



FALL 2018

THE ELK GROVE PRES PRESS

VOLUME 5

BLESSINGS FROM DEXTER

The lectionary for Sept. 2 included a reading from the first chapter of the Epistle of James, including this portion of verses 19 and 20.

“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry, for a person’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.”

A lot to think about in those few words!

“Slow to become angry.” I have enough hot Irish blood in me that I can become quite angry at times, even if my more subdued English blood tries to keep that in check. But James doesn’t say “don’t become angry”, it says be “slow to become angry.” And James puts “quick to listen” and “slow to speak” before that admonition about anger.

But why listen if I already know what others need to hear? Perhaps James is suggesting that when I don’t listen and when I am quick to speak, the only opinion I seem to care about is my own. That’s an ego problem.

And, if I am then quick to anger, that’s also an ego problem, especially if someone had the nerve to suggest that what I had to say was not the wisest thing they had ever heard.

When my anger comes from my own hurt little ego, James is certainly right that “anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.”

We’ve heard that John McCain had a temper -- that he could become quite angry at times. And, perhaps that anger sometimes had to do with his ego. But he also became angry when he saw injustice and inequality and the disregarding of our American values and the disrespecting of persons. But, however hot his anger may have been at times, he was also ready to reach out to those against whom that anger may have been aimed.

As followers of Christ, I hope and pray we don’t allow our egos to lead us to anger before we have carefully been attentive and listened. And, as followers of Christ, I also hope and pray that we will be responsible in strongly and at times angrily opposing injustice and inequality, while allowing God’s righteousness to be at work in our own lives, even as we seek to work for God’s righteousness in the world.

*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!*

The Journey ... I begin to see the Light – Larry Bowermaster

My journey begins with Mr. Beck dozing in his pew in the tiny Hydesville Community Church. I was about 7 years old and sitting with my friend Mike, as we wiggled and squirmed through the sermon. Mr. Beck, a hard-working but elderly rancher, was trying to catch a few winks, but to no avail – Mrs. Beck kept him alert with her elbow. In Sunday school, we were taught Bible verses and the books of the Bible, worked on Apostle coloring books and popcicle stick crosses. My attendance at church was spotty over these years. But when I was about 11, we learned about an upcoming summer camp.

The thought of a week at summer camp sounded great, but CHURCH camp – I wasn't so sure about that. But, the decision was easy since mom thought it was a good idea. Summer rolled around and off I went to camp. The camp was held at a small but primitive park in a nice redwood grove along a local river. Meals and tents were provided, but we had to bring standard camping gear – sleeping bag, swimsuit, Bible, flashlight, etc. Daytime activities included Bible verses and stories, craft projects, swimming and more. After dinner, we all went to the big revival tent. Songs were sung, Bible verses read and of course, the Bible-quoting minister reminded us of our sins and transgressions.

Meals were always entertaining. The food was assembled in the outdoor cook shack. After the blessing, we shuffled past the shack and had the food carefully slopped onto our sectioned trays, then we sat down to enjoy the meal. We ate at picnic tables under the majestic trees, requiring us to be on constant lookout for falling redwood needles in our food. Sometimes our meals had a woodsy flavor. Other than the cook shack, the only other buildings were the outhouses. To find them at night, flashlights were needed. One night after the evening sermon, my friend Mike came to me in a dither. "My flashlight fell into the outhouse and it's my Dad's. We have to get it out!" So off we went to the scene of the crime. Arriving at the odiferous pit we immediately were blessed with good news – I peeked in and **I saw the light!** The flashlight was still working! We opted to leave the light in the pit. On the last night of camp, we gathered around a big bonfire. As a part of theatrical drama, the minister encouraged each of us to toss a stick onto the bright fire. With this stick ablaze, God would burn away our sins and enter our hearts. Wow. This sounded like a real good deal so I picked up a stick. Additionally, the minister said God may call us to serve Him in some specific way. **The Flames Of The Fire Appeared To Flicker.**

Yikes. I was terrified that if I tossed the stick I would be summoned by the good Lord to spread his Word and become a Bible-packing, fire and damnation preacher just like we listened to all week. GULP. For a career choice, I had really been thinking more along the lines of a truck driver, professional hunter, or jungle explorer. Well, I opted to **not** throw the stick. But, it certainly got me thinking about religion and life.... **The light glowed.**

Church life eluded me until the early 1970s. After Cheri and I were married in 1971, we started attending the Methodist Church in Rancho Cordova. Here... **the light was rekindled.** Moving to Eureka in 1999, we joined the First Presbyterian Church where I got involved with a few committees and a few groups over the 34 years we lived there ... **and the light grew.**

In 2014 we moved to Elk Grove and started looking for a church. We visited a few but really liked the coziness and welcoming feeling of this very church. What really sealed the deal was early in the Christmas season, Randy, the minister, announced that the church would be decorated on the upcoming Saturday, so please come help. On that Saturday, I decided to stop by to see how the decorating was going. Well, it was going just fine. In fact, it looked like almost everyone in church was now here decorating. Again welcomed by a number of you people, I stayed and helped with decorating. **The light brightened.**

Sometime the next year, our church sent out pledge cards for money and time. I don't really remember checking the box for "Worship Assistant" but the good Lord must have guided my hand. Within a week I was contacted and thanked for volunteering to be an assistant and then asked, "so what Sundays would you like to assist"? I think my response was just a long pause and a blank stare. Taking on the worship assistant duties was not in my comfort level. I blinked, swallowed and when I started breathing again I mumbled something like "well I guess I can do it, yes, I **can** do that." So here I am!

The light grows brighter as my journey continues.



I will walk by faith even when I cannot see.
2 Corinthians 5:7

HAPPY 90TH BIRTHDAY TO LORNA UNO



The congregation celebrated Lorna Uno's 90th birthday during church hospitality hour on July 15, 2018. Pastor Dexter shared this beautiful tribute to honor one of our most favorite people.

Lorna – As a part of this morning's worship service, we are pleased to join in celebrating your 90th birthday, which was actually on Tuesday, the 10th.

There are actually a lot of birthdays and anniversaries this month and I want to send greetings to all those others, too. But, #90 is worth special note. And we're glad family members are here to help us celebrate.

Lorna, on behalf of all of us, I want to say "THANK YOU".

--Thank you for giving us a reason for a celebration. We enjoy celebrations.

--Thank you for giving us "*young people*" a positive role model for our own years ahead.

--Thank you for being a living reminder of a dark chapter in our nation's history.

--And, thank you for being a witness to how God can mysteriously and wonderfully work even in dark times.

--And, thank you – as the Psalmist wrote – for being open to that moving of God in your life.

Writer Brian McLaren has words that I think apply to your personal history, as well as to all of us as individuals, and to our collective history – as a church, as a nation. He wrote.

"...by history I don't simply mean the objective record of what we did and what happened to us. Rather, our history is how we understand and interpret what we did and how we understand and interpret what happened to us. The differences and tensions between what happened and how we interpret and understand what happened are highly nuanced and highly interesting. And the ways we recount and retell our history form our identity."

Lorna, thank you for what you have done with your history:

--for being open to God...

--and for becoming such a blessing to us and so many others.

HAPPY #90th Birthday! --- AMEN

CELEBRATIONS CONTINUE: On August 11, 2018, **Dale Chilcoat** welcomed his **80th** year with a party hosted by his family. There were many memorable moments, but some of the highlights included exceptional music from Virginia Ayers Dawson and Jacqui Hairston, a wonderful dance performance by Doris Williams (which inspired others to join in), great food and a beautiful summer's evening. We give grateful thanks for Dale and for all the gifts, talents, merriment, floral bouquets, leadership and wisdom he brings to EGPC. Dale, may continued blessings be heaped upon you. AMEN



EXCHANGE OF THE PEACE – DIANE LOWE



Why do we “share the peace” during Sunday worship service? It is an act of reconciliation. Jesus said: “...*first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.*”

“*Peace of the Lord be with you*” is an ancient greeting of brothers and sisters in Christ. What is acknowledged as most important between us is the peace of Christ that passes all understanding. We greet one another with some words of the peace of Christ as common forgiven sinners. As we are forgiven, so we forgive.

The benefit of passing the peace is that the time is given to celebrate this gathering, the primary symbol of Christ present among us. The drawback is that it can be seen as a time just to move about and greet friends. The sharing of God’s peace can be lost and the tie may be more about saying “good morning” or having other conversation. We share this exchange as a sign of our baptismal unity as children of God. The passing of the peace stresses what the community has in common – the grace of God in Christ that holds us all in communion with one another regardless of how we feel about it. Also, important is that this practice invites hospitality to visitors.

BIBLE STUDY – JUDY LEWIS

Bible study will resume on **Thursday, Sept. 13th at 7 PM** at the church. We will begin studying the Book of Romans. More formal than Paul’s other letters, Romans sets forth the doctrine of justification by faith (and its ramifications) in a systematic way. The theme of the epistle is the righteousness of God. A number of basic Christian doctrines are discussed: natural revelation, universality of sin, justification, propitiation, faith, original sin, union with Christ, the election and rejection of Israel, spiritual gifts and respect for government. Paul was anxious to minister in this church that was already widely known, so he wrote the letter to prepare the way for his visit. Many have stated that this book is the most important of all the New Testament books. Let’s explore! See you on Sept. 13th.

TRIP TO COLUMBIA – JUDY LEWIS

Join us for our 2nd annual trip to the Columbia Fallon Playhouse on **Nov. 15th, 2018** where we will see the play “Away in the Basement”. Tickets for the play are selling quickly, so sign-ups are needed by **Sept. 15**. Tickets are \$32.00 plus \$2.00 handling fee. The plan is to meet at the church at 9 AM for the bus ride to Columbia. The bus is courtesy of Merrilee and Simon Engle. Please contact Judy Lewis with questions.

The play is set in 1959 when the loveable church ladies are dealing with a potentially disastrous Sunday School Christmas Program. With holiday preparations and love in the air, life inside and outside the basement always has surprises in store. Can the ladies once again be counted on to step in and save the day?

SMALL GROUP DINNER – PHOEBE HSU

The next small group dinner is scheduled for **Saturday, Sept. 29th** at 5:00 PM. If you can host a dinner in your home or would like to attend a dinner, please sign up or contact Phoebe at: phoebe1128@cs.com

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Don't miss the women's luncheon at Terri Bacon's house (8009 Solomon Drive), **Wednesday, Sept. 12th at 11:00**. Chef Bob Bacon will demonstrate proper knife skills while he prepares a light lunch for us. Sign up at church or email Terri at baconazca@surewest.net to RSVP. The Women's Ministry group is starting a new project with this meeting. If you want to contribute a package of disposable diapers (any size diaper, any size package) they will be delivered to Chicks in Crisis. We will do this at all our regular meetings in the coming year.

A MINUTE FOR MISSION – TERRI BACON

Our congregation knows a lot about helping kids. We start with our own life experience (we have LOTS of that) and add a large helping of compassion. As a congregation we have:

1. Provided hundreds of dollars for school supplies for the kids at Mary Tsukamoto School.
2. Helped support an Armenian Village kindergarten.
3. Provided \$1,000 for a scholarship for a first generation college student in Elk Grove.
4. Helped build three schools in Honduras.
5. Adopted families at Christmas.
6. Helped fit shoes on kids as part of the Share a Sole project.
7. Given thousands of pounds of food to the Elk Grove Food Bank.
8. Helped support African children through our support of missionaries Jeff and Christi Boyd.
9. Initiated a diaper program for Chicks in Chris through the Women's Ministry group.

I'd like to highlight two of our projects.

DIAPERS – The Women's Ministry group has decided to collect disposable diapers (any size or amount) at our regular meetings. We will make sure they are delivered to Chicks in Crisis.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP – We have donated \$1,000 for a 2019 EGPC scholarship for a first generation college student. The applicant will apply through the Elk Grove Regional Scholarship Foundation and will write an essay describing how their academic goals will help build a better community and world. This scholarship was partially funded by a \$500 donation from Simon and Merrilee Engle. The funds were matched by donations from the congregation.



SANCTUARY CLEANING UPDATE – SHARON CHILCOAT

A big "thank you" is extended to the folks who have been cleaning our sanctuary so faithfully through the summer. Nick Kehm needed a break after so many years of doing this very important task. The Lapachets, Bacons, Helmichs, and Doris Williams all pitched in to help. Doris discovered she enjoys doing this task and has taken over the lion's share of weeks. Consequently, we do not need any more volunteers at this time. So, thanks to these people and all of you who share your time and talent to support EGPC.

JEWISH PERSPECTIVES – JUDY LEWIS

Sept. 9th - Rosh Hashanah - New Year



The ancient Rabbis believed that the Lord created the world in the first week of the month of Tishri. Therefore, the first day of the seventh month is considered the beginning of creation and the beginning of the year. Three things are important for this holiday. First, it is a call of repentance. Second, it was to remind the Lord that He was in covenant relationship with His people Israel and to deal gently with them, not according to their merits but according to His gracious promises specially made to Abraham and to the patriarchs of

old. Third, the blowing of the Shofar, or ram's horn, was to confound and to confuse Satan, who, the Rabbis thought, had a special predilection of accusing Israel on New Year's Day, bringing up before the Lord all their shortcomings and sins.



Sept. 16th - Yom Kippur - Day of Atonement

Yom Kippur is a solemn fast day. For 24 hours from sundown to sunset, Jews the world over, young and old, male and female, assemble in synagogues and places of prayer, to seek atonement with God and forgiveness for all their sins. It is the Day of Judgment and Reckoning.

Sept. 23 - Sukkot - Feast of the Tabernacles

The last of the three times each year that Jews are commanded to go to Jerusalem to celebrate. Apart from its agricultural character, the Feast of Tabernacles also commemorates God's mighty deliverance of His people from Egypt and their 40 years of wilderness wandering, when they dwelt in tents and tabernacles.



Oct. 14th - Simchath Torah – The Rejoicing over the Law



It arose in the early centuries when the system of reading the Law of Moses in the synagogues during the period of one year was established. On the Day of Rejoicing over the Law, the reading of the Book of Deuteronomy was completed and Genesis begun. These scrolls, "The lively oracles of God," are the most precious possession of Israel. Men lived and died to preserve these for the generations yet unborn.

EVENING OF ART REVIEW – SUSAN MORRISON

Those lucky enough to have attended Dale Chilcoat's "EVENING OF ART" presentation on August 24th were treated to a master class in art appreciation.

Dale transformed our sanctuary into a candlelit classroom / art gallery. Dale's passion for art, his experience as a professor and his talent for telling stories made the art come alive. The EGPC sanctuary was filled (almost to capacity) with both familiar faces and visitors. What an incredible evening. Definitely a 5 star review. **Bravo and ENCORE!!!**

COMMUNITY OUTREACH THOUGHTS

Hello Church Members and Friends:

Fall and winter will soon be here. It will be time for cooler temperatures, wind and rain. Time to appreciate the warmth and comforts of home. Time to start thinking of the joy of the holidays and the reunions of family, friends and neighbors.



It is also the time to give thanks and count our many blessings -- Blessings such as health and of the grace of the Spirit. For me, fall is the time for self-reflection and spiritual renewal with an increased awareness of those less fortunate and challenged. For me, it is a time when I reflect upon my own accomplishments in service to my family, my church, my neighbors and the community. I feel it is also a time to renew an emphasis to serve and consider new ways to touch and embrace others with the Spirit.

During the fall and winter seasons, think about some of the ways you can serve others. Serving can be simple and small. It does not need to be big in scope. Think of a way to reach out and touch someone less fortunate. Let the Spirit be kindled within you and let the Spirit be known to others through your actions in service and compassion to others. Thanks be to God for his grace to us.

Mike Van De Pol
EGPC Community Outreach Team

We need your spirit, thoughts, ideas and commitment. Please consider helping this valuable ministry team. Please contact Mike Van De Pol if you wish to participate. All are welcome. Thank you and God bless.

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:

PASTOR: Dexter McNamara
LOCATION: 8153 Elk Grove Blvd., #50
Elk Grove, CA 95758
916-683-1435 (Church)
916-717-2995 (Cell)
dexmcna@yahoo.com

Website: <http://elkgrovepresbyterian.com>
email: elkgrovepres@gmail.com



*****LEADERSHIP TEAM*****

ELDERS:

Bob Huggett -- Property
Liz Irons --Admin/Clerk of Session
Mike Van De Pol -- Outreach
Terri Bacon—Mission & Evangelism
Judy Lewis-- Education
Sharon Chilcoat--Communication
Phoebe Hsu--Nurture
Diane Lowe--Worship
Richard Bristow—Budget

DEACONS:

Cheri Bowermaster
Larry Bowermaster
Patty Huggett
Kathy Wong
Marie Galustian
Marlene Laufer