

Community Presbyterian Church

1100 College Avenue

Pastor's Corner



We enter a new church year on Nov. 29! This is good news for those who couldn't wait for this year to be over! In Advent, we look forward to the return of Christ as we celebrate the One who "became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood" (John 1:14 Message). Our Advent theme is based on this poem:

I believe in the sun; even when it's not shining.
I believe in love; even when I don't feel it.
I believe in God; even when God is silent.

The poem historically is attributed to an anonymous Jewish prisoner in a concentration camp who wrote it on the walls of a cellar. I can't verify it's source. But I can verify it is a poem, which offers us, hope, love, peace and joy so needed this year.

We who follow Jesus keep waiting, holding on to his hope, to his love, to his peace and to peace, which passes all understanding. 2020 has been a very different year than most of us have ever experienced. While I too am looking forward to a vaccine and life without masks, mandates and malice, the truth of Jesus is timeless. He holds us especially in the hard times. When we keep our eyes on Jesus, we can throw off everything that gets in the way and run with endurance the race set out for us. (Heb.12:1-2) Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. (Gal. 6:9).

As the end of this year draws to a close, may we draw from Jesus all we need to keep on! May we

receive hope for the journey, peace in our lives, love for others and joy in our hearts.

In Christ,
Janet

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|------------------|-------|
| Kay Cowin        | 12/01 |
| Lexie Barbour    | 12/04 |
| Koreena Stowell  | 12/05 |
| Linda Weinman    | 12/08 |
| Caden Fitzgerald | 12/12 |
| Tim Schueller    | 12/13 |
| Neil Smith       | 12/14 |
| Jim Thornes      | 12/15 |
| Adysen Osborn    | 12/20 |



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"Advent" means "coming" or "arrival." During the season of Advent, we celebrate Christ's coming into the world and watch with expectant hope for his coming again. In its historical origins, the season of Advent was patterned after the season of Lent, a six-week period of penitence and preparation for Easter. Similarly, the four weeks of Advent present an opportunity for communal discernment and personal examination, as the church prepares to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord and looks with hope for Christ's return.



Between memory and hope

An excerpt from the Companion to the Book of Common Worship (Geneva Press, 2003, 96)

In Advent we expectantly wait for the One who has already come. We anticipate the promised justice of God's new world, yet we praise God who raised the "righteous branch" to rule with justice and

righteousness. We hope for the restoration of the afflicted, the tormented, and the grieving, yet we delight that healing has come in Christ. We long for the beating of swords into plowshares, yet we rejoice that the Prince of Peace has appeared. We yearn for the barren deserts of our inner cities to flourish, yet we laud the desert Rose that has bloomed. We dream of the land where lions and lambs live in harmony, yet we acclaim the child born to lead us into the promised land.



Christ has come! Christ is risen! Christ will come again! In Advent, we are living between the first and the second coming of the Lord. The dialectical tension of maranatha [alternately translated “Come, our Lord!” or “Our Lord has come”] — placing us between memory and hope, past and future — may strengthen our Advent liturgies. Perhaps we need to cling to the ancient cry of

maranatha! and its paradoxical meanings so we may freely embrace “the new thing” prophesied by Isaiah (Isaiah 43:19) that God is doing among us right now. The tension and paradox we find in Advent shapes our celebrations during the season.

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Christmas Eve Worship Service

Time: 5:00pm,
How: in person or by zoom/Facebook.

Advent Candles will be lit by our Mountain Movers Youth Group! The offering from this service will be given to the St. Maries Volunteer Free Clinic.

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You never really know the true impact you have on those around you. You never know how much someone needed that smile you gave them. You never know how much your kindness turned

someone’s entire life around. You never know how much someone needed that long hug or deep talk. So don’t wait to be kind. Don’t wait for someone else to be kind first. Don’t wait for better circumstances or for someone to change. Just be kind, because you never know how much someone needs it.



– Nikki Banas

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Bev McCuaig shared this with us from the Daily Guidepost - 2020

Monday, October 5

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!”
– Philippians 4:4 (NKJV)



My name is Grace, known as Gracie the golden retriever. I’m three years old. I think you’ve heard about me from my person, Edward Grinnan. Today I want to talk about my tail. Dogs have them. Humans don’t. There are reasons for that.

You wouldn’t believe how many ways I use my tail. When I’m happy, it wags like crazy. Sometimes when I am really happy, my whole back end wags. I think there is no greater expression of joy in the world than a wagging tail. Dogs wear our hearts on our tails, that’s for sure. If I’m having a good dream, my tail wags even though I am asleep!

If I am sad or disappointed, my tail droops. It’s like I’m just too down to even raise it. Not all wagging is happy or sad. Trust me on this. I wag slowly when I am uncertain about something, like if other dogs will let me sniff them. Occasionally, I misinterpret other dogs’ wags. I’ve run into trouble because of that. I must be more sensitive to others!

As noted, it’s a good thing people don’t have tails. I think people would put too much importance on them. They’d spend lots of money on tail-grooming products and tail ornaments.

Their tails would be status symbols. I also worry that people with certain sorts of tails would not like people with different tails. There would be tail prejudice! Maybe this is why God did not give people tails. Dogs don’t do this. We respect all tails, even those short and stubby ones. All tails are important!



A tail is good for many things. But most of all, it’s how we dogs smile at the world.

Hardly a day goes by, Lord, when the dog You gave me doesn’t teach me something. Help me to be more like she is, seeing the world with an open, accepting heart.

– Edward Grinnan



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I'm too blessed to be stressed
 Too grateful to be hateful
 When life gets you down,
 You gotta.....
 Smile a little bigger
 Laugh a little louder
 Give a little more
 Forgive a little quicker
 Love a little deeper
 Swim through life a little slower.

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Why go to Church?

If you're spiritually alive, you're going to love this!
 If you're spiritually dead, you won't want to read it.
 If you're spiritually curious, there is still hope!

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday.

He wrote: "I've gone for 30 years now, and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons, but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time. The preachers are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all".

This started a real controversy in the 'Letters to the Editor' column. Much to the delight of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today.

Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

When you are DOWN to nothing, God is UP to something!

Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible, and receives the impossible! Thank God for our physical and our spiritual nourishment!

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On Christmas morning a woman told her husband, "I just dreamed that you gave me a beautiful diamond necklace.

What do you think it means?"

"You'll know tonight," he said.

That evening just before opening presents, the husband came home with a small package and gave

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The Youth/Christian Education

The Mountain Movers appreciate the new furniture for their "hang-out." The bigger television makes it soooooo much nicer to watch their message videos. The kids love the new fun seating. Mountain Movers meet every first and third Wednesday from 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. A special thank you to Kay Cowin for always filling the kids' bellies!



The Christian Education Committee determined that, because of the Covid pandemic, there will be no Children's Christmas program this year. While the Christmas program is one of the highlights of the year and will be greatly missed, our primary concern is the health and safety of our children, their families and our church family.

In order to connect with the children during December, an Advent bag will be sent to the children. The bag includes a candy advent countdown, a devotional, a few Christmas activities and trivia question cards.

As far as what comes after December, it depends on what the virus does. The numbers, which as you know have been rising, will need to go down considerably before Sunday School and any after school activities happen.

The January Christian Education meeting will assess the situation. A determination will be made at that time.

it to his wife.

Delighted, she opened it only to find a book entitled "The Meaning of Dreams."

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Missions Update

Operation Christmas Child

Child was a success for our contribution, despite the pandemic and fewer people at church donating and a crimp on shopping for many of us. We sent off 158 shoe boxes filled with gifts for kids around the world. We



collected funds to help send them, mostly with our OCC collection jar. More than \$800 came in. Included in those contributions was a gift of \$102.75 in memory of Pat Ducommun from the St. Maries Women's Study Club. We blessed the boxes and kids who will be receiving them during worship on Nov. 15. We will be tracking where they go and let you know when we have that information. A big thank you to all who helped fill the boxes, donated money to send them, and helped deliver them to our regional collection site.

We received a thank you from the **Phoenix Community Presbyterian Church** in Oregon for the \$1000 donation we made to them after the devastating fire that ripped through their town, destroying much of their community. The money will be used to help people rebuild their community and help meet some of their immediate needs.

Sandy is including an **alternate advent calendar** with ideas for donations by you to help fill our Free Little Pantry. Feel free to substitute items if it works out better for you. Bring your donations in any time.

Our **Christmas family** this year is a young family who has a very premature baby and many extra expenses. We plan to do our donations a bit differently this year. We want to help them with some of those expenses in way that best helps them and their needs. Marge Gannon is again coordinating this project. The best way this year to share our love is by gifting them with funds/cash that we will transfer most into gift cards which they can then choose where to use it. When you contribute, please label your gift "Christmas Family."

Thank you all for your love and sharing for all our mission projects. God bless you all.

Nativity of the Lord/Christmas

Since at least the fourth century in Rome, Christians have celebrated the incarnation and nativity of Jesus Christ on December 25. There is more than

one theory about the origin of this festival day. Some have suggested that it was established to replace the Roman feast of Natalis Solis Invicti (the "birthday of the unconquered sun"). Others believe that Jesus was conceived on March 25 (coinciding with the date of his crucifixion, as recorded by some witnesses in the early church); December 25 is exactly nine months later.

Regardless, the time between December 25 and January 6 (Epiphany) has become an occasion for the church to celebrate and give thanks for the arrival of God's Word made flesh — the light of God that has come into the world, the light that even death could not extinguish.

The Word became Flesh

An excerpt from the Companion to the Book of Common Worship (Geneva Press, 2003, 92-93)

What is "Christmas"? It is three words: God in flesh; or four syllables: in-car-na-tion. The Gospel according to John (1:14) tells us, "The Word became flesh and lived among us, ... full of grace and truth." Christmas proclaims that God has come in flesh, has come "to save us all from Satan's power." Christmas celebrates far more than a birthday; Christmas acclaims the advent of messianic salvation. Christ was sent among us in order to save us. ...

What we pay homage to at Christmas, therefore, is that the ultimate fulfillment of God's saving purpose begins with the birth of Jesus, the messianic Savior. God's only Son is born among us in order to save the world. This is the message of Christmas.

From the beginning of time, God's saving purpose has been at work. God has raised up the seed of Abraham, including Moses and Gideon and Samson and John the Baptist. Through all these generations, God has been faithfully at work raising persons to bring us the Davidic Messiah, the messianic King, the Son of the Most High who will ascend the throne of David. Through all of human history, God has been bringing forth Jesus Christ. Now through the birth of the Savior, God's purpose will be fulfilled. God has acted to save God's people. The Christ child is born for the saving of the world.

