



**First
Presbyterian**
CHURCH OF PORTLAND

Spire
JULY 2021

Come to the 2021 All Church Labor Day Retreat!

Get ready for a church family reunion. FPC's annual Labor Day Retreat is happening September 3 to 5 in the lovely Columbia River Gorge at the Menucha Retreat and Conference Center. Beth Gunn will be our special program speaker. She is the Associate for Youth for the Presbytery of Western North Carolina with a particular emphasis in Recreation Ministry, so she's perfect for Menucha! Join us for fun and fellowship. Let's take this time to reunite and celebrate after the long pandemic separation. Stay tuned for info on registration in mid July.

FPC at work in our Neighborhood

I love stories where goodness flows out like ripples in a pond, which happened recently at First Presbyterian. A year ago in July, thanks to a grant from the Capital Campaign Mission giving funds, FPC was able to adopt the Alder House building through our mission partner Lift Urban Portland (Lift UP). This adoption meant that for the year we supported monthly food boxes that are specific to the resident's needs, provided food and nutrition education through their supper club program, and the ongoing support of the Emergency Food Closet, housed in our Julia West building. Our Mission Committee was faced with a decision on how to fund the next year's adoption fee after the overall church budget was hit hard due to the COVID Pandemic. Hope was not lost! FPC received a generous memorial gift and the Session voted to set aside 10% for the church's Mission work. When our Mission Standing committee met, they voted unanimously to use a portion of those funds to continue our relationship with Alder House and Lift UP for the next year. We are grateful for the generous gift made to FPC and for the call of our church to care and love our neighbors. If you would like to learn more about how you can get involved in the mission and service work of the church, please contact pastor Brenna at bdykman@firstpresportland.org

Worship Services Are Open!

We are delighted that in-person worship is now possible again. **Reservations are no longer required**, and these guidelines are now in place as we gather:

If you are fully vaccinated: (including children who have received the vaccine)

(have received both doses of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine or a single-dose vaccine, with at least 14 days since the final dose):

- You may attend in-person worship without a mask or social distancing
- If you prefer to wear a mask, we support your choice and have disposable masks available. A front section of the sanctuary will be available for social distancing.

If you are NOT fully vaccinated:

- You may attend in-person worship, but are required to wear a mask.

Children:

- Children and youth between 5 and 12 years of age are required to wear a mask if not vaccinated.
- Masks for children up to age 5 are up to the parent or guardian. We support your choice and offer disposable masks to those who would like one.
- A socially distanced section is available at the front of the church.

Please join us in person or online! If you have any questions, please email office@firstpresportland.org

First Presbyterian Church
1200 SW Alder St.
Portland, Oregon 97205 | (503) 228-7331
www.firstpresportland.org

Musings from Pastor Zane



As our Pastor asked me to write something for the July edition of the Spire, my first thought was to wonder what to say for this low month in the church year. But I have a few musings to share.

First, I want to wish you all a delightful and safe celebration of Independence Day. Karol and I live in Clark County, just a block or so outside the boundary of Vancouver. In years past, the noise has been astounding late into the night. There have been injuries reported in the news the following day each year. So, here's to the enjoyment of civic fireworks, if that's your thing, and to some reflection on the liberties celebrated on this holiday. Oh, and we look forward to seeing you in church on the 4th.



Rev. Zane Buxton

Speaking of liberties and values, I hope that you have heard or will go back and stream Brenna's sermon from June 13. She spoke about finding our places in God's ever-unfolding story. She spoke of her own (in her words) surprising call to ministry in God's work of reconciliation and renewal. While she was speaking, I thought back to the big decision that our denomination made 100 years ago. For decades, church leaders and theologians wrestled with the question of the ordination of women. Finally, in 1920, a special committee of the General Assembly (call it the Congress of our denomination) declared that the Scriptures did not prohibit the ordination of women. Our constitution was changed (I believe in 1921, maybe 1922). Of course, our church was influenced by the action of the country in guaranteeing women the right to vote (the 19th Amendment). As you can imagine, our change of practice was slow. First, some women were ordained as Deacons; later some as Elders. Finally, in 1955 Margaret Towner became the Reverend Margaret Towner. Just think of the leadership that women serving in pastoral roles and educational ministries have provided this congregation, as well as the church at large. Thanks be to God for opening our eyes to new chapters in the story the Spirit is writing.

It has been delightful to see more of you in worship (masked) and out on the plaza (masks optional) on Sundays. But it has been a bit puzzling to worship planners and pastors to observe that the actual numbers of folks arriving in person has fallen short of expectation. The reservations have fallen short of the seats deemed available. And in the weeks declared open to all who want to come, the numbers have still been small. I think we are seeing what has been discussed for months. The pandemic may have occasioned a shift that will endure. Many folks seem to be pleased enough to stream the service and, thus, are and perhaps will forego the process of getting to the gathering place. It is clearly one's own choice to make. But may I encourage you to reflect a bit about the value of our relatedness and being in each other's company as we are in the presence of God.

Blessings to you all, from your (very) part-time Parish Associate, Zane

An Invitation to Join the Annual Giving Endowment

Our church has a new endowment specifically designed to help donors build a stable financial base for the church while saving money on their taxes. The Annual Giving Endowment was established last year. Like other endowment accounts, the fund are invested to generate income for the church for many years.

It is different from our other endowments in that it accepts on-going contributions, for example from Individual Retirement Accounts and individually owned securities. These contributions are then eligible for a tax return deduction against taxable income.

The new endowment was set-up to begin paying annual dividends to the church from what it has earned in the market when it reaches a base amount of \$250,000. As of June, it was \$26,000 short of that mark. If we can add that amount soon, the fund can start subsidizing our budget in the coming fiscal year.

Contributions to this new endowment can be tailored to meet the donors' objectives. Donations can go directly into a consolidated fund, or they can be segregated and allowed to accumulate until they reach an amount specified by the donor before their dividends will flow into the church's operations account. Under this scenario, a donor could use the endowment to pay their annual pledge, or to endow their pledge in perpetuity.

If you would like to contribute to this fund through an IRA contribution, please contact your financial advisor. For stock or cash donations, please contact Marc Lavender, Church Business Administrator, at (503) 228-7331.

The Columbarium Project is Nearing Completion!

Take a moment to visit FPC's new Columbarium on the east side of the Plaza. (If the gate is locked and you would like a closer look, please ask for a key in the church office.) The two plinths of the Columbarium contain 192 niches to hold the ashes of deceased FPC members and/or clergy and their families. Each niche can hold one or two urns that have been specially designed to fit the space. Landscaping and other details are still underway. We hope you will plan to attend the dedication on Sunday September 26 after worship. For more information or to purchase a niche, please contact our church administrator, Marc Lavender.

Please save the date for Tom Withycombe's inurnment service on Sunday, August 1st which will be in the contemplative garden area where the beautiful columbarium is located on the Plaza. All are welcome!"

Congratulations to FPC Higher Ed Grant Awardee!

Congratulations to Mira Coles, who was awarded an FPC Higher Education Grant this year. Mira has completed her freshman year in the Clark Honors College at the University of Oregon. She plans to attend law school and eventually work in the public policy area. This FPC grant program is for high school seniors or others who may have delayed entrance to further education and have been accepted into an accredited trade, license or certification program or full college, and those who were or are currently active with the community of First Presbyterian Church in their high school years.

Children's Ministry Internship: Accepting Applications Now!

Are you looking for a meaningful opportunity to share your amazing gifts, grow in faith, and build your resume? Do you like kiddos and have some time available on Sunday mornings?

First Presbyterian Portland has an opportunity for you! We are looking for a team of interns (ages 14-19) to work on Sunday mornings with the Children's Sunday School program of the church. The internship is divided into two semesters (September-December and mid-January through May) plus a required orientation gathering in late August. You can apply for either or both semesters. For more info, please click the application link below or reach out to Pastor Carmen at cgoetschius@firstpresportland.org Compensation is provided! Please prayerfully consider this opportunity that is open to youth of our church (or other churches!). Applications are due **Monday, July 5th**.



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PWM Virtual Sale

The Presbyterian Women Ministry (PWM) is planning a virtual sale between August and Thanksgiving this year. For planning, those interested in participating are requested to send the particulars of who, what and when to Ann Walsh ann.walsh@gmail.com to ensure a successful virtual event. Jams and jellies may be available early on, while other products like cards and baked goods will be made later. Help in brainstorming and ensure this virtual event will be a success. Responses are

Welcome Don Choi, FPC Session-recommended Inquirer for Ministry!

Don(g) Choi, a new FPC member shortly before COVID closed the church office, will become a familiar face to our congregation over the next couple of years as he seeks to become a chaplain through the Presbyterian Church USA. This month he will serve as lector and going forward will be incorporated into church life as much as possible. When you run into him, please welcome and greet him. Here are a few



Church Member Don Choi

conversation starters: He and his family immigrated to Dallas when he was 16 from South Korea. He has attended the University of Texas (Austin, sociology), Vanderbilt (master's in divinity), McCormick Seminary (doctorate in divinity) and Northwestern University (working on a master's in science - information design and strategy). He served in pastoral leadership of Korean Bethany Presbyterian Church in Lincolnwood, IL. Don received his science training in the US Army and continues to serve his country in the US Army Reserve (aircraft power plant repairer). He works at INTEL where he troubleshoots and maintains semiconductor tools. In his free time, he enjoys music (composes, plays and records Asian-themed music using Western instruments), art (painter and photographer), website design and development, making and flying drones, and recently travelled to Glacier and Yellowstone. Don plans to continue working at INTEL while he works through the process to ordination, and afterwards, as he wants to be able to use his chaplaincy within the US Army Reserve and other populations that face difficult decisions and challenging life circumstances.

— Mary Priedeman

Congratulations to Alexander Wendeheart!

Congratulations to Alexander Wendeheart, one of our candidates under care of the Session, as he has passed the last of his ordination exams!

Capital Campaign Mission Giving Update: Wild Fire Relief

2020 brought not only the global COVID-19 pandemic but also devastating wild fires to the Pacific Northwest, including here in Oregon. Five churches in the Presbytery of the Cascades were deeply impacted:



- **First Presbyterian Church of Phoenix**
- **McKenzie Valley Presbyterian Church**
- **The First Presbyterian Church of Mill City**
- **Springwater Presbyterian Church**
- **Eagle Creek Presbyterian Church**

The Capital Campaign Mission Giving Committee of our church (with Session approval) designated \$3,000 to each church for their relief efforts. Letters of gratitude received from the churches indicate the financial gifts have helped in the following ways:

- **Assist church members who lost their homes or suffered other losses**
- **Help stock a food pantry and support of food programs**
- **Church repairs due to smoke damage**
- **Rebuild fencing around a church building**
- **Repair a church fire escape**
- **Rehab a church parking lot**

All of these churches are looking for ways to continue to help their congregants and their communities.

We are grateful that due to our congregation's generous giving, we were able to help out our neighboring churches during a time of great need.

Capital Campaign Mission Giving Committee — Greg Aldrich, Rev. Brenna Dykman, Kathryn Hill, Linda Killen and Steve Primack

Working Toward Justice

One of the many things the pandemic brought to light was the vast array of inequalities in our country and from that came what some refer to as the second wave of the civil rights movement. The flood of media displaying violence and discrimination against bodies of color hit a deep cord and reawakened a personal call to engage these issues. While it is important as a community to be engaging with these topics, among the questions BIPOC voices are asking allies is what are we doing personally to work towards justice in our lives? In hope of encouraging you to join me on this journey, I wanted to share some of the ways that your Interim Associate Pastor has been engaging in this work.



I have been working to de-colonize the media I am engaging with, filling it with the beautiful work of marginalized voices. I have been reading poetry, fiction and non-fiction books, theology, listening to podcasts, and watching movies by black, brown, Asian, and indigenous voices. Not sure where to start? Here are a few of my favorites: Podcast: On Being interview of Resmaa Menakem, Poetry: Whereas by Layli Long Soldier, Theology: James Cone's The Cross and the Lynching Tree, Movie: 13, Non-Fiction: Michelle Alexander's The New Jim Crow, Fiction: Tayari Jones's An American Marriage.

I am also working to de-colonize the actions of my everyday life. I have given up my beloved Egg McMuffin before hikes because I don't want to support a company that benefits from the for-profit prison labor system.

I correct and educate family members when they make homophobic or racial remarks. I am purposely engaging with voices from different world views so that I don't create a sound booth of my own opinions. The church has been doing the hard but necessary discovery work of engaging in racial

justice too. Beside the two book/discussion groups, our church library has been stocked with books (for adults and children) to help us learn and grow in our understanding on race and racial justice. The library also procured a wonderful new art piece for the children's area that depicts the beautiful diversity of God's people.

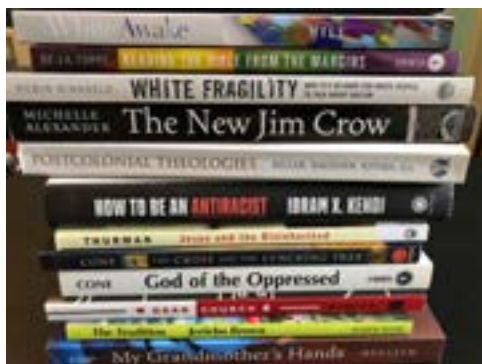
The staff have been going through the educational spaces in the church to make sure the things in these areas reflect the full diversity of God in all body types and color. We also are making sure the educational resources for all ages are ethnically accurate, de-colonizing our symbols and spaces. Our mission subcommittee voted to allocate the monies we use to support the work of higher religious education to go to a historically black seminary. At the Presbytery level, there is work being done to look into offering diversity and inclusion training for all pastors. These are just some of the ways the Church is working towards creating a world that more accurately reflects the Kingdom of God here on earth.

— Pastor Brenna

Northeast Emergency Food Program: How We Can Help!

- **Learn more** about NEFP: <https://www.facebook.com/NEFPpdx/>
- **Volunteer** to come to Pantry in NE Portland to sort, box, hand out food and other necessary items: <https://emoregon.org/nefp/nefp-volunteer/>
- **Donate** to NEFP (Financial or In-Kind): <https://emoregon.org/nefp/give/>
- **Pray** for NEFP's continuing successful service to Portland

— Deborah Resley




NE Emergency Food Program (NEFP) Mission
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Nursery Thank you!!

You have generously showered the babies at the church with love! Thank you to every person who gave gift cards and purchased items through Amazon to help refresh the church nursery. Additionally, many volunteers have helped clean, paint and decorate to ensure safety and hospitality. Thank you one and all for your investment in a littlest disciples at FPC. The church nursery really does look



fabulous. I can't wait to give you a tour in the fall when we reopen both our nursery services and Sunday school. Parents and Grandparents, please know that we are cooking up some amazing, faith-filled, fun programming for the fall. We pray you will entrust your babies, children and youth to our care as we share in helping them know Jesus' love for them more full. With love and in hope, Pastor Carmen

Renegade Opera on the Plaza

July 29, 30, 31, and August 1st!

Maddy Ross, Chancel Choir Soprano and *Celebration Works* administrator, is excited to announce that Renegade Opera, Portland's unconventional opera company, will be transforming our plaza into an opera stage this July! *Orfeo in Underland*: a journey through love, loss, and acceptance, is a modern adaptation of C.W. Gluck's opera, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, featuring Italian singing, English dialogue, fantastical puppetry, and an original musical arrangement for string quintet, piano, and 8 voices. It's a live theater experience you won't want to miss!



Featuring the beautiful voices of Madeline Ross, Madeline Tran, Claire McCahan, Elsa Dougherty, Elliot Menard, Claire Robertson-Preis, Jesse Preis, and Timothy Lafortte. Performance dates are July 29, 30, 31, and August 1 at 7:30pm

Get your tickets here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/orfeo-in-underland-tickets-156582728155>

Find more information at www.renegadeopera.org

Rose Haven Donations of Used Technology - August 5th

Technology links us all to family, community, and employment. Rose Haven has an opportunity to receive free technology devices for their new space for use by their clients, and we can help by donating our used electronics through their partner "GetLagosNow."

The 2nd Annual E-Recycling PDX Event is **August 5th** from 10 am to 3 pm at Lexicon Solutions, 4605 SW Poplar Lane, Portland, 97225. Come



and safely donate your electronics, printers, laptops, desktops, cellphones, etc. to be either recycled or refurbished and given back to the youth, families, and persons in need in our community! Rose Haven is grateful to be partnered with GetLagosNow and featured for a second time at this event.

Last year, donated items were shared between Rose Haven, Raphael House, New Avenues for Youth and Rosewood Initiative. These organizations supply the youth, families, and persons in need in the community, especially during this COVID recovery period. Presenters representing GetLagosNow, community groups, and technology professionals will provide information beneficial to all of us. A full itinerary can be found at: getlagosnow.com/e-recycling Please support this additional way to support Rose Haven as well as other community groups. If you are unable to drop off your electronic devices on August 5th, they can be picked up from your home, or dropped off at the Church for delivery that day. Questions? Please contact Cindy Finch cindyloufinch@yahoo.com

Civil Rights Pilgrimage

Join this 9-day pilgrimage from Atlanta, GA to Memphis, TN to remember, study, and be inspired by key moments in the Civil Rights Movement. Organized by Progressive Pilgrimage, a small travel ministry led by Presbyterian pastor Heather Prince Doss, a good friend and colleague of Pastor Carmen. Stops on this journey include the King Center in Atlanta; Montgomery and Selma, AL; Jackson and Money, MS; the Lorraine Motel in Memphis; and more. The group size is limited to 26 participants. For more information visit <http://progressivepilgrimage.com/civilrights2021> or contact heather@progressivepilgrimage.com

Help FPC Become an Earth Care Congregation

The Earth Care Team has begun work to certify First Presbyterian Church as an Earth Care Congregation with the Presbyterian Church, USA. Our goal is engaging and assisting all parts of the congregation involved with worship, education, buildings and groups and outreach/mission with taking steps to be more faithful stewards of God's Creation rooted in the Earth Care Pledge, which is as follows:



- Our worship and discipleship will celebrate God's grace and glory in creation.
- Our education will encourage and support each other in keeping and healing the creation.
- Our facilities will be managed, maintained, and upgraded to respect and cherish all creation.
- Our outreach will encourage community involvement and public policy to protect and restore the earth.

Your participation and ideas are welcome! Those with an interest in caring for God's Creation may join the Earth Care Team or volunteer with projects such as educational events or reducing the environmental footprint of our building and grounds. The application for certification, to be approved by Session, is due on February 15, 2022, and requires steps be taken in four areas: worship, education, building and grounds and outreach. Our first step is documenting things that have already been done. From new books in the library to music benefiting a local conservation group, there is much to celebrate in addition to new steps to take. Team members desire to serve as a resource to all committees. To share an idea or accomplishment or get involved, please mail Jenny Holmes jehrestore@gmail.com or Chris Nilson cnilson@verizon.net

Wedding Assistant

The church is seeking a wedding assistant to help our Wedding Coordinator, Bill Edwards, with arrangements for weddings. Applicants need to be at least 16 years old. Compensation is set at \$15/hour. If you are interested in applying, please email office@firstpresportland.org

A New Tradition – Menucha Homecoming! Saturday, August 7

Coming off of this most challenging year, we're welcoming everyone back for a Menucha Homecoming! It will be a chance to gather with friends, connect with those we may have lost touch with over our 70 year history (including former staff), and offer our gratitude for all the ways our community has sustained us. Many of you have shared memories of Menucha being the only constant as you grew up or a place where you transformed significantly. We are glad that, while the world continually changes, Menucha is reliably a place where you'll always be welcome—it's time to come home!



**MENUCHA HOMECOMING
PICNIC 2021**
Saturday, August 7
11:00 am - 2:00 pm
All are welcome - help us spread the word!



Menucha Homecoming Picnic (formerly known as Summer Fair) will be on Saturday, August 7th from 11 am – 2 pm. Bring a blanket or chairs and a picnic lunch. We'll have drinks and sweet treats! There will be live music, tours of the Wright Hall renovations (masks will likely still be required in Menucha buildings), old fashioned outdoor games, and more important—familiar faces, a warm welcome, and a chance to re-connect with this sacred space. This is not a fundraiser. Entry is free, and everyone is welcome!

Can you help spread the word? Thank you for passing this invitation all who would enjoy spending time at Menucha.

Join an Art Workshop at Menucha, August 8-14

How would you like to leave your usual obligations behind and learn to draw or make jewelry at Menucha for a week in August? We're partnering with the Creative Arts Community to host adult art camps in August. There are 6 spots open in Paul Missal's workshop, Still Life: Drawing Like It Matters and 2 spots in Jewelry Metal Fabrication with Judith Gauthier. With a maximum of 10 students per class, each student will get plenty of the instructor's time and attention plus plenty of Menucha's delicious meals and plenty of time to enjoy relaxed summer days in this beautiful place. Visit <https://menucha.org/programs/creative-arts> to learn more.



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Plaza Garden News



Plaza garden plantings Photo by Molly Spencer

Through the past two years, a small group of volunteers has worked tirelessly to remove overgrown plants from our plaza garden. They removed ivy from the south church wall

shrubbery, and two spruce trees! A professional landscaper donated his time and plant selection expertise, and assisted with planting and debris removal. He also purchased new plants at wholesale prices for us. Volunteers are now ensuring that the tender new plants receive the extra care they require.

Now when you enter the plaza garden, you will see new roses, jasmine, and two beautiful spiraled trees placed to frame our exceptional Chapel Rose window. There is Andromeda along the south wall, and geraniums adorn the front entrance by the elevator.

New coming attractions will include; fresh new sod, new trees on west side of the garden, and new plantings next to the elevator. When plantings are complete, a dark Hemlock top dressing will be applied. We graciously thank Pastors, church members and staff for the opportunity to refresh our unique plaza garden, and bring it back to life. We look forward to the day when church members, guests and the community at large can enjoy it again. We believe those who created this special space many years ago would be very happy with the transformation.

— Karen Halvorsen & Molly Spencer