



**Minister's Report**  
**June 7, 2020**

**Opening Words: I Look at the World - Langston Hughes (1930) \*\***

<b>Overall:</b> It has been another full and ever-changing month. As we continued to deal with the Covid-19 crisis, continuing to stream our worship and provide other gatherings, we had several virtual rites of passage, as well as a virtual annual meeting. With the death of George Floyd, we pivoted rapidly to respond, in worship, marches, demonstrations of solidarity and support.				
	Ministerial Observations	Ministerial Wonderings	Ministerial Flags	Ministerial Celebrations
<b>Governance and Leadership</b>	The events of the past month have called for FPB leadership (board and minister) to move rapidly and thoughtfully in response. It has been heartening to see how well we have collaborated, keeping our mission at the forefront of our decision making.	The Reopening Planning Group (RPG) will convene in the next two weeks. Many questions/requests for in-person gatherings have already been received. Who should make final determinations? Is RPG only making recommendations to the board?	When will we have conversations with possible organizers to confirm their willingness to organize a fall fundraiser (online auction)? Do we have the right people? Who should ask them?	Annual Meeting went well. Kudos to the planning team for all the excellent preparation work!
<b>Staff</b>	Lisa and Alisa are checking the building regularly. Derrick has been in to remove food and to deal with rodent infestation. Alisa and Lisa pick up mail and send bills out. Will consider (with RPG) how, and how soon, we might begin to alternate going into the office.	Laci is working full time, remotely, planning programming, staying in close contact with RE families and committee, plus offering daily video story time. She has been actively generating ideas for RE in the coming year, both virtually and (potentially) in person.	Keith has had very successful open mic nights for the choir. He has plans to engage them as a group in worship, 4-5x (virtually) in the coming year.	Staff continue to be in good health and spirits, in spite of long days and hours of work. All have much-needed vacation time finally being taken or planned.  Jud is off for the summer. We have been very fortunate to have such a talented and flexible intern this year and look forward to welcoming him back in September.

<b>Worship, Ritual and Ceremony</b>	Worship committee has all summer services planned, to be prerecorded and shown through Facebook Premium. Worship leaders will moderate a Zoom coffee hour afterward, which will include candles of joy and concern.	Worship committee will be working to engage more parishioners in worship next year, using the virtual platform to our best advantage. We will give even more attention to how we support the spiritual needs of all of our members in this virtual space.	The staff worship planning team will be considering, with advice from the RPG, at what point they might safely begin live-streaming from the sanctuary again. Singing will continue to be prerecorded until it is deemed safe to be together.	Rev Lisa led distanced wedding, graveside memorial service and child dedication rituals this month.
<b>Congregational Life and Spiritual Development</b>	The Pastoral Care team and small group leaders have been working hard to support our members. There will be planning this summer for more small groups of different kinds, starting in the fall, to respond to and support the needs of our community. Ideas welcome!	<b>The Welcoming committee is down to a few members, with no apparent new chair for next year.</b> Rev Lisa has spoken to some of the remaining members about joining welcoming and worship committees next year, as both happen simultaneously in the virtual worship space.	Tuesday night “surprise” groups have been lightly attended. We’ll suspend these for the summer and rethink what kinds of gatherings are needed in the fall. Laci will support Rev Lisa in considering adult/family programs.	We welcomed 9 new members on 5/30, virtually. All are very enthusiastic about joining FPB!  Thursday “Shout Outs” have been a great way to appreciate and celebrate our community.
<b>Community Engagement and Social Justice</b>	IJC launched a “quiet” campaign to support the Ecuadorian community in Milford, where the needs are dire. Food and other goods will be distributed directly to those in need; the pastors are deeply grateful for our support.	The Board swiftly approved a BLM tower slide projection on 6/2/20, which was very well-received. It will continue on Tuesday nights for some period of time.  Roadside memorial is growing and seems to be generating an active and healthy community “conversation.” Rev Lisa will continue to monitor the contributions, removing it when it seems to have “lived out its “useful life.”	FPB “Virtual Vigil” on 6/1 was well-attended. 37 participants shared their anger and grief over the killing of black men in police custody in this country.  <b>Many FPB members have attended BLM rallies and vigils. Some thought toward recommending actions to congregants, beyond the “Action Page,” is needed.</b> Rev Lisa is gathering a group to consider how to set priorities each week.	We reached our \$10k goal for our Chelsea Collaborative GoFundMe in less than a week! The goal has now been increased, as the need continues to be huge.

<b>Finance and Administration</b>	2021 Budget was approved on 5/31/20, with little debate, due to excellent pre-planning and preparation.	Rentals: Alisa and Rev Lisa will be in active communication with the Sai Center and Lin Center about future plans that will include safety considerations. So far, no commitments have been made.	Adam has confirmed that staff in other congregations are being reimbursed for their home internet use during this time of pandemic. He has suggested an across-the-board reimbursement per staff member.	Budget conversations received much appreciation from those who attended. Building Blocks were especially helpful.
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### **I Look at the World ~ Langston Hughes (1930)**

I look at the world  
From awakening eyes in a black face—  
And this is what I see:  
This fenced-off narrow space  
Assigned to me.

I look then at the silly walls  
Through dark eyes in a dark face—  
And this is what I know:  
That all these walls oppression builds  
Will have to go!

I look at my own body  
With eyes no longer blind—  
And I see that my own hands can make  
The world that's in my mind.  
Then let us hurry, comrades,  
The road to find.