

Pastor's Corner

The Rev. Dr. Sallie Watson, General Presbyter

My friend Craig Satterlee is the king of transitions! In his book *When God Speaks Through Change*, he identifies three parts to every transition. The first part is the “ending,” the time that something has happened when you know you can’t go home again. So the beginning of a major change usually involves the grief associated with whatever ending is taking place.

So if you start with the end, you’re right to think that we end with the beginning. Whatever the new start is—the arrival of the new pastor, the dedication of the new building, whatever—that is the event that marks the end of the transition.

It’s the middle phase, however, that’s the ugliest. The “Liminal” phase is that scary, messy in-between time when the old is gone but the new is not yet known. It’s everything that happens between the beginning of the change and the conclusion of it. The word “liminal” comes from a Latin word which means “threshold”: the door frame. When you’re standing at the threshold at someone’s home, you’re not yet into the house, but you’re not on the sidewalk either. This phase can last for months or maybe even years. Which means: this is a time to experiment!

You know, I have to say, I hate the liminal part! I like to know where we’re going. And if I have to choose between remembering the past and not knowing at all, remembering wins every time. If I got to do things the way I want to do them, I would move straight from the moment of transition right into the new beginning and avoid all the messy experimental stuff in between. But that’s not how we get to do them in Mission Presbytery, or at Northwood either.

You and I find ourselves in that liminal time, don’t we? Would that we could move from our fond memories of Traci and how great life was while she was with us, right through to the start of the new pastor. Friends, I wish I could promise that to you. But it wouldn’t be the truth. This is the time when you as a congregation get to find your way together, to try some new things, to keep some of the old ways and ditch the rest, and all the while trust that God is going to see you through.

But how do we do that? We can only move **forward** by **remembering**, remembering only these two things: Who’s in charge, and what we’re called to do.

Friends, God is in charge. **God** is in charge. We can remember those four words every time we are tempted to envision a future—or a past—of our own creating. And once we know deep down in our bones who it is that is really in charge, we will automatically know what we are supposed to do: to LOVE God, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. On these two commandments, Jesus says, hang everything else: the law, the prophets, our very lives.

Friends, our reason for being is to glorify God and enjoy God forever, not to ruminate endlessly on the past. That is exactly the way, and the only way, we can get ourselves through the threshold and cross over from the past into God’s future.

Northwood Day School News

Martha Sherrod



Happy New Year!! New School Year, that is! The excitement is high as we welcome back all our children and families for a wonderful new year.

The week before school started the teachers and staff participated in several hours of professional development. Topics included professionalism, ethics, health and safety, cultural diversity, student engagement, lesson planning strategies, and social and emotional development of young children. Whew! So it is not surprising that we can report that all of the Day School teachers are now CDA certified or higher! One of our teachers has even begun work on her Master's Degree!

Last year NPDS was awarded a wonderful grant from PreK4SA. So far, the funds have been used for new curriculum and teacher training. This year several of our teachers will continue 30 hours of training provided by PreK4SA. Some of the funds will also be used for playground upgrades. All this is helping us continue our progress toward Texas Rising Star and NAEYC accreditation.

We are excited to report that we have been able to offer tuition assistance to five of our families! Our silent auction at our end of the year celebration last year has allowed us to begin our tuition assistance fund.

Our children will continue to attend Chapel every morning. What better way for them to start each day!

Are you interested in helping the Day School in some way? Come be a Reading Buddy! Do you have a special talent or interest that you would like to share with the children? Let us know!! We would LOVE to have you visit!

Our enrollment is almost at capacity, so we are thankful for the highly qualified and dedicated teachers who work with our children each day. We also thank YOU for your continued support of the wonderful ministry that is our Day School!

Contemporary Book Club

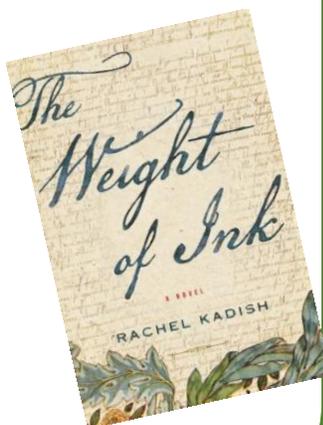
September selection is
The Weight of Ink
by Rachel Kadish.

Sunday, September 23,
5:30pm'

Dinner followed by book
discussion

Home of David and Mary
Middleton, 218 Oakleaf

Non church members are
welcome.



Social Justice League

Monthly meetings will resume on Saturday evenings this fall. Watch eNotes and the bulletin for announcements of topics and dates. Or join the Social Justice League group on Facebook.

Sunday Morning Classes for Adults This Fall

Seekers Class

David Middleton

Many of us at NPC might find ourselves wobbly in the maintenance of our spiritual disciplines as we enter another interim phase in the evolving life of our beloved church.

Whether we come customarily to God moved by missionary zeal, or by a need to be involved in the music of devotion and praise, or to be refreshed and sustained by the practice of group and personal prayer, all of us will benefit by being intentional about growing our faith in the coming months.

It's with that growth in mind that the Seekers Class aims to undertake a new, creative look at where our faith-life begins: in a close study of the teachings of Jesus.

Amy G. Oden, Professor of Early Church History and Spirituality at Saint Paul School of Theology, is the author of a new book that will focus our attention for several weeks: *Right Here Right Now: The Practice of Christian Mindfulness*, just out from Abingdon Press.

This book reveals the Christian roots of mindfulness—possibly a surprise to some—yet Prof. Oden argues strongly that, when the actual practices of mindfulness are reclaimed, they in fact deepen the life of Christian faith and reinforce the power of our mission of love in the world. Once it is realized and claimed, the awareness of living in God's presence right here and right now invites a transformative new way to proclaim God's mercy, justice, and abundant life.

Prof. Oden's message shows how the practice of Christian mindfulness begins with the teachings of Jesus and continues throughout Christian history. Like the good handbook it is, in part, *Right Here Right Now* also includes clear step-by-step instructions for the PRACTICE of Christian mindfulness.

So here's an invitation to spend some time puzzle-solving.

If you're curious about how the Christian life that first turns inward to center on God can and does necessarily then turn outward to be a source of joyful blessings to the world, by all means FEEL WELCOME to attend the Seekers Class and help unravel (then proclaim) the argument of *Right Here Right Now*.

We'll begin classes on September 9 at 9:30am.

Hope to see lots of you who are variously "Seekers" there.

Faith Café

Regardless of where you are in your faith journey, this is a safe, laid-back, welcoming place to come each week, explore God's Word, and talk openly about how it applies to our lives. So please, join us for good coffee and even better conversation. We are brewed and ready each Sunday in the Parlor at 9:30 with a start time of 9:45.



Faith Cafe
Coffee + Jesus

Coming Youth Events

Main Event for Youth: September 21-23

This weekend retreat at John Knox Ranch is open to all 6th-12th grade students and their adult leaders.

Midwinter Youth Retreats: January 11-13 and January 18-20, 2019

Annual midwinter retreats at Mo-Ranch, combined for junior and senior high.



Are we contemporary yet?

Owen Duggan

What goes into being a genuinely contemporary church? Anyone who visits different churches today will find that styles of worship vary greatly. Two terms that get bandied about are 'traditional' and 'contemporary.' But do we really know what is meant by these labels and are they useful? I would venture to say they mean something very different to each person and from one church to the next.

In some churches such as the Episcopal Church, one may encounter an English cathedral style of service with choir (sometimes boys only) and organ. This manner is often shared by large, older Presbyterian, Lutheran and Methodist churches, although the sopranos and altos would most certainly be women. Some Baptist churches may have very large choirs and, in addition to the organ, groups of musicians or even small orchestras, allowing for a broad range of expression. We might be tempted to call all this traditional music. But what if the hymn, anthem, or choral blessing was written by a living, breathing composer. Doesn't that make it contemporary?

And what about mainline churches that have folk/rock (praise) bands? Are they contemporary? Some of the hymns accompanied by these groups date back centuries and even some of the newer worship songs date back forty or so years. Perhaps you see where I am going with this...

Instead of contemporary and traditional, why don't we use musical terms? For example, *classical* church music would have organs, choirs and orchestral instruments. *African-American gospel* music would have choirs, jazz organs, guitars and drums. *Appalachian gospel music* would have dulcimers, banjos, dobros, mandolins, etc. Popular non-denominational music would have a rock band with keyboards, guitars and drums. Do you see where I am going with this?

The musical expressions of the Church come in many shapes and sizes and can incorporate both old and new sources and instruments. They also can and do, when presented with energy and integrity, appeal to young and old. The most important element is character. Does the music on Sunday (or Saturday or any other time) reflect the character of the congregation and the people expressing themselves? Does the music provide the medium for spiritual elevation, contemplation, devotion, and renewal? If we really want to talk contemporary, are we using inclusive language and realistic, compassionate, and transformational pastoral perspectives?

The joy of church music lies in its amazing diversity. Right now. Today. We have only to open our hearts and mouths and enter God's courts with praise and thanksgiving!



PW Circles

Judy Harris

Summer is over and that means our Women's Circles are gearing up for a new Bible Study and Fellowship Gatherings. All are welcome at any circle. Our leaders are Elizabeth Hewins, Day Circle; Charlotte Canaday, Saturday Morning Circle; and Sherryl Walsh, Evening Circle. The Wednesday and Saturday Circles will be using the Horizon Study: *God's Promise, I Am With You*. You can obtain a copy from Judy for \$11.00.

In September, the Day Circle will meet Wednesday, September 12 at 10:00am in the Visions Room at the Church. The Saturday Circle will meet in the Church Parlor September 8 at 9:30am. Both groups will review the Introduction and Lesson 1.

The Evening Circle will meet the third Monday, September 17 at 6:30pm at the home of Stephanie Balderas. They are studying *Misreading Scripture With Western Eyes* by E. Randolph Richards and Brandon J. O'Brien. They will study Chapter 1 for the first lesson. This book is available on Amazon for \$13.43.

Questions? Call Judy Harris, 210-602-7992.

Lots of Ways to Know What's Happening

Patty Clark

Back in January, we all got our Star Words. Mine was 'Communication' At the time I thought 'Huh? What on earth could that mean?' Now I know. Shortly after Traci announced her departure, which was not long after Pastor Krin left, I awoke in a panic, thinking, 'How can I communicate news to the congregation?' Now I know what my Star Word means. Communication. Thankfully, we have some excellent volunteers to help keep it all going.



So, how do YOU get your information about happenings at Northwood? Since you are reading this, obviously the Breezeway! But we have many other avenues. Use them all to stay in COMMUNICATION!

- Breezeway—a monthly newsletter, electronic and printed, available to all members and friends. The electronic version is available on the NPC website and printed copies are available in the Narthex.
- NPC Website—<http://npcsa.org/> Includes the church calendar, photos and all sorts of other cool things. It's here that you can click a link to sign up for eNotes, or link to our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram feeds. And, you can even make a donation or pay your pledge online!
- eNotes—a weekly (more or less) email update on what's happening on Sunday. To sign up, click on the link on the website 'Subscribe to Receive Weekly E-Notes' <http://npcsa.org/>
- Facebook—<https://www.facebook.com/NorthwoodPCUSA/>
- Twitter—<https://twitter.com/NorthwoodPCUSA>
- Instagram—<https://www.instagram.com/northwoodpresbyterian/>
- Sunday Bulletin inserts—many people (me included) still like good old paper, so be sure to check the bulletin inserts each Sunday.
- Church Displays and Bulletin Boards—wander around the Narthex and the Breezeway and the office hallway for various info on Presbytery activities, PW events, Mission, new Members, and more!

And speaking of communication ... how do you keep up with our mission co-workers in Zambia, Charles and Melissa Johnson? We often post things through the Northwood links, but you can follow them individually in several ways!



PC(USA) website – Profile, Prayer Cards, Signups and Donations –
<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/charles-and-melissa-johnson>



Facebook –
<https://www.facebook.com/LifeinLundazi>
<https://www.facebook.com/mcjsa78>
<https://www.facebook.com/charles.johnson.7547>
<https://www.facebook.com/charlesjohnsonphotography>



Instagram –
https://www.instagram.com/Life_in_Lundazi/



Twitter –
<https://twitter.com/LifeinLundazi/>



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Clerk of Session Report, August 2018

Ellen Patterson, Clerk of Session

Greetings from your Clerk of Session!

We have had a busy month, and here are some major action items that the Session passed as well as some announcements.

On August 5 at New Member's Meeting in the library, Diz Carpenter was accepted into membership. She is a structural engineer, plays the drums, and was invited to Northwood by Rebecca Williamson during the Jennifer Knapp event in April. Welcome, Diz!

At the August 7 stated meeting of the Session, committee assignments for session members were made as follows: Building and Grounds: Larry Finkel, Ryan Grogan; Finance: Bob Lord, Patty Clark; Personnel and Administration: Helen Smith, Chair; Cotton Clark co-chair; Fellowship: Jane Wright; Worship and Music: Vanessa Mueller; Congregational Care: Norma Roberson; Mission and Service: Elizabeth Hewins; Day School: Kate Carey; Christian Education: Sarah Clapp and Nick Roberson; Membership and Evangelism: Elizabeth Clapp; Auxiliary Groups- Contacts: Boy Scouts of America- Jim Mueller; Northwood Junior Players: Jennifer Rivera.

As a gift for Pastor Traci upon her departure from NPC, a motion was made to gift Pastor Traci with the Apple MacBook Laptop and iPad, which were bought for her use upon her arrival at Northwood. Pastor Traci will be leaving a 32-point information list of transition topics for our new pastor when he or she arrives.

The following motions were also made and passed: Larry Finkel, chair of Building and Grounds, moved to replace the original wooden doors in four openings in the Fellowship Hall with new bronze (black) aluminum doors and side lights using top half of door and side light for glass and, in addition, to replace the old windows with new insulated bronze aluminum windows to match new doors and side lights. The money for these improvements will come from the restricted building funds for building and grounds.

A motion was made that we have a congregational meeting to elect Gail Clowe, Lisa Mines, Blanche Ryan, and chairperson Jane Wright as the new Nominating Committee for selecting next year's class of elders. The congregational meeting took place on August 19. At this congregational meeting, the following on the outgoing elder Nominating Committee were dismissed and thanked for their service: Sandeen Finkel, David Middleton, Donn Iverson, and Gayle Millard Lord.

The Interim Pastor Search Committee also made the following report at the August 7 session meeting: four candidates for interim pastor have already been interviewed. The Presbytery Committee on Ministry met on August 6 and appointed as Interim Session Moderator Carla Matthews, for September through November. We will offer Rev. Matthews \$100.00 per meeting as an honorarium. The goal is to have our interim pastor in place by some time in October. The Session approved a motion from the Interim Pastor Nominating Committee that two additional members join the search committee: Anne Little and Tommy Moreno.

Please also remember that all Committee Meetings are scheduled to take place in the Fellowship Hall after worship on September 16 and November 18.



Committee Sunday Is September 16

Elizabeth Hewins

After worship on Sunday, September 16, Northwood's committees will meet in the Fellowship Hall. The Committees actively help with God's work in our church, our neighborhood, our state, and even worldwide through support to our Mission Co-Workers in Zambia. We need your help, your creative ideas, and your skills. Here is a list of the committees and their scope. Pick one that you are interested in and come meet with us on September 16!

Building and Grounds: Responsible for the maintenance, repair, and appearance of all church buildings and grounds.

Christian Education: Responsible for the organization and administration of a strong and complete educational program for the nurture of members and friends of NPC.

Congregational Care: Responsible for the continuing care of the needs of members of the congregation. It shall assist the pastor(s) and Session in maintaining contact with those who are ill, hospitalized, or homebound as well as those who have experienced other particular sorrows or joys.

Fellowship: Responsible for planning activities that bring church members and friends together for the development of personal relationships so that all may have a sense of belonging to the Northwood family.

Membership and Evangelism: Responsible for the advertising and promotion of the church and its programs, reviewing the membership rolls, contacting prospective members, and providing for the assimilation of new members into the fellowship and service of the church.

Committee Chairs

Building and Grounds: Larry Finkel and Ryan Grogan

Christian Education: Sarah Clapp and Nick Roberson

Congregational Care: Norma Roberson

Fellowship: Jane Wright

Membership and Evangelism: Elizabeth Clapp

Mission and Service: Elizabeth Hewins

Personnel and Administration: Helen Smith, Chair; Cotton Clark co-chair

Stewardship and Finance: Bob Lord and Patty Clark

Worship and Music: Vanessa Mueller

Things to Know

- Committee Sunday comes four times a year for meetings after worship in Fellowship Hall. Some committees have additional meetings and some work through email.
- You don't need to be invited to be part of a committee. Pick something that interests you and join them this month.
- Lunch and child care are provided on Committee Sundays.

Mission and Service: Responsible for encouraging and supporting the mission outreach of the church beyond the local congregation and coordinating the mission work efforts and mission interpretation within the congregation.

Personnel and Administration: Responsible for the employment and oversight of nonordained staff. It shall assist the session in fulfilling its responsibilities to persons employed by the church, with concern for equal employment opportunity, fair employment practices, personnel policies, and the annual review of the adequacy of compensation for all employees. While it is not the supervisor of the pastor(s), this committee provides support for and evaluation of the pastor(s) and is readily available to all staff members on a confidential basis.

Stewardship and Finance: Responsible for receiving and disbursing church funds and encouraging the stewardship of each member in terms of time and talent as well as money.

Worship and Music: Responsible for the planning, oversight, and evaluation of the public worship of God, including the proclamation of the Word of God, celebration of the Sacraments, corporate prayer, and offering of praise to God in song.