



SONSHINE

Monthly Newsletter of the Palm Springs Presbyterian Church

“My heart is stirred by a noble theme, as I recite my verses for the king.” Psalm 45: 1



It is difficult to believe that summer is almost past and fall is knocking at our door! Soon, our travels around the Valley will be a little slower and happenings at church a little faster; although I must admit, we've had a pretty busy time during the hot months here in Palm Springs. It's been wonderful to experience the same sense of transformation and expectation we began to recognize last 'season;' now, we can start getting excited to welcome our fellow travelers back 'home' and look forward to even more discoveries of who we are and can be in God's service.

I am just back from annual R&R, rested, I trust (since as of this writing I am just warming up the car for the actual trip), and ready to engage in some of those plans we've been dreaming about. More about that in the next Sonshine! At this moment, I am imagining the fruits of this rest, and as well, meditating on the meaning of ministry, of my place in God's plan, and our relationship as a family in Christ.

As a pastor, it is a hard thing to do to leave one's church family for even a short time; for a longer time, it is a true challenge. For years, I took smaller breaks and often found myself 'not quite there' when returning, as it seemed like time away was over before it truly began. Because of the rhythm of Palm Springs, taking time during winter is often impossible, and so, listening to the advice of tenured desert folks, the possibilities of August became both alluring and meaningful. And, as I discovered last year, very beneficial: To be able to sit quietly and listen to God without fences; to revisit friends and not rush the experience; to explore materials and create dreams of the Kingdom; to, at the end, return spiritually fed, refreshed, and excited to begin again!

I am grateful for this time, and the trust of a congregation to take it. The covenant of care between Pastor and people can be seen as generous and, I assure you, tremendously necessary for the health of both Pastor and church. Time for study and rest are sometimes set aside by church leaders, saved for 'someday,' while enthusiasm and energy wane. This is time directed to create and sustain healthy lives and relationships – not just the human side, but the spiritual as well. I give thanks for all of you, and your support of this time away.

Of course, you will have been missed! Of course, I will have worried about every soul and wonder how the Smoke Tree in our parking lot is doing! And of course, having knelt at a stream's edge, I will have immersed myself in the splendor of Creation, and savored the whisper of the wind in the trees. Yes, and likely eaten my fill of seafood and Hum Bows in the alleys of coastal cities or a berry pie in the high Sierras.

The verse from Psalms sounds uncannily like a Shakespearean quote, doesn't it? Sheer poetry, indeed. Yet it is the beginning of a song of love of Biblical proportions, and I hope an indicator of the song, our song, to be sung as we pursue the best parts of our lives in praise, worship, works and welcoming: together, as the body of Christ.

In His Service, Christine.

Day Trips!

Sorry that you missed two recent day trip events - going to the Power baseball game and to the Palm Springs Art Museum. Attendance was low but I realize many of you were away for the summer or did not want



to venture out in the smoke and the heat. That being said, I want to continue interesting day trips - including The Living Desert, a visit to Oak Glen during apple season, a walk around the Annenberg estate and perhaps another trip to the Palm Springs Art Museum. The planning for these will be for October and/or November. Let me know if you are interested in these plans. If you have other ideas, let me know. The more the better. Don Shepherd, 760-340-9432



Our Choir will be returning from our summer break on Sept 8th. and our our first practice will be on Wednesday, Sept 4 at 2:00 PM in the sanctuary. If you have been thinking about joining us, Fall is a good time to get started although we are happy to have new voices anytime. We will soon be working on Christmas music which is always a joyful time in the church. Come and be part of it. If interested, please see our director Alex Danson, Susan McGuire or Jim DeHart. Also we can really use a volunteer, a few hours a week, to help file music.

Your Elder of Music and Worship, Susan McGuire

PIANO CAMPAIGN CONTINUES!

We have been advised that our piano, which has faithfully provided wonderful music for several years, is on its last legs. Since the piano campaign began, you have given \$2355 towards the purchase of a new or new to us instrument. Thank you.



Somewhere out there is a wonderful piano waiting to call PSPC home! If you know of an opportunity we can check out, please let us know! Between Sundays and our Classical and Jazz Concerts, it will be well used, cared for and appreciated. Dreams DO come true!

Donations to the campaign may be sent to Jim at the church office; except, of course, actual pianos in which case let one of our team and Pastor Christine know!

Thank You and God's Peace, The Worship and Music Team (Susan, Alex, Jim and Christine)



September 2nd

BUDGET REPORT



This fourth bi-monthly article on the financial health of Palm Springs Presbyterian Church brings both good news and a continuing request for members and other friends to continue increasing their prayer and financial support for our Church.

Through August, pledge payments and donations exceeded last year's, but not by enough to offset higher budgeted expenses, principally for full-time ministerial salary and pension/medical coverage. During the budget process this past winter, we members made a conscious decision to raise Pastor Christine's leadership to "full time" from three-quarters previously. She has delivered admirably as our full-time pastor, but our increased giving has not been enough to keep up with the "challenge" budget. Despite some welcome special gifts this summer, to pay Church bills we have had to nearly exhaust our meager reserve funds. What to do?

Staff will continue working hard to hold operating expenses below both budget and last year's actual costs. However, savings will not be enough. Members and other friends need to make that "extra" gift that will help PSPC make its challenge budget. During many years of financial experience, I have found that virtually no one likes discussing or meeting budgets. However, dislike does not eliminate their importance. Please consider prayerfully your financial support for our beautiful little Church and its mission in the Coachella Valley. A balanced budget this year will lead to positive plans for next year. Thank you for increasing your financial support.



ONGOING PROJECTS

We recycle! Bring your empty aluminum cans and glass and plastic bottles to the church office. Thank you for helping our budget and the environment.

PSPC Aprons for sale "Have You Hugged a Presbyterian Today" - \$16.75 - See Morella, Jim or Jackie

PSPC cookbook, Love Feast, is for sale for \$5. See Jim or Jackie.

Save used ink cartridges for Palm Springs High School Band fundraiser. Collection jar is on Jackie's desk.

Save Box Tops for Education for Sabella's school. You can leave them in the office.

Bring a package, can or box of food for The Well in the Desert. Leave it in the bin by the front door. They can also use warm clothing.

Save used stamps and Campbell's soup Labels for The Tecate Mission. Leave a ¼ inch border around the stamp when you cut them out. Leave them with Jackie.

Bring in your gently used women's clothing for Hacienda Valdez.. You can leave it in the office with a note on it.

Sunday Morning Kerygma class with Ernie Moore - Fellowship Hall 8:30 AM

Men's Bible Study with Allen Perrier - Fellowship Hall Wed 7:00 AM
Breakfast after Bible Study.

Women's Bible Study meets on Tuesday at 9:30 AM. We will be on hiatus in August.

Yoga Classes Tuesday, 11: AM (except on Women's Birthday Luncheon day) and Thursday at 5:30 PM (except on 5:59 Gathering Thursdays) in the Social Hall.

Thanks to Harvey Stephens for all his work with our recycling program. You brought in \$120 in recycling for the July, 2013. The total income received this year is \$876! That is up from last year. Thanks to everyone. We are not only helping the environment, but you are significantly helping the budget. Keep up the good work.



**We
Recycle**



Editor's Note - I asked Morella if she would write a blurb for the Sonshine about her trip and I got this awesome telling of her adventure. She said I could edit it for length but there is nothing that should be taken out. Thanks, Morella

Request received: "Write something about the trip this summer for the "Sonshine".

I aim to please, so here goes... Greetings to all my friends at PSPC ~~~

Although there were four points of interest, these musings will focus here on the 1st stop: the Amazon River portion — which was then followed by the 2nd stop~~ Ecuador: the capitol, Quito, the "center of the world" Longitude - 0 meets Latitude -0 ; then flying 600 miles west to the Galapagos Islands which is a National park and a UNESCO World Heritage Site where the wildlife reigns – tortoises, seals, pelicans, turtles, iguanas and Darwin finches – and you can't say "shoo" when they lay on the hotel patio, swim in the pool or nap on the welcome mat at the hotel entrance (I saw it all) ; 3rd stop~~ Panama City, Panama: Watched ships in the locks at the Canal, saw the construction in progress of the large new larger, 'parallel' canal. Currently, ships carrying a maximum of about 3500 - 40' containers, but the new wider canal will be able to accommodate ships the size of aircraft carriers, hauling about 12,000 - 40' containers; and ending the trip with the 4th stop~~ the (Dutch) resort island of Aruba: where the palm trees along the beach look like unfurled flags flying horizontal in a strong wind, because they are cursed by a continual strong wind forcing them to grow horizontally, rather than have normal pineapple tops. The gal traveling with me was carrying two huge professional cameras and there was certainly a great deal of material for the photographer. My Sony (with a zoom lens) fulfilled my requirements of impromptu snaps of things of interest documenting the where-and-when I was of the trip. My greatest treasure of my travels is the memories, not memorabilia....

The first view of the mighty Amazon River was from 30,000' and appeared as a very wide silver ribbon looping and doubling back and meandering through the green jungle as far as one could see. We landed at 341' elevation in Iquitos, Peru – considered the largest continental city that is unreachable by road --- choose air or a long boat ride. The Amazon is shorter than the Nile, but produces more fresh water for the ocean than any other river. It was mid-afternoon, and our destination was a Lodge down river at the end of an hour's boat ride. It was dry season, but we were in a rain forest, and expected much rain. True to form, once on the river the guide pointed at the dark clouds starting to appear ahead of us. The River level can fluctuates annually up to 40'. This year, the usual 150" of rain fall was been 250", so even though we were to be in the "dry" season the river was still 10' - 20' above flood stage. I'd hate to be there in the rainy season. Everything in our suitcase was damp/wet from the humidity.

When we landed, we were met by a guide, and with a car and driver, we spent the next hour making our way through the city to the end of the street which then became the local market of produce, prepared food stands, crafts, and a variety of offerings of everyday life – a man sitting on the street with a sewing machine and a half dozen pairs of shoes to repair, ladies selling fabric and housewares, and many men standing around doing nothing, but appeared to be hoping for something to do. One was lucky (I think), he was our very strong luggage porter who carried all at once our four pieces of luggage (about 150#s) from the car down the several blocks through the congested market to the waiting boat. It was down a packed muddy bank to where the boat was snugged up as tightly as possible. It was old, well used, with

a bit of duct tape (a worldwide fix-it kit) and a low roof we had to duck under to get to the side board to sit on. At the rear of the (about) 20' boat sat the 'boatman' (driver) with two outboard motors, a propeller on a long boom, and a hose line from the 5 gallons gas cans to the motors. It was shallow, and sat low in the water. Inside, we sat almost even with the water line. Soon after getting out on the mile-plus wide Amazon for the hour ride to the Lodge, the dark clouds began to show up ahead of us. As it got darker, the guide (in his plastic poncho) was standing in the rain, up on the nose of the boat watching for debris and giving left and right hand signals to the boatman at rear. The wind came up, and in that area "rain" needs to be in bold capital letters and underlined. We had put on our wind breakers, and the guide signaled for us both to put on life jackets. We rolled down the side "isinglass curtains" (clear plastic), which then put us in a leaky wind tunnel. So our expectations of getting into the rain forest and being wet were met quickly. Because of the high level of the river, there were no river banks, and no tree trunks or other natural land marks. It was hard to compete with the noise of the boat motors, so there was very little talking on the river trip... just personal observations, anticipation and thoughts of astonishment as to where I was. After nearly an hour in the middle of the wide river, we moved to the left, slowed a bit and turned through brush going into what looked like just a flooded backwater area, when in fact it was a flooded tributary river and we were surrounded by leafy tree tops. I wondered how they could tell where was the correct "hole" in the tree tops to go into. Around a couple of more turns, we turned right through more treetops and there high on the hill ahead of us was the Lodge.

By now, it was about 5PM, rainy and dark when we got into our room....That's when I realized my electric travel hair dryer wasn't going to do much good..... no electricity. In the dining hall was an odd assortment of power bars and extension cords with electronic equipment of all sorts plugged in here and there. We joined the electronic plug in party (cell phones, cameras, readers, I-pods, etc.) of the 8-10 guests and dozen employees. There was an anemic generator that ran 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the evening to facilitate primarily meal preparation. We plugged in our electronics, but I never did get a full charge on anything during our time on the Amazon, but we got by. And, I did get pretty proficient at holding a flashlight in my mouth while digging through the suitcase at night. We could only pack in the morning, since it was the only time we had (day)light in the room.

This sleeping room had 4' high walls, screen from there up, gathered fabric on a sagging wire provided (visual, not audio) privacy curtains. Our room's ceiling was screen to keep the bats and birds and mosquitoes out of our sleeping area. I awoke one morning to men talking and when I opened my eyes I was looking at a man up in the rafters (above our screen ceiling). They were trying to get a sheet of corrugated sheeting located to stop a leak in one of the units. So, much for privacy. The average temperature and humidity are almost equal... high 80s, so it was not cold, just "wet". We had our own bath room (screened ceiling) with a stall shower which was a bit grungy, but I didn't spend much time in there because there was no hot water... just "normal Amazon" river water. I learned how to wet down and scrub with the body soap then turn on the water and step into the shower just long enough to rinse off, all the while telling myself it was not cold.

Of course, no local water in the mouth or eyes, we bought and drank bottled water (or boiled coffee or hot tea water, or cokes), and ate nothing that was washed or prepared with their "river" water, sticking

with well cooked food, much of which included pretty good fish from the river and one of their variety of potatoes.

The next day, we searched the Amazon for pink dolphin on our way to another lodge. After going up the River a ways, we could see a village up the bank, but to get to it meant walking on an assortment of boards (compliments of the floods), tree trunks, branches, and whatever else they could tie together (sometimes it was only a few inches wide) to make a several hundred foot long path from the boat to the shore across a very muddy area. I had selected my foot apparel at the first Lodge from the boot rack. They were knee high black rubber (farmer's) boots that fit pretty well, for which I was grateful, as I walked quite a few miles in them. Amazingly enough, I traversed the various access "board walks" without slipping off (of course, I was usually being steadied by one of the guides who was sometimes walking in nearly knee high mud), and up the muddy bank, to a sidewalk that made for a mile walk through the village (along with our luggage in a little four wheeler) to the other side of the island where we got into another just as worn out boat to go up that tributary to another lodge for the next two nights. It was only about 12 feet above the river level, but the lodge rooms were up another 12 feet on stilts. But, that couldn't survive the 40' river rise and the water line was midway up the walls in our room. This time we had a full wall of screen, but the same variety sagging privacy curtain and a barely functioning bathroom (which, like the previous one, had never seen X-14 or Comet.)

We did a night river run looking for caiman, but only found one of the dangerous variety of snakes hiding in a tree, trying to look like a branch, and doing a good job of it. Day or night, the vision of the guides is superb – they miss nothing. In brush along the river edge, he saw the eyes of the snake who was trying to look like the branches of the bush. Late one afternoon, we paddled a small boat up the river into a still cove. There we fished for piranha. They were aggressive on the raw chicken bait, but we never got one hooked. Although, the next morning our guide speared one, so I did get to see the abundant needle sharp interlocking teeth that can be lethal. We were the only guests in that lodge, along with about four staff for two nights, and only the guide spoke English. I communicated with the staff with hand signals and smiles. The last evening there, the guide and I had been sitting in the dining room still visiting when it was finally time to call it a day. I looked for a place to toss my desert ice cream bar wrapper. He and I walked over to three (recycle) wicker baskets with lids, and as we chose the center "paper" one, he lifted the lid. That's when we both saw the movement by his hand that surprised us both and we jumped back. It was a snake who had probably figured out that was a good place to go for a snack. The resident cat was also the snake patrol, and by morning, he had rendered the snake inoperable and left it so we could see his trophy and the value of his patrol talents. Speaking of trophies, I didn't get one (but felt like I should have) when I hit the post target (with a mop of hair as the villain) with the dart I shot using a blowgun. Would I need a permit for that "gun" I wonder.

One afternoon we stopped along the river to visit a local animal reserve. The first to greet us were little capuchin monkeys (they are ones used as "helper" monkeys). King Kong was not bashful at all and glad to be picked up. He immediately removed my friend's hat from her head, put it in her hands in front of her, then crawled in and promptly went to sleep with her holding the hat. I had a large parrot sitting on my shoulder, and a young capuchin monkey came running across the lawn to me. He stopped, looked up, then scrambled up my pant leg and onto my shoulder, instantly curling up and going to sleep leaning

on my neck, but the parrot didn't like his presence and flew away. He stayed there for some time, as I wandered around, looking at other animals, including a 15' boa constrictor, stretched out in the grass with a butterfly on its back. Finally, it was time to go, and I began walking back across the lawn towards the boat. Suddenly I remembered there was a boa here, and at that point I had almost stepped on his head which gave me an instant scare, although, I had just missed it, I wanted to jump 10 feet sideways to get away from it. I still cringe to think of it. I don't think either of us would have been happy.

We walked through the jungle one day to another village to listen to the Shaman tell about his concoctions and cures offered up for everything from a broken heart to a broken foot. He even passed out samples. I don't recall what it was to "fix", but whatever it was, mine wasn't "broken"...it looked pretty ugly, and smelled worse – I don't know how (or why) the other tourists drank it...

These are a few of the memories I have added to my basket of life. Leaving the Amazon area was bitter sweet. I was glad to be leaving the wet humid climate (and snakes, which I do not like), but also felt like I had hardly scratched the surface of things to do and see in the area. The junior high school book report that had years ago tweaked my curiosity about the Amazon River came to life, at least for a little while, and for that I am grateful. And, I feel blessed that I was able to at least have experienced this much of the intriguing Amazon history and culture and had the opportunity to meet and interact with these delightful people.

To God be the Glory... Morella

From *Saying Grace* Edited by Sarah McElwain

Editor's Note- This was received by Dorothy Hollerback

Thankfulness sets in motion a chain reaction that transforms all around us - including ourselves. For no one ever misunderstands the melody of a grateful heart. Its message is universal; its lyrics transcend all earthly barriers; its music touches the heavens.

Dear Dorothy, Thank you so much for your birthday greetings. I was 79 years old and am still on chemotherapy. Still going strong and we are enjoying being near our daughter and her family. Hope all is well with you and say Hi! to all the folks at church. Fondly, Donna McCullen

Anonymous



Phyllis Burrows mother, Irene Mungo, celebrated her 105th birthday on July 19 at her residence at Emeritus Assisted Living in Palm Springs. She takes part in activities such as word games and cross word puzzles. Refreshments and a large birthday cake were served. In her little speech at the party she credited her longevity to having had a loving husband for 37 years and many friends over the years. She really is an inspiration to Phyllis.

From the Kitchen of Jackie Morgan

Vanishing Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookies

(This is the Quaker Oatmeal recipe for Oatmeal Raisin cookies. I just substituted chocolate chips for raisins because we like them better.)

1/2 C plus 6 tblsp softened butter
3/4 C firmly packed brown sugar
1/2 C granulated sugar
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla
1 1/2 C all purpose flour
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp salt
3 C oatmeal (quick or old-fashioned uncooked)
1 C chocolate chips

Heat oven to 350. Beat butter and sugars together until creamy. Add eggs and vanilla; beat well. Add combined flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt; mix well. Add oats and chocolate chips; mix well. Drop dough by rounded tablespoonfuls onto ungreased cookie sheets. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool 1 minute on cookie sheets; remove to wire rack. Cool completely. Store tightly covered



Online giving is now up and running. Just get on our website, www.pspresby.org and click on the button in the upper right hand corner. The website will guide you through the steps to take advantage of online giving. It can be used to make regular tithes to the general fund or the piano fund. You

can use this option weekly, every two weeks, monthly, quarterly or a one time basis.



What Are You Doing This Summer?

Send us pictures and articles about your activities this summer. Whether it's a fabulous trip to strange and exotic places or a staycation, we would love to hear from you. Send them to jmorgan@pspresby.org.



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Quotes from Benjamin Franklin

“Blessed is he who expects nothing, for he shall never be disappointed.”

“God heals and the doctor takes the fee.”

“Guests, like fish, begin to smell after three days.”

“He that falls in love with himself will have no rivals.”

“If you would know the value of money, try to borrow some.”

“Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, and half-shut afterwards.”

“Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain and most fools do.”

“The Constitution only gives people the right to pursue happiness. You have to catch it yourself.”

“Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.”



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OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of Palm Springs Presbyterian Church is to proclaim the Good News of God by reaching out to others and inviting them into a new relationship with Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to be a center for spiritual growth and friendship, where the teachings of Jesus are faithfully received and God's grace is joyfully celebrated.

Pastor:
Rev. Christine Dickerson

Music Director:
Alex Danson

Office Administrator:
Jim DeHart

Church Secretary
Jackie Morgan

Sonshine Editors:
Jeff & Jackie Morgan



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