



Highlights

First Presbyterian Church

From the Heart

Dear Friends in Christ,

If you or someone you know has ever been hurt by the Church or by other Christians, you know how painful that can be. Those wounds can run deep, leave lasting scars, and in some cases never fully heal. Sometimes a word or event can trigger past traumas and resurface old wounds we thought had gone away. How can we heal from such wounds? Where can we go for help when the place we sought refuge is the same place that afflicted us in the first place? And how can we help others who have suffered spiritual abuse?

Spiritual abuse can take on many forms. Sometimes it can be a single incident directed at an individual, like a dispute that gets out of hand, leading to unkind words or actions in the heat of the moment. Sometimes these are unhealthy or abusive patterns that go unchecked and leave entire communities wounded. Then there are the much-publicized cases of systemic abuses like in the Roman Catholic Church or more recently in the Southern Baptist Convention where cases of misconduct and child abuse have been covered up by the church or simply swept under the rug.

In addition to conflicts within the church, the very teachings themselves can cause harm. Women have been told by pastors to remain in abusive relationships, for example, because of the church's interpretation of certain biblical passages.

Some have been wounded when the church's teachings have led them to judge or exclude family members based on their religious beliefs, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any number of other categories.

It is a wonder that the Church has survived the harm it has inflicted on others in Jesus' name over the centuries!

As someone who has experienced the best and the worst of the Church during my 28 years of ordained ministry, I would like to open the door to share our experiences of being wounded by the Church. My hope is that by revisiting past church-related trauma in a safe and confidential setting, we can experience some healing and a renewal of our hearts. This can take place one on one, or if you are interested in a small group setting, I'd like to invite you to consider a four-week small group opportunity that Becca and I will host in our home from 7 - 8:30 pm beginning, Thursday, September 26th, entitled *Wounded by the Church*. This will be the first in a series of four-week small group experiences we are calling *Small Talks on Big Issues* that will take place between now and next June. Note: space is limited to ten people, and there is a process for registering, so please look for the *Small Talks on Big Issues* write-up for more details.

In my experience, people who have been hurt by the Church tend to feel alone or have trouble finding safe, healthy outlets to express their trauma. This is not surprising, because Christians and Christian institutions can both be the source of great help and great harm. Once someone has been traumatized, it can make trusting other Christians and churches that much more difficult. When this happens, it can lead to a spiral of despair and even a loss of faith.

If this resonates with you or someone you are close to, please know that you/they are not alone. Time and time again, Jesus spoke out about the harm the religious leaders were causing the people they were supposed to shepherd. He also offered another way, one of self-giving love, humility, and forgiveness. May the Lord open paths for healing.

Godspeed,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Church Business Items

Session Actions

Session did not meet in August.
The next Session meeting will be on September 16.

July Financials

Income Year-to-Date: \$252,334
Income Budgeted YTD: \$220,910
2024 Annual Income Budgeted:
\$380,880

Expenses Year-to-Date: \$241,742
Expenses Budgeted YTD: \$242,235
2024 Annual Expenses Budgeted:
(\$417,647)

Capital Spending YTD: (\$101,085)
2024 Annual Capital Budget:
(\$112,600)

Water Damage Building Repairs
thus far: (\$30,142)
Water Damage Insurance Payment:
\$167,762

July Financials continued:

The capital spending reflects the elevator safety lock and the finished heating and cooling upgrade, copier for front office, and new sound bar.

We celebrate the revival of Vacation Bible School. The monetary donations of \$90.00 and many hours of volunteer power were multiplied, resulting in smiles and scripture lessons that will stay with the children.

The children collected over \$149.00 in donations to provide clean drinking water to families in Honduras.

Memorial Service

Saturday, October 5, 1 pm Sanctuary

There will be a memorial service for Nancy Helwick in the sanctuary on Saturday, October 5 at 1 pm.



Worshiping and Learning

Sunday School Kick-off **Sunday, September 8** **In between services**

Information will be available on the upcoming Sunday School classes for both adults and children.

Adult Sunday School **Sundays, 9:45 am** **Resumes Sunday, September 15**

Stan Jacobson will be leading this class with a 4-week course called *Spiritual Pilgrims: Listening to the Voice of God*.

Often, we describe prayer as speaking and listening to God, but when it comes down to listening to God we are often living in a fog.

In each session we will focus on different ways God seeks to speak to us. In lesson one we will experience how God wants to speak to us through the Scriptures. In lesson two the focus will be listening to God through the people in our lives and lesson three will focus on listening to God through our inner-most desires. Finally in lesson four we will look at the place of spiritual direction in listening to God.

I hope that you will attend, experience, and learn.

Youth Sunday School **Sundays, 9:45 am** **Resumes Sunday, September 15**

Naomi Circle **Monday, September 9, 1 pm** **Fellowship Hall**

Naomi Circle will be studying from the book *Brave and Beloved, An In-Depth Study of Women of the Bible*.

The church office has the books. Come pick up your book during business hours. The books are \$15.00 each or whatever you can donate towards the cost.

Beverly Brown, 360-457-8205,
antbk2p2@olypen.com.

Praise Team Rehearsals **Tuesdays, 6:45 pm** **Resumes Tuesday, September 3**

If you would like to be part of the worship praise team, contact Michael Rivers.



Special Events

Annual Sun & Shade Church Picnic



Saturday, September 7, 3 – 6 pm
Dona & Stan Hair's home

Join your church family for a fun afternoon of food and fellowship. There will be plenty of chairs, tables, water and parking. Just bring yourselves, some food to share and whatever you'd like to drink...we will have water. The address is 681 Diamond Vista Drive, Port Angeles. A short 4 miles from the church.

Please sign up at the Connection Center and note what food you're going to bring.

Carpooling from the church will be available.

Youth Group Fall BBQ

Saturday, September 21, 5 – 7 pm
Michael Rivers' home



Calling all youth!

Michael Rivers, our church's Worship Team Leader, has invited us all to his house for a fun evening. We will have a BBQ, yard games, and singing around a campfire. Invite a friend, and come enjoy a last summer-type activity before school gets too crazy, and the fall weather sets in!

Church Grounds Clean-up Party

Saturday, September 28, 9:30 am

It is that time of year again when we will gather and cleanup the church grounds.

Come one and all and bring your clippers, loppers, pruners, and rakes, big and small.

We will have compostable bags for yard waste.

Monthly Events

Book Club

Thursday, September 19, 10:30 am
Fellowship Hall

Reel Reflections

Returns on October 20.



Special Sunday matinee, 2 pm
Fellowship Hall
***Secondhand Lions* is the film.**

Small Talks on Big Issues

Thursday Evening Small Groups, 7 - 8:30 pm

Small Talks on Big Issues are four-week small group opportunities for people to delve into some weighty subjects in a caring, supportive, and confidential community of brothers and sisters in Christ. Groups will meet at 7:00 pm at the Pauls' home and share a dessert before entering into conversations on sensitive topics close to many of our hearts. Topics will vary throughout the year, and participants are only asked to commit to any one four-week session.

Because space is limited and building trust is critical, please consider the following to determine whether this small group experience is for you:

- 1. Does the subject personally affect you or someone you love?*
- 2. Are you willing to explore the intersection of faith and the subject matter with a spirit of curiosity? Curiosity is key, because these are not easy subjects with pat answers—in fact, you may end up with more questions.*
- 3. Are you willing to be vulnerable, share openly, listen to others, and engage in sensitive discussions, all while listening to the Holy Spirit speak through others and through the experience? Because these subjects will personally resonate with members of the group, good listening and heartfelt sharing will be the keys to creating a supportive and safe community.*
- 4. Can you make the time commitment to attend all four gatherings?*

Small Talks on Big Issues is not for everyone, but for those with a burning desire to share their stories and struggles with a goal of seeking better understanding of the topics and of oneself, this might be just right for you. If you are interested in taking part, please contact Pastor Matt for more information and to complete the registration process.

Session One: Wounded by the Church

Some call it spiritual abuse: when the fellowship community that is supposed to demonstrate the love and compassion of Jesus Christ misuses its power and authority and causes harm to individuals or whole groups of people. Have you ever been hurt by the church or by what you have seen the church do to others? Our hope in this first session will be to share our stories, grow in understanding, and even confess our own complicity in causing harm to others in Christ's name through our actions or inaction...and to gain a measure of healing.

Meeting Dates

September 26

October 3, 17, 24





Thank you

This year's Sizzling Super Sale netted about \$4,500 for Olympic Angels, the nonprofit supporting local foster care. It's about \$100 more than last year. Small amounts are still arriving!

What a monumental effort by our congregation dealing with an avalanche of donated items, the sorting and positioning, the cashiering, kitchen help, advertising, and the cleanup and distribution of unsold items. A gigantic thank you to all who lent a hand in making this a marvelous mission outreach in our community. Lots of raves from shopper/donors.

So many of you pitched in and I would attempt to recognize you all but fear I'll omit someone, so I won't go there. But I do want to say thank you to Vee Canning for obtaining a \$250 Thrivent grant for advertising and feeding volunteers. Thrivent is a Lutheran Church insurance and charitable program.

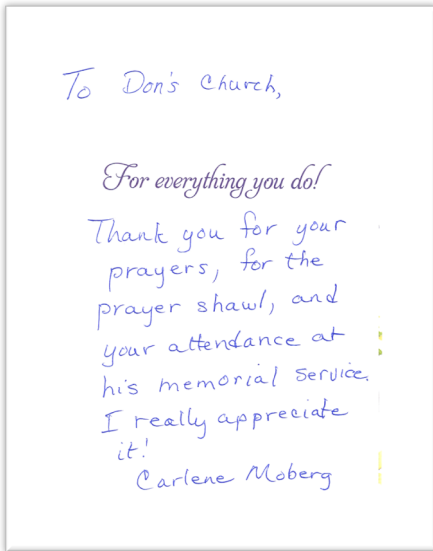
Also, this sale could never have happened without Bobbie Buckley onsite daily to set up and sort and support sale day, a big hand up front from Dorita Reed, and brawn from Stan Hair in moving and setting up and breaking down tables. Phew.

The cleanup crew was amazing. We ended up with so much stuff (mostly leftovers from a rummage sale and an estate sale).

Tasha, an Olympic Angels caseworker, put up and took down street signs and was at the sale all day. Her fellow caseworker, Aimee, showed up with her "herd" (partner and 3 youth) to help clean up.

Thank you FPCPA members for showing Christ in us.

Susan Fisher



Volunteering & Donating

TAFY Dinner

Saturday, October 5, 3:45 pm

October 5, is First Presbyterian's date to contribute to The Answer for Youth (TAFY) dinner. You can donate a portion of a meal: a hot dish, salad, side dish, beverage or dessert. There is a sign-up sheet at the Connection Center or contact Marcia Logan at 360-452-3535.

On-going

Little Free Pantry - This is our church's food pantry stocked by **you**. The donation box is in the Fellowship Hall. Please consider donating shelf stable food such as rice, instant meals, pasta, canned goods, cereal, snack bars, juices, soups, beverages, etc...

For information contact Martha Bell, solduccamp@olympen.com

Port Angeles Food Bank - Please consider joining the monthly group to work at the Food Bank. This group always works the second Thursday of each month at 10 am.

For information contact Barb Pappas, bpappas378@gmail.com

Christmas Gift Cards - One of the church's outreach projects is the annual donation of Christmas gift cards to needy families with children in the local grade schools and middle school.

The need in 2024 is still great. Please consider donating by making a check out to the church and writing "Christmas Gift Cards" in the memo line.



1 Walter Higbee

3 Dan Cobb
Glenda Jaquins

5 Jodee Force

8 Julius Johnson

9 Bryn Christiansen

16 Becca Paul

20 Lorrie Corder

22 Bill Isenberger

23 Rosalie Doty

24 Tessa Rivers

25 Karen Kremkau

26 Barbara Buchanan

27 Susan Evans

5 Larry & Bobbie Buckley

8 Paul & Sheri Stutesman

9 Mark Wendt & Dorita Reed

24 John & Rosalyn Taylor



Vacation Bible School a Huge Success!

The week of August 5, our church was filled with the voices and laughter of children learning about God in fun and exciting ways. Vacation Bible School's theme this year was "Diving into Friendship with God." Decorations were created that turned the church into a scuba diver's seascape: a submarine, a giant octopus floating off the sanctuary balcony, coral reefs throughout the hallways, and more. Fairview Bible Church had finished the same VBS curriculum the week before and donated several of the sea-themed decorations they had created—including jellyfish hanging from our ceilings!

It was truly an ecumenical event—from Fairview’s contributions to participation from Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, and First United Methodist Church. Many of the children who attended were not church goers, but the hope is that this opportunity for them to learn about God will benefit them in the years to come.

In keeping with our water theme, the children brought coins and bills to support World Vision’s clean water project in Honduras. Just five dollars helps supply clean water for one child for a year. Almost \$150 in donations will give 30 children clean water for a year!

I want to thank the many people who helped make Vacation Bible School successful.

Donations of sea-themed and craft items poured in: seashells, beach towels, scuba gear, pool noodles, etc. Volunteers prepared snacks, did clean up, directed skits, printed bulletins, and taught lessons. Thank you for making this event happen. We couldn’t have done it without all the team. I am so proud to be a part of this great church family! Pam Carnahan, VBS Director

Supporting Our Schools

The new school year is here and as in years prior we are supporting our Port Angeles elementary schools with school supplies and cookies.





School supplies are always needed so if you can, please donate. There is a collection box in the church.

The cookie sign-up sheet is at the Connection Center. The staff at all of the schools we deliver cookies to really appreciate the thoughtfulness and the kindness of getting home-baked cookies. It really lifts their spirits.

If you have any questions contact the church office or Sheri Stutesman @ 360-460-5347.

September 2024

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Sat

1 8:30 and 11 am Worship Service	2 Labor Day Church office closed. 	3 8 am FISH Company 1:30 Community Life 6:45 pm Praise Team	4 9 am Women's Bible Study	5 3 pm Mission & Outreach 7 pm Worship & Music	6	7 Sun & Shade Picnic 3 - 7 pm 
8 8:30 and 11 am Worship Service Sunday School Kick-off	9 1 pm Naomi Circle 2 pm B,G, P Committee	10 8 am FISH Company 6:45 pm Praise Team	11 9 am Women's Bible Study	12 10 am Food Bank Helpers	13	14
15 8:30 and 11 am Worship Service 9:45 am Sunday School	16 7 pm Session	17 8 am FISH Company 4 pm Deacons Mtg 6:45 pm Praise Team	18 9 am Women's Bible Study	19 10:30 am Book Club	20	21 5 pm Youth Group BBQ
22 8:30 and 11 am Worship Service 9:45 am Sunday School	23 Deadline for October <i>Highlights</i> submissions	24 8 am FISH Company 6:45 pm Praise Team	25 9 am Women's Bible Study	26 7 pm Small Talk Big Issues	27	28 9:30 am Church Grounds Clean-Up Party
29 Season of Creation Sunday 8:30 and 11 am Worship Service 9:45 am Sunday School	30	1 8 am FISH Company 6:45 pm Praise Team	2 9 am Women's Bible Study	3 7 pm Small Talk Big Issues	4	5 1 pm Nancy Helwick Service 3:45 pm TAFY Dinner Donations



TO HOPE AND ACT WITH CREATION

SEASON OF CREATION 2024

The firstfruits of hope
(Rom 8:19-25)

Each year from September 1st to October 4th the Christian family unites for the Season of Creation, a worldwide celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home. It is a special season where we celebrate God as Creator and acknowledge Creation as a divine continuing act that summons us as collaborators to love and care for the gift of all that is created. As followers of Christ from around the globe, we share a common call to care for Creation. We are all part of what God has made. Our well-being is interwoven with the well-being of the Earth.

We rejoice in this opportunity to safeguard our common home and all who share it. As people of faith, we are called to lift the hope inspired by our faith, the hope of resurrection. This is not a hope without action but one embodied in concrete actions.

The theme for 2024 is “To hope and act with Creation” and the symbol is “The first fruits of hope” inspired by Romans 8:19-25:

19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; **20** for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **22** We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; **23** and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. **24** For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

The different dimensions of hope:

- Christian hope is not superficial, it's concrete. Our hope is rooted in God's character, promises, and actions.
- To change the system, we must change our mindsets.
- Active hope in our Christian communities can be seen in the care of creation, hearing the voices of the vulnerable, hearing the cries of the Earth.
- Because we are hopeful, we can act and so see what we hope for.
- Transformation takes time, we have to be patient. Hope is also a process, requires patience.
- Hope is faith in the things we do not see, hope is knowing that tomorrow will be better because Christ is resurrected, He defeated all evil. Everlasting life overcomes all things.

Action as a sign of the first fruits of hope:

- Action as the first fruits of hope can look like many different things: advocacy campaigns, sustainability initiatives, and educational formations to help upskill Christian communities in their awareness of how to care for Creation is central to our faith.

The first fruits of hope can be seen when we think and work collectively, when we recognize how we depend on Creation, when we listen to the Earth, when we listen to the voices of our local and global neighbors impacted by climate change, when we listen to the prophetic voices of indigenous peoples, when we listen to the different creatures that are going extinct and the ones still striving to live, when we listen to the voices of young people and children, when we learn from the slow and powerful cycles of life of different species, ecosystems, and biomes, when we work together with Creation and all creatures for a better future.

<https://www.seasonofcreation.org>



**TO HOPE AND ACT
WITH CREATION**

SEASON OF CREATION 2024

The firstfruits of hope
(Rom 8:19-25)



“Do Tell!”

September’s question: *Who was your favorite teacher and why?” Tell the school’s name and location too.*

Pat Davies remembers Miss J. Pontoni, her senior English teacher at Sunset High School in Beaverton, Oregon. It was Miss Pontoni’s first year of teaching and she was very enthusiastic.

Susan Fisher’s favorite teacher was Mr. Ross from Whiteman Jr. High in Goshen, Indiana. Mr. Ross taught algebra and Susan loved it. “With bonus points we could score more than 100! (and I did).”

Lauren Corder’s second grade teacher at Calk Elementary School in Corpus Christi, Texas was her favorite. Her classroom was a warm, welcoming place and she made learning fun.

Mr. Downey at Miller Junior High School in California was **Jim Buckmaster’s** favorite teacher. “He helped me by giving me more of his time as I was still struggling with my dyslexia.”

Rainy Birch enjoyed having Mr. Ed Jaquins as her teacher at Jefferson Elementary School in 1976-77. He taught us really useful things like how to address an envelope for mailing, how to spell *Juan de Fuca* and *Clallam County*. He encouraged us all to try out for spelling bee, believing we were all capable. He taught confidence!

From **Tom McCulloch** - My favorite teacher was Mr. Hays. He was my history teacher, and he taught me a lot about world history. Actually, I had a lot of great teachers. The school that I went to was called Woodstock School located in Mussoorie, India in the foothills of the Himalayas. The school was for missionary children from all denominations. We had people not just from America and Canada but from many other countries including Indians. There is a vast diaspora of Woodstock alumni all over the world. My parents met at this school and were married at the school.

Slowing the Waters

*The weather here has been as nice as it can be
Although it doesn't really matter much to me.
As far as I'm concerned each day's a rainy day
And it might as well rain until September*



Every time I heard that song as a teen, I could swear my summer was cursed with a rain shower. How times have changed. Today we pray for some summer rain (no lightening, please) and we look for ways to conserve.

Ten-plus years in planning, the Dungeness Off-Channel Reservoir Project's objective is to store water in the winter and spring in order to disburse it during dry summer months for salmon spawning and farm irrigation. The reservoir will create a climate resilient water supply and a new county park while restoring streamflow, recharging the aquifer, and providing floodwater management. It's a modern day application of ancient water retention practices. For project updates: tinyurl.com/38krbzsy

We can use water in our gardens more efficiently in several ways. By watering less often but more deeply we lose less to evaporation. Another trick to slowing water loss is watering between 4 and 9 a.m.

Mulch (bark, wood chips, leaves, straw, etc.) also discourages evaporation and moderates soil temperature. Water at the roots. You can also trap water by building small berms around plants to create miniature reservoirs. Consider soaker hoses which ensure 90% of your water is going to your plants.

Did you know that dishwasher manufacturers compare their machines' water consumption with hand washing while the faucet is running? Am I the only one who doesn't leave the faucet on? Here's the beat-the-machine game I play when I hand wash. Start with an empty dishpan and a wet, soapy dishcloth. Wipe the dish clean and rinse it over the dishpan, faucet on only when needed...a trickle works. Wet the dish-cloth in the pan and repeat. Extra dirty dishes get wiped and rinsed outside then dishpan. This method only uses a gallon or two. Did I win?

During WWII, our parents and grandparents learned to live on less and make use of what was on hand. Hopefully we'll never need ration cards for water, but we too can learn to live comfortably with less. There are so many ideas and resources just a Google away. I'll leave you with this thoughtful quote from the Sioux nation:

A frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives.

Interfaith Earth Care Coalition

Save the Dates



2nd Annual Chili Cook-Off, Sunday, October 20, 5 - 7 pm,
Fellowship Hall

Start working on your award-winning new *or* old chili recipe.



Mission Fair, Sunday, October 20, 9:30—11 am

Information on the next page



The Mission Fair will showcase the following organizations:



Vacation Bible School memories



