



Presbytery Of Grand Canyon

E-FOCUS

Weekly Missive | October 16, 2020

What is Truth?

Greetings!

In the hidden corridors of power, where men inflict their hubris upon others, Jesus looked Pilate in the eye and said, "For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate's infamous reply was, "What is truth?" (John 18:37-38)

We have a truth problem in our churches that mirrors the truth problem in our society: fake news vs. real news; echo chambers resounding with prejudice; churches and families teetering on the edge of schism. What is truth?

Our problem will only intensify between now and November 3rd. You know it. I know it. We all dread it. And it is inevitable. But what is not inevitable is our participation in the maelstrom of misdirection, argumentation, name-calling, and schism-facilitating discourse all over social media. What is truth? I have been invited to preach at a "purple" congregation, (more "red" than "blue" but filled with folks across the social and political spectrum), on November 8. The assigned passage is Cornelius' vision and Peter's conversion to embrace Gentile inclusion (Acts 10). Arguably the text is all about race, all about inclusion, all about over-turning centuries' old social mores. I could write a sermon on any of these three topics or all of them. Heck, I wouldn't have to write anything at all; the sermon would write itself. What is truth?

If I wanted to participate in schism, I would write one of these sermons. Half the congregation would applaud me. Half would...not. If I wanted to write such a sermon, I would be within my rights, for as Paul says, "All things are lawful." But do you remember how Paul concludes his sentence? "...Not all things are beneficial." (1 Corinthians 6:12, 10:13) What is truth?

It troubles me when I see pastors craft sermons that argue with the proverbial "straw person." I see it from left and right, right and left. I have done it myself. For the record, I have never lost an argument with a straw person I created!

We argue with straw people whenever we try to take a biblical passage and make a 1-to-1 comparison between then and now, which is impossible. We do it whenever we refuse to dig deep into the cultural complexities and social nuances of the biblical world. We do it whenever we neglect to consider two-thousand years of Christian theology and ethics, emerging scientific understandings, and the cultural consequences of colonial history, industrial evolution, regulatory impacts, and legal pronouncements all of which have shaped and formed today's society. Most of all, we do it when we forget the reality that, for the Christian faith, truth is found in a person. What is truth?

Jesus is truth.

So here is what I plan to do and what I have found helpful to lead communities beyond the back-and-forth, zero-sum-game, winners-and-losers discourse in which we too often participate. I am going to ask



myself and the congregation three questions: what, who, and where?

(1) What does the Spirit draw to your attention? That is, what do you notice and wonder about in the biblical text?

(2) Who do you need to listen to regarding their experience? That is, who has a perspective you need to hear, perhaps because it is foreign to your own experience?

(3) Where do you see God showing up? That is, where is the Spirit blowing through the community to bring newness of life, to cause our daughters to prophesy, our young men to see visions, and our old men to dream dreams? (Acts 2:17)

I believe that in asking these three questions—what, who, and where—we will be led beyond mere argumentation to explore and discover God’s calling to us. I believe these questions create an open and listening stance through which we can hear the Gospel today and see the truth—see Jesus. The only question, once that happens, is: Will we follow him?

Grace and peace,
Brad Munroe

[Click here to read this missive and others](#)



The family of Rev. Frank White, who passed away this week. Service to be held online Saturday.

Presbytery of Grand Canyon in its discernment process



in a member of the Fort Defiance Presbyterian Church on the Navajo Nation. We're so appreciative of all the food & supplies that have been delivered to us. There're a few who are homebound & it's so uplifting for them to receive their boxes, water & yes, even the dog food. I share food & supplies with neighbors across the road whose Window Rock cafe has been closed since March. So happy to receive the donations!

Thank you!
Dona Etsitty

REGISTER FOR PRESBYTERIAN BORDER MINISTRIES EVENT



Registration for the 2020 Presbyterian Border Region Outreach (PBRO) event, "**Gospel Hospitality & the Kingdom of God,**" is now open!

This **online event** will be hosted by the ministry site *Pasos de Fe y Esperanza* in Ciudad Juárez, and presented through Zoom. **The conference begins on Friday, November 6 and will conclude with morning worship on Sunday, November 8.**

Registration is \$20 per person or \$40 for a household of 2 or more. Each individual or household will receive a Zoom link in order to participate.

The registration fee includes: pre-conference workshops, 3 worship services, Saturday

lunchtime workshops, a special concert on Saturday evening and interpretation services during regular conference sessions.
[Click here to register](#)

[Click here for flyer](#)

We're **STILL** looking for volunteers to help load another truck bound for the Navajo Nation!

From October 16th-23rd

TODAY, October 16th- 11am 16 strong volunteers to help unload Bashas' trucks. Be prepared to stay for 3 hours or more!

Saturday the 17th- two shifts, 9 am-12 noon and 1 pm-4 pm 16 volunteers per shift
Monday - Thursday(19th- 22nd) two shifts per day 9 am - 12 noon and 1 pm- 4 pm., except **Tuesday 20th-** three shifts- 9 am - 12 noon, 1 pm- 4 pm and 5 pm-8 pm.

Friday 23rd 9 am-12 noon and 12 noon - 4 pm or until loading is completed. We need 16 **strong** volunteers to help load the two St. Mary's Food Bank semis who are transporting to Navajo Nation.

We need 16 volunteers per shift.

Venue: **Valley Presbyterian Church**
6947 E. McDonald Dr, Paradise Valley

RSVP to Sharon Yates for scheduling at Synod of the SW-sharon@synodsw.org - 520-791-9600



OCTOBER

27- [Strengthening Relationships between Law Enforcement and Faith Communities](#)

29- [Town Hall Meeting via Zoom](#)- 1 p.m.

NOVEMBER

7- [Town Hall Meeting via Zoom](#)- 9 a.m.

14- [Presbytery meeting via Zoom](#)

[Presbytery calendar](#)

[JOBS](#)

[MARKETPLACE](#)



[This Week's Presbyterian News](#)

[Presbyterian Women of GC](#)- (Scroll to PW tab)

[Arizona Faith Network Events](#)

[Presbyterian Older Adult Network](#)

[Latest from the Board of Pensions](#)

[Presbyterians Today](#)

[Synod PW- Loaves and Fishes](#)

[ACTIVE SHOOTER PLAN FOR CHURCHES](#)



SHAPING FAITH IN CRISIS PEACE BY PIECE

OCTOBER 27-28, 2020

PRESBYTERIAN OLDER ADULT NETWORK

First National Zoom Conference

Shaping Faith in Crisis: Peace by Piece

October 27-28, 2020

The current pandemic has made pastoral care an even greater challenge with the need for SIP (Shelter In Place) and social distancing. This event will bring together leaders and experts on aging, spirituality, and pastoral care, as well as leaders from communities of faith, seminaries, academia, and community organizations.

[Click here for information](#)



Training for Re-Opening

We are pleased to announce in partnership with the Insurance Board the release of Insurance Board's COVID-19 Video Training, "Re-opening during COVID-19: Considerations for Church Leadership and Clergy" to help ministries with their decision making process regarding re-opening during COVID-19.

[MORE](#)



Update from First Light Fellowship

PGC's New Church development First Light Fellowship is approaching the 3rd anniversary of worshipping in Anthem-our first worship service was the first Sunday of Advent in 2017.

[MORE](#)



2020 Stewardship Scholar Essay Contest

The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) is excited to announce our Fall 2020 Stewardship Scholarship Essay Contest. Students are invited to write a 750-1250 word essay on the topics of Land Stewardship or Trust in the More-Than-Human world for a chance to win a cash scholarship toward your education. There will be one grand prize scholarship of \$1000 and two semi-finalist scholarships of \$500 awarded. Complete essays or excerpts may be printed in SUWA's Redrock Newsletter. [Click here for more information](#)

Immigration News

The Stated Clerk just released a statement urging Presbyterians to call members of Congress -

<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2020/10/13/stated-clerk-denounces-immigration-officials-plan/>

More news:

<https://mailchi.mp/pcusa.org/cameronian-asylum-seekers-need-our-voices-and-support>

We have been accompanying folk from Cameroon, GHANA, Togo, Somalia, Eritrea , Cuba, Valenzuela, Peru, Colombia, Honduras, Guatemala , Mexico, Ecuador, Russia to name a few. Our Detention Ministry has just ordered Bibles in Arabic, Russian, Swahili at the request of the Chaplain at one of the detention centers. We think not that the private detention center realizes we are encouraging liberation theology with this gift.

[Click here for a word from Rev. James Ninrew.](#)

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

PARENTAL CONCERNS ABOUT YOUTH AND DATING

Dating may have slowed due to the Coronavirus, but parents should always be vigilant about dating pitfalls to avoid. Does your son's or daughter's dating partner show possessiveness, jealousy or a short temper toward her or him? Red flags such as these escalate to more dangerous behavior. One in four, and sometimes one in three dating relationships in youth between the ages of 12 to 24 contain verbal or physical abuse. Our youth aren't talking with their parents, and parents aren't aware that their youth may be victims or perpetrators of abuse.

[Click here for resources](#)



Want to help our Navajo Sisters and Brothers?

The Presbytery of Grand Canyon has started a Navajo Nation Relief Fund. You will find a link on the Presbytery website, where you and your church family can make donations. You will be asked to create a profile for future giving. This site is safe and maintained through the Presbyterian Foundation. Tell your friends!

Thanks for your continued love and care!

[Click here to Give](#)



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