



THE CHURCH'S LIFE
 News of the First Presbyterian Church
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2023

From the Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care



In the cherished and important moments of your life, which stories accompany you? Are they of family, pictures to laugh and cry with, included? Are they from long-time employee-relationships at work, gathered over the years? Are they travels close-by or afar with friends? Perhaps they are in anticipation of sharing holiday (ie Christmas) greeting cards with updates of family/ friends you haven't seen in some time? Heaven forbid, they may be stories from exploring biblical narratives that bring to memory, 'I heard this story before, and am experiencing it today'; joy or sorrow, (or healing)! And, lastly, they may be remembering, recognizing, reminiscing, or reflecting upon deep, personal loss---of a family member, a close friend, or even a spouse. We've all got them---stories to tell and some to listen to, as these timely narratives continue to shape us, and our world today.

Our congregation had a chance to participate in this recently at the worship service of remembrance and reflection of the life of long-time First Presbyterian Church-Oregon member, Jerry Neath. I will remember this celebration of life for some time. Thank you to all who made this possible, and an event (moments) to remember: Jeanne Neath and her family (those traveling from afar as well), our talented church choir, the efforts of church members, Dave Hanson, Karen Baker, Nancy Cox, Char Hanson and all those assisting with arrangements for the luncheon reception in the sanctuary. Indeed, it was a time together to cherish and remember.

If you have stories to share, please stop in anytime for any time period, a few or many minutes, on Wednesdays from 10:00am until Noon when I am at the church in the pastor's office. I am there every other Wednesday and in September on the 6th and the 20th, rain or shine! We can share stories that enlighten, are full of joy, stories that bring sorrow or healing, empathize or wound, or any that bring concerns or need attention.

In my experience in ministry, the Presbyterian community is always looking for ways to make a positive impact in our area, in our world. This vision, I have found, is in real life at First Presbyterian Church-Oregon. The PPOW (Presbyterian Pantry on Wheels) is one example of our mission in assisting those less fortunate than us. Each month a theme is used to collect items so much needed by others, that we might share our own surplus(es). In the past it's been grape jelly, harvesting vegetables, backpacks, mittens/hats or other needs for others. Grants for these pantries have been drastical-

From the Associate Pastor (cont'd.)

ly cut or eliminated altogether.

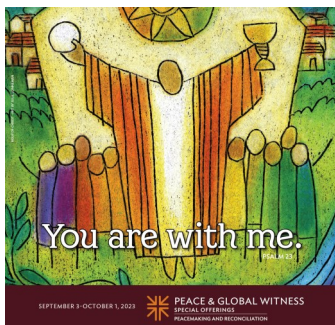
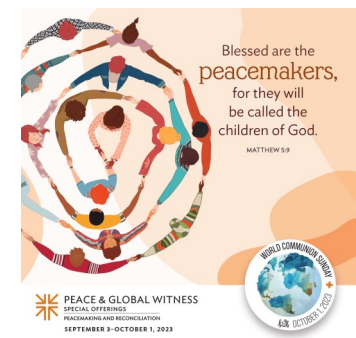
Another wonderful community-building example is our Oregon Area Senior Center, where activities and opportunities for relationship-building abound! Crafts (and supplies), sports (pickle ball), movies, support groups, nutrition, community updates, and more are plentiful every day of the week/month. A monthly newsletter gives us ideas to ponder too! These, and other examples are plentiful for our participation. That's where we come in to share our talents, time, and treasures. Each of us can step up, and we will be glad we did!

Our Session met in late August and is working diligently on several topics: welcoming new visitors, implementing exciting and enticing (and participating) worship service items, and bringing members closer to one another with conversation and personal relationship building.

We are looking forward to the new school year, and our new church calendar year to accompany our young faith followers as well. The choir will return too! Ah, another outlet for our energy! Oh, the possibilities to become involved in our church family---year-round.

Please join me in preparing our hearts and minds for assisting our church in any way we can in any of its many activities---there are places, spaces, for everyone

May God Bless,
Pastor Sandy



Mission



PPOW (Presbyterian Pantry on Wheels)

Grocery distribution for the month of August served 12 families. The congregation provided produce from their gardens and families received tomatoes, potatoes, squash, celery, peppers, turnips, kale, green beans, jalapenos peppers, cucumbers, and watermelon. The PPOW families were grateful to have fresh produce to add to their homecooked meals! Thank you!

In addition to the fresh produce each family received: shredded cheese, chicken, ground beef, grapes, bananas, onions, eggs, bread, tortillas, carrots, peanut butter, oil, mayonnaise, ketchup, and cookies. Congregation donations from the monthly collections, also provided cereal and jelly. For many of the families, this will be the majority of the groceries for the month to feed their families.

A member of our congregation also gave each family a \$50 gift certificate to Walmart to help purchase school supplies. Thank you to our generous congregation for adding additional items that the PPOW budget cannot provide! We are called to serve Jesus by contributing to the well-being of the most vulnerable in all societies. Your support of PPOW makes a difference in the lives of the families served.



PPOW for September - After-school and Lunchbox Snacks



Thanks to all who donated fresh produce from their gardens to our August distribution. For September we are collecting after school and lunchbox snacks...things like individual packages of chips, cookies, fruit snacks, etc. Granola bars are welcome, too.



As most of our families have children, we thought this would be a fun way to kick off the school year! As always, thanks for your ongoing support of the PPOW program!



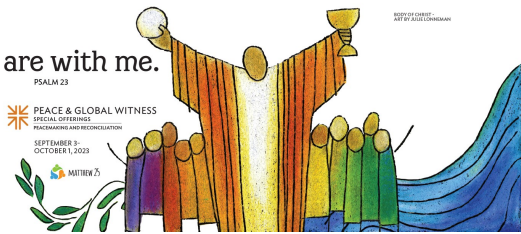
Peace and Global Witness Offering

You are with me.

PSALM 23

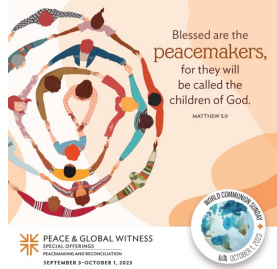
PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
SPECIAL OFFERING
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION
SEPTEMBER 3 - OCTOBER 1, 2023

MATTHEW 25



On World Communion Sunday, October 1 we will receive the Peace and Global

Witness offering. A gift to this offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of conflict and injustice across the world. Individual congregations are encouraged to utilize up to 25% of this Offering to connect with the global witness of Christ's peace. Mid councils retain an additional 25% for ministries of peace and reconciliation. The remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice in cultures of violence, including our own, through collaborative projects of education and Christian witness.



Briarpatch Youth Services

The Mission Committee has decided that the 25% FPC will retain will go to Briarpatch Youth Services. From their website....*"The Briarpatch Youth Shelter provides shelter and other services to homeless or runaway youth, or youth at risk of separation from their family due to conflict or other reasons. Opened in 2015, our shelter has eight beds and welcomes all youths, ages 12-17. There are an estimated 300 youth in Dane County who are homeless every night. This shelter was created to help these youth get off the streets and provide them with a safe place and services to succeed. Aside from providing shelter, we offer individual counseling, family counseling, case management and a 24-hour help line."*

Christian Ed



Blessing of the Backpacks

The Paw Patrol and a unicorn came to church on August 27! Well, they came on backpacks! There was a special blessing during worship for those backpacks and for those who carry them. Pastor Paulette offered a litany for the start of the school year and for the adventures ahead. Thanks to everyone who participated and remember, "God's got your back"!

September Sunday School

Youth will be invited to Sunday School on September 17 after the Children's sermon. The lesson will be "The Greatest Commandment". Any questions or suggestions, please contact Judy Belanus.



Finance

A Gentle Reminder

If you haven't already taken the opportunity to make your 2023 Per Capita payment of \$35.15 per family member, including children who may no longer be living at home, please start your summer on a positive note by making your payment as you are able via check or our [online given page](#). TIA, as we say on social media -- Thanks In Advance!





Session News from August

Session action items:

Approved the bid of \$13,180 from Hallman Asphalt to crackseal, sealcoat, and restripe the church parking lot.

Acknowledged the donation from Norm Walmer to cover the cost of grinding and removing stumps along the west side of the property.

Approved the hiring of Karen Baker as Interim Music Director.

Authorized Academy of Sound to use all the space in the Narthex west of the main entrance as their exclusive office space and accept the offer from AOS to increase rent from \$880 to \$900 per month

Authorize Dave Hanson to develop a proposal to purchase a camera to be used for recording Sunday Services.

Selected Dave Hanson and Sue McGuigan to serve on the 2024 Nominating Committee.

Respectfully submitted, Tom Niebauer, Clerk

Session and PNC Monthly Update

Starting on October 1, there will be a Session and PNC update on the first Sunday of each month. There will be a brief update from the most recent Session meeting and the PNC process. Most important will be the opportunity for questions and suggestions for congregational conversation.

These monthly updates will be held immediately after worship.

Music Director Update

We are sad that Elisa Kaether has resigned her position as of August 31st. We thank her for her skill, warmth and energy, and are very glad we will still keep connected as she continues as director of AOS.

We have been advertising multiple places for a new music director, with no nibbles so far. Never fear! Karen Baker has again agreed to serve as our Interim Music Director beginning September 1. Thank you, Karen!

We are grateful to both for their contributions to our church's beloved music program!



September

- 1: James Mastny
- 8: Mike Johnson
- 22: Debra Edgren
- 23: Colleen Hasler
- 25: Linda Weigt

July Financial Snapshot

First Presbyterian Church of Oregon				
Monthly Financial Summary				
as of	July 31, 2023			
		Monthly Amount	Year-to-date Actual	Year-to-date Budget
Pledges Committed (Annual Budget \$117,440)				
	Operating Cash Revenue from Pledges	\$ 21,537	\$ 77,407	\$ 68,507
Operating Income				
	Total Income	\$ 22,452	\$ 88,514	\$ 76,854
	Deduct: Total Expenses	\$ 8,487	\$ 69,370	\$ 117,972
Adjustments to Cash:				
	Add: Transfer from Current Assets	\$ -	\$ 2,865	\$ -
	Deduct: Transfer Memorial Fund Donation	\$ -	\$ 110	\$ -
	Deduct: Principal Payment on Debt	\$ 803	\$ 5,645	\$ -
	Net Operating Income (Loss) ADJUSTED	\$ 13,162	\$ 16,254	\$ (41,118)
Cash Balance-Operating Fund				
	Beginning Balance	\$ 31,851	\$ 28,322	
	Ending Balance	\$ 44,854	\$ 44,854	
	Increase in Available Operating Funds	\$ 13,004	\$ 16,533	