

8th & Holly newsletter
First Presbyterian Church
85 South Holly Street
Medford, Oregon 97501

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage paid
Medford OR 97501
Permit No. 383

Faithful to God; Grounded in Love,
responsive to the world.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
Church

8th & Holly

Our 139th year

Nurturing people in body, mind, and soul for the glory of God

The monthly newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Medford, Oregon February 2024

Lenten opportunities

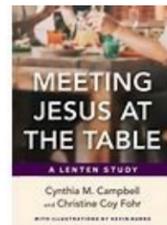
This Lenten season begins on February 14, also Valentine's Day and the State of Oregon's birthday. Here at First Presbyterian, we can go on a pilgrimage right here at home during Lent.

A daily devotional booklet, *Local Pilgrim*, will be available for pickup in the Narthex starting Sunday, February 11. Sayer Strauch will lead a 9:45 a.m. class Sunday mornings during Lent to help us focus week-by-week on topics in coming devotions. He'll provide an overview of the pilgrimage opportunity at the opening class.

The booklet, edited by Teri McDowell Ott, editor of *Presbyterian Outlook* magazine, is an invitation to explore your community, "to pause, ponder and pray. What will God reveal to you?"

As Pastor Murray said in a recent sermon, the word pilgrimage is usually thought of as a contemplative journey to a shrine or a sacred place. What we seek in our local pilgrimages this Lenten season is the sacred, God's presence, in places we visit within our community.

Share a meal and a message this Lent at Wednesday Soup Suppers which begin February 21 and continue through March 20. The simple meal, prepared by a crew of volunteers, will be followed by a study led by the Rev. Hugh Anderson.



Lessons come from the book *Meeting Jesus at the Table*, full of biblical insights on stories of Jesus as he shares food with others. The books will be available for \$12 each for those who wish to purchase one for their own study.

This Lenten series is an opportunity to review our personal practices of fellowship, worship and justice relating to food security. Hugh Anderson is a retired minister and Christian Educator who frequently worships with us.

There are two sign-up sheets in the Narthex for these Soup Suppers, one indicating you wish to attend and if you wish to order a book. The other is for volunteers including making or furnishing soup, preparing the meal and clean up, for each of the five suppers.

Local Pilgrim



From the pastor's study

By Murray Richmond

February is here and with February comes Lent, and with Lent comes Ash Wednesday.

This year Ash Wednesday is on Valentine's Day. Not the best day to consider your mortality and your sins, but I'm not in charge of the calendar. We will have our annual Ash Wednesday service this year, starting at 7 p.m. We will not use fire this year, but instead we found some water soluble paper. People can write what they are repenting from on the paper, and we just drop it the water and it dissolves.

But Lent is more than Ash Wednesday. It is a season to help us find our true priorities. What is truly important to you. Last year, when Lent rolled around, I decided to give up something that was and is very dear to me—coffee. Yes, I gave up coffee for Lent. Not caffeine but coffee, so

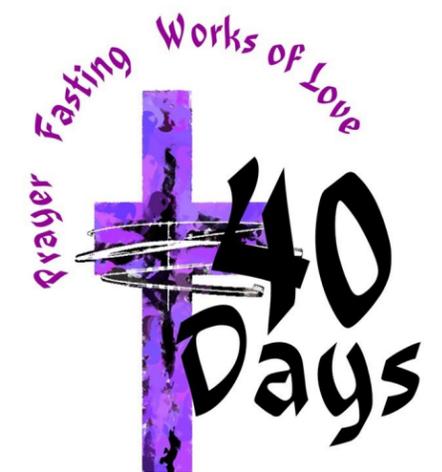
I could drink tea. I learned that I could give up coffee for an extended period of time. I usually give up alcohol and sweets for Lent, then I add one other thing, a different thing every year. I haven't decided what I am going to do this year, but I will.

But is more than a time to give up things. It is also a time to try new activities, activities that will feed your spirit—a five-minute time of prayer or Bible reading every day, a volunteer activity, like giving out bag lunches or helping with our Food Bank, or doing a good deed like driving a neighbor around. Anything that feeds your soul.

The sermon series for Lent will focus on the virtues we need to get through the rough spots of our lives. Hope in the face of despair, peace in the face of conflict, joy in the face of sadness, love in the face of hostility, patience in the face of a fast-food world. I may continue it after Easter.

I will be gone for two weeks in February visiting a friend in North Carolina. But you are in great hands.

I hope and pray that Lent will be a time of spiritual growth this year!



Women's Fellowship resumes

Women's Fellowship, which went on hiatus during Covid, resumes activities this month. The kick-off is a 12:30 p.m. luncheon on Friday, February 9, in the banquet room of Applebee's Restaurant, 1388 Biddle Road.

A second activity for the month comes on Thursday, February 22 at 1 p.m. We'll work on crafts at Jan Grunwald's home, 3479 Durst Street in Medford. Evonne Hubbard, who's organizing the event, says craft kits will be furnished and she promises they will be "easy, fast and designed for those who don't like crafting but enjoy the fellowship."

Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex.

February at First

- 2 Friday**
6:30 p.m. **“It Checks Out” Narcotics Anonymous,** Fellowship Hall
- 3 Saturday**
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous,** Fireside Room
- 4 Sunday**
8:30 a.m. **Informal worship,** Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **Scam-wise class,** Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship,** Sanctuary
- 5 Monday**
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting,** Fellowship Hall
- 6 Tuesday**
10 a.m. **Staff meeting,** workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank,** 950 Columbus Ave.
- 7 Wednesday**
5:30 p.m. **Choir Practice,** Sanctuary
- 9 Friday**
12:30 p.m. **Women’s Fellowship luncheon,** Applebee’s 1388 Bidle Road
6:30 p.m. **“It Checks Out” Narcotics Anonymous,** Fellowship Hall
- 10 Saturday**
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous,** Fireside Room
- 11 Sunday**
8:30 a.m. **Informal worship,** Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **Local Pilgrim class,** Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship,** Sanctuary
Noon, **Worship Committee,** Library
3 p.m. **Jazz Vespers, Timberline Express Big Band,** Sanctuary

Heat and eat
Folks, the Food Bank needs your help. To supplement contributions we get from the Oregon Food Bank through ACCESS, our local community action organization, we need canned food in the category “heat and eat.” Things like chili, beef stew, Spaghetti Os, ravioli, canned macaroni and cheese or corned beef hash. On the first Sunday, February 4, it’s fresh food time: pick up a sack of potatoes, onions or carrots at the market and bring it to church .

- 12 Monday**
4:15 p.m. **Christian Ed Committee,** Library
6:30 p.m. **Mission Committee,** Fireplace Room
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting,** Fellowship Hall
- 13 Tuesday**
10 a.m. **Staff meeting,** workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank,** 950 Columbus Ave.
- 14 Ash Wednesday Lent begins**
5:30 p.m. **Choir Practice,** Sanctuary
6 p.m. **Fellowship Dessert,** Fellowship Hall
7 p.m. **Ash Wednesday worship,** Sanctuary
- 15 Thursday**
9 a.m. **Personnel Committee,** Library
10 a.m. **Finance Committee,** workroom
- 16 Friday**
6:30 p.m. **“It Checks Out” Narcotics Anonymous,** Fellowship Hall
- 17 Saturday**
3 p.m. **Music Educators benefit recital,** Sanctuary
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous,** Fireside Room
- 18 Sunday**
8:30 a.m. **Informal worship,** Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **Local Pilgrim class,** Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship,** Sanctuary
12:30 p.m. **Deacons,** Fireside Room
- 19 Monday Presidents’ Day**
Church office closed, Sarah Corson Center open
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting,** Fellowship Hall
- 20 Tuesday**
10 a.m. **Staff meeting,** workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank,** 950 Columbus Ave.
- 21 Wednesday**
5:30 p.m. **Choir Practice,** Sanctuary
- 22 Thursday**
1 p.m. **Women’s Fellowship,** craft time, Jan Grunwald home 3479 Durst Street
- 23 Friday**
6:30 p.m. **“It Checks Out” Narcotics Anonymous,** Fellowship Hall
- 24 Saturday**
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous,** Fireside Room
- 25 Sunday**
8:30 a.m. **Informal worship,** Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **Local Pilgrim class,** Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship,** Sanctuary
5 p.m. **Classical Vespers, T. J. Snyder & Anna Christina Streletz,** Sanctuary
- 26 Monday**
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting,** Fellowship Hall
- 27 Tuesday**
10 a.m. **Staff meeting,** workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank,** 950 Columbus Ave.
6:30 p.m. **Session,** Fireside Room
- 28 Wednesday**
5:30 p.m. **Choir Practice,** Sanctuary

New officers, vacancies start 2024

Three deacon vacancies and three elder vacancies face the congregation after the Annual Meeting January 28. Nominating Committee Chair Kathy Gordon reported the committee was unable to find nominees during a search which began last fall. No nominations were offered from the floor during the meeting.



Deacons Betty Tozier and Barbara Moore will serve three-year terms.

Elected to the Board of Deacons class of 2027 were Betty Tozier, who currently serves, and Barbara Moore, who returns after a three-year absence. The vacancies to be filled include the one-year remainder of Linda Colehower’s class of 2025 term and

two openings in the class of 2027. Deacons provide support to members and friends in their parishes.

Nikki Keating, currently serving on Session, was re-elected to the class of 2027. Both remaining openings are also part of the class of 2027.



Elder Nikki Keating

If you feel called to serve or have a nomination for any of these vacancies please contact Marthanne Dedrick, chair of the 2024 Congregational Nominating Committee or the church office. Other members of the new committee elected Sunday are Patty Herkert, Josie Metz, Jan Barrett, Terri Johnson, Tam Moore and Lynn Sjolund.



Times of Transition
2023 Annual Report

For those who missed Sunday’s 138th Annual Meeting of the congregation, copies of the Annual Report are available in the church office, in the Narthex and the report is posted on the church website.

Highlights include the 2024 budget of \$1,065,144 for the congregation, Urban Center II Building and the Sarah Corson Child-care and Learning Center; a financial report for 2023 showing \$54,315 was drawn from reserves to cover last year’s expenses, and reports from the Board of Deacons and the several church committees. Written reports from Pastors Murray and Mike and Sarah Corson Center Director Jaime Snider are included along with recognition of retiring church officers and remembrances for members and friends who passed away in 2023.

February birthdays



- 7 Nancy Leever
- 8 Suzann Harrison
- 9 Andy Ullrich
- 15 Marilyn Hultquist
- 15 Sandra Anderson
- 17 Marg Funch
- 22 Mary Lynn Lucas
- 27 Linda Colehower
- 27 Sue Silfvast
- 28 Jaycee Lowe

Early vespers

This month only, Jazz Vespers is at 3 p.m. so you can get home in time to watch the 49’ers and Chiefs in their Super Bowl rematch. Martin Behnke’s Timberline Express Big Band provides the music.

Classical Vespers on February 25 will be at 4 p.m. It features T.J. Snyder, a 2022 graduate of Grants Pass High School currently studying at Rogue Community College. He was co-winner of a Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon concerto competition in 2023 and performed his winning Mendelssohn concerto with the Youth Symphony. Anna Christina Streletz will accompany Snyder on the piano. Snyder hopes to become a professional violinist.

First Presbyterian Church

85 South Holly Street
Medford, Oregon 97501
Phone: (541) 779-1711
Email: fpcm@firstpresmedford.org

Office hours Mon. through Thurs.
9 a.m. to noon.

- Pastor ...Rev. Murray Richmond
- Congregational Care Associate
.....Mike Hubbard
- Associate for Visitation and Pastoral Care
.....Rev. Mary Wright Gillespie
- Minister of Music and Media
.....Tony Chunn
- Administrative & Financial Assistant.....Elizbeth Mahan

Sarah Corson Childcare & Learning Center.....Jaime Snider

Session Committee chairs

- Building & Grounds—Monty Holst (541) 324-1630
- Christian Education—Vacant
- Church Growth — Tom McDermott (541) 734-4675
- Fellowship—Doris Sjolund (541) 857-6646
- Finance — Cathy de Wolfe (541) 773-7350
- Personnel—Carol Holst (541) 899-1147
- Mission—Bob Frey 1-(503) 779-5558
- Worship & Music—Kathy Gordon (541) 772-6526

www.firstpreschurchmedford.com

Your newsletter team

Paulette Avery, Cindy Walker
Barbara & Tam Moore
(541) 608-0171

Copy deadline: 4th Monday of the month prior to publication

email: newsletter.firstpresmedford@gmail.com