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JOHN READING PLAN

Join us on a journey through the Gospel of John. We're recommending a simple plan that covers one chapter a day. Simply pick a day to start and read one chapter every day and you'll be done in 21 days. If you want to join a You Version Bible App reading plan, let us know and we'll help you get started. New groups are starting all the time.

Day 1 - John 1	Day 12 - John 12
Day 2 - John 2	Day 13 - John 13
Day 3 - John 3	Day 14 - John 14
Day 4 - John 4	Day 15 - John 15
Day 5 - John 5	Day 16 - John 16
Day 6 - John 6	Day 17 - John 17
Day 7 - John 7	Day 18 - John 18
Day 8 - John 8	Day 19 - John 19
Day 9 - John 9	Day 20 - John 20
Day 10 - John 10	Day 21 - John 21
Day 11 - John 11	



Connections

February 2021

A Year of Contradictions: A Reflection on 2020

Tim Sievers, Connection Director

I recently was reminded of a song from the 60s that remains popular even today. In 1965, The Byrds emerged into the rock and roll world with their landmark album Mr. Tambourine Man. The title track made its way to the top of the Billboard Chart and was soon followed by their cover of Pete Seeger's *Turn! Turn! Turn! (To Everything There is a Season)*, a song based on the words of a man struggling with the contradictions of life thousands of years ago.



The author of Ecclesiastes put it this way:

- 1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven;
 - 2 a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
 - 3 a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
 - 4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
 - 5 a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
 - 6 a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
 - 7 a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
 - 8 a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.
- ~ Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

2020 was nothing, if not a year of contradictions. Different. Difficult. Challenging. Frustrating. Lonely. Unprecedented (and not in the good way). Change. Growth. Creativity. Learning. Adapting. Community. Togetherness. I could use all of these seemingly contradictory words to describe the way I encountered 2020.

Pete Seeger, in an interview about *Turn! Turn! Turn!* said, "It is something worth considering that the world is full of opposites intertwined, with good and bad tangling up all the time."

That's the truth of our fallen and frequently confusing world – it's full of contradictions. The preacher of Ecclesiastes sets before us seemingly



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contradictory choices, but it occurs to me that each seemingly contradictory statement is simultaneously true and necessary. It's not that there is a time to plant or a time to pluck up, but that we may need to plant and pluck at the same time.

As I consider the song and the scripture in light of our current circumstances, and our summer study of 1 Peter, I am deeply convicted by the Holy Spirit that this challenging and confusing time in which we live was ordained by God. Here in Ordinary Time, as we methodically and thoughtfully consider how God works through us in the ordinary places of life, the cry of my heart echoes the proclamation of the preacher of Ecclesiastes.

Now is the time to be born again into new life in Christ. Now is the time to die to sin and self. Now is the time to plant the gospel. Now is the time to pluck up the false gospels we've allowed to order our lives for so long – racism, nationalism, party, and the American Dream. Now is the time to break down walls that divide us from each other. Now is the time to build a longer table at which all people are welcome. Now is the time to weep and mourn with those whose lives are marked by oppressive systems of injustice that prevent their achieving equality. Now is the time to laugh and dance with those who have reason to celebrate – and we all have a reason to celebrate – the goodness of our God. Now is the time to keep silence before the Lord and listen for his voice.

“Now is the time to pluck up the false gospels that we've allowed to order our lives for so long - racism, nationalism, party, and the American Dream.”

For sure, we must persevere in the midst of whatever we face and live the life of holiness that Peter called us to. We need to be planting the seeds of the gospel in our families and our community, but, we also need to pluck up those things that keep us from doing that – our selfishness and pride. We need to break down the barriers in our own hearts that keep us from loving our neighbor as we love ourselves and instead choose love every day.

Since last March, there hasn't been much of life that has gone as I anticipated it would. The changes that came as a result of COVID-19 meant a new way of doing school for my kids. Even my own online seminary classes were affected, as my practices of worship class was supposed to include observation, participation and reflection on in-person (never had to say that before) worship experiences in churches that weren't my own. There was no need for school buses from March until June and instead I found myself delivering lunches to our school families. In the church, we haven't met for in-person worship for 45 weeks (as of this writing). This has been different, difficult, challenging, frustrating, and at times, lonely.

And yet, we've never stopped being the body of Christ. We've not stopped worshiping, growing in our faith, serving our neighbors or sharing the Gospel. It has been a time of change, growth, creativity, learning, adapting, community, and togetherness.

In the midst of the unprecedented, we've been forced into new and uncomfortable places, but all the while we've continued working to fulfill the mission of the church in our community, to help people depend on Jesus to restore their imperfect lives.

The truth is, this season has changed me. I expect it has changed you too. And, as difficult as it has been, I'm unwilling to wish this year of contradictions away; God has done amazing things in me and through the church. However, there remain questions for us to address, and as we move forward in 2021, I hope you will join me in answering them:

- What will you plant and what will you pluck up?
- What will you break down and what will you build up?
- What will you seek and what will you lose?
- What will you keep and what will you cast away?
- Will you be silent or will you speak?
- Will you love what is right and true and good?
- Will you hate what is evil and wrong – that which seeks to divide and destroy?
- Will you be a peacemaker?



Youth Group Activities Hybrid (Zoom+In-Person)

Middle School Youth Group (Grades 6-8)
Wednesdays | 6:30 - 7:30 PM

High School Bible Study (Grades 9-12)
Sundays | 6:30 PM

Please contact **Vanessa Moore**
with any questions:
(509) 595-1910
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The Color of Compromise: A Book Review

Tina Laughary

Here in the United States, the summer of 2020 drew attention to race, prejudice and privilege in our country, and renewed interest in a discussion that has existed for generations. This is a discussion that we, as Christians, must be engaged in - sitting on the sidelines is not an option. We follow a God of love and righteousness who calls us, as His church, to stand up for the disadvantaged and marginalized. This call is clear. The question is not, "Should we engage in this issue?" The question is, "Where do we begin?" I decided to begin with education. To know how I might help solve a problem, I need to better understand the problem. One of the books I turned to for understanding is, *The Color of Compromise* by Jemar Tisby.

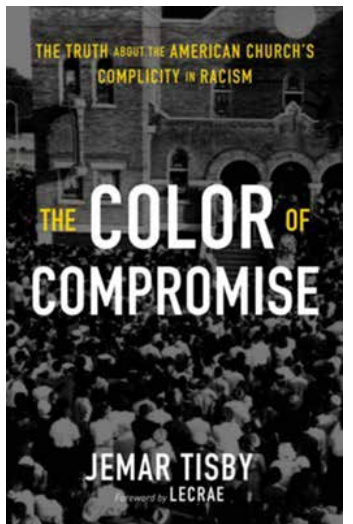


“...burying our head in the sands of ignorance will not bring about the repentance that needs to happen.”

Tisby, a historian, tells the story of the American Church as it relates to racism and injustice. The picture he paints is not always one I like. If I am honest, it feels terrible to hear how the bride of Christ, His church, has been complicit in dehumanizing and victimizing our brothers and sisters of color. It is uncomfortable to learn how prejudice has shaped our church, our education system and much of the culture we live in. But, burying our head in the sands of ignorance will not bring about the repentance that needs to

happen. If we, as God's church don't call our sin out for what it is, we will never heal from it. We need to repent—to turn from our collective sin.

There is hope for us friends. Tisby provides suggestions for how we, as the church, can begin to change, to be more inclusive, more inviting, and more diverse. Would you join me in this journey of learning? If you choose to read *The Color of Compromise*, I guarantee you will not like everything you read. I encourage you to do it anyway. Pain is a part of growth. Let us grow together as we seek to be a church fully representative of our God's beautiful creation of all colors and backgrounds.



Adult Bible Study Schedule Zoom Only

Tues. | 5:30 AM | Men
Tues. | 10 AM | Mixed
Wed. | 9 AM | Ladies
Wed. | 6:30 PM | Mixed
Thurs. | 9 AM | Ladies



“Sweet Surprises” Palouse Choral Society

presents an evening of *Virtual Performances*
URL available at noon Sunday, February 14
& invites you to bid on our *Silent Auction* items.
Bidding opens on February 10 & Closes February 17



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<https://event.gives/pcsauction>

TO PURCHASE
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A Sampling of our Sweets

DATE NIGHT! - A one night stay at Moscow's University Inn & \$40 gift certificate to "Seasons Public House"

"Our Love is Here to Stay" - Gershwin

KAY YOUNGBLOOD'S FAMOUS HUCKLEBERRY PIE - Features hand picked Huckleberries, glass pie plate, & carrier.

"You and Me" - Lifehouse

TOY JACK POT - HOURS OF FUN from Hodgins Drug

"Till There Was You" - Meredyth Wilson

GLUTEN FREE CARE PACKAGE - Basket full of Gluten free mixes & flours from Rascal J

"Brightly Dawns Our Wedding Day" - Gilbert & Sullivan

HAND-KNIT CHILD'S MITTENS - Donated by Gillian Sharma



Wildfire Relief Fund Update



Heidi and her 8-year-old son Jace. Diana and her 11-year-old daughter. John and Carolyn, a senior couple - they all lost their homes in Malden, WA to a wildfire on Labor Day.

Palouse Federated Church is receiving financial donations in order to bless these families and help them on their journey to restore their homes and move through this stressful transition time.

We give thanks that Heidi's insurance company is working swiftly to help her with a new home, and Diana will receive a home thanks to the generosity of a nonprofit group. We continue to pray for John & Carolyn, who haven't yet been able to finalize plans to replace their home.

Here are some additional ways you can help these families:

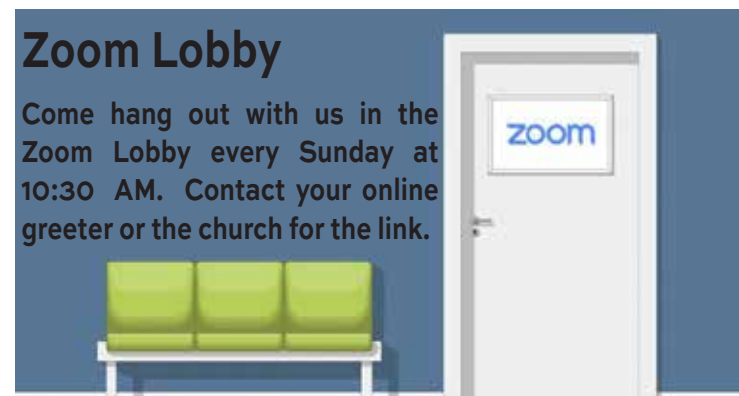
1. Keep them in your prayers - pray for peace, encouragement, strength and wisdom.

2. Donate to our wildfire relief fund. You can designate your check or online donation to wildfire relief. Just make sure checks are still made out to Palouse Federated Church, and clearly note that it is for fire relief.

What your support has already done: John & Carolyn have a new shed, and a fuel card to help offset the travel costs between the place where they are staying and their home site. We're presently working with John & Carolyn to facilitate a repair to their truck. Diana has the resources to build a shed of her own. Heidi and Heather received help to replace some of what was lost and to bring back memories (photos) destroyed by the fire.

Zoom Lobby

Come hang out with us in the Zoom Lobby every Sunday at 10:30 AM. Contact your online greeter or the church for the link.



Ash Wednesday | Feb. 17 | 2 Options

Morning: Curbside Ashes to Go

We will host a Drive-Up or Walk-Up Ash Wednesday service in the church parking lot on **Feb. 17 between 6:30 and 9 AM**. Stop in for a brief prayer and the imposition of ashes.

Evening: Parking Lot Service & Radio Broadcast | 107.5 FM

In the evening, you can **join us at 6 PM** in the parking lot for our Ash Wednesday Service & radio broadcast. The imposition of ashes will be offered at each car.



Palouse Food Pantry Distribution Day | Feb. 24 1-2 PM & 4:30-6 PM Calvary Chapel of Palouse

Order Online: palousefoodpantry@gmail.com
Or Call the Pantry: (509) 595-3048
Orders will be delivered or you can pick up.

How Creation Works

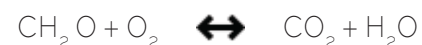
Terry Keller

In my last column, I talked about being better stewards of this beautiful Earth we call home and about using the talents and gifts God has given us to work at combatting climate change. One of the gifts God has given us is science, and science can help us better understand what's going on with climate change.

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth... God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good.”

~ Genesis 1:1, 31a

Here's how that creation works:



The arrow shows that the equation works both directions.

From left to right: CH₂O is the chemical formula for the simplest carbohydrate. That represents plants, food, and fuels including fossil fuels. CH₂O plus O₂ (oxygen), through respiration (all animals, including humans, do it) or combustion (burning fuels), produces CO₂ (carbon dioxide) and H₂O (water). This releases energy for biology and technology.

From right to left, H₂O (water) and CO₂ (carbon dioxide) combine through photosynthesis to make plants. The energy in sunlight is stored in the plant tissue. Some of those plants get buried far underground and become petroleum and coal, storing a large reservoir of carbon and energy there.

This equation has remained in balance for eons. It had to; otherwise there would be no CO₂ (carbon dioxide) to keep Earth warm and support plant growth, and no food nor fuel. But since the Industrial Revolution, in the geologic blink of an eye, humans have been digging up and burning more and more of the stored fossil fuels, releasing more and more CO₂ (carbon dioxide) and water. Photosynthesis cannot keep up to balance this equation. So the CO₂ (carbon dioxide) has been building up in our atmosphere, causing climate change.

That's it in a nutshell. We humans have unbalanced the created system, and the system is changing in response, with the consequences of more CO₂ (carbon dioxide): increased heat, stronger wind, torrents of rain and floods, longer drought, more fire.

We can wring our hands or sit on them, but I would rather we work with God's natural order to find ways to live sustainably upon this Earth. All of God's creation, including humanity, depends on it.

My thanks to Kent for explaining the above cycle to me and to Sharon White for her input and edits. If you're interested in working on sustainability or learning more, please contact me (tkeller2nd@gmail.com). In the meantime, recycle, lower your thermostat if you can, and drive less.

—
“We humans have unbalanced the created system, and the system is changing in response...”
—

Not God Enough Letting God be More in Your Life

Pastor Corey Laughary



“A god small enough to be understood is not big enough to be worshiped.”

~ Evelyn Underhill

“Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.”

~ Psalm 115:3

“I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the Lord, who does all these things.”

~ Isaiah 45:7

I confess: I allow my view of God to shrink on a regular basis. But, God doesn't ever shrink - God is always the most-wise, most-powerful, most-loving, most-holy and most-compassionate Being in all existence. Unfortunately, the hum-drum of daily life, and the difficulties that come into our lives can tempt us to reduce God to a version that we can better “manage” or “comprehend.”

I believe much of our anxieties and struggles come from us having a greatly reduced version of God in our daily life. We make God into someone that is smaller than our problems, a God who doesn't have enough forgiveness for us, or a God who doesn't know as much as we do.

I want to encourage you to let God be “more” in your life. In this upcoming season of Lent, we will explore what it means to increase our view of God, as we work to make room in our hearts, minds, and schedules for God's presence to have a bigger prominence than it currently has.

Will you join me on this journey of letting God grow in your mind, heart and schedule? You can do so by participating in our Lenten activities. Join us in our Community Read for the season Not God Enough, or do the Not God Enough reading plan on the YouVersion Bible App (it's only a few days long). Pick up a copy of the Spiritual Growth Guide and let the scriptures and reflections speak to your heart.

God is always greater than we know, but God is good enough to allow us to get to know more about Himself.

I'm looking forward to this journey

Pastor Corey

Spiritual Growth Guide

Revised and Updated for 2021, the PFC Spiritual Growth Guide is a great resource for anyone who wants to grow in their life of living for Jesus.

In this new edition, you will find opportunities to reflect on our church mission, vision, and values. There's tons of scripture references that will help you grow in your understanding and practice of worship, prayer, serving, sharing your faith, and more. There's a new section on grieving and celebrating, with practical helps for advance care planning and even pre-funeral planning. A new self-care section will help you take steps to take care of your soul, your body, and your mental health. Also included in this edition is a section on spiritual disciplines that you can put into practice in your life to deepen your communion with God.

This resource is biblical, practical and accessible. If you want a copy, just let us know. If you know someone outside of our church family who would like a copy, we would gladly provide one. The suggested donation to cover the cost is \$10. Call (509) 878-1509 or e-mail next@palousechurch.org to order.

Some of our Bible Study groups will integrate the Spiritual Growth Guide into their routine, and a new group is forming to focus just on the Guide. Let us know if you'd like to connect to the Spiritual Growth group or a Bible study.

Theme for Lent 2021: More God

2021 Lent Book: “Not God Enough” by J.D. Greear (Available in Paperback, Audio or Kindle)

Theme Verse: “He must increase, but I must decrease”
- John the Baptist, John 3:30

Virtual Soup Suppers: Join us Wednesday evenings at 6:30 PM beginning Feb. 24 for Virtual Soup Suppers via Zoom. Each week, we will hear a brief encouraging testimony about seeing God “Increase” in our life.

You can choose to eat soup (keep your “mute” option on) or go soup-less; either way there will be good food for your soul.

There will be opportunities to share soup and bread recipes with one another. And, we will be praying during Lent for how we, as a local expression of the Body of Christ, can see Christ increase in our communities.

