

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 September 22, 2025

Our Book of Order

The Presbyterian Church (USA) comes from very organized roots, originating in the church of Scotland. To make sure we are all on the same page (*all puns included*) we have a Constitution of the PCUSA. It is broken into two parts.

The first part is contained in the Book of Confessions. The text of twelve confessional documents comprise this volume. Together these documents stand to be significant and instructive to both the individual and corporate life and faith of Presbyterians.

The Book of Order is the second part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This volume contains the Foundations, the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship, and the Church Discipline.

Changes to the Book of Order are not taken lightly. All recommended changes are reviewed at the national meeting, called the General Assembly (GA). After careful examination and discernment the proposed change is voted on the floor of GA and then is sent to the presbyteries throughout the denomination for their vote. This process can take up to a year. Contact the church office if you'd like a copy of our Book or Order.

Announcements

- ✦ [Coffee & Tea Fellowship](#) – Join us Friday, October 10 in the church parlor for coffee, tea, food and fellowship.
- ✦ [First Friday Flicks](#) – October's First Friday Flicks will happen on the second Friday, Friday, October 10 at 7pm in Goodenberger Hall with Mary Poppins.
Watch the movie trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uBw6EvIxIS8>
- ✦ [Now Live Streaming YouTube](#) – Sunday worship is available as recordings or livestreaming at on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@FirstpresbyterianastoriaOrg>
- ✦ [The Food Bank](#) – Needs:
 - breakfast cereal,
 - individually wrapped toothbrushes,
 - boxes,
 - volunteers.
- ✦ [Donate Online](#) – We are accepting online donations. You can either look for the QR Code at church or go to the [church's website](#) for more details.
- ✦ [Book Study Starting](#) – Beginning Sunday, October 12, at 11:45am in the Christian Resource Room, we will take a look at **Vanishing Grace**, the sequel to Philip Yancey's **What's So Amazing About Grace?**
 - **Book:** <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/vanishing-grace-philip-yancey/1127764880?ean=9780310351542>
 - **Study Guide:** <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/vanishing-grace-bible-study-guide-philip-yancey/1141914992?ean=9780310825494>

Thoughts from Pastor Paul

Dear Siblings in Christ,

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

In a few weeks, we will start a new book study, **Vanishing Grace: Bringing Good News to a Deeply Divided World** by Phillip Yancey. This is Yancey's sequel to his book that we recently studied, **What's So Amazing About Grace?**

With all that is going on in the world, there seems to be no shortage of ungrace. Although there are those who are calling for peace and understanding, for conversations to take place instead of name calling, there are those in power who seem to demand division and take every opportunity to pour gasoline on the already burning fires of discontent. Fires stoked by ignorance, bigotry, xenophobia, homophobia and blind nationalism. As I type this, I admit that I am not showing grace for those who promote these ideologies. My disappointment has, at times changed from sadness to anger. (*Note, I almost used the word grown instead of changed, but I realized that is anything but growth.*) Perhaps I'm taking a cue from Amos 5:15, "Hate evil, love good, and establish justice at the city gate." Or Romans 12:9, "Love should be shown without pretending. Hate evil, and hold on to what is good." Still, I realize, that as a follower of Christ, I know that I must do better than simply hate hate, I must, with the strength and wisdom of the Holy Trinity, show God's grace and seek to live as Jesus lived and taught us to live.

In the preface to *What's So Amazing About Grace*, Yancey wrote,

As I began my research, I came to see that grace underlies the gospel. It affects how we treat each other: our family members and the coworker we don't get along with, those who sit beside us in church and those who vote in ways we don't agree with, the friend who hurt us years ago and the cranky neighbor down the street. I truly believe that the future for Christians depends on how we master the art of giving grace. Gordon MacDonald said, "You need not be a Christian to build houses, feed the hungry, or heal the sick. There is only one thing the world cannot do. It cannot offer grace." And that is the church's single most important contribution. Where else can the world go to find grace? And the world indeed is desperately thirsty for grace.¹

Let's face it, grace is not always easy to share. There always seems to be at least one person who rubs us the wrong way. Whether it's people we know who have done wrong to us or our loved ones, or it's someone we've never met but who has done things against others throughout God's creation that perpetuate oppression, hate, homophobia, xenophobia, bigotry, destruction of the environment, etc... some people seem to do everything they can to stir up negative emotions in us that cause us to stumble in showing and sharing grace. Remember Jesus' words, "You're familiar with the old written law, 'Love your friend,' and its unwritten companion, 'Hate your enemy.' I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst." When we remember Jesus' words and teachings, we realize that we must find the courage to show and share grace even with those, who through their actions or inactions, cause us anger. And, with the help and guidance of the Holy Trinity we will be able to do just that. So, siblings in Christ, pray for God's help and then be prepared to show and share God's grace with everyone and anyone, including those who rub us the wrong way, as well as yourself.

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 Yancey, Philip. *What's So Amazing About Grace? Bible Study Participant's Guide*, Updated Edition (p. v). (Function). Kindle Edition.

Our Church Family's Financials for August 2025

Income – \$ 8,500 – year to date = \$97,719.64

Expenses – \$ 8,400 – year to date = \$100,820.02

\$10,000 transferred from savings with a YTD total transferred from savings of \$20,000.

FPC Astoria Calendar

9:30am every Tuesday and Thursday in the Christian Resource Room for a time of prayer.

October	10	Friday	Coffee & Tea Fellowship at 10am in the Parlor
			First Friday Flicks – Mary Poppins at 7pm in Goodenberger Hall
	12	Sunday	World Communion Sunday (Celebrated)
			Fellowship & Worship at 2pm at Astor Place & 3pm at Clatsop Retirement Village
	15	Wednesday	Bowling & Pizza Fellowship at 5pm at the Lower Columbia Bowl
	16	Thursday	FMT meeting at 11am in the Christian Resource Room
	17-19	Friday-Sunday	Women's Retreat & Bible Study at Seaside Worldmark
	19	Sunday	Book Study Vanishing Grace: Bringing Good News to a Deeply Divided World by Philip Yancey – 11:45am in Christian Resource Room
21	Tuesday	Session Meeting at 12noon in the Christian Resource Room	

We Share Our Joys & Concerns

- Family and friends of Malcolm Van Meer
- Family and friends of those touched by the Minneapolis school shooting
- Family and friends of Keith Linehan at his passing
- Family and friends of Jim Applegarth at his passing
- Dick and Joyce Etulain - Healing, Peace & Discernment
- Jean Cox for healing and discernment
- Joe Shaw for healing and recovery after having a stroke
- Patti Shaw for peace, discernment and strength
- Jill Ritch for healing, peace and discernment
- Lillyana Rose for healing
- Joyce and Dick Etulain for healing, strength & discernment
- Dave O'Neel for healing & discernment
- Pam Wev for healing and discernment
- 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 continued healing
- Anna Langeberg – Healing, peace and discernment
- Sara Jackson – Healing, peace and discernment
- Deborah Towner – healing, peace and discernment
- George Willsie - Healing
- Fred & Norma Novak – Healing, peace & discernment
- Marcella Price – Peace & Discernment
- Alice Burgess – Healing & Discernment
- Katy Paz – Healing & Peace
- Butch & Vinie Elliot – Healing & Discernment
- Gerald Smith – Healing, Peace & Discernment
- Michael Smith – Healing & Discernment
- Patti Brockhoff – Healing & Discernment
- Will Sheridan – Healing & Discernment
- Crystal Oliver – Healing, Strength & Peace
- For all who are being displaced or disadvantaged by federal cutbacks

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 & 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.



*Come Join us for Coffee,
Tea
& Fellowship,
Friday,
October 10
at 10am
In the Church Parlor.*



Book Study

Vanishing Grace: Bringing Good News to a Deeply Divided World
By Philip Yancey

Beginning October 19 at 11:45am
in the Christian Resource Room
Contact the church office or scan
the code to order the book

Scan QRC
for book:



Scan QRC for
study guide:



PHILIP
YANCEY
VANISHING
GRACE

Bringing Good News to a Deeply Divided World

Keeping Job Corp Open & Running:

PLEASE write and/or call our representatives and the Department of Labor. Remind them of all the positives that Job Corp has done and continues to do for our nation by giving its students all they need to be solid citizens, contributing to the betterment of our communities and nation through the positive outlook they bring to the revenue they bring through their gainful employment; helping not only themselves and their communities to prosper, but also the companies for whom they are employed. The contact information follows...

House of Representatives

District	Name	Party	Room	Office	Phone	Committee Assignment
1st	Bonamici, Suzanne	D	2231	RHOB	(202) 225-0855	Education and Workforce Science, Space, and Technology
2nd	Bentz, Cliff	R	409	CHOB	(202) 225-6730	Energy and Commerce Natural Resources
3rd	Dexter, Maxine	D	1207	LHOB	(202) 225-4811	Natural Resources Veterans' Affairs
4th	Hoyle, Val	D	1620	LHOB	(202) 225-6416	Natural Resources Transportation and Infrastructure
5th	Bynum, Janelle	D	1508	LHOB	(202) 225-5711	Financial Services
6th	Salinas, Andrea	D	403	CHOB	(202) 225-5643	Agriculture Science, Space, and Technology

Senators

Name	Office	Phone	Committees
Merkley, Jeffery	531 SH	202-224-3753	Appropriations, Environment and Public Works, Foreign Relations, Rules and Administration, Budget, Jt. Com. Printing
Wyden, Ron	221 SD	202-224-5244	Energy and Natural Resources, Finance, Budget, Jt. Taxation, Select Intelligence
Address mail as follows: U.S. Senate Name Office Washington, DC 20510		Department of Labor Phone: 202-693-6000 U.S. Department of Labor AGENCY NAME OFFICE NUMBER 200 Constitution Ave NW Washington, DC 20210	

Find agency names and office numbers here: <https://www.dol.gov/general/agencies-contact>

Other Ways to Make a Difference

☪ 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, October 6, City Council Meeting at 6PM.
- Astoria School District
 - Wednesday, October 8, Regular Board Meeting at 7PM.
- Clatsop County
 - Wednesday, October 8, Board of Commissioners Agenda Work Session & Regular Meeting at 5PM.
- Clatsop Community College
 - Thursday, October 9, Board of Education Meeting at 5:30PM.
- Port of Astoria
 - Tuesday, October 7, Commission Business Meeting at 4PM.

Working for Justice and Peace

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.

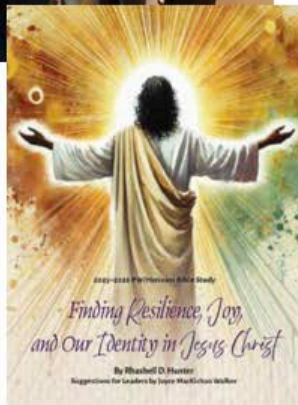
Often black has been used with negative racial connotations. In this campaign Black is used as a color of resistance and resilience.

October 2025

- Domestic Violence Awareness Month; ncadv.org/take-action; nomore.org; presbyterianwomen.org/justice or <https://pcusa.org/resource/domestic-violence-worship-resources>
- Fair Trade Month; fairtradefederation.org/celebrate-fair-trade-month
- National Disability Employment Awareness Month; dol.gov/agencies/odep/initiatives/ndeam

5	World Communion Sunday; pcusa.org/resource/resources-world-communion-sunday
11	International Day of the Girl Child; unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/girl-child
	National Coming Out Day; hrc.org/resources/national-coming-out-day
12	Children’s Sabbath: Educate a Child; childrensdefense.org
13	Indigenous Peoples’ Day; americanindian.si.edu/nk360/informational/columbus-day-myths
16	World Food Day; fao.org/world-food-day/home/en
24	United Nations Day; un.org/en/observances/un-day

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>



October’s Women’s Bible Study – Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ

Join us October 17-19 at the Seaside Worldmark for a Women’s Retreat & Bible Study. Contact the church office for more information or if you would like to attend.

If anyone wants to carpool on Saturday morning please contact Hazel.

See <https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/current-bible-study/> for more information. For more details about the Bible study, contact Hazel Davidson.



First Presbyterian Church of Astoria



The Food Bank Needs:

- Breakfast cereal,
- Peanut butter,
- Boxes
- Volunteers

Contact the church office at 503.325.1702 for more information.



Scan for
Directions

At the Lower
Columbia Bowl
826 Marine Dr
in Astoria
October 15
At 5PM

First Presbyterian Church of Astoria
Invites one and all to an evening of
Bowling, Pizza Fun & Fellowship



Walk For Palestine

Permanent Ceasefire Now

**Last Sunday of the
Month @ 3p
Meet @ 8th +
Commercial St
Astoria**

**Family
Friendly**

Meet outside the
Astoria Post
Office. Join in a
peaceful walk
around downtown
Bring your flags +
signs!



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:

- ✝ [Stated clerk urges conference attendees to 'be grounded in Christ's ministry of justice'](#)
- ✝ [Serving up social justice advocacy with a side of joy](#)
- ✝ [Presbyterian Hunger Program approves over \\$1 million in grants](#)

Reflecting on Palestinian suffering nearly two years after the Oct. 7 attack on Israel

Presbyterian peace advocate stresses the need to end atrocities and famine in Gaza for the sake of both peoples

September 29, 2025 | Doug Dicks, Global Ecumenical Liaison | Presbyterian News Service

Next week on Oct. 7, it will be two years since Hamas combatants breached Israel's security fence surrounding Gaza and launched a deadly attack against Israel's kibbutzim on the border, slaughtering over 1,200 Israelis and taking 250 hostages back into Gaza. An Israeli music festival called NOVA was happening on the same weekend, and whether or not it was known by Hamas prior to the attack, many of its attendees fell victim to Hamas' atrocities.

Immediately, the world condemned this barbaric attack against civilians and soldiers alike.

Two years on and the world, including many Israelis, still don't know the full truth surrounding the events of that fateful day.

Israeli women soldiers, working as "spotters" on the border with Gaza, had long warned that Hamas was planning an attack. Their superiors and their families wrote them off and scoffed at the idea that Gazans could carry out any kind of meaningful assault against the strongly weaponized and militarized Jewish state. The spotters were not wrong. Some were killed, and others taken hostage, only to be released later in a prisoner swap.

In July 2024, the Israeli daily newspaper Ha'aretz ("The Land") would reveal that Israel had invoked what is known as the "Hannibal Directive" or the "Hannibal Protocol" on Oct. 7, a controversial procedure used by Israeli Defense Forces to prevent the capture of Israeli soldiers by enemy forces. According to one version, kidnappings must be "stopped by all means," even at the price of striking and harming their own forces and/or civilians.

Within days following Oct. 7, Israel, supplied with a massive quantity of weapons from the Biden administration, launched deadly attacks on Gaza. The attacks have continued to this day, resulting in untold civilian casualties. In the months since, Israel has dropped bombs on the tiny enclave equivalent to over six Hiroshimas. Every school, university and hospital has been targeted and all but totally destroyed.

The entire world has watched, largely in silence, as tens of thousands of Gazans have been systematically slaughtered. The Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac, the Lutheran pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hope in Ramallah, Palestine, stated that today, “Gaza is the moral compass of the world” and that “silence for the ongoing genocide is complicity.”

In July of this year, the Holy Family Catholic Church in Gaza took a direct hit from an Israeli airstrike. Three people were killed, including the sister of Dr. Maher Ayyad, the medical director at Gaza’s Ahli Arab Hospital. This hospital, the only Christian-run hospital in Gaza and administered by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, has long been supported by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Its ministry of healing among the people of Gaza has been a source of hope to many people over the years.

Today, Gaza has been turned into a wasteland. How anyone has survived nearly two years under an almost constant bombardment is anyone’s guess.

On July 28, Israel’s Physicians for Human Rights and B’Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, called Israel’s actions in the Gaza Strip a genocide. The same week, the Rev. Jihyun Oh, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Executive Director of the Interim Unified Agency, said in a statement released to the church that international legal scholars, Christian denominations, human rights organizations and genocide experts have warned that “the unfolding destruction in Gaza meets the criteria of genocide under [international law](#).” You can read Oh’s complete statement [here](#).

Currently, the United Nations claims that over half a million Gazans are suffering from famine. Israel claims the report is “baseless.”

Likewise, Islamic Jihad has released shocking videos of at least two Israeli hostages looking emaciated and gaunt. Hunger and starvation are being used as a weapon by both sides against the other. In August, it was reported that Israel’s own military data indicates that 83% of those killed in Gaza were Palestinian civilians. The current death toll in Gaza now stands at more than 62,000. Today, Gaza is home to the largest known population of child amputees in the world.

In the West Bank, violent Israeli settlers have set fire to fields, olive groves, cars and even houses in Palestinian villages and towns. In several instances, they have even killed Palestinians trying to defend their lands and their homes. At least four of those killed since the war in Gaza began were Palestinian American citizens who were visiting family in the West Bank. The Israeli army has seldom intervened, creating a situation where the Israeli settlers act with impunity, and get away with — in some cases, literally — murder.

For Palestinians, what Israel is doing in the West Bank and in Gaza constitutes a continuation of the Nakba, or Catastrophe, that befell them in 1948 and resulted in the expulsion of Palestinians from their cities, villages and towns and the systematic takeover of historic Palestine. Estimates are that



Photo by Emad El Byed via Unsplash

over 750,000 Palestinians were ethnically cleansed from their homes, and over 400 Palestinian villages were wiped off of the map and bulldozed into obscurity.

Yet these same Palestinians and their many descendants have never forgotten what befell them. Subsequent generations vow to return to their villages and towns, and they have never relinquished their right to return, which was guaranteed to them in [United Nations Resolution 194](#).

In the Gospel of Matthew, we read, “But when [Jesus] saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.” (Matthew 9:36)

Compassion involves more than just sentiments of the heart. It entails direct actions which can change the situation for those affected by circumstances beyond their control. Just as [Jesus commanded his disciples](#), “you give them something to eat,” so, too, we are also responsible for doing our part in order to change the reality that is currently unfolding for those in Gaza who cannot help themselves. Only a concerted and united worldwide effort will end Israel’s brutal, inhumane war on the people of Gaza.



Doug Dicks

My fear is that significant, irreparable damage has already been done — not only in and to Gaza, but to the soul of the Jewish state and its people. The Jewish state was founded on the premise that it would be a light unto the nations. The nation — and the world — that swore “never again” has allowed it to happen once again. Only this time, the victims are perceived as being of less importance. The world has largely stood by and watched, silent in the face of looming starvation and the imminent annihilation of the Palestinian people. Surely, this episode in humankind’s history will be remembered by future generations as one of the darkest, and they will once again pose the same question to those of us who stood by and did nothing: “Why?”

Doug Dicks serves as a Global Ecumenical Liaison with the Interim Unified Agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

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 Pam Winn

09-13-2006

I SHOULD PROBABLY START PREACHING TO
THE CHOIR AGAIN



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
direction