

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 April 21, 2025



Happy Easter!...For the Next 50 Days

"Easter" comes from an old English word related to dawn and shining. At Easter we stand in light of the resurrection to see a new creation, transformed by the grace and glory of God. We celebrate the presence and power of the risen Christ in his church, proclaiming his good news through Word and Sacrament. We rejoice in the gift of the Holy Spirit, who is the "Lord and giver of life." In the fullest sense, Easter is a new way of life, in which we are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:11).

The date for the festival of the Resurrection of the Lord changes from year to year as it is calculated in relation to the phases of the moon. Since the Council of Nicaea in 325, Western Christians have celebrated Christ's resurrection on the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring on or after the spring equinox (March 21), occasionally shifting the date to the following week to avoid coinciding with the Jewish Passover. This elaborate computation means Easter Sunday may take place as early as March 22 or as late as April 25. Eastern Christians use a different set of astronomical tables based on the Julian calendar instead of the Gregorian; for this reason, the Catholic/Protestant and Orthodox celebrations of Easter typically occur on different Sundays.

As with Christmas, Easter refers not only to a single day, but to a whole season of celebration in the Christian year. The season of Easter spans the fifty days between the Resurrection of the Lord and the Day of Pentecost and encompasses the Ascension of the Lord. Traditionally, the first service of Easter takes place on the eve of the Resurrection of the Lord with the Great Vigil of Easter. The seven weeks of the Easter season make up a "week of weeks" (seven times seven): a symbol in time of the fullness and abundance of God's grace. In ancient practice, fasting and kneeling were forbidden during the weeks of Easter. In this most joyful season, we celebrate the great mystery of our faith—that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. (BOCW, p. 316)

Announcements

- ✦ **Earth Day Resources** - The 2025 theme is *The Power of God: From Extractive Theology to Transformative Faith*. Download the [28-page resource](#), and visit the [CJM page](#) for videos and additional materials that congregations may find useful.
- ✦ **Now Live Streaming YouTube** – Sunday worship is available as recordings or livestreaming at on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@FirstpresbyterianastoriaOrg>
- ✦ **Women's Bible Study** – Ladies fellowship and Bible study every third Saturday of each month at 10am at the Davidson's home. Contact Hazel Davidson or the church office for more details. The Bible study is titled **Let Justice Roll Down**. See <https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/bible-study/justice/> for more details. Next bible study is April 26 at 10am.
- ✦ **Book Study – What's So Amazing About Grace by Philip Yancey** – Now starting, Sunday April 27 at 11:45am in the Christian Resource Room.
- ✦ **First Friday Flicks** – Join us Friday, May 2 at 7pm in the fellowship hall as we watch **How to Train Your Dragon**, have some popcorn and enjoy some good fellowship. See the trailer: <https://youtu.be/1huZhKwhIQc?si=m-F4RKUAUzUjU-Gn>
- ✦ **Friday Coffee & Tea Fellowship** – Please join us Friday, May 9 at 10am for coffee, tea, treats & fellowship in the church parlor.
- ✦ **Bowling & Pizza** – Join us for bowling & pizza night Wednesday, May 21 at 5pm.
- ✦ **The Food Bank** – Needs:
 - breakfast cereal,
 - individually wrapped toothbrushes,
 - volunteers.

Thoughts from Pastor Paul

Dear Siblings in Christ,

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

Every April 22, we celebrate Earth Day. There should be little doubt that this wonderful place where we live, this planet Earth, is a wondrous gift of God. There are so many systems working in concert with each other, and although we are learning more each day, in the full scheme of things, we haven't even begun to scratch the surface of how all of creation works together. And as mankind continues to exploit the natural resources of Earth with concern only for immediate monetary profit and without concern for existing life and future generations, the Earth we know and both need and enjoy, is in peril because of our abuse as a society. If you've any doubt about the effect humans have on this awesome planet, think back to the two weeks mankind was on COVID lockdown. During the lockdowns, with mankind staying at home and not producing pollution, according to CNN, "Pandemic lockdowns improved air quality in 84% of countries worldwide..."¹ I'm sure if you search the internet, you'd be able to find archives of many of the news reports from the day where the commentators were surprised by the changes being witnessed during this time: the veil of smog being lifted over most cities, revealing mountain ranges that had been long missing from the landscape, wildlife returning to areas that had been long dominated by humans. Although there are those who ignore the facts, there can be no doubt that mankind is the single biggest threat to the future of our entire world, that is, God's creation.

According to www.earthday.org, "Groups that had been fighting individually against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness and the extinction of wildlife united on Earth Day around these shared common values. Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, urban dwellers and farmers, business and labor leaders.

By the end of 1970, the first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of other first-of-their-kind environmental laws, including the National Environmental Education Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and the Clean Air Act. Two years later Congress passed the Clean Water Act."

Siblings in Christ, let us each commit to being the stewards of God's creation that God calls us to be. Finding new ways to work together roll back the centuries of neglect and abuse that mankind has inflicted on God's creation, seeking to make profits at any cost. As an individual, one might wonder how any one person can make a difference. But that's when we need to remember our faith. When each of us do what we are called to do to make God's kingdom known in the here and now, we will find that together, we can indeed bring about change, and through God's guidance, and working toward the greatest commandments that Jesus reminded us about, by loving God with all that we are and loving all others as ourselves, while holding mankind responsible, we can turn the tide of abuse to a tide that allows God's creation to again thrive and be there for future generations to enjoy first hand.

As we were called to take on spiritual disciplines during Lent, let us look to Earth Day as an opportunity to extend that call to take on new spiritual disciplines that not only strengthen your relationship with the Holy Trinity, but also help to bring about positive changes to God's creation. Remember, when we are working together in doing God's work, though something might seem impossible, with God, it is possible.

Please, as you continue to show and share God's selfless love, grace and kindness to each other, remember to show that same love, grace and kindness to yourself. If you are in need of someone to talk to, someone to pray with, someone to just listen to you, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Blessings and shalom,

Pastor Paul

¹ <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/16/health/world-air-quality-report-intl-hnk-scn/index.html>

Our Church Family's Financials for March 2025

Income – \$ 6,680 – year to date = \$40,909
 Expenses – \$ 17,845 – year to date = \$43,444

FPC Astoria Calendar

Join us at 9:30am every Tuesday and Thursday in the Christian Resource Room for a time of prayer and each Sunday at 11:45am in the Christian Resource Room for “What’s So Amazing About Grace” book study.

April	26	Saturday	Women’s Bible Study at Hazel Davidson’s home at 10am
	27	Sunday	What’s So Amazing About Grace Book Study at 11:45am in the Christian Resource Room
May	2	Friday	First Friday Flicks – How to Train Your Dragon – 7pm in Goodenberger Hall
	9	Friday	Coffee & Tea Fellowship – 10am in the Church Parlor
	11	Sunday	Mothers’ Day
	13	Tuesday	Session Meeting at 12noon in the Christian Resource Room
	21	Wednesday	Bowling, Pizza & Fellowship at 5pm at the Lower Columbia Bowl



First Friday Flicks Presents...

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON

**Friday, May 2 at 7pm in
 Goodenberger hall**

*Free admission, popcorn and
 fellowship for all*

Scan to watch the trailer



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

- The family and friends of Shelby Thompson at her passing and her new born baby girl Lillyana Rose who is in NICU
- Family & friends of Betty (Elizabeth Jane) Moberg mourning her passing
- Family & friends of Kathy Davidson mourning her passing
- Shane Chase for healing, peace and discernment
- Melanie Battle for peace, strength and discernment
- Jon Wright for healing, peace and discernment
- Jenny & Mike Curtis – Jenny's healing
- Anna Langeberg – Healing, peace and discernment
- Sara Jackson – Healing, peace and discernment
- Deborah Towner – healing, peace and discernment
- Crystal Oliver – Healing, Strength & Peace
- George Willsie - Healing
- JoAnn Feary – For complete healing
- Fred & Norma Novak – Healing, peace and discernment
- Marcella Price – Peace & Discernment
- Michael Smith – Healing & Discernment
- Linda from Chicago – Healing & Discernment
- Patti Brockhoff – Healing & Discernment
- Will Sheridan – Healing & Discernment



- Alice Burgess – Healing & Discernment
- Katy Paz – Healing & Peace
- Butch & Vinie Elliot – Healing & Discernment
- Gerald Smith – Healing, Peace & Discernment

Continued Prayers for God's Creation

The people of our nation and the world as it is affected by the adverse changes to our national government and economy.

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 would be changed to make serving and saving God's creation their number one priority.

All of God's creation as it seeks to survive mankind's exploitation and the results global climate change.

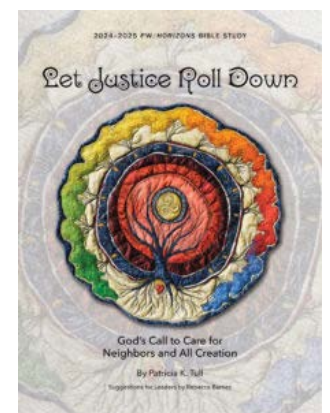
Women's Bible Study – Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation

Join us the third Saturday of the month each at 10am. The next Bible study will be announced soon.

We are called to care for neighbors and God's creation with all our hearts, with particular care for society's least powerful members who are disproportionately impacted by unjust systems. In God's first instructions to the nation of Israel we hear "you shall not pervert the justice due to the poor" (Exodus 23:6); in Moses' final speech at the promised land's border, he reiterated, "Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue" (Deuteronomy 16:20); and from Amos, the earliest recorded prophet, "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream" (Amos 5:24). Scripture reminds us that we are called to speak out to urge our society to act for just transitions in this fast-changing world.

See <https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/bible-study/justice/> for more information.

For more details about the Bible study, contact Hazel Davidson.



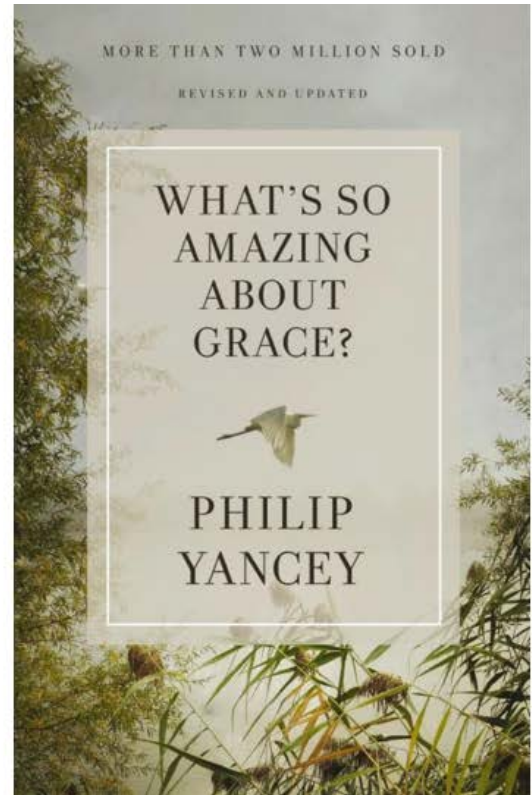
Book Study

What's So Amazing About Grace?


By Philip Yancey

Now starting Sunday, April 27 at
11:45am in the Christian
Resource Room

Contact the church office or scan
the code to order the book



Getting Involved in the Community

 Volunteers are needed for the church's food bank to stock shelves and to help serve customers. Contact the church office for more information.

 Attend a local public meeting:

- City of Astoria
 - Monday, May 5, City Council Meeting at 6PM.
- Astoria School District
 - Wednesday, May 14, Regular Board Meeting at 7PM.
- Clatsop County
 - Wednesday, April 23, Board of Commissioners Agenda Work Session & Regular Meeting at 5PM.
- Clatsop Community College
 - Thursday, April 24, Board of Education Meeting at 5:30PM.
- Port of Astoria
 - Tuesday, May 6, Commission Business Meeting at 4PM.

Church Directory and Giving Statements available through IconCMO

If you've not yet signed into your church account, please do so. If you haven't received a link or if you need to have one resent to you, please contact the church office.

What is IconCMO And How Does It Help Our Church?

IconCMO is a database that keeps the records for your church. It allows staff and church members to utilize your church's database for communication, membership information, print your own contribution statements, and so much more.

What Can I Do After Logging Into IconCMO?

Our church members can:

- edit and view your own information,
- view and communicate with other church members — an online church directory,
- view or print out a donation statement at any time,
- see what groups you are in.

Our church staff can:

- edit or view any record based on their security level,
- add donations, pledges, members, groups, and attendance,
- review church accounting books or payroll,
- communicate via mass email or text messaging to the entire church or certain groups,
- and so much more...

Can I Use My Mobile Device?

Yes! Our church members can have access to the church directory at their fingertips to communicate to other church members. Check out the [information about the mobile apps](#). Our church members can use one of the two app download buttons below to get the mobile application.



Login to the church's site at: <https://www.iconcmo.com/login/5033251702/>

Working for Justice and Peace in March and April

Remember, every Thursday throughout the year is an opportunity to participate in Thursdays in Black.

See www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/thursdays-in-black

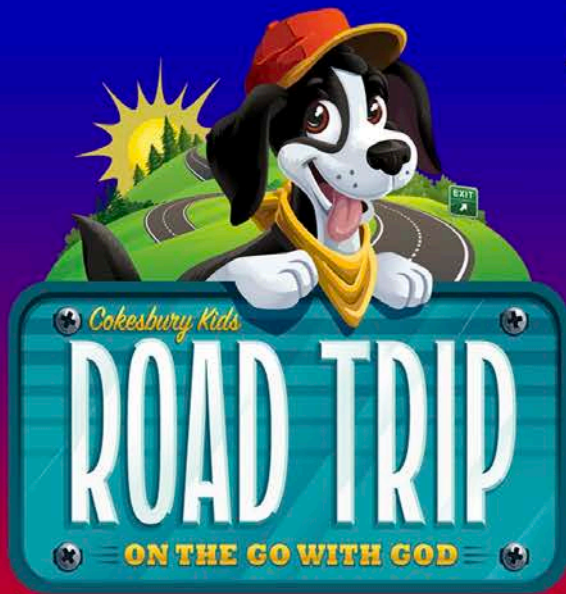
In every country, gender-based violence is a tragic reality. This violence is frequently hidden, and victims are often silent, fearing stigma and further violence.

We all have a responsibility to speak out against violence, to ensure that women and men, boys and girls, are safe from rape and violence in homes, schools, work, streets – in all places in our societies.

The campaign is simple but profound. **Wear black on Thursdays.** Wear a pin to declare you are part of the global movement resisting attitudes and practices that permit rape and violence. Show your respect for women who are resilient in the face of injustice and violence. Encourage others to join you.

Often black has been used with negative racial connotations. In this campaign Black is used as a color of resistance and resilience.

April 2025	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sexual Assault Awareness Month; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_Assault_Awareness_Month• Ecumenical Advocacy Days; advocacydays.org	
22	Earth Day; pcusa.org/earth-day-sunday-resources
24	Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day; pcusa.org/about-pcusa/agencies-entities/interim-unified-agency/ministry-areas/world-mission/jinishian-memorial-program/armenian-genocide
30	Denim Day; denimdayinfo.org
From the Presbyterian Women in the PCUSA https://www.presbyterianwomen.org https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2025-JP-Calendar-FA-updated-Feb2025.pdf	



ASTORIA CHURCHES VBS 2025

**June 23 - 27
9am - 12:15pm**

725 33rd St, Astoria

At "Road Trip - On the Go With God", your students will enjoy an interactive, energizing, Bible-based good time as they are on the go with God. They will become Travelers and discover how God is with them wherever they go!

Presented by:

First Baptist Church of Astoria
First Presbyterian Church of Astoria
Peace First Lutheran Church, Astoria

**register
online:**



Questions: (503) 325-6252

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:

- ✚ [Faith groups mourn the death of Pope Francis](#)
- ✚ [Minding the wealth gap](#)
- ✚ [On Friday, houses of worship across the county will ring bells for freedom](#)

Uncovering the how and why of Christian nationalism

Amanda Tyler of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty speaks at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church

April 4, 2025 | Mike Ferguson | Presbyterian News Service

LOUISVILLE — Amanda Tyler says it's the duty of Christians to face Christian nationalism. Before we can do that, the executive director of the [Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty](#) said Wednesday during a talk at [New York Avenue Presbyterian Church](#) and to those listening online, we must understand what Christian nationalism is and what it threatens to do.

Christian nationalism is “a fusion of national and religious identities and goals. It is a recurrent problem throughout history and around the world today,” Tyler said. It's present in Russia, India, Hungary, Zambia, Nigeria, Ethiopia and other place. “It is not uniquely an American problem,” she noted.

Tyler's “Christians Against Christian Nationalism” talk was part of New York Avenue Presbyterian Church's [McClendon Scholar Program](#). Her presentation, and a question-and-answer session with the program's executive director, Theo Brown, can be seen [here](#).

The organization [Christians Against Christian Nationalism](#), for which Tyler is the lead organizer, defines Christian nationalism as “a political ideology and cultural framework that seeks to merge American and Christian identities.”

“Christian nationalism suggests that to be a real American, one has to be a Christian — a Christian who espouses and holds certain fundamentalist beliefs that align with conservative political priorities,” she said. “In the U.S. context, we cannot think about Christian nationalism without thinking of racism and white supremacy.”

“The ‘Christian’ in ‘Christian nationalism’ is less about theology and more about an ethno-national identity. In the U.S., that is whiteness,” Tyler said. “Christian nationalism is not new. It is a new term for an old problem in the U.S. context.”



Photo by Kelly Sikkema via Unsplash

While we now “thankfully” think of the Ku Klux Klan as a fringe group, Tyler noted the KKK once marched and rode on horseback down Pennsylvania Avenue in the nation’s capital.

Calling the United States a “Christian nation” is “an exaggerated form of American exceptionalism,” Tyler said. John’s gospel says “God so loved the world, not just the United States, but that’s essentially what this mythology says, that the U.S. is the apple of God’s eye.” It also claims that God inspired the Constitution, or at least part of it, and that the framers were divinely inspired. Tyler looks to the Constitution itself to refute that idea. “The framers barred religious tests from the beginning,” she said.

Christian nationalism is also “a gross distortion of the teachings of Jesus, who was always on the side of the marginalized and oppressed,” Tyler said, adding that Jesus was executed by the empire. “This Jesus, the Jesus of the gospels, bears no resemblance to the white Jesus who is the mascot” of Christian nationalists, who use “the language and symbols of Christianity, and to the casual observer, it’s the same thing.”

Tyler distinguished between patriotism and Christian nationalism.

Patriotism, she said, is love of country and is freely chosen. “There are lots of ways to be patriotic,” Tyler said. Nationalism is “allegiance to country that demands supremacy over all other allegiances, including Jesus.” A good litmus test is this: If our patriotism causes us to sacrifice religious convictions, it’s no longer patriotism. “It has drifted into the unhealthy and dangerous area of nationalism,” she said.

Polling by the [Public Religion Research Institute](#) shows 29% of Americans reject Christian nationalism and 37% are skeptics. 1 in 10 adheres to Christian nationalism, and 20% are sympathizers. Those who embrace it strongly agree with these statements:

- “The U.S. government should declare America a Christian nation.”
- “If the U.S. moves away from our Christian foundations, we will not have a country anymore.”
- “U.S. laws should be based on Christian values.”
- “Being Christian is an important part of being fully American.”
- “God has called Christians to exercise dominion over all areas of American society.”

While adherents and sympathizers amount to just 30% of the population, “the problem is they hold a disproportionate amount of political power right now,” Tyler said. “They are using their power to try to destroy democratic institutions.”

Together with the [Freedom From Religion Foundation](#), Christians Against Christian Nationalism provided a report to the Select Committee investigating the events of Jan. 6, 2021. But “if you look at the Select committee’s [845-page] [report](#), there are no references to Christian nationalism,” Tyler pointed out. “They lacked the political courage to call out Christian nationalism.”



Amanda Tyler

Tyler cited links to Christian nationalism in anti-immigration legislation and anti-transgender policies, among others. It’s also showing up in public education. Some states and school districts are posting “In God We Trust” and the Ten Commandments in classrooms. Other public schools have replaced school counselors with school chaplains.

"It is incumbent for those of us who are Christians to speak out against Christian nationalism," Tyler said. Here are some ways to do that.

- Sign the Christians Against Christian Nationalism [statement](#).
- Get connected to [groups working for religious liberty and pluralism](#).
- Take action to educate others — online, in your community and in your church.

Last fall, Tyler published her book "[How to End Christian Nationalism](#)." "It was written to be read and acted on," she said. "We are trying to organize people to take action in their local communities."

After her talk concluded, Tyler sat down with Brown to answer a few questions. She said Christian nationalism has had "high tides" throughout American history, including the Civil War, the 1920s and the 1950s. "I mentioned 'God bless America' in my talk," she said. "Almost every politician uses it at the end of almost every speech. What is being reinforced? Religious permission for whatever came before. Those of us who pay attention need to call that out for what it is."

Supporters of strengthening Christian nationalism in public schools have at least two strategies, she said. One is Christianize public schools, and the other is to privatize public education, "which has been done by underfunding public schools."

"But vouchers for public schools are incredibly unpopular," Tyler said. "Most people like and support the public schools."

Even steps like considering the removal of flags in sanctuaries can be complicated, she said.

Churches with large immigrant populations often locate their flags in the sanctuary "because their sense of being a true American has been questioned," Tyler said. "Because of white Christian nationalism, they have been accused of not being fully American. It varies by particular community."

"This is a huge problem. It can feel too big for any one person to do much about it," Tyler said of Christian nationalism. "But if we do one small thing all together, that's huge ... I am grateful to be in this work with all of you."

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.

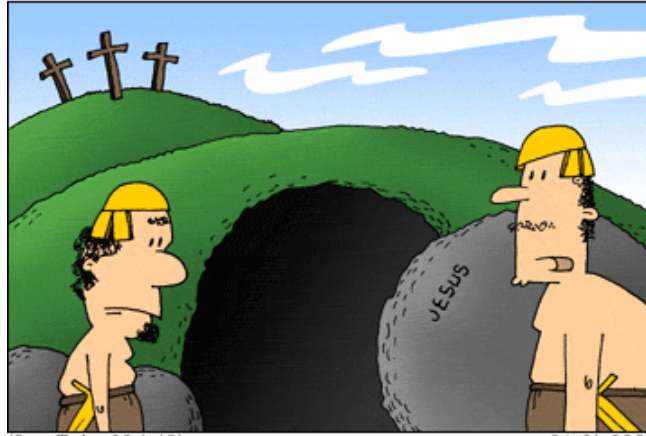
Email: pastorpaul@fpcastoria.org **Phone:** 971.606.5606

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.

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



(See John 20:1-18)

04-21-2003

BETCHA TEN SHEKELS THOSE CHRISTIANS
HAVE FIFTY NEW SONGS BY THIS WEEKEND



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