Some Questions for Our Post-Covid Future

Dear Friends,

I realize we are not completely out of the pandemic. The Delta variant is a real concern, and it would sure be better if more people (especially in Arkansas) were fully vaccinated. But I am hopeful that the end is in sight.

Having said that, I think there are some important questions I hope we at Second Presbyterian Church will seriously consider before we rush too quickly back to “normal,” whatever that means. My assumption behind these questions is that COVID has changed the church forever, and the question now is “How do we imagine ministry in a changed landscape?”

A few months ago, a friend asked his adult daughter, an introvert, how she was doing with her COVID isolation. She said, “Dad, I've been training for this all my life. I love it.”

(You know what an introvert is. An introvert is a person who expends energy when with people, and then gathers energy when alone. An extrovert is a person who gathers energy when with others, but expends energy when alone.)

We Presbyterians tend to be wordy, extroverted people. Our worship services are a barrage of words, and we gather in big social groups to make decisions and to have fun. COVID has kept us apart. It turns out some Presbyterians have really enjoyed the distance. Some have relished attending worship online, and studying the Bible via Zoom, and going to ministry meetings from their couch.

What adaptations have we made during COVID that may be worth keeping? What have we learned about the needs of introverts that might inform our ongoing ministries?

Another thought: We are accustomed to church membership and participation as being in-person, face to face, in a shared physical space. But during COVID we have provided opportunities for people to participate via the internet wherever they may be. Is there room to plan for and include the participation of people in other places in meaningful, ongoing ways? I’m thinking of multi-city Bible studies, virtual gatherings of our college students and recent college graduates to connect them to one another and to the faith, weeknight church school for young parents so they could learn together with a glass of wine in hand after the kids are put to bed. I actually think the definition of church membership is about to explode, because it no longer needs to be tied only to geography.

Something else: Our congregation has experienced many deaths these last months, and grieving families have been left without the traditional rituals of funerals and memorial services. What have we learned about partnering with grieving families that might be of use in future rituals? How do we accompany people through grief delayed, grief prolonged?

You have probably read about the “nones” – people with no religious affiliation. Many of them, perhaps most, are actually disaffected baptized Christians. Mostly they’re young, and they’re disaffected for many reasons. Among those reasons is that they have not heard the church speak persuasively on the matters of the day, on race, on the environment, on immigration. How can we reach more baptized skeptics? How can we speak and act on the issues of the day in such a way that it will entice people more interested in following Jesus than belonging to a church?

I don’t have the answers to all these questions, but I do believe the questions are important. How we respond to them will go a long way toward shaping the coming chapter in our congregational life.

Christ’s peace,

Steve
NEW HVAC UNIT INSTALLED

On June 11, a new 30 ton York HVAC unit was installed on the roof of the Education Building. This unit replaces a 33 year old unit and services all of the Adult Education classrooms except Room 68 and all of Bible Village except the Drama Room. This replacement was paid out of the contingency fund in the 2021 Property Ministry budget.

Vacation Bible School is Coming Soon!

All 1st-5th graders are invited to this year’s VBS which takes place August 1st-5th from 5:30-8:00 p.m. Youth and adults are welcome as volunteers. For more information or to register, contact Grant Wright at grantwright@secondpreslr.org.

BLESSING BAGS

The Second Presbyterian Youth group came together on June 16 to pack and pray over these bags to better serve our community. Blessing Bags are containers of basic toiletries that can be handed to people in need of such items. Our 50 bags contained items such as deodorant, toothpaste, a nail file, a toothbrush, sunscreen, and a bar of soap.

VBS Minis

Pentecost fire, wind, and spirit engaged the participants of our VBS Minis week, June 7-11. Preschool aged children and their adults discovered the gift of the Holy Spirit through drama, music, art, movement, snacks, play, and much more. This program was a combined effort of our Children’s Ministry and Music Ministry, led by Mr. Grant and Miss Mary. Members of both Second Presbyterian and the Chinese Christian Church, as well as several visiting families from the Little Rock community, participated.

Bell Boot Camp

Good news! There’s still room in this music and art camp. While the focus will be on ringing bells, there’s so much more happening, too. Elementary, Middle School, and Senior High students are invited to participate. Contact Mary Ibis for more information, maryibis@secondpreslr.org.
OUR ENDOWMENT FUND AT WORK

$30,000 in Scholarships Awarded!

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to award $29,000 in scholarships to eleven highly qualified students from the May and Deal scholarship funds within our Church’s Endowment Fund. These students will be attending Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, Hendrix College in Conway, Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont, Missouri University of Science & Technology in Rolla, Missouri, Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, and University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississippi. The committee also awarded funds to the general scholarship programs at Lyon College, University of the Ozarks, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary and Union Presbyterian Seminary.

Our church is blessed to be able to award financial assistance for higher education through our endowment fund. These scholarships were made possible by the planned gifts from Ruth May Wassell Gibb in 1961 and Lamar Deal in 1993. The committee awarded a total of $30,000 for the 2021-2022 school year to assist students with higher education.

Join the Plastic Free Team!

God’s call to care for creation can sometimes seem overwhelming, but together we can rise to the challenge! The new Environmental Stewardship Ministry invites you to join in the PLASTIC FREE ECOCHALLENGE, a global challenge for the month of July to reduce and refuse single-use plastics. The Ecochallenge runs from July 1-31 (you can join anytime during the month), and is a fun and easy way to take action and make a difference! Our ministry invites you to create intention and take action on creating plastic-free habits with us. Register online at ecochallenge.org to join the Second Pres Environmental Stewardship team and see how 31 days of action add up to a lifetime of positive change for you, our community, and the planet. This is our first official action as a ministry, and we are excited to have you join us. If you have any questions about the challenge or other sustainability issues, please contact Moderator Carol Young cyoung8151@sbcglobal.net or Staff Resource ann.b.owen@icloud.com.

Many Thanks!

As a part of returning to in-person worship, our 9:00 service has moved to the Great Hall to allow for social distancing. Many thanks to our faithful volunteers who helped transform this multi-purpose area into a worship space, especially Bruce Rentz, Cindy Feltus, Jo Paulus, Carol Young, Rob Owens, and Bob and Diane Skinner.

Save The Dates

All ages are invited to meet up for the Arkansas Travelers baseball game and picnic on August 28. We’ll have discount tickets on sale soon.

Also, mark your calendar for the annual All-Church Picnic at Ferncliff on September 26 immediately following Sunday worship.
Livestream Technicians Needed

Do you have an aptitude for computers? Then do we have an opportunity for you! As part of the Second Vision Capital Campaign, we started putting together the equipment to livestream our Sunday morning service. The pandemic accelerated our timeline a bit as we pivoted to virtual worship. Now is the time to pivot back to our original goal of livestreaming the Sunday morning 11:00 a.m. worship service instead of the current pre-record/produce model we use. To make the stream happen, we are in need of a handful of folks willing to take on a Sunday morning every month (or so) to operate the buttons for the livestream. For more information or to volunteer, contact Sam Byrd.

Soles for Souls

We are in need of men’s shoes for Stewpot! Athletic styles are preferred, but all will be accepted. Please drop off at the church for the Stewpot closet. Please contact Ellen Russell at russellellen3211@gmail.com for any questions.

Welcome Kristin!

Interim Youth Director

Kristin Orsi was born in Little Rock, Arkansas and grew up in Second Presbyterian. Kristin was active in the youth group in high school and served as a youth advisor for four years. Kristin was also the youth intern for the summer of 2020. She graduated from Boston University with a degree in Elementary Education in May 2020. She will be attending the University College of London in the fall to get her master’s in Social Justice and Education.

Cheeses With Jesus

July 14, 7:00 p.m. at Club 1836 (1406 Cantrell Road, Little Rock)

July 28, 7:00 p.m. At Villas at Northwood Creek (8910 Northwood Creek Drive, North Little Rock)

Contact Catherine Allsbury for more details. catherineallsbury@secondpreslr.org

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group

Are you caring for a loved one with dementia—perhaps a parent or a spouse? You are invited to our twice monthly Caregiver Support Group, designed for family members caring for a loved one with dementia. Support group meetings were “on a break” in June. We will gather again in July. For more information, contact Jo Ann McQuade, Janet Nelson or Alisa Secrest.

Give Online to Support the Ministries of Second Presbyterian Church

You now have the opportunity to support the ministries of Second Presbyterian Church through online giving. Visit secondpreslr.org/giving to contribute to the Annual Budget, the Second Vision Capital Campaign, make a Memorial Gift or Birthday Fund contribution.

Missed a Sermon?

Did you miss one of the sermons? If so, you can listen to recent sermons on the church website at secondpreslr.org. Click on “Worship and Music,” then click on “Listen to Recent Sermons.” To receive a copy of a sermon either by e-mail or regular mail, contact Karin Howze@secondpreslr.org or (501) 227-0000.
Are You Experiencing Pandemic Fatigue?
Are you feeling exhausted from all the disruptions to life brought on by the pandemic? Are you or someone you know struggling with challenges like . . .
• Isolation and loneliness;
• Anxiety over health;
• Grief due to many different kinds of losses;
• Tension from juggling work, childcare, and schooling;
• Financial strain or job loss;
• Uncertainty about the future; or
• Other unexpected life challenges?
If so, you don’t have to face it alone. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to listen, care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support.
A Stephen Minister will meet with you privately—by phone, by video chat, or, if safely possible, in person—to offer care and support. It’s free and completely confidential. For more information, please contact Alisa Secrest, alisasecrest@secondpreslr.org.
Stephen Ministry is one to one, lay, Christian caregiving provided to individuals who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. If you or someone you know is hurting, please contact us for more information.

Interfaith Friendship Camp Update
Interfaith Friendship Camp is doing something new this year! Rather than a five-day virtual or in-person camp there will be two opportunities for families to join together for fun, fellowship, and interfaith bonding. The next camp is scheduled for July 11. All are invited regardless of your prior participation in interfaith children’s activities. Mary Ibis and Jeannie Ford invite you to join us for this exciting opportunity. Please contact Mary or Jeannie if you have questions.

Moms Night Out
Moms! Join us for an evening out at Crush Wine Bar at 318 N Main St, North Little Rock, on Wednesday, July 14 at 7:00pm. Please contact Dania Edwards at daniaedwards@secondpreslr.org if you plan to attend and we’ll save you a seat!

Those Serving Our Country
Matt Coffey—stationed in Washington, DC
Andrew Delo, Jeanne Lloyd’s grandson – stationed in Charleston, SC
Taylor Douglas, son of Susan & Kevin Douglas – San Diego, CA
Jackson Hudkins, son of Jay Hudkins and Becky Latch – Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO
Greer Johnson, daughter of Cory and Stephanie Johnson, granddaughter of Kelly & Judy Johnson – Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO
Jonathan Johnson, grandson of Helen Scott, nephew of Clarke & Cindy Scott Huisman – stationed at Fallon, NV
Daniel Jones, Marjorie Watkins’ nephew, Sarah Ceja’s cousin – stationed in Offutt AFB, NE
Jonathan Miller, son of Patrice & Stan Miller – pilot for the USS Carl Vinson
Kyle Rought, Mary Ibis’ cousin – stationed in Fort Hood, TX
Jesse Smith, nephew of Diane Karlson – stationed in California
John Matthew Solomon, son of Mary Margaret & Alan Solomon – stationed at Fort Meade, MD
Kevin Truslow, stationed in Sumter, South Carolina

Summer Sunday School
As in pre-pandemic years, Children, Youth, and most of our Adult Sunday School classes will recess during the summer months and will resume with our Fall Kick-Off on September 12. Two classes will continue to meet on Zoom:
The Bible Study Class will meet each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. For more information or to receive the link for participation in this class contact Chris Boggs (chrisboggsctrl@yahoo.com) or Jeannie Ford (jeannieford@secondpreslr.org).
Spiritual Nourishment will continue to meet and discuss The Care of the Soul, by Thomas Moore. For information about how to join this class contact Nancy Hicks (nvhicks@gmail.com) or Janet Carson (plannitjanet@gmail.com).
What do you get when…..

A Presbyterian, a Baptist, an Episcopalian and a Methodist pastor walk into the Great Hall?

A great Adult Summer Bible Study Series!

Sponsored by the Adult Education Ministry, this special opportunity for Bible Study will take place in conjunction with our children’s evening VBS program. The meetings will be August 2-5, 6:00-7:00 p.m. Adults are invited to gather in the Great Hall for Bible Study with four pastors from around our community. Each pastor has been asked to present on their “favorite” Bible story, character, or passage of Scripture. Presenters will include:

Steve Hancock, Second Presbyterian Church
Randy Hyde, Retired Baptist Minister
Elizabeth Henry-McKeever, Saint Michael’s Episcopal Church
Maxine Allen, Saint Paul United Methodist Church, Maumelle

Each presentation will be a stand alone topic, so you are invited to attend one, two, three, or all four evenings as your schedule allows. Watch for more information about topics, schedule, and registration.

Spreading God’s Love

At the Families with Young Children Ministry's Family retreat this year we painted sun catchers for the residents at Presbyterian Village. They loved them so much!

They sang "This Little Light of Mine" as they were passed out. They loved seeing the pictures of the families who made them and it definitely brightened their day!

Moms Night Out

Moms! Join us for an evening out at Crush Wine Bar at 318 N Main St, North Little Rock, on Wednesday, July 14 at 7:00pm. Please contact Dania Edwards at daniaedwards@seondpreslr.org if you plan to attend and we’ll save you a seat!

New Lunch Bunch (es) Forming

Belonging and Fellowship are teaming up to launch a new program: groups formed around sharing lunch together.

Meal sharing is an act of hospitality and friendship in cultures around the world, not to mention a beloved Southern tradition. We are looking to organize groups of 5 to 8 adults who would like to meet up for lunch, every week or maybe every month.

Why new groups? For new kids on the block who don’t have an ‘in crowd’ yet; for newly single people who are finding their way in a ‘non-couple’ world; for quiet people who don’t like mass meetings; for friendly people who are always open to having more friends.

You can sign up online at secondpreslr.org or contact Alisa Secrest (alisasecrest@seondpreslr.org) with questions.
Welcome New Members!

**Janie Rash** joined by Reaffirmation of Faith. She is also one of our church’s sextons. Janie has many ties to this church. Her father was Rev. Park Moore. She is the daughter to Betty Jean Moore and sister to Aileen Moore. She has one daughter, member Lucy Vitela and a son Michael Vitela. Janie loves to fish and spend time with her family on the weekends.

**Becky Talmadge** joined by Transfer of Letter from First Presbyterian Church in Fredricksburg, VA. She is a life long Presbyterian. She has been very active in the Young Adult group for the past year. Becky is a software programmer for Dillard’s and enjoys spending time with her dog, Dan.

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### SAVE THE DATE

**AUGUST 2, 9:30 a.m.**

*Dusk, Night, Dawn: On Revival and Courage*

By Anne Lamott

All are invited to join the 1st and 3rd Monday Morning Bible Study group for a one-time discussion of Anne Lamott’s latest book.

In *Dusk, Night, Dawn* Lamott asks “Where do we start to get our world and joy and hope and our faith in life itself back….with our sore feet, hearing loss, stiff, poor digestion, stunned minds, and broken hearts”? We will reflect on how in her thoughtful, comic, warm and wise way Anne Lamott shows us ways we can adopt to move through life’s dark places and toward the light of hope that still burns for all of us.

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### Summer Book Discussion Series

The Adult Education Ministry is once again offering a series of opportunities for folks who love to read (and talk about what they read) to “gather” for literary discussions over the summer. Members of the ministry have made book selections and look forward to leading these Sunday afternoon discussions. The meetings will be held in person, in Second Hall.

**July 11 at 3:00 p.m.**

Leader: Chuck Chappell

*The Color Purple*, by Alice Walker

Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple* (1982), winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, has been appropriately celebrated as a compelling presentation of the growth to intellectual and emotional awareness experienced by the book’s central character, a complex African-American woman named Celie. Integral to the remarkable transformation in Celie’s life is the vital role played by religion as it appears in several forms of expression and practice.

**August 15 at 3:00 p.m.**

Leader: Vernon Markham

*Godric*, by Frederick Buechner

Join us on a fantastical journey in the ancient world of Anglo-Saxon England as we experience the coming of age of the medieval Roman Catholic saint, Godric of Finchale. Set in the twelfth century *Godric* is a semi-fictionalized tale published in 1980 by American author and theologian Frederick Buechner, for which he was a finalist for the 1981 Pulitzer Prize. This novel reengages in several substantial themes such as sin, the search for identity, faith, and the supernatural….with an investigation of death and ageing at the forefront. Ho doubt you will find yourself somewhere in Godric’s observations and gain insight into Buechner’s own life journey.
Presbyterians in the Press

Marie Holder Supports Girl Scouts

Active church member, Marie (first from left) joins with other women to found Julliette’s Circle, named for Girl Scout founder, Julliette Gordon Low. This group of women in the local Girl Scout council area — Girl Scout Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas — are committed to the Girl Scouts. They understand the benefits and importance of being in the Girls Scouts for young girls and have made a financial commitment to the council. Marie, also a former Girl Scout, received her Juliette’s Circle membership as a Christmas gift from her husband, Ryan, and children, Alex and Kate. Where she grew up in Mississippi, Marie says, joining Girl Scouts was one of the few things available for girls to do. “I just loved it — the sense of responsibility and community service.” She explains this was in the early ’80s so there was a sense of empowerment for girls and women and that responsibility “stays with you for the rest of your life.” Arkansas Democrat Gazette June 13, 2021.

Hillcrest Life – Fisher Wolfe Artist in Residence

2nd Church youth and recent Central High School graduate, Fisher Wolfe, was profiled in Hillcrest Life for her art work and sense of community. Fisher enjoys being engaged in her community and takes every opportunity to show her support for the neighborhood. Fisher’s art includes realistic portraits of people or animals with acrylic, watercolor and colored pencils. Creating art has allowed her to express herself in ways that she normally can’t. “It helps me cope and focus on things when my anxiety and depression are in force and I feel overwhelmed.” Her favorite environment to do her art is in her bedroom, “It is my safe haven and I don’t have to worry about other people judging my work or choices I make in my pieces if I’m in my room.” Her goal in the art world is to simply create pieces that evoke emotion from the viewers. “I love seeing people’s reactions to my pieces, be it commissions or just my original ideas.” Hillcrest Life, June 2021.

Clyde Scott - Arkansas Razorbacks Best Seasons FOOTBALL/TRACK AND FIELD, 1948

Clyde “Smackover” Scott was named posthumously to the Arkansas Razorbacks Best Seasons list of athletes. He transferred to the University of Arkansas in 1946 after resigning his post at the U.S. Naval Academy in order to marry Leslie Hampton, now church member, Leslie Scott, whom he met as the reigning Miss Arkansas when he escorted her around Annapolis, Md., while at the Miss America pageant. Scott became a legend with the Razorbacks as an All-American in 1948 competing as a two-way star in football and self-taught sprinter on the track team. At the London Olympics in 1948, he earned the USA and the Razorbacks a silver medal in the 110-meters high hurdles in a photo finish. Scott, who passed away in 2018, at age 93, had his No.12 jersey retired by Athletic Director John Barnhill in 1950, the first Razorback to earn that distinction. Arkansas Democrat Gazette, June 27, 2021.
Sunday Online Worship Service
Available beginning at 8:30 a.m. at secondpreslr.org

Pastor
Rev. Steve Hancock
Associate Pastors
Rev. Alisa Secrest
Rev. Lindy Vogado
Rev. Jen Evans
Parish Associate
Dr. Robert Williamson
Church Educator
Jeannie Ford
Director of Families with Young Children Ministry
Dania Edwards
Interim Director of Children’s Ministry
Grant Wright
Interim Director of Youth Ministry
Kristin Orsi
Director of Music and Arts
Dr. Bevan Keating
Associate Director of Music
Mary Ibis
Organist
Adam Savacool
Business Administrator
Aileen Moore
Director of Planned Giving
Malina Kirchner
Newcomer Care
Catherine Allsburry
Facilities Manager
David Beach

Administrative Associates
Karin Howze
Tracy May
Sharon Howard
Carrie Johnson
Food Service Manager
Brenda Majors
Child Care Coordinator
Karin Howze
Sustainability Coordinator
Ann Owen
 Sextons
Guy Howze
Carrie Johnson

Bulletin Board


We celebrate with Annie Dunnagan and Christian Grimes who were married June 19. Parents of the bride are Steve and Kim Dunnagan.

We rejoice with John and Kati Mallory on the birth of a son, Tate William Mallory. Also welcoming Tate is big brother Jack. Grandparents are John and Brenda Mallory.

Our sympathy goes to Rick Bailey and Lori Cline on the death of Ric’s father, Bob Bailey; Carol Leggett on the death of her son-in-law, Zachary Thicksten; Laurie Stueart and Kelly Ball on the death of their mother, Linda Stueart; Mark Williamson on the death of his wife, Kathy Williamson; Joseph Yancey on the death of his grandmother, Barber Yancey; the family and friends of Jacqueline Ponder; the family and friends of Stuart Baer.

We would appreciate your help . . . in keeping the church office informed when there is a sickness in your family, when someone is in the hospital, or a death has occurred. Please also keep us updated on the sickness or concern so that the information we have on our Care and Concern Line is accurate. Members and friends can call the Care and Concern Line, (501) 227-6117, on weekdays to receive information about prayer concerns in our church family. We will honor all requests for confidentiality, but in order for us to offer pastoral care we need to be aware of your situation. We also want to know about the joys, accomplishments and achievements of members of the church. Please call Alisa Secrest or Sharon Howard in the church office with information, (501) 227-0000, or e-mail alisasecrest@secondpreslr.org or sharonhoward@secondpreslr.org. Thanks for your help!

Newsletter articles may be e-mailed to: newsletter@secondpreslr.org

Upcoming Deadlines:
Wednesday, July 28
Wednesday, August 25

Facebook.com/SecondPresbyterianChurch

Second Gifts
FOR THOSE WHO FOLLOW
Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock

Please prayerfully consider including our Church in your estate plans. Your gift will support our ministries for many years past your lifetime.
Our legal name is:
Second Presbyterian Church of Little Rock, Arkansas