

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ASTORIA

Our Mission Statement:

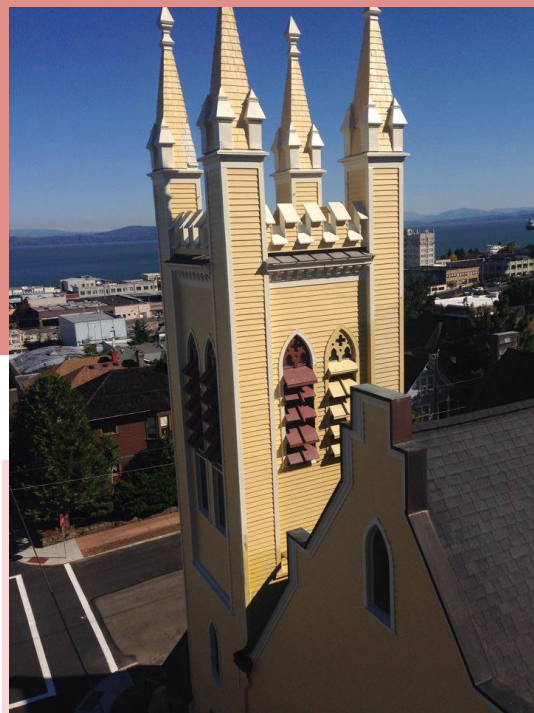
"To help people within a kind, safe and compassionate community to know Christ and grow His Love"

Week of January 15, 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 with Hazel.

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, breakfast cereal, 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, February 9th 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 and that 2024 is treating you well thus far.

Wanted to talk this week about our last Sailboat Church class. It was all about our boat, also known as the church. Joan Gray reminds us that the church is more than a building. It's even more than just a group of people getting together once a week. She reminds us that the church is called to be the body of Christ. And as Christ is both fully human and fully divine, Gray writes, "The church, as Christ's body, also is both divine and human. As a divine, God-ordained movement, it is holy because it is created and powered by God. Jesus Christ promises to make himself known in the world through the church. God, not human beings, created the church. Because of this, the church is more than an organization of people who enjoy getting together to do religious exercises and good works. The church is a divine, even supernatural, community gathered by God to do God's work."¹ God created the church to continue the work of Jesus, to share God's love, grace and mercy and to the world of man that was, and is, broken by sin. As Gray stated, "In his suffering-servant death on the cross, Jesus gave birth to the church. He is the captain of our Sailboat. His cross is its mast. He calls believers to live as sailors, setting sail by the Spirit and navigating in the flow of God's will. But even if the sails are raised and the sailors are ready, a Sailboat has to have wind in order to sail."² And it is the Holy Spirit that was breathed into the disciples that fills our raised sails, moving us closer to God's kin-dom, helping us to do God's work throughout creation.

Gray reminds us that the early church didn't always get it correct. But, when they allowed the Holy Spirit to move them forward, they were able to do wonderful things throughout God's creation. As Gray reminds us, "The Advocate that Jesus had promised did for them what they could not do for themselves and, before long, blew them out of Jerusalem to change the world forever. And they did it, not with their own wealth, wisdom, and power but through participating with the Holy Spirit in Jesus' resurrection life and power."³ When we follow the Holy Spirit, we do things, not for our own personal gain, but for the mission work that God calls us to. If we are there for our own causes, if we are not out in our communities working to make God's creation a better place, then it is as if we are not even out on the water, but rather still tied up at the dock. This is counter to what God calls the church to do. These are neither rowboat nor sailboat churches; instead, they are more like pleasure barge churches serving their own purpose instead of God's.

And while the pleasure barge churches are still tied to the docks, there are other churches that understand that God requires them to get out on the water and do God's work. The problem with many churches is that they do so with little prayer, discernment, listening for the Spirit, or dependence on God to direct and provide. These are the rowboat churches. As Gray stated, "...without centering their efforts in these God-honoring practices, rowboat churches come up with projects that seem good to them and carry them out with the resources at their disposal. They settle for what they can do in their own power. These efforts at mission may seem successful on the surface. However, because they do not involve a partnership with God, they bear little lasting fruit for God's reign in the world. As Jesus said, "Without me, you can do nothing" (John 15:5)."³ As a church, we must seek to always do God's work, and we must also not forget that God, the Holy Trinity, must drive all we do.

So, if you are wondering what a church is supposed to do with the power of the Holy Spirit in its sails, well, that's chapter 5 after the Congregational Meeting on January 21.

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

¹ Gray, Joan S.; Gray, Joan S.. *Sailboat Church* (p. 24). Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.

² Gray, Joan S.; Gray, Joan S.. *Sailboat Church* (pp. 27-28). Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.

³ Gray, Joan S.; Gray, Joan S.. *Sailboat Church* (p. 28). Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.

know. And don't forget to not just invite someone to church or a church event, bring them! See you at church!

Blessings and shalom,
Pastor Paul

Our Session Has a New Look!

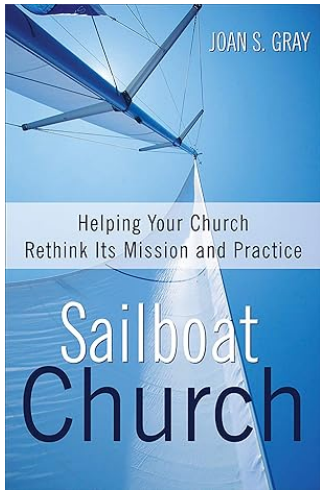
"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is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

In case you missed it last time, here's the list of church teams from your FPC Astoria Session. If you feel called to be a part of any of these teams, please let one of your Session members or Pastor Paul know.

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 21 – Chapter 5

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	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

- *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.

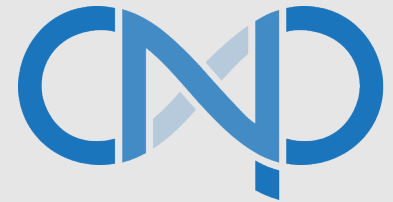
Those who are forced to flee their homes, risking life and limb for the hope of a better life.

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
 - Tuesday, January 16, City Council Meeting at 6PM.
 - Tuesday, January 23, Planning Commission at 5:30PM.
 - Wednesday, January 24, Parks Board at 6:4PM
- Clatsop County
 - Wednesday, January 24, Board of Commissioners Agenda Work Session & Regular Meeting at 4PM.
- Clatsop Community College
 - Thursday, February 8, Board of Education Meeting at 5:30PM.
- Astoria School District
 - Wednesday, February 14, School Board Meeting at 7PM.
- Port of Astoria
 - Tuesday, February 4, 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

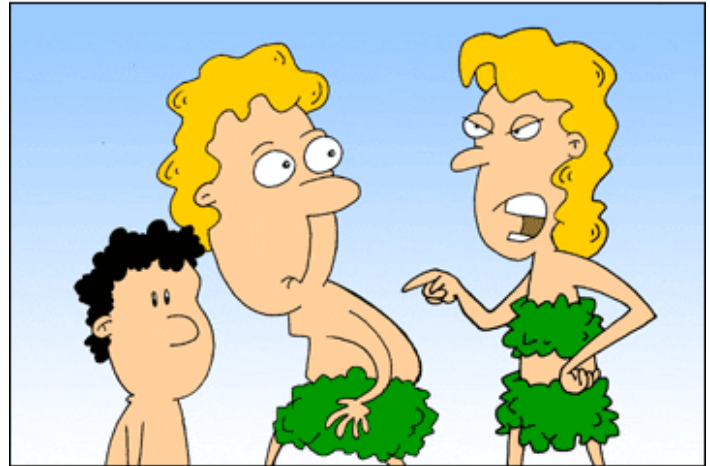
Phone: 971.606.5606

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