

Woodburn First Presbyterian Church Newsletter

Fall 2023

Sundays at 11:30 AM

Rev. Cynthia O'Brien preaching at all services

November 5.....All Saints Day
Communion, Soup Lunch

November 12..... Prayers for Veterans

November 19..... Thanksgiving Sunday
Special Guest—Dr. Howard Kenyon from
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Thanksgiving dinner after church coordinated by
the Hankins family! Bring your favorite side dish.

November 26..... Christ the King Sunday

December 3.....First Sunday of Advent
Communion, Soup lunch

December 10.....Second Sunday of Advent
Guest pianist Honey Wilson joins us for the next
three Sundays

December 17.....Third Sunday of Advent
Christmas Party Luncheon with carols and Santa,
coordinated by the Hankins family. Bring a favorite
dish to share

December 24..One service for Christmas Eve at 11:30 AM
Candlelight and Carols

December 31..... New Year's Eve celebration



"How to Talk Across the Political Divide"

A Braver Angels Skills Workshop

What: There's a lot of stress these days among family members and friends who are divided politically, and the current polarized public conversation doesn't help.

Please join us for the Braver Angels Skills Workshop to learn skills for having respectful conversations that clarify differences, search for common ground, and affirm the importance of the relationship.

There is no charge for this workshop.

Who can come? Anyone interested in having better conversations with people on the other side of the political aisle, including and especially family and friends.

Presenter: Cynthia O'Brien, Braver Angels Certified Moderator

When: Tuesday, Nov 14, 2023, 6–8:30 PM (doors open at 5:45)

Where: First Presbyterian Church, 950 N. Boones Ferry Rd., Woodburn 97071

About Braver Angels: Launched in 2016, Braver Angels is a bipartisan citizen's movement to unify our divided nation. By bringing red and blue Americans together into a working alliance, we're building new ways to talk to one another, participate together in public life, and influence the direction of the nation.

We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory...will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

– Abraham Lincoln, 1861

Join the national movement! www.braverangels.org

Learn about Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Dr. Howard Kenyon, Senior Advisor for the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, will visit our church on Sunday, Nov. 19, as part of his tour of Willamette Valley congregations. He will come early at 10:30 AM, set up a table in the fellowship hall, and speak for a few minutes in the service. Howard wants to get to know our congregation and community and help us understand how EMO, in partnership with the Presbytery and churches, is serving those in need throughout Oregon. EMO serves tens of thousands of people in need via direct services and public advocacy. It is the nation's largest state-wide ecumenical organization.



Howard Kenyon retired recently as the nonprofit's Vice President. With a doctorate in theological ethics, Howard has spoken at conferences, churches, and campuses throughout the US and internationally and has written two books. He and his wife, Kim, served in missions in Taiwan and Northwest China for 17 years before moving to Oregon in 2007 with their four, now grown, children. Currently living in Salem, he loves gardening and hiking.

Rebuilding Our Staff, One Knee at a Time

Both our pastor, Cynthia, and our music director, Debi, are getting knee replacements this fall! Cynthia had hers on September 11, and Debi will get hers on December 5. Thanks to everyone for your support and encouragement.



Christmas with First Presbyterian Church
Food and Festivities!

Sunday, December 3–Soup lunch after church

Wednesday December 6 and December 13–Christmas caroling! Meet at church at 5 pm

Sunday, December 17–Christmas Party lunch after church with music and Santa!

Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve–One service at 11:30 am with candlelight and carols

Welcome Guest Pianist Honey Wilson

Honey will play for us on December 10, 17 and 24 while Debi is recovering.



Theme for 2024

After conversing with some church folk recently, I've chosen "Hope" as a ministry theme for 2024. Hope in Christ, love for our church, and our commitment to be a beacon of hope and light to our community. Soon you'll receive a mailing with more details. Aurora will also have this theme.



All Saints Day. Bring photos. Sunday, Nov. 5, is when we observe All Saints Day. For the last couple of years, we have had an ofrenda—a space to display photos of people who have died. Any size photo, framed or not, is fine. You can bring the photo(s) Nov. 5 when you come to church.

Family Building Blocks News

Marcy Sterling, Mission Elder

Family Building Blocks hosted a Dream Builders Luncheon, October 18 at the Salem Convention Center. Five of us went, Julie Moore, Vickie Gonzales, Joyce Griffiths, Mark Sterling, and Marcy Sterling. We enjoyed a delicious salad lunch. During the program we were informed and inspired. We learned it was founded in 1997 in Salem to keep children safe and families together in Marion and Polk counties. They have a huge impact on our community. Their focus is on prevention, they partner with families with the greatest need. Eligibility is based on stressors, such as homelessness, poverty, addiction, abuse, and depression. Studies have shown that stressors such as these can cause stunted brain development in babies and children. Family Building Blocks offers support for parents to form strong bonds with their children and increase their readiness for the future.

The numbers reflect the positive impact FBB has on their children. 99% of the children enrolled in prevention programs were able to safely remain with their parents avoiding foster care and the devastation of abuse. Graduation rates increased, health outcomes improved, and job opportunities were enhanced.

Family Building Blocks relies solely on donations. Our congregation is committed to supporting their mission here in Woodburn. The support we give them through monthly donations and through Project Kindness continues to make a difference for many. We will continue to support them into the future. Christmas is on the horizon, so look for plans for gifting to come soon.

I believe our support of this program is imperative and benefits are only positive.

Advent Devotions

In December you'll receive a new Advent devotional called "Apocalyptic Advent: Embracing Hope in the Second Coming of Christ." It's in digital form; printed copies will also be available. Author Rev. Teri McDowell Ott has written really thoughtful devotions which answer a lot of questions we may have about the end times while helping us have faith today. I think you'll find it engaging and encouraging.

Christmas Party Sunday, December 17 at 12:30 pm



We can't wait to tell you how much fun this will be. Lunch after church coordinated by Nancy Hankins and Cindy Hawkes, with lots of great food (bring a special side dish that you're proud of!), music, and a visit from Santa! Aurora folks are invited, too.

First Presbyterian Church

Rev. Cynthia O'Brien, Pastor
revcynthiaobrien@gmail.com
503-962-9186, cell

Debra Huddleston, Music Director

Elders

Mike Hachquet, Clerk of Session

Walt Mangerich

Paula Walcott

Kathy Erion

Johanna Samson

Mark Sterling

Julie Moore

Marcy Sterling

Vickie Gonzales



Christmas Eve—One service at 11:30 AM. Are you making Christmas plans yet? December 24 is a Sunday. We will have one service at 11:30 AM. This will be the Candlelight Christmas Eve service for First Presbyterian Church of Woodburn.

If you'd like to attend an evening service, Aurora's Christmas Eve service will be at 7 PM and we'd be happy to see you there.

News from Mike Hachquet, Clerk of Session

We plan to close the sale of our tree lot on the North side of our property by the end of October. The 1 ¼ acre lot has been finalized at the county records office. We have just a few documents to clean up before closing. The sales price will be \$407,849.66. \$50,000 will go into an escrow account to remediate the property.

A car careened into our church parking a few months ago. The accident caused damage to the wood sign and flagpole in front of the church. We received \$1,300 as a settlement for the accident that will be dedicated to a new sign.

We received a legal confirmation that Linda Johnston's estate has been left to First Presbyterian Woodburn. Proceeds from the liquidated estate will be dedicated to the Community Garden. The estate will be in probate until her home is sold. Linda's house will be listed by Judy Hill on November 1. As part of Linda's estate, we also received a John Deer riding mower.

The Community Garden supplied 993 pounds of produce to the Food Bank this year. We have a garden diagram that will product more vegetables and flowers in 2024. We will work with Community Partners to determine how to further improve the garden once the proceeds of Linda's estate are received.