


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 140th year

The monthly newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Medford, Oregon

May 2025



View from the Bridge

By Mike Hubbard

I write this article with strains of Jonas Nordwall’s arrangement of Jean Sebelius’ Finlandia echoing in my mind. Long one of my favorites, Nordwall chose to close April’s Classical Vespers program. Hearing it beautifully played on our equally beautiful organ will stay with me for a long time.

As a hymn, the lyrics are assuring: “Be still, my soul! the Lord is on your side”—truly music to “soothe a savage breast.” As a whole, the piece (technically a “tone poem”) evokes some of that



Jonas Nordwall in concert April 27

Congressional help asked to unfreeze food distribution

Facing the possible loss of up to 40 percent of available foods through continuation of a federal freeze of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Emergency Food Assistance Program, Session this week asked Rep. Cliff Bentz (R-Oregon) for help.

The freeze, ordered shortly after installation of our new President in January, forced cancellation of many surplus food deliveries across the country. USDA’s program purchased surplus commodities for distribution to food banks.

“As the governing body of First Presbyterian Church, we are very concerned about the future of the hungry in this community, and across the nation,” said Session in its letter to Bentz.

Bentz, in his second term in Congress, is a member of the House subcommittee on Health, and is part of the House Rural Health caucus. His Oregon second congressional district includes vast farms which in past decades sold surplus crops to USDA.

Transition team listens

Mark Saturday, May 10 on your calendar for a report on what our Transition Team is learning about this congregation, and the community we serve. The location and time of the meeting is being worked out.

The Rev. Robin Garvin, our transitional consulting pastor, will be here that weekend while Pastor Mike takes some vacation days. She will lead worship on Sunday, May 11.

Dan Johnson, co-chair of the team which is laying the groundwork in our search for a new pastor, told Session this week that 52 members and friends responded to a survey conducted this spring. The team is analyzing responses. It is scheduling interviews with community leaders to update our understanding of local needs.

At the May 10 meeting, the team presents preliminary findings, then will ask participants to react to the information, and share their insight..



savagery.

Finlandia was originally part of a much larger composition written as a political protest against Czarist Russia. To avoid Russian censorship, it was performed under different names in a variety of concert venues. It was the music of the partisan underground. In that context, its dark and ominous opening assumes a whole new meaning.

Why is *View from the Bridge* offering a music review? Perhaps because Sibelius’ dark and ominous view of his homeland’s circumstances resembles our own. The first four minutes of Finlandia could be the soundtrack for Ephesians 6:11-12: *...For our struggle is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*

By any measure—climate change, shifting systems of global power, social/political volatility, or economic outlook—Paul’s assessment of this present darkness plays in a minor chord. For us, it’s the diminishing influence of mainline Protestant churches, the rise of Christian Nationalism, and an erosion of humanitarian values. We struggle in realms of spiritual darkness.

Of course, Paul’s letter didn’t leave the Ephesians in the dark. He closed with “Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Nor did Sibelius leave us in the dark. Near its end, calmness prevails with the serene and melodic Finlandia Hymn. Numerous hymn writers have lent lyrics to the tune. The one we know best, Be Still My Soul, is perhaps the most poignant:

*Be still, my soul! your God does undertake
To guide the future as he has the past;
Your hope, your confidence, let nothing shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul! the waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while he lived below.*

Grace and peace. Pastor Mike

May at First

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

3 Saturday
Noon **“Attitude of Gratitude”**
Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room
Noon, **Women’s Fellowship**
Luncheon, Casa Vieja, 959 Medford Center
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends”** Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room

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

5 Monday
4 p.m. **Zoom book club** email hughanderson2004@msn.com for the link
6:30 p.m. **“Dopeless Hopechicks”** Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room

6 Tuesday
10 a.m. **Staff meeting**, workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank**, 750 N Columbus Ave

7 Wednesday
4:15 p.m. **Christian Ed** Committee, workroom
5:30 p.m. **Choir practice**, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. **“Men’s Unloaded”** Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room

8 Thursday
6 p.m. **Bad Girls of Bible** class, workroom

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

10 Saturday
TBA **Transition** listening meeting
Noon **“Attitude of Gratitude”**
Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room
7 p.m. **“Circle of Friends”** Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room

11 Sunday
8:30 a.m. **Informal Worship**, Fireside room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary
5 p.m. **Jazz Vespers**, Southern Oregon Jazz Orchestra, Sanctuary

12 Monday
4 p.m. **Zoom book club** email hughanderson2004@msn.com for the link
6:30 p.m. **Mission** Committee, workroom
6:30 p.m. **“Dopeless Hopechicks”** Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room

13 Tuesday
10 a.m. **Staff meeting**, workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank**, 750 N Columbus Ave.
6:30 p.m. **Vitality** committee, workroom

14 Wednesday
5:30 p.m. **Choir** practice, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. **“Men’s Unloaded”** Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room

15 Thursday
9 a.m. **Personnel** Committee, Pastor’s Study
10 a.m. **Finance** Committee, workroom
1 p.m. **Women’s Fellowship** craft time, workroom
6 p.m. **Bad Girls of Bible** class, workroom

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

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

18 Sunday
8:30 a.m. **Informal Worship**, Fireside room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary
Noon **New members’** class, Youth Lounge (2nd floor)
Noon, **Worship** committee, Sanctuary

19 Monday
Sarah Corsen closed. MOVING DAY
4 p.m. **Zoom book club**
6:30 p.m. **“Dopeless Hopechicks”** Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room

20 Tuesday *Sarah Corson reopens in Urban Center II*
10 a.m. **Staff meeting**, workroom
12:30 p.m. **Food Bank**, 750 N Columbus Ave.
6 p.m. **Bad Girls of Bible** class, workroom

21 Wednesday
5:30 p.m. **Choir** practice, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. **“Men’s Unloaded”** Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room

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

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

25 Sunday
8:30 a.m. **Informal Worship**, Fireside room
11 a.m. **Traditional Worship**, Sanctuary
4 p.m. **Classical Vespers**, Tereza Golombková, Sanctuary

26 Monday *Memorial Day*
Office and Sarah Corson Center closed
4 p.m. **Zoom book club** email hughanderson2004@msn.com for the link
6:30 p.m. **“Dopeless Hopechicks”** Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room

27 Tuesday
10 a.m. **Staff meeting**, workroom
12:30 p.m. Food Bank, 750 N Columbus Ave.
6:30 p.m. **Session**, Fireside Room

28 Wednesday
5:30 p.m. **Choir** practice, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. **“Men’s Unloaded”** Narcotics Anonymous, Great Room

29 Thursday
6 p.m. **Bad Girls of Bible** class, workroom

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

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

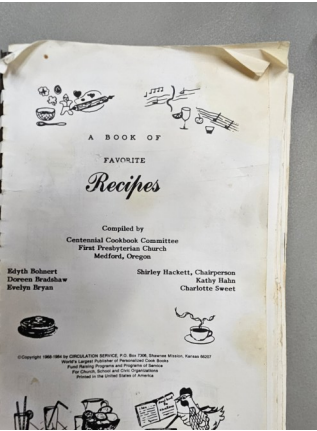
A season of church history



The 1896 building at Main and Holly

During worship June 8, you’ll get to hear a hymn popular at the time of our founding, played on a pump organ which was part of our early worship services. For the pot-luck meal following the single 10:30 a.m. service, folks will be asked to prepare casseroles or salads from recipes found in the 185-page Centennial Cookbook published in 1985, when this congregation celebrated its first century.

At the potluck, you’ll learn about the contents of a time capsule first installed when the Christan Education wing was built in 1952. It was most recently opened and contents added, in 2000. Folks at the potluck will be asked to suggest items we might add to the collection – and how long the congregation should wait before again looking into the time capsule.



Centennial Cook Book

May birthdays

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

You are invited

If you’ve been worshiping with us for a while, we invite you to join us for a light lunch, Sunday, May 18. We’ll have some information on what it means to be a Presbyterian, some of the ways you can help us grow God’s Kingdom here in Medford, and if you are interested, how to formally join First Presbyterian Church of Medford.

There’s a sign-up sheet in the Narthex where you can leave your contact information, and let us get a count of those coming to lunch on May 18.

We’ll meet after the 11 a.m. service, upstairs on the second floor of the Christian Education Wing in the Youth Lounge.

Chicken or fish?

You make the choice. Our Food Bank needs both of these popular proteins in May to augment food we get through ACCESS, the local community action agency, and the Oregon Food Bank. Please shop for either canned chicken or fish, or the newer servings which come in a pouch.

Your contributions can be put in the red grocery cart located in the Narthex.

First Presbyterian Church

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.....Tony Chunn
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