

# First Presbyterian Church of Alma

May 2022 Newsletter

In the Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program we have focused on Adaptive Leadership, found in a book written by Ronald Heifetz. The idea is that there are technical solutions and adaptive solutions to problems. I might have mentioned this theory before, but I think it's really important.

Technical solutions are easier to navigate because it is something that has been tried before, could be found in a manual, that is a trusted solution. For example, if my car has a flat tire, I know that I either have to put a new tire on it or have it towed somewhere—those solutions should work nearly every time.

Adaptive solutions are more complicated and varied and vague. They haven't been tried before. The pandemic is an example of an adaptive challenge. At first we didn't know much about COVID-19 and we all stayed home for months—something we never had done before as an entire country. Then, we tried masking and distancing, and we've seen what has worked and what hasn't. Our responses to the pandemic have been adaptive solutions.

The pandemic is a large scale adaptive challenge, but we face adaptive challenges all the time. The church (as a whole) has faced an adaptive challenge for decades. As numbers of members have declined (for various reasons we could explore but don't have the time here) churches have asked, "What's next?" Every church has tried a variety of solutions: knocking on doors, changing the name of the church, changing the music, opening a coffee house ministry, selling the building. Some of these have worked, some of the time, in some situations. This is an adaptive challenge—there is no one solution for all, and so churches are having to be creative and do new ways of ministry they have never done before.

The session had some of this conversation as we discussed the committee restructure within the church. Feedback from committee and session members told me that the organizational structure wasn't working. It was changed a few years ago to try to lessen the stress of members who were doing too much. The concept was phenomenal, but as you all lived into the solution, you found you needed a new solution. So, the session had a called meeting on April 25 to restructure. The outcome is on page three of this newsletter. This is a smaller technical piece of a larger adaptive challenge. As we talked about restructuring, we also asked questions like, "what is our goal as a congregation?" and "how do we connect with the community and college?" These are questions that are important and will shape our future.

Important notes about the restructure—Outreach was part of Spiritual Growth, but is it's own committee again. Building and Grounds was with Finance and Endowment, but they are separate again. Oversight is no longer a committee. This probably looks similar to former structures. Here's what might shift as we restructure. I've asked each committee to consider the following at each meeting over the next few months:

How are decisions/events communicated to the congregation? *(The committee is responsible for figuring out the best communication strategy—it might be newsletter, bulletin, announcement—and to make sure that information gets to the appropriate person).*

What opportunities arose from this meeting that we could include the college or community? *(Rather than having one committee focus on college relations, we hope to have everyone thinking about how to integrate the building of this relationship).*

How is your committee involved in Matthew 25: eradicating systemic poverty, ending structural racism, and creating congregational vitality? *(Or, how is it not).*

This is good and faithful work, and we are in this together. The session discussed how we will live with this new structure for a while, and see how it does. It might need to be changed a little along the way, but we will be adaptive. I welcome questions and comments and thoughts as we navigate through this adaptive challenge.

Peace,

Rev. Katrina

**Session Notes:**

**April 18, 2022**

- We continue to monitor COVID-19 and cases have been low in our county
- Marsha Turner was elected Treasurer for another year (thanks, Marsha!)
- Nominating Committee is meeting to nominate one ruling elder for session and two members for the next nominating committee
- A called meeting happened April 25 to discuss committee structure
- Next meeting May 23 at 6.30pm



**Alma College Happenings:**

As we begin this new partnership with the college, you can find exciting news and events here each month. During the month of May students will be doing a creative worship service at 4pm in the Chapel, creating Mobile Altars, followed by dinner at 5pm. All are welcome! Go Scots!

On Thursday, May 5 from 12-5 you are invited to help Nicki Crump with her final art project! During that time she will be at the Clack Art Center where you are invited to roll out some clay to help make a bread basket for the Chapel communion set. Nicki would love for church members to participate in this! No artistic talent necessary!

During the summer there will be some students on campus working. Our hope is to support those students through the summer by letting them know we're thinking of them, and maybe providing a cookout or picnic. If you're interested, please contact Rev. Katrina.



Do you have information you'd like to provide for the newsletter?

Have you moved and would like your address shared with the congregation via the newsletter?

What sort of information would you like to read here?

Send your thoughts and comments to Rev. Katrina for future newsletters: [pastor@firstpres.net](mailto:pastor@firstpres.net)



**Rev. Katrina's Schedule:**

Monday—Wednesday at First Pres—these days I'm around for visits, meetings, and I'm almost always in the office Mondays from 9-2. I'm in and out the other days, but happy to schedule something if you send an email!

Thursdays I am at the college, unless there is a pastoral emergency

Friday is my day off and I do not respond to emails



**Committee Restructuring (C= Chair; L = Liaison to Session)**

Personnel—Sue Malone (C) Joyce Elsea (L)

Nominating—(currently open)

Outreach—Sue Malone (C & L)

Spiritual Growth—Jeri Piccolo (C& L) - *includes worship, Presbyterians, Christian Ed, and Stewardship*

Building and Grounds—Mark Jewell (c) Bryan Dinwoody (L)

Finance and Endowment—Chuck Fortino (C & L)

(This does not affect deacons)



MATTHEW 25

Join us for worship  
in Fellowship Hall  
on Sunday, May  
15!



# May 2022

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1	2 9.30am Linus Ladies	3 Food Pantry 1.30-3	4 5.30 Book Study	5 12-5 Nicki Crump Art Project Clack Community Café 5.30	6	7
8	9 9.30am Linus Ladies	10 Food Pantry 1.30-3 7pm Spiritual Growth	11 5.30 Book Study	12 Community Café 5.30	13	14
15  MATTHEW 25 Worship in Fellowship Hall	16 9.30am Linus Ladies Rev. Katrina at Wabash Pastoral Leadership	17 Food Pantry 1.30-3	18	19 Community Café 5.30	20	21
22 Love Inc., speaker after worship	23 9.30am Linus Ladies	24 Food Pantry 1.30-3	25 5.30 Book Study	26 Community Café 5.30	27	28 Highland Festival
29 Highland Festival	30 9.30am Linus Ladies Memorial Day Office Closed	31 Food Pantry 1.30-3				