


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

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

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
Church

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

8th & Holly

Our 139th year

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



From the pastor’s study
By Murray Richmond

There is an old joke that goes, “What do you get when you mix Christianity with politics?”
The answer? “Politics.”
I got an email this week from a Christian organization that was promoting Theocracy. Theocracy is when a nation is ruled, not by the people, or even by the leaders, but by God. You may have heard it called Christian Nationalism. Basically people who adhere to this way of thinking believe a) this was always intended to be a Christian nation, b) that the law of the Bible should be the law of the land, and c) there should no place for non-Christians in ruling the United States.
I bring this up because it is a growing trend these days, and because I think it is non-biblical, and downright dangerous.

The Kingdom of God was never intended to apply to any nation on earth. God may bless America, but that does not mean God does not bless other nations as well. The story of Pentecost is the story of God transcending language and borders, so the Kingdom was be seen as global, and not tied to any one country directly.
Not to mention that making the Bible the law of the land is highly problematic. Are we really going to stone children if they are disobedient to their parents? Will we really allow a father to sell his daughter into slavery? Will we execute adulterers?
I don’t think so. While we can be guided by basic Judeo-Christian values, such as the latter part of the ten commandments, the parts about not killing or stealing, how do we enforce making the Christian God the only deity that is worshiped in America.
I think the most radical thing about the Gospel of Jesus is that it is open to all people regardless of nationality. Even people whom the Old Testament deems unfit for the Kingdom of God (such as eunuchs) are welcome into the Kingdom described by the New Testament.

The idea of making America into a Christian nation might be appealing to some, but in the long run our faith is defined by our relationship with God, and not our relationship to our country.
There is enough room in the Kingdom of Heaven for all!



Actual Wolf comes to vespers



Dickason

Drummer and singer-songwriter Eric Pollard brings his music to Jazz Vespers at 4 p.m. Sunday, March 10. Pollard began his musical career in Minnesota and in 2012 began performing professionally as Actual Wolf. He’s been part of the Southern Oregon music scene for the past couple of years.
Joining Pollard will be Tarik Ragab on bass, Dean Angermeier on piano, with vocals by Moorea Dickason.



Pollard

Iryna in concert March 24




Kudielina

March Classical Vespers showcases the talents of Iryna Kudielina, the Ukrainian pianist doing graduate studies at Southern Oregon University. The service begins at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary on Sunday, March 24.
Iryna is a recent Platinum Award winner in the international London Young Musicians competition. It’s an on-line contest for artists under 28 years of age. She won the award for an entry in the Romantic Period Music category during the 2023-24 competition.


Spare crib? Do you have an unused crib at home? We need a crib, and a couple of baby blankets, as we re-equip the church nursery. Please call the office if you can help; we’ll arrange to pick up the crib.

Childcare. We have a group of trained volunteers to provide care for younger children during the traditional worship service. Please let an usher know if you wish for your child go to the nursery.



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You are invited to pick up our Lenten daily devotional booklet, *Local Pilgrim*, available on the table in the Narthex. Skip Strauch teaches a Sunday morning class at 9:45 in the Fireside Room highlighting material from the booklet. Join him for this weekly study during Lent.

March at First

1 Friday
6:30 p.m. **“It Checks Out” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fellowship Hall

2 Saturday
Noon **“Attitude of Gratitude” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

3 Sunday
8:30 a.m. **Informal worship**, Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **Local Pilgrim** class, Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary

4 Monday
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting**, Fellowship Hall

5 Tuesday
10 a.m. **Staff** meeting, workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank**, 950 Columbus Ave.

6 Wednesday
5 p.m. **Soup Supper & class**, Fellowship Hall
5:30 p.m. **Choir Practice**, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. **“Men’s Unloaded” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

8 Friday
6:30 p.m. **“It Checks Out” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fellowship Hall

9 Saturday
Noon **“Attitude of Gratitude” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room
12:30 p.m. **Women’s Fellowship luncheon**, El Tapatio 1250 Biddle Rd.
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

10 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
4 p.m. **Jazz Vespers**, Eric Pollard Trio, Sanctuary

11 Monday
4:15 p.m. **Christian Ed Committee**, Library
6:30 p.m. **Mission Committee**, Fireside Room
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting**, Fellowship Hall

12 Tuesday
10 a.m. **Staff** meeting, workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank**, 950 Columbus Ave.
7 p.m. **Concordia Choir** concert, Sanctuary

13 Wednesday
5 p.m. **Soup Supper & class**, Fellowship Hall
5:30 p.m. **Choir Practice**, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. **“Men’s Unloaded” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

15 Friday
6:30 p.m. **“It Checks Out” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fellowship Hall

16 Saturday
Noon **“Attitude of Gratitude” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

17 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

18 Monday
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting**, Fellowship Hall

19 Tuesday
10 a.m. **Staff** meeting, workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank**, 950 Columbus Ave.

20 Wednesday
5 p.m. **Soup Supper & class**, Fellowship Hall
5:30 p.m. **Choir Practice**, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. **“Men’s Unloaded” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

21 Thursday
9 a.m. **Personnel Committee**, Library
10 a.m. **Finance Committee**, workroom
1 p.m. **Women’s Fellowship**, craft time, location TBA

22 Friday
6:30 p.m. **“It Checks Out” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fellowship Hall

23 Saturday
Noon **“Attitude of Gratitude” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

24 *Palm Sunday*
8:30 a.m. **Informal worship**, Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **Local Pilgrim** class, Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary
4 p.m. **Classical Vespers**, Iryna Kudielina, Sanctuary

25 Monday
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting**, Fellowship Hall

26 Tuesday
10 a.m. **Staff** meeting, workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank**, 950 Columbus Ave.
6:30 p.m. **Session**, Fireside Room

27 Wednesday
5:30 p.m. **Choir Practice**, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. **“Men’s Unloaded” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

28 Thursday *Maundy Thursday*
6 p.m. **Maundy Thursday supper** and service, Fellowship Hall

29 Friday
6:30 p.m. **“It Checks Out” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fellowship Hall

30 Saturday
Noon **“Attitude of Gratitude” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

31 *Easter Sunday*
8:30 a.m. **Informal worship**, Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **Local Pilgrim** class, Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary



Join us every Wednesday at 5 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for the Lenten Soup Supper. The Rev. Hugh Anderson leads a study of the book *Meet Jesus at the Table*. Class begins at 5:15 and is over at about 6:30 p.m. Please sign up if you plan to attend.



90 grants in 22 countries eased hunger; over 55,000 pounds of seeds and seedlings were distributed to farmers along with 875 chickens and, in Malawi, 105 women became self-employed through your self-development of people program.

When we each give a little, it amounts to a lot.

Special Offering envelopes can be found at the end of each pew and on the sign-up table in the Narthex. Or you can donate online from our website, just indicate that the donation is for One Great Hour of Sharing.

March birthdays

- 3 Cathy Ullrich
- 4 Samantha Lowe
- 5 Kathryn Adams
- 9 Elizbeth Mahan
- 11 Brooklyn Walston
- 14 Jane Blomquist
- 16 Jack Jones
- 19 Linda McDermott
- 20 K.C. McCoy
- 21 Cindy Bursk
Barbara Moore
- 23 Ginni Peterson
- 26 Dan Johnson
- 27 Sarah Granger
- 28 Kristy Denman
- 29 Jamie Neal
- 30 Betty Tozier

One Great Hour

We Presbyterians are part of a connectional church doing God’s work around the World. And the single, largest way we all come together is through the Lenten One Great Hour of Sharing special offering. It’s been a tradition here at First Presbyterian to be part of this 75-year-old denominational offering.

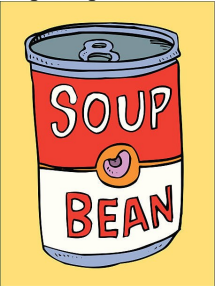
Bring your gifts to worship on Easter Sunday. They support efforts to relieve hunger through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, promote development through the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, and assist in areas of disaster through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Here’s what we Presbyterians did with your gifts in 2023: \$3.1 million went for disaster assistance in the United States and 35 other countries;

Share the soup

For March, the word is “soup!” Canned soup, boxed soup, Cup of Soup, Soup Mix, and last but not least, Ramen Noodles. The West Medford Food Bank has not been getting much soup from ACCESS, our regional connection with the Oregon Food Bank. We need to step up and fill the need for soup. The pantry feeds 600 people a week on average. It would be good if we could bring in 2,400 cans, boxes, or bags of soup during the remainder of Lent.

And this Sunday, March 3, is fresh produce day for the Food Bank. Buy a sack of onions, potatoes, or carrots when you are at the market, and put it in the red cart in the Narthex when you come to church on the first Sunday of the month.



First Presbyterian Church

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