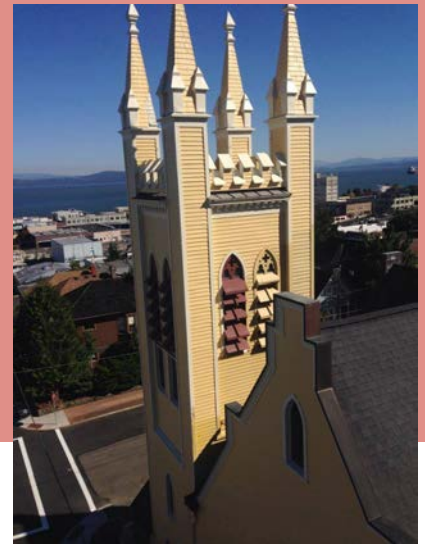


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ASTORIA

Our Mission Statement:

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

Week of February 26, 2024



Session Teams Are Calling

Our Session and Deacons had a wonderful Leadership Class this past weekend where there was great discussion and a lot of learning.

There is little doubt that our church family is blessed with some wonderful folks serving God and our church family as Deacons and Ruling Elders. Many of you may have had the opportunity to serve in the past and to all of you we give (& God) thanks.

If you've ever felt a call to help with one of the session teams, well guess what? You are more than welcome to do just that. You don't have to be a Ruling Elder, a Deacon or even a member of the church. You can simply show up and serve as you are called to serve. And we all know that life happens. So, if for whatever reason you can no longer help on a team, no worries, we understand.

If God is calling you to help with a team, let us know. And if God is calling you to help and you don't ask, don't be surprised if you get an invitation from a Ruling Elder to join a team.

Announcements

- ♣ **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.
- ♣ **Sunday Mornings** – Your help is needed! 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 during fellowship or contact the church office for more information.
- ♣ **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! Next Bowling & Pizza Day is March 21.
- ♣ **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, March 16 at the Davidson's home. For info call the church office. For more details see:

<https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/bible-study/sacred->

FRIDAY COFFEE (& TEA) FELLOWSHIP

COME JOIN US

Join us every month on the second Friday. We're meeting Friday, March 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.

Well, we were back in the Sailboat Church this last Sunday looking at chapter 8, Moving with the Wind. As with all the other chapters thus far in Joan Gray's book, this one was packed full of information that helped stimulate good thought and discussion. In this chapter Gray talked about the need to be responsive to the Holy Spirit in a manner that best serves God's mission.

The first thing that Gray wrote about was the need to be intentional about spiritual formation as a church community. As Gray wrote, "People who come to church brimming over with God-life have something to share that gives energy to the whole body. However, the disciplines of individuals are not what have the most impact on the life of a church. Rather it is the disciplines engaged in as a congregation that are most powerful. These practices allow the Spirit to move each church into the adventure that God has for it." (p 65) Gray suggests that our church family prayerfully discern areas that need attention, and that we ask God that we be guided to the resources that are needed. Gray suggests that we ask and seek the Holy Spirit's guidance in answering the following:

How in our life together do we make time for people to experience God in ways that empower them? **How** do we challenge and support people to move out of their comfort zones to serve God? **How** deeply is prayer woven into the fabric of our communal life? **How** can we make the practice of prayer more central? **How** does our congregational culture encourage generosity, including tithing, as a spiritual discipline? **What** is the passion level of our worship? **Does** our worship encourage people to offer themselves to God every week? **Does** our worship provide opportunities for people to experience what is being preached and taught? **Is** testimony from members of the congregation a regular part of our worship? **Where** in our congregation do people get beyond surface relationships to share their struggles and know one another deeply? **What** signs do we see of maturing fruit of the Spirit in our people? **Where** do we need more? **How** do we as a congregation practice genuine hospitality to strangers and "the least of these"? **How** do we confront behaviors that are hurtful to the body of Christ? **How** do we help people change these behaviors? **What** opportunities do we offer for people not only to learn the Scriptures but also to be transformed by them? **What** things do we as a congregation need to stop doing so that we can focus more energy in growing toward God and doing God's mission in the world? **How** could our board, working with the minister, become a more effective spiritual leadership team? **How** do we hold our leaders accountable and support them in their spiritual growth? **Where** in our congregation do we practice Jesus' command to "love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12)? **How** do we encourage people to share with people outside the congregation how God has made a difference in their lives?" (pp. 66-67)

It is critical that we ask these questions and seek guidance from the Holy Spirit so our church family can be more responsive to the Spirit.

Gray then writes about practicing sanctified imagination. As Gray wrote, "Each congregation must discover its own mission; each one must discern what is beside its name on God's to-do list." (p. 67) Congregations must use their Holy Spirit-led imaginations to find their call. When doing this, we need to remember that what the Holy Spirit is calling us to do might not make sense to conventional wisdom. That might be why Gray uses the word 'imagination'. Before we do this, we must first seek to understand what it means to be Jesus' disciple. That's when you will know in your heart when you hear God's calling.

The next section, Rise above Self-Interest for the Good of the Church reminds us that we need to be willing to sacrifice our personal desires for the sake of the God's called mission for the church. This is a difficult one for most of us to live up to because it is often about giving up things that seem special for us as individuals. Gray wrote, "This way of moving with the wind involves humility of spirit. It requires that we realize that because something is right for us does not mean it is right for everyone; because we prefer doing things a certain way does not mean that is always the best way to do them. It involves the ability to stand back and look at the big picture when making decisions instead of always doing what we would prefer. Sometimes it may mean sacrificing our own personal desires and interests so that the mission of the church may go forward. Sailboat Christians are willing to rise above self-interest and personal preference for the greater good of the whole. In so doing, they follow the example of Jesus who came, not to be served, but to serve." (p. 70)

Gray then wrote about the willingness to fail. If we are going to be willing to take chances with change, we must also be willing to risk failure. Gray reminds us that many churches wither and die because they are too afraid of trying and failing. Sailboat churches are, "...willing to risk what God has given for the sake of doing God's will. The risks may involve the church's finances, the church's buildings, or even the church's reputation in the community." (p. 72)

In the section titled, "Cultivate a Culture of Abundance and Generosity", Gray reminds us that when we become overly concerned with scarcity, which usually happens regarding money, we are actually practicing what is known as 'functional atheism'. In other words, we don't trust God to see us through. If we allow the Holy Spirit to truly work, and if we work with the Holy Spirit, we can find the culture of scarcity turned into a culture of abundance.

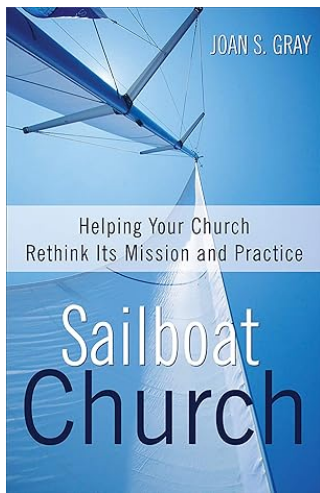
In her next section of chapter 8, Gray wrote of the importance of discerning and using the spiritual gifts of the church family members. Rowboat churches tend to look at openings on session and elsewhere in the church as, "How many slots do we have to fill?" This often puts people in the position of doing something they have no gift for. A sailboat church works to understand the God given gifts of its members and seeks to get each involved, "...in ministry that both feeds and challenges them to the end that the mission of the church will go forward and God will be glorified. This is how people find joy in serving God!" (p. 74)

Gray then reminds us of the importance living out the agape love that Jesus commanded us to share with each other. Agape love is a selfless love that has us serving each other because the Holy Spirit calls us to, not because we expect anything in return.

In the final section of chapter 8, Gray shares about growing in hard times. Gray reminds us that God is present and working in and through us even in the most painful of situations. Gray wrote, "Three biblical principles are especially important in giving us a spiritual understanding of difficult situations: (1) God can bring good out of anything; (2) God can use our weaknesses; and (3) God leads, and we follow." (pp. 75-76) As Gray wrote, "The temptation to take the reins out of God's hands and put them into our own is very strong and seems to be part of human nature. Failures can become blessings if they teach us that in everything that goes on in the church and in our individual ministries, God leads, and we are to follow." (pp. 79-80) Failure is sometimes God nudging us to where and who we need to be.

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 shalom,
Pastor Paul



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

Next Class March 3 –
Chapter 9

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.

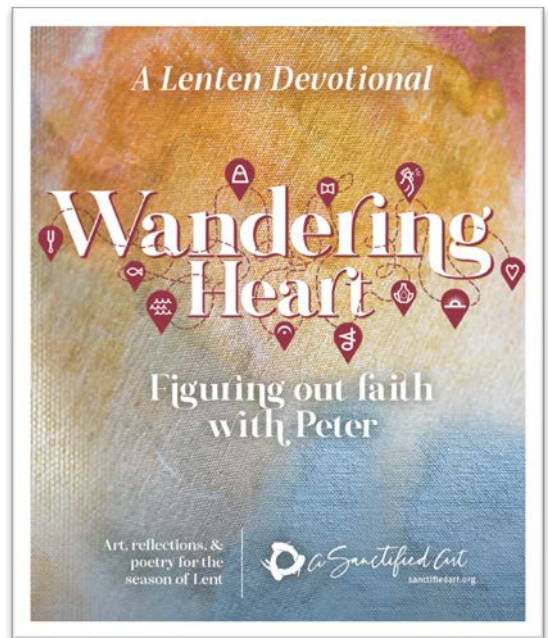
Arguing that churches should be "sailboats," Joan S. Gray encourages readers to shift concern from the many daily, practical concerns of their local church to fresh ideas that can be found using the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The book includes forty days of sailing prayers, quotes from Scripture, brief 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.

Lenten Devotionals Available

Beginning the First Week in Lent and concluding the Second Week of Easter, this devotional follows Simon Peter's journey with Jesus (as outlined in our Wandering Heart series). It includes weekly reflections with art, hymns, poetry, commentary, and journaling prompts. We encourage you to read the devotional at your own pace, looking for the ways your own story may be reflected in Peter's faith journey. As we wander through Lent, let us tune our hearts to sing God's grace. May we rest in streams of mercy, never ceasing.

Copies are available in the back of the sanctuary or by contacting the church office.



We say So Long but not Goodbye

Our church family said so long to Rebekah and Wombat Murdock Sunday as they get ready for their next chapter of life. Rebekah is moving closer to her family to reconnect with them.

Rebekah has been an important part of our church family for many years and even though she is moving to the east coast, she will always remain in our hearts, thoughts, and prayers. We are all both extremely excited and saddened at the same time for this opportunity for her to reconnect with family and will be praying for safe travels and an easy transition, and for God's richest blessings on her future.

Rebekah (& Wombat), please stay in touch as you will always be in our hearts.



FPC Astoria Calendar

March	7	Worship Team Meeting 12noon in the Christian Resource Room
	8	Coffee Fellowship at 10AM in the Church Parlor
	10	Daylight Savings Time Begins
	12	Session Meeting at 4 PM
	14	VBS Planning at 10AM in the Christian Resource Room
	16	Women's Bible Study – 10AM at Hazel's House
	17	Combined Worship & Potluck at Pioneer Presbyterian at 10AM
	19	Deacon's Meeting at 4PM in the Christian Resource Room
	20	Bowling & Pizza at Lower Columbia Bowling at 5PM
	24	Palm Sunday
	28	Maundy Thursday Seter Dinner at 5:30PM in Goodenberger Hall
	29	Interfaith Peace Walk at 3:30PM in downtown Astoria (see flier below for more details)
		Good Friday Service at 6PM in the Marcotte Chapel
31	Sunrise Easter Service at the Astoria Column at 7AM	
	Easter Worship & Celebration at 10AM	

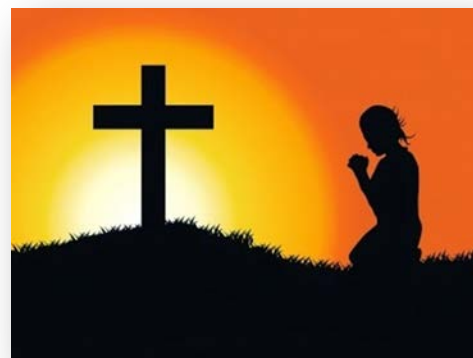
Working for Justice and Peace in March

All Month:	
• Women's History Month; womenshistorymonth.gov	
Date(s)	Event
1	World Day of Prayer, wdp-usa.org or worlddayofprayer.net
8	International Women's Day, internationalwomensday.com or un.org/en/observances/womens-day
10	Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday, pcusa.org/women Self-Development of People Sunday, presbyterianmission.org/ministries/sdop/
11	J&P Book Discussion Group online, 3:30–5:30 PM Our Missing Hearts by Celeste Ng. Register at presbyterianwomen.org/justice
11-22	UN Commission on the Status of Women, unwomen.org/en/csw/csw68-2024
17-23	National Agriculture Week; iatp.org
20	Mr. Rogers Day, presbyterianmission.org/ministries/theology-formation-and-evangelism/office-of-chris-tian-formation/mr-rogers-day-resources
22	World Water Day, worldwaterday.org
25-31	National Farmworker Awareness Week, saf-unite.org/national-farmworker-awareness-week
29	Good Friday; presbyterianmission.org/story/april-15-2022/
31	Easter; presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/christianyear/resurrection-lord-easter
	National Farm Workers Day, nationaltoday.com/national-farm-workers-day
From the Presbyterian Women in the PCUSA https://www.presbyterianwomen.org https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2024-JP-Calendar-FA-rvsd-2.pdf	

Prayers of the People –

Please send prayer requests to the church office

- *Juanita & Marcella Price – Healing & Peace*
- *Michael Smith – Healing & Discernment*
- *Duffy Mueller – Healing, Peace & Discernment*
- *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 seeking 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.

Getting Involved in the Community

☪ Volunteers are needed for the church's food bank to stock shelves and to help serve customers.

☪ Attend a local public meeting:

- City of Astoria
 - Monday, March 4, City Council Meeting at 6PM.
 - Tuesday, March 19, Historic Landmarks Commission at 5:30PM.
 - Tuesday, March 26, Planning Commission at 5:30PM.
 - Wednesday, March 27, Parks Board at 6:45PM
- Clatsop County
 - Wednesday, March 13, Board of Commissioners Agenda Work Session & Regular Meeting at 5PM.
- Clatsop Community College
 - Thursday, March 14, Board of Education Meeting at 5:30PM.
- Astoria School District
 - Wednesday, March 13, School Board Meeting at 7PM.
- Port of Astoria
 - Tuesday, March 5, Commission Business Meeting at 4PM.

Church Directory

Next time you're at church, please take a moment to review the church directory. Let us know if your contact information needs updated or included.

We hope to have an up-to-date church directory before Easter.



75 YEARS |  **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT



February 14 - March 31, 2024

Join with Presbyterians worldwide in sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

This Lenten season, please give generously to One Great Hour of Sharing.

WAYS TO GIVE —

- + Through your congregation
 - + Online at pcusa.org/give-oghs
 - + Text OGHs to 91999 to give
- or-



You can help sustain the important ministries and programs that are supported by One Great Hour of Sharing Offering by making an online gift at any time throughout the year. Checks may be sent Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); P.O. Box 643700; Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

Thanks to your heartfelt gifts, One Great Hour of Sharing currently supports projects in over 100 countries.

IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!

To learn more about how your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing makes a difference, visit pcusa.org/oghs



One Great Hour of Sharing is one of four annual special offerings. The four churchwide Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) play an important role in defining what it means to be a congregational church in the twenty-first century, bringing together the diversity of the PC (USA) to focus and take faith-based action on shared concerns. The Offerings offer opportunities for partnership, learning, and witness and profoundly affect the life of the church as a collective witness to Jesus Christ's love for the whole church.

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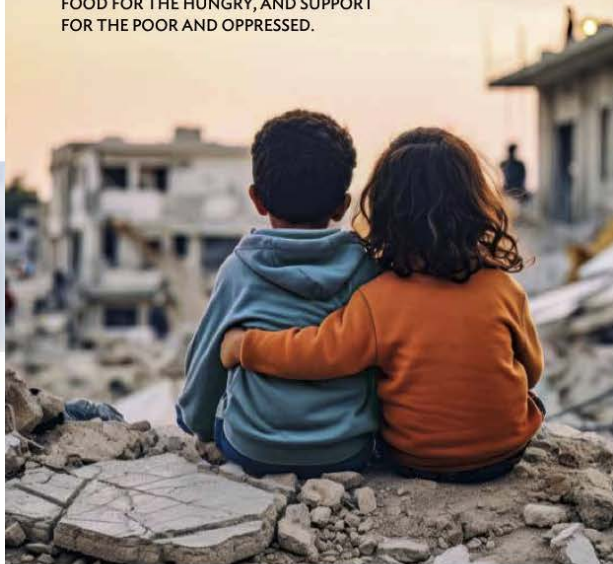
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75 YEARS |  **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

REPAIRING THE BREACH

— ISAIAH 58

PROVIDING RELIEF FROM NATURAL DISASTERS,
FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY, AND SUPPORT
FOR THE POOR AND OPPRESSED.



Repairing the Breach, Fixing What's Broken

In Isaiah 58, God, through the voice of the prophet, calls us to be repairers of the breach — and by repairing the breach, we will, by God's grace, be led into a new season of justice, freedom and peace.

“Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.”

—Isaiah 58



One Great Hour of Sharing supports programs in over 100 countries.

FLETCHER

75 YEARS |  **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

IN THIS SEASON OF LENT,
we follow Jesus' example;
walking alongside the most vulnerable
to partner in repairing the harm inflicted upon them.
WE ARE THE CHURCH, TOGETHER;
and we are there with those who need us.

Each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing helps improve the lives of the suffering and the vulnerable through three life-saving programs ~



HOUSE RESTORATION - VILLAT

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Restore Streets to Live In



KASUPE MINISTRIES

PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM

Share your Bread with the Hungry



CARIDAD GARDENS

SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE

Loose the Bonds of Injustice

Please give generously.

IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!



Astoria Annual

INTERFAITH PRAYER WALK

Good Friday, March 29th, at 3:30 pm

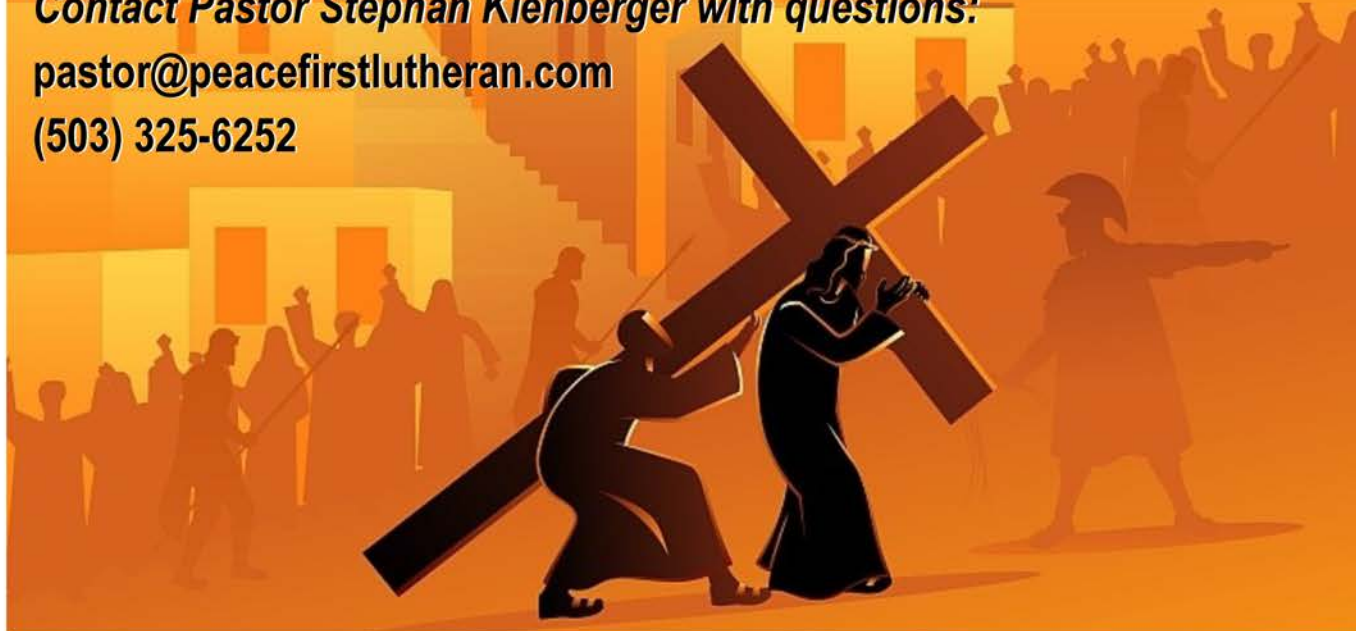
This year the Churches of Astoria will again be hosting an interfaith Prayer Walk through downtown Astoria.

Join us in praying for our city during this prelude to the Easter Season. We'll meet at the parking lot at 12th & Duane across from the former Peace Lutheran Church (now Peace First). We'll plan to walk and pray through the downtown area for approximately an hour and a half.

Contact Pastor Stephan Kienberger with questions:

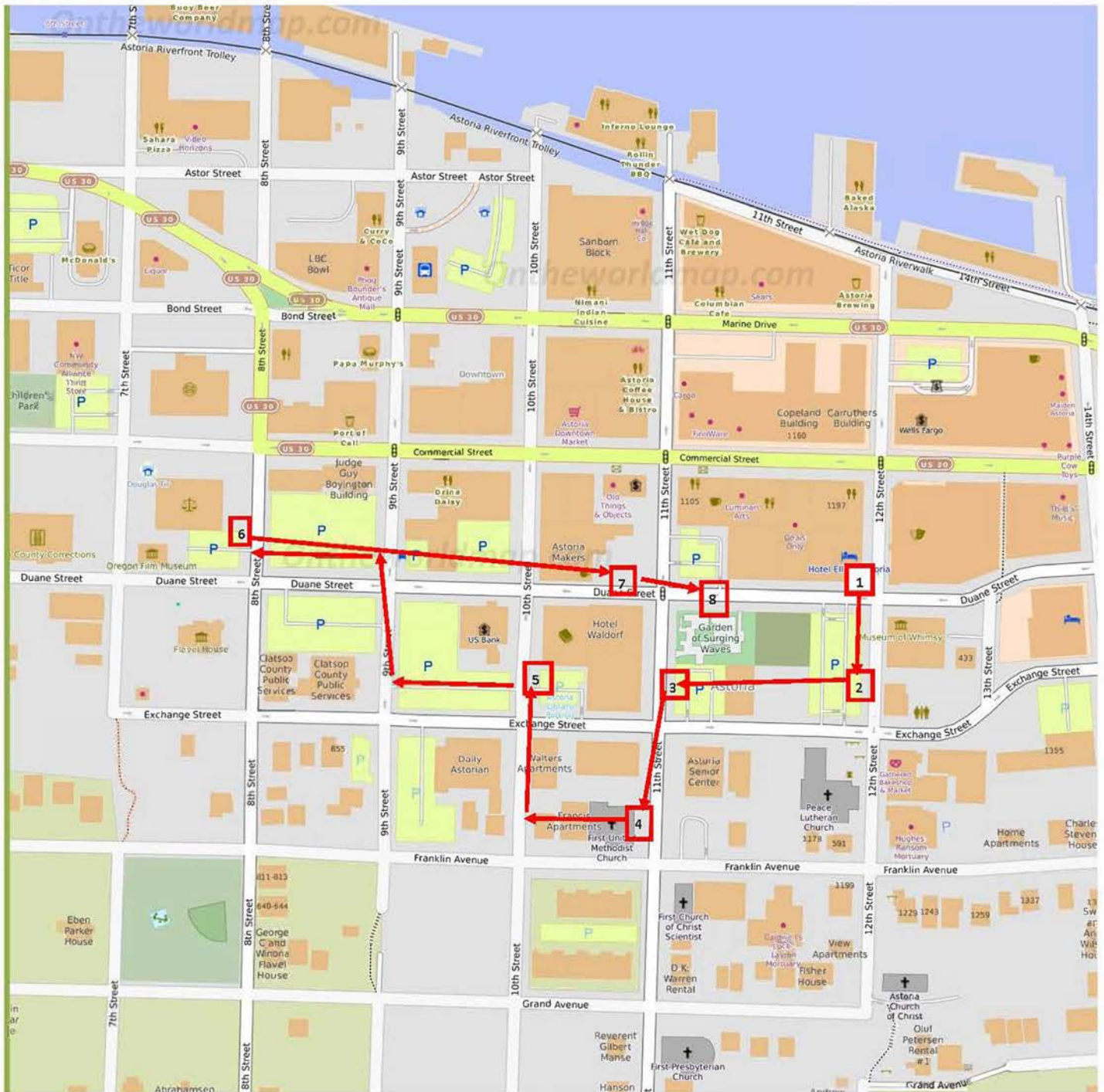
pastor@peacefirstlutheran.com

(503) 325-6252



Good Friday Processional: Prayers for the Community

Friday, March 29 @ 3:30 P.M.



We meet at 12th and Duane to begin the processional and will end at 11th and Duane at the Garden of the Surging Waves.



*Daylight Savings Time Begins
Sunday, March 11!*

**DON'T FORGET TO
SPRING FORWARD**

REMEMBER TO SET YOUR
CLOCKS **AHEAD** 1 HOUR
SATURDAY NIGHT

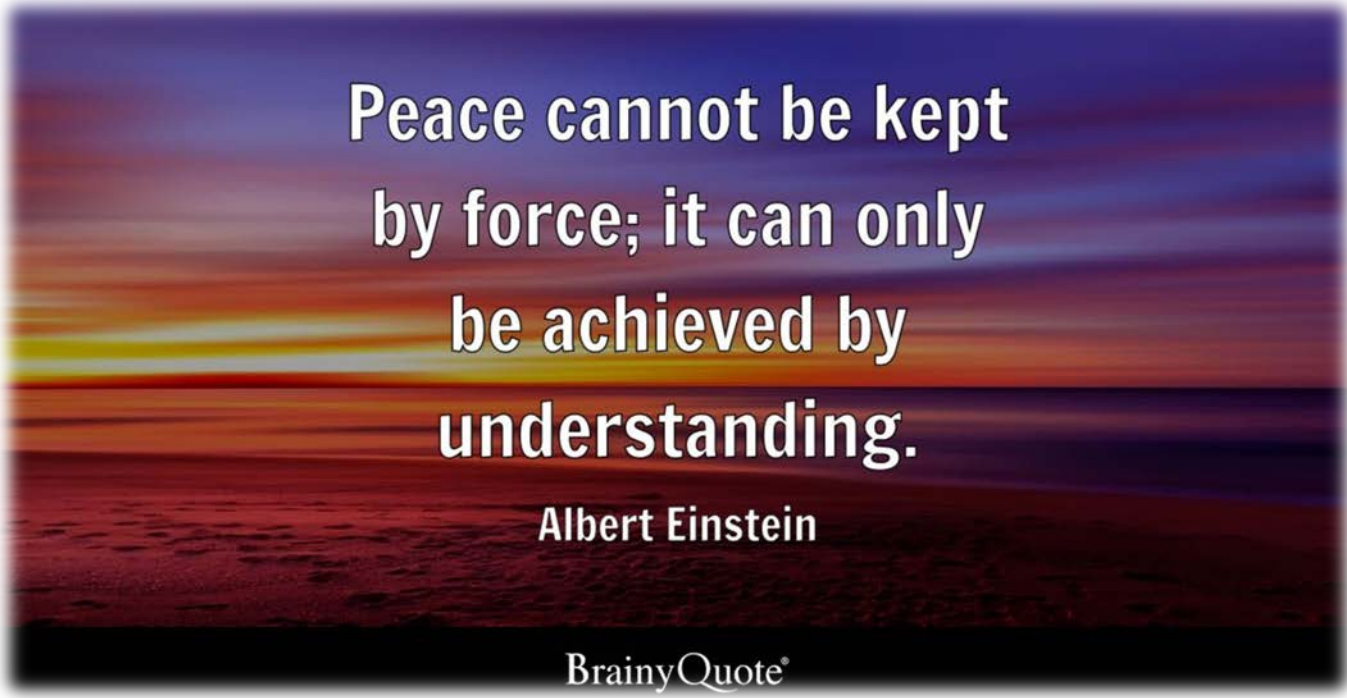


**Join us March 17 at 10AM,
For Our Combined Worship
& Potluck with Our
Sister Church,
Pioneer Presbyterian
Church in Warrenton**

*First Presbyterian Astoria &
Pioneer Presbyterian Church*
33324 Patriot Way, Warrenton, OR



Scan with your phone for
directions.



Peace cannot be kept
by force; it can only
be achieved by
understanding.

Albert Einstein

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 always available 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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Thanks to Dad Hengeveld

03-10-2006

TELL ME, ADAM ... HOW IN THE WORLD IS IT THAT I'M NUMBER FIVE ON YOUR SPEED DIAL?



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