

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ASTORIA

Our Mission Statement:






"To help people within a kind, safe and compassionate community to know Christ and grow His Love"

Week of December 4, 2023

The Season of Advent is Here

The origin of the season of Advent is uncertain. It may have been patterned after the season of Lent as a period of penitence before Christmas, or as a time of preparation for baptism at Epiphany. The duration of Advent was, in some times and places, as long as six or seven weeks. (Book of Common Worship, p 163)

Announcements

-  **Sunday Mornings** – We need greeters, ushers and liturgists to share the warmth of our church family with all who come to worship. Sunday School Teachers are needed too! See the sign-up sheet in the back of the Sanctuary or contact the church office for more information.
-  **Bell Choir Practice** – Come and join the musical fun as the Hand Bell Choir practices each Wednesday at 4 PM.
-  **The Food Bank** – Is in need of mac & cheese and volunteers. Please contact the church office for more information. The Food Bank is open Monday through Friday from 3pm – 4pm, except on holidays, and is located on the north side of the church.
-  **Bowling & Pizza** – Come join us for fun, food and fellowship at 5 PM on the third Wednesday of each month at the Lower Columbia Bowl in Astoria. And don't forget to invite a friend! Starting again in January.
-  **PW Women's Bible Study** – Women come join in the Presbyterian Women's Bible study, **Sacred Encounters**. We'll be meeting at 10AM on the third Saturday of the month, December 16 in the Parlor. For info call the church office. For more details see: <https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/bible-study/sacred-encounters/>



COME JOIN US

Join us on Friday, December 8th in the church parlor at 10 am for coffee, tea, treats, and fellowship. Come join the fun!



NOTES FROM BEYOND THE PEWS

Thoughts from Pastor Paul

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Hope and pray you all are doing well, are staying safe and are feeling blessed.

For this message, I'd like to share a devotional that I recently read...

Holy Desperation by Vicki Kemper

The poor and homeless are desperate for water, their tongues parched and no water to be found. But I'm there to be found, I'm there for them, and I will not leave them thirsty. I'll open up rivers for them on the barren hills, spout fountains in the valleys. I'll turn the baked-clay badlands into a cool pond, the waterless waste into splashing creeks. - Isaiah 41:17-18 (MSG, adapted)

The Great Salt Lake was once a paradise for boaters, birdwatchers, and beachgoers. But the massive body of water, home to brine shrimp and flies that attract 10 million migratory birds a year, is drying up.

The Antelope Island marina where pleasure boats once docked is a pathetic collection of warped walkways over dried dirt. Visitors intent on floating in the lake's famously salty waters are warned they will have to walk up to a mile from shore. Most concerning is the poisonous arsenic exposed by the dry lakebed and carried by wind into the lungs of the region's residents.

What does this unfolding disaster have to do with Advent, a season of waiting and watching for God to fulfill our longings for union and wholeness?

The Word becomes flesh not simply to gratify our spiritual desires but also to satisfy and transform our desperate physical, societal, economic, and environmental needs.

While we look up and down and all around for any sign of hope, when our situations become so dire that we stop believing in deliverance and restoration, God comes to us again—longing to be found, wanting to reveal love's power, waiting to make miracles out of our mighty messes.

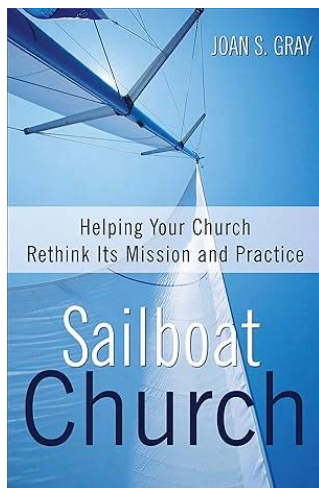
Prayer - Come to us again, O God, and quench our thirst—for water, for hope, for justice and peace, for you.

https://www.ucc.org/daily-devotional/holy-desperation/?inf_contact_key=55e384bf9dab0f3c025f9530aa5aaed2b7af0999dac2af6212784c39e05d2aef

Please stay safe. If you'd like to hear from me, please give me or the church office a call and let me know.

Blessings and peace,

Pastor Paul



Join us each Sunday following worship in the Christian Resource Room for the book study of **Sailboat Church**.

Next Class December 17
– Chapter 3

Are we a rowboat church or a sailboat church?

Rowboat churches depend largely on human effort. When church budgets shrink and membership declines, rowboat churches frantically row harder against a current, often frustrated and disappointed at their efforts. Sailboat churches, on the other hand, take up the oars, hoist sails, and rely on the Holy Spirit to guide them.

Arguing that churches should be "sailboats," Joan S. Gray encourages readers to shift concern from the many daily, practical concerns of their local church to fresh ideas that can be found using the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The book includes forty days of sailing prayers, quotes from Scripture, brief reflection questions, and an extensive bibliography that is arranged by theme. Perfect for groups to read together, this book will help leaders reframe their church's mission and practice with the Holy Spirit as their guide.

Copies available in the church office or you can purchase them online from Amazon at: <https://a.co/d/fB97Clr>
A Kindle version is also available.

Zoom Fellowship

Join us, every Sunday at 2PM for Zoom Fellowship. This is a great way for those who are unable to make it to Sunday worship, or other local events to reconnect with our church family. We look forward to seeing you!

If you would like to join the fellowship, please follow this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9291402896?pwd=ejY1TGs5U1pkWE5EdFRyTy9hT1J4Zz09>

- Meeting ID: 929 140 2896
- Passcode: 344110

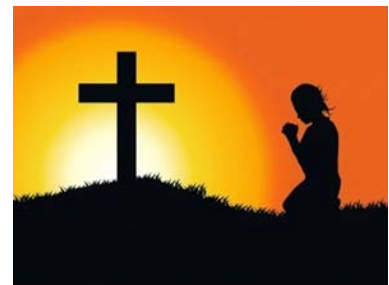
FPC Astoria Calendar

December	8	Friday Coffee Fellowship – 10AM in the Church Parlor
	10	Children’s Christmas Program & Dedication of Pledges during worship
	12	Brown Bag Session Meeting – 11AM
	13	Bell Choir Rehearsal 4PM
	16	Women’s Bible Study – 10AM in the Church Parlor
	20	Bell Choir Rehearsal 4PM
	21	Longest Night Worship Service – 7PM in the Marcotte Chapel
	24	Worship Service 10am
	24	Stories and Carols Candlelight Service 7PM
	31	Combined worship with Pioneer Presbyterian at FPC Astoria – 10AM

Prayers of the People –

Please send prayer requests to the church office

- Brodie MacDonald – Continued Healing
- Katy Paz – Healing & Peace
- Butch & Vinie Elliot – Healing & Peace
- Gerald Smith – Healing, Peace & Discernment



Continued Prayers for God’s Creation

All those touched by mass shootings and other crimes of hate and violence.

The people of Ukraine, the Gaza Strip, and other parts of the world as their lives have been torn apart by war.

Those struggling for justice and equality.

Those suffering from oppression and violence.

Those who are forced to flee their homes, risking life and limb for the hope of a better life.

For those who prioritize profit over God’s creation, that their hearts be changed to make serving and saving God’s creation their one priority.

God’s creation as it seeks to survive mankind’s exploitation and global climate change.

The Votes are In!

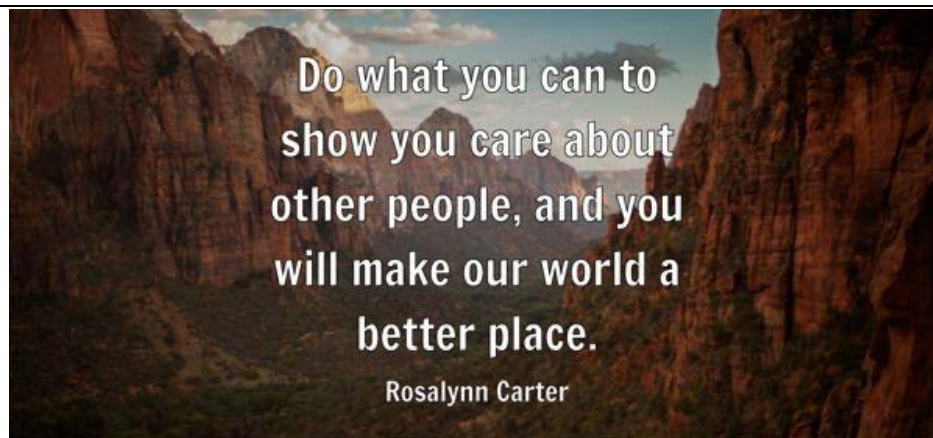
Because of all the positive input from many of you, your Session has unanimously voted to become part of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians. Our church family not only welcomes everyone who wishes to worship with us, we also accept everyone. Membership in Covenant Network of Presbyterians is one of many ways for us to share our Open & Affirming attitude with the rest of our community and the world. This also helps members of the LGBTQIA+ community to know that they truly have a safe place to worship and fellowship and that they would be welcome to join and be an active part our church family.

For more information about the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, see: <https://covnetpres.org>



Getting Involved in the Community

- ☰ Volunteers needed for the church's food bank to stock shelves and to help serve customers.
- ☰ Attend a local public meeting:
 - Tuesday, December 6, Port of Astoria Commission Business Meeting at 4PM.
 - Tuesday, December 7, Clatsop Care Health District Board Meeting at 12PM.
 - Wednesday, December 13, Clatsop County Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting at Judge Guy Boyington Building, 857 Commercial St., Astoria at 5PM.



Office Hours –

Monday through Thursday – 9:00 am to 12 noon

Pastor Paul's Office Hours & Contact Information

Pastor Paul is in the church office during office hours and is available by phone, text or email most times.

Please note, Pastor Paul takes his Sabbath every Friday but is available on Fridays for emergencies.

Email: pastorpaul@fpcastoria.org

Phone: 971.606.5606

Prayer Requests & Newsletter Articles & Information –

The newsletter is published the 2nd and 4th week of the month.

If you have anything that you would like included, please send it to the church office by 12 noon on Wednesday on the 1st or 3rd week of the month.

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12-22-2014

WHAT DO YOU BUY THE GUY WHO HAS EVERYTHING, MADE EVERYTHING, AND HAS GIVEN US EVERYTHING?



First Presbyterian Church of Astoria

1103 Grand Avenue, Astoria OR 97103

Join us every Sunday at 10AM for a family friendly, Christ centered worship where all are welcome & accepted.

www.fpcastoria.org | email: office@fpcastoria.org | phone: 503.325.1702



An Open & Affirming Church Family



Scan for directions