

# First Presbyterian Church of Alvin

## *Press Bytes*



To the Saints at First Presbyterian,

Greetings. I'd like this message to be titled, "Don't Be A Slave To the Past".

Being one who loves history and majored in Medieval history, I have studied centuries of history primarily in Europe and the Middle East. We joked and said that we began with Adam and Eve and stopped at the 17<sup>th</sup> century. So much to study!

Several things leap out at you as you study this history. One being all the wars and violence we humans commit against each other. You study the violence one nation commits against another nation and violence one race or religion commits against other races and religions. You begin to see that we humans don't particularly like each other at certain times in certain centuries.

Most nations have a violent past in wars and racial/religious prejudice. Israel was established when Joshua crossed the Jordan River and literally fought his way to the Promised Land. The war still goes on. Islam arrived in the 7<sup>th</sup> century as a way to unite the East from the West. Unity couldn't be done politically but could be done with this new religion created by Mohammed. It worked and soon it became a religion of conquest. The Holy land became the land of Allah. They marched into Europe and were finally stopped. You can still see Moorish evidence in Spain. England, France and Spain were always at war. Catholics and Protestants fought terrible wars. Volumes can be written and have been on world history.

Our nation has a violent history as well. Lots of wars were fought both internally and externally. Most of our land was either taken by force from other people, purchased from other nations or settled by mass migrations. In charge of these actions were individual people who had visions of what a great nation we could be. Unfortunately today some folks are looking at the "dark side" of these individuals; Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, Woodrow Wilson and so many others. They were a product of their times.

It wasn't a good time for many and there were a lot of negative attitudes we had towards others. Slavery in this country was horrific. Asians on the West Coast had their form of slavery but wasn't called that. Native Americans faced a possible Genocide. Some of our history wasn't a pretty sight. All the good many individuals accomplished is being overlooked by part of their past. Do we focus on the negative or positive? In all these matters, it is in the past! Can't be redone or changed. My hope is that we won't be a slave to the past, continuing to live in it, and not move ahead into the present and future. We are an imperfect people making imperfect decisions from time to time. We will always continue to do that more or less. Let the past go and learn from it. Jesus told us we are new creations, the past is gone, the old has passed away and behind us and the future awaits. We never have to be burdened by the past unless we want to be. Learning from it is our hope for a better tomorrow. We can make the necessary changes.

Only God is perfect. We are not nor will we ever be. It's all about the here and now. God will guide us into the future if we seek God's will. Make this a great July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Peace,

### July Issue

Message from the  
Pastor by CO Magee  
(on Cover)

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**Ongoing Prayers** : Matt Ober, Lisa McCalla, Belinda Busscher, Kim Hill, Lorenda Baldwin, Nick Cordero, Patty Costanzo, Billy Steckert Jr., Brenten Dietrich, Rachel Grimmett, Mark Clark, Tammy Robinson, Hazel Beuloh, Terry Thacker, Martha Phipps, Helen Escobedo, Morgan Stanley and George Maxim.

**Immediate Concerns** : People suffering from the COVID-19 Corona Virus

*Please call the church office with updates.*

### July Birthdays

- 3 Rebecca Farris
- Steven King
- 5 Ashley Burke
- Roy Carpenter
- 7 Lucas Meystedt
- 11 Chloe Davis
- Lucile Beasley
- Owen Wilson



- 13 Brandi Bowers
- Mandi Odom
- 16 Edith Rockwell
- 17 Norman Rowsey
- Scott Thomas
- 19 Kimberly Doughty
- 20 David Williams
- 26 Raia Stanley
- 27 Lily Bower

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God.”

1 John 3:1



In 1967 Grace Ward Harby had a vision to provide inexpensive, serviceable clothing to school-age children and their families. What started as a ministry in her car evolved into what is now the Clothing Outlet, located on our church campus. As it was back in Ms. Harby's day, the proceeds from the Clothing Outlet still provide school supplies for children/families in need.

Now, over 50 years later, this ministry is still going strong, and we have joined with the Alvin Independent School District, and the Thelma Ley Anderson Family YMCA to better serve our community. The last few years, you all were kind enough to provide glue sticks and bottles of 4 oz. glue. This year, we could use **glue sticks** and bottles of **4 oz. glue** (they're both fairly inexpensive) again. Thank you!!

Blessings and peace.



## “Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another” (John 13:34) – Christopher Lo

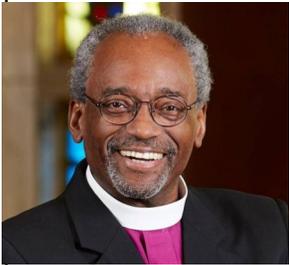
Following the death of George Floyd at the hand of the Minneapolis police on May 25, the Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson II, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) said on June 3, “No longer can we hide behind not being controversial. We are all caught in this quagmire now. The church, is called to dismantle structures that put people in poverty and pain, to not only share the gospel, but share ourselves.”



On June 9, President J. D. Greear addressed the Southern Baptist Convention saying, “We need our brothers and sisters of color. Southern Baptists, we need to say it clearly: As a gospel issue, black lives matter. Of course, black lives matter. Our black brothers and sisters are made in the image of God. We pray that our culture continues to change, and we know it starts with the leaders.”



Also on June 9, the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, the Most Rev. Michael Curry said, “Freedom’s walk is always a long, arduous walk, fraught with setbacks, filled with hardship. It is that walk like Jesus walking the Via Dolorosa, the Way of Sorrows. It is that walk, like those who walked at Selma. It is a long walk to freedom, but we must remember they that wait upon the Lord will renew their strength. They will mount up on wings like eagles. They will run and not be weary. And more importantly, they will walk and not faint. God is still God and our work goes on. The struggle continues. And sisters and brothers and siblings, we must keep the faith.”



On May 31, Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, the President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued a statement, “We should not let it be said that George Floyd died for no reason. We should honor the sacrifice of his life by removing racism and hate from our hearts and renewing our commitment to fulfill our nation’s sacred promise — to be a beloved community of life, liberty, and equality for all.”



On June 12, Dr. Jim Winkler, the President of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC) wrote “We, especially white people, are all responsible for doing the hard work to end racism and white supremacy. The burden cannot always be on our African American brothers and sisters. These are not just ideologies or individual opinions. These are deadly systemic issues at the core of the American society.”



A Prayer for Racial Justice from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA), *“Save us, O God, from ourselves, from racism often cloaked in pious words, from the machinations of white supremacy hidden in calls for civility, from micro aggressions thinly veiled in arrogance, from apologies when they don’t give way to action, from forgiveness without facing the truth, from reconciliation without reparation. Deliver us, O God, from expecting siblings of color to continue to bear this emotional work, which is not theirs to do. Grateful for the long arc that bends toward justice, we pray: Grant us wisdom, give us courage for the facing of these days, by the power of the Spirit, all for the sake of the kingdom that we share in Christ Jesus. Amen.”*



“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”  
  
Romans 5:8

