



**RUPTURE  
REPAIR**

*September 2021*

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“You shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the restorer of streets to live in.” (Isaiah 58:12)

Dear Church Family,

I don't want to be melodramatic about the moment we find ourselves in – as every chapter in history has been filled with challenges – but you and I are living in tumultuous times. Division is prevalent. Fingers are pointing and blaming. Information is complex, controversial, and contradictory. Political parties are posturing for the next election cycle, seeking to vilify the opponent and garner buy-in from potential voters and donors. Demands are being made of leaders and decision-makers that are virtually impossible to meet. People are turning their backs on family members and friends. And all of this is being amplified by social media.

As God's humble people, we must honestly confess that the Church is not immune from going down the same divisive path. The temptation to be right is always before us. The perspectives we have been shaped by are hard to release, or at least lay aside. The insecurities we live with make honest and thoughtful conversations almost impossible. And, just as in our larger culture, fear drives our behavior more than love.

How might God want to use us in this season of disagreement, conflict and division? How might what we say and what we do point people to the one who “has broken down the dividing wall, that is the hostility between us”? (Ephesians 2:14) How might we be a “repairer of the breach”? Is there any hope that what has been RUPTURED can be REPAIRED?

Our sermon series this fall will remind us that it is, ultimately, God who repairs and restores. God is constantly calling us back to Himself and to each other. The very oneness of God – as Father, Son and Holy Spirit – is like a magnet, drawing us not only to the Three in One but to each other. Just because we see life and faith (and COVID) differently doesn't mean we can't live, worship and serve in a unified fashion. In fact, our greatest witness to who God is may be in our ability to love well across differences.

This is not a call to live without conviction or clarity. Being simply agreeable so as not to ruffle feathers isn't the answer either. My challenge to us as a family of faith is that we would cry out to God; asking Him to repair the divisions we have allowed to get between us; pleading that He would do what only He can do; praying for a oneness in Christ and remembering,

“If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.”

(2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

Let's join together – united in Christ – and help repair the breaches.

Faithfully yours,





## FAITH CIRCLE

Faith Circle will be meeting on the first Thursday of each month starting September 2 and continuing thru May 2022. We will meet in Fellowship Hall starting at 9:15 am. We will be using the book "Women of the Bible" by Jean Syswerda, with our study led by Janie Duffy. This year we will focus on women of the New Testament, beginning with the chapter on Elizabeth. All women of the church are invited to attend. Please contact Sarah Potts (243-3696) for more information or if you need a study book.



## WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

The Women's Afternoon Book Club will be meeting on Monday, September 13 at 1:30 pm. Our book selection will be *Brave Girl, Quiet Girl* by Catherine Ryan Hyde. All book lovers are invited to attend.



## PRAY AND PLAY

The next Pray and Play will be Thursday, September 16 from 5:30-7:30 pm at Lincoln Park (Oak shelter between the tennis courts and golf course). Women-come join us to pray, play yard games and enjoy dinner. Please bring your own dinner. If you have any questions, please contact Tasha Haley (tashahaley@firstpresgj.org)



## YOUTH/FIREPROOF

Wednesday night Fireproof (5th and 6th graders) and Youth Group (7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade) will be starting up again on September 8, 2021. Youth meet from 6:30 to 8:00 pm in the Youth Room. Fireproof will meet in The Gathering Place. There will be no dinner served. If you have any questions or are interested in volunteering, email Sarah Queen (sarahqueen@firstpresgj.org) or Janet Young (janetyoung@firstpresgj.org)



## ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Come explore how the Old Testament helps us better understand our identity, value, and purpose as human beings, and as the covenant people of God. We will be using the book *Bearing God's Name* by Dr. Carmen Imes. The study will be facilitated onsite by Joshua Sherman and Scott Tuning, starting Sunday, September 19 at 11 am. Sign up at the Information Desk. For more information, please contact Joshua Sherman (tunekicker@gmail.com).



## THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN

The Center for Children, a nationally accredited children's advocacy center located in Grand Junction, is the first stop for children in Mesa County and surrounding areas who are suspected victims of sexual and serious physical abuse, and for children who may have witnessed a violent crime. The Center is holding a luncheon on Wednesday, September 8 from 11:45 am–1 pm at the Doubletree by Hilton. The featured speaker for the event is Margaret Hoelzer, an Olympic swimmer and a survivor of child sexual abuse. First Pres is a sponsor of this event, and there are still seats available at the First Pres table. If you would like to attend, contact Debe Colby at (242-1923 or outreach@firstpresgj.org) by Friday, September 3.



## THE PREGNANCY CENTER

The Pregnancy Center of Grand Junction MOVED to a new facility. For three years the Pregnancy Center prayed about how to manage the significant increase in needs. When the Main Street facility closed the middle of August, they met clients needs on an individual basis. Through prayers and financial partnerships, they now have a new facility, located at 2478 Patterson Road, Suites 1 & 2. In their new location, they hope to expand their hours and add new services such as ultrasound, STI testing, a men's ministry, and sexual avoidance counseling. Everyone is invited to the OPEN HOUSE on Saturday, September 25 from 10 am to 1 pm.



## MESA COUNTY JAIL MINISTRY

The Mesa County Jail Ministry, a local non-profit that shares the Love of Jesus with our Mesa County Jail inmate population, is holding an appreciation breakfast on Saturday, September 18 at Appleton Christian Church. They will be providing a free thank you breakfast to anyone who would like to stop by between 8 am and Noon. There will be members of the board and staff as well as former inmates there to share their stories. The event is free and open to the public and donations will be accepted. First Pres supports the Jail Ministry through our mission budget.



## "EMPTY" EMPTY BOWLS

Grand Valley Catholic Outreach has decided to cancel the annual Empty Bowls event again this year. The event brings over 1000 people to the Soup Kitchen for lunch and dessert. At this time, they believe it is in the best interest of all that they do a second "empty" Empty Bowls event. Just like last year, they are asking everyone to buy a ticket for \$25 to this "non" event. For this purchase, you will not get to stand in line, you will not get a potter's bowl, you will not fill a bowl with soup, and you will not select a delicious dessert. What you will get is another opportunity to provide a complete daily noonday meal for those who otherwise would go hungry in the valley. The number of people who are hungry and sometimes do not know where their next meal will come from has continued to grow here in the valley. The Soup Kitchen is now doing in-person dining for lunch six days a week and also provides to-go lunches for those who are more comfortable eating off-site. Our First Pres crew continues to provide lunch the first Saturday of every month at the Soup Kitchen. Empty Bowls is their only fundraising event for the year that Catholic Outreach puts on. If you would be willing to support this endeavor, contact Debe Colby (243-1923 or outreach@firstpresgj.org). Debe has tickets available for the "non" event.



## CONVOY OF HOPE

Convoy of Hope, a faith-based nonprofit organization, with a passion to feed the world through children's feeding initiatives, community outreach, and disaster response, will be in Grand Junction on Saturday, October 2, from noon to 3 pm. The organization partners with local churches, businesses, civic organizations, and government agencies to offer help and hope to communities around the world.

The Convoy of Hope event is being organized by Canyon View Vineyard Church with fourteen other churches involved. The event is targeting people in the valley who have limited resources and could benefit from assistance in many areas. It will be held in the parking lot of Central High School. The things that will be offered include: distribution of food from an 18-wheeler; a prayer tent; massages; medical screenings; haircuts; family portraits; services for Veterans; a children's area; and worship music. If you would like to volunteer to help that day, please contact Steve Jordan (760-408-4497) or Tracey Klaver (970-250-1485) and they will help you get connected with the right group.



## COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Colorado Christian University (CCU) in Grand Junction is looking for Nursing Affiliate Faculty. They need Christian nurses to prepare the nurses of the future to pursue excellence and a calling to serve others! If this sounds like you, please reach out to Susan Fuentes, Assistant Director of CCU's BSN Program @ 970.623.8710 or sfuentes@ccu.edu for more information. First Pres and CCU have a memorandum of understanding that allows First Pres attendees to receive a discount on tuition when they do online classes.



## PROJECT 1.27

Project 1.27, a local non-profit that serves our foster/kinship children in Mesa County, is having an Information Night on Tuesday, September 7 from 6-8 pm. Information Night fulfills the first two hours of state training. Offered from a Christian perspective, Info Night is required to become a Project 1.27 family. Considering fostering or adoption, register today! For more information, go to [project127.org/infonight](http://project127.org/infonight).



## HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

First Pres. will be doing a Habitat Build Day on Saturday, October 2 from 8 am to 3 pm. We can have two teams of 12 people (12 in the morning and 12 in the afternoon) as the maximum for the project. You must be 18 years or older to participate. Please wear closed toed shoes and bring sunscreen. Lunch will be provided. You can sign up at the Information Desk in the Lobby. Questions, please contact Steve Jordan (steve@ridgestonellc.com).



## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

A small shoebox can teach a child about the love of God, lead a child to faith in Christ, inspire pastors, and plant new churches. What goes into the box is fun, but what comes out is eternal. Be a part of changing lives through the power of a simple gift. *Operation Christmas Child*, the annual Samaritan's Purse shoebox packing event, will begin on **Sunday, October 24**. Shoeboxes will be due back at the church on Sunday, **November 14**. More information will be in the October newsletter.



# NOTES FROM TEXAS

Hi Y'all! As I write this, I am still in Dallas on Sabbatical, but I should be home by the time this letter reaches most of you.

I want to take this opportunity first of all to thank you, FPC for taking care of us, your staff members, with the unique and wonderful gift of sabbaticals every seven years! This has been a marvelous experience for me in countless ways. Thank You!

While for some, a Sabbatical can be restful, mine has been educational above all. I have been practicing an average of four hours a day and having organ lessons three times a week with Dr. Bradley Welch (who has taught me a GREAT DEAL!) I have visited some of the most beautiful churches imaginable and have played several marvelous pipe organs. Among them, the largest pipe organ in the state of Texas!

I'm based at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church here in Dallas. This is where I do most of my daily practicing and have most of my lessons. They have a great organ; about four times the size of ours at FPC. Of those I've played here, that's the smallest of them! I attend church at Preston Hollow each Sunday here, and have served by singing, playing organ, and conducting the choir as needed. They have a wonderful music ministry here and everyone has been so nice to me.

I am staying in the guest apartment of the home of the Preston Hollow Choir Librarian, Susan Wilson.

Susan and Ed (her husband) have been more than kind to me. I am sure we will all be lifelong friends.

Beside the intense music making, I have caught up with several friends who are living or visiting this area. I have read quite a few good books (musical, theological, personal growth, etc.). I have also really enjoyed visiting many great local art museums and seeing regular collections and special exhibits of all sorts. I swim a good bit as well. That helps beat the humidity!

Lastly, I have spent time planning music for fall at FPC. I have selected some wonderful anthems and handbell music (in addition to the new organ pieces I've been learning). While I am very excited about this music and resuming our choirs, I am MOST excited about starting "Bach to the Bible," an adult Sunday School class that explores sacred music as a means of deepening worship and discipleship. We are going to learn, grow, and of course have a lot of fun! I'm hoping that if you don't attend another class already, you will consider "Bach to the Bible." We will start Sunday morning September 12, 9.45-10.30 am in the Sanctuary.

Can't wait to see you all soon! I don't think I have a Texas accent yet!

Love,

John Howard,  
Director of Music and Worship Arts



## SENIOR ADULT LUNCHEON

Please join us for our next SAM luncheon on September 13 starting at 11:30 am in Fellowship Hall. Young Life Area Director, Luke Feather will be joining us as our speaker. Pulled pork sandwiches will be provided, please bring a side dish/dessert to share. Sign up at the Information Desk in the Lobby to attend. We hope you can join us!



<b>EMAIL YOUR PHOTO</b>	<b>SIGN A WAIVER</b>	<b>ACCESS ON OUR WEBSITE</b>
office@firstpresg.org	We can email it to you or you can pick one up in the church office	Call church office (242-1923) to get password

Would you like to be in our online Church Directory?