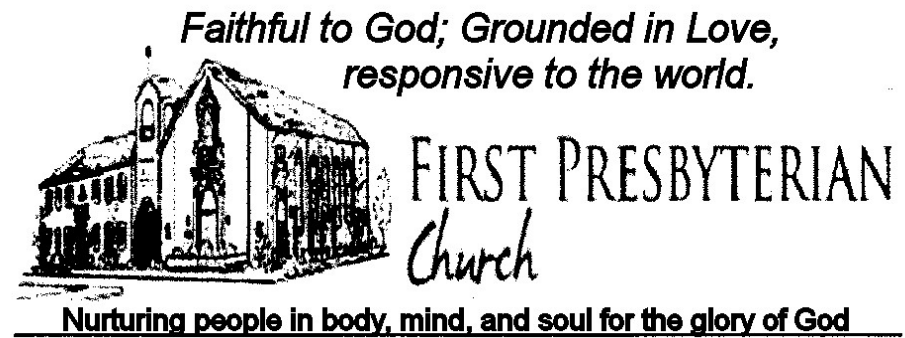


8th & Holly newsletter
First Presbyterian Church
85 South Holly Street
Medford, Oregon 97501

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Our 139th year

The monthly newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Medford, Oregon

May 2024

Big band and brass quintet coming

Trumpeter Corren Hileman's Southern Oregon Jazz Orchestra returns to First Presbyterian for our May 12 Jazz Vespers service, and a brass quintet of Rogue Valley Symphony musicians plays the May 26 Classical Vespers.

The Jazz Orchestra, one of a couple of big bands in the area, began 16 years ago and plays at several local venues. It includes 16 instrumental musicians and a vocalist, and specializes in songs from the Big Band era.

The symphony Quintet also has a long history of entertaining in the area. It includes current and past members of the symphony, many of whom also play in Ashland City Band and Southern Oregon Concert Band.

Both services begin at 5 p.m. and are held in the Sanctuary.

Red Cross eyes disaster readiness



The American Red Cross and our Mission Committee are exploring building upgrades which could improve service to the community during a disaster. Chair Bob Frey this week briefed the Session on talks. He says Red

Cross grants could help with building upgrades such as a possible solar electric power source and improved food storage facilities.

Bob will attend a Red Cross class on writing proposals for their grant program.

Flowers in the woods



It's the month for celebrating the flowers. You are invited to join members of the church family Saturday, May 19 for an easy hike up Elk Creek to view the flowers. There's a signup sheet in the Narthex.

We'll meet at the church parking lot at 9:15 a.m. to organize carpools.

Or you can drive to the Elk Creek trailhead and meet there at 10:15 a.m. Elk Creek is a major tributary of the Rogue River located north of Shady Cove. Bring water, a picnic lunch and your camera. Leashed dogs are welcome.



Jazz Orchestra at Grape Street Grill



From the pastor's study

By Murray Richmond

Part of our mission vision statement says that we are aiming to be "responsive to the world." It is a worthy goal, but what does it look like in real life?

This may be the most controversial part of both our vision and mission statements. So far we are being responsive by feeding hungry people. But the world is a lot bigger than our back door. Being responsive to the world is not always as easy as feeding hungry people at our door.

One of you came into my office a few weeks ago and asked a question I have not forgotten—what does it mean to be responsive to the world given the various situations we face today? A few months ago I wrote a column on Christian Nationalism, and the dangers it raises for both the church and our country. I believe it is an aberration of the Gospel. How are we to respond to it though?

One of the biggest issues facing our nation today is immigration. The Bible says, "When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not wrong

him. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Lev. 19:33-34) Do you think the Christian Nationalists who also oppose immigration haven't gotten to this part of the Bible yet? Or are they just ignoring it?

Closer to home, we have a huge drug problem here in the Rogue Valley. How are we to respond to that as Christians? The War on Drugs has not exactly been a resounding success (unless you count putting record numbers of people behind bars a win). The Bible does not address this specifically, so does that mean we can ignore the problem? That's not being responsive! Maybe we should advocate for more treatment centers. Will that help address the problem in a realistic way? Should we talk about it?

I am not advocating we start to become "political," and by that, I mean getting involved in partisan politics and supporting or opposing certain candidates for office. My standard is twofold; what does the Bible say, and what would Jesus do? In his book *Christ and Culture* Richard Niebuhr looks at different ways Christians can respond to the world around them. One of the ways is Christ Transforming Culture. That means when Christians live by the standards of Jesus in a public way, a way meant to transform the culture, to counter hate with love, to meet ignorance with knowledge, to face prejudice with tolerance, to greet hostility with peace.

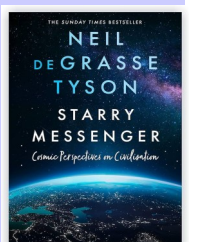
Maybe we should be talking a bit more about this.

Cosmic thoughts

A Monday afternoon Book Club launched a study of *Starry Messenger* in April, and you can still join. The book is a best-seller by astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson. Hugh Anderson is facilitating the study, conducted by Zoom at 4 p.m. each Monday.

Tyson describes his latest book as "a wake-up call to civilization." He suggests that by backing away from issues which divide us, one discovers unifying perspectives.

If you are interested in joining the study, email Hugh at hughanderson2004@msn.com.



May at First

1 Wednesday

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

3 Friday

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

4 Saturday

Noon **“Attitude of Gratitude” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room
Noon **Women’s Fellowship luncheon**, Wild River Brewing Co., 2684 N Pacific Hwy.
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

5 Sunday

8:30 a.m. **Informal worship**, Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **John’s Letters**, Fireplace room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary

6 Monday

4 p.m. **Book Club**, Zoom
4:15 p.m. **Christian Ed Committee**, Library
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting**, Fellowship Hall

7 Tuesday

10 a.m. **Staff meeting**, workroom
Noon, **Staff appreciation luncheon**, Fireside Room and Fellowship Hall
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank**, 950 Columbus Ave.

8 Wednesday

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

10 Friday

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

11 Saturday

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

12 Sunday

8:30 a.m. **Informal worship**, Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **John’s Letters**, Fireside room

(continued column 2)

12 Sunday

11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary
Noon, **Worship Committee**, Library
5 p.m. **Jazz Vespers**, Southern Oregon Jazz Orchestra, Sanctuary

13 Monday

4 p.m. **Book Club**, Zoom
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting**, Fellowship Hall
6:30 p.m. **Mission Committee**, Fireside Room

14 Tuesday

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

15 Wednesday

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

16 Thursday

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

17 Friday

6:30 p.m. **“It Checks Out” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fellowship Hall
6:30 p.m. **Pre-K Graduation**, Holmes Park, 185 S Modoc Ave.

18 Saturday

9:15 a.m. **Wildflower hike**, carpool from church parking lot or 10:15 a.m. at Elk Creek trailhead
Noon **“Attitude of Gratitude” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends” Narcotics Anonymous**, Fireside Room

19 Sunday *Pentecost offering*

8:30 a.m. **Informal worship**, Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **John’s Letters**, Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary
12:15 p.m. **Deacons**, Fireside Room

20 Monday

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

21 Tuesday

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

22 Wednesday

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

24 Friday

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

25 Saturday

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

26 Sunday

8:30 a.m. **Informal worship**, Fellowship Hall
9:45 a.m. **John’s Letters**, Fireside room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary
5 p.m. **Classical Vespers**, Rogue Valley Symphony Brass Quintet, Sanctuary

27 Monday *Memorial Day*

Office and Sarah Corson Center closed
4 p.m. **Book Club**, Zoom
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women’s meeting**, Fellowship Hall

28 Tuesday

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

29 Wednesday

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

31 Friday

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



young person can finish school.

You can bring your gifts on Pentecost Sunday or dedicate a gift through the donation portal on the church website. Please give generously.

May birthdays

- 1 Sue Vanier
Barbara Gurschke
- 2 Kim Hayes
Anne Van Nuys
- 4 Mike Hubbard
- 6 Jeff Vanier
Alan Jones
- 7 Kobe Walston
Sarah Amaya
- 11 Cathy Crandall
- 14 Daphne Rose Marks
- 16 Carl Hultquist
- 17 Todd Diehl
- 17 Norm Peterson
- 18 Ellen Rancik
- 19 Carolee Jones
Evan Heintz
- 20 Derek Mauldin
- 22 Terri Johnson
- 26 Cordelia Arellano
- 27 John Cartmill

Each year on Pentecost Sunday, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the church. Pentecost arrives 50 days after Easter and 10 days after the Ascension — when Jesus ascends into heaven. Jesus ascends and the church is born. If his mission and ministry is to continue, it is upon us, his disciples, to keep it going.

Our gifts to the Pentecost Offering connect with God’s hope and future, supporting ministries with children, youth and young adults by building a life of faith.

Forty percent of your gift stays in this community. Session designated it to our partnership with the Maslow Project. Maslow serves homeless youth and their families in Jackson and Josephine counties. Their goal is stabilizing the family unit so the



Elevator upgrade



The Otis Elevator Co. gave our Urban Center elevator a new lease on life last week. Technician Justus Porta replaced the near 30-year-old circuit board and several elevator controls as part of a maintenance contract signed last year. New elevator standards require periodic technical inspections and upgrades.

First Presbyterian Church

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Congregational Care Associate

.....Mike Hubbard

Associate for Visitation and Pastoral Care

.....Rev. Mary Wright Gillespie

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.....Tony Chunn

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