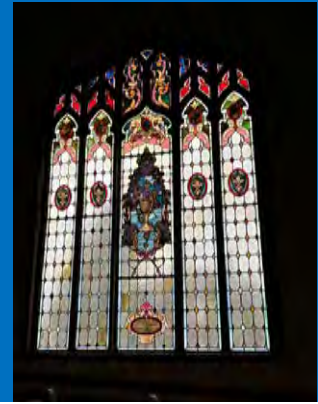


# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ASTORIA

## *Our Mission Statement:*

*"To help people within a kind, safe and compassion*

## *Week of July 1, 2024*



### *God's Mission (F-1.01 from the PCUSA's Book of Order)*

*The good news of the Gospel is that the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit— creates, redeems, sustains, rules, and transforms all things and all people. This one living God, the Scriptures say, liberated the people of Israel from oppression and covenanted to be their God. By the power of the Spirit, this one living God is incarnate in Jesus Christ, who came to live in the world, die for the world, and be raised again to new life. The Gospel of Jesus Christ announces the nearness of God's kingdom, bringing good news to all who are impoverished, sight to all who are blind, freedom to all who are oppressed, and proclaiming the Lord's favor upon all creation.*

*The mission of God in Christ gives shape and substance to the life and work of the Church. In Christ, the Church participates in God's mission for the transformation of creation and humanity by proclaiming to all people the good news of God's love, offering to all people the grace of God at font and table, and calling all people to discipleship in Christ. Human beings have no higher goal in life than to glorify and enjoy God now and forever, living in covenant fellowship with God and participating in God's mission.*

### *Announcements*

- **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.
- **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 July 17<sup>th</sup>.
- **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.
- **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.

### **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 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

Evangelism. It is a word that causes many of us to cringe. We are told that evangelists are supporting candidates and causes that are xenophobic, homophobic, and that exploit and oppress people, placing profits above all of God's creation. Placing their personal wants above the needs of others and using scripture for their own glory and gain instead of the Glory of God. Demonstrating a love of self instead of the selfless love of others. When people complain about the "crisis at the boarder" without asking why people are risking, literally life and limb, to venture thousands of miles with only what they can carry for the slight possibility of hope of a better life than the one they were fleeing in their homeland, they are not evangelizing, they are instead going counter to what God calls us to do. Not only does Leviticus 19:33-34 tell us, "When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land...", Jesus reminds us in one of the two great commandments that we are to selflessly love all others as God calls us to selflessly love ourselves.

In an interview on NPR, Russell Moore, an "Evangelical Christian" leader, talked about why he thought Christianity is in crisis today in America. He said, "Well, it was the result of having multiple pastors tell me essentially the same story about quoting the Sermon on the Mount parenthetically in their preaching - turn the other cheek - to have someone come up after and to say, where did you get those liberal talking points? And what was alarming to me is that in most of these scenarios, when the pastor would say, I'm literally quoting Jesus Christ, the response would not be, I apologize. The response would be, yes, but that doesn't work anymore. That's weak. And when we get to the point where the teachings of Jesus himself are seen as subversive to us, then we're in a crisis."<sup>1</sup>

According to dictionary.com, "evangelism" is defined as "the spreading of the Christian gospel (God's good news) by public preaching or personal witness."<sup>2</sup> That is, to spread the selfless love that is God, and the message of God's redeeming grace, that is meant for, not a few, but for all who would receive it. The self-proclaimed evangelicals, therefore, aren't true evangelicals; rather, they are false or counter-evangelicals for they are preaching a message that goes counter to God's true gospel. These counter-evangelicals worship, not God, but rather themselves and a false sense of nationalism by claiming to put one nation above the rest of God's creation. And this is why it so important that we remain steadfast in our faith and in the true gospel and sharing it in how we live. As has been said, 'Preach the gospel always, and when necessary, use words.' As with everything else in life, we need to pray and then listen for God's still speaking voice to guide us. Remember that we are not to spend our energy fighting anyone; rather we are to spend our energy sharing the gospel with all who would receive it. We serve an awesome God who is greater than anything a counter-evangelist can muster, but as Christians, little Christs, it is up to us, guided by the Holy Trinity, to show and share God's selfless love with all whom we come in contact with. We must do all that we do in and with the agape, selfless love that is God, be it voting for a candidate not supported by counter-evangelicals, or by knocking over some tables in the proverbial temple. It is our challenge to take back the word 'evangelical' to mean what it originally meant. And it is then, as the beautiful hymn says, "They will know we are Christians by our love." A love that is meant not for a few, but for all of God's creation. A love that looks to the needs of God's creation before the personal wants of a few.

So, siblings in Christ, keep up the good fight and keep sharing the gospel, God's good news through deed and word. And no matter how bleak things may seem, do not lose faith nor hope. Remain steadfast and know with all that you are that God and God's agape love is greater than anything any the world of man and any counter-evangelical can say or do.

Please be safe and take care of yourselves. 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*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2023/08/05/1192374014/russell-moore-on-altar-call-for-evangelical-america>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/evangelism>

## 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.

Please find a book 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.



## What a Fun Time at the Astoria Midsummer Scandinavian Festival with Coreen Bergholm as the Grand Marshal

And not only was Coreen this year's Grand Marshal, we got to enjoy the wonderful music of Coreen Bergholm's Nordic Accordion Band.

Coreen, thank you for bringing so much joy to our church family and to our community. You are a true blessing!



## What a Great Time at Camp Firelight

The campers all had a great time at this year's city-wide Vacation Bible School (VBS), Camp Firelight where all learned that "Whenever I'm afraid, I put my trust in you! Psalm 56:3", being able to trust God to give us what we need whenever we need it, regardless of what's going on around us.



## ***Twas a Bonnie Time for All at Our First Kirkin' O' the Tartan***

A big thank you to all who helped make our first (and hopefully not last) Kirkin' O' the Tartan such a wonderful successful worship celebration. It was a bonnie time for all!



## ***FPC Astoria Calendar***

<b>July</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Celebration of Life Service for Juanita Price at 3PM in the Sanctuary with reception to follow in Goodenberger Hall</b>
	<b>8</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Copeland Commons Board Meeting – 6PM in the Christian Resource Room</b>
	<b>12</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Friday Coffee &amp; Tea Fellowship in the Church Parlor</b>
	<b>16</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Session Meeting at 11am in the Christian Resource Room</b>
	<b>17</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Bowling, Pizza &amp; Fellowship at the Lower Columbia Bowl at 5pm</b>
	<b>18</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Deacon's meeting at 11am in the Christian Resource Room</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Combined Worship &amp; potluck with Pioneer at Coffenbury Lake, Shelter C at 10am</b>

## ***Prayers of the People – Please send prayer requests to the church office***

- Family & Friends of Juanita Price in their time of mourning
- 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
- 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.
- 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.

## 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 15, City Council Meeting at 6PM.
  - Tuesday, July 16, Historic Landmarks Commission at 5:30PM.
  - Tuesday, July 23, Planning Commission at 5:30PM.
  - Wednesday, July 24, Parks Board at 6:45PM
- Clatsop County
  - Wednesday, July 10, 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, August 6, Commission Business Meeting at 4PM.

## Working for Justice and Peace in July

4	Independence Day; <a href="https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/independence-day">presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/independence-day</a>
8	J&P Book Discussion Group online, 6:30–8:30 PM (Eastern) on A Place Called Home: A Memoir by David Ambroz. Register at <a href="https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/justice">presbyterianwomen.org/justice</a>
From the <a href="https://www.presbyterianwomen.org">Presbyterian Women in the PCUSA</a>   <a href="https://www.presbyterianwomen.org">https://www.presbyterianwomen.org</a> <a href="https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2024-JP-Calendar-FA-rvsd-2.pdf">https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2024-JP-Calendar-FA-rvsd-2.pdf</a>	

## 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:

- ☪ [Utah's Interfaith Partnerships make impact on community needs](#)
- ☪ [After significant debate, Assembly approves both parts of split 'Olympia Overture'](#)
- ☪ ['Proclaiming the end of greed and tor role of hope'](#)

## Two Churches, One Mission

May/June, 2024 Volume L, No. 3 Presbytery of the Cascades

By Dianna Weston, Northwest Region Reporter



Pastor Jerry O'Neil at Pioneer, Warrenton

Back in 1846, William H. Gray planted what is now the oldest, continuous Presbyterian church west of the Rockies in Warrenton, Oregon. What is also interesting to note, a trail used by the Clatsop people was later used by local farmers to attend weekly services. That trail is now known as US Highway 101.

The church in question is **Clatsop Plains Pioneer, Warrenton**. The Reverend Jerry O'Neil is its pastor. He's been there for a year and a half after having served the Lutheran Church for more than 40 years.

Pioneer averages 25-30 people on Sundays. Like many mainline churches, it is a greying congregation. Last year pastor Jerry became friends with Pastor Paul Davidson First,

Astoria as they experimented with preaching at each other's church. They now consider each other "partners in ministry."

The trial led to a decision to share a joint service in months with five Sundays. Now called "Inter Church," the two congregations switch back and forth between the two sanctuaries. The host church does the worship service. (Join their next Inter Church on June 30!)



First, Astoria

Pioneer invited First, Astoria folks to join them at their annual picnic and service in the Fort Stevens State Park. On St. Patrick's Day First, Astoria returned the favor. The joint service celebrated the saint, but also featured pastor Paul in a kilt and performing his "puppet ministry" with his sidekick, "Professor Hiccup." Pastor Jerry played his ukulele.

Pastor Paul brings some experience with cooperative congregations from his first call in Kansas, when he served three churches at once. Each of the churches had active sessions that formed a parish council to coordinate and share resources, such as a parish choir, new member class, and the like. The council shared a van, which they used to take new members on a tour of all three churches.

He sees a potential for First, Astoria and Pioneer to share a fellowship and outreach committee and perhaps a parish choir.

"I think partnership sounds too much like a business term. I think we're more like siblings in spirit," he says. Pastor Paul and his worship committee want to host a "Kirkin O' the Tartan combined service. The two congregations also have plans for a joint Earth Day celebration and project next year.

At the moment they have no merger ideas but do want to expand joint activities. The two spiritual leaders want to keep trying to do more and more together and are mindful of keeping each other apprised of special events such as bowling/pizza nights.

First, Astoria will host a Ladies' Tea, the Saturday before Mother's Day and Pioneer ladies are invited.

Pastor Paul summarizes, "We need a gentle nudge to wake our congregations up to the fact we're all the same family. Just as Jesus chose his original disciples, so has he chosen us. We can't just sit in separate buildings. Churches are not buildings. Churches are people."

"God brings people together to supplement each other's strengths and weaknesses, like gears and cogs."

<https://cascadespresbytery.org/omnibus-2/>

**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](mailto:pastorpaul@fpcastoria.org) **Phone:** 971.606.5606

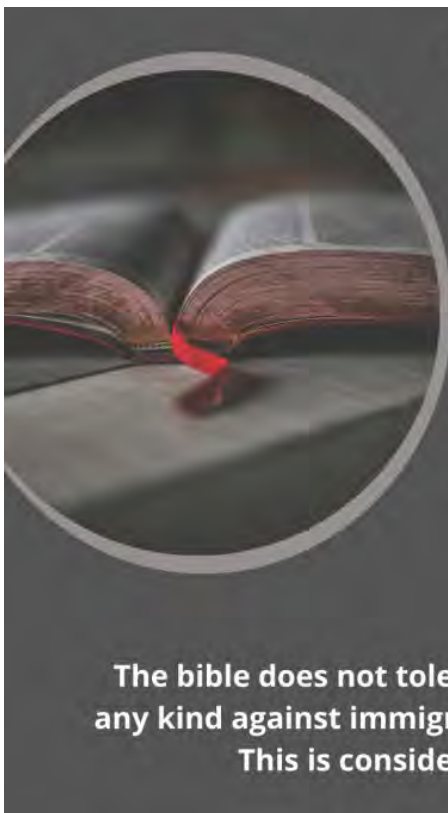
**Prayer Requests & Newsletter Articles & Information –**

The newsletter is published the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month.



THE CHURCH WAS NOT PREPARED FOR THE SURPRISE TOLERANCE DRILL



**Cursed is anyone  
who withholds  
justice from the  
foreigner, the  
fatherless or the  
widow.” Then all  
the people shall  
say, “Amen!”**  
Deuteronomy 27:19

**The bible does not tolerate inequality of  
any kind against immigrants or minorities.  
This is considered a sin.**



## 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](http://www.fpcastoria.org) | email: [office@fpcastoria.org](mailto:office@fpcastoria.org) | phone: 503.325.1702



An Open & Affirming  
Church Family



Scan for  
directions