

VOLUME 24
ISSUE I

JANUARY 2024



Newberg First Presbyterian Church

PEW NEWS

A message from Pastor Chris

A New Year of Love

Last year as we prepared for 2023, I remember reflecting on my new year goals in the January Pew News. Probably because I had suffered with some low back pain and was concerned about a few extra pounds, I decided to focus on a year of good health. Well, my back did heal up nicely in 2023, but I am still working on those extra pounds. In addition to focusing on health again this year, I am choosing for 2024 to center my year on the goal of love. It is fun to hear people start to talk about 2024. I have heard some minister types start to talk about 2024 as a year for more or a year for the open door. I know it can sound cheesy, but I like the idea to let a new year spark a spirit of hope and expectation for what God wishes to do in our lives.

The reason love is my word for the new year is that love is what I sense is most needed in our families, community, and world. We need a revival of love. Christianity needs to be seen as a faith perspective rooted in love. They will know we are Christians by our love is the right spirit, but I am not sure the Church has always embodied the words in this hymn.

May I suggest that love begins with love of God and love of self. It is hard to love others well unless we learn to love ourselves. It is also hard to love ourselves unless we see ourselves the way God sees us.



A New Year of Love

How does God see us? Remember the story from Mark 10: 13-16, where parents bring their children to be blessed by Jesus? The disciples want the kids to go away. They feel like a distraction. Jesus instead invites the children to come to him for a blessing and says that the kingdom of God belongs to them. Jesus wants to bless these children with his love. Jesus sees the children as worthy of love.

Friends, Jesus wants to embrace us with love. In light of how God sees us, we can also love ourselves. Then out of an overflow of love from God and for God, we are empowered to love others. We can love first our family and friends, and then the broader community, including the most vulnerable and even those we might struggle to love.

I hope in 2024, love is the mission of our church and other faith communities as we spread the love of Jesus to a world in need. Remember love is experiential. Rather than suggesting love is only feelings or only actions, I would encourage us to see love as both. It is good to experience the feeling side of love. In 2024, do things to help you experience love. Take walks in nature. Cozy up to a good book with a cup of coffee or tea. Take a friend out for lunch. Give lots of hugs and receive them as well. It is good to feel love.

Also, show love through actions. Visit those who are sick and lonely. Work to raise awareness about social causes you believe in. Pray for those in need and find tangible ways to reach out beyond your comfort zone.

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A love revival is ultimately all about relationship with Jesus. Remember all our beliefs about God, the Bible, and the values we learn are for the purpose of relationship with God, ourselves, and others. It is one thing to grasp the truth with our mind. It is another thing to be embraced by a relational God who wants to know you personally and make you feel cherished.

May 2024 be a year of love for God, us, and the world. May a love revival grow in our families, church community, Newberg, and beyond. Know that I, your pastor love you very much and am excited for another year of following Christ together as a church family.



Please join us after worship on **Sunday, January 28th**, for our **Annual Congregational Meeting**. This is a time for to celebrate the previous year, look towards the future and vote on important business matters of the church. See you there!



Session Meeting
December 5, 2023

Bob Andrews provided a thoughtful devotion on meeting God at the crossroads of life.

We welcomed the Rev. Dr. Mark McIlraith by Zoom, who shared about his ministry SOMA Digital. Session approved becoming a church partner with SOMA Digital. To learn more about this ministry, please see somadigital.org .

Aine and Emma Hynes received church supported scholarships for college of \$750 each. They expressed gratitude for these gifts.

COLA (Cost of Living Increases) of 2% were approved for 2024 for Pastor Chris Murphy, Pat Goodman, and Katherine Millage.

Session approved new Children's Ministry Coordinator position for Angela Greenbaum at \$3,640 for the year.

Session approved Youth Leader stipends of \$7,500 for 2024. Joe and Emily Summers currently help with our youth leadership.

Session approved offering a Sabbatical Supply Pastor position for an ordained PCUSA minister this summer to cover for Pastor Chris' sabbatical from June 1-September 1. For those 3 months recommended compensation is \$5,050, pending final negotiation with final candidate for position.

Finance and Facilities will meet on Dec. 21st to make recommendations on 2024 budget. Session to approve budget at January meeting.

With gratitude for her service, Session accepted the resignation of Mary Kalesse from Session. She is focusing on caring for Armond during this season.

Marc Mannerter will be nominated as a new deacon for 2024.

Living Nativity will be offered with joy on Dec. 16th and 17th from 6 to 8 PM, along with annual Christmas Eve service at 7 PM. Special thanks to Ron Parrish and team for supporting the Living Nativity program.

Annual Congregational meeting is set for January 28th, 2024.

Special Thanks to Lory Albright for recording minutes this month.

Summary provided by Pastor Chris Murphy



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 keep Mary Kalesse and the Kalesse family in your prayers as they mourn the death of Armond. May God send His comfort and peace during this time of grief.



Prayers are needed for Roberta Simonsen as she enters hospice care. She can still receive visitors. May God send comfort, grace and peace to Roberta and the Simonsen family.



We ask for prayers for all who live in war affected places. May God send peace to them and strength, grace and comfort as they face daily hardship and grief. Pray for peace to all as we enter this new year.



Thank you to all who brought toys for the TVF&R Toy and Joy Toy Drive!! We collected so many toys and the Fire Departments were so grateful!! So many children will receive these great toys!!

Thank you!!
The Deacons plus Shirley Kolb (with her truck)!



An Update From Erik and Maureen York

The Fun of Equipping New Staff & Interns



Each fall we welcome new staff and interns, eager to serve the Lord among athletes. They are asking questions about where to best invest their time, wondering whether they are doing the right things, and being sharpened in their own faith and identity in Christ. Equipping them is really fun because they remind us why we said yes to following the Lord in

mission. Sam, (new staff) said, "...the content was very applicable and engaging. I liked that we started our time off with team building and getting to know one another and then throughout the week covered deeper topics. I was nervous to do evangelism on a campus I was not familiar with at first but it ended up being a great experience and I'm happy I did it!" Pray for them as they invite believers into discipleship relationships that open doors to team bible studies and team meetings, building trust with coaches, and working with limited availability of athletes because of their demanding schedules.

One of our interns, Trinity, also traveled with our Volleyball staff (Amber and Casey) to closed areas in south Asia where we have been building relationships through sport for two years. Our staff partnered with Cru staff from the Philippines. Pray for trips in the spring, for ears prepared to hear (and for ears that need to be closed for protection sake to be closed), wisdom and courage for gospel boldness in the right time.



This week pray for:

International Coaches Academy being hosted at our HQ, 40 coaches from 12 countries, many of whom do not yet know the Lord.

Team Leaders Training in Orlando, as Maureen, Luke, Lynn (design team) and other leaders are coaching the in person experience and have opportunities to hear from national Cru leaders.

Thankful for the ways you make it possible for us to invest well in multiplying disciples,

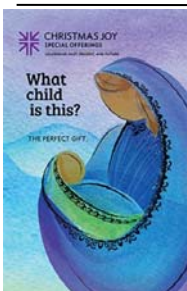
On a personal note:

Sometimes the alerts of age and health can be a good thing—curbing blood sugar and cholesterol have resulted in Erik happily dropping a few pounds and continuing to regain energy, the best since his surgery more than a year ago.

We're encouraged to see Kristianna trusting God in the midst of organic chemistry; Natassia appreciating and praying about college options as she makes campus visits and fills out applications for next year; seeing Katrielle regain her old outgoing self and kicking off swim meet season.

Below: Natassia at District XC meet, where she ran her best time by 42 seconds! Our girls ran strong as a team, really proud of them!

Erik had a lot of fun doing his XC parent volunteer job of driving the follow up gator.



The Christmas Joy is our Special Offering of the Holiday Season, designed to give us an opportunity to offer Assistance to Pastors and other Church Workers who run into a difficult financial time, and to help Support Presbyterian Racial-Ethnic Schools and Colleges. The month of December is our traditional window of time to receive these offerings, but going into 2024 will be a bit of a boost for our totals this year.

Thank you again to our always-generous congregation!

Blessings – The Mission and Global Witness Committee



An important project our congregation supports



News from Brian and Julie O

Dear Partners,

It has been an eventful few weeks!

We completed the exegetical check of the entire book of Genesis, and it is now sent out for philological editing (aka style checking) and field testing. Please pray for those processes.

We have been working on incorporating the results of philological checking and field testing for Mark into the translated Abaza text, and we should be able to finish this week. It will then get translated back into Russian for the benefit of the translation consultant. [That helps highlight how it was put in Abaza.] We plan to do the final consultant check in March.

Luke & Acts have been published! Praise God! I've seen a copy on a Zoom call, and it looks very good. Please pray that it would be well received.

We have a time-sensitive prayer request: there is going to be a segment on Abaza radio about the new publication -- Luke and Acts in one volume -- like an "announcement/press release." The broadcast will include interviews with several members of our translation team. I have been asked to send a short audio file (in Abaza of course!) for the program. Please pray for me as I make and send this, and also for the radio program to generate interest in the book. Here's the English version of what I plan to say:

"The Abaza language is beautiful and rich. It is a privilege to be part of this project, and I love working with the other members of our team. I have great respect for each one of them. Each person brings different knowledge and expertise, and together we have produced an accurate and beautiful translation that I hope many Abazas will read and enjoy. While we consulted Russian versions/translations, my own role is to compare the translation with the original text in the Greek language, to make sure the Abaza translation accurately conveys the original meaning. I wish God's blessing on all the Abaza people through His Word."

With Mark and Genesis in the hands of people responsible for other stages, my immediate attention will be turning to Exodus and John. Please pray as I get started on exegeting those (both are completely drafted) in the next weeks.

Julie got good news about her knee. The bigger of the two clots is gone, and we hope the remaining one will dissolve in the next three months. Meanwhile, she can start physical therapy next month. It looks like she will not have surgery on the torn meniscus. Praise God!

Thanks for your prayers.

For a number of years, we have supported Caroline Kurtz and the Maji Development Corporation (MDC). She has facilitated getting electricity to the village where she was raised. The latest endeavor has been getting clean water to the area around Maji, these are facts and reactions to the water project:

It's hard for us to fathom that the 400 families in the rural communities of Siski and Adikas, down the mountainside from Maji,

Have ALWAYS had to walk long, steep paths and carry spring water home for drinking, bathing, and cooking

Have NEVER had safe water available, because cattle had to share those springs.

Only 10% of the district's families live in the town of Maji. The rest live on scattered farms, growing almost all of what they eat or walking miles to open air markets where they can sell their excess produce and buy things they can't grow. These rural areas now cluster around elementary schools, small clinics, some grinding mills for grain, and small administration offices.

Rural leaders were essential members of the collaboration that MDC pulled together to reach this success!

A woman from the rural Maji District area of Adikas wants to thank you directly. You will see what a difference access to clean water has made in her life. [Click here](#) to watch the video made by Kidus Samson!

An update from Caroline about the making of the "thank you" videos:

The Dizi people are a very small cultural group with their own customs and language. Dizin is in a completely different language family from Amharic, which I speak. There are no snap-crackle-pop sounds in Dizin, but the lilt or the drop of syllables gives meaning--it's called a musical language. The women in the videos (one is linked above) are speaking Dizin. Ato Markos listened to their testimonies of thanks and translated them into Amharic. I listened to his translations and wrote them down in English. To bring you their thanks, it took three languages! The gratitude is clear in all three!



Atos Markos with a Dizin alphabet chart

Our Church Life



Starting the season off right! Tom, Angela, Christopher, Corban and Marc (and many others) joined together to make our sanctuary festive and beautiful!



(Above and left) This was the first year our church presented a Living Nativity to the Newberg community. Many thanks to all who planned, participated and put so much labor and talent into this beautiful event. And Adelaide, you make an awesome shepherd!



(Above) The Youth Group had a wonderful Christmas party with food, music, crafts, games and fun! (And welcome back from college, Justice. Your music and talent are much appreciated.)



Above: The full view of the Living Nativity—beautiful!



(Above) The Benefit Concert, featuring Thunderstorm Artis of The Voice, helped raise funds to care for the homeless population of Newberg. Many thanks to Northside Church for arranging this and for their work caring for the homeless.



Our Church Community: Get Involved!

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CAYAC
(College and Young Adult Community)



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 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 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!



We are excited to begin our new youth ministry this fall! Led by our new youth ministers, Joe & Emily Summers, Youth Group meets every 2nd and 4th 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.

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) 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) or Ciarán Hynes (chynes@georgefox.edu.)

January 2024



Taking Down the Greens After Worship



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 	2 2:00 pm- Worship Committee meeting	3 9:00 am -Bike Ministry 7:00 pm- Choir Practice	4 8:00 am- Men's Fellowship	5 9:00 am- First Friday Prayer Retreat 	6
7 10:30 am- In-Person and Livestream Worship Service  6:00 pm- CAYAC	8 3:30 pm- Chair Yoga	9 6:30 pm- Session meeting	10 10:00 am- Deacon's meeting 7:00 pm- Choir Practice	11	12 11:00 am- Space 4 Grace Women's Fellowship	13
14 10:30 am- In-Person and Livestream Worship Service 6:00 pm- Youth Group 	15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day  3:30 pm- Chair Yoga 5:30 pm- MLK Day Celebration @ Cultural Center	16	17 9:00 am -Bike Ministry 7:00 pm- Choir Practice	18 8:00 am- Men's Fellowship 6:30 pm- Finance & Facilities meeting	19 3:30- Mission Committee meeting	20
21 10:30 am- In-Person and Livestream Worship Service 	22 3:30 pm- Chair Yoga	23	24 7:00 pm- Choir Practice	25	26 11:00 am- Space 4 Grace Women's Fellowship	27
28 10:30 am- In-Person and Livestream Worship Service Congregational Meeting 6:00 pm- Youth Group 	29 3:30 pm- Chair Yoga	30	31 7:00 pm- Choir Practice	Adult Education class meets each Sunday at 9:00 in the Fellowship Hall Children's Worship happens each Sunday morning. Children will leave Worship right before the sermon and join their teacher for fun and learning!		

CELEBRATE



Birthdays

4- Chuck Zickefoose
6- Joe Samacki
10- Mary Kalesse
26- Eric Swehla
27- David Chris
31- Bob Andrews

Anniversaries

6- Bob & Libbi Hamilton
25- Bob & Sylvia Burns

Upcoming Events

1-7-24: Join us after service as we take down the Christmas decorations and prepare our Sanctuary for the new year. Many hands make light work...and sometime a lot of laughter!

1-15-24: There will be a celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. day at the Chehalem Cultural Center, beginning at 5:30

1-28-24: Our annual Congregational Meeting will be held after worship. Please join us as we all attend to the business of the church.

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.