



November 13, 2020

Presbytery News

Homestead Presbytery Strategy Team

Q. Hey, I went to the Day of discernment in 2019 and I wonder what ever happened to our ideas?

A. Glad you asked. The Strategy Team has been combing over what you said and to build upon this we will be contacting your church soon to review what was said and listen to new ideas so our team can help the Presbytery move forward.

Strategy Team Members

- Thomas Dummermuth – Eastridge Lincoln, Clergy
- John McPhail – Columbus Federated, Ruling Elder
- Steve Piper – Palmyra, Clergy
- Terri Sherman – First Lincoln, Ruling Elder
- Wendy Wait – Gresham, Ruling Elder
- Charity Potter – Wakefield & Thurston John Huss, Clergy
- Suzie Harder – Lincoln Southern Heights, Ruling Elder



IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO SIGN UP FOR THIS

"Reboot Your Worship"

The Gift of Revitalization: a 6-week interactive online worship learning experience with Dr. Marcia McFee and the Worship Design Studio- **Free to You!**

This course is also tailored to approach worship practices during the pandemic and will explore the basics of sensory-rich worship design while emphasizing safety protocols and getting creative for online expressions without burning out. AND Dr. McFee will be getting you ready for your best Advent season ever all along the way! All you need to do is register (at no charge) to receive the emails. You can invite unlimited members of your worship team (or potential worship team members) to receive these communications as well. We encourage you to take advantage of this free offer (usually \$99 per church) made possible through our area's registration.

Register ASAP!

(You will get access to all 6 webinar videos.)

<https://ny163.infusionsoft.com/app/form/homestead-presbytery>

Rev. Chris Peters Installation at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Lincoln.





**NWC&CV Committee's
"Hope for the Journey Ahead"**

Lectionary Devotion

Now until the end of the year, the NWC&CV Committee will be offering devotions each week that are based on the following week's lectionary passage of the writer's choice. We hope this will be beneficial for you and your churches in this time.

The recognizable saying of Jesus, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me," characterizes the gospel passage for Sunday, November 22, which is Matthew 25:31-46. In this passage, Jesus lays out some examples of those who live faithfully in Jesus' presence: feeding the hungry, giving fluids to the thirsty, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, caring for the sick, and visiting the imprisoned.

It is interesting that this is one of the last formal lessons Jesus gives before he is arrested. In a time of rising anxiety, his focus is on caring for others *and* teaching others to do the same. In fact, serving others is how we will experience Jesus in our midst.

In this time of unsteadiness and unclear futures, our "hope for the journey ahead" lies in following in Jesus' footsteps. In Jesus' time of growing anxiety and unsteadiness, his focus was on serving others and encouraging others to do the same. This is where our hope lies in this time as well: serving others and encouraging others to do the same. Although our tendency is to enter into "survival mode" and focus on our own needs (which many of us are experiencing right now), the truth is that our best chance of surviving and thriving is looking outside of ourselves to the needs of others. The reason for this is that in serving the needs of others, we focus on what we *can* do instead of what we *can't* do while putting ourselves in a place to recognize the gifts God has given us that can help us thrive moving forward. And, we experience Jesus in new and life-giving ways as we experience those we serve.

Even Jesus had a moment in Gethsemane where the anxiety got too much and he started focusing on his own survival ("Let this cup pass from me"), but then he shifted his vision to the needs of others and continued serving ("Your will be done"). And we can do the same. Following in Jesus' footsteps, we can find escape from our survival mentality and live into the hope of a thriving existence in serving the needs of those in our communities (what Vital Congregations calls "Outward Incarnational Focus"). In doing so, we live into the hope that Jesus offers through us and the hope Jesus has for us and our churches.

Here's to hope for our journey ahead,
Zac Wolfe
Pastor of FPC Beatrice
Moderator NWC&CV Committee

Spiritual Wellness Journey Workshop

Do you feel like your connection

with God is a mile wide and an inch deep? Have you struggled to discover meaningful ways to sustain your spiritual health? In this workshop, participants will gain a better understanding of spiritual wellness. They will assess their own spiritual wellness and identify their God-shaped connection



style. They will also create an action plan to position themselves to develop a closer relationship with God and others. Presented by Rev. Dr. Candace Adams, ACC (revadams@hotmail.com). Click [here](#) to download flyer.

WHEN: Friday, November 20, 2020 @10:00 am-2:30 pm (Central Time, with break for lunch)

WHERE: Virtual via Zoom (link will be sent in Welcome Email)

COST: \$75.00/participant

OPSF

Will scholarship a maximum of 12 participants for 1/2 of the registration costs (\$37.50). Please register and send your paid registration receipt to Joyce: opsf@opsf-omaha.org

REGISTER NOW!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Faith Partners

Prevention Committed - Recovery Friendly

Sarah was distraught when she called her Pastor about her adult son. Mike hadn't been home in several days. She knew that meant he was on a bender. When found, he was so sick he was immediately hospitalized. The Pastor connected him to a member of their Faith Partners Team in recovery who visited him in the hospital. Mike said, "I know I need to get back to A.A. but I'll need a ride." Another Team member set up an evaluation. Still another helped Sarah engage with Alanon. This is one way a Faith Partners team works.

Faith Partners supports churches in taking their proper place in helping people with recovery from alcohol, drugs and other life controlling problems. It also helps them provide science-based prevention and education on these problems. "We want every church to be prevention committed and recovery friendly," says Sandy Morrissey, Region 5 Prevention Director, who manages the project.

According to Rev. Otto Schultz, LADC, Faith Partners Project Developer, "Many churches have members with lived experience recovering from behavioral health issues both as people with dependence and as family members. They want their church to serve people affected by these problems and some are ready to act." "Faith Partners provides the

training and continuing support that keeps teams growing,” says Rev. Thomas Dummermuth, member of the Eastridge Presbyterian Team.

A dozen churches from six denominations have teams in Southeast Nebraska. Faith Partners trains and supports them in prevention, education and recovery support for families hurt by these issues. They are not counselors but friends in Christ.

Faith Partners is planning a six-hour Team Training in January. To learn more about how to help the Sarah’s and Mike’s your church serves, contact Otto Schultz, 402-770-1974 or starfish@inebraska.com.

Sarah and Mike? The Team had succeeded in what it was called to do, providing church support for people needing recovery. But that was over a year ago. Recently, Mike received his 1-year recovery medallion.

Virtual Event with the author of *Disunity in Christ*



Saturday, November 14

10:00 am and 2:00 pm

Both sessions will take place on Zoom. Recordings of both sessions will be made available following the live event.

Synod of the Sun's Network for Dismantling Racism invites you to a virtual event with Dr. Christena Cleveland, author of *Disunity in Christ*.

You are invited to join us on **Saturday, November 14** for a time of conversation and learning with Dr. Christena Cleveland. Dr. Cleveland is an activist and public theologian, speaker and author, teacher and researcher. She holds a Ph.D. in social psychology from the University of California Santa Barbara as well as an honorary doctorate from the Virginia Theological Seminary. Dr. Cleveland has held faculty positions at several institutions of higher education and she is the founder and director of the recently-launched Center for Justice + Renewal.

Synod of the Sun will be hosting two 90-minute sessions with Dr. Cleveland on November 14, at 10:00 am Central Time and at 2:00 pm Central Time. Participants will be invited to engage with Dr. Cleveland about her book *Disunity in Christ*, with the opportunity to ask questions. We will also hear Dr. Cleveland's reflections on how the Church has responded (or not) to events like the Tulsa Race Massacre and what the Church's role is and should be in movements like Black Lives Matter.

Please register ahead of November 14

Session 1

Session 2

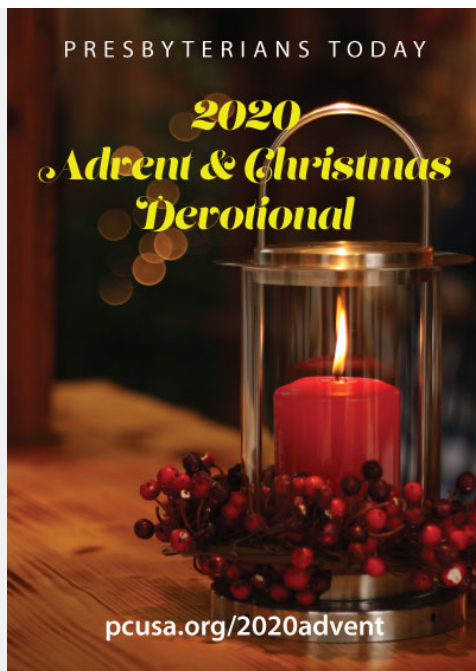
Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday is November 22, 2020 and the Gospel Lectionary Reading for that day is Matthew 25:31-46—the focus of the Matthew 25 Vision for the PC(USA). Diane Moffett, J.

Herbert Nelson, and the leadership of the Mission Agency are preparing a recorded *worship service based on the Matthew 25 Vision* for congregations to use however and whenever they like. It should be available for downloading on Thursday, November 18. Here's the link to the service: <http://pcusa.org/matthew25-worship>. Liturgical materials are drawn from the "Worship in a Matthew 25 Church" resource available on the Matthew 25 website. Diane is preaching and her sermon title is "Seeing Jesus."



MATTHEW 25

Actively engaged in the world



PRESBYTERIANS TODAY

2020
**Advent & Christmas
Devotional**

pcusa.org/2020advent

Presbyterians Today Advent Devotionals are being published in an exclusively online format this year. They are available free at: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today/advent2020/>

New interactive Advent study series using award winning documentary resources!



This four week Advent study explores the sacred stories of Advent and Christmas through the biblical narratives of Zechariah, Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary in dialogue with short excerpts from film: particularly, the documentaries by the Story Ministry division of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, produced alongside the affected communities. Using brief clips as conversation starters and interweaving them with the biblical narrative and Advent themes, a dialogue is created between the Bible's sacred stories, our own human experience, and these also-holy stories from the films. Each week also includes a brief filmed interview connecting the day's topic with the unfolding impact of COVID-19. The films share stories that are drawn from the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami that killed 230,000, gun violence, refugee resettlement, immigration detention and environmental racism.

[Download the Study Here!](#)

**GRANTS & EMERGENCY FUNDS
FROM
NEBRASKA PRESBYTERIAN
FOUNDATION**



Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation

SPRING GRANT CYCLE BEGINS IN DECEMBER

Everyone has been forced to be more creative in their ministries since COVID began, so what opportunities has this pandemic created for your congregation? Does your congregation want to increase their impact in your neighborhood or community but lack the funds to get your big idea started? Are you facing challenges with an online presence with your current technology? Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation could be the answer to help you fund your project or program. We are offering annual grants to PCUSA churches and related organizations in Nebraska for new or ongoing outreach activities which enhance or expand some aspect of your ministry. The online application process begins in December and grants will be awarded in April.

KESSLER EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUNDS AVAILABLE

The Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation offers financial assistance for PCUSA pastors, or a surviving spouse, who is experiencing an urgent financial crisis. Applicants must be an active or retired installed or commissioned pastor who

has, or is currently serving, a Nebraska congregation and currently residing in Nebraska.

For more information on our grants or funds, please visit our website at www.nebpresby.org or contact Audrey Richert at arichert@nebpresby.org, or 402-420-9877.

Opportunities to Be Helped and to Help with Challenges Due to the Pandemic

Opportunity #1 --- Pastor Zac Wolfe of Beatrice First Presbyterian Church has announced that their Session will be donating \$500 for use by churches in Homestead Presbytery that have special ministry needs related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. An application for such funds follows and is due (postmarked or emailed) by October 31, 2020. At Beatrice Session's request, the Homestead Presbytery Disaster Response Team will review applications and make decisions regarding distribution of funds. If interested, please complete the application entitled "Application for Funds to Help Cover Pandemic-Related Ministry Expenses."

Opportunity #2 --- Beatrice First Presbyterian Church Session is also presenting a challenge to other churches and individuals in Homestead Presbytery inviting any that are interested and able to donate funds for the same purpose. They will match dollar for dollar up to another \$1000 to help churches with special ministry needs related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This opportunity to give and have gifts matched will extend through December 31, 2020 or until the \$1,000 is matched. If interested, please complete the form entitled "Donation of Matching Funds to Cover Pandemic-related Ministry Expenses in Homestead Presbytery."

Per Business and Finance Committee of Homestead Presbytery:

That the Business and Finance Committee endorses the matching gift program sponsored by the Beatrice church for churches facing financial struggles in the time of the pandemic (a \$500 gift with matching donation from the Beatrice church up to an additional \$1000) and that the assistance fund be managed and dispersed by the Disaster Response Committee in accordance to guidelines and procedures developed by the Disaster Response Committee.

The funds should be sent to the Presbytery for accounting purposes, with immediate notification upon receipt of a donation being sent to the Pastor and Clerk of Session in addition to the chair of the Disaster Response Committee. Should, at the end of the pandemic, there be funds remaining, then the balance shall be designated for use by the Disaster Response Committee to respond to financial needs in the Presbytery due to disaster.

What an incredible blessing this is for both churches with needs and for churches and individuals who can step up to meet those needs. Thank you, Beatrice First Presbyterian Church, for your wonderful spirit of generosity!

[Download Application Here!](#)

Weekly Prayer Requests

Hickman

We at Hickman Presbyterian Church are working hard to continue to serve the needs of the congregation and the community. We are still worshipping via Zoom, but we are putting in place a safety plan and the ability to livestream our services for the time when the session deems it appropriate to hold in-person worship. We are doing take-out meals every other Wednesday, and most of our education programs have resumed virtually. We are reading through the Bible this year together, and we have a virtual mid-week gathering in which we are studying Richard Foster's book, *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*. We are currently making decisions about how to hold a safe and meaningful Christmas Eve service. Please pray for wisdom, energy, and love to navigate the strange territory in which we all find ourselves.

Homestead Presbytery

840 S. 17th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508

Monday-Thursday 9:00am-4:00pm

Friday 9:00am-12:30pm

Office: 402.474.0612

Interim EP: 803.556.3355

Stated Clerk: 402.217.3684

