



*November 19, 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>

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**Advent Devotion**  
**From The New Worshipping Community/Church Vitality**  
**Committee**  
**Written by**  
**Rev. Dr. John J. Duling, Committee Member**

**Psalm 80:1-7,17-19**

**Theme: Hope for the Journey Ahead**

We are on a journey as a Presbytery with our sister congregations in hope. That is a very fitting direction for us as we make the journey to behold a new birth – the birth of the Christ. I have chosen a psalm from the first Sunday of Advent which is a plea that God would restore us as a people of faith individually and as a body of Christ.

Psalm 80:1-7; 17-19 is a cry and plea to be restored. The psalmist recalls the days when God had blessed the people of Israel, but now seems absent. There is a troubling cry that God would intervene and restore the people. In fact, three times the plea is:

“Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved. (Psalm 80:3, 7, 19)

In that plea, there is a yearning that God would hear and bring comfort to the people of Israel. It is particularly noteworthy that each time that this repeated verse is stated, that it escalates in intensity. At first it is a mere statement asking for restoration. But, the second time and third time seems to heighten the emotion and power of the plea. One could hear the

raise and pitch of the voices as the plea is made stronger and more intense each time.

I would like to suggest that as one reads this psalm, do it out loud. In verse 3, read it in normal voice. In verse 7, raise the pitch and intensity to a moderate level with more emotion. Then, read verse 19 with great gusto! In fact, shout it out!

RESTORE US, O GOD; LET YOUR FACE SHINE, THAT WE MAY BE  
SAVED!!!!

Now, read the psalm again as a prayer, but this time emphasize 4 aspects of verses 3, 7, and 19.

- 1) Begin as a prayer asking God: "Restore us"
- 2) Call on the name "O God." Pause and let it sink into your spirits Who will restore.
- 3) Seek the face of God to shine – imagine the Shalina glory of God emanating around you
- 4) Declare the Amen of the prayer with: "That we may be saved!"

Interestingly, the psalmist makes a note of hope for which this prayer has been offered in verses 17 and 18:

- <sup>17</sup> But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,  
the one whom you made strong for yourself.  
<sup>18</sup> Then we will never turn back from you;  
give us life, and we will call on your name.

There is an implicit note of hope in these verses, such that one can shout and declare with great intensity and emotion:

RESTORE US, O GOD; LET YOUR FACE SHINE THAT WE MAY BE  
SAVED!

Imagine what that restoration may mean personally and as a congregation – a body of Christ crying and shouting in hope for restoration. As a people of faith, we are confident that God will bring light into dark lives as God restores. It is a hope of the Christ that is realized and offered to us in scripture: John 1:1-5, 14, and 8:12 (Jesus said, "I am the light of the world ..."). Let that light shine, encourage each person and congregation, and motivate us on this wondrous Advent journey with hope.

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**An invitation to offer support to the staff at**



Rev. Jeff Mildren, a chaplain at Bryan Health, is working on a community

project for the employees of their Health system. He is asking community faith leaders to record a one-minute word of encouragement and hope that will be shared on their intranet system within their facilities. If you are interested in contributing to this project contact Chaplain Mildren on his office number at 402-481-3065 or his email at [jeff.mildren@bryanhealth.org](mailto:jeff.mildren@bryanhealth.org)

Chaplain Mildren also said people could send cards for those working in their facilities, particularly those on the COVID units. If they send them to the Pastoral Care office the chaplains will share them. He suggested this might be a good project for a Sunday School class or other groups in the church.

Mail to: Pastoral Care Dept.  
Bryan Health  
1600 S. 48th St.  
Lincoln, NE 68506-1299

As a former chaplain in several health facilities, I would like to urge us to remember all our health care workers, particularly our chaplain whose ministry is often overlooked. I thought this would be a great way to share some hope and joy during the holidays.

Submitted by: Rev. Dr. Karen R. Moritz  
Member-at-Large serving First Christian Church  
Lincoln, NE



## On #GivingTuesday, we proclaim, "We are the Church, together!"

Join the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on #Giving Tuesday, December 1, for an all-day, virtual celebration of the collective power of Presbyterian generosity, as we profess by our actions—and with our gifts—that we can accomplish far more together than any one of us can do alone. On #GivingTuesday, we invite you to join with Presbyterians from near and far for prayer and worship, fun with some familiar faces, and an unparalleled opportunity for your generosity to make a lasting impact around the country and around the world.

[Learn more and Donate!](#)

# *Let us give thanks...*

*A service of gratitude for all faiths*

## *Community Interfaith Thanksgiving Service*

*Sunday, November 22, 2020, 3:00 p.m.*

*A Virtual Service*



*Due to the pandemic, this year's event will be online.*

*To watch go to:*

*Faith Coalition of Lancaster County  
Website: <https://www.lancasterfaith.org/>*

*Or Facebook page :  
<https://www.facebook.com/FaithCoalitionLC/>*

*(the video will be left up for 2 weeks)*

### **Thanksgiving Service Program**

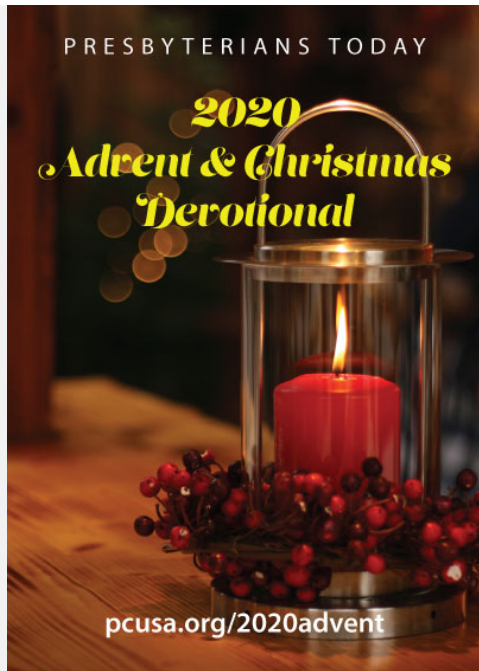
**Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday** is November 22, 2020 and the Gospel Lectionary Reading for that day is Matthew 25:31-46—the focus of the Matthew 25 Vision for the PC(USA). Diane Moffett, J.



**MATTHEW 25**

**Actively engaged in the world**

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."



**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](http://www.nebpresby.org) or contact Audrey Richert at [arichert@nebpresby.org](mailto: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

### *Humboldt*

Prayers are requested for the well being and prosperity of the Humboldt congregation. May they continue to grow as a caring and nurturing Christian community, as well as individuals, focusing on prayer, Bible study and worship.

### **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





