



Faith United
Presbyterian
Church
in Farmers Branch

Words of Faith

September 2020

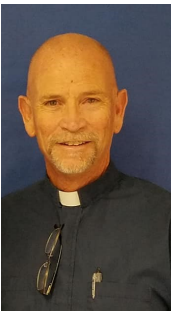
Volume X, Issue 9

*Glorify God, grow disciples, and
meet the needs of our neighbors.*

From the Pastor

Rev. Dr. Ken Ritchie

“Fasten your seat belts, it’s going to be a bumpy night.”



In the classic 1950 movie, “The Wisdom of Eve,” Bette Davis’ character Margo Channing utters one of the best movie quotes of all time, “Fasten your

seat belts, it’s going to be a bumpy night.” That line comes to mind as I think about the Fall that is before us. Obviously, our journey through the wilderness of pandemic and racial awakening has already been bumpy. However, it is going to get bumpier as we move towards a tumultuous election and its aftermath.

These are complex times as we are confronted by racism in all of its forms, increasing violence, destruction and anger, competing truths and mistrust, chaos and discord, and of course, the pandemic of COVID-19. Deep divisions and bitter partisanship casts a pall over us. It is as if there are two radically different parallel universes playing out in polemic echo chambers.

The Psalmist reminds us of a different approach, longing for the pathway and presence of God. Perhaps it is the Word of God that can be our seat belt for the bumpy ride ahead. This week in Praying the Psalms we considered Psalm 119:33-40. You can find the video on the church’s Facebook page or the church’s YouTube channel.

This section of the psalm is a series of prayers for insight, moral guidance and deliverance from social disharmony and distractions. That makes this section of the psalm very contemporary. It begins with the desire for the Lord to teach the Lord’s way. This is the humble recognition we are always in learning mode. We don’t have all the answers. We must be open to the Spirit. We pray to be given understanding, so that we can be faithful to God’s way. We need what God promises to give. There are many things that can get us off the pathway of God. In the psalm greed and those things that do not

have ultimate value are directly mentioned. Of course, in our culture these are still omnipresent threats. However, polemic echo chambers and hardened biases will also distract us. The psalmist gives us words for prayer that acknowledge a humble confession that we need God’s work and presence in our lives. We are dependent upon the Spirit’s wisdom and guidance, not to confirm our biases, but to be formed and shaped in God’s ways and God’s will.

The only verse in this section of the psalm that does not begin with an imperative is verse 40. The Hebrew word “behold/see” has many functions. One of those functions is to introduce a summative comment. This verse is a summary of the preceding petitions of prayer. The key theme of the verse is longing, the fervent longing for the pathway of God. This is to be our prayer for this bumpy ride that will only get bumpier.

Words of Faith

From the Pastor

cont'd.

What we also know is that the ways of God have been revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus – love, compassion, peace, empathy, justice, inclusion, caring, healing, building up, bringing together, reconciling, sacrifice. To pray a prayer of longing for God's will and God's way is a prayer of humility – to be open to God's way, teaching, will, Word, to shaped and formed in the likeness of Christ.

To be formed and shaped in these words of prayer will not make the ride less bumpy. The psalm is not a prayer for escape or avoidance. The pathway of God will always wind through such challenging terrain. However, these words of prayer will turn us towards the pathway of God and God's Word for our lives, which is the path of life. This is the best seatbelt we can have!

"Fasten your seat belts, it's going to be a bumpy night." Let's be people of prayer that long for God's ways in these complex times. For if this is our prayer, we will also be people who purposely walk on the pathway of God being the agents of light for our days of darkness.

I hope to see you Sunday via Facebook or YouTube. If you need technical help connecting to either of these let me know. We will get you the assistance! This week we consider Psalm 149. Dancing with the Lord.

Continue to choose love and compassion, kindness and caring. Make peace and do justice. Long for the ways of God.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Ken

Ken@FaithUnited-pc.com

Outreach & Evangelism

Debbie Rainier

Thank you for your gifts toward the Pentecost Offering in May. A total of \$405 was collected. 40% of the Pentecost offering is retained by individual congregations wanting to make an impact in the lives of young people within their own community. The remaining 60% is used to support children-at-risk, youth, and young adults through ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The 60% (\$243) was assigned to support the Pan American School. And the 40% (\$162) retained by FUPC will be used to purchase and send school supplies to our neighborhood school, Chapel Hill Preparatory. These gifts were made possible by YOU the faithful members of FUPC!



Happy Birthday!

September 2

* Dave Youngstrum

September 3

* Jessica Stottlemeyer

September 5

* Patsy Craig

September 7

* Billie Jones

September 8

* Phil Kretchmar

September 10

* Nadine Moser

September 13

* Stephanie Booth

September 17

* Ila Post

September 26

* Katie Miller

* Debbie Rainier

September 27

* Sugie Maxfield

September 28

* Jeanne Sawyer



Next newsletter is October 2020. Deadline

for articles, Friday, September 18.

**Contact church office or Brenda Swindle
via email to submit articles.**



Prayers for:

- ♥ Dale Durcholz
- ♥ Kathie Heffler
- ♥ Roger Jones
- ♥ Sugie Maxfield
- ♥ Betty Runkel
- ♥ Jeanne Sawyer
- ♥ Barbara Stein
- ♥ Dennis Van Deventer

Rehab/At Home:

- ♥ Margaret Jones
- ♥ Marilyn Rose
- ♥ Freddie Simmons

Weekly Bible Study class

Our adult Sunday School class, **Weekly Bible Study**, is currently being taught by video. Links to these videos are included in the weekly News Brief.

We continue our series on Paul's letters. Expect updates and links to be on the website: www.FaithUnited-pc.com or the Faith United YouTube channel.

Rich Lewis





Fall @ Faith United *FUPC Worshiping online*

Sunday, 9/6 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.
14th Sunday after Pentecost, Communion Worship at 11 a.m.

Sunday, 9/13 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.; **15th Sunday after Pentecost**,
Worship at 11 a.m.; Stated Session meeting, via Zoom at 1 p.m.

Sunday, 9/20 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.; **16th Sunday after Pentecost**, Worship at 11 a.m.

Sunday, 9/27 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.; **17th Sunday after Pentecost**, Worship at 11 a.m.

All worship services and classes available via Facebook Live or on Faith United's YouTube channel.
Worship resources available at www.FaithUnited-pc.com

Online Worship Continues

You will find Worship Guides and resources on our website:

www.FaithUnited-pc.com



You will see the logos (right) on the website and can choose which method with which you would like to worship.



Faith United Presbyterian Church

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On the Web!
www.FaithUnited-pc.com

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