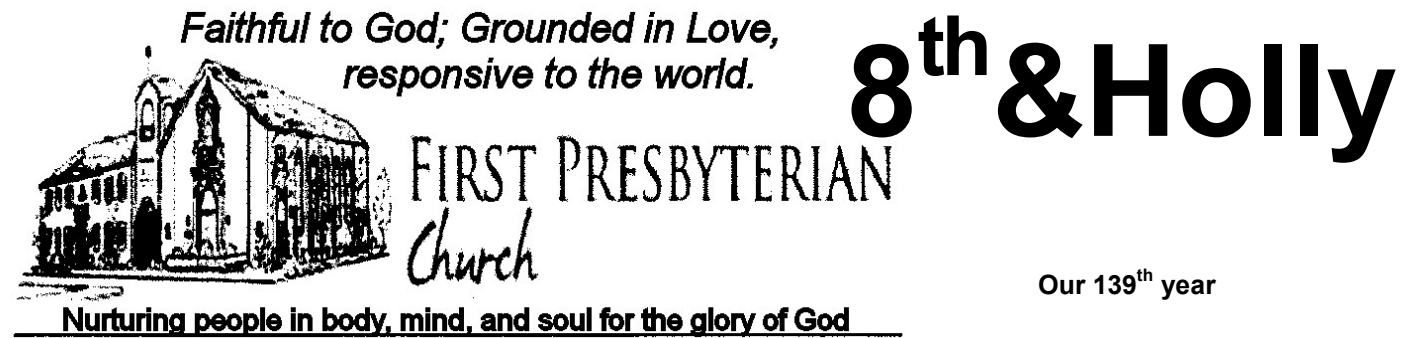


8th & Holly newsletter
First Presbyterian Church
85 South Holly Street
Medford, Oregon 97501

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



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

From the pastor's study

By Murray Richmond and Jaime Snider

If you have been in the church building lately you have noticed a big difference. Our Sarah Corson Child Care Center moved into the Fellowship Hall and church nursery room because of some very complicated water problems next door at their building. At first, we thought it would only take a couple of weeks for the building to be ready to house kids again.

Unfortunately, we were overly optimistic about the timeline. As much as EVERYONE wants the Child Care Center to be back in its own digs, it will be much longer than two weeks before this happens. The water issues in the Sarah Corson Center building are much more serious and mysterious than we first thought. The earliest estimate we have for project completion is six to twelve months. This is not an ideal situation for anyone, but it is a challenge we must accept and conquer. We can do hard things!

We are searching for other alternatives of places to temporarily house our Center, but as of the time of this writing, we have not found a suitable solution. We certainly don't want to tell 50 sets of parents that we no longer have space for their children, and they need to find an alternative childcare solution. Child Care is already very sparse in our area, with one available space for every four to five children needing care. Our Center has a stellar reputation in the Rogue Valley. Sarah Corson Center is part of our mission and has been for over 22 years. We provide affordable, high-quality childcare and preschool for dozens of local working families. Covid-19 very much proved to all of us just how vital and essential childcare services are for working families. Without childcare, much of our workforce would disappear.

We know that this is a major inconvenience for our congregation. Not having the use of the Fellowship Hall has been and will remain hard on us. It is at times like this when we question Paul's words in his letter to the Thessalonians: "In all things give thanks." We are supposed to thank God for this?

God does do some interesting things whenever we face adversity. We are thankful that we did not have to close the Center (but moving into the Fellowship Hall was an administrative nightmare). We can be thankful both church and Center staff worked tirelessly together to organize and execute a very quick plan to move, which only forced one additional day of closure to families to get the Center back up and running in its new location. We can be thankful for local and state entities that moved mountains to quickly give us the approvals needed to operate our childcare center inside the church. We can be thankful we are able to continue to provide quality childcare for working families. We can be thankful we do not have to lay off a dozen church staff who work with our childcare center and preschool. We can be thankful our upstairs tenants, Oregon Pacific Financial Advisors, are able to stay in operation and continue to provide us with monthly rent payments. And we can be thankful this water issue, while massive, is repairable.

While this will be hard on us, both on our Sarah Corson Center and on our congregation, we must look at this as an opportunity for growth. Much of what we do is building-based, primarily occupying the downstairs portion of our building. Perhaps we need to rethink how we do things. Perhaps we need to use the upstairs portion of our building more for small group meetings, outside group meetings, etc. (note: our Sarah Corson Center CANNOT use the upstairs portion of our building due to fire codes preventing children under 10 years of age from occupying the upstairs portion of a commercial building). Perhaps we can learn to be more dependent on each other, and less dependent on our building. Things like education and fellowship activities can happen in homes, coffee houses, restaurants or other venues. Let us use this opportunity to stretch our imaginations concerning what God is able to do through us!

September vespers



Vannice

Composer Michael Vannice brings a group of his musical friends to play the September 5 Jazz Vespers service. Vannice is a multi-talented player of reed instruments who's composed and arranged music for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival for the past decade. His primary instruments are tenor and baritone saxophones.

The service is at 5 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Vannice's quartet includes Scott Rogers, guitar; Joe Cohoon, bass; and Kent Clinkenbeard on drums.

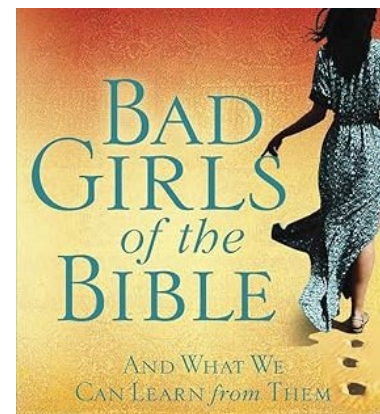
The visual art of Steve Harris, a writer and illustrator of children's books, will be on display in our first-floor hallway gallery. His portfolio features black and white illustrations for a story about a young girl.

Fall study: *Bad Girls of the Bible*

There's lots to learn from stories of women in the Bible. This fall Josie Metz will lead a Thursday evening class on *Bad Girls of the Bible*. It is built around three books by author Liz Curtis Higgs. The 7 p.m. class will be in the office Workroom weekly starting Thursday, September 26.

There's a signup sheet in the Narthex, including a place to indicate if you wish to order a book at \$12 each. We are ordering all three books in the series, and Josie will organize sharing of the references. The *Bad Girl* books can also be downloaded in Amazon Kindle format.

For more information on the series, call Josie at (541) 301-1417.



September at First

1 Sunday
8:30 a.m. **Informal Worship**, Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary

2 Monday Labor Day
Office and Sarah Corson Center closed
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women's meeting**, Great Room

3 Tuesday
10 a.m. **Staff meeting**, workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank**, 950 Columbus Ave.
4:15 p.m. **Christian Ed Committee**, workroom
6:30 p.m. **Growth Committee**, workroom

4 Wednesday
6:30 p.m. **"Men's Unloaded" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room

6 Friday
6:30 p.m. **"It Checks Out" Narcotics Anonymous**, basement room

7 Saturday
Noon, **Women's Fellowship Luncheon**, Wild River Brewing Co., 2684 N. Pacific Hwy.
Noon, **"Attitude of Gratitude" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room
7 p.m. **"Circle of Friends" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room

8 Sunday
8:30 a.m. **Informal Worship**, Fireside Room
9:45 a.m. **"Your Vote" class**, Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary
Noon, **Worship Committee**, workroom
12:15 p.m. **Deacons**, Fireside Room
5 p.m. **Jazz Vespers, Michael Vannice Quartet**, Sanctuary

9 Monday
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women's meeting**, Great Room
6:30 p.m. **Mission Committee**, workroom

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

11 Wednesday
6:30 p.m. **"Men's Unloaded" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room

13 Friday
6:30 p.m. **"It Checks Out" Narcotics Anonymous**, basement room

14 Saturday
Noon **"Attitude of Gratitude" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room
7 p.m. **"Circle of Friends" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room

15 Sunday
8:30 a.m. **Informal Worship**, Fireside Room
9:45 a.m. **"Your Vote" class**, Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary

16 Monday
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women's meeting**, Great Room

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

18 Wednesday
6:30 p.m. **"Men's Unloaded" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room

19 Thursday
9 a.m. **Personnel Committee**, Library
10 a.m. **Finance Committee**, workroom
1:30 p.m. **Women's Fellowship**, craft time, workroom

20 Friday
6:30 p.m. **"It Checks Out" Narcotics Anonymous**, basement room

21 Saturday
Noon **"Attitude of Gratitude" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room
5:30 p.m. **Fall Kickoff BBQ**, offsite location TBA
7 p.m. **"Circle of Friends" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room

22 Sunday
8:30 a.m. **Informal Worship**, Sanctuary
9:45 a.m. **"Your Vote" class**, Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary

23 Monday
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women's meeting**, Great Room

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

25 Wednesday
6:30 p.m. **"Men's Unloaded" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room

26 Thursday
7 p.m. **"Bad Girls of Bible" class**, workroom

27 Friday
3 p.m. **Dana Collins memorial service**, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. **"It Checks Out" Narcotics Anonymous**, basement room

28 Saturday
Noon **"Attitude of Gratitude" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room
7 p.m. **"Circle of Friends" Narcotics Anonymous**, Great Room

29 Sunday
8:30 a.m. **Informal Worship**, Sanctuary
9:45 a.m. **Adult Sunday School**, Fireside Room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary

30 Monday
6:30 p.m. **Narcotics Anonymous women's meeting**, Great Room

Leak search update

Water damage in the Sarah Corson Center is widespread, contractors say, and there's still many theories about where the moisture originated. In an update for Session this week, Center Director Jaime Snider and Bob Haddon of the Building and Grounds committee described several theories from plugged downspout drains to infiltration of ground water.

"Any area of doubt, we have to deal with it now, so it doesn't happen in the future," said Bob. He and Jaime met with Bel for Restoration, general contractor on the job, later this week to map out strategies.

It's estimated that once the source or sources are confirmed repairs will take months to accomplish. Jaime said much of the flooring is removed in the five Center classrooms as part of the leak investigations. Since July, Center classes have used the Fellowship Hall and Nursery for their students. Sarah Corson is one of only two state-licensed infant care facilities in Medford.

Shifting rooms

We've rearranged our facilities for the interim. The office workroom is a primary small meeting room. Narcotics Anonymous groups are meeting upstairs in the Great Room and downstairs in the former preschool play room.

We've withdrawn our invitation to host the November presbytery meeting, and First, Ashland will host instead.

Offsite BBQ

Our Fall Kickoff barbecue is on track for 5:30 p.m. Saturday, September 21.

It will be at an off-site location, and will be potluck with the church furnishing the main course, Pastor Murray's North Carolina barbecued pork. Bring a side dish or dessert to this festive meal.

Acclaimed organist books October concert

John West, the organist and choir director for Hollywood Methodist Church in Los Angeles, will play our Schoenstein Organ Sunday, October 27. West is a composer and much-celebrated musician in Southern California. He's house organist for the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. Dudley and Ginni Peterson are sponsoring the Medford concert. Robin Blomquist says arrangements are being worked out. Expect more details in early October.



West

September birthdays

- 1 Doris Sjolund
- 3 Vickie Reierson
- 9 Al Densmore
Jennifer Belford
- 12 Jim Foucault
- 15 Alice Smith
- 16 Meghan MacDonald
- 21 Dick Birkinshaw
Michelle Mauldin
- 22 Mary Dixon
- 23 Marv Hayes



Much of our attention this fall is on the presidential race already unfolding. Far down on Oregon's ballots are six measures which may directly impact us – including one on how Oregon counts ballots in future elections.

Two of our resident political experts, Al Densmore and Tam Moore, will teach three special 9:45 a.m. Sunday School classes on the ballot measures, beginning September 8. Classes will be in the Fireside Room. Al is a former state legislator and mayor of Medford. Tam is a former Jackson County commissioner.

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Associate for Visitation and Pastoral Care
.....Rev. Mary Wright Gillespie
Minister of Music and Media
.....Tony Chunn
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Copy deadline: 4th Monday of the month prior to publication

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