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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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PHONE: 815-562-7053 WEB: PLACEFORGRACE.COM

WELCOME

January 18, 2026 - 9:00am

Welcome and Announcements - Lizzie Cartwright

Time of Preparation for Worship

Introit: Lord, We've Come to Worship You

Call to Worship - taken from Psalm 25

Leader: Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths.

All: Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.

Leader: Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

All: He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.

Leader: All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

All: Who is the man who fears the LORD? Him will he instruct in the way that he should choose.

Song: Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing # 2

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon

Leader: A prayer based on the teaching of Jesus: Lord, you said, "If you love me, you will obey what I command."

All: Forgive us our lukewarm love and our disobedience.

Leader: Lord, you said, "You may ask for anything in my name."

All: Forgive us when we think we need to solve our own problems.

Leader: Lord, you said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

All: We confess that our lives are often consumed by worry and anxiety.

Leader: Lord, you said, "If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit."

All: Forgive us our barren lives, Lord.

Leader: Lord, you said, "You must testify, for you have been with me."

All: We confess, Lord, that we have been too often silent.

Leader: Lord, you said, "Love each other as I have loved you."

All: In this and in so many other ways, we confess our failures and shortcomings. Amen.

Choir Anthem: Come Follow Me

Scripture: John 10:27 (blue 90, black 104), Proverbs 3:5,6 (blue 549, black 586), 1 Peter 2:21 (blue 206, black 233)

Sermon: Follow Me

Song: I Have Decided to Follow Jesus # 376

Prayers of the People—Deb Schiller

Offering and Doxology

Song: I Will Follow

Blessing: 1Thessalonians 5:23-24

On Thursday mornings, at 10:00 am, Jeana Valdivieso will be leading a Bible study, on the book of Colossians. We will meet in the Narthex, in the seating area.

All are welcome to join in!!

If you have any questions, please reach out to Jeana.

Fellowship Commission Request

Are you a lover of baking cookies? Do you enjoy walking through the cookie aisle at the grocery store, trying to choose just the right kind? If so, Fellowship Commission could use your help! We are in need of cookies (storebought or homemade) for upcoming Sundays, and any amount you could provide would be greatly appreciated!

Feel free to drop them off at the church during the week and place them in the freezer and we will take it from there! Also, we are very grateful to those of you would have provided cookies thus far to enjoy with our coffee time!

Any questions, please reach out to us. Thank you so much!

The Fellowship Commission

Karen Cech, Rachel Thorson, Shay Good

Our youth are headed to WINTER CAMP over the next few weeks! Please be praying for their weekends, travels, fun, chapel and worship sessions.

Our middle schoolers will go this weekend, high schoolers the following weekend and our 3-5th graders will go in February.

Please be praying for them all!

Middle Schoolers: Allie, Grace, Adelaide, Samantha, Sydney, Taylor, Piper, Campbell, Clara, Lauren, Eve, Adalyn, Ashley, Ellie, Ayla, Madelynn, Emmeline, Emma, Evelyn, Zoey, Annalyce, Schekina, Jessica, Grayson, Reed, Grant, Lincoln, Caleb, Brantley and Lucas
Chaperones: Tessa, Sara, Mike, Julia, Jared and Gracee

High Schoolers: Parker, Grant, Cooper, Even, Nolan, Aaron, Kayl, Josie, Delani, Abby, Rylie, Megan and Adelaide
Chaperones: Tessa, Sara, Tarah and Jared

3-5th Graders: Clara, DeeDee, Abigail, Anna, Ava, Lily, Riley, Winnie, Eleanor, Oakley, Maddox, Brody, Rory, Liam, Silas, Hudson, Xander, Warren, Spencer, Colin, Ronan and Maddox
Chaperones: Sara, Tessa, Andrea, Brittanie, Brian, Cooper, Parker, John and Josh

SUNDAY, January 18

9:00 a.m. Worship Service
10:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour, Adult Ed, Sunday School
6:30 p.m. High School Youth Group
6:30 p.m. Chunko's Small Group
7:00 p.m. AA Meeting

MONDAY, January 19

10:00 a.m. Bible Study with Connie Dougherty
6:30 p.m. Cub Scouts
6:30 p.m. Middle School Youth Group

TUESDAY, January 20

7:00 p.m. Committee & Deacon Meetings

WEDNESDAY, January 21

11:00 a.m. Prayer Group
6:00 p.m. Choir
7:00 p.m. AA Meeting

THURSDAY, January 22

7:00 a.m. Kiwanis
10:00 a.m. Bible Study with Jeana
4:00 p.m. 3-5th Grade Youth Group

SATURDAY, January 24

7:00 p.m. AA Meeting

SUNDAY, January 25

9:00 a.m. Worship
10:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour, Adult Ed, Sunday School
6:30 p.m. Chunko's Small Group
7:00 p.m. AA Meeting

For the months of January and February, Xav & Jeana Valdivieso will be our Pulpit Supply and Pastoral Care team!

If you would like to get ahold of them, their contact is:

Xav's Cell Phone: 815-761-2005

Jeana's Cell Phone: 815-761-4010

Xav's Email: sxvaldi61@gmail.com

Office Coordinator/DCE - Sara Slattengren
Student Ministry Leader - Tessa Stouffer
Secretary/Receptionist - Midge Berg
Financial Secretary - Karen Hauck

Church Web Site: www.placeforgrace.com

E-Mail Addresses:

Xav Valdivieso: sxvaldi61@gmail.com
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Office Hours: M-Th 9a-4p
Fri 9a-12Noon

Pagan Threat: Confronting America's Godless Uprising

By Lucas Miles

Read and reviewed by Mike Chunko

Depending on who you talk to these days, America is on the verge of being overtaken by AI (artificial intelligence) which in the view of even more (again, depending on who you talk to) will soon usher in the Antichrist, Worship of the Beast, bringing swift destruction to the entire globe. It's a carnival shooting gallery of opinion, reaction, over-reaction, and the integrity of some of this "information" would be better suited to a literary remake of Sinclair Lewis' epic 1927 novel, "Elmer Gantry." On the other hand, there are reasonable voices today sounding fact-based alarms and observation to the those who have ears to listen, that things in the spiritual world are not everything they should be. "Pagan Threat: Confronting American's Godless Uprising," by Lucas Miles, is one such message. Not that the threat is anything new. This pseudo-spiritual expression has been making inroads into culture for decades. So, don't blame Opray Winfrey for it. This one's not all her fault.

Part of the blame may be the Church's failure to recognize signs of the times, subtle and not so subtle messages, and the people bringing them to the fore.

That's where this timely book comes into focus. Not everyone is going to read and agree with 100% on every page, but there is a wealth of material here to ponder and pray about as we see our culture grow darker. "To navigate this challenging era," writes Miles in the introduction to this compelling and urgent work, "Christians must renew their commitment to biblical truth while engaging the culture with grace and conviction," (pg. xiii, Introduction).

Agreed. And this book is a good place to begin understanding what's going on in today's world. This is a well-researched, balanced view of the Pagan culture of the 21st Century. It might be the first book you read to familiarize yourself with this trend but rest assured it will be an eye-opener and a platform for continued, thoughtful conversation and Bible study.

Check it out in the New Life Library today!

Note: Lucas Miles is the author of "Woke Jesus: The False Messiah Destroying Christianity," (2023) and is also available for checkout in the New Life Library.

Hello Church!

Here is a brief survey from the Pastor Nominating Committee. We need your help in finding the right person to be our next pastor. We know God has someone out there for us. Your help can steer us in the right direction.

So, thank you for taking a few minutes to share your thoughts as our church enters this season of pastoral transition. Your voice matters. This survey is an integral part of our Mission Study, helping the Session and the Pastor Nominating Committee understand who we are as a congregation, what we value, and where God may be leading us next.

Please answer prayerfully. There are no "right" answers—only your experiences, hopes, and insights. All responses are confidential and will be used only to support the discernment process.

We are grateful for your participation and for your love for our church. May God guide us together as we seek His will for the future.

In Christ,
The Pastor Nominating Committee
John Haselton, Kara Burke, Connie Dougherty, Brent Tracy, Sarah Chisamore,
Mary Kay Merema, Brad Chapman

If you have a prayer request that you would like to be put on the "Prayer Chain", please send it to Mary Kay Merema. She sends the prayer requests to the texting threads.

Mary Kay's phone number is 815-761-3428.

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FOR CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY

