

VOLUME 23  
ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2023



Newberg First Presbyterian Church

# PEW NEWS

A message from Pastor Chris

## *The Joy of the Incarnation*

Christmas is a season of joy as we remember the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. I treasure the opportunity each year for our church community to remember the stories surrounding the birth of Jesus. As Christians, our two major holidays are the birth of Jesus and the resurrection of Jesus. The birth reminds us of the gift of the incarnation, God becoming one of us as a human being. Easter reminds us of the resurrection and the gift of eternal life.

Why is the incarnation a reason for joy? God becoming one of us in Jesus shows that our God is not aloof to the suffering in the world. Instead, in Jesus we remember that God understands the highs and lows of the human experience. Jesus has experienced what we experience daily. Jesus is God with skin on.

Jesus shows us that God is love in his demonstration of love to the most vulnerable. Jesus faced the perils of being born under the hardship of having no room in the inn. His parents struggled with the reputation of having Mary's pregnancy occur before wedlock. Jesus and his parents became refugees who fled to Egypt to protect his life.

As we reflect on the struggles of life and the perils in the world, we can find comfort in knowing that God understands and sent his Son to



## The Joy of the Incarnation

relate to a world in need and to save a world bound in sin. Israel and Palestine remain locations in this world filled with violence and struggle. As we enter Advent, may we pray for peace in this part of the world and all places where Christ's reign of love is needed.

In our own community, this Advent Season we will celebrate the birth of Jesus with a special Living Nativity program on Saturday, Dec. 16th and Sunday, Dec. 17th from 6 PM to 8 PM. We are looking for volunteers to dress up as characters for the Nativity (Mary, Joseph, Shepherds, and Magi). We will also be serving apple cider and receiving nonperishable food items to donate to Fish. In addition to our Living Nativity events and Advent worship services, we will

have a special Christmas Eve service at 7 PM on Dec. 24th.

We look forward to celebrating the Christmas Season together. Whatever struggles you may be facing, we hope that the joy of the incarnation of Jesus will warm your hearts and inspire your generosity as you remember the love of Jesus for the world. Remember the same God who became one of us in Jesus will meet you in your need this Christmas Season.





Session Meeting  
November 14, 2023

Pastor Chris shared that he attended Shalom Collective spiritual formation event.

Kim shared that we have a new anti-harassment and anti-racism policy through the presbytery.

Toy and Joy Drive is going strong with the help of our Deacons.

Session chairs are turning in budget requests for the upcoming 2024 year.

Christian Education Scholarship given to Justice Sandoz for \$750. Justice shared his appreciation.

Initial pledge amounts appear to be slightly more than last year. More details to come.

Mission and Global witness committee purchased 50 Advent devotionals from Frontier Fellowship. They will be distributed on Sunday, November 26.

Christmas Joy offering is happening during the month of December.

Hanging of the Greens scheduled for November 26th.

Live Nativity will be Dec. 16th and 17th from 6 PM to 8 PM.

Peace Garden update: we now have seven donated benches in place.

Vision Planning Team continues to meet led by Ciaran Hynes, Mindi Hynes, Kim Godshalk, and Chris Murphy.

Wishing all a blessed Advent Season,  
*Clerk of Session Kim Godshalk and Pastor Chris Murphy*



**PEACE and GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING**

The Mission & Global Witness Committee is pleased to let you know that the Special Offering received during World Communion Sunday on October 1 is a wonderful \$940. Your offering along with many other congregations like ours, will do a great deal to help calm the chaos we see in today's world.

Because of your generous giving, the 25% (\$235) our church retains, will support our own beautiful Newberg Peace Garden!

Thank you and Blessings!

*The Mission and Global Witness Committee*



If you are in need of prayer or know someone who is, please contact Katherine in the front office so that you can be added to our prayer list and thus served by our congregation.



Please offer prayer for our landscaper Miguel Mora's daughter's recovery from the car accident a year or more ago. She is still working for recovery from brain injury and musculoskeletal injuries. Please ask God to send peace, strength and grace as she recovers.

**Offering Envelopes**



**From our Finance Office....**

Now that pledge season has concluded, many of you are getting ready to bring (or send in) your tithes. If you would like contribution envelopes (with your number on it) to deliver your contribution, you can contact Susan King. She'll make some up for you. Just email her at [fpcoffice@frontier.com](mailto:fpcoffice@frontier.com) and she'll be in touch.



**Deacon's Toy Drive  
November 12 - December 10, 2023**

**Bring your new, unwrapped toys to church!**

Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue (TVF&R) will be holding their annual toy drive in November and December of this year. The Deacons have collected toys in the past and we would like to continue the tradition this year. The fire stations accept new, unwrapped toys for children of all ages. The toys go to needy kids in the Newberg/Dundee area.

When I was a little girl (Paula Buck), my father was a fireman and we used to give toys we no longer used to the fire department. The firemen giftwrapped the toys and gave them to children in need. They called their toy drive "Toy and Joy." The Newberg Toy and Joy Program began in a firefighter's garage in 1929. The goal was to give every child in the Newberg area a joyful holiday. Newberg Toy & Joy is supported by yearly fundraising efforts and incredible community support. You can help our church be part of that support. Please bring your new toys to the church sanctuary from Nov.12th– Dec. 10th.

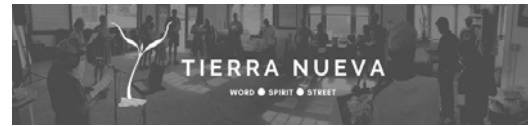
Thank you,  
The Deacons

*Paula Buck, Di Murphy, Judy Landis, Jen Henry, Mindi Hynes, Cate Murphy*





From Lise Bennett,  
Tierra Nueva Staff Member



There is a drug addiction epidemic in our valley, although it is unfortunately not unique to our area.

Drugs, especially opioids like fentanyl and heroin, have stretched out their deadly tentacles and have a suffocating grip on so many people. And because of the voracious appetite of the monster of addiction, people who are in its grasp sometimes sacrifice everything on the altar of acquiring more drugs.

"Getting well" is what it's called, because when someone is addicted, if they are not high, they are very sick. Their body and brain are screaming out for more drugs to relieve the pain. They burn bridges, destroy relationships, hurt people, and commit crimes. All this compounded with the addiction itself leaves people isolated in shame. Addiction leads to shame, and shame mixed with addiction is deadly, because shame is something that isolates people in their addiction. They don't believe they are worthy to be included. It is a horrible cycle.

We have had many memorials here at Tierra Nueva for people who died as a result of drug overdose. Several of the memorials were for people who were at one time a part of Tierra Nueva. They were struggling to regain their lives after addiction had ravaged them. They were invited to the table, loved and included.

If only our love could hold them back from relapse.

Despite all the efforts, the addiction pulled them back, and shame kept them isolated. Then they breathed their last breath, and the hearts of their loved ones shattered into silent tears cried alone.

Some of the memorials were for people we had never met, but their family had heard that we were a safe place where they could remember their loved one without judgment or shame.

The thing about the shame that surrounds addiction is that it doesn't stop with the person who is addicted. It carries over to their loved ones. To lose a child or loved one is heart wrenching. To lose a loved one to overdose carries the excruciating heartache of loss with a suffocating shadow of shame hanging over the survivors.

Shame has even kept families from celebrating the life of the dear one who died. You see, when someone is suffering with addiction, sometimes people find it hard to remember the person who is worthy of being celebrated. It doesn't feel like a celebration of life when that life was so broken that they damaged the people around them.

Several families waited a long time to have a memorial. They wanted to remember the person, not the addiction. But addiction was the reason they were gone. See how complicated it is?

Many came to us when they found out that we would host a memorial for their loved one. We walked alongside them throughout the process, invited and included them at the table of remembrance, this time for their dearly departed.

Tierra Nueva is a safe place for families of those who have lost loved ones through overdose to come together to remember, grieve, and be loved right where they are. Shame must stay out.

There is no shame in celebrating a life. There is grief and sorrow, especially when that life is cut short, but there is love and healing in coming together in remembrance.

We will not stop praying, inviting, including, and believing that dear ones will be pulled back from addiction and death and will achieve a life of sobriety. We will not give up. It is worth the fight. So many of our people have conquered addiction and are fully living. They are reaching out and sharing the hope and strength they have found in Jesus. Hope is not lost.

We hope and pray that one day we will no longer have to officiate and host memorials for people whose lives have been cut short. But until that day comes, we will be sitting across from mothers who sob as they tell us about their child, and they ask if we can remember them for who they were, and not for what they did. And we do. And we will.

That is what Jesus does when He invites us to the table to remember him. He invites us for who we are, not what we have done. Tierra Nueva is a place of remembrance. Every week we gather in a circle for communion to remember the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. We feel the weight of Him dying and rejoice in the resurrection life that conquers death.

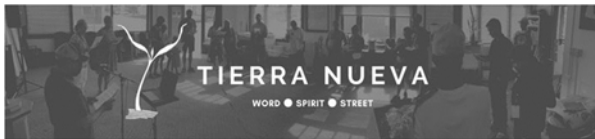
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We also remember the people who have died tragically, and we welcome survivors of loss and survivors of addiction to the table, regardless of who they are, where they have come from, or how they have been living their lives. God invites us here just as we are. We will remember together.

*Luke 22:19 He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

*<sup>20</sup> After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you." [b]*



## An Opportunity from Bob & Gracie Ekblad Support Tierra Nueva's 'Word, Spirit, Street' Mission

Tierra Nueva is in an exciting season of growth and fruitfulness. Today we invite you to partner with us in this vital mission.

- We are seeing people grow in their faith and confidence that there is life-changing news to be found in Scripture as they attend our weekly street Bible studies and Sunday worship.
- The Holy Spirit is helping us seek and find our Valley's most vulnerable, gathering them into healthy community.
- People who are connecting to Jesus are choosing to step away from years of addiction, criminal lifestyles, and homelessness into active recovery and the rebuilding of their lives.
- Continuing Tierra Nueva's mission in Honduras which we began 42 years ago, pastor David Calix leads weekly Bible studies in remote villages and oversees our coffee farm, where the harvest is now happening, employing many.

We do not need support to cover rent (we own our building), utilities, building repairs (done), or Gracie and my support (we raise our personal support separately). We need help covering the half-time salaries of our pastoral associate Lise Bennett, and Honduran pastor David Calix. Your support will also help us:

- Support longtime volunteer Jessica to coordinate Family Support Center outreach, including the delivery of Christmas gifts to children of inmates incarcerated over the holidays (150 kids received gifts last Christmas, personally delivered by our faith community members).
- Open our Family Support Center's warm clothes closet and prayer ministry through employing one of our community members two half-days a week.

Thank you for considering this appeal. You can send checks to Tierra Nueva, PO Box 410, Burlington, WA 98233.



*Bob Ekblad hosting Outdoor Friday Bible Study*



*Longtime Volunteer Jessica, coordinating Family Center outreach*



*Pastoral associate Lise Bennett, author of the previous essay on addiction and grief, taking a selfie with a Tierra Nueva group*



Don't forget, another way to give this season is through our Christmas Joy Offering. This special offering raises money to provide assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develops our future leaders and Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Bring your offering to church on Sunday, December 3rd or Sunday, December 10th. Let's spread God's love throughout our world.

# Our Church Life



## Newberg First Presbyterian Church Live Nativity

Saturday, December 16th

Sunday, December 17th

6:00-8:00 PM

Our church is presenting a Live Nativity to honor the birth of our savior and to gift our community with a Christmas experience of God's love. Come and visit and enjoy some warm apple cider as well as this loving offering to our church family and our community.

*(If you are interested joining this church experience, volunteers are still looked for, welcomed, and much appreciated!)*



### A Sweet Gift for the Holidays!

This year the Coffee Café is featuring chocolate bars for holiday giving whether as a hostess gift, a stocking stuffer, or a Christmas present. There are ten different bars in stock and plenty of each. Plus, a collection box big enough for 9 bars. Come select the bars, fill the box, and pop it in an available jolly Christmas sack. **\$25.00**

Your Equal Exchange Elf, *Margie*

***(Flavors: Classic Milk Chocolate, Milk Chocolate Caramel Crunch with Sea Salt, Dark Chocolate Caramel Crunch with Sea Salt, Dark Chocolate Lemon Ginger with Black Pepper, Dark Chocolate Almond & Sea Salt, Dark Chocolate w/Coconut Milk, Dark Mint Crunch, Dark Chocolate Infused Orange, Very Dark Chocolate, Panama Extra Dark Chocolate)***



## In the Spirit of Christmas.....

For those wishing to make a donation to the Newberg Peace Garden, Sylvia Burns suggests that this year you consider purchasing a living Christmas tree. Then, after your festivities, you can donate it to the Garden. Once replanted, it would be a wonderful lifetime remembrance of family and Christmas joy that you can visit any time you wish!



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**NEWBERG EMERGENCY SHELTER NEEDS A KITCHEN**  
All proceeds from the concert will support the renovation of the Northside kitchen, which serves as a lifeline to our local homeless community.



Scan to Purchase tickets here

OR

Purchase Tickets Online

[www.northsidenewberg.org/](http://www.northsidenewberg.org/)

### Northside Community Church

Wednesday | 12.13.2023 | 7:00pm - 9:30pm

Ticket Price

**\$20**

\*\$25 at the door



### The Nutcracker

December 9 at 2:00 pm & 6:30 pm  
December 10 at 2:00 pm

Performed at the Newberg High School



Are you ready to get into the Christmas spirit? Attend a performance of The Nutcracker, presented by the Chehalem Valley Dance Academy here in Newberg. Our church sponsors this ballet each year as part of our community outreach and involvement. And for a special treat, Chiara Murphy will be dancing in the show. To purchase tickets, please click [here](#). Enjoy!





## Our Church Community: Get Involved!

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**CAYAC**  
(College and Young Adult Community)



Sunday Morning  
Adult Study

Adult Spiritual Formation class is held every Sunday morning at 9:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. This year Adult Education is led by the dynamic team of Mary Kalesse and Mindi Hynes.

Come gather with us as we learn together, sharing life and building relationships, while we discuss life from a spiritual perspective. It's a great way to deepen your spiritual journey...and make some great friends!

Newberg First Presbyterian Church started CAYAC, which stands for College and Young Adult Community, in the fall of 2018, and it continues to be a positive space for support and good friendships. Feel free to contact Pastor Chris at [murphycb@frontier.com](mailto:murphycb@frontier.com) if you know any college students or other young adults who would be interested in participating in this amazing group. CAYAC meets on the first Sunday of each month from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.



**Men's Fellowship** is held on the first and third Thursdays of each month at 8:00 am. To learn more, please contact Gary Buck through his email,

[gbuck41108@mindspring.com](mailto:gbuck41108@mindspring.com) or give him a call at 503-250-1163. He'll give you all the information you need to join up with new friends and old!



Join the  
Youth Group

We are excited to begin our new youth ministry this fall! Led by our new youth ministers, Joe & Emily Summers, Youth Group meets every Sunday evening, from 6:00 to 7:30 pm, at the church. Our youth ministry is open to ages 11 to 18. Come join us!



**Bike Ministry**  
*In partnership with Love INC*

First Presbyterian Church partners with Love INC in providing bikes to eligible clients. Clients are screened by Love INC to determine need and eligibility. Many times people who are getting back on their feet need to have more reliable transportation than those feet.

First Presbyterian's Bike Ministry takes in donated bikes, delivers them to the Retired Recyclers for repair and rehab, and once the bikes are returned all fixed up, serves as a distribution point for Love INC clients to choose the bike best suited to them.

If you would like to help out with this ministry, you may contact Elise Prayzich (307-690-3762.)



**Space 4 Grace  
Women's Fellowship**

Space for Grace meets the 2nd and 4th Friday of every month at 11:00 am. Our times together include practical reflections on scripture, sharing of life, and prayer. All women are invited to join this group to enjoy the fellowship and friendship of women in a safe and supportive place. For more information call Mary Kalesse (503-709-3292.) We're looking forward to meeting you!



Chair Yoga

**Chair Yoga**

Chair Yoga class meets weekly on Mondays from 3:30-4:15 pm, in the Fellowship Hall.

If you are interested in joining this restorative class, you can contact Lory Albright at 971-226-8407, or email her at [lorylyn808@gmail.com](mailto:lorylyn808@gmail.com).

Class is led by Lory, who is a licensed yoga instructor. She is happy to share her gifts of love and joy, as well as her training, with her church family.



**Friday Prayer Retreat**

Join us on the first Friday of each month as we gather together at church from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon with a small luncheon after. Together we will make First Presbyterian a house of prayer for Newberg.



**Calling all who love to sing!** Our choir, led by Pat Goodman, is always looking for new voices to praise God. Our choir sings two times a month but practices every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm.

Consider this your invitation to join one of the liveliest, most fun-loving and welcoming groups you'll ever run into. Contact Pat Goodman ([pat88g@frontier.com](mailto:pat88g@frontier.com)) for more information. All are welcome!










**The Newberg Peace Garden** is always looking for volunteers to plant, water, weed, and give our garden the TLC it needs.


If you would like to volunteer, or make a donation to the NPG, please contact Sylvia Burns ([secondwindsb@hotmail.com](mailto:secondwindsb@hotmail.com)) or Ciarán Hynes ([chynes@georgefox.edu](mailto:chynes@georgefox.edu).)

# December 2023

*Unto Us  
a Child is Born*



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Adult Education class meets each Sunday at 9:00 in the Fellowship Hall, <b>but will be cancelled on December 24th</b>					1 9:00 am- First Friday Prayer Retreat 	2
Children's Worship happens each Sunday morning. Children will leave Worship right before the sermon and join their teacher for fun and learning!						
3 10:30 am- In-Person  and Livestream Worship Service 6:00 pm- Youth Group 6:00 pm- CAYAC	4 3:30 pm- Chair Yoga	5 6:30 pm- Session meeting	6 9:00 am -Bike Ministry 7:00 pm- Choir Practice	7 8:00 am- Men's Fellowship	8 11:00 am- Space 4 Grace Women's Fellowship	9
10 10:30 am- In-Person  and Livestream Worship Service 6:00 pm- Youth Group	11 3:30 pm- Chair Yoga	12	13 10:00 am- Deacon's meeting 7:00 pm- Choir Practice	14	15	16 6:00-8:00 pm- Living Nativity <b>Today and Tomorrow!</b> 
17 10:30 am- In-Person  and Livestream Worship Service 6:00 pm- Youth Group Christmas Party	18 3:30 pm- Chair Yoga	19	20 9:00 am -Bike Ministry 7:00 pm- Choir Practice	21 8:00 am- Men's Fellowship 6:30 pm- Finance & Facilities meeting	22	23
24 10:30 am- In-Person  and Livestream Worship Service 7:00 pm- Christmas Eve Service	25  <b>Christmas Day</b>	26	27	28	29	30

6:00-8:00 pm -  
Living Nativity 

31  
10:30 am-  
In-Person   
and Livestream  
Worship Service  
**New Year's  
Eve** 



## Upcoming Events

**12-16-23 and 12-17-23** - Our church is presenting a Live Nativity from 6:00-8:00 pm. Come and visit and enjoy some warm apple cider as well as this loving offering to our church family and our community.

**12-24-23 – Christmas Eve Service– 7:00 pm:** Please join us for this special service celebrating the wonder and hope of Christ's birth.

## Birthdays

20– Brian O'Herin  
30– Maxine Shuler

## Anniversaries

17– Sandi & Tim Olmstead

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Pastor Chris Murphy may be reached at his email:

[murphycb@frontier.com](mailto:murphycb@frontier.com)

or by calling the church office at 503-538-3313

Our website address is : **[newbergfpc.org](http://newbergfpc.org)**



NEWBERG FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
501 MISSION DRIVE  
NEWBERG, OR 97132



GRACE. HOPE. LOVE.