

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 August 12, 2024



The Safe is...Safe

If you've ever been in the area behind the chancel, you may have noticed a very large safe. Although the exact age of the safe is not known, it is believed to predate the 1890s. It's most likely too that the safe arrived in Astoria via rail rather than by ship. For a long time, the safe remained locked, hiding mysteries from the past. Well, she may not be a safe cracker, but Diane Hankins did know the combination to the safe and just what to say to the safe to get it to open up to reveal those mysteries from the past. And not only did Diane manage to get the safe open, she spent many a day at the safe, going through each treasure and revealing a great deal,

not only about our church family's past, but about our community. Among the items Diane discovered were Session meeting minutes dating from 1877 – 1893, Congregational meeting minutes from 1898 – 1912, the church register from 1879 – 1956, several copies of deeds, photos for the first 100 years of the church, Treasurers' reports from 1884 – 1902, copies of Will and Last Testaments for Truman F. Powers from 1883 and Captain George Flavel as well as various copies of deeds and many other legal documents from our church family and communities' past.

Diane is restoring the binding of what she can restore and has since had the safe's tumblers cleaned, the safe cleaned and is preparing to send the church related documents to the Presbyterian Historical Society, the National Archives of the PCUSA, in Philadelphia PA where they will be preserved for future generations.

A big thank you to Diane for all her work on helping to reveal and preserve our church family's history!

To find out more about the Presbyterian Historical Society, you can find them on the internet at:

<https://www.history.pcusa.org/>

Announcements

- **The Food Bank** – Is in need of reusable bags, cat food, dog food, breakfast cereal, canned soup 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, pizza, and fellowship at 5 PM on at the Lower Columbia Bowl in Astoria. And don't forget to invite a friend! Our next bowling & pizza night is Wednesday, August 28th at 5pm.
- **Coffee, Tea & Friday Fellowship** – Join us every month on the second Friday for coffee, tea, treats, and fellowship. Our next gathering is September 13th 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.

Hope and pray you were able to join us on August 4 at Coffenbury Lake for our annual picnic and worship with Pioneer Plains Presbyterian Church. Thanks to Joan Scoggins for her leadership in getting the singers together and Phil Keim for his voice and guitar, and for Max, Jenny and Hazel lending their voices to lead music too. A big thank you too to Pastor Jerry for sharing God's message in his sermon. And don't even get me started on all the wonderful food and fellowship! It is always a blessing to come together with our church family and those from other church families to experience God and fellowship and to help remind us that our church family isn't confined to the building where we worship, but expands, beyond our community and across God's creation.

That's something that is easy to forget too; the fact that we are a part of something much bigger than ourselves, our families, our church families, our communities and beyond. We are a part of God's creation. And we are not only called to work & fellowship with each other, when we do, we often find that when we do, things go a little smoother.

As we are reminded in 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 25-26:

You can easily enough see how this kind of thing works by looking no further than your own body. Your body has many parts—limbs, organs, cells—but no matter how many parts you can name, you're still one body. It's exactly the same with Christ. By means of his one Spirit, we all said good-bye to our partial and piecemeal lives. We each used to independently call our own shots, but then we entered into a large and integrated life in which *he* has the final say in everything. (This is what we proclaimed in word and action when we were baptized.) Each of us is now a part of his resurrection body, refreshed and sustained at one fountain—his Spirit—where we all come to drink. The old labels we once used to identify ourselves—labels like Jew or Greek, slave or free—are no longer useful. We need something larger, more comprehensive.

The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance. (MSG)

As I was reading this passage, I realized that this is speaking not only about the body that we know as the church, but it is also speaking at all levels. For as we are all made up of cells that work together to create the parts of our bodies that, hopefully and God willing, work together, so too are our church families and communities made up of several different people and parts, representing the wide variety of gifts that God has given all. And when we remember whose we are and to celebrate our differences instead of using them as a reason for division (*which is often easier said than done*), and work together for the betterment of God's creation, we often find that the load is a little lighter and just maybe a few more lives are made better as a result of coming together. As we read in Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, "Two are better than one because they have a good return for their hard work. If either should fall, one can pick up the other. But how miserable are those who fall and don't have a companion to help them up!" (CEB) Yes, we must continue to work together as a church family, but we need to continue to, with the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Trinity, reach out to the greater church family throughout God's creation so that we can better share the gifts of God with all of God's creation.

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. 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*

FPC Astoria Calendar

2 nd & 4 th Sundays		New Members/Inquirers Class in Pastor Paul's office following worship	
Every Tuesday & Thursday		Prayer Time at 9:30am in the Christian Resource Room	
August	13	Tuesday	Building Liaison Meeting – 11am in the Christian Resource Room
			Session Meeting – 2pm in the Christian Resource Room
	18	Sunday	Book Study – The Bible's Yes to Same Sex Marriage – beginning at 11:45am in the Christian Resource Room
	25	Sunday	Fellowship & Worship at Astor Place at 2pm & Clatsop Retirement Village at 3pm
	28	Wednesday	Bowling, Pizza & Fellowship at the Lower Columbia Bowl at 5pm

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

- Deborah Towner – healing, peace and discernment
- 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.

New Members/Inquirers' Classes

Wondering what it means to be a Presbyterian? Wondering what church membership is all about? Wondering why church membership is important? Well, come join us for a New Members' class and we'll do our best to answer all your questions. Whether you're interested in joining, just wanting to find out more information, or maybe you're a current member that just wants a refresher course, all are welcome to attend. Join Pastor Paul in his office after worship on the 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month. The next class will be on Sunday, August 25.



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.

Unless the Holy Spirit says otherwise, we will continue this every following Tuesday and Thursday at 9:30am in the Christian Resource Room unless otherwise noted.

We hope to see you there.

Book Study Beginning Sunday, August 18 – The Bible's Yes to Same-Sex Marriage by Mark Achtemeier

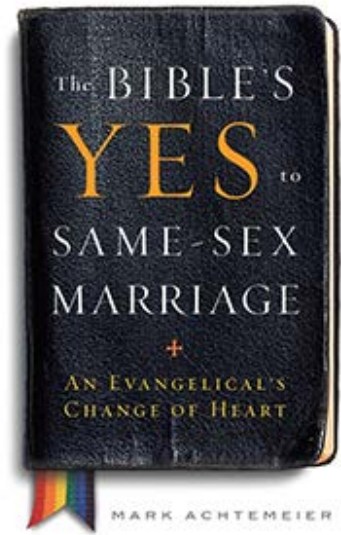
In the early 2000's, Mark Achtemeier embarked on a personal journey with the Bible that led him from being a conservative, evangelical opponent of gay rights to an outspoken activist for gay marriage and a fully inclusive church. In *The Bible's Yes to Same-Sex Marriage*, Achtemeier shares what led to his change of heart: the problems with excluding groups of people and the insights into the Bible's message that led him to recognize the fullness of God's love and support for LGBT persons. Readers will discover how reading snippets of Scripture out of context has led to false and misleading interpretations of the Bible's message for gay people. Achtemeier shows how a careful reading of the whole Scripture reveals God's good news about love, marriage, and sexuality for gay and straight people alike.

Meeting Sundays following worship in the Christian Resource Room beginning August 18. So, come, fellowship & learn!

Copies of the book are available for Nook and Kindle or in print at:

- <https://www.barnesandnoble.com>
- <https://www.amazon.com>

If you would like a copy of the book, please contact the church office.



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, August 19, City Council Meeting at 6PM.
 - Tuesday, August 20, Historic Landmarks Commission at 5:30PM.
 - Tuesday, August 27, Planning Commission at 5:30PM.
 - Astoria School District
 - Wednesday, September 11, Regular Board Meeting at 7PM.
 - Clatsop County
 - Wednesday, August 28, Board of Commissioners Agenda Work Session & Regular Meeting at 5PM.
 - Clatsop Community College
 - Thursday, August 20, Board of Education Meeting at 5:30PM.
 - Astoria School District - Wednesday, September 11, at 7PM.
 - Port of Astoria
 - Tuesday, September 3, Commission Business Meeting at 4PM.

Working for Justice and Peace in August

6	Hiroshima Day; pda.pcusa.org/pda/resource/hiroshima-day-prayer
8-11	2024 Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women; http://presbyterianwomen.org/gathering
9	International Day of the World's Indigenous People; un.org/en/observances/indigenous-day
11	Day of Prayer for the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula; pcusa.org/resource/sunday-prayer-worship-for-peaceful-reunifica-78123
18	Public Education Sunday; presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/child
19	World Humanitarian Day; worldhumanitarianaday.org/ or en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Humanitarian_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	

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:

- ✚ [Regarding Ruling Elders](#)
- ✚ [If I showed up at your church, somebody other than Jesus would be happy to see me](#)
- ✚ [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance expands recovery support in Haiti](#)

September is a new season for small churches

Christian Formation August 15, 2024

Congregations with fewer than 100 members reimagine Christian Formation Week

by Beth Waltemath | Presbyterian News Service



Sandy Safford (Contributed photo)

September is a month where “we begin new things, restart or reconnect in our small churches,” said Sandy Safford, a Christian educator and commissioned lay pastor who recently served a small church for 10 years.

At the invitation of the PC(USA)’s [Office of Christian Formation](#), Safford facilitates a [community circle for leaders of small churches](#). Educators, volunteers, pastors and commissioned pastors serving congregations with fewer than 100 members meet regularly to discuss the particular triumphs and trials of small church ministry. The community circles are held as open office hours, so anyone who registers can attend, whether or not they’ve attended in the past. The next meetups are in October and November. Register for [Small Church Community Circles](#) to receive a link.

At the August meetup, the launch of the Christian Formation year — known as [Christian Formation Week](#) — was on the minds of many. “While it may not be an official kickoff, or what larger churches might call a ‘Rally Sunday,’ I think for most churches, even small ones, it is a beginning of a new season,” said Safford, who called it a time to “put something new forward.”

A leader in a church with membership under 30 shared how her church approaches a new season through a gradual celebration of the theme. With only a few school-age children, the church doesn't hold Sunday school but offers a coloring table during worship, and the worship leader engages those who sit at the table in a special dialogue on the Scripture during the service once a month. In September, her church will use the resources for a [Season of Peace](#). As the peace-themed coloring sheets are completed, they will hang them around the sanctuary like banners until the church is clothed in peace-inspired art culminating on Oct. 6, [World Communion Sunday](#).

Some churches with children who are outgrowing earlier ways of engagement are using [resources for youth-led services](#) to celebrate the new school year or inviting tweens to serve in specific roles like greeter and usher. Laura Peiper, who serves as a small church coordinator for [Flint River Presbytery](#), said, "I have 13 churches with membership from five to 44 in worship. Only one of those congregations has a children's program." She tailors Christian Formation ideas for all ages to these contexts. Recognizing that vitality is contextual for small churches, this model of ministry with a part-time resource consultant has been embraced by other presbyteries as well.

"So often in a small church you feel like resources for Rally Day don't fit because you feel you aren't kicking off something," said Safford. In her work as a consultant and coach in [Denver Presbytery](#), Safford encourages leaders to adapt resources to scale and to take their time with launches. Another leader in a church with fewer than 75 members shared that in her church, they don't try to bless the backpacks, commission the new teachers and throw a launch party all on the same Sunday. Instead, they space each of these special celebrations out over August and September.

Safford said that small churches tend to be "community-oriented" when it comes to the back-to-school season. "If you don't have children or youth, then they think we could offer a picnic in the park on a Sunday afternoon," said Safford, who also said she has seen smaller congregations in the same area partner together to put together such an event. The result is an approach to the celebration of Christian Formation that goes out into the streets, parks and neighborhood rather than limits itself to a weekly classroom and program year model. These types of ideas are good for churches of any size, especially when planning for [Evangelism Sunday](#) on Sept. 15.

"Small church ministry can look so different than what we hear about," said Safford, who also pointed out that many of the curricula and resources assume medium- to large-size contexts. Safford celebrates that in the past five years, there has been an increase in conversations and spaces to share.

Miatta Wilson, associate in the Office of Christian Formation, agrees and has seen the added value of the office's small church community circles, which have had over 100 registrants. "They're



making connections with other people who can be supportive to them in smaller contexts," said Wilson, who also shared the good news that [the 226th General Assembly approved a resolution](#) to research and develop curriculum and more resources for use in the small church context. The Office of Christian Formation has already compiled existing [small church resources](#) and looks forward to adding more.

Wilson has been thrilled by the response of small church leaders to these community circles and shared upcoming events like the [Evangelism Conference](#) on Oct. 3-5 or current resources that cover topics such as [children's ministry beyond the church walls](#), [guides for sharing stories with children](#) and helping [congregations rent their facilities](#).

Leaders of small churches can face challenges connecting to resources and each other because they are part-time, volunteer or a commissioned ruling elder also leading worship every week. "How do we make sure that folks who are in smaller contexts even know that there are things that exist that could be helpful or adapted to their use?" Small church community circles are one way to get the word out. As the circle of attendees widens and the resources for small churches are shared by attendees to their own connections, the circle of resourced small churches gets wider and wider.

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.

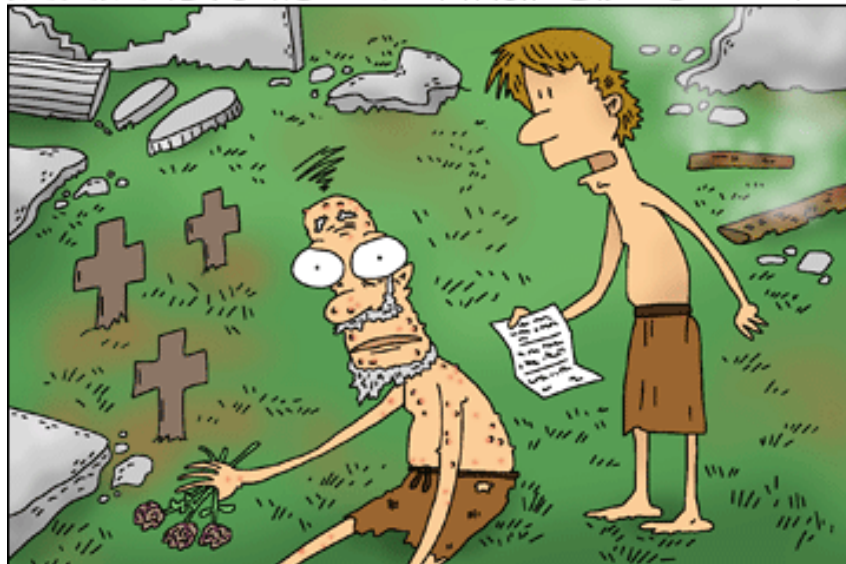
Email: pastorpaul@fpcastoria.org **Phone:** 971.606.5606

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.

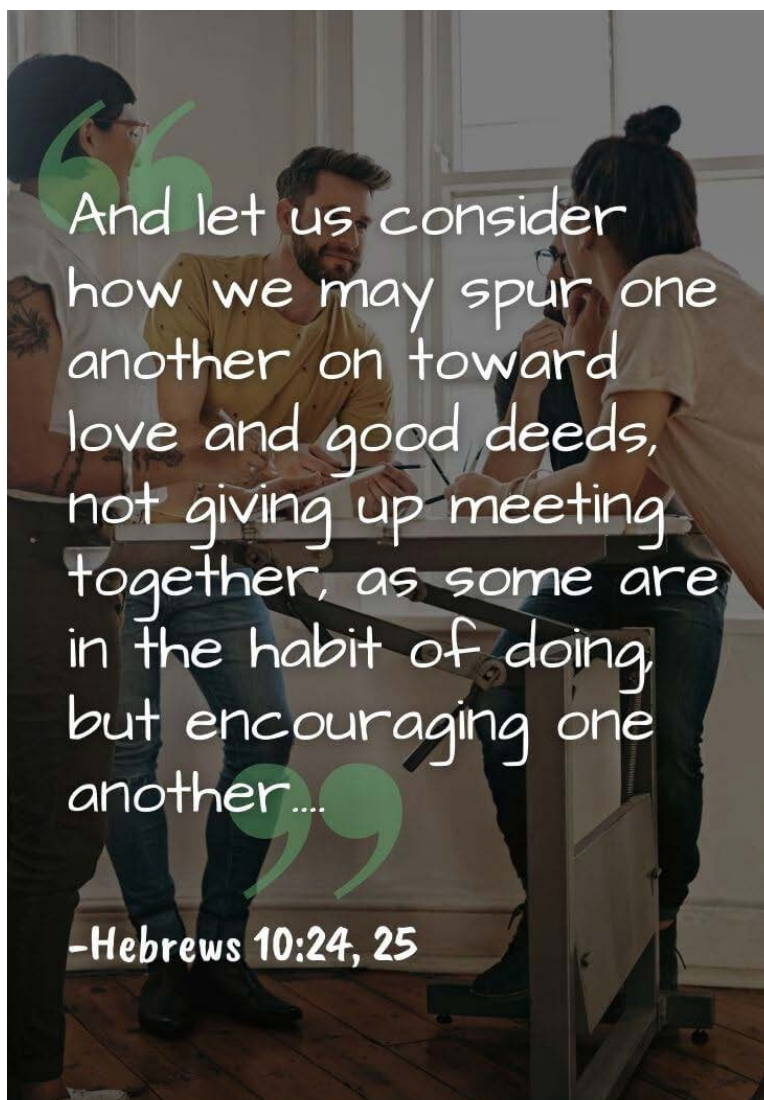
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(See Job 1)

09-27-2013

HEY JOB IT LOOKS LIKE YOU HAVE JURY DUTY TOMORROW



And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another....

-Hebrews 10:24, 25



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



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directions