



FALL 2017

THE ELK GROVE PRES PRESS

VOLUME 1

BLESSINGS FROM DEXTER

Cars and Chimes. That's what I heard as I sat on our patio early one Sunday morning.

Cars -- those rather amazing machines that allow us to move about, to get to and from work or school or appointments, or to just go out venturing, or move elsewhere in search of a whole new life. Cars -- symbols of creativity and ingenuity and industrial power and national pride.

And chimes -- those passive metal tubes ringing out their simple reminders of calm and peace and serenity.

As I listened to those cars and chimes, several thoughts came to mind:

--about how the Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to live responsibly in this industrialized, globalized world;

--about how a dictator in North Korea uses machines developed through ingenuity and industrial know-how to threaten whomever he believes

challenges his brutal regime;

--about how strangers have magnificently come together to help each other in the devastation of Hurricane

Harvey, often using machines also developed through ingenuity and industrial know-how;

And as I looked at the brightening sky, I recalled what William Falk, the editor of THE WEEK magazine, wrote about the August 21 eclipse, how it was:

"a reminder that we are passengers on a rock swinging through the solar system in a celestial dance choreographed by forces beyond our ken and our control. Awe is an uplifting emotion. It is good to feel small, to sense how brief and fragile our lives are in astronomical terms, to see that beyond the mundane lies a great mystery.

... This week, a great darkness fell upon America, and it was easy to understand why eclipses terrified the ancients, who saw them as portents of doom. But then the sun returned, advising us: Light defeats darkness. This too shall pass."

Light defeats darkness, love wins out against hate. That's the hope of the Gospel, and sometimes we need the simple tinkling of chimes to remind us of that.

EGPC reaches out to those who are "not yet followers" of Jesus as well as believers.

We are an open and accepting congregation.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

A COLUMBIAN ADVENTURE – JUDY LEWIS

On Thursday, July 13th, fourteen members from Elk Grove Presbyterian Church (EGPC) carpooled to Columbia State Park to see a performance of “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat”. We

met at Kate’s Tea House for lunch before going to the historic Fallon House Theater. The play was excellent. It was a wonderful afternoon filled with fun, laughs and fellowship.



BACK TO SCHOOL

This summer, Diana VanDePol coordinated a school box project for Mary Tsukamoto Elementary School here in Elk Grove. The goal was to provide basic school items for students that would otherwise go without.



Contributions from our EGPC Mission fund as well as dollars from our generous congregation allowed for 30 boxes to be completed. Each box was filled with crayons, pens, pencils and glue sticks – items necessary to help each child have a successful school day.

Our small efforts make a difference!

God bless all our students and teachers this school year!

MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL

On a very HOT Saturday in August, EGPC was well represented at the 6th Annual Elk Grove Multicultural Festival. This community event celebrates Elk Grove's diversity through music, art, food and entertainment. Mike VanDePol, Liz Irons and Michael Wong hosted our booth which was complete with pictures, brochures, handouts and information about our church and upcoming events. Many thanks to this outreach team for providing their time and talents to spread the GOOD NEWS!



A MINUTE FOR MISSION – TERRI BACON



Missions are a key part of our ministry at EGPC. Locally, we continue to support the food bank with both dollars and food donations. Grocery bags of food are collected every Communion Sunday then delivered to the food bank. We also support HART/WINS, helping local people who are homeless. This year, we will once again participate in the Elk Grove ecumenical Share A Sole project, helping needy school kids with a new pair of shoes.

We participate in Presbytery missions with quarterly donations of \$750.00 and participate in all four denomination offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost, Peace, and Christmas Joy. That money is forwarded to the denomination for mission programs. We are able to retain a portion of the Pentecost and Peace offerings for our own designated projects. This year we used our portion of the Pentecost

offering to help provide the school supply boxes mentioned above. We are looking into using the money we retain from the Peace offering to help with a kindergarten in Armenia that is near to Pastor Vigen's heart!

Last year we supported Jeff and Christi Boyd, Presbyterian missionaries in Central Africa. They will be at our church on September 24, sharing their stories with us.

Our largest project is our mission to Honduras. In cooperation with University Presbyterian Church and the Presbytery College ministry, we have built two school buildings in Honduras. Seven people from our congregation, plus Dexter and Carol, have gone to Honduras to help with construction. As I write this, college students are currently in El Progreso, completing the second building which we started earlier in the year. Our congregation raised \$3,000 for each school building and also gave scholarship money to help some of the students with their first mission experience.

Our committee meets about 6 times a year. We always welcome new members!

WORSHIP NEWS -- JUDY LEWIS

THE REFORMATION: The Reformation, also referred to as the Protestant Reformation, was a schism from the Roman Catholic Church initiated by Martin Luther and continued by John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli and other early Protestant reformers in 16th century Europe.



It is usually considered to have started with the publication of the Ninety-Five Theses by Luther on October 31, 1517.

Luther began by criticizing the sale of indulgences, insisting that the Pope had no authority over purgatory and that the Catholic doctrine of the merits of the saints had no foundation in the gospel. The Protestant position, however, would come to incorporate doctrinal changes such as a complete reliance on the scripture as a source of proper

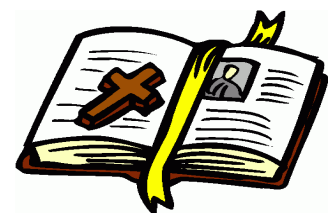
belief, and the belief that only faith, not good deeds, brings salvation. The core motivation behind these changes was theological, though many other factors played a part.

In honor of this 500th year, starting in September, we will have a series of Children's Sermons on some of the factors behind the Reformation.

REFORMATION CHILDREN'S SERVICE SERIES	
September 3	Indulgences
September 10	The 95 Theses
September 17	Martin Luther
October 1	Printing Press
October 8	John Calvin
October 15	Reformation Outcome Summary

BIBLE STUDY RETURNING

Please join us as we study God's Word from Luke. Beginning Thursday, September 14th at 7 PM we will work on finishing Luke and start the book of Acts. Come join the discussion and fellowship. Everyone is welcome!



GROWING IN FAITH – DIANE LOWE

We are in a slow, steady growth at EGPC. Church attendance currently averages 51 worshipers. This is an increase from an average of 45 in 2016. As a result, we are sometimes running out of hymnals for Sunday worship. Thus, 25 additional hymnals have been ordered which should serve us well this coming year. Each hymnal cost \$20 ($\$20 \times 25 \text{ hymnals} = \500). Please consider a \$20 donation toward the purchase of a new hymnal. Simply earmark your donation for “hymnals” and place in the offering plate. If your gift is in memory of someone, please note that with the donation as well. Thank you!



BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS – SHARON CHILCOAT

Elk Grove Presbyterian Church will hold a “Blessing of the Animals” service on Saturday, October 7, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. in the parking lot in front of the church.



Animal blessing services were introduced by St. Francis of Assisi 800 years ago. He believed that humans are only one of a myriad of God’s creatures and all are blessed in the eyes of God. From Genesis 9: 8-11, “ After the flood, God said to Noah, “I now establish my covenant with you and your descendants and with every living creature that was with you on the ark, the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals that came out of the ark with you, every living creature on earth.” This is just one of many other biblical passages that show that God cares for all creation.

Animal blessing services are usually held in early October near the date of the death of St. Francis which was on October 3, 1226. Now many churches hold these services. St. Francis became the patron saint of animals.

You are invited to bring your animals to be blessed. Please be sure they are controlled and have them on leash or contained so there will be no “riot”. The community of Elk Grove will be invited to participate with us as will the service animals of the police department.

My Story – by Phoebe Hsu



I was born and raised in Shanghai, China. The country had been under communist regime since 1949. From that time until the mid-70s, China was quite isolated from the outside world except for contacts with Russia, Albania, Romania and some African countries. My parents became Christian prior to 1949. When I grew up, my mother often told me that one day she wanted to send me to the western world. It was an unthinkable thought because the country had a very weak economy, political turmoil, and everything was planned and controlled by the government. There was no chance to get out of the county. But, my mother kept her beliefs and had faith in God. In 1972, the U.S. and China reformed their diplomatic relationship. All of a sudden, the door started to open. It took several years of waiting and involved many procedures for me to come to America. When this happened, it was the beginning of a new life.

I have been very grateful for the opportunity to come to America. I started life in this country with \$40, which was the maximum amount allowed to be exchanged by Chinese government in the early 80s. All of a sudden, I became quite poor with many challenges ahead. At first I felt insecure and helpless. I started to rely on God once I became a Christian. While in college, I was very focused and I took school seriously. The tuition was provided by overseas family support at first. Toward the end of my junior year, I was informed that no funds would be available for my senior year. I was devastated. Obviously, my limited income of \$300 a month, which I received by working 24 hours a week on a work study program, would not solve the problem. Without further financial support, I would not be able to finish my education as wished. I decided to meet with school Dean. On the way to the Dean's office, I prayed for miracles. Dean Skinner kindly received me in his office and listened to my concerns. He then checked my grades and told me to wait. A few minutes later, he told me that the school had decided to grant me a one year tuition-free scholarship. I was literally speechless with tears in my eyes. I know that God was behind me and had just given me a great gift. With his blessing, I graduated on time and with honors. Over the years, I have encountered many magic experiences with God. I have learned to keep my head up when things are low and to keep my head down in humility when things are at their peak. GOD IS THE MOST POWERFUL AND OUR SAVIOR. -- AMEN

A WORD ABOUT FLOWERS – DALE CHILCOAT

Thanks to so many of you who donate flower money for our Sunday worship services. Some of you donate above the \$20.00 and that is very much appreciated. When you donate, if there are special flowers you would like to see or specific colors, let me know and I will try my best.

On special occasions, such as Easter, Mother's Day, etc., availability goes down and costs go up. Thanks to you who offer me flowers from your garden.

When Sharon and I travel, I need someone to take over for me and we are blessed to have a few who volunteer. If you are interested, I will be happy to do a tutorial.

For those of you who ask if I do flowers for special occasions outside of the church, I do not, but thanks for the confidence.

I appreciate the many kind words and your support for this ministry.





WOMEN'S MINISTRY – SUE BRISTOW

September 12 @ 10 AM: Fitness Activity. Meet at Horseshoe Park on Denali Circle. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing. Healthy snacks and water will be provided. There are covered picnic tables and benches all around the park as well as walking paths and fitness equipment. Contact Sue Bristow for more information: 916-835-0586.

October 10. Time TBA: Susie Lapachet will lead a quilting activity . No previous quilting experience needed.

November 14: Time TBA: “Bringing Christ Back to Christmas”. In preparation for the Advent season, the “3 Sues” (Susie Lapachet, Sue Bristow and Susan Morrison) will lead a devotion about a Christ-Centered Christmas.

December 12 @ 7 PM. Susie Lapachet will host the women’s Christmas party at her home. Details forthcoming.

FINANCIAL NEWS – RICHARD BRISTOW

<i>These figures reflect income vs. expenses through June 30, 2017*</i>	
TOTAL INCOME	\$75,563
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$82,593
*Totals do not include \$3,677 special mission donations.	

ABOUT OUR CHURCH:

Elk Grove Presbyterian Church is a faith community striving to follow Christ by:

- ***Supporting each person on their own unique journey with God.***
- ***Joining together for joyful and meaningful worship, education and fellowship.***
- ***Working together to help build a better community and world.***

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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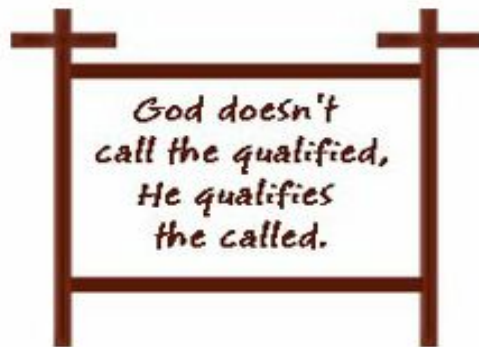
916-683-1435 (Church)

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****LEADERSHIP TEAM****

ELDERS:

Bob Huggett -- Property

Leslie Konopinski --Administration

Mike Van De Pol -- Outreach

Terri Bacon—Mission and Evangelism

Judy Lewis-- Education

Sharon Chilcoat--Communication

Phoebe Hsu--Nurture

Diane Lowe--Worship

Richard Bristow—Budget

DEACONS:

Jim Konopinski--Yellow

Frank Tafoya--Green

Cheri Bowermaster--Red

Larry Bowermaster--Blue

Patty Huggett--Purple

Kathy Wong-Orange