

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 January 1, 2024

Women's Winter Retreat & Bible Study

The Saturday, January 20 Sacred Encounters Bible study will be held at the Seaside World Mark (26 Ave A) with lunch following – as part of a mini-retreat. Those just coming for the Bible study and lunch can carpool from the church at 9 AM. Hazel will be part of that group.

Please contact the church office for more information.

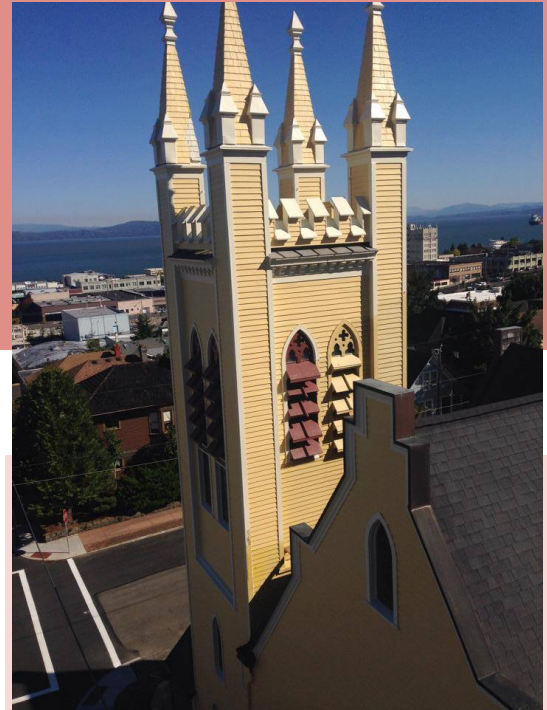
Announcements

2024 **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.

2024 **The Food Bank** – Is in need of cat food, 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.

2024 **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 17.

2024 **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, January 20. For info call the church office. For more details see: <https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/bible-study/sacred-encounters/>



FRIDAY COFFEE (& TEA) FELLOWSHIP

COME JOIN US

Join us on Friday, January 13th 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,

First, HAPPY NEW YEAR! Hope and pray you all are doing well, are staying safe and are feeling blessed and that you had a wonderful Christmas and New Years.

A big thank you for all your prayers and well wishes as I continue to recover from my hospitalization in November and December. Each day I feel a little more strength returning. A big thank you too for all of you who were able help my family and me move into our new home. Hazel, Elizabeth and I are so looking forward to getting settled and having you all over for a thank you celebration. We'll keep you posted.

Well, we've made it to 2024. It is my hope and prayer that all of God's creation will find and know peace in God's agape love that is meant for all of God's creation and that all will share that love as God calls us to.

As we celebrate each New Year with hope for the future, and starting anew, I hope and pray that you will consider, with God's help, taking on a New Year's resolution, and of course, the resolution that I encourage you to take on, if you're not already doing so, is that of finding a spiritual discipline. There are many that can help center and strengthen your faith and relationship with God. There's meditation, prayer, fasting, and many more. I recommend the book, ***Celebration of Discipline*** by Richard Foster to help with finding something that's best for you.

You may have to try a few out before you to find the best fit for you, but do please give them a try, find one (or more) and make them a part of your life. You will be surprised how things change. Just remember, for anything new like this, you must give it 4 – 6 weeks before it becomes a part of your routine.

In this New Year, remember to put everything in God's hands, and to listen for God's still speaking voice and seek to follow God's wisdom. As Pope John XXIII wrote, "Consult not your fears, but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern not yourself with what you tried and failed in, but what it is still possible to do. Now is the time to put aside past and present setbacks and failures and look with confidence to the new day called tomorrow." And as Rabbi Evan Moffic prayed, "Eternal God, You gave us the greatest gift: the gift of life. In the coming year, help us use it wisely. May we grow in generosity, kindness and forgiveness, hope, faith and love. Amen." God is always there for us, regardless of what the new year brings. Remember the words of the Apostle Paul from Romans 8:38-39, "I'm convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers or height or depth, or any other thing that is created." (CEB)

So, in this new year, may you fully and truly feel God's peace, love and presence in and throughout every day of the year, in every trial and tribulation and in every celebration. May you be blessed and bring God glory in all that you endeavor to accomplish.

I am so thankful for each of you. Please take care of yourselves and be kind to those around you, and yes, that includes yourself. If you'd like to hear from me, please give me or the church office a call and let me know. And don't forget to not just invite someone to church or a church event, bring them! See you at church!

Blessings, peace, and may you have a Happy and Blessed New Year,

Pastor Paul

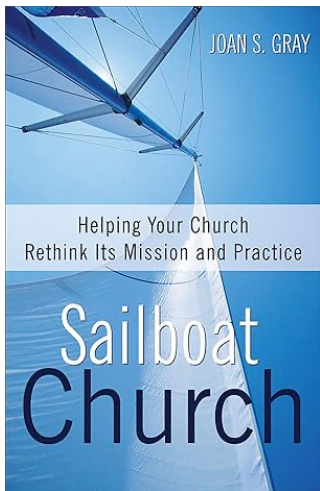


Our Session Has a New Look!

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully." (Romans 12:6-8, NIV)

Following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, your FPC Astoria Session recently voted to establish teams to spread out the work and responsibilities of our church family. If you feel called to be a part of any of these teams, please let one of your Session members or Pastor Paul know. The new teams are:

- **Buildings & Grounds**
 - Repairs and maintenance of church buildings.
 - Correspondence and coordination with organizations leasing space from FPC Astoria including the annual review and signing of corresponding leases.
 - Manage and coordinate rentals of church space for special events.
- **Christian Education**
 - Determine needs for Christian education for all ages of the church family and seek ways to meet those needs.
 - Coordinate with recruiting teachers and facilitators for different studies.
- **Fellowship & Outreach**
 - Coordinate activities that promote fellowship and outreach that help to strengthen the relationships between church family members and members of the surrounding community.
- **Mission**
 - Identify mission needs both locally and globally that the church family can contribute to either financially or physically.
 - Coordinate efforts to gather support for mission activities with
 - "Moments for Mission"
 - Gathering or creating announcements and inserts seeking assistance from the church family in answering the needs of the given mission.
- **Finance & Stewardship**
 - Attend to and maintain all FPC Astoria's financial bookkeeping requirements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and related laws.
 - Send out letters with giving amounts to those who have contributed to the church family's finances.
 - Create and implement annual stewardship campaigns.
- **Worship**
 - Continually review weekly worship and recommend changes based on comments from the congregation or from personal experiences.
 - Identify and help plan special worship opportunities throughout the liturgical year.
 - When needed, assist in filling the pulpit through obtaining pulpit supply.
- **Personnel**
 - Meet with the employees of FPC Astoria on a regular basis.
 - Ascertain the needs of the employees.
 - Give employee reviews at least annually.
- **Nominating**
 - Seek candidates for open Ruling Elder and Deacon seats.



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

Next Class January 7 – Chapter 4

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

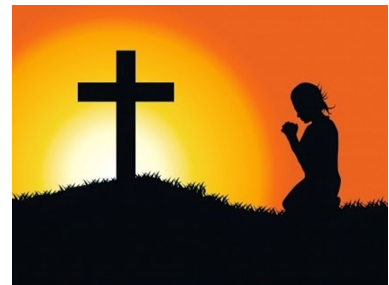
FPC Astoria Calendar

January	7	Coffee Fellowship & Sailboat Church Book Study following worship in the Christian Resource Room
	9	Session Meeting at 4:30PM in the Christian Resource Room
	12	Friday Coffee, Tea & Fellowship – 10AM in the Parlor
	17	Bowling & Pizza at Lower Columbia Bowling at 5PM
	20	Women's Bible Study – 10AM in the Parlor
	21	Annual Congregational Meeting following Worship

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.

What Does it Mean to be a CNP Church?

Confident in God's hopeful future and grateful for the ever-widening welcome of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Covenant Network of Presbyterians seeks an equity still not fully realized for LGBTQIA+ people in church and society, by



Engaging the church to invite all of God's children into safe and welcoming congregational spaces of affirmation, healing, dignity and purpose;

Educating the church to expand our welcome of LGBTQIA+ people, to affirm their gifts for ordained office, and to uphold marriage equality for all; and

Equipping the church to bear witness to justice through advocacy and activism at the international, national and local church levels; speaking a prophetic word in anxious and divided times; and standing with others in fighting hate and oppression against any of God's children.

The Covenant Network of Presbyterians calls the church to bear a unified witness to generous hospitality and faithful justice.

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:

- City of Astoria
 - Thursday, January 4, Design Review Commission at 5:30PM.
 - Tuesday, January 9, Historic Landmarks Commission at 5:30PM.
 - Tuesday, January 23, Planning Commission at 5:30PM.
 - Wednesday, January 24, Parks Board at 6:4PM
- Clatsop County
 - Wednesday, January 10, Board of Commissioners Agenda Work Session & Regular Meeting at 5PM.
- Clatsop Community College
 - Thursday, January 11, Board of Education Meeting at 5:30PM.
- Astoria School District
 - Wednesday, January 10, School Board Meeting at 7PM.
- Port of Astoria
 - Tuesday, January 2, Commission Business Meeting at 4PM.

Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man.

Benjamin Franklin

BrainyQuote

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: pastor paul@fpcastoria.org

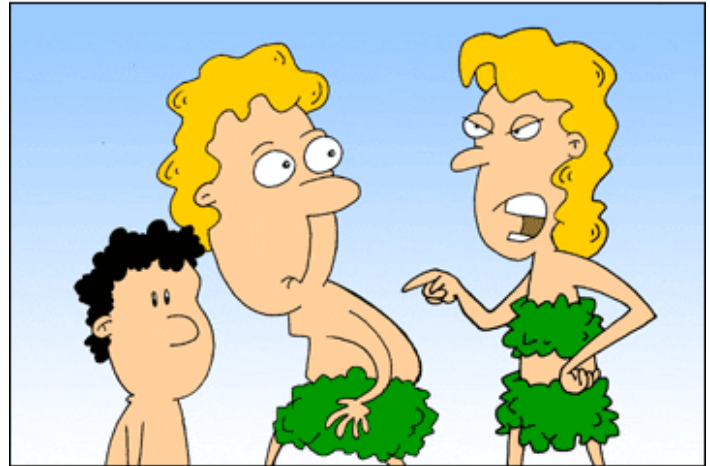
Phone: 971.606.5606

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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Thanks to Joe Kaufmann (See Genesis 3) 01-08-2003

WILL YOU PLEASE STOP TELLING THE KIDS THAT I ATE US OUT OF HOUSE AND HOME



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