



The Peoples Weekly Mini Mouse



Manse Cat Weekly: Musings from Pastor Leia / her cat

Volume 1, Issue 13

Some of you may know that I keep a file of "sermon outtakes." Sometimes I pull out a joke that didn't fit the tone, or an extra illustration. Sometimes I end up going in a different direction and so I take out a section that was leading up to a different point. Sometimes I remove entire paragraphs for length.

Theoretically, any of these outtakes could make their way into another sermon, so I try to make a note of the holiday or text or theme they were written for. I haven't had the chance to reclaim any of them yet, but to be fair, I've only been keeping the file for a year and change.

As I removed and rewrote the conclusion for my sermon from June 21st, I read through my collection of outtakes again, and I noticed that there were a couple different passages that tried to express similar ideas, ideas that I've tried to preach more than once but couldn't quite put the right words to at the time.

But since the original conclusion of my sermon for the 21st was, coincidentally, about how we don't always have the right words to express what we believe, I thought that I would share it, along with another two outtakes.

"We are not perfect and we aren't always going to get it right. That's just being human. Our end goal isn't to be perfect; it's to be better. I know that there are themes and causes that I feel confident speaking to and openly supporting, but I also know that there

are issues that overwhelm me. I know how to celebrate Pride Month, but not Juneteenth. I have been totally comfortable leading classes on death and dying and funeral planning, but I don't know where to begin in preaching an impassioned condemnation of the countless ways that our society prolongs systemic racism, however much I wish that I did. I hope that I'm never remembered as being like Pharaoh. I hope that my heart never becomes too hard to be unraveled and woven into something new."

"I like to think that if I had been ordained twenty years earlier, that I would have been an open activist against homophobia and a strong advocate for the environment. But there were times after seminary when I struggled to pay my rent, even when I was working. I don't have a spouse to support me if I destroy my career by being too controversial. It's easy enough now to make these grand idealistic statements... But six years ago, I preached on this text [1 Kings 21:1-16; the story of Naboth being killed so that the faithless king could claim his orchard] at my home church. I boldly said that if I were ever to find myself in a church that wouldn't let me perform the wedding of a same-sex couple, that I would leave and find another church; another denomination, if I had to. It's a nice sentiment, but I had no idea at the time that my ordination was still four years away, or that it would take me two years from finishing seminary classes to finding a church after a series of part-time,

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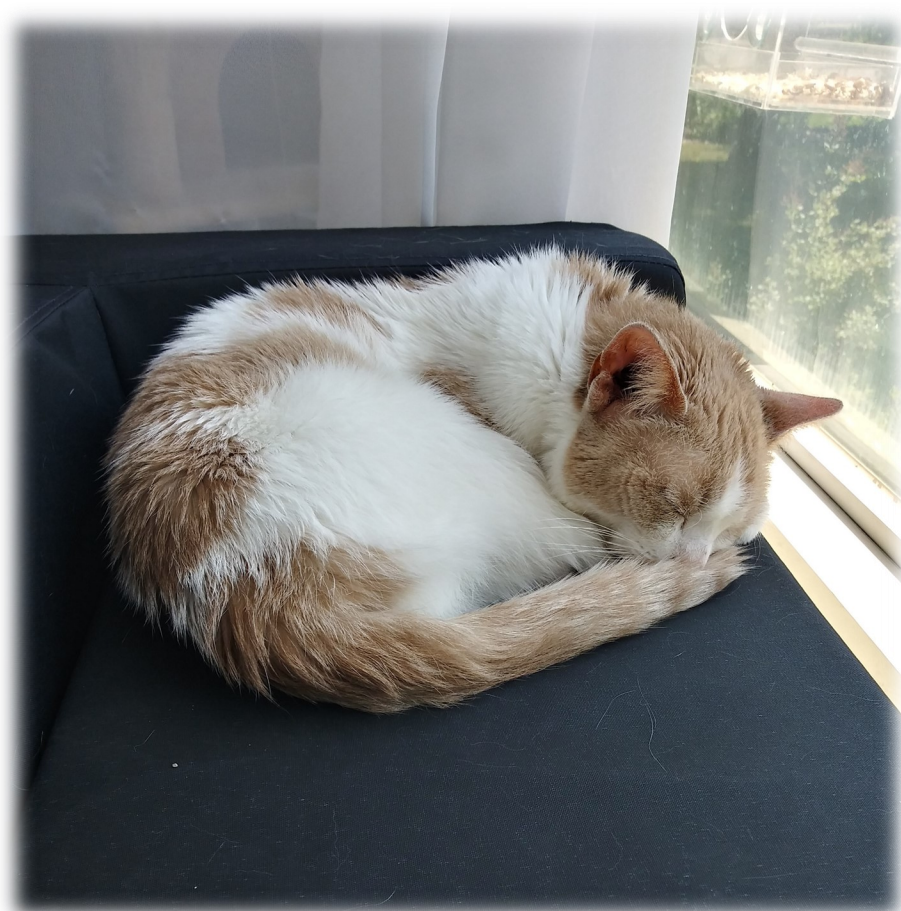
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Pastor Leia Continued

temporary, low-paying jobs. How brave and how bold would I really have been, if my livelihood and career had been at stake? How much would I really have risked? Would I have done as much as I could as quietly as I could, planting seeds for the next generation? Would I have convinced myself that change wasn't possible and resigned myself to a belief that there was nothing I could do?"

"If you can live the life that God calls you to live, if you can treat your enemies with mercy, if you can treat the oppressed with dignity, if you can find the strength to do what is right (even when it's hard), if you can find the courage to speak up for what is right (even when you aren't the one being hurt), if you can seek justice, and love kindness, and walk humbly with God...if you can live that life, then there will be people who hate you. If the table is round, then no one gets to sit at the place of honor. If the pizza is sliced up equally, then no one gets to call dibs on the biggest piece. If we recognize that the way our society is set up hurts people, then not only do we have to admit that we were wrong, but we have to change, and we don't like doing either of those things."

Leia



Happening This Week of June 22, 2020

Tuesday, June 23, 8pm: Bible study on Facebook Live

Wednesday, June 24, 8pm: evening prayer on Facebook Live

Thursday, June 25, 5pm: virtual fellowship on zoom <https://peoplespresbyterian.org/events/virtual-cocktail-hour-2020-06-25/>

Sunday, June 28, 10am: worship on Facebook Live followed by virtual fellowship on zoom <https://peoplespresbyterian.org/events/virtual-coffee-hour-2020-06-28/>



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS:

JUNE 16, 2016 (Zoom) SESSION MEETING

Clerk of Session (Nancy Kuzniar)

March and April session meetings were canceled because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The May 20, 2020 Session meeting was held via Zoom.

Communion was celebrated during online worship on Sunday, June 7, 2020, with members providing their own Communion elements in their homes.

Treasurer (Chris Wetzler) In May, General Fund cash decreased by \$5,130.69, down to \$14,400.88. This is partially due to the payment of \$4,675.73 for boiler room repairs, including a new pump. In addition, contributions were below budget.

The monthly expense budget is \$11,207. General Fund receipts of pledges and contributions were \$5,137 from the following sources: Give Now button on website \$262, checks \$2,515, electronic giving \$2,370. We also received \$50 in building fund contributions.

Pastor (Rev. Leia Battaglia) Since worship moved online in mid-March, I have been overwhelmingly busy.

I created a worship studio in my craft room, and have learned how to film, light, and live stream. After a while of "one-camera" worship, I downloaded and learned a new software that allows me to include other materials within the live stream, allowing for pre-recorded lay readers. In addition, I started offering a twenty minute Wednesday evening prayer service every week. Although the data provided by Facebook is arbitrary and general (a "view" only needs to be three seconds long to be counted), both services seem to be reasonably well "attended" and people often participate by typing their prayer concerns in the comments. The online format is certainly not anyone's

ideal form of worship, but it has allowed us the space to celebrate occasions that we wouldn't otherwise have had special services for, like Easter vigil, the feast of the Ascension, and Memorial Day.

In April, I started an informal Tuesday night Bible study to connect Biblical themes with current events (Ecclesiastes asks where God is when there is pain in the world, and the prophet Amos speaks to justice and social unrest). Because our church community has been unable to gather together for conversation, I host twice-weekly fellowship hours on Sunday mornings and Thursday afternoons.

In order to be as accessible as possible, and recognizing that some members might not be comfortable downloading new programs or navigating Facebook Live, I have tried to offer different ways to participate. For every Sunday service, anyone can visit our website and click a link to the recording of the morning's service, listen to an audio recording of the sermon, read through the readings and prayers, click a link to hymns on YouTube, or any combination of the above. Instead of every other month, there has been a weekly mini Mouse newsletter. I've been calling/texting/emailing people as much as I can, putting an emphasis on our members who live alone, but since my workload has increased pretty dramatically, I'm deeply grateful to the Deacons, who have been regularly checking in on their flocks. Peoples is in the process of signing up potential blood donors to host a drive for the Red Cross this summer, has been in conversation with Aid in Milan about community needs, and will be collaborating with

our weekly Thursday night renters, the SCA, on some projects around the church campus.

Because I've been needing so many new skills and relying so much on the collective experiences of my peers, I have been attending a lot of webinars including digital storytelling, effective church website design, staging online worship, creating engaging social media, preaching in time of crisis, copyright law for churches, connecting virtually, etc. I have been regularly attending Presbytery gatherings (online) and sharing resources with other churches. With so much of everyday life moved online, I have ramped up the timeline of some major website work that I'd been planning. For example, there are now dozens of sermon audio recordings, a pastor's blog, more visitor-friendly language, and a secure page for online donations. Obviously I'm unable to get the sorts of photographs of church life that I'd been wanting to put up, but I am nevertheless proud of the work I've done so far.

There has been a lot of science, uncertainty, conflicting news, fear, and societal upheaval in the wake of this pandemic, and while no pastor on the planet was prepared or trained for any of it, I have been doing the best I can to pastor our church in this season. I constantly feel like there is more that I could be doing, but I also know that I need to pace myself, and so I have been limiting my daily work to no more than ten hours a day and committing myself to take one day off every week. The pandemic will continue to force large changes in the way that we understand worship for a long while to come: we will be unable to sing together until there is a vaccine, for example. I know that

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS:

Cont'd

these are difficult times, that everyone has been asked to make painful sacrifices, that the nature of an online format excludes certain demographics, and that people are deeply frustrated with the social and spiritual limitations of being unable to worship together in person, but I hope that in years to come, Peoples will **remember this season as a time when they were reminded that God is always with them, wherever they are, when they found new ways to be a community, and when they loved their neighbors by staying home to slow the rate of infection as much as they could.** God has seen us through loneliness and sickness and social unrest before, and I know that God will see us through again.

Online Worship: After discussion, a motion to continue **online worship through the end of July, 2020**, was seconded and carried unanimously. This deadline will be revisited at the July 15 virtual Session meeting to determine whether further extension of the online-only date is needed.

Buildings and Grounds (Skip Lawver) Adrian Mechanical has finished repairing the copper pipes and boiler pump in the Mechanical Room. This was a major repair task and not a cheap one. The two inch copper pipes had developed a leak and the impeller on the boiler pump had failed, so these repairs were needed. Thanks to Steve Barney for taking charge of this project. Kudos to Doris Campbell, Nancy Kuzniar, and Bob Meyer for cleaning up the three flower beds bordering the parking lot. Great job people. Repaired wooden chair from nursery, with glue and love. Big people - please sit someplace else. Also thanks to the mowing crew for a great job. Big shout out to Cory for all of her deep cleaning of public areas at the Church. She is doing a dedicated job. Thanks Cory

Christian Education (Carole London) Pastor Leia joined the CE Committee a few months back in a meeting with Marble Memorial United Methodist Church in Milan, to discuss the possibility of joining the two churches in presenting a united VBS in the summer. Both sides agreed and plans were going well when the Covid-19 situation came along. After attempting to move the dates later in the summer in hopes of having an "all clear" declared, it was decided to cancel VBS altogether in the form we are used to. There is still a possibility to create a "virtual VBS" for the community. We will continue our efforts for a joint VBS in 2021.

Earth Day Sunday was celebrated by asking all the kids to go out and "clean up their part of the world."

A letter and picture of the trash I picked up on my walk was sent to the CE families.

I have sent 6 activity packets to the 9 younger youth of the church. We were studying the Beatitudes before Covid-19 came along, so the mailings were crafts and activities pertaining to them. I included an upbeat, encouraging letter to the child and family with each packet. The 10 older youth received a personal card and letter checking in with them and making sure they were doing ok. (Received a nice letter back from Jaidyn :)) Later I sent them a second packet with a letter and activities to finish off the Beatitudes.

I mentioned to all the kids that the day will come when we will all be able to meet again at church and when we do, we will have a celebration! I can't wait!!

Stewardship (Bob Elliott) With everything closed, there hasn't been much activity. Checks for pledges have continued to trickle in through the mail and are being dropped off. Steve

Barney has been doing a weekly count and recording of these donations. We are also receiving funds donated over the internet via our already-existing electronic giving system and through the new Give Now button on the church website, which are automatically deposited in our checking account.

Pastor Leia has been very proactive in researching cost savings and ways to facilitate ongoing giving by the congregation, including enabling donations through the "Donut" button on the PPC website, and making us aware of the available Covid-19 savings through the Board of Pensions.

Treasurer Chris Wetzler completed the application process for Covid-19 Dues Relief through the Presbyterian Board of Pensions, and received approval. This will save our church \$1,461.10 per month for May, June and July, reducing payments due at the end of the month. Total \$4,383.30. We will see the savings starting early June.

Our general fund checking account balance is holding steady so far, but will take a big hit this month with payment of the bill for furnace repairs. This expenditure is double what we budgeted for church maintenance for the entire year.

A Zen Reflection

ZEN FOR THOSE WHO TAKE LIFE TOO SERIOUSLY

I feel like I'm diagonally parked in a parallel universe.

Monday is an awful way to spend 1/7 of your week.

A day without sunshine is, like, night.

On the other hand, you have different fingers.

42.7% of all statistics are made up on the spot.

Honk if you love peace and quiet.

Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm.

The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.

A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.

Change is inevitable, except from vending machines.

Plan to be spontaneous tomorrow.

Always try to be modest, and be proud of it!

If you think nobody cares, try missing a couple of payments.

Ok, so what's the speed of dark?

How do you tell when you're out of invisible ink?

When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.

Hard work may pay off in the future. Laziness pays off now.

Everyone has a photographic memory. Some just do not have film.

How much deeper would the ocean be without sponges?

Eagles may soar, but weasels do not get sucked into jet engines.

What happens if you get scared half to death twice?

I used to have an open mind but my brains kept falling out.

Why do psychics have to ask you for your name?

Inside every older person is a younger person wondering what happened.

I couldn't repair your brakes, so I made your horn louder.

If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something.

An Important Note From Your Clerk of Session Regarding Worship

Dear Peoples people –

Patience may be a virtue, but it's hard to be patient! We want what we want and we want it sooner than later.

We would all love to get back to worship as usual at PPC. We care about each other, and miss seeing each other in person. We want to be able to join in singing the hymns and participating in the responses. We all want “normal” back. Now!

Some churches are opening for worship. Many churches, however, are not willing to risk the health and safety of their church families by opening too soon. Peoples Presbyterian Church is in this category.

As you have probably read and heard, churches are rated along with bars in the “potential danger” category: ranked 8 out of 10, with 10 being the most potentially dangerous. Interesting company, to say the least. Some of the reasons for this rating are the same reasons why the PPC building has remained closed. *We really miss singing.* Singing and talking have been shown to spread moisture droplets (even with masks), which can contain the coronavirus. *We really miss talking with our friends before and after worship.* Talking spreads moisture droplets (even with masks), which can contain the coronavirus.

One of the main problems is that this coronavirus is invisible. People can be carriers of the virus without getting sick or showing any symptoms. But, they still can easily pass that virus on to others. That is where the danger lies, and that is why Session met via Zoom on June 17, where they voted unanimously to continue online worship through July. Session will meet again in July (via Zoom) to review current medical information and decide what's next. Session is taking it one month at a time, to allow for new research and eventually a vaccine.

This is how we are showing our love and caring for each other – not being willing to risk sharing a virus any of us could have without knowing it. We love our congregation too much to risk taking chances.

To be clear: Per the Book of Order, when and where to hold worship services is a Session responsibility and decision. The pastor has one vote on Session. (And, in case you're curious, the President, Treasurer and the Clerk of Session do not have a vote on Session. Voice but no vote.)

I encourage you to join the Sunday morning worship services online, through the link that Pastor Leia sends via email each week. And then come join the virtual coffee hour via Zoom, for which she also sends a link. It's a good way to see and talk with each other without the risk factor. If you have questions or need help with this, please contact the church office or the pastor.



A Note From Your Office Administrator:

For your safety and the respect and safety of those working in-office, **PLEASE WEAR YOUR MASKS AT ALL TIMES** in the church when others are present—**EVEN AND ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU ARE TALKING.** If you take your mask off while talking, it completely defeats the purpose of wearing one! I have already had to ask members to put their masks on. I have your safety in mind; please keep mine in mind as well.

Thank you for your cooperation.

-Alayna, Office Administrator

Caring Corner

People's Prayer List

Essential Workers:

Medical Staff - **Diane Glover**, nurse at St. Joes Hospital
Kim Heeringa, clinical subject coordinator/microbiologist, at the 1000-bed field ward
Shane Bookout, paramedic
Bob Sitz, pharmacist, at State Hospital and Herrick Hospital
Becky Sitz, works at the pharmacy at U of M Hospital
Lisa Pratt, works in the patient laboratory at VA Hospital
Staci Bashaw
Jennifer Bookout
Lori and son Jesse Fugate
Tony Gehring
Stacy and Larry Johnson
Kerri Morrow
Alayna Plews' father, Terry Plews
Vicky and Richard Gehring
Al and Albert Clarke
Justin Fugate
Ryan Cranson
Jessica Cranson
Jacob Cranson
Travis Cranson

Laid Off Workers:

Jenny Bellers
Phil Marteney
Jason Marteney
Linda Cranson
Rob Cranson

Please let us know if you are aware of any other Essential Workers or those who are laid off.



In the midst of the pandemic, Doris Ann Campbell, Carol Heeringa, Mary Huber, Nancy Kuzniar, Katherine McClellan, and Betty Rose have continued to knit beautiful hat for the Chemo Lab out St. Joe's



**Sue Stevens
completed this
beautiful quilt for her
uncle!**



**Mary's
GoldenDoodle: A
before and after
of her makeover!**

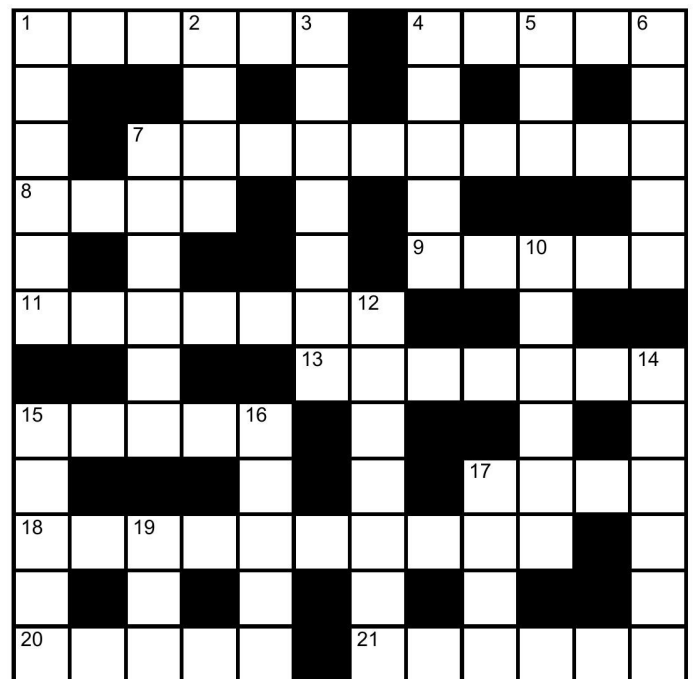
QUICK BIBLE CROSSWORD VIII

Across

- 1 Conflict (6)
- 4 Implement of war (5)
- 7 Forty years were spent here by Israel (10)
- 8 Watery downfall (4)
- 9 Consumed (5)
- 11 Testimony (7)
- 13 Sow (7)
- 15 Healed (5)
- 17 Tear (4)
- 18 Providential (10)
- 20 Humble (5)
- 21 Language (6)

Down

- 1 Obtain temporarily (6)
- 2 Jacob, for example (4)
- 3 Eternal (7)
- 4 Attend (5)
- 5 First woman (3)
- 6 Resurrected (5)
- 7 Season (6)
- 10 Tenths (6)
- 12 Red (7)
- 14 Enigma (6)
- 15 Biblical transport (5)
- 16 Decomposition (5)
- 17 Destroy (4)
- 19 Uncooked (3)



by *Philologus*

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QUICK BIBLE CROSSWORD VIII - SOLUTION

B	A	T	T	L	E		S	P	E	A	R
O			W		N		E		V		I
R		W	I	L	D	E	R	N	E	S	S
R	A	I	N		L		V				E
O		N			E		E	A	T	E	N
W	I	T	N	E	S	S			I		
		E			S	C	A	T	T	E	R
C	U	R	E	D		A			H		I
A				E		R		R	E	N	D
M	I	R	A	C	U	L	O	U	S		D
E		A		A		E		I			L
L	O	W	L	Y		T	O	N	G	U	E

Across: 1 Battle, 4 Spear, 7 Wilderness, 8 Rain, 9 Eaten, 11 Witness, 13 Scatter, 15 Cured, 17 Rend, 18 Miraculous, 20 Lowly, 21 Tongue.

Down: 1 Borrow, 2 Twin, 3 Endless, 4 Serve, 5 Eve, 6 Risen, 7 Winter, 10 Tithes, 12 Scarlet, 14 Riddle, 15 Camel, 16 Decay, 17 Ruin, 19 Raw.

Bible Crossword by BiblePuzzles.org.uk

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Pastor's Email: ppcpastor@peoplespresbyterian.org

Website: www.peoplespresbyterian.org

Worship:

Streamed Weekly on Facebook Live
at 10:00 am every Sunday

Prayer Service:

Streamed Live each Wednesday on Facebook
Live at 8:00 pm