

Dear FPC family and friends,

A couple of events that have taken place in York have caught my attention over these past few weeks. Rev. Molis Augustave was a pastor in York who had served the community for years, had a family with a wife and children and a congregation that loved him and supported him, not unlike the type of love and support that you show to me and Stacy. Yesterday he was deported and sent back to Haiti because of a political change in policy that has gone in effect over these last few months in relationship to him and his status. Previously he was in this country legally, and now it is declared that he is no longer allowed to be here.

A week earlier a violent illegal incident took place in York that created a tense and volatile environment which resulted in signs being placed up in York calling for white men to unite and intimidated a deadly retribution to people of color in York. You may or may not be aware that York has a tragic history in respect to racial equality with the national guard being deployed there in the late 60's and early 70's. A lot of that pain came flooding back over these recent days.

The common denominators in these incidents are many. 1) All of this happened in York which is a neighbor to us. In my capacity as Moderator of the Presbytery of Donegal, York falls in our Presbytery and so in essence is part of the scope of the work that I do as Moderator. 2) People of color were singled out and targeted. While Rev. Molis was not deported as a result of being a person of color, that certainly did come into play in his ability to remain in this country. If he were of European descent we know that the powers that be would have a much more sympathetic listening ear. The statistics simply reflect this truth. 3) Some churches have spoken out strongly against these events and even point to these actions as going against the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This Gospel calls us to welcome the stranger in the case of Rev. Molis, and to be reconciled with each other in the case of the reaction to the crime that took place.

But I'm wondering how many of us have ever heard of Rev. Molis. I'm also wondering how many of us have taken sides in the events in York and have found ourselves on the side that I am saying in this enews is not at all the side that our Savior would have taken. Make no mistake, there are sides in these events and in these situations. If we remain silent we have taken a side, and I would say that it would be a side that goes contrary to the teachings of Jesus. There are very few things more infuriating to our Savior than racism. You can hear it in his story of the Good Samaritan, and his encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus loved people, full stop. We are to love people, full stop.

I don't often take the time to address events that have happened around us. Some would call that political, but I would call it living out our righteousness. Disciples of Jesus Christ are called to welcome the stranger. Disciples of Jesus Christ are to show no partiality. These are Scriptural truths that do not waver. This Sunday we will read a Scripture that ends with: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." May God have mercy on us when we continue along in our lives as if nothing is happening when God's people, and any person for that matter, is being treated less than His creation.

Your servant in Christ,

Pastor Bob

HAPPENING IN THE LIFE OF FPC...

BIBLE CHALLENGE: Began Monday, September 7th! It's not too late to join us for a 90-day read through the gospel Challenge. Each day you are given an opportunity to read one chapter from the gospels and to reflect on it with a journal. You can also find the blog post here on our website: <https://www.straspres.org/category/bible-reading-challenge-blog/>. Challenge journals are available on the table under the TV in the Well and on the glass table in the foyer.

BIBLE STUDY: Join Pastor Bob for an interactive Bible Study on Youtube every Thursday evening at 6pm. You can join him here: [Youtube](#)

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Please mark your calendars! We started a new Bible Study on Tuesday, September 22nd, and it's not too late to join us! Classes are held at 9am and 7pm in room 4. All are welcome! This fall, we are using a study by Kristi McLelland entitled "The Gospel on the Ground - The Grit & Glory of the Early Church in Acts." For any questions please contact Linda Bredin, Stacy Bronkema, or Sandy Wenger.

TRUNK OR TREAT at FPCS: will be held this year from 5-6:30pm on Sunday, October 25th. Sign up at the table under the TV in the welcome area and have your car parked and decorated with a suitable theme by 4:30pm. Children should arrive in a costume between 5-6:30pm. Anyone who would like to donate candy and snack items should sign-up under the TV in the Welcome Area. For more information, contact Beth Feiler at [717-572-9683](tel:717-572-9683) or bfeiler@straspres.org.

GOLF ANYONE? Join Pastor Bob at Meadia Heights for golf on September 29th at 1pm. The cost is \$75 and there are 8 open spots. Let him know if you are interested!