



First Church Tucson Weekly Digest

Season Well

By Paul Cho on August 24th, 2020

One of the more memorable expressions I have learned in recent years is “seasoned.” I do not mean the seasoning of food, though I confess that since the pandemic I am seasoning my foods with more variety than I have in the past. In conversations among people of faith, there comes a time when we must address the elderly, the senior, the aged, etc. It is at times like these that we use the expression “more seasoned” as opposed to saying “older” or “elderly.” I came to appreciate the expression because it nuances a kind of quality that the “young” do not yet possess. While the “young” have their own qualities (and they are not shy to boast), I tend to believe that the seasoned have much to offer. Resilience, calmness, and a knack for humor are among the qualities I think our “seasoned” siblings offer from their wealth of experience.

I think of Jesus’ words, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” (Jn 10:10b) Or, as Eugene Peterson interprets, “I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of!” (MSG). Clearly, Jesus is talking about us having and experiencing the abundant life in Christ. But this is John we are talking about! And the gospel of John uniquely states “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being...” (Jn 1:1-3)

So, we not only experience life abundant through Christ Jesus, but by extension we experience life abundant through everything that has come into being.
Rejoice! Stars and celestial things! Rejoice! Furry babies and creatures with wings!
Music and fine arts! Korean dramas and American rom-coms! (Albeit, you will have to work extra hard to look for the glory of God in television, but it is possible!)

All that to say, there is much joy in our world, even as we straddle the biggest health, economical, and ecological challenge we have ever faced.

One of the greatest joys we have is in learning, in expanding our minds, in developing ourselves. Not to boast and certainly not to prove to anyone, but simply accepting the humble truth that there is much in our world that reveals the glory of God.

Indeed, learning helps us to season well. Certainly, among Christians, to remain teachable is perhaps the greatest virtue we have as disciples of Christ.

I came across an article in the Arizona Daily Star by Adina Wingate titled “Virtual classes aimed at helping older adults.” In it, she describes the Aging Mastery Program by PCOA (Pima Council on Aging). *“The Aging Mastery Program aims to change societal expectations about the roles and responsibilities of older adults over time and to create fun and easy-to-follow pathways for getting more out of life.”*

If you asked me, it sounds awfully familiar. They are offering a 10-week series of classes beginning in September, but you need to register by this Friday, August 28th. You may call PCOA at 520-305-3400 for more information and to register. Or visit, PCOA.ORG

I want to encourage you to sign up and take a class. Even if they are full or do not offer what you would like to learn, there are so many different avenues for learning, I hope it will not discourage you.

Also, consider joining the Wednesday Evening Zoom session where Music Ministry Director Lorena Suarez will begin a new class in September titled, “World Music Tour.” The class does not require you to speak or appear on camera. You can participate at any level you please.

And, of course, anyone can join the Thursday Afternoon Progressive Christianity book study. We are currently reading “Universal Christ” by Richard Rohr. The book helps us frame how we relate with God and more importantly how we relate with one another. It is an excellent choice for those who may have pondered questions like “Where is justice when the innocent are sacrificed for someone else’s wrongs?” or “We have Jesus, but what about Mohammad or Buddha?”

As for me, I am learning how to sew. Inspired by the late Rev. Cynthia Langston Kirk, I am currently learning the basics, like hemming curtains, making shorts out of pants (it’s been really hot this summer), and making clothes for Amber’s dolls. In the future, I hope to make quilts, stoles, and other vestments.

Whatever it is, I hope you will keep learning! Season well my friends!

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THIS WEEK’S
ANNOUNCEMENTS & GATHERINGS

Women on a Spiritual Quest

Meet with WSQ for book studies and the best kind of Methodist small group accountability. Beginning August 24th. **Mon @ 4:30PM.**

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/92059519248?pwd=ZmN4dTFCcVVCVjlnM3FHUHVvemNFdz09>

ZID: 920 5951 9248
PW: 6226481

Exploring Biblical Wisdom

Gather for group Lectio Divina as we seek spiritual formation through scripture reading, reflecting, and sharing the Spirit that lives in each of us. **Tues @ 11AM.**

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/98179862680?pwd=ck15OU5KbWUyY0NwOUNxbzJkOUVBUT09>

ZID: 981 7986 2680

PW: 6226481

Music History Workshop

Join Music Ministry Director Lorena Suarez as she unpacks the rich history and tradition in the musical arts! This week, The Golden Age of Jazz. **Wed @ 5:30PM.**

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/92978304567?pwd=Mmo4UWZtc012TUxzVS9VYXlpVU1iZz09>

ZID: 929 7830 4567

PW: 6226481

Progressive Christianity Book Study

Explore the richness of progressive Christian thought through literature. **Thurs @ 2PM.**

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/98015738087?pwd=eGFpVWRCUnZraWxUU1d0anRiU2pFQT09>

ZID: 980 1573 8087

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Sunday Morning Live!

Join us live on Sunday mornings on Facebook livestream. **Sun @ 10AM**

Visit fb.com/firstchurchtucson/live

Sunday Morning Fellowship

Join on Zoom for fellowship immediately following the live stream. **Sun @ 10:30AM**

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/97274927766?pwd=bVlqNmZjTk84bHFHd0JRS0U5R0c4Zz09>

ZID: 972 7492 7766

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Korean Language Ministry

한국어 사역 온라인모임을 소개합니다. 주일 오전 1130 페북 실시간 방송이 있습니다.

[fb.com/tucsonkoreanchurch/live](https://www.facebook.com/tucsonkoreanchurch/live)

방송 직후 Zoom을 통해 교제의 시간에 초대합니다.

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/99861120822?pwd=VWlyZ3FrM2ZrNHhrVIRlNHc1NTBLQT09>

ZID: 998 6112 0822

PW: 6226481

또한, 금 오후 7시에 (기존 토요일 새벽 기도회 대신) 온라인 모임을 위에 표시된 Zoom 가상 공간에서 갖고, 일요일 오후 1시에는 한어권 청년들의 모임이 따로 있습니다.

Support the Ministries at First Church Tucson

Now is the time to give courageously to ministries that matter to you.

Visit this [link](#) or go to www.bit.ly/givetofumc to set up online donation.

You may also send gifts via Paypal to recipient address: finance@firstchurchtucson.org

And as always, you can mail in checks to the church office. Alternatively, have your IRA advisor automatically make payments from your IRA to the FUMC checking account.

THIS WEEK'S
BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

SONG FOR **THOUGHT**
"Holy Ground"
Geron Davis

by **Lorena Suarez**

Director of Music Ministries on August 22, 2020

Songwriter Geron Davis was born in Bogalusa, Louisiana in 1960. When he was 19 years old, Geron wrote his best-known song, Holy Ground. His father, a pastor, asked him to write a song for the first service in the new building of his church, and he did it. On a Saturday night, Geron went to the sanctuary, and it took him around 25 minutes to finish

this touching song. The next morning, Geron taught it to his siblings, and later that day, they sang it at the morning service.

Holy Ground was published in 1983 by Meadowgreen Music and it has been performed all over the world since then. Enjoy!

Lyrics:

When I walked through the doors
I sensed His presence,
And I knew this was the place
Where love abounds.
For this is a temple
Jehovah, God abides here,
And we are standing in His presence
On holy ground.

*We are standing on holy ground
And I know there are
angels all around.
Let us praise
Jesus now,
For we are standing
in His presence on holy ground.*

In His presence
There is joy beyond measure,
And at His feet
Peace of mind can still be found.
And if you have a need
I know He has the answer,
Reach out and claim it
For you are standing on holy ground.

We are standing on holy ground

Suggested recording:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6jARz5P_XM

CENTERING - *Practice Square Breathing*

- Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds,
- Exhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds.
- Repeat as necessary.

SONG OF PRAISE

Select a song of your choice, or
Refer to this week's Song for Thought

OPENING PRAYER - *Psalm 19:14*

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable to you,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.

READING

Matthew 16:13-20

REFLECTING

Take a minute or two in silence.
Allow your thoughts to rest on a word, a phrase, a memory from this passage.
Journal or share your thoughts from this moment of meditation on the passage.

RESPONDING

Respond to the reflection through the guidance from the Holy Spirit.

MINUTE MEMOIR - by Paul Cho

We need to remember how extraordinary Peter's response is. Peter's confession is the standard proclamation of faith. "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." The messiah from the world *Christos*, the anointed one, pointing to the prophetic literature of the Hebrew bible and their long awaited savior. But this statements risks Peter's standing in the Jewish community, possibly punishable for blasphemy against God. Son of the living God, as in, a God who is active and alive rather as opposed to the lifeless statues and philosophical ideas of the time. But this statement risks Peter's standing in Roman society which claimed Caesar (and Caesar alone) as the son of god.

Professing our faith, professing who Jesus is to us, has always had real ramifications. It has always implied some social change we will experience as individuals. It has always meant that we would have to live our lives as different, as set apart, because of what we profess, in spite of how others view us.

I pray not merely so that we might have the courage to withstand the ramification of what we say, but rather, to be completely filled with confidence in our God so that we not fear anything. And may we, in our collective confession, find the bedrock of what is our church.

RESTING

Dwell in your reflection and response.
Take time to offer God praise and glory.
Repent and seek forgiveness.

Offer joys and the concerns, adding in your personal prayers.
Lastly, offer a thanksgiving for God's grace and mercy.

CLOSING PRAYER *Wesley Covenant Service Prayer*

I am no longer my own, but yours.
Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing, put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
exalted for you, or brought low for you;
let me be full,
let me be empty,
let me have all things,
let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.
And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.
Amen.



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