

Newberg First Presbyterian Church

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PEW NEWS



*“The Season of
Advent”*

PAGE I

Welcome to the season of Advent! Advent is the liturgical season where we prepare for the coming of the birth of Jesus. The word Advent is from the Latin word *adventus*, which means “coming.” It is a translation of the Greek word *parousia*. At one point in church history the focus of Advent was on the second coming of Christ, but since the middle ages the Church has connected Advent primarily to the birth of Jesus. Today, Advent refers to the period from Dec. 1st through Dec. 24th, Christmas Eve. The season directly after Advent is Christmastide, which lasts for 12 days until Epiphany Sunday.

You will notice that during the Sundays of Advent, we are enjoying the stories within Matthew and Luke that highlight the birth of Jesus and the events that were occurring before and after the birth. We are reading some Scriptures from the Old Testament that prophesy the coming of Emmanuel, God with us. We are also singing Christmas music, so that we can immerse ourselves in the wonder of Christ’s birth.

I hope in this season of Advent that you can find comfort and joy in the coming of the baby Jesus. We can be reminded that God became a vulnerable baby, so that we could see the invisible God become visible (Colossians 1: 15). The beauty of this season is that we can come to God and share our vulnerability, while being in awe of God’s vulnerability.

There is nothing like holding a vulnerable infant in one’s arms. Babies are completely dependent on adults for everything. It is profound that God chose to become vulnerable because it shows that we follow a God who is not afraid of entering our human experience. God is not at all distant or aloof from the needs of humanity or the rest of God’s creation. God became one of us and remains with us in our seasons of joy and hardship.

I know that during the joy of the season of Advent and Christmas many people also experience waves of grief as they remember loved ones who have passed away. As you experience different emotions this Advent season, remember Jesus has entered our experience and understands our feelings. Just as a vulnerable baby commands our attention, may we hold this season with awe and wonder and allow all our feelings to be brought to our loving God, who offers us comfort.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Chris

Light of Hope – Taliilee’s doctoral dissertation goal “was to answer the main research question: How can Arsi women today be empowered to protect their human rights and participate in society’s social and religious life?”

Wycliffe SIL - Brian is continuing to work through the exegesis of Luke. The first chunk is 1:1-4:13, and I’m on my third and final pass through this. It is going well.

CRU – Erik says “Our five week fall module has emphasized relationship with the Lord, spiritual disciplines and growth as well as understanding Cru’s leadership framework.”

Smiths - Dennis says: “There is something about life lived here and now that breaks many people. But it is our brokenness that binds us together. It is our brokenness that is caught up by God’s Spirit and transformed into fierce hope and persistence. God gives us a vision of power used not to corrupt, not to abuse or to oppress, but to serve the common good. Here’s what we know: somehow, death and injustice do not win in the end. We are a resurrection people.”

Tierra Nueva – [Excerpt from a guest speaker]: Let us embrace this Advent, a divine challenge to be bold lovers who imagine and who question, who resist forces that seek to separate us from neighbor, and who believe that divine love binds us to one another and to the future that we create together.

A CAYAC Thank You!!

We are so grateful for all the cooks and Pizza suppliers who fed our CAYAC attendees so very well for our Monday Night Gatherings during this GFU semester!

They all enjoy the special meals these folks have prepared for them – some more than once!!

A BIG THANKYOU to:

* Darlene Zickefoose * Sylvia Burns * Di Murphy * David Waterbury *
* Mary Kalesse * Pam Weaver * Paula Buck *

The new semester’s CAYAC will begin on Monday, January 13 – and you, too, can have the joy of preparing a meal for the group!

Sign-up sheet is now available at the Sign Up Table in Fellowship Hall.

Blessings to our faithful chefs and Pizza supporters!!

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Our Christmas Joy offering will be gratefully received again this year on Christmas Eve, and on the Sundays surrounding Christmas. One of the four Special Offerings of PC(USA), it has been a part of the Christmas tradition in the Presbyterian Church since 1933. Half of this offering is distributed through the **Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions**, recognizing the faithfulness of current and retired church workers by providing funds to help them through difficult times. The other half supports **Presbyterian racial-ethnic schools and colleges**:

*Johnson C. Smith University, NC

*Knoxville College, TN

*Menaul School, NM

*Stillman College, AL

*Presbyterian Pan American School, TX

You will find inserts and envelopes in your December Sunday bulletins telling you in more detail about the important Mission your Christmas Joy offering supports. Special envelopes will also be available for you in the pews in December.

We are grateful for our always-generous congregation!

Thank you!

The Mission and Global Witness Committee



Christmas tree decorating
as part of our annual
Hanging of the Greens

Deacons are grateful for all who have contributed to the Deacons Fund. As we look back on 2019 we would like to remind you of how our finances were used. First of all we pledge quarterly payments totaling \$4,300 a year to the following organizations:

FAITH IN ACTION – Faith in Action brings people of faith together to advance racial and economic justice.

FRIENDSVIEW RETIREMENT COMMUNITY – a Christian Life Plan Community.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY, NEWBERG – a nonprofit organization that helps families build and improve places to call home.

HENDERSON HOUSE of McMinnville – provides Yamhill Co. with services for victims dealing with domestic and sexual violence.

LOVE, INC. – mobilizes local churches to transform lives and community in the Name of Christ. Assistance programs such as food, clothes, dental care, and other basic needs. Our church helps with the bike program.

LUTHERAN COMMUNITY SERVICES, McMinnville – provides programs for families, immigration counseling and advocacy programs.

A FAMILY PLACE – works to reduce child abuse, neglect and foster placements in Yamhill County by offering at-risk families parent education and specialized preschool for children.

NEWBERG FISH – member of the Oregon Food Network focused on providing emergency food services.

PROVIDENCE MEDICAL CENTER – for providing spiritual care and hospice services.

YCAP (Yamhill Community Action Partnership) – operates a Coordinated Entry point for Yamhill County for housing and services for those in need.

We have a Good Samaritan Program to help anyone in our Congregation that needs some financial help.

We sponsored tables for the Hearts of Gold dinner at Providence Medical Center and Love, Inc. annual banquet for a total of \$1,000. We support our teachers in the Congregation \$500. We put on a potato feed; cinnamon roll Sunday; Auction dinner; help with Easter Breakfast; provided strawberry feed on BBQ Sunday; Cream Puffs for Bright Sunday; Pie Social for first responders, fireman and police of Newberg-Dundee; provide Cake for Church Birthday and Mother's Day; sponsor Toy and Joy Drive; sponsor a Food Drive; contribute to Shop With a Cop Program plus supplies for the kitchen.

I know that many of the Deacons donate and do not submit a bill. So far this year we have spent \$7,154.42. So a tip of a hat to the Deacons.

Sharon Riha, Di Murphy, Paula Buck, Dorothy Au, Carol Swehla, Susan King and Pat Harcourt.

GIVE A GIFT THAT COUNTS!

(A message from the Presbyterian Coffee Project.)

The Presbyterian Coffee Project is a mission outreach program at First Presbyterian that is in its eighteenth years of existence. The Project partners with **Equal Exchange**, a democratically organized worker-owned cooperative located in Massachusetts. EE product line includes many choices in coffee, chocolate and tea plus other household staples and healthy snacks.

Equal Exchange's model of trade is called **Fair Trade**. It is built upon an equitable and strong relationships between farmers and consumers. By buying EE products we join a network that enables small-lot farmers to stay on their land, support their families, plan for the future, and care for the environment.

For this Christmas holiday season EE Christmas gift boxes and cases of individual products are available for purchase. After service **Sunday, December 8** in the Fellowship Hall there will be a display of products and orders will be taken. All are invited to stop by and take a "look". Orders will be filled and ready for pick-up on Sunday, December 22.

We all have family and friends we wish to remember during the Christmas season but have no idea how. Here's the answer.

Margie

November Session Minutes Summary

Capital Campaign: approximately \$128k received in pledges, and \$29k actual monies received, so far.

Financials: expenses continue to exceed income. Undesignated funds balance currently at -\$49k.

Facilities: since installing security lights/camera system, no new graffiti has been detected. Many thanks to Tim Weaver and Gary Buck for working on this.

Mission: the committee will be promoting purchasing gifts for Christmas through such catalogs as Heifer International, Presbyterian Mission Giving and Compassion International.

The Session accepted, with regret, the resignation of Susan King, Office Manager.

Deacons: the auction raised approximately \$4,100. A great success.

Sylvia Stater

Clerk of Session

December 15

A presentation of Christmas Around the World will be presented December 15, during worship. The program will consist of narration, slides and music to highlight how our fellow Christians celebrate the season around the world.

Presbytery Meeting

The Presbytery of the Cascades recently met at Southminster, Beaverton on Nov. 15-16, with approximately 150 in attendance. FPC Newberg was represented by Pastor Murphy, Elise Prayzich and Sylvia Stater, commissioned Ruling Elders, and Gary Buck also attended the Saturday gathering.

Three lots were approved for sale – one by FPC Salem, with proceeds to be used for repairs/facility improvement. Two lots in Oakland, OR were also approved for sale.

Presbytery coffers have ballooned in recent years, due to dissolution of some congregations. The 2020 Budget for Presbytery was approved, with Per Capita amount set at \$36.50 per congregant.

Commissioners were elected to attend the 224th General Assembly: 2 pastors (plus alternate), and 2 ruling elders.

Approval of Rachel Stramel, candidate for ordination, after examination by those in attendance. Ms. Stramel will be ordained as Associate Pastor at Orenco Presbyterian Church, Hillsboro, on December 15.

Approval of motion that, at each meeting, Presbytery will acknowledge the land upon which Presbytery meets, and the people to whom the land once belonged. Sessions are encouraged to do the same.

Overture to GA: an overture to the 2020 General Assembly passed, "Responding to the Human Needs of those affected by the Crisis in Syria". Read the whole overture at Presbytery website.

Finally, a motion was made and passed, that pastors will be entitled to a fully-paid 3-month sabbatical after 6 years of service to a particular congregation.

Sylvia Stater

Clerk of Session

Annual Giving

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We have received 31 pledge cards totaling \$129,086.00 in 2020 committed contributions.

The 2019 committed contributions total pledged is \$126,636.00. we have received \$125,356.86 so far in 2019.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

12-10 7:00 pm Session Meeting in Media Room
12-12 2:00 pm Deacons Meeting in Library
No Meeting for Mission & Global Witness Meeting
No Meeting for Finance & Facilities Meeting

Pastor Chris Murphy may be reached at his
email: murphycb@frontier.com
or by calling the church office at 503-538-3313

Our website address is : newbergfpc.org



NEWBERG FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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GRACE. HOPE. LOVE.