



The Compass

July-August 2021

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—Portland, Indiana

Pastoral Perspectives on Summertime Content

It seems to be a common event for those who have birthdays around the holidays to often receive combined Christmas and birthday presents around the same time each year. Some remark that it usually means you get bigger gifts than others do. Yet, in my experience over the years, one cannot escape eventually feeling at times a fear of missing out (“FOMO”). What would it be like if, instead, one’s birthday were celebrated at a different time of year?

I have a cousin named *Noel* (French for “Christmas”) whose birthday is Christmas Day. My mother’s name is *Natividad* which is Spanish for “Nativity”, and her birthday is also December 25. My birthday is Christmas Eve. My parents named me *Rex* which is Latin for “King” in reference to the “King of kings” whom scripture accords, as per biblical scholars, to be Jesus the Christ whose birth is celebrated by the religious culture of society on December 25, a few days or so after the *winter* solstice.

While writing this the week following the *summer* solstice, I am remembering how every time I hear the terms and phrases “king of kings” and “lord of lords”, the associated tunes and harmonies attributed to corresponding measures and stanzas in the *Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel’s *Messiah* come to mind. Each time it elicits unmitigated desire to sing out joyfully with the zeal and fervor of a thousand voices singing together in powerful vocal rendition through sustained repetition of choral proclamation. Something wants to burst out from within without hindrance, sans any encumbrance, barring whatever hesitation or inhibition might be in the way toward expressing with total abandon the sheer joy of love come down on earth as it is in heaven. All creation, in a sense, is bursting at the seams around us while at the same time in the ebb and flow of life’s journeys, we are allotted time and space to just be “sittin’ on the dock of the bay wasting time” as the popular song lyric goes. Can you hear whistlin’ in the wind?

And so it is that amid summer times past and present, while the livin’ might not always be easy, there is also an ease of mind that is in mine. A state of being that, after natal midterm messianic celebrations, takes place for me amidst much of my progeny’s and their late mother’s birthday months of July, and August, and into September.

This summer, after celebrating our interdependence together at our nation’s Day of Independence on the Fourth of July Holiday Week/end, my daughters and I look forward to a series of celebrations in remembrance of their mother’s, late grandmother’s, and each of the six sisters’ birthdays over the next two and a half months. While remembering each other on such special days, beloved familial traditions of half-year celebrations in remembrance will no doubt take place as well for those among us whose birthdays are at around Christmastime or beyond. I think we will also celebrate Christmas in July!

This year following the previous year’s onset of the present pandemic provides our family a time for reflection through summertime when the newest little ones of my grandchildren born during recent global challenges may very well be sung to sleep in sweet slumber of Gershwin’s lyrical turns of phrase set to soulful sustenance of summery solitude by the soothing seashore. I imagine myself humming “So, hush, little baby, don’t you cry” unto each precious young one’s ears in the wake of world events while the waves wash upon the shores of our sovereign nation’s land. Indeed, among other US citizens, my country ‘tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing, too. From coast to coast in the land of the free, may we ascribe glory to the holy One who alone is worthy of praise, giving thanks in all circumstances, continually learning to be content.

In Christ of Christmas in July Jubilance with August Affection into September Salience, we prayerfully abide

With Grace and Peace in the Spirit of Jesus,

Pastor Rex Espiritu

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LOCAL FURNITURE COMPANY MAKES DONATION TO FPCP

Portland manufacturer, TLS by Design Custom Furniture, recently made a large and extremely generous donation of 13 brand new high quality tables of various sizes and designs to our church. This donation was part of a larger gift to Portland's non-profit organizations that chose to participate. Maria Snow from the Portland Mayor's Office coordinated the ordering of tables and assisted us during the loading process. Jeff Day, Director of TLS, met us at the factory, where we were able to thank him and the company for sharing this donation with our church. Maria & Jeff are pictured below right.

In true Presbyterian fashion, our members rallied together to load the tables from the factory, transport them, and then unload them back at the church. Thanks to Dennis & Debbie Ford, John, Emily, J.B. & Jay Goodrich; Mary McCord, Pam Rogers, and Gary & Claire Smith. This was a heavy job that was made a bit lighter by everyone who assisted.

The donation included accent tables, a dining table, a sideboard for use in the Fellowship Hall, and console tables all of which have already been put to use throughout the church building. *Photos by Claire Smith. More photos on Page 3.*





MOTHER'S/FATHER'S DAY AT FPCP

Mother's Day and Father's Day were celebrated with gifts given by the Christian Education Committee for every lady and gentleman in attendance. The ladies each received a flowering plant wrapped in a handmade dishcloth, and the gentlemen received popcorn.



Mother's Day photos by
Claire Smith & Dennis Ford.
Father's Day photo by
Barbara Cortner.



July

- 01 Bev Arnold
- Larry Hiatt
- 03 David Loyd
- 04 Dennis Ford
- 06 Suzie Arnold
- 10 Linda Rodden
- 12 Tom McCord
- 13 Sam Benirschke
- 19 Ron Bisel
- 20 Paul Byrum
- 23 Becca James
- 27 Carol Knight
- 29 Meg Mauger
- 31 Violet Trinidad

August

- 09 Kathy Ayers
- 10 Sarona Goodrich
- 15 Brooklynn Byrum
- 23 Phil Frantz
- Kadin Ross
- 24 Sandra Bailey
- 25 Seth Rodden
- 27 Donna Haggenjos
- 30 Lucas Rodden



The Church Office
will be closed
Monday, July 5 &
Tuesday, July 6

IN MEMORIAM

Condolences to the family and friends of Naomi Pryor. Naomi passed away May 12. Before passing, Naomi held the longest continuing membership (90 years) of FPCP. She joined the church in 1931.



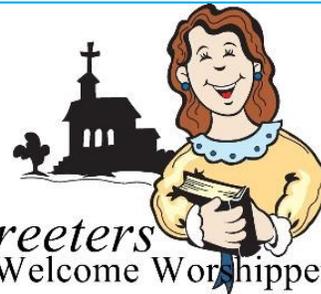
Condolences are also extended to the family of long-time FPCP friend, William (Bill) Knight, Jr. who passed away on June 8.

Thank you



Dear Church Family... Thank you for your prayers, cards, texts, emails, Facebook comments, and visits during the re-

cent passing of my dear sister, Jean Maxwell. It is comforting to know that my family is cared about by so many during this difficult time. Jean's love and dedication for her church and choir were of monumental importance to her. Her beautiful alto voice will be missed by our family and her church family, but we rejoice knowing that she has joined the heavenly choir. In Christ's love, *Claire and Gary Smith*



Greeters
Welcome Worshippers

Greeters are needed for August-December. Please see Linda Frantz or call the church office if you would like to volunteer. Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to serve as Greeters so far this year, and thanks in advance to those that will volunteer.



Pastor Rex's daughter, LydiaGrace Quine-Espiritu Gray was recently called to ministry as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Indiana. Please pray for her as she begins this new ministry.



**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

402 North Ship Street
Portland IN 47371

Phone: 260.726.8462

<mailto:office@firstpcportland.org>

<http://www.firstpcportland.org>

Our Vision Statement

“To provide a ministry which will lead people to strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ and reach out with God’s love.”



CALENDAR



July

- 04 Independence Day
Communion
- 05-06 Church Office Closed**
- 06 3:00pm Worship & Music Committee Mtg.
- 11 Pastor Rex @ Winchester
- 25 Pastor Rex @ Winchester

August

- 01 Communion
- 07 Presbytery Meeting
- 08 Pastor Rex @ Winchester
- 10 6:30pm Session Meeting**
- 16 9:00am Newsletter Deadline
- 22 Pastor Rex @ Winchester
- 29 Pastor Rex @ Winchester
- 30 Bread of Life Community Dinner

BREAD OF LIFE

The next Bread of Life Community Dinner First Presbyterian Church will host is on Monday, August 30.

If you want to help serve or if you would like to provide some of the food, please contact Julia Schwomeyer at 726.4761 or call the church office at 726.8462.



**Church Office hours:
Monday-Thursday 9:00am-3:00pm
Closed on Friday**

**Sunday Morning Worship 9:30am
in person & via Facebook
www.facebook.com/FirstPCPortland/**