God.

Preaching is a great honor and a tremendous responsibility. It is humbling to stand at the pulpit proclaiming, “Thus sayeth the LORD.” What matters is how God has revealed himself, what God thinks, and what God has commanded. The preacher's role is to present, explain, and apply what God has given to us in Scripture. That is always the starting place; preaching is not the time to get on my soapbox and tell you what *I think*.

Make sure you see the clarifying clause: “as the writings of the prophets and the apostles declare.” The importance of Scripture cannot be overstated. The Westminster Confession says it this way, “The authority of the Holy Scripture depends not upon the testimony of any many or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.” In other words, preaching must be rooted in Scripture.

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Now that may seem simple; however, the Bible is not just a rule book. It is a relationship book. It contains a variety of different kinds of material: history, poetry, letters, commentary, proclamation, and commandments. There were so many different ways God had revealed himself to people. There were so many different kinds of situations through which God worked. But through it all we see – as Max Lucado and Randy Frazee would describe it – God's Upper Story revealed. The Upper Story is God's overarching narrative of creation, redemption, and reconciliation.

When I was in seminary I had the privilege of getting to know Bill Pannell. He was a professor of preaching and the dean of chapel at Fuller. I got to know him a little bit during those days and enjoyed visiting with him. Early in his life, he had served with Youth for Christ and had gone on tour with Tom Skinner Associates as an evangelist. He told me stories of being out on the circuit with evangelism tours. One time he was sitting on the podium with other people watching as a speaker worked the crowd into a frenzy. The more animated the speaker and the crowd got, the more he sat puzzling. Finally, he leaned over to the guy next to him and said, "You know, there's not enough gospel in that to save a gnat."

For whatever reason that has stuck with me. As I prepare to speak each Sunday, I ask, "Is there enough gospel in this sermon to save a gnat?" It's a different way to ask myself if I am prepared.

How can you know if we are on the right path? Are you hearing, "The true preaching of the Word of God in which God has revealed himself to us, as the writings of the prophets and apostles declare"?

**Pastor's Study**

On September 4, we will wrap up the Summer Series of Hawaiian Island Ministry with a bonus keynote video: Priscilla Schirer's, "The Patience of God." We will **not** have a class on September 11. We will begin a ten-week look at the Essential Tenets of the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO) beginning on September 18.

Your brother in Christ,

**Bob Davis**

**WOMEN'S THURSDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY**

We will meet on Sept. 12 at 1:30 in the library. We are on lesson 3 (Listening to the God of Covenant) in the study book "Listening to God". Plan to come early for fellowship time. All ladies are welcome. If you have questions call Lynne Weaver-- *via the church office at 882-1032.*



**LOOKING FOR AN EASY WAY TO VOLUNTEER?** Every Sunday you see pictures and words on the screens to help you worship. These slides are prepared in PowerPoint by Paul Weaver with occasional help from Troy Stansbury. Most Sundays Margo Weaver pushes the button to change the slides as we go through the service. Starting soon, both Margo and Paul are planning to sing in the choir and they need someone else who would be willing to take over the job of running the slides during the service. It is simple but requires that the person be alert during the whole service. If you think you might be able and willing to do this, please call Paul Weaver at *via the church office at 882-1032.* Ideally, a couple of people would make this easier. Thank You!

**TRUMPET DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER**

is September 12  
Send your info / articles / submissions to [margo@fpcarsoncity.org](mailto:margo@fpcarsoncity.org)

**Congregational Giving—GENERAL BUDGET**

	2019 Projected		
	Budget Need	Given	Difference
August 19 2019			
Year to date	\$363,000	\$341,081	+\$ 21,919
<u>Current</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>Difference</u>
	\$341,081	\$350,695	-\$ 9,614

Thank you for your continued generous support of God's work through First Presbyterian Church of Carson City!

# Family Ministry

This is a new ministry for our church, and it's an exciting blank page, with the story being written by a holy hand. I don't know what the plot will be, but I do know the characters - I see you each week as we gather to worship. This is not only a children's book. They have their part, a very important one. But each of you has a role in this narrative. We will celebrate being a part of God's family all together through various activities and times that will allow each of us to be an active member of our worshipping community. Maybe you want to help write a chapter. Or you want to assist someone else in composing an article. Whatever it is, you are a valuable part of this ministry. It's going to be an adventure, sometimes a comedy, maybe even a bit of a drama. There will be strong leads, comic relief, and many others to round out a rich cast of characters. I am here to give you the tools you need to succeed. I am reaching out to meet and know you on a deeper level. Please get in touch with me when you are ready to write your part. Or maybe just hold the pencil and see how it feels in your hand.

## August Memory Verses

I treasure your word in my heart so that I may not sin against you.  
Psalm 119:11

And he said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."  
Matthew 4:19

"...Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean."  
Matthew 8:2

Our Sunday School rooms are getting a makeover! We want families to bring their time and talents to this project. Whether you're six or eighty-six, you can be a part of this exciting change. See me to sign up for a Saturday (exact date to be determined) of painting and pizza!

Sherry Chenin  
Family Ministry Coordinator



## Success?

More than once, and a few years back (18 or more), I was very concerned with being successful in other peoples' eyes. I stewed and fretted that my life did not mean much in the grand scheme of the world's pursuits. And that is just it: the world would have me running here and there and doing what seems in man's eyes as the best expression of life. "Get involved in the latest cause" — as deemed by the world — "Seek solutions that government should be offering" — "Acquire, then sell at a profit, and repeat". By the world's standards, I should spend my time and energy on making a legacy that people can point to and say, "That was done well", "That person really made a difference", "Boy, they really had it all together" or "They really had it made".

Many of us might scoff at that idea as it is literally a "keeping up with the Joneses" (sorry to all you with that last name). Most of us have come to the conclusion that the world isn't even watching that closely. But it is! Others are watching to see what the hope we claim is all about.

All that will matter in the end is a life that has been lived for God, and a broken heart for those things that break His heart. If we let all the worldly traps catch us, we will not be fit for Heaven. This has been a very hard year of events, and yes, there will still be hardship in the events that happen in our country and in the world, BUT GOD has called us to ease the suffering of others in what we say and do. He calls us to focus on Him and His way. He calls us to walk the paths that He has set before us. His paths are quite counterintuitive and "other" than what the world calls us to. God's measure of success will be in how we love Him and how we love our neighbor as our self. It will call us to trust in Him. He has the Master Plan; what we need to do is follow Him.

As we begin this new season of fall and with it the celebration of reformation in the church; let's allow God to RE-FORM us and guide us in His paths of righteousness — for His Name's sake.

Blessings,

*Karen*



### Chancel Choir returns in the Fall Our first rehearsal is Wednesday, September 4!

Come and join us! We are always looking for new singers. Our rehearsals are generally Wednesdays (there are a few Tuesdays due to holiday schedules), and we begin rehearsals at 7:00 PM. We would love to have you join us this season! If you have questions, please call Karen at 775-721-3549.



### Save the date!!

Friendship Suppers will be back on October 11 and 12. Sign-ups will be at Coffee Hour in October. You don't have to be a Host, just plan to attend and make new Christian friends!

### DESERT SCHOONERS

Many Presbyterian Churches have a "Mariners" fellowship group—since we are in the desert we call ours Desert Schooners with the president being the Wagon Master. The programs are open to all.—so come join us!

We meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month in Fellowship Hall. There's a short program, like a Chautauqua, a description of the highway art around Carson or the Senior University affiliated with UNR's, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. This month Bob Davis will introduce himself and share some of his hobbies and life experiences with us.

Bring your own a sack lunch on Tuesday, September 24 at 11:30 and join us in the Fellowship Hall.

Hope to see you there. For more information call Wagon Master Carolyn Knutson or Sandy Ehresman *by calling the church office 882-1032.*



Names and dates removed for privacy

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**ON OUR PRAYER & PRAISES LIST**

Names removed for privacy

All the words listed to the right of the puzzle are in the puzzle - left, right, up, down or diagonally. Find each word and then put the leftover letters in the correct order to form the *mystery answer*. See the back of the September calendar insert for the answer!

M H T U R J D L  
 H A I M E H E N  
 S D T S D O B A  
 I A U T J V O J  
 L S R U A I R U  
 A S D Z D T A D  
 S A M U E L H E  
 S H E L I S H A

Deborah, Elisha, Ezra, Hadassah, Jesus, Joel, Judas, Judea, Mattatha, Nehemiah, Ruth, Samuel, Silas

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By God's Providence, this appropriately-timed article from the *New Horizons* magazine was seen by George Stanton. Thanks for sharing, George!



Anyone who has ever been on a pastoral search committee knows that seeking a new pastor can be a tremendously long and arduous task. But many of us are taken off guard by the challenges that come once a new pastor arrives. Chances are, you came to your church under your previous pastor because you liked the church under his leadership. Now that church is changing.

Many churches can lose a significant number of their membership within the first two years of a pastoral

transition. This can lead to discouragement for both the pastor and the remaining members. The discouragement can be so great that we may grow discontent with our church, lay the blame at the feet of our new pastor, and even be tempted to leave the church ourselves.

How can we prepare ourselves and our church to preempt the exodus and the heartache that so often follows a pastoral transition? Having witnessed several churches go through this, here are ten observations I have made that may make the transition go more smoothly.

### **1. Pray for your new pastor from day one.**

Pray that God would accomplish what he has planned for the church through the ministry of your new pastor. Pray for his encouragement. Pray that he would grow in grace and in love for his new congregation. Pray for him each week as he prepares to administer Word and sacrament. Pray that he would have wisdom and insight into the needs of the church. Pray for his family. Do this from day one—don't wait until the pastoral honeymoon is over!

### **2. Pray for yourself.**

Pray that God would soften and prepare your heart for the work he is doing through this new pastor. Pray that you would grow in grace and in loving submission to his leadership. Pray that your ears and heart would be eager and prepared to receive and believe the Word preached each week. Acknowledge to yourself and to God that there will be disappointments and ask for his grace to face them even before problems arise.

### **3. Pray for the congregation.**

Pray for peace and unity. Pastoral transitions often bring out the worst in churches as we inevitably hope for a pastor who will reflect our priorities (and not those of the guy on the other end of the pew). This can bring division to even the strongest church. Pray that the congregation would joyfully submit as one body. Pray for unity in the session; disunity among the leadership can destroy a pastor and a church. Pray for the pastor's and elders' wives.

### **4. Get to know the pastor and his family.**

Often, we expect the pastor to reach out to us and get to know us—as well we should. It is one of his duties as pastor. Chances are, he is eager to do so. But remember he is the newcomer, and he may have one hundred new people to meet. If you are a longtime member, you already know the others at church and have only his family to reach out to. Invite him over. Ask him about his hobbies. Ask him about his convictions and who or what shaped him. Aim to do this regularly! As he inevitably brings changes to your church, keep communication open. Try to understand him and the new direction he is taking the church before suggesting your own.

### **5. Don't compare.**

Okay. Let's be honest. This one is humanly impossible. You are going to compare your new pastor with your old pastor. You are going to compare his preaching with your favorite radio or podcast preachers. But don't

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always give him the short end of the stick. It's okay to miss your previous pastor and even mourn, but don't forget to move on and embrace your new pastor with all his strengths and weaknesses. Try your best to overlook those weaknesses by God's grace and to actively take note of his strengths.

#### **6. Speak positively about him to others.**

When your pastor first arrives, there is going to be a time of excitement. But after a year or two there will most likely be a period of disappointment as you find out that he's just a man and unable to meet everyone's expectations. It's so easy for us to begin to grumble quietly among ourselves. We may even feel justified, with a chapter and verse to validate our discontent. Now is the time to avoid listening to the grumbling—whether inside your mind or coming out of someone else's—and to start counteracting it with praise. Get your congregation excited again about your new pastor by praising him to others.

#### **7. Encourage him.**

We've all heard the statistics on pastoral burnout. It's so much easier to complain than to encourage, and as a result, the criticisms your pastor hears probably far outweigh the compliments. Make it a point to encourage him and his family. Your pastor is sincerely devoted to your church and eagerly desires its growth in grace. It is his job to be concerned about its well-being full-time. It can be rewarding, but it can also be emotionally and spiritually exhausting. He needs your encouragement more than you know.

#### **8. Get your hands dirty.**

We all have our favorite ministries and priorities, and we want our new pastor to adopt them as well. But what if he doesn't? Remember, the entire work of the church does not rest on the pastor. Get involved! If you see a need, ask him if you can help. Your pastor will be thrilled. Even better, ask him where he sees a need and then offer to fill it.

#### **9. Commit for five years.**

No matter what. Your new pastor may arrive and quickly make several changes, or he may arrive and keep things just as they are. Either way, give him time. Just as he cannot get to know an entire congregation in one or two years, neither can you judge his ministry in just one or two years. A pastor doesn't begin to truly have an impact on a church until a few years in. Be patient.

#### **10. Remember that this is the Lord's church.**

Things may not go in the direction that you thought they should. But God is sovereign, and he is accomplishing his will in his church, even if we don't understand it. Be committed to the body. Don't make your membership conditional on who is in the pulpit. Pray that the Lord's will would be done, not any one person's. Be encouraged. He will build his church, and the gates of hell will not stand against it!

*New Horizons* magazine (August/September 2019).

*The author is a member of Providence OPC in Rockford, Illinois.*

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Wondering what this "ECO" is that you keep hearing about? Come learn about the tenets of the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO) during the 10:00 am or 5:30 pm Pastor's Study on Wednesday evenings starting September 18th!



Maybe some of you saw the movie **BREAKTHROUGH** that was recently in theaters. However if you missed it, we now have it in our own FPC Library for you to check out.

This movie deals with many life relationships. It is based on a true story of a mother who believed in prayer and that God would bring her adopted son back from the brink of death. During the movie you will see how relationships are dealt with, with a new pastor, new music in their church, mother/son, wife/husband, son/teacher/coach/friends, father/family, mother/medical staff and much more. This movie is a testimony of how faith and love can bring a miracle to life.

This amazing movie/story is recommended for viewing with family and friends of all ages.

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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Trumpet & Sunday Bulletin articles can be sent to [margo@fpccarsoncity.org](mailto:margo@fpccarsoncity.org) and may be edited for space. See calendar for due dates. Trumpet mailing team led by Linda Poole.

**This Month's Sermons**

September 1: "The Call"	Mark 2: 13-17
September 8: "The Bridegroom"	Mark 2: 18-22
September 15: "The Sabbath"	Mark 2:23-28
September 22: "The Pharisees Conspired"	Mark 3:1-6
September 29: "The Multitudes"	Mark 3:7-12

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