

Monday Minders – Week of August 8, 2016

First Presbyterian of Hector & Lodi Presbyterian Church

Dear members and friends,

I meant to share this story with you back in July on the 47th anniversary of the first moon walk and forgot. But since we're spending a few weeks looking at the sacraments, this story is appropriate now, as well.

Many of you probably watched the transmission coming from the moon of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin. Unfortunately, I missed it because I was away at Boy Scout Camp and had been selected for the Order of the Arrow. I was spending that night alone out in the woods.

Meanwhile, up on the moon, before they took their famous first steps, something else happened that none of us knew at the time, though it was later published. The following article comes from the Presbyterian Historical Society which is headquartered in Philadelphia:

"I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me."

With these words from scripture, astronaut Buzz Aldrin celebrated the first, and so far only, communion service on the moon. In the weeks leading up to his Apollo 11 mission in 1969, Aldrin, an elder at Webster Presbyterian Church outside of Houston, worked with his pastor Dean Woodruff to come up with the right symbol to mark the first lunar landing.

It was Aldrin's idea to celebrate communion. With permission from the Webster Presbyterian Church session and the stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Aldrin packed communion elements as part of his personal preference kit. The bread and wine had been blessed at Webster, and the church provided the tiny chalice, which was small and light enough to take into space.

As the world watched, the Apollo 11 lunar capsule successfully landed on the surface of the moon on July 20, 1969. During the scheduled rest period before Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first humans to walk on the moon, Aldrin took out the elements and the piece of paper with the words from John 15:5 and celebrated communion. As he later reported, there was just enough gravity on the moon's surface to pour the wine into a cup.

While NASA staff knew about the lunar communion, the event was not reported in the press until August, with Presbyterian Life noting the special communion in its September 15, 1969 issue. Aldrin, however, was frequently identified as a Presbyterian elder, and his public remarks broadcast right before returning to earth included a

passage from Psalm 8: *When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained: what is man that Thou art mindful of him?*

Webster Presbyterian Church, the home of many astronauts and others in the space industry, has marked the unique occasion every July with Lunar Communion Sunday.

See more at: <http://www.history.pcusa.org/history-online/presbyterian-history/heritage-sunday/heritage-sunday-2016#sthash.QoPRF17W.dpuf>

Perhaps it is just a coincidence, but a couple weeks after I received the above article from the Presbyterian Historical Society, I received an email quoting from an article written by Buzz Aldrin for Guideposts magazine about this same event. Here are some of his reflections:

"In the radio blackout, I opened the little plastic packages which contained the bread and the wine. I poured the wine into the chalice our church had given me. In the one-sixth gravity of the moon, the wine slowly curled and gracefully came up the side of the cup. Then I read the scripture."

"I had intended to read my communion passage back to Earth, but at the last minute [they] had requested that I not do this. NASA was already embroiled in a legal battle with Madelyn Murray O'Hare, the celebrated opponent of religion, over the Apollo 8 crew's reading from Genesis while orbiting the moon at Christmas. I agreed reluctantly."

"I ate the tiny Host and swallowed the wine. I gave thanks for the intelligence and spirit that had brought two young pilots to the Sea of Tranquility. It was interesting for me to think that the very first liquid ever poured on the moon and the very first food eaten there were the communion elements."

"And, of course, it's interesting to think that some of the first words spoken on the moon were the words of Jesus Christ, who made the Earth and the moon - and who, in the immortal words of Dante, is Himself the "Love that moves the Sun and other stars."

Grace & peace,
Pastor Jim

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This week (Aug 8 – 14):

Mon: Euchre @ 6:45 pm (Hector)

Tue: Bone Builders @ 8:30 am (contact Kerry Solomon for location)

Wed: Men's Breakfast @ 8 am (Toni's Diner & Hector)
Bone Builders @ 10:30 am (contact John Flowers for location)

Thu: Choir rehearsal @ 9 am (Hector)

Fri: Attic Sale @ 8 am (Hector)

Sat: Attic Sale @ 8 am (Hector)
Food Pantry @ 3pm (Lodi)

Sun: Worship
@ 9:30 am (Hector)
@ 11:15 am (Lodi)
Attic Sale @ 11 am (Hector)
VBS Setup @ 2 pm (Hector)

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Hector worship leaders for August:

Ushers: John Flowers & Paul Leahy

Liturgists: Liz Adams (8/14), Roberta Dannenfels-Flowers (8/21)

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Everyone is cordially invited to our next

Presbytery Church Cluster Meeting

Sunday, August 21 @ 3 pm

First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca

The theme will be Youth in the Church.

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Looking ahead:

Vacation Bible School: Mon, Aug 15 – Fri, Aug 19

Hector food pantry: Thu, Aug 18 @ 8:00 am (Hector)

Mobile food truck: Fri, Aug 19 @ 10 am (Hector)

Presbytery Cluster Meeting: Sun, Aug 21 @ 3 pm (First Pres Ithaca)

Lodi Free Lunch: Sat, Aug 27 @ 11:30 am (Lodi)

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Attic

Sale



Fri, Aug 12 = 8 am – 4 pm

Sat, Aug 13 = 8 am – 4pm

Sun, Aug 14 = 11 am – 3pm

Bring items to Fellowship Hall: Mon – Thu (Aug 8 – 11) / 9 am – 2 pm
Be ready to say "yes" when asked to help!

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Vacation Bible School 2016

(August 15 – 19)



See Shelly Gimbar (546-2864) for more information.

