

Ephesians 3:14-21.

What times we are in! The context and culture are all in a state of flux. This is referred to by leaders and consultants coaching high level leaders around the globe as **VUCA – Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous** (see Arable Group, book *Life in Flux*). Can feel like whiplash!

Yet, in these times, God has lifegiving, exciting opportunities and invitations for us beyond what we can ask or imagine, as we are rooted in, filled with all the fullness of Christ through his riches and power transforming us, working in and through us, right in the place where we are sent. (Eph. 3)

Gandhi read and was very intrigued by parts of the Bible, Christ's teaching and was drawn to Christ. However, as he said ***"I like your Christ; I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ."***

It was truly tragic that the racism, colonialism,... and other ideologies had formed most of the Christians he encountered such that they were not like Jesus.

What do people observe, experience when they are around you and me, around our churches? Communities of disciples/apprentices of Jesus who are like him and do what he did? Or...?

We are being observed! A great deal at stake in how we choose to respond, to speak of and treat one another and all others, including the lonely, the least, the lost and the foreigners in our midst.

How the body of Christ has the mind and heart of Christ, how it embodies Christ's ways, love, life in and before the world is SO crucial!

Jesus told us that his plan for the reconciliation and redemption and transformation of the world he loves in his Holy Spirit power and presence at work in and through his church.

So, how do you and I become formed to be more like Christ, living and joining Christ in his mission?

We are ALL being formed. The only question is by what, by whom into what image and likeness? Most people never stop to look and be honest if they **are intentionally engaged in being formed as Christ's apprentices/disciples. It is a BIG deal! The word for disciple/apprentice/follower appears 269 times in the New Testament !!**

Practicing the WAY is a clear, engaging, quality resource/process for groups, churches being rooted and grounded in Jesus, in his love, that we may be formed, may grow up into the fullness of maturity in Christ.

Be with him Become like him Do as he did !

NOTE: Sometimes we Presbyterians can prefer substituting knowledge *about* God (we think we can master or control information) and miss out on experiencing the transforming healing love of God that surpasses knowledge! (Eph. 3:19).

I hope you and groups in your church will consider using the book, free workbook & videos, pastor/leader helps, to provide the content and the connections and community opportunities for the Holy Spirit to do "more than you dare to ask or imagine by HIS power at work within us" ! This is foundational for ALL else.

Leadership Cabinet – I worked on a range of areas to help resource, plan ahead, carry out the various aspects of ministry they do, including, policies, personnel, finances, visioning, direction, oversight and coordination. Planning presbytery meetings with a team as we seek to equip, encourage, connect, provide support for our presbytery.

We are a fully remote office, with Deb's assistance on site with file cabinets. I worked with Deb and Ric to finish sorting/emptying. We are grateful to FPC Bozeman for the office and years of great hospitality.
Anti racism policy: staffed and Interacted several times with members of Subgroup that worked on second anti racism draft that is recommended to the presbytery. See report.

BOO amendments – worked with Caroline, LC & PMT.

Office of the Stated Clerk: Resourcing from the Office of the Stated Clerk office is less than in the last several decades. The primary resource on the proposed Amendments etc. has seen a shift in both strategy and role from a balanced information piece inclusive of pro/con to only promotion of the Amendments.

PMT, pastors, CRE candidates and churches – November - February have been some of the most active months in quite while for churches, some with unique challenges, pastors, CRE candidates and transitions across our presbytery. See Report for MANY things occurring.

The transitions, session and PNC work with some churches involves a variety of subgroup work, conversations, and meetings of several kinds, conferring, and partnering with PMT liasons and PMT leadership, along with supporting leaders and sessions as needed. PNC's are active and covet your prayers in Deer Lodge, FPC Bozeman, Jordan, Terry, and will be in Dillon. Christine Long from BOP plans to be with us and available at our May meeting.

We are grateful for successful shoulder surgery for Wenda Fry and Freeman's heart cath and 2 stents.

Our love and prayers are with:

Dan Krebill and Jody McDevitt on the loss of Doris Krebill at 99! What a lady!

Dave and Vicki Thompson and their families with the loss of Vicki's Herb Sackman in the Terry Church.

We are grateful for the ministries of Dick and Mary Davis and celebrate their retirement!

And are sad to say good by the Daniel and Callie Triller as he has taken a call in WA state near family.

CRE training program through Dubuque/Synod: Several from Yellowstone have been taking courses, all or just some. We are blessed to have a wide range of CRE's in training. PMT has taken Caroline Fleming, (Miles City), Danny Pratt (Forsyth) and Traci Ruschetti, (Butte) into the Seeker phase of our process and others shortly.

Uncovering Buried Treasure and Sharing the Light - continuing to explore the best timing to have Rev. Dr. Verlon Fosner from Seattle hold an in person training workshop on Dinner church for the presbytery. I and leaders in several churches attended the Discipleship Reset equipping workshop week by Fresh Expressions. Quality ideas!

Immigration and foreigners or asylum seekers in our midst: How are we as citizens of heaven to live out the , Bible's commands to love the sojourner / foreigners in our midst with the highly complex and fast shifting circumstances and legal aspects surrounding immigration. I have been researching, networking, and sent out information/resourcing for those in our presbytery regarding educational, legal, and a variety of needs and opportunities. See my February letter, including the lawsuit which the PCUSA is one of many denominations.

Synod: I attend valuable monthly meetings covering a wide range of needs, ideas, opportunities, sharing with the other Presbytery Execs. We met together in Nov. including a fruitful consultation with Corey Schlosser-Hall regarding stories, insights from transitions and adaptations in and among other presbyteries. Synod Assembly met virtually in Feb. for it's 2024 meeting.

Camping and Youth: These ministries are our primary mission as a presbytery and God is doing some great things! We hope you all will support them. Thanks to the leadership and all who helped with a wonderful ski/soak retreat in Bozeman last weekend. It was great to see what God was up to when I had dinner and some of Sat. evening with the group. Camp is shaping up well. See report for lots of details

Personal: We are grateful for many blessings and appreciate prayer for the lingering flu and virus challenges.