

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ASTORIA

Our Mission Statement:

*"To help people within a kind, safe and
compassionate community to know Christ and*

Week of June 17, 2024



Kirkin' O' the Tartan – Sunday June 30 at 10am

Our fifth Sunday celebrations with our sister church family, Pioneer Presbyterian Church, are always a wonderful time for worship & fellowship, and this month's will be no exception. We are planning a Kirkin' O' the Tartan with a potluck following the service in Goodenberger Hall. If you're wondering what that is, I've rerun an article from our last newsletter below that gives a good history & description.

A part of the service will be a procession of the tartans. If you have a family tartan, you are welcome to process with your family tartan, as a banner and/or wearing it. If you would like to purchase a flag or banner for your tartan, there are many places online that can help. I ordered my family's tartan flag from ScotsTee at: <https://scotstee.com/pages/scottish-clans#D>

Please contact the church office if you'd like to participate in the procession. There are also tartans for each branch of the military that will need carried in. If you'd like to carry one of these banners, please let us know which one. We'll have more details coming soon for a practice procession.

Announcements

- † **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 June 19th.
- † **Vacation Bible School (VBS)** – If you know any young ones, grades K -5, don't forget to sign them up for this year's community VBS. See below for more information.
- † **Juneteenth Remembrance Service** – June 19 at 7PM at Peace First's downtown campus, 565 12th Street. This is a community focused time of worship, remembering and repentance. All faiths are welcomed and encouraged to attend, as we remember and honor the sacrifices of the Emanuel Nine.
- † **Free Library** – We now have a Free Little Library at the church. Nancy Cole is looking for books to stock it. Please help make this community outreach a success. See below for more information.
- † **The Food Bank** – Is in need of reusable bags, cat food, dog food, 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** – HELP! We need greeters, ushers, liturgists, & Sunday School teachers to help with our Sunday worship. See the sign-up sheet in the back of the Sanctuary or during fellowship or call the church office for more info.

FRIDAY COFFEE (& TEA) FELLOWSHIP

COME JOIN US

Join us every month on the second Friday for coffee, tea, treats, and fellowship. Our next gathering is July 12th in the church parlor at 10am. Come join the fun!



NOTES FROM BEYOND THE PEWS

Thoughts from Pastor Paul

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Hope and pray this note finds you well and feeling blessed.

There are a few Bible verses that cause me to shutter and put a knot in my stomach. At least for a short time. There is one verse though that haunts me more than any other. It's Luke 9:62, where Jesus is quoted, "No one who puts a hand on the plow and looks back is fit for God's kingdom." Jesus was responding to someone saying to him, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say good-bye to those in my house." Although the interpretation found in the Message seems to say it best, where we read, "No procrastination. No backward looks. You can't put God's kingdom off till tomorrow. Seize the day." I can't help but to think that Jesus is telling us not just to "Just do it!" when we commit our lives to him, he is also telling us that we should not look over our shoulders at our past lives while we are journeying forward on the path that God has laid out before us. Now I have never plowed a field, but it is my understanding that when you are plowing, you look forward, picking a point on the opposite end of the field to focus on while you plow forward. This is done so the plow lines will be straight and won't overlap. If you take your focus off of that point, that destination, and look over your shoulder, no matter the reason, it is almost a guarantee that your plow line will become less of a line and more of a scribble.

It may be different for you, but what I hear Jesus telling me in this verse is that I am not to have any regrets. But, regardless of how much praying I do, I often find myself thinking about something that I said, didn't say, do or didn't do in my past that I wish I could change. These memories haunt me as much as Jesus' telling me that I must not have regrets. After all if something is bugging me about something I was responsible for in my past, what must others think about me? ARGH! And we are not alone in our regrets. Scripture is full of examples of people who look back at events in their lives that they wish they could do different. Think about how Peter felt for his three denials of Jesus on the night of Jesus' arrest. And Paul called himself the "chief of sinners".

But then something happened a few months back that really made me question the power that we give regrets when we allow them to haunt our memories. I received a note from a childhood friend on Facebook. He was apologizing for things that he did and said to me when we were children and asked for my forgiveness. I really had no memory of what he was describing but could tell by his comments that he was really being haunted by those events from our distant past. I assured him that I didn't hold him any ill nor did I hold any grudge against him. I assured him that he need not feel any guilt, for he was forgiven and that he was truly beloved and blessed as well as a blessing to others. This made me wonder about those regrets that I find myself looking back at. Is it me that is making a big deal out of them? Is it me that is keeping those regrets alive and "well" allowing them to haunt me? As the Apostle Paul reminded us in Philippians 3:13-15, "[Siblings], I myself don't think I've reached it, but I do this one thing: I forget about the things behind me and reach out for the things ahead of me. The goal I pursue is the prize of God's upward call in Christ Jesus. So all of us who are spiritually mature should think this way, and if anyone thinks differently, God will reveal it to [them]." (CEB) We need to remember that, as George Santayana once wrote, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."¹ Yes, we must learn from our mistakes, but we must not let them keep us from moving forward on God's path. Christ died so that, although we stumble at times, we need not stay down when we do, but that we can, with God's help, get back up and continue on our path that God has laid out before us. As we read in Ephesians 1:7, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace..."(NIV) Siblings in Christ, don't live in your past; instead, live in God's future!

Please be safe and take care of yourselves and be kind to those around you, and 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 and shalom,
Pastor Paul*

¹ https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/those-who-cannot-remember-past-are-condemned-repeat-it-george-santayana-life-reason-1905#:~:text=Those%20who%20cannot%20remember%20the_Great%20Ideas%20of%20Western%20Man

Free Library

We now have a Free Little Library at the church! It is located outside the entrance leading to the office/conservatory. Nancy Cole is looking for books to stock it. If you have adult or children's books that you would be willing to donate, please bring them to the church. Hopefully it will be up and running by the end of the week.

Once we have books in the Free Little Library, please find one that you might like to read - take it and then replace it with another book or read it and bring it back.

Please help make this community outreach a success.



Astoria Citywide Vacation Bible School (VBS) 2024 "Camp Firelight"

June 24-28, 2024, 9:00 am to 12:30 pm at Peace First Lutheran downtown campus, corner of 12th & Exchange. Children in Kindergarten through 5th grade.

At Camp Firelight VBS, your students will enjoy an interactive, energizing, Bible-based good time on their summer camp adventure with God. They will become Campers and discover how to put their trust in God in every situation.

To register go to: <https://form.jotform.com/212875056503152> or scan the QR with your smartphone



Prayer Time

If you feel a call in your heart to share in conversation with our loving God in a time of prayer, please join us each Tuesday and Thursday at 9:30am in the Christian Resource Room for a time of meditation and prayer.

We will use this time to share with each other and our loving God, and then listen for God's still speaking voice to respond to our hearts and minds.



BYOCC – Bring Your Own Coffee Cup

To help with reducing waste from fellowship time, please bring a reusable coffee cup for your beverages during fellowship.

We'll even make sure it is washed and ready for the next week's fellowship time.

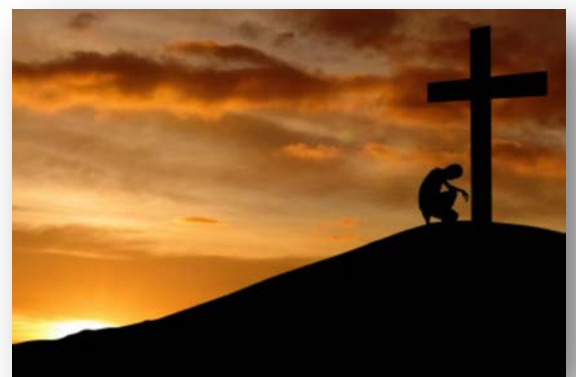
FPC Astoria Calendar

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|-------|-----------|--|
| 17-23 | Mon-Sun | Pastor Paul is out of the office. Call the office for pastoral care. |
| 19 | Wednesday | Bowling, Pizza & Fellowship at the Lower Columbia Bowl at 5pm |
| 24-28 | Mon-Fri | Astoria Citywide VBS - Camp Firelight 9am – 12:30pm |
| 25 | Tuesday | Session Meeting at 1:30pm in the Christian Resource Room |
| 27 | Thursday | Food Bank Board Meeting at 1:30pm |
| 30 | Sunday | Kirkin' O' the Tartan at FPC Astoria – 10am |
| | | Potluck & Fellowship to follow worship in Goodenberger Hall |

Prayers of the People –

Please send prayer requests to the church office

- Crystal Oliver – Healing, Strength & Peace
- Family & Friends of Bob Girard in their time of mourning
- Rebecca Springle – Her mother's cancer & father's bodily challenges
- Jennifer & Timothy Kramer – Healing & discernment
- Family & Friends of Roberta Ryding in their time of mourning
- George Willsie - Healing
- JoAnn Feary – For complete healing
- Fred & Norma Novak – Healing, peace and discernment
- Jackie Templeton – Remembering her husband of 60 years, Mike, who died a year ago.
- Bob Blue – Mourning the loss of his wife, Barbara.
- Glen Ahrens – healing of his knee so that he retains full use of it.
- Juanita & Marcella Price – Healing & Peace
- Michael Smith – Healing & Discernment
- Linda from Chicago – Healing & Discernment
- Joanna from Seaside – Healing & Discernment
- Kari Stedman – Healing & Discernment
- Patti Brockhoff – Healing & Discernment
- Will Sheridan – Healing & Discernment
- Alice Burgess – 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.



A BIG THANK YOU to all who came out to support our LGBTQIA+ siblings at the Astoria Pride Parade on Saturday, June 8! It was a great time for all!



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, July 1, City Council Meeting at 6PM.
 - Tuesday, June 18, Historic Landmarks Commission at 5:30PM.
 - Tuesday, June 25, Planning Commission at 5:30PM.
 - Wednesday, July 24, Parks Board at 6:45PM
 - Clatsop County
 - Wednesday, June 26, Board of Commissioners Agenda Work Session & Regular Meeting at 5PM.
 - Clatsop Community College
 - Thursday, July 11, Board of Education Meeting at 5:30PM.
 - Astoria School District - Wednesday, July 10,
 - Budget Hearing at 5:45PM.
 - School Board Meeting at 7PM.
 - Port of Astoria
 - Tuesday, July 2, Commission Business Meeting at 4PM.

Working for Justice and Peace in June

| | |
|---|---|
| June | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) Pride Month; https://archives.gov/news/topics/lgbt-pride-month |
| 16 | Father's Day; Presbyterian Men Sunday; https://presbyterianmission.org/ministries/men |
| 19 | Juneteenth; https://presbyphl.org/what-is-juneteenth-resources-for-formation-education-and-gospel-witness |
| 20 | World Refugee Day; https://un.org/en/observances/refugee-day |
| 21 | National Indigenous Peoples' Day; https://presbyterianmission.org/story/celebrating-indigenous-peoples-day |
| 30 | Immigration Sunday; https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/immigration |
| From the Presbyterian Women in the PCUSA https://www.presbyterianwomen.org https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2024-JP-Calendar-FA-rvsvd-2.pdf | |

Find Out More About What's Happening in our Denomination

Find out more about what is going on in our denomination, the PCUSA, by visiting and subscribing to the PC(USA) News at <https://www.pcusa.org/news/>

Current stories include:

- ☪ [Go forth and be the church as you have received the church](#)
- ☪ [1 John has wisdom for preaching in polarized communities of faith](#)
- ☪ [Presbyterian pastor calls for end to gun violence, promotes Guns to Gardens event](#)

First GA town hall is a how-to for Creation care at the local level

Environment June 7, 2024

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/first-ga-town-hall-is-a-how-to-for-creation-care-at-the-local-level/>

Presbyterians offer up solutions as they look forward to the 226th General Assembly

by Mike Ferguson | Presbyterian News Service

LOUISVILLE — During the first town hall offered Thursday by the [Office of the General Assembly](#) ahead of the [226th General Assembly](#), more than 30 Presbyterians gathered online to, as host Jessica Maudlin said, “engage with each other about your experiences with Creation care and climate change in your context.”

Once she’d welcomed everyone, Maudlin, Associate for Sustainable Living and Earth Care Concerns in the [Presbyterian Hunger Program](#), immediately gave the floor to those who’d dialed in. Participants had accounts of their faith community’s efforts to care for Creation; comments about GA overtures, including [Env-02](#) and [ENV-03](#); and questions on how to pay for the installation of solar panels and other Creation care options at their churches.

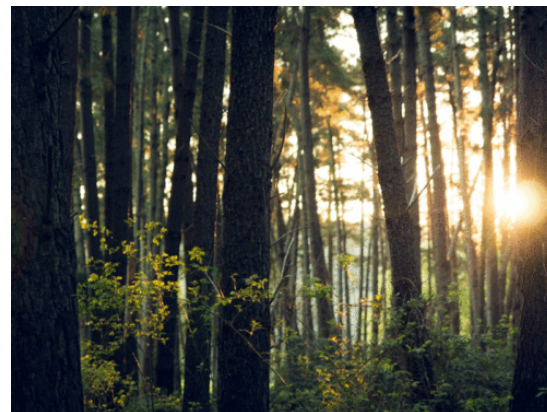


Photo by Dan Stark via Unsplash

Martha Campbell, a member of [Montreat Presbyterian Church](#), an [Earth Care Congregation](#) in North Carolina, encouraged churches to consider becoming cooling or warming shelters in their communities. Campbell said a church member who volunteers at an area Habitat ReStore purchases fans during the summer and space heaters in winter months. Church members refurbish them and then distribute them to an agency that serves the wider community.

Barbara Morrison sees many hopeful signs in her community, Traverse City, Michigan. Her church secured a grant to put in native plants and recently started a high-density [pocket forest](#). “A lot of us are fostering trees this summer,” Morrison said, “helping the roots to grow.”

The congregation also plans an upgrade to its HVAC system and is exploring installing solar panels on the roof. “It’s nice to know we can tap into programs the national government has to facilitate what the church is doing,” Morrison said.

In addition to the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program’s [Restoring Creation Loan](#), Maudlin told participants that many presbyteries have “projects and programs to help churches be more energy efficient.”



Jessica Maudlin

Dr. Mark Eakin of [Presbyterians for Earth Care](#) noted that grants and rebates from the federal government designed to help churches boost their energy efficiency are usually “administered by your state.” He suggested checking with [Interfaith Power & Light](#) or the state’s environmental office, because “they’re well-informed on this.”

Jennifer Houston said her church in Washington state recently applied for a feasibility study on installing solar panels and battery storage, but didn’t make the cut. “For a minute I was discouraged,” Houston said. “They said, ‘Apply again. More money is becoming available.’ With help, I was able to fill out the grant forms. It wasn’t as overwhelming as I thought it would be.”

At her church, the youth group put in native plants a decade ago. It’s since been designated as a backyard wildlife habitat. A ninth grader recently used Creation Justice Ministries’ [Plastic Jesus](#) materials to craft a sermon. “It was moving,” Houston said. “People were coming up and saying, ‘What can we do?’”

Steve Bruening, who’s a member of a congregation in Cincinnati, said the church is exploring financing a large solar array and is wondering how to message the idea among the church’s 600 members.

Eakin said for his church, [Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church](#) in Kensington, Maryland, “it was a seven-year process” involving a community partner and a solar development company which agreed to lease the church’s roof. When the session learned the installation would save the church 27% on its electric bill and that members of the community would also be provided reduced-cost energy, “it was a fairly easy sell,” Eakin said.

The Rev. Fred Milligan, another member of Presbyterians for Earth Care, just completed an interim ministry at a church in New Jersey. The church had a plan developed several years ago for making energy-saving investments. “We dusted it off and got in touch with a solar contractor,” Milligan said. “Some of the key ingredients of the plan had shifted and they found they could afford installation of solar to provide all their electrical needs” thanks to programs funded by the [Inflation Reduction Act](#) and by the state.

“At the end of 10 years, they will have recouped all their financial outlay,” Milligan said, adding, “each state is different.” He recommended looking into “what your state provides.”

Campbell said churches can care for the Earth in small ways. Her church gives new members a cloth bag emblazoned with the church’s logo, which many use in place of plastic bags at the grocery store. The church has no building and worships on the grounds of [Montreat Conference Center](#). When it holds a fellowship dinner, people bring their own plates and flatware, then wash them at home.

Kevin Schoener, a ruling elder in the [Presbytery of Western New York](#), talked about his congregation's involvement with the [Waterkeeper](#) organization, which works to promote clean, healthy and abundant water. "We have found folks tend to be more easily educated when they're doing something," Schoener said. "If there's an event you can spearhead or participate in publicly, it's a great opportunity to help out and educate folks."

General Assembly town halls are announced [here](#).

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.

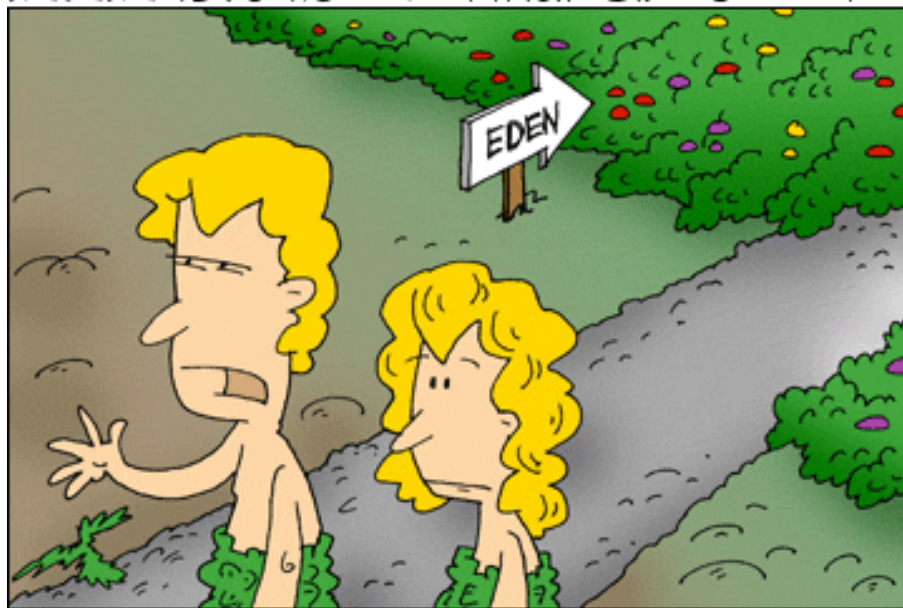
Email: pastorpaul@fpcastoria.org **Phone:** 971.606.5606

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 (See Genesis 3)

01-03-2005

OUR RESOLUTION LAST YEAR COULD HAVE BEEN "LESS FRUIT", BUT NO ... WE WENT WITH "TRUST PEOPLE MORE"



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