



# SEEDS

The Newsletter of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos

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2020-2021 PWPLRCT

2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER 2020

April 19, 2020

Dear Sisters in Christ,

As I sit at the computer reflecting upon my quarterly note to you, I glanced at my hands which normally would display colorfully manicured gel nails (a way to treat myself after I retired 😊). Instead, I see the latest style called 2/3- polish and 1/3 cuticle 🤖! Now this is a poorly crafted example, but, indeed, it serves to point out something so small that we take for granted.

As of today, it has been about four weeks that we have been confining ourselves at home as germ-free as possible, wearing masks and gloves and practicing social distancing of at least six feet when going out. These are definitely troubled times. Times we never expected or have lived through. Millions out of work or working at home, schools closed, long lines, necessary items in short supply. Essential workers, healthcare providers, firemen, police, dangerously at risk... the list goes on. Loved ones are not only catching the coronavirus but many have left this world. Our World is in turmoil. Jobs and economy are uncertain. Maybe we will have a new normal established.

When is the right time to reopen our businesses? When will there be a vaccine? Sometimes I feel that the future is so uncertain. How could this happen? When will it end? I find I could be worried about this 24/7, and yet, somehow, I find myself remaining calm as I remind myself that Christ is right here, right now assuring me that all will be well. After all, last week was Easter and what better way to remind ourselves that Jesus is alive in us and will never leave us. Despite the tragedy of this pandemic, have you seen the miracles occurring time after time? Brave men and women who are on the front lines hour after hour, people stepping outside themselves to help each other and, crossing all boundaries, not "me first" but "you first before me", neighbors helping neighbors, and the list goes on.....So much hope for our world.

And how about you? You are all in my thoughts and prayers. I keep wondering how each of you are handling this crisis. How are you connecting at each of your churches? How about with your women and your friends? Are you keeping in touch by phone or by note? Or how about Zoom? Is your family shopping for you and dropping stuff off? Are you bored? Tired of TV? Outdoors walking whenever you can? How about your neighbors? If you are living alone, how about the constant stillness? If you are with someone, are you enjoying each other more? Feeling cramped for space?



We of the CT would love to know what kinds of things you are doing to keep connected. Not knowing how long this will last, we would love to hear specifically what your stories are by ***Staying Connected***.

For example, On Friday mornings a group of my church women get together by Zoom and have coffee. We are each in our house, we can see one another on the computer, iPad or audio alone on the phone, coffee in hand. A couple of the gals meet for daily walks while social distancing. Meals are brought over to friends. Neighbors putting lawn chairs next to the street facing each other and catching up. (Remember growing up when there were chats over the fence?) How about holding your Circle and Bible study by Zoom? Friends play bridge or board games by special apps and conferencing FaceTime by phone. Be creative!

Please call, text or email me (714-501-4399 or [annesivley@aol.com](mailto:annesivley@aol.com)), or let your Cluster Leader know any need you may have, or just connect when she gets in touch. I would love to make a list and find out what you do to make life matter to you and your friends. Although we think these are the worst of times, can't we find the rainbow to make this the best of times? You matter to us and we want you to know!!

Love and Blessings,  
Anne Sivley, Moderator of PWPLR

"A little consideration, a little thought  
for others, makes all the difference."  
— Winnie the Pooh



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“Friendship is the source of the greatest pleasures, and without friends even the most agreeable pursuits become tedious.”  
—Thomas Aquinas

“Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays.”  
—Soren Kierkegaard



“Do not waste time bothering whether you “love” your neighbor; act as if you did. As soon as we do this we find one of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved someone you will presently come to love him.”  
—CS Lewis

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## Postponed Events:

- PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN IN THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS 2020 Spring Gathering, *"Asylum Defined Part 2"*, Saturday, May 2, at First Presbyterian Church of Fullerton, 838 N. Euclid St., Fullerton.
- PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN IN THE SYNOD OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AND HAWAII, *"Love Abides Within the Intersections of Love and Identity"*, 9:30 a.m., Saturday, May 30, at Westminster Gardens, 1420 Santo Domingo Avenue, Duarte.

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## Lent in a Time of Epidemic - Musings by Jim Burklo

Lent 2020

Let us fast from hugging and handshaking  
And let us feast on bowing and waving.  
Let us fast from hoarding food and toilet paper  
And let us feast on the food in the back of our pantries.  
Let us fast from gathering physically  
And let us feast on communing virtually.  
Let us fast from obsessing about the future  
And let us feast on the everyday wonders of the present.  
Let us fast from casting blame for our troubles  
And let us feast on showing compassion for the most vulnerable.  
Let us fast on being scared  
And let us feast on getting prepared.  
Let us fast from fear  
And let us feast on the perfect Love that casts it out

<https://www.facebook.com/CACouncilofChurches>

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## WAYS TO STAY/BECOME CONNECTED:

- ❖ Web Conferencing for bible study, book discussions, virtual lunch, or ??? using Zoom or Facetime or ??
- ❖ Chain (add to and email to next; replace yours when receive back) or send out multiple receiver emails
- ❖ Mail (snail or email) a 'just on account of because card' to let someone know you are thinking of them
- ❖ Call to say 'hi, how are you doing?'
- ❖ Reconnect with someone
- ❖ Smile at stranger and say, 'Good morning' or Thank you or 'How are You?'; acknowledge their existence

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**THANK GOD EVERY DAY FOR THE DAY**

**COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS**

**SAY I LOVE YOU TO THOSE YOU LOVE**

# I Am Grateful

My heart is heavy thinking about all those whose lives and livelihood have been touched by all this coronavirus pandemic that has spread all around the world. What was so far away is suddenly so close. How desperate others must feel, and so isolated and worried about their future and their economic situation. How very alone and afraid others must feel. The very future... is very scary indeed! In times like these I cannot help but look inwards to the gratefulness I feel at this time in my life. . . .

I am, first and foremost, grateful to God for all that I am and for all that I have. I am eternally blessed with my loving family of Harry, Shirley and my grandchildren, Matthew and Jacqueline. I love each of them so much and am so proud of all they have become. This love expands to include my dear brother, his wife and their family. They all mean the world to me despite the physical distances between us as we are dotted across the U.S. They are forever in my heart and in my prayers. I am ever so grateful for the iPhone, internet and technology that keeps us close where distance cannot.

I am ever so thankful for the special parents I had. I know they loved me and did the very best they could. I am indebted to them for introducing me to God and for providing for my education which prepared me to teach all those 50 years. I know that one day we will be reunited in love up above. With deep gratitude and thanksgiving, I developed an inner strength and courage that took root and resulted in the me of today. How sad that I am that my parents sacrificed so much for us after both having prepared for careers... but most grateful to have created me and my two bros whom I love dearly both here and above.

I am so thankful to have a roof over my head, food to eat and money to pay my bills. I cherish all the loving friends and family I have to "keep me company", especially in times like these. I can't imagine how desperate I'd feel if I didn't have relationships including long-term and recent... the internet, the cell phone, the computer, the TV. I am ever so grateful for the ability to walk, talk, speak, think, feel. . . . Gratiied for memories of both long ago and now; thankful for not only the ability to disappear into memories and imagination when the going gets tough, but for having found true love which has been such a gift. Yes, I am ever appreciative of all the disparaging times and for the ability to look for the positive in the toughest of situations, and for discovering the warmth that I feel when I show love to mankind.

I am grateful for... the tiny birds and their sweet songs, the sounds and smells of the outdoor streams, the snow-covered mountain peaks, the awesome sunsets at the end of the day, the brilliance of the rising sun first thing in the morn, the sounds of children frolicking on a playground, the whistle of a train as it streams by, the beauty of Spring as it peaks its head, the ring of the words, "I'm home for the day!". . . .

The list goes on and on but..., I am grateful to God who created the universe and presides over all. For you see, without God, I wouldn't be here at all!! Because of my belief and my profound faith in Jesus Christ and the triune God, I can know, without a doubt, that God will be with me wherever I am - whether it be in this world or the next in Heaven. I am never alone. For all I have is today and I am, oh, so grateful. I am not afraid. Yesterday is gone; I can't worry about tomorrow for today has enough troubles of its own. I will rejoice because I am here, and I have today. I will do and be the best that I can be! For you see... Just for Today... I AM. . . FOREVER GRATEFUL!



Anne Sivley

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## ***Change your outlook on gratitude and put things into perspective with these inspirational quotes***

- "At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." – Albert Schweitzer
  - "Gratitude is the fairest blossom which springs from the soul." – Henry Ward Beecher
  - "Gratitude turns what we have into enough." – Anonymous
  - "Gratitude is a powerful catalyst for happiness. It's the spark that lights a fire of joy in your soul." – Amy Collette
  - "Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow." – Melody Beattie
-

# I Am Grateful

## WHAT'S NOT CANCELLED

**"...the joy of the Lord is our strength." Nehemiah 8:10  
With a THANK YOU to David Hasse, we share his prayerful reflections  
with you in this uncertain time of COVID-19:**

*So much has been and will continue to be, for some time, cancelled: sports events, concerts, plays, worship services, rallies, travel, meetings, classes and so much more. However –*

*Love has not been cancelled.  
Mercy has not been cancelled.  
Prayer has not been cancelled.  
Attentiveness has not been cancelled.  
Goodness has not been cancelled.  
Thanksgiving has not been cancelled.  
Loving relationships have not been cancelled.  
Kindness has not been cancelled.  
Music has not been cancelled.  
Conversations have not been cancelled.  
Learning has not been cancelled.  
Poetry and storytelling have not been cancelled.  
Courage has not been cancelled.  
Meditation and contemplation have not been cancelled.  
Painting and dancing have not been cancelled.  
Families have not been cancelled.  
Community and solidarity have not been cancelled.  
Faith has not been cancelled.  
Hope has not been cancelled.*

*And ... God's presence with us, has not been cancelled.*

**Take care of yourselves and your households. What real Lenten "penances and disciplines" we are experiencing in this STAY HOME MANDATE and all that it entails. Aren't we learning lots about *virtual* presence in church? Let us be united in prayer with with one another and those world-wide who have contracted the virus and their families. Know YOU can count on our prayerful remembrance, Your Marianite Sis-tahs**

*Jackie McPheeters  
Threads of Love-Orange County, Inc.  
(714) 854-9272-H  
(714) 296-4208-C*

NOTE: The Marianites of Holy Cross is a Roman Catholic congregation of nuns, founded in Le Mans, France, in 1841, by the Blessed Father Basil Anthony-Marie Moreau, CSC. It was founded as a third distinct society within the Congregation of Holy Cross, that is, the congregation of the priests and brothers of Holy Cross.

# I Am Grateful

Take a moment and breathe in these words of Fr. Richard Hendrick, OFM, written t Friday, March 13, 2020

*Lockdown  
Yes there is fear.  
Yes there is isolation.  
Yes there is panic buying.  
Yes there is sickness.  
Yes there is even death.  
But,  
They say that in Wuhan after so many years of  
noise  
You can hear the birds again.  
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet  
The sky is no longer thick with fumes  
But blue and grey and clear.  
  
They say that in the streets of Assisi  
People are singing to each other  
across the empty squares,  
keeping their windows open  
so that those who are alone  
may hear the sounds of family around them.  
They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland  
Is offering free meals and delivery to the  
housebound.  
Today a young woman I know  
is busy spreading fliers with her number  
through the neighbourhood  
So that the elders may have someone to call  
on.  
Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and  
Temples  
are preparing to welcome  
and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary  
All over the world people are slowing down  
and reflecting*

*All over the world people are looking at their  
neighbours in a new way  
All over the world people are waking up to a  
new reality  
To how big we really are.  
To how little control we really have.  
To what really matters.  
To Love.*

*So we pray and we remember that  
Yes there is fear.  
But there does not have to be hate.  
Yes there is isolation.  
But there does not have to be loneliness.  
Yes there is panic buying.  
But there does not have to be meanness.  
Yes there is sickness.  
But there does not have to be disease of the  
soul  
Yes there is even death.  
But there can always be a rebirth of love.  
Wake to the choices you make as to how to  
live now.  
Today, breathe.  
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic  
The birds are singing again  
The sky is clearing,  
Spring is coming,  
And we are always encompassed by Love.  
Open the windows of your soul  
And though you may not be able  
to touch across the empty square,  
Sing*

Grace and peace,

## Julie Taylor

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[nfwm.org](http://nfwm.org)  
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[flickr.com/photos/nfwm](https://flickr.com/photos/nfwm)

Presbyterian Hunger Program, PCUSA – Rev. Andrew Kang Bartlett  
<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/hunger/>

# I Am Grateful

## STAYING CONNECTED:

Yorba Linda Presbyterian Church 's Thursday Morning Women's Bible Study, TLC (Together Living in Christ), is studying the Psalms by email.

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### Psalms of Trust

23, 11, 16, 27, 46, 52, 62, 63, 91, 121, 125, 129, 131, 61, 91

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My response to reading Psalm 52:8. I enjoy art journaling as I meditate on God's word.  
Brigette Brink



This morning I paused on Psalm 131:2. In the Message it says

"I've kept my feet on the ground, I've cultivated a quiet heart. Like a baby content in its mother's arms, my soul is a baby content." This made me think about my sweet 3 1/2-month-old granddaughter. She does not like to be put down, so I go over and hold her while mommy rests. I love holding her!! So the verse made me think when we rest in God, it makes Him happy also. Resting and not worrying. Just like a baby.  
Brigette Brink



At this time these are the verses & chapters that I found very moving and helpful

Chapter 16 verse 8

Chapter 27 verse 14

Chapter 46 verse 1-2

Chapter 121 verse 7-8

Blessings

LaVerne Stern

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"At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." – Albert Schweitzer

*"Today I choose to live with gratitude for the love that fills my heart, the peace that rests within my spirit, and the voice of hope that says all things are possible."* – Anonymous

"When I started counting my blessings, my whole life turned around." – Willie Nelson

*"You cannot do a kindness too soon because you never know how soon it will be too late."*  
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

"In ordinary life, we hardly realize that we receive a great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich." – Dietrich Bonhoeffer

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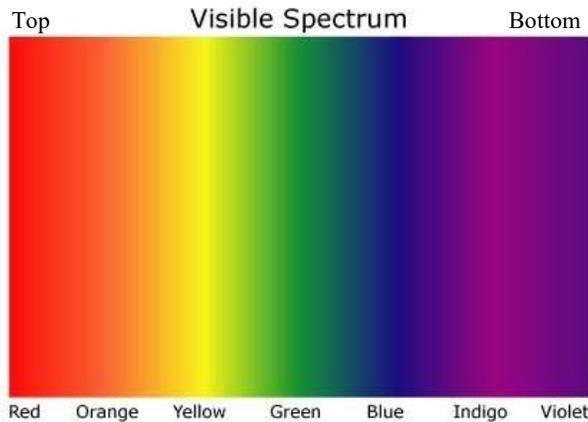
# I Am Grateful

## BEAUTIFUL GOOD FRIDAY

God sent a beautiful full rainbow to Anaheim this afternoon. This picture was taken by my son who lives close to Disneyland. Sandy Wooldridge, Friday, April 10



Every rainbow you see will have these seven colors in this order (from the top of the arc of the rainbow to the bottom of the arc).



Use the mnemonic device ROYGBIV, in which each letter stands for the first letter of the color names (in other words, R is for red, O is for orange, Y is for yellow, etc.). Most people pronounce ROYGBIV in three syllables, making it sound and look more like the name of someone: Roy G. Biv.

## Reminds Me of Sabbath Rest

During this time of sheltering in place I found this speaking to me so clearly. It seems so simple but for me it's difficult to implement. I think it's a good thing and something I will try to implement even after we are released. I hope you enjoy.

Sandy Wooldridge

### In the Moment at Yorba Regional Park

Anne Sivley  
February 20, 2020



Being present in this moment at the Yorba Regional Park, I find myself reflecting and putting my thoughts down in my notes on my cellphone. The beauty I am witnessing at this time of day is precious and ever so calming. My thumb lightly and quickly tries to capture each moment and thought that comes from the center of my being.

As I peer over my reading glasses across and around the lake, there appears to be an absence of ducks today, but in their place, a plethora of black coots hovering together both in and out of the water with a half dozen plus one geese swimming away from them so as not to interfere with whatever they are doing.

People, people everywhere, young, younger, "more mature", moms, dads, babies, grandmas, grandpas, pooches of all varieties mostly walking but some being carried. I find it delightful and wonderful to observe so many individual cultures enjoying the day's outing; yet it seems and feels like everyone has collectively morphed into one gigantic outdoor culture of its own. Strollers, baby buggies, bikes, all kinds and shapes of sidewalk vehicles. As I look to the right of me, I see a young couple cuddling on a park bench near the water, and to the left of me, families laughing, talking and engaged in various and sundry activities.

It's getting chilly now as the sun begins to set and the breeze begins to pick up. The coolness doesn't appear to deter anyone. It's almost like



people don't want to let go of this beautiful sunny yet winter So. Cal day. Families are still strolling along the path. Bundled toddlers peek out of the coverlets in their hooded buggies. Some clearly are out for a stroll while others are more intentional in their gait for

late afternoon exercise. People are sporadically hanging around at picnic tables chatting while still enjoying each other's company. Looking out across the lake, the paddle boats have now been vacated and are centered in a cluster awaiting tomorrow's inhabitants. Even the geese are calling it a day, but not those coots!! Soon they will retire to the trees for the night.

What fun it has been to vacate my mind of mundane household duties and practice being in the moment at Yorba Regional Park.

## LET YOURSELF REST

If you're exhausted, rest.

If you don't feel like starting a new project, don't.

If you don't feel the urge to make something new, just rest in the beauty of the old, the familiar, the known.

If you don't feel like talking, stay silent.

If you're fed up with the news, turn it off.

If you want to postpone something until tomorrow, do it.

If you want to do nothing, let yourself do nothing today.

Feel the fullness of the emptiness, the vastness of the silence, the sheer life in your unproductive moments.

Time does not always need to be filled.

You are enough, simply in your being.

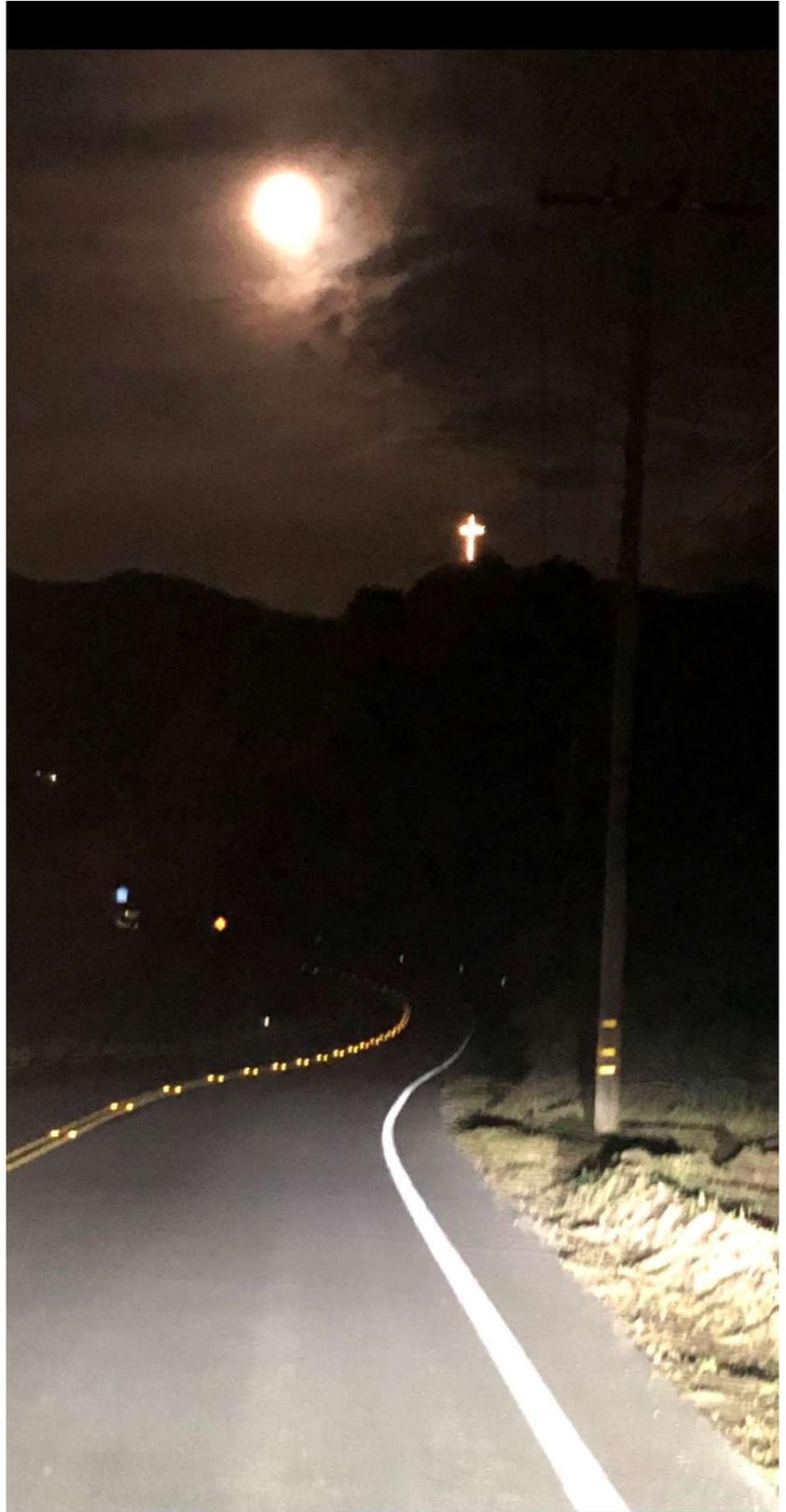
Jeff Foster



# THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD

All thanks to God for the sign of the  
MOON and the CROSS that led me to  
remember that GOD IS IN CHARGE!!

Anne Sivley  
Sunday, April 7



**THE ROAD TO  
SALVATION**

# EASTER

LOS ANGELES, CA (Catholic Online <https://www.catholic.org/lent/story.php?id=76995>)



## 5 BEAUTIFUL SCRIPTURES TO REMIND YOU WHAT EASTER IS ALL ABOUT

THIS IS THE TRUE REASON WE CELEBRATE EASTER. WE CELEBRATE LIFE,  
SACRIFICE AND NEW BEGINNINGS.

***"Jesus said: I am the Way; I am Truth and Life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him." - John 14:6-7***

Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. He is the way to eternity with our Heavenly Father.

***"After Jesus had taken the wine he said, 'It is fulfilled'; and bowing his head he gave up his spirit." - John 19:30***

The words "It is finished" have since become amazing words that ripple through the Christian community. With Christ's death, everything was changed forever. Jesus died for the sins we are all guilty of and allowed us to find redemption, though none of us are truly worthy.

***"The veil of the Sanctuary was torn right down the middle." - Luke 23:45***

The veil of the temple was an enormous curtain representing the divide between man and God. When Christ gave his life for us, the veil was torn and now nothing separates us from the Lord!

***"He is not here; he has risen..." - Luke 24:***

Jesus is alive! God is, and never will be, dead. No one can ever kill Jesus Christ, our Lord God, or the Holy Spirit. They will always live on to encourage us, commune with us, help us and stay by our sides for the rest of our days.

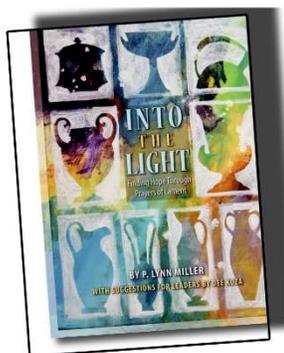
***"Jesus said: I am the resurrection. Anyone who believes in me, even though that person dies, will live," - John 11:25***

The Easter celebration is much more than a memorial to Christ, who died for our sins. It's a celebration of thanks for the greatest gift ever bestowed upon mankind.

**WE HAVE THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE WITH OUR HEAVENLY FATHER AND BENEFIT FROM A LOVING GOD WHO DOESN'T JUST TELL US ABOUT HIS LOVE - HE SHOWS US.**



# Introducing the 2020–2021 PW/Horizons Bible Study!



In this nine-lesson of the study, Lynn Miller revives lament as a proper theological response to the difficult situations of our world. One of the foundational points of the study is that, in scripture, lament usually leads to hope. After crying out to God, the one who laments remembers God. And while that doesn't fix things in the moment—the injustice, the loss still exists—the lamenter is strengthened to face the world and to hope. And for us as Christians, hope is not just an emotional response or an attitude of pie in the sky. Hope implies movement: both God's inherent movement toward justice and our movement toward God. Recovering lament may be one of the church's most timely gifts to the world.

<b>LESSON ONE</b> The Heart of Lament	<b>LESSON TWO</b> Lamenting Alone and Together	<b>LESSON THREE</b> Women's Lament	<b>LESSON FOUR</b> Lamenting Death
<b>LESSON FIVE</b> Lamenting Life	<b>LESSON SIX</b> Lament Over the City	<b>LESSON SEVEN</b> Creation Laments	<b>LESSON EIGHT</b> God Laments
		<b>LESSON NINE</b> The End of Lament	

Ordering is easy!

Shop online at [www.presbyterianwomen.org/shop](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/shop).

Or call 800/533-4371, Monday–Friday, 9 AM–5 PM.

## 2020 Birthday Offering



Since 1922, Presbyterian Women's Birthday Offering has helped fund mission projects that improve lives.

This year's Birthday Offering recipients are:

<p><b>Center for Social Assistance to the Disabled, Family, and Children</b> <b>PREOBRAZHENIYE</b> <b>Assisted Living Facility</b> Davydovo, Russia</p>	<p><b>Community Presbyterian Child Learning Center</b> in Payson, Arizona <b>Childcare and Prekindergarten Facility</b> Presbytery of the Grand Canyon</p>
<p><b>GAP Ministries of Augusta, Georgia</b> <b>Expand Access and Service Space</b> Northeast Georgia Presbytery</p>	<p><b>Liberty Community Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota</b> <b>Northside Healing Space Expansion</b> Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area</p>

**S**UMMER  
BEGINS WITH THE  
**S**UMMER **S**OLSTICE  
Saturday, June 20, 2020



## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PIGEONS AND DOVES?

Look at both birds and answer the following questions:

1. Which bird is a pigeon, and which is a dove?
2. Which is the messier and which is the cleaner?
3. Which bird is referenced in the Bible?



*Read the article/information below to see how you did.*



### ***What's the Difference Between Pigeons and Doves?***

BY HANNAH MCDONALD

AUGUST 17, 2018

To the layman, the difference between pigeons and doves has something to do with color, maybe. Or location. Or general appeal (doves usually get much better press than pigeons do). But what's the actual, scientific difference between doves and pigeons?

As it turns out, there isn't one. Paul Sweet, the collection manager for the department of ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History, says the difference is more linguistic than taxonomic.

"The word *dove* is a word that came into English from the more Nordic languages, whereas *pigeon* came into English from French," Sweet tells Mental Floss.

Both *dove* and *pigeon* refer to the 308 species of birds from the *Columbidae* family, Sweet says. There's no difference between a pigeon and a dove in scientific nomenclature, but colloquial English tends to categorize them by size. Something called a *dove* is generally smaller than something called a *pigeon*, but that's not always the case. A common pigeon, for example, is called both a *rock dove* and a *rock pigeon*.

"People just have their own classification for what makes them different," Sweet says. "So, in the Pacific, for example, the big ones might get called *pigeons* and the smaller ones might be called *doves*, but they're actually more closely related to each other than they are to other things in, say, South America, that are called *pigeons* and *doves*."

The difference boils down to linguistic traditions, so feel free to tell people you're releasing pigeons at your wedding or that you're feeding doves in the park. Scientifically speaking, you'll be correct either way.

<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/554182/what-is-difference-between-pigeons-and-doves>

**Columbiform**, (order Columbiformes), any member of the group of birds that contains the pigeons, doves, dodos, and solitaires. The order Columbiformes is divided into the Raphidae, a family of extinct birds that embraces the dodo and the two species of solitaires, and the Columbidae, a family made up of extinct and living pigeons and doves. The names *pigeon* and *dove* are synonymous and imply no biological distinction.

<https://www.britannica.com/animal/columbiform>

#### **Biblical reference      Leviticus 14:30 (NRSV)**

And he shall offer, of the turtledoves or pigeons such as he can afford,

<https://www.biblegateway.com/verse/en/Leviticus+14:30>

## 5 Bodyweight Moves That Work Nearly Every Muscle in Your Body

By Lauren Bedosky | March 11, 2020

**All you need is a little floor space to build head-to-toe strength and stability.**

If you want to build functional strength and stability, bodyweight exercises are hard to beat. That's true for all levels of exercisers, but especially if you're new to strength training. "It's really important to be able to control your own bodyweight and have good alignment and form before adding additional weight," says Ashley Fluger, C.S.C.S., a sports performance specialist at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York City.

Many bodyweight exercises also work multiple muscle groups, making them an efficient option for building functional strength—meaning the strength you need to perform everyday movements with ease, she says.

Plus, bodyweight exercises are incredibly convenient. All you need is your own body, a little floor space, and maybe a chair, wall, or table.

There's no shortage of options, but the five bodyweight exercises below are some of Fluger's all-time favorites for challenging almost every major muscle group.

### How to Use These Bodyweight Exercises

Fluger suggests two options:

1. **Pick two or three exercises** to string together into a quick, do-anywhere bodyweight workout. This approach works best if you're tight on time or want to supplement your existing routine with some extra strength work. It's also great for people who get bored by doing the same workout again and again—you can pick different moves each time.
2. **Do all five exercises** in order for a longer, full-body strength session.

Whichever approach you choose, start by doing two sets of the suggested number of reps for each exercise, resting 30 to 60 seconds between sets (or more if you need it). Gradually work up to three sets of each exercise as your strength improves.

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"If you can believe it, the mind can achieve it." – Ronnie Lott

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### Bodyweight Exercise #1: Squat



Hip-hinging or squatting movements are a staple of daily life: getting into and out of chairs, bending down to pick something up, using the toilet. That's why this is one exercise all older adults should learn and continue doing as long as they can.

*Do 2 to 3 sets of 8 to 12 reps*

**How to do it:** Stand tall with your feet shoulder- to hip-width apart. Hold your arms straight out in front of you at shoulder level and brace your core. This is your starting position.

From here, push your hips back, and bend your knees to slowly lower your body into a squat, not letting your knees cave in as you do so. Pause, then push through your heels to slowly return to starting position. That's one rep. Perform two to three sets of eight to 12 reps total, resting 30 to 60 seconds between sets.

# Stay in Shape

## Bodyweight Exercise #2: Glute Bridge



As expected, the glute bridge is a great exercise for strengthening the all-important muscles in your glutes, hips, and hamstrings, Fluger says. What you might not realize is this exercise also requires you to activate the muscles in your abdominals and lower back to keep your body stable—so it doubles as a great core exercise.

“Keeping these muscles activated will help you walk and climb stairs, maintain balance, and ease hip or back pain,” Fluger says.

Do 2 to 3 sets of 8 to 12 reps

**How to do it:** Lie on your back with knees bent, feet flat on the floor about hip-width apart and heels a few inches away from your buttocks. Press your arms into the floor for support and brace your core to minimize the arch in your lower back.

From here, push through your heels and squeeze your glutes to lift your hips up until your body forms a straight line from your knees to shoulders. As you get stronger, focus on getting your shins as close to vertical as you comfortably can at the top of the movement. Pause, then slowly lower your hips to return to starting position. That’s one rep. Perform two to three sets of eight to 12 reps, resting for 30 to 60 seconds between sets.

**Make it harder:** Try the marching glute bridge. Lift your hips to the raised position. Keeping your hips raised, lift one knee to your chest, lower it back down, lift your other knee to your chest, and lower it back down. Lower your hips to return to starting position and repeat.

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“The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a person’s determination.” – Tommy Lasorda

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## Bodyweight Exercise #3: Modified Pushup



The pushup is often credited as an upper-body exercise, but in addition to working your chest, shoulders, arms, and back, it also strengthens your core, quads, and glutes, Fluger says, because “[a] lot of muscles are working,” She adds that perfecting your pushup will help you with a wide range of everyday tasks, including pushing grocery carts, lifting grandchildren, and even maintaining great posture.

Do 2 to 3 sets of 8 to 12 reps

**How to do it:** Stand facing a table, dresser, or wall. The taller the object or the more upright you are, the easier the move. Place your hands on the edge, slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Move your feet back until you are at a comfortable angle, keeping arms straight and perpendicular to your body.

Bend your elbows to slowly lower your chest toward the object, pause, and then press back up to straighten your arms. Keep your body straight throughout the entire movement, making sure to engage your abs and squeeze your rear. That’s one rep. Perform two to three sets of eight to 12 reps, resting 30 to 60 seconds between sets.

**Make it harder:** Lower your hands to the floor to perform traditional pushups.

## Stay in Shape

### Bodyweight Exercise #4: Stepup



Single-leg exercises like stepups are an essential part of a well-rounded strength routine. These exercises train each leg to be strong and stable independently of the other, which helps iron out any imbalances, Fluger says. While stepups primarily target the muscles in your lower body, your entire core has to engage to help maintain your balance.

*Do 2 to 3 sets of 6 to 8 reps*

**How to do it:** Stand in front of a step. Start with a low step, increasing the height for a challenge. If you like, perform the move next to a wall for support.

Set your left foot on the step, push down through your heel, and lift yourself up until your leg is straight. Step down. That's one rep. Perform six to eight reps or as many as you comfortably can, then repeat on the opposite side. That's one set. Do two to three sets, resting 30 to 60 seconds between sets.

**Make it harder:** Once you've mastered the bodyweight stepup, it's time to add some resistance. Grab a pair of light dumbbells and hold them at your sides with palms facing your body as you perform the movement.

### Bodyweight Exercise #5: Bird Dog



The bird dog is a great multitasking strengthener with an emphasis on your core. “Your core—which includes the glutes, hips, abdominals, and deep core muscles that support your spine—plays a key role in just about everything you do, including walking, standing, sitting down, and rolling over in bed,” Fluger says.

During this movement, you have to control your arms and legs while they're moving, Fluger says. That requires engaging your muscles from head to toes to keep your body stable and avoid toppling over.

*Do 2 to 3 sets of 6 to 8 reps*

**How to do it:** Start on all fours with your hands below shoulders and knees below hips. Engage your abs, keep your spine neutral, and gaze down or slightly forward.

Lift your left arm and extend your right leg until they are in line with the rest of your body. Pause, then lower back down, and repeat on the opposite side with right arm and left leg extended. That's one rep. Perform two to three sets of six to eight reps total, resting 30 to 60 seconds between sets.

**Make it easier:** Keep your hands on the floor, and only extend your leg.

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You can't get much done in life if you only work on the days when you feel good.” – Jerry West

“Do not let what you can not do interfere with what you can do.” – John Wooden

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