

The Delmar Prez



Delmar Presbyterian Church
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Hagia Sophia, Holy Wisdom
a blog by Rev. Larry Deyss, HR

(Albany Presbytery Blog Post for September
by Rev. Larry Deyss, HR)

The death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg has sent a shock wave of grief and anxiety throughout much of the nation. She was an outstanding woman, a strong and steady person of intellect and integrity. Her passing is a huge loss, especially at this critical time when wisdom and steadiness are so greatly needed. Already there is a rush to fill the office adding to the anger and division that roils the nation, which most likely will increase down the road.

It is obvious that the levels of anxiety and fear are running high.

That fact was clearly demonstrated for me at a recent Creation Care Zoom meeting when the chairperson announced that the next meeting would be November 16th. Someone casually remarked that meeting would be after the election. Several people expressed agitation and anxiety saying, "I don't even want to think about it!"

There are lots of strong feelings all through our society.

The question is how are we going to deal with these feelings? We must manage them in constructive and healthy ways. If we do not, they will further rip us apart as persons and as a society. We need to be careful not to go past a tipping point beyond which anger and anxiety change us into something we never intended to be or become. What are we to do?

I have some thoughts to share though no definite answers.

First, what we have been experiencing is like being hit with two hurricanes at once. One is Covid and the other is an ongoing crisis at the highest levels of governance in the land. These hurricanes have hit us hard and continue to pound our boats. The systems of thought and practice that we rely upon have become unmoored. We are now being tossed to and fro upon violent waters.

In the Gospel of Matthew (14:28-31) is an image of what happens when people are taken over by their anxiety and fear. Jesus is walking on the water toward the disciples who are in a boat. Peter wishes to step out and meet Jesus on the water. At the bidding of Jesus, he steps out but noticing the strength of the wind he becomes frightened. Beginning to sink he cries out to Jesus, "Lord save me!" Jesus reaches out his hand and catches him, saying, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

This is a complex text but I will nevertheless point to one simple teaching. Peter was doing fine until he focused on the intensity of the storm and therefore away from Jesus. At that point he started going down and in panic called to out to Jesus.

Currently, we have been so taken in by the strength of the winds and words whipping around that we have focused almost exclusively on the storm. We have taken our eyes off of the Lord, the source of our strength and steadiness, and now find ourselves starting to sink.

Taking our focus off of the source of our faith and strength, or having no faith core at all, is one of the problems of living in what Charles Taylor, in his book *Secular Age*, talks about. We have become unmoored from the faith which has in the past kept us steady. We have broken loose and are being tossed about in the angry and tumultuous seas of our time.

A corrective can be found in a return to the sources.

We need look at our faith sources with new eyes and rediscover the depth, steadiness and wisdom they offer us. To do this in any meaningful way means we need to be open, willing and patient before the Word and the practices which nourish our soul in ways the secular world alone cannot. This is not to say we need to set the secular aside. The secular and the sacred go together, however we cannot look to only one of them to meet all our needs. The ancient sources need to be read as they speak to us in the context of our time. In doing so, one can be surprised by the relevance of texts for us today.

St. Paul provides us with counsel that leads us into sanity and strength.

We would do well to ponder anew St. Paul's words in his letter to the Romans in Chapter 12, where he counsels,

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

The renewing of heart, mind, body and soul is how we strengthen ourselves so we can live in the world without being ground up and destroyed. Further on, in chapter 12:9-21, Paul sets forth a brief section on ethics. It is a little longer than I wish to quote so I will let you read it for yourself. If you do so, you will find it to be powerful and to the point as it speaks to us today.

Paul's ethical teaching culminates with the words: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Thomas Merton is also a source that speaks to people today.

I wish to share from a little book which has become very dear and helpful to me over the years. It is Thomas Merton – *A Book of Hours*. In the readings for Saturday the first reading is "Dawn." The poetic and deep spiritual wisdom of Merton shines forth in his work.

There is in all visible things an invisible fecundity, a dimmed light, a meek namelessness, a hidden wholeness. This mysterious Unity and Integrity is Wisdom, the Mother of all, *Natura naturans*.

There is in all things an inexhaustible sweetness and purity, a silence that is a fount of action and joy. It rises up in a wordless gentleness and flows out to me from the unseen roots of all created being, welcoming me tenderly, saluting me with indescribable humility.

This is at once my own being, my own nature, and the Gift of my Creator's Thought and Art within me, speaking as *Hagia Sophia*, speaking as my sister, Wisdom.

I am awakened; I am born again at the voice of my Sister, sent to me from the depths of divine fecundity.

We live in a very real world and we must contend with very real things.

However life is not intended to be lived in constant anxiousness and despair, as if we were without resources, indeed divine resources, to help us negotiate what is before us. Holy texts and sacred writing deliver Wisdom which opens our eyes and our soul to see the richness of the world.

We are lifted up, not so we can escape the world, but so we can see what is there in all of its richness and can then go to work in the world. It is through Wisdom that we do our best work and our best living.

Listen! Our Sister calls. Her name is *Hagia Sophia*, Holy Wisdom.

WORSHIP

Worship Plans for November

Delmar Presbyterian Church really misses you! The task force and session have agreed that we would like to start opening the church to congregants. This, however, will be done on a very limited basis so we can test our procedures, monitor COVID developments in the community, and keep those involved in creating the service as safe as possible.

We are inviting 10 people to come each week. We ask that you call or email the office to reserve a spot and if the week is full you will be priority for the next week. If our county goes into orange and local cases start to rise we may have to shut back down and everyone will be notified if that happens.

We remind you that services will look a bit different as we are still set up for live streaming and ask that you stay in the seat you are directed to. We look forward to seeing you and providing a meaningful worship experience to everyone.

However worship, study and fellowship occurs, Delmar Presbyterian Church will be alive, following Jesus, doing our best to continue Christ's work. Have questions? Please contact Pastor Karen at pastorkaren@delmarpres.org.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Matthew 25 Course Nov. 9-Nov. 30

"Civil Initiative and the Engaged Church"

This course is designed to introduce basic principles for faith-based community formation that will help church communities

to engage in a principled and theologically grounded way in civic life and grass-roots justice movements. This course is not designed to train participants in a specific organizing strategy, but instead offers foundational principles of community formation to nurture faith communities that have the capacity and resilience to respond to entrenched systems of oppression in creative and liberating ways. Built around the thinking of Quaker philosopher Jim Corbett (1933-2001), the course will foreground the experiences and voices of faith-based activists.

Link:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/online-matthew-25-curriculum-will-help-church-communities-engage-civic-life-in-a-principled-and-theological-way/>

There is a fee for this course. Please let Pastor Karen know if you would like assistance in registering.

DEACONS

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1	Abigail Dasari
1	Carolyn Tweedie
4	Greta Hertz
5	Moses Torres
6	Henry Fleischut
9	John Moser
12	Bob Lynk
15	Arch Munro
18	Linda Miller Lowry
21	Bill Garvey
26	Lynda Spielman
27	Brian Krzykowski
27	Bill Storrs
28	Ella Cady
28	Peggy Mull

RPMs

Rise Against Hunger

Traditionally the RPMs would host a **Rise Against Hunger** event in the fall. An alternative option they have asked for is hygiene kits. The RPMs will assemble the kits at a Sunday meeting but we need your help with donations for the items that will go into these kits. We will be filling 100 kits. Your items can be left in a bin marked RPMs outside the DPC main entrance door.

Hygiene Kit Materials

All new items required. Please Note: Contents of kits or the containers of kits should not be imprinted with cartoon characters, advertisements, religious, patriotic, military or camouflage symbols.

- **bath hand towels (15 x 25 –17 x 27 inches)** - No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels
- **washcloths** - No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels
- **combs** - with at least 6 inches of teeth
- **toenail or fingernail clippers**
No emery boards or metal nail files
- **bath-size soap (3 oz. bar or larger)**
No Ivory or Jergen's brand - something to do with moisture content
Do not remove from packaging
- **individually packaged adult toothbrush**
- **adhesive bandages (¾ by 3 inches)**

Submitted by Beth Gould
RPMsYouthGroup@gmail.com

Please place your items in the donation bin outside the main entrance door. Thanks!

OUTREACH

Thanksgiving Gift Cards

This year DPC is partnering with local schools to provide Thanksgiving Meals to families in our community. In lieu of baskets, we will be donating gift cards to a local grocery store. In addition, we will again be providing gift cards to Arbor Hill Elementary School. If you would like to contribute to this ministry, please donate on our website or send a check designating your gift for Thanksgiving. Thank you for your generosity!



Food Pantry Needs

Please consider picking up an extra pack of **paper towels and/or toilet paper** when you shop. Drop them at church and they will be promptly delivered to the food pantry.

Thank you for your generosity in supporting one of DPC's outreach projects to neighbors in need!

Looking Ahead

We will be collecting items for our DPC Mitten Tree and White Manger service in December. Look for more information in the December Prez.

Fair Trade Market Alternative

Message from Market Organizer Marilyn Kriss:
Since we won't be able to hold our traditional Black Friday Fair Trade Market this year, I'm going to set up a little shop in my Delmar basement, starting November 16, where you are welcome to come and browse. This year I'm featuring Living Traditions, a large collection of exquisite ornaments, coasters and other decorative and useful items made by Syrian refugees in a fair trade business in Turkey.



In addition, I'll gather some perennial favorites, including stitched treasures from Amani Ya Juu, organic fair trade beeswax lip balm by Zambeezi, whimsical children's hats crocheted in a refugee project in Istanbul, and lovely bags sewn by women in India who are no longer exploited in the sex trade.

Please call, text or email me to arrange a time when you can come and safely shop. I'd prefer that one or two people come at a time and of course with masks. Cash, check and credit cards accepted.

Marilyn Kriss
518-928-1906
cmkriss79@gmail.com

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Ladies Who Care

All are invited to join us on Zoom, Wednesday, December 2nd at 1 PM for our Christmas musical program by Sue Allen.

“MINCE PIES AND MEMORIES”



“Come with me on a musical journey through my childhood memories of Christmas. Along the way I'll share some of my favorite carols, introduce you to some of the quirky members of my family and, hopefully, put all of us in the mood for the festive season.”

Sue, who lives in Wales, is the “mum” of Sarah Lewis. With the technological assistance of Sarah and Dan, we are so pleased that Sue can share her talents with us from across the ocean.

A Zoom invitation will be sent out on December 1st. Please circle the date on your calendars now.

“My Brush with Art” Re-Run Monday, Nov. 9

Some folks were very sorry that they missed Bob Lynk's program last week so he has graciously agreed to repeat it on Monday at 1 PM. A Zoom invitation will be sent out with the Friday Update.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session Highlights for September 22, 2020

The meeting was held via Zoom. A quorum was declared. The consent agenda and August minutes were approved.

Elder Tricia Hertz will be serving on Session in the “at large” position, no longer as Personnel chair, per her request.

A motion was made and seconded to extend the posting for the DPC custodian position – with an application deadline of October 7, 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

A request from an outside group to resume meetings was tabled until we have a more consistent cleaning situation. The **Building Request Form** and **Checklist for Using Church Facilities** will be revised to be more appropriate for our current pandemic situation.

Communications:

The six new loaner tablets, to be signed out to members who have not been able to access online worship, are ready to distribute.

Outreach:

A motion to approve a \$2000 donation for forest fire relief from 2020 Outreach Designated Mission funds to the United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley in Salem, Oregon, was made, seconded and discussed. A vote was approved: 7 in favor, 1 opposed.

Personnel:

The committee met and made the following decisions:

1. To offer the custodial position to Reyhan Cicek. She was interviewed, but decided the position was not suitable for her.

2. Approved “Clean and Care Cleaning Services LLC” (contact, Amber Zane) to do a onetime deep clean per \$400 estimate. Cleaning is scheduled for 9/23/20.

3. Approved repair to the broken fellowship hall door at a cost of \$4145 – to be taken from the Capital Replacement Fund. Repair is scheduled for October 22.

Worship:

COVID Worship Schedule: live streaming only through 10/18/20. Session will be meeting again on October 20th and to reevaluate.

Pastor’s Report:

A proposal was made to do away with most of our committees in favor of centers of responsibility that operate with ad hoc projects. We still need several standing committees (i.e., some combination of finance, personnel, and admin) and at least one committee (Education) seems to be working well as a committee and should continue to function that way. This action needs a task force to iron it out and make a focused recommendation - Nancy Braaten, Irene Harbison and Laura Scott volunteered to meet weekly with Pastor Karen as a “Restructuring Team”

The meeting closed with prayer.

Next Session Meeting:

Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 7:00 PM on Zoom

Email vote also sent to change session date from September 15 to September 22 – all elders voted yes.

Email Vote: Pastor sent out an email requesting permission to purchase equipment for live streaming. Currently, volunteers are using their own computer. Computer has been ordered and has been delivered. Wiring estimates are being solicited.

DPC Protections Against COVID

The church building is being cleaned regularly in accordance with CDC guidelines. In addition, cleaning logs have been posted in the office and both restrooms to be updated

each time an area is cleaned and sanitized. As a reminder, we ask each individual to wear masks and sign in when entering and leaving the building. Hand sanitizer is available at each entrance. Thanks for doing your part to help keep DPC a safe environment.

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS



Orders are now being taken for the Christmas poinsettias that decorate our Sanctuary during the Christmas season. Poinsettias are available in your choice of red, white or pink for **\$10** each, and ***may be taken home after worship on Christmas Eve.***

The deadline for ordering is Sunday, November 30, 2020.

Please include your payment with this form and bring or mail it to the church office.
Thank you!

Name: _____

In Honor//Memory of (circle one)

Total # Poinsettias: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

How many? _____ RED _____ WHITE _____ PINK

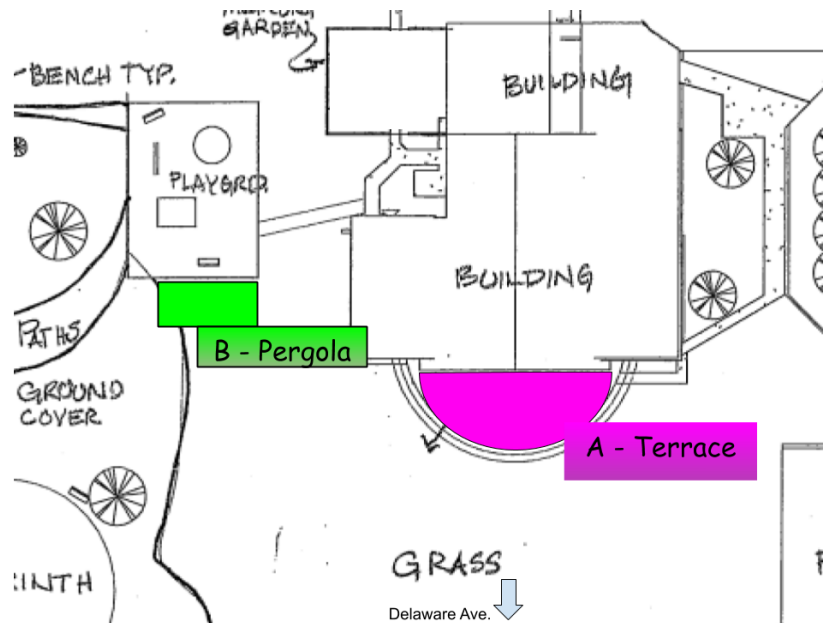
BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Bob Horn Bequest Survey

The Building & Grounds Committee wants your input. Bob Horn, a long-time member and avid gardener, left a bequest to the church to be used to beautify the grounds of Delmar Presbyterian. The committee has narrowed the options to two worthy projects. Unfortunately only one of these plans can be executed. Exact dimensions will be determined by budget and vendor quotes.

Option A: Terrace outside Fellowship Hall. Half circle going from double doors to double doors. A short retaining wall as the ground slopes away from the church so the patio is level. The patio will provide the congregation options for outdoor services, concerts for the public, youth group conversation space, or lemonade on the lawn.

Option B: A pergola at the south edge of the playground. Open on two sides with vines growing up the columns and across the top. The pergola will provide seating for parents watching children at the playground and a quiet spot for meditation. There would be space for a picnic table.



Bonus question: Would you be willing to donate \$200 to add native trees to the front lawn facing Delaware Avenue.

Email responses to office@delmarpres.org

Name: _____

Preference: A - Terrace OR B - Pergola

_____ Yes, I'm willing to donate \$200 for a tree to be planted in the front lawn