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Triennial Visit  Oct. 31st Daylight Savings time ends  Nov. 1st All Saints Day -Worship Recognition  **Please Note**: Shelly Ryan will be on vacation October 26-30. Pastor Jan will be in the church office. *The First Word* will not be published on October 27th. The next edition will be published on Nov. 3rd. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **A Note from Pastor Jan**  LOVE: DAVID & MEPHIBOSHETH—2 Samuel 9/John 13:34 – 35           Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan, David’s oldest and best friend. His name actually shows up three times in the story of David. The first time was when he was five years old: news came to Saul’s palace in Gibeon that King Saul and Prince Jonathan had just been killed by the Philistines in the battle at Jezreel. Not knowing what to expect except the worst, all the servants in the palace ran for their lives. Five-year-old Mephibosheth’s nurse grabbed him on the run and then tripped. In the fall the boy’s ankles were broken, both of them, so he was carried to the safety of the small village Lo-debar. The bones didn’t heal correctly, so he was never again able to walk well. He grew up in obscurity, lame.           Mephibosheth was the only living heir of the once-great house of Saul, but nobody knew it. His life was in danger if that knowledge become known; he grew up with his royal identity suppressed, the privileges of royalty denied him, and both conditions were aggravated by his lameness. Basically, he was a victim. At some point David’s name no doubt popped up. If it hadn’t been for David, there would have been no accident and no lifelong crippling disability. It was David’s fault they were living in obscurity. Mephibosheth was trained from a young age to look for the cause of his misery outside himself, to find someone to blame, and fantasize revenge on the world.           The second story took place years later. Mephibosheth was now an adult, still cruelly handicapped because of the accident. Worse, he was badly crippled in spirit because of the embittering stories. He was living out the meaning of his name, “Seething Dishonor.” Then one day he was summoned in Lo-debar to present himself to David, which could only have struck terror in him. There could only be one reason for this summons: David must want to eliminate any possible future challenge to his kingdom. After all, David had suffered much from Saul’s enmity; he was being most careful now that no possible insurrection left anywhere. And Mephibosheth had been found out. He was put on a donkey and taken to Jerusalem. Every step brought him nearer to his anticipated doom.           When he was brought into David’s presence, who addressed him by name, “Mephibosheth,” and assuaged his fear, saying, in effect, “Relax, it’s going to be all right.” What he didn’t know when he was brought into David’s court—never imagining in his wildest dreams—is that he was there to be loved. He had no idea that his father Jonathan and David had made a covenant with each other, binding themselves in loyal love. Jonathan’s last words to David cemented the conditions of the covenant: “The Lord shall be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants, forever.” Here was the descendant. Mephibosheth didn’t know it, but he was the target that very day of David’s promised love, his covenanted love. The exquisite and determined love that Jonathan had given David was now given by David to Jonathan’s son.           David’s kingly rule was already marked by justice and fairness, and now he emerged here as a lover. The Hebrew word *chesed*, narrowly translated as “love,” is a large word. *Chesed* is often used in the biblical revelation to designate God’s love. We humans can love with that love, but we don’t seem to get very good at it. *Chesed* is love without regard to shifting circumstances, hormones, emotional states, and personal convenience. This is the John 3:16 love, “God so loved the world…” This was the kind of love with which David loved Mephibosheth that day—who had never been loved like this.           The third story took place years later during the Absalom rebellion. Mephibosheth had been living as an honored family member, living in a house of love, being the recipient of love. During this rebellion, there’s two stories that appear within the larger scope of this chapter of his life. One former servant of Saul tells a story to David as an accusation of betrayal regarding Mephibosheth. The second story is from his lips himself and is a declaration of loyal love. The former servant, Ziba, tells David that Mephibosheth betrayed him; he stayed behind to become king, to grab David’s throne. David accepts this first story without asking questions. Then he runs into Mephibosheth, who says he wanted to leave but Ziba betrayed him, leaving him behind. So who’s telling the truth? We’re never explicitly told, but David doesn’t care who’s telling the truth.           This is the characteristic Davidic note, the anticipation of the gospel. David first sought out Mephibosheth from a position of strength. He used his strength to love generously, *covenantally*. Uncorrupted by power, love flowed unimpeded. David treated Mephibosheth with the love with which God had saved him. He doesn’t need to know who’s telling the truth. He takes Mephibosheth’s story at face value and keeps faith with him. He persists in his love of him. David in weakness is as strong as ever in love.           May we strive to be more like David, who in the thick of everything going wrong, determines to love an unpromising stranger, and to persist in that love no matter what. The gospel miracle is that human beings like us from time to time evade the temptations of power and the brittleness of success and actually manage to vulnerably love another person who has all the potential of turning on us and rejecting us. Every time such love is ventured, another piece of the gospel is proclaimed, and the Kingdom of God is made credible. Let us so love….    OCTOBER IS PASTOR APPRECIATON MONTH           I want to personally thank Shelly Ryan, our wonderful Administrative Assistant, for her skills in espionage. Apparently she emailed people and spoke to them on the phone while I was still in the office—not knowing that she (and several others) were involved in secretly putting together Pastor Appreciation Day after church on October 18th during our potluck. I was clueless! I’m grateful for her tireless efforts. You’re amazing, and I’m blessed to work with you.  I especially want to thank the congregation of FPC for the wonderful cake that read, “We Appreciate Pastor Jan.” The COVID-19 lockdown has been very difficult for me. My family was never able to come together for a memorial service for my sister Kathy, who died in late January of this year. Added to that not being able to minister to the people of FPC with personal visits and home communion—being cut off from our church family has been tough. I have had a hard time in isolation not having a strong friend base here in town, so it’s been very lonely for me not being able to be personally connected to others. I share all this to say that the cake and the basket filled with cards and gifts were not expected and it all was a gift straight from the Lord. My spirits have been raised and I was greatly encouraged by your words and tokens of love and appreciation. I don’t have the words to adequately express my love to all of you, but please know how I was greatly touched by your love.  With love and blessings,  Pastor Jan | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | |  |  |   **A TURKEY SHOOT**  **FPCIS PARTNERING WITH**  **COURTESY SPORTING AND PAWN**  HERE IS THE DEAL!  All the money from this event goes to the Carlsbad Police Dept. and Eddy County Sheriff's Dept.  This is an outreach event into the community to:  1.    Show support for the heroes in these departments  2.    Allow these departments to use the money to directly support their tax-free charities such as: Battered Family Shelter and Citizens Offering Police Support (COPS)  The Courtesy Sporting And Pawn will provide gun safety and manpower to actually oversee the shooting event.  FPC will provide funding and logistics, including advertisement and frozen turkeys. If anyone would like to support this event specifically by making a donation, it would be greatly appreciated. Please leave donation in church office or in the collection plate during the church service. Be sure to mark your check "Turkey Shoot" in the memo line. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Wednesday Night**  **6 Week Bible Study**  **"Presbyterian 101"**  **A Reformed Faith Refresher Course**  **Please join us at 5:00 p.m.**  We gather for a light meal, and then dive into our study from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. If you'd like to join us on a Zoom meeting, this allows people at home to participate in our discussion. [When you receive the email from FPC about joining the Zoom meeting Wednesday, all you will have to do is click the blue link in the message.](http://www.zoom.com)  Thank you to everyone who volunteered to sponsor the shared meals.  Oct. 21 -  Bruce & Linda Faulk  Oct. 28 -  Jan Desterhaft (last session) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Church Signs**  "I Want to Be Like Saul - I Want to Be  on the Road to De-mask-us"  **Weekly Scripture**  When we can’t answer the whys or don't understand the ways of God, we can always trust his wisdom.  *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding." Proverbs 3:5* | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | |  |  |   **﻿Time Change**  Daylight Savings Time Ends on October 31st.  Be sure to turn your clock back one hour before bed!  **Stewardship Campaign**  You may have received a letter regarding our pledge campaign with a pledge card for 2021 enclosed. Please either send your pledge to the office at PO Box 39, call Shelly to record your pledge, or drop your card in the offering plate on Sunday. Pledge cards are used to prepare our budget for the coming year. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Prayer Concerns**  **Pray for RAIN!!!**  Ken & Rhonda Beamestefer, Tyler Blythe, Martin Calderon, Owen Carleton, Donna Eakin’s mom, Faith Goad, Muriel Gossage, Hayden Kimbley, Patrice Landreth, Tim Lodel, Robin Patillo, Sharone Snelling, Sarah Trexler, Evan Winegarner, Donna’s friend Shirley who is hospitalized in OK.  **Sympathy:** the friends and family of Joe Painter and the Fudge family  **Long term health issues:**Pat Collins, Susie Coy, Robert Navarrette, Scott & Shirley Maxwell, Phil Sharp, Robert Navarrette  **Homebound and Care facilities:** Rich Adamson, Muriel Gossage, Dodie Hendley, Helen Patterson, Phyllis Readel  **Military:** Mollie Navarrette Acuna, Rey Acuna, Cody Ogden-Stell  **Members/Friends Serving Overseas:** Carol & Leith Fujii    At the beginning of each month, we remove names of people from whom we haven't had a recent report. To add someone to the prayer list or report on their status, please contact Shelly or Pastor Jan. | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Church Property Policy**  When borrowing church property, it is required that you let the church know in advance. If there are no conflicting events, we usually can give you permission. | | |  | | --- | |  | | | | | | |
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