



This week author Silverio Gonzalez challenged me to think about who God really is and asked me to set aside some of my presuppositions. What's the difference between the true God of the Bible and an idol that we humans create? "An idol will always agree with you. An idol will always say and do the expected. An idol will ultimately bore you and will never inspire you to worship. The real God is different."

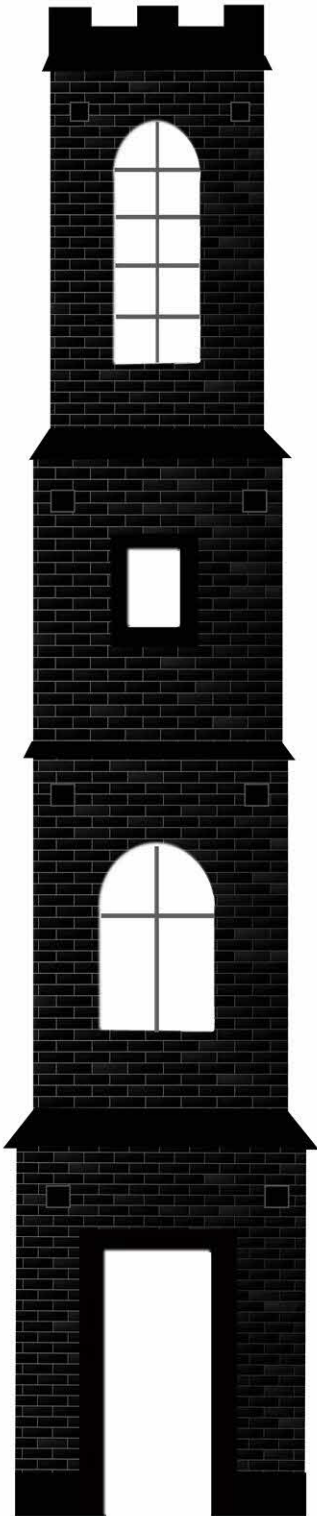
1. The real God challenges us. Jesus issues challenges. When we throw parties, Jesus instructs us to invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind (Luke 14:12-14). Jesus describes the life of his disciples as a life of self-denial (Matt. 16:24-25). Jesus calls us to love our enemies (Matt. 5:44). Jesus made it sound like it was impossible to inherit the kingdom of God and be rich in this life (Luke 18:25).

2. The real God surprises us. In the Bible, God does the unexpected—he shows mercy. "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). The judge became the judged. The righteous bore the punishment for unrighteousness. The holy identified with the unholy. In the Bible, we find Jesus doing the exact opposite of what everyone expects. When people expect kindness, he shows anger. When people expect justice, he shows mercy.

3. The real God causes us to worship. God reveals that he is greater than we ever thought. Coming to know God puts our existence into perspective: we are a speck of dust in a universe that the infinite, incomprehensible God created out of nothing. In Isaiah 6:1-6 we catch a glimpse of God. He sits high on a throne. The train of his robe fills the entire temple. Seraphim, six-winged angelic beings, encircle his throne. Two of their wings cover their faces, and two of their wings cover their feet. They fly around his throne singing praises: "holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" (Isa. 6:3).

May we be open to the challenges, the surprises, and the wonder of God.

Pastor Ray



Dear First Presbyterian Session, Membership & Pastor Ray,

It is with both excitement and sadness that I am putting together my last Open Door for you. I have accepted a position at the City of Miami as the Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Police and therefore must resign my role as your Office Administrator.

While I am so excited to begin facing the challenges that this new position will offer, I am sad to be leaving you wonderful folks! It has been my joy and honor to serve you for the last 4+ years. You have seen me through the death of my mother and onset of adulthood of my 3 children. Serving as your office administrator has been a truly uplifting experience for me. In my time here I have learned so much about myself and how to be of service to others.

Today I learned that our commonly used word "Goodbye" comes from the term "Godbwye" a contraction of the phrase "God be with ye". The contraction was first noted in the 1570's. As time went on, it is believed the phrase was influenced by terms like "good day" and "good evening", transitioning then from "god be with ye" to god-b'wye to good-b'wy and finally ending in today's blessing of goodbye.

And so, I leave you with this blessing "Goodbye, May God Be With You always! Love, Jera

MAY THE ROAD
RISE TO MEET
YOU
MAY THE WIND BE ALWAYS AT
YOUR BACK
MAY THE SUN SHINE WARM
UPON YOUR FACE
THE RAINS FALL UPON YOUR
SOFT FIELDS
AND, UNTIL
WE MEET AGAIN
MAY GOD HOLD YOU
IN THE PALM OF HIS HAND

WELCOME TO OUR NEW OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

We are pleased to announce that our new Office Administrator is Ross Tomlinson. Many of us already know Ross as a kind, patient presence, a committed member, and a great cook. But Ross also brings many gifts that will serve us well in the office: technological savvy, accounting, and creativity.

Welcome!





- October 3** Love Is Patient and Kind
- October 10** Love Puts Others First
- October 17** Love Keeps No Record of Wrong
- October 24** Love Is Filled with Joy and Truth
- October 31** Love Never Fails



Kum Ba Yah aka Kum Ba Zoom

We meet every Wednesday on ZOOM for fellowship, study and prayer. 7:00 PM. The link to the Zoom Meeting is sent in the Wednesday eMail each week.

Kum Ba Yah topics:

- October 6** Becoming a Discerning Community
- October 13** Wilderness #5
- October 20** Discerning Our Gifts
- October 27** The Gift You Have Received

Adult Sunday School

Sundays at 9:30am on Zoom and in Person!

- October 3** I Maccabees
- October 10** II Maccabees
- October 17** Care of Creation
- October 24** The Post-Pandemic Church
- October 31** Experiencing God through Art



We anticipate resuming the backpack program in mid-September having overcome numerous challenges that covid presented to us. God willing, we will continue to provide supplemental nutrition for Roosevelt first thru third graders for another school year. When backpack started five years ago, we were preparing 30 to 40 bags of food items and have seen that number grow to 60 to 70 bags this past year. Covid has been a double whammy for us with church attendance restricted while some parents of school children lost their jobs. The result has been declining income for the program while demand has nearly doubled. I am calling on you readers of The Open Door to help us keep this program going for the children of Roosevelt school. Thanks to our partners who have continued to provide support including the Quapaw tribe, Friends church, Community of Christ church, and Calico Quilters. Finally, I want to thank members of the FPC congregation who have donated their time and support. I look forward to working with you to continue the backpack tradition.

Thanks to the following folks who volunteered for work on Backpack : Janice Johnson, Melinda and John Thiesing, Sarah and John Lomax, Nancy Gee, Betty Lou Ankenman, Kathy Prince, Cindy Holt, Shawn Spencer, Cari Allen, Frank Denny, Pastor Ray, and Jera Rendel.



Pastor Ray sent a letter to the Quapaw Nation requesting a donation to our backpack program for Roosevelt Elementary, Miami. The Quapaw have helped us in the past.

On September 18, Dave Foster and Grace spoke in support of the request at the Quapaw committee meeting. We were pleased to learn the Quapaw will be donating \$1000, plus beef sticks to our backpack program.

Thanks to all, especially the Quapaw Nation.

The Mission Committee met on September 21, 2021. Those present discussed some different places and organizations that may benefit from our donations. This month the committee decided to donate from their Local Mission Funds: \$200.00 to Eastwood Manor "Resident Activity Fund" in honor of CB Roberts & \$200.00 to the Local Salvation Army to help immediate needs. From their Global Mission Funds: \$200.00 Goodland Academy.



They discussed the upcoming months and noted some places that they would like to help in the future. The Committee will continue to investigate ways our Mission funds can help others both locally and globally. If you have any ideas, we would love to hear from you! Please call a committee member or join in the next meeting!

Thank you everyone for your continued support, we do great things here at First Presbyterian, Miami!



4-State Teens 4 Equality

A new group is forming to provide a safe place for area teens to explore their uniqueness as created and loved by God. First Presbyterian is happy to offer space for this new group. The first vision for this group came from the story of a young gay man who has experienced bullying in an area school and rejection by his local church. We look forward to learning and growing together.



October

2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA	2
3 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Fellowship 7:00 pm AA	4 10-12 Food Pantry 7:00 Gamblers Anon.	5 10-12 Food Pantry	6 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA 7:00 KumBaZoom	7 10-12 Food Pantry 3:00 Backpack Pack. 7:00 Gamblers Anon.	8 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA	9
10 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Fellowship Deacon Mtg 7:00 pm	11 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA 3:00 Backpack Pack.	12 10-12 Food Pantry	13 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA 7:00 KumBaZoom	14 10-12 Food Pantry 7:00 Gamblers Anon.	15 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA	16
			MPS No School	MPS No School	MPS No School	
17 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Fellowship 7:00 pm AA	18 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA	19 10-12 Food Pantry 11:00 Mission Mtg 7:00 Session Mtg	20 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA 7:00 KumBaZoom	21 10-12 Food Pantry 3:00 Backpack Packing. 7:00 Gamblers Anon.	22 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA	23
24 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Fellowship 7:00 pm AA	25 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA	26 10-12 Food Pantry	27 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA 3:00 Backpack Packing. 7:00 KumBaZoom	28 10-12 Food Pantry 7:00 Gamblers Anon.	29 10-12 Food Pantry 12-1 AA	30
31 9:15 Breakfast 9:30 S School 10:30 Worship Fellowship 7:00 pm AA						

OCTOBER



Jeff Stevens ... 10/3
 Melissa Bekemeier ... 10/11
 Kay Condren ... 10/13
 DeMaris Celeste Rector ... 10/13
 Karissa Whalen ... 10/15
 Linda Elmburg ... 10/16

James Stevens ... 10/22
 Meredith MacQueeney ... 10/24
 Ray VandeGiessen ... 10/25
 Warren Wilbur ... 10/26
 Cy Elmburg ... 10/27
 Pat Carden ... 10/28
 Jim Hill ... 10/30

*Should your name be here?
 Please let the office know your birth date so we can include you!*



October is Pastor Appreciation Month

Many people have complex relationships with their pastors because faith, church and God involve a mix of emotions. We have particular ideas about church practices, congregational priorities, the minister's use of time, money, authority and more.

But most pastors are deeply devoted to Christ and believe that God has called them to serve in a certain place. They have the best of intentions and work hard to share the good news of the gospel. So in honor of Pastor Appreciation Month in October, consider the following:

God doesn't call the qualified; he qualifies the called. Your pastor may need time to learn and develop certain skills. (Everyone does!) Bless pastors with your patience.

We don't change the message; the message changes us. You probably won't like all your pastor's sermons or newsletter columns. But instead of complaining, ponder that something may rub you the wrong way because God is trying to change you. Keep an open mind and heart.

If a church wants a "better" pastor, it just needs to pray for the one it has. Pray often and caringly for your pastors, church leaders and their families. The role is challenging, so support them spiritually and ask God to reveal his love and grace to these special servants.

Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery - Native American Work Group

At a recent Zoom meeting we went over bids for work to be done on several native American churches in eastern Oklahoma. There is much repair work to be done. Now that bids have been approved, work can begin.

Grace also has received a donation for the program, which she has passed on to EOP.

- Grace Goodeagle, Member

Servers in the Lord's House

	Usher	Coffee Host
October 3	Deanna Duvall	Open
October 10	Deanna Duvall	Open
October 17	Melissa Bekemeier	Open
October 24	Open	Open
October 31	Melissa Bekemeier	Open

Please call the office or talk to Pastor Ray to sign up for servers slots!

Backpack Helper Schedule

Wednesday, 9/29	Open	Open
Thursday, 10/7	Open	Open
Monday, 10/11	?? - I am not sure if there will be	backpack packing this week TBD
Thursday, 10/21	John Lomax	Sarah Lomax
Thursday, 10/28	Open	Open
Wednesday, 11/3	Open	Open



SINGERS!!!

We are exploring the idea of starting a choir for Sunday worship services.



We will begin when COVID subsides, starting with only one or two Sundays a month.

Let Pastor Ray or Celeste Rector
know if you are interested or
have any questions!

October 2021 Daily Lectionary

These Scripture readings are from the two-year daily lectionary of the Presbyterian Book of Common Worship.

Old Testament

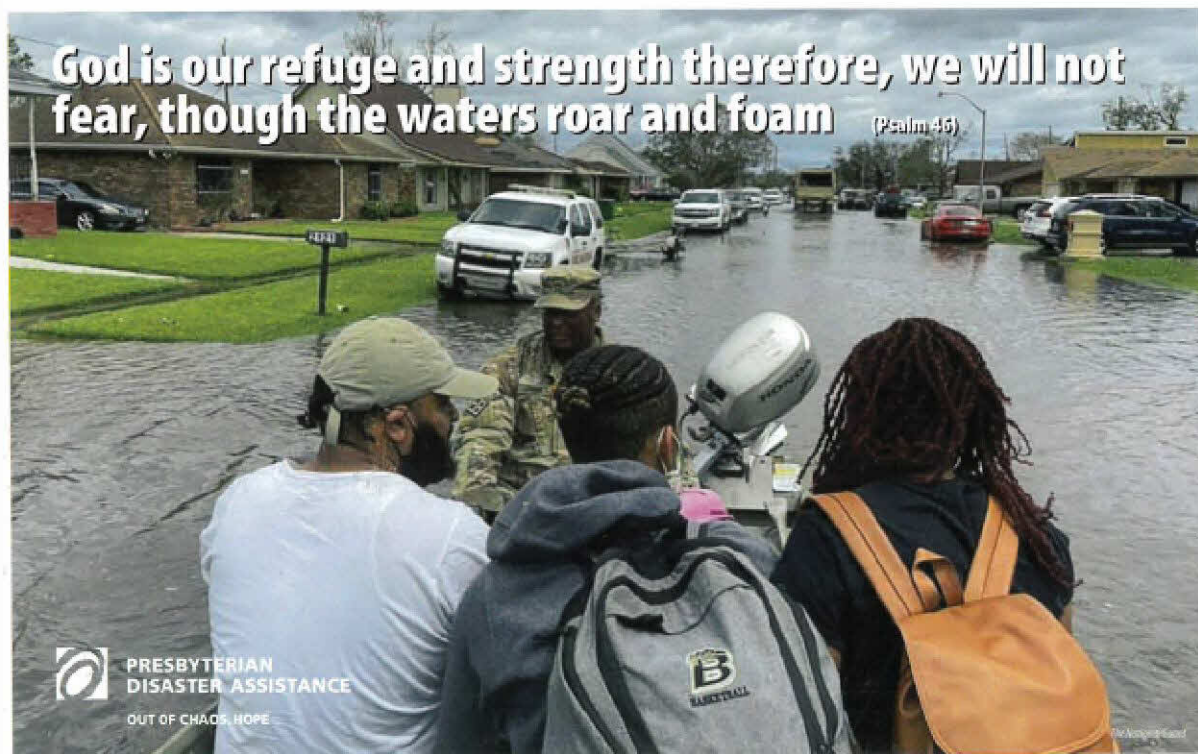
Epistle

Gospel

[Year One]

10/01/2021	2 Kings 19:1-20	1 Cor. 9:16-27	Matt. 8:1-17
10/02/2021	2 Kings 19:21-36	1 Cor. 10:1-13	Matt. 8:18-27
10/03/2021	2 Kings 20:1-21	Acts 12:1-17	Luke 7:11-17
10/04/2021	2 Kings 21:1-18	1 Cor. 10:14-11:1	Matt. 8:28-34
10/05/2021	2 Kings 22:1-13	1 Cor. 11:2 3-22	Matt. 9:1-8
10/06/2021	2 Kings 22:14-23:3	1 Cor. 11:23-34	Matt. 9:9-17
10/07/2021	2 Kings 23:4-25	1 Cor. 12:1-11	Matt. 9:18-26
10/08/2021	2 Kings 23:36-24:17	1 Cor. 12:12-26	Matt. 9:27-34
10/09/2021	Jer. 35:1-19	1 Cor. 12:27-13:3	Matt. 9:35-10:4
10/10/2021	Jer. 36:1-10	Acts 14:8-18	Luke 7:36-50
10/11/2021	Jer. 36:11-26	1 Cor. 13:(1-3) 4-13	Matt. 10:5-15
10/12/2021	Jer. 36:27-37:2	1 Cor. 14:1-12	Matt. 10:16-23
10/13/2021	Jer. 37:3-21	1 Cor. 14:13-25	Matt. 10:24-33
10/14/2021	Jer. 38:1-13	1 Cor. 14:26-40	Matt. 10:34-42
10/15/2021	Jer. 38:14-28	1 Cor. 15:1-11	Matt. 11:1-6
10/16/2021	Jer. 52:1-34	1 Cor. 15:12-29	Matt. 11:7-15
10/17/2021	Jer. 29:1, 4-14	Acts 16:6-15	Luke 10:1-12, 17-20
10/18/2021	Jer. 44:1-14	1 Cor. 15:30-41	Matt. 11:16-24
10/19/2021	Lam. 1:1-5 (6-9) 10-12	1 Cor. 15:41-50	Matt. 11:25-30
10/20/2021	Lam 2:8-15/Jer41:4-18	1 Cor. 15:51-58	Matt. 12:1-14
10/21/2021	Ezra 1:1-11	1 Cor. 16:1-9	Matt. 12:15-21
10/22/2021	Ezra 3:1-13	1 Cor. 16:10-24	Matt. 12:22-32
10/23/2021	Ezra 4:7, 11-24	Philem. 1-25	Matt. 12:33-42
10/24/2021	Hag. 1:1-2:9	Acts 18:24-19:7	Luke 10:25-37
10/25/2021	Zech. 1:7-17	Rev. 1:4-20	Matt. 12:43-50
10/26/2021	Ezra 5:1-17	Rev. 4:1-11	Matt. 13:1-9
10/27/2021	Ezra 6:1-22	Rev. 5:1-10	Matt. 13:10-17
10/28/2021	Neh. 1:1-11	Rev. 5:11-6:11	Matt. 13:18-23
10/29/2021	Neh. 2:1-20	Rev. 6:12-7:4	Matt. 13:24-30
10/30/2021	Neh. 4:1-23	Rev. 7:(4-8) 9-17	Matt. 13:31-35
10/31/2021	Neh. 5:1-9/Ezra 1:1-11	Acts 20:7-12	Luke 12:22-31

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is delivering immediate aid to those impacted by Hurricane Ida.



After the sudden, tragic death of his son Christopher, Pastor Greg Laurie told of shopping with him in the late '70s. He told Christopher to pick out a Star Wars toy, and the boy chose a small Hans Solo from the bottom shelf. Meanwhile, Laurie was looking up at the Millennium Falcon spacecraft.

“Why don’t we get this to go with your new figure?” he said. Christopher’s eyes lit up as he hugged his dad.



Laurie says, “Christopher eventually learned that when we were in a toy store and I asked what he wanted, his best bet was to say, ‘You choose, Dad!’ And I’d always get him something better than he would’ve chosen for himself.”

Don’t be afraid to let God “choose” for you, Laurie says. “God’s plans for you will always be better than your plans for yourself.”

—Homiletics

After starting a new diet, I altered my drive to work to avoid passing my favorite bakery. I accidentally drove by the bakery this morning and there in the window was a host of goodies. I felt this was no accident, so I prayed,

“Lord, it is up to you. If you want me to have any of those delicious baked goods, create a parking place for me directly in front of the bakery.”

And sure enough, God answered my prayer! On the eighth time round the block, there it was!



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