

**First Presbyterian Church  
Hot Springs, Arkansas  
Transitional Thoughts**

If we need to be reminded of how quickly time passes, all we need do is take a walk outside. The weather has changed. Soon, the trees will be turning. My children in the Midwest are beginning to complain about the cold weather. Things are changing. That is the way it is in nature with the seasons. That is the way it is with everything else, too. We live in a world and bodies that are constantly changing. Benjamin Franklin once said, "When you are no longer changing, you're finished."

So, change is a natural part of our individual and collective lives and experiences. But I know that it seems you have had more than normal change this year. And you have. The leaving of a long-term beloved pastor is hard enough. But the inability to have a good, goodbye, makes it even harder. The pandemic has dramatically changed our lives, our rhythms and normal course of life. Part of that change included the complete closing of the church for a time. I know many of us are tired of the dramatic change. But, I also know, wishing it away won't make it go back to the way things were. We will be in this new place for a time to come. For a time, that will require us to find new ways to be church, to compromise, and to discern where God is leading and desiring the church to become. So, within the upheaval and grief of losing what was, there is an amazing opportunity to discern what can be. That is the magic and promise of change. Because First Pres is far from finished, as Benjamin Franklin might say.

Part of that new way of being church will be the opening of the sanctuary for Sunday morning services. We will continue with the online services each week (which has been something new for me); but this Sunday will mark the beginning of resuming live Sunday services. The services will be with a new face and doing some different things in the order of service, spacing and masking. All of it is being done with the goal of providing a meaningful, encouraging, uplifting and safe worship experience. The worship committee and those who have put effort and thought into this have been a real blessing to this church. As the "new face," I'd like to share with you that First Presbyterian is gifted with intelligent and gifted committee and session leaders, whom I very much appreciate.

So, I would remind you to call the church for reservations if you plan on attending any Sunday worship services. In addition, please call for reservations for Committee Meetings and Group Studies. We will all be learning as we go along.

God's blessings be yours this week.

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[Click here for this week's video service](#)