

Memo from the BelPres Session
May 21, 2018

BelPres is a Jesus church. We are committed to helping bring Jesus' healing wherever we live, work, play and learn as the Holy Spirit guides us. Our essential identity at BelPres remains focused on Jesus, his loving Kingdom and the authoritative Word of God. When we see changes in cultural and political values or disagreement among Christians, it is good to re-emphasize the central, unchanging truths to which we remain strongly committed. Our guiding philosophy is that we take a strong stand on Jesus Christ and the authority of scripture; on all other issues we prefer to engage in conversation. The way in which the Lordship of Christ and the authority of scripture is worked out in our lives requires relationship, grace, time, and love.

This is a season of disagreement in our culture and our denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA). While it is normal for Christians to disagree on many issues, Jesus calls us to love others and to be peacemakers as we seek to bear witness to the transforming truth of the gospel in our lives.

This June the Presbyterian Church (USA) General Assembly, a representative church council convened every two years, will address difficult issues very similar to those addressed in 2016. These include how best to seek peace in the Middle East, to demonstrate God's love to all people especially the LGBTQ community, to care for God's creation, and to structure and fund our denomination for the 21st century. Every General Assembly makes decisions which understandably cause a wide range of responses among people with differing views. Local congregations and individuals are free to agree or disagree with denominational decisions and none of these decisions require or forbid anything at BelPres. All funds given to BelPres are used entirely at the discretion of our session and PCUSA cannot require us to support GA decisions. More information concerning BelPres and PCUSA is at www.belpres.org/denomination.

At BelPres we want to keep Jesus at the center of all we do and say. We urge you to encourage anyone with denominational questions or concerns to contact Rev. Scott Mann. Thank you for helping us remain focused on God's mission of love as we pray and work toward the complete spiritual, relational and economic flourishing of the cities to which God has called us here in our region and beyond.

Elder Linda Mauzy, Clerk of Session
Rev. Dr. Scott Dudley, Senior Pastor
Bellevue Presbyterian Church