

Newberg First Presbyterian Church

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PEW NEWS

Newberg, OR



"Journeys of Faith"

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FROM THE REV. CHRIS MURPHY– Journeys of Faith

Have you ever gone backpacking or taken a long hike in the woods? For 15 years I met every year with four friends from college to go backpacking for 3 to 5 days. We enjoyed some amazing adventures in the mountains of Washington. We once backpacked for five days in Arizona's Grand Canyon exploring the beauty of God's creation. Sometimes we enjoyed sunshine and fresh-water streams. And on other trips we woke up to snow or rain. Hiking or backpacking in nature reminds me of our journeys of faith. There are times when life feels joyful and we are filled with prayers of thanksgiving to God as we enjoy the journey. There are also seasons of sorrow or grief where God may feel absent or when life seems like a steep incline up a perilous mountain.

How are you feeling about your faith journey in this season of your life? Does your backpack feel loaded down or light? Do you have strength for the hike or do you feel weary? The good news is that God walks with us on our journey of faith in times of happiness and sorrow. Sometimes life feels like a mix of both and we are invited to lean into God's grace and love for us and to find rest on the journey.

On Sunday, June 23rd I began a summer sermon series called "Journey of Faith". During the summer I am sharing about my own faith journey and how I have learned to rely on God's love and grace especially when I have felt the weakest. We will be blessed to hear faith journey sermons from our mission partners, Bob Ekblad from Tierra Nueva on July 14th and Taliilee Fiquuu from Frontier Fellowship on August 18th. During my vacation times, Newberg First Presbytery church member Mary Kalesse will be sharing from her own life experiences as she reflects on the wisdom of Scripture.

I invite you this summer to reflect on your own faith journey and how God has grown your faith through the ups and downs of your life. In many ways, I feel like this church is on a backpacking trip together. We continue to explore the terrain of our lives and we share times of celebration and times of grief. It is good to remember that we are not alone on the journey. We have God and we have one another.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Chris

Each month we will be featuring one of our Mission Partners. Brian and Julie have been receiving support from our congregation for a number of years and were actually married in this church. They have served in several capacities for SIL which is associated with Wycliffe Bible Translators. (Also our Mission and Global Witness committee is seeking new committee members, talk to Elise Prayzich or Chuck Zickefoose.)

Brian and Julie O'Herin



Brian has been associated with SIL International in several roles, most recently moving from International Linguistics Coordinator. He is now focusing on Biblical translation in various languages.

SIL International is a faith-based nonprofit organization. Founded in 1934, SIL has grown from a small summer linguistics training program with two students to a staff of over 5,000 people from 89 countries of origin. SIL is currently involved in over 1,660 active language projects, representing 1.07 billion people in 162 countries.

SIL serves as an advocate for ethnolinguistic communities, assisting them in raising awareness of their needs to governments, organizations and individuals whose policies and practices can promote and facilitate language development.

Through language research, documentation and promotion of language development, SIL contributes to the preservation of languages and cultures in danger of disappearing.

Please check out the entire group of our Mission partners on the Fellowship Hall bulletin board.

Annual Church BBQ & Strawberry Feed



A Special Thanks to our
volunteers at the BBQ.
Well Done!





July

Birthdays

5– Darlene Zickefoose

7– Dorothy Au

19– Lynne Patrick

24– Cate Murphy

25– Mary Andrews

25– Bruce Murphy

26– Marilyn Viers

31– Sylvia Stater

Anniversary

NEWBERG MOM INSPIRES WORLDWIDE LOVE MESSAGE



Amy Wolff couldn't quite believe what she found herself doing on a rainy, dreary day here in 2017.

"I thought to myself, 'This is the dumbest idea I've ever had.'" she recalled as she told her story to hundreds April 6 at the Newberg-Dundee Mayors Prayer Breakfast at Newberg's Chehalem Cultural Center. "But I was \$120 into it, so I did it anyway." The \$120 went toward an initial batch of simple signs, with extremely brief messages, that Wolff had a graphic designer friend make with the crazy belief that some Newberg residents might be willing to post them in their yards. With the help of her husband and two young daughters, Wolff knocked on about 20 doors near the high school, and explained what the signs were about. "They, without hesitation, took my sign," she said, the amazement still evident in her voice almost two years later. What Wolff and those living near the school obviously shared was a deep concern over a very troubling trend in their city — a rash of teen suicides that showed how badly the signs' messages of hope were needed. Messages like "Don't Give Up," "You Matter," "Your Mistakes Do Not Define You," and "You Are Worthy of Love." In only a few hours the entire Newberg community was buzzing on social media about the signs, and within four days Wolff had received 100 orders for more signs to be placed throughout the city. Thus began what in a stunningly short time has become a global phenomenon. Wolff's "dumb idea" has proven to be anything but — with the lawn signs of hope spreading to all 50 states, 22 nations and 10 languages. The messages also have become available not only in signs but also on decals, pencils, wristbands and pins through the non-profit Don't Give Up Movement. To date, these items have become "215,000 tokens of love and hope around the world," Wolff said. A George Fox University alumna who attends Northside Community Church in Newberg, Wolff is a speaker coach at Distinction Communication Inc., a company she co-owns with her father Jim Endicott. In addition to coaching business professionals, she is also a TEDx speaker coach for TEDxPortland. By now, Wolff has accumulated many stories about the life-changing, life-saving impact the movement is having both nationally and globally. It is from her devout faith in Christ and a heart that reflects His compassion that Wolff began the signs project. But — and this might have surprised some attending the Christ-centered prayer breakfast — Wolff said the signs are deliberately not meant to candidly proclaim the good news of the Gospel. In fact, when one of Wolff's daughters suggested that "Jesus Loves You" could be a message on the signs, Wolff gently explained to her why she won't let that happen. Wolff's concern is that if the signs are overtly religious, "then some people won't accept them, because they will think there are strings attached." Instead, the signs are meant to serve as a first step in opening up communication and consideration about basic ideas of love, hope and acceptance. From that foundation, real person-to-person encouragement with the truths of God can then be offered. "Yard signs don't effectively spread the Gospel — we do," Wolff said. The important thing in building such relationships, Wolff said, is to offer "generous love to everyone always" — even those who may have sharply different opinions on things. She told of a Facebook friend of hers named Missy, who started getting hateful messages from her own circle of friends because she had dared to open communication with Wolff, a Christian. "Missy's generous love defends me," Wolff said. "Maybe generous love looks like sitting with people you disagree with. Empathy is not endorsement. We do not need to agree on everything but we need to genuinely care." And with that caring attitude, believers in Christ can at an appropriate point "be bold, We share His name — it is Jesus — our surest hope," Wolff said.

For more information on the Don't Give Up Movement, go to www.dontgiveupsigns.com

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS

NO JULY MEETINGS

Pastor Chris Murphy may be reached at his
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Our website address is : newbergfpc.org

ONE
AND
ALL

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GRACE. HOPE. LOVE.