



**First  
Presbyterian**  
CHURCH OF PORTLAND

**Spire**  
AUGUST 2021

## **All Church Labor Day Retreat aka Church Family Reunion**

**You're not just invited – you're needed!**

**Whether you come for September 3-5 or Saturday only, please join us at the Labor Day retreat.**

You really are needed. Why?

Pastor Spencer described it this way. “God calls us to be the community of faith. After more than a year apart from one another, this event is a time to come together and intentionally be that community: To interact with our brothers and sisters in Christ; to renew relationships, to form new relationships. Not only does it feel great to be together in a beautiful place with excellent food and comfortable accommodations, but doing so truly will strengthen First Presbyterian Church for the year ahead.”

Our guest leader, Beth Gunn, has years of experience facilitating Christian events of all sizes (including thousands of teens at the Presbyterian Youth Triennium), she's focusing our program on “Telling Our Stories” and “Church Family Reunion.” She'll also lead vespers and assist FPC pastors with Sunday morning worship.

Retreat planners encourage everyone to participate at the level that is comfortable for them. High energy people could wake up early for a polar bear swim, attend the morning program, hike, play outdoor afternoon games, jog the “Menucha Meander” around the property, dance, and participate in a scavenger hunt. People looking for a more relaxed time could attend the program, take a nap, read a book, watch lawn games from a chair on the terrace, talk with a few people over a jigsaw puzzle, and play bridge.

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## **Columbarium Dedication on Sunday September 26th**

Dedication of the recently completed Memorial Garden and Columbarium is planned for September 26th after worship. The dedication service celebrates the culmination of a three-year project spearheaded by Columbarium Committee Chair, Joyce Evans, and Committee Members Lurna Shively, Ann van Bever and Jon Bates. The installation of the Memorial Garden and Columbarium is a timeless and welcome addition to the church's Plaza and provides a peaceful place for quiet meditation and remembrance. The first inurnment services (placing the ashes of the deceased into a niche of the Columbarium) are scheduled for July and August of this year.

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## **Continuing to Respond to a Changing Picture**

Thanks to the Reopening Group of our Session for their help setting guidelines for the church as we worship and meet in the continuing virus season. As these guidelines will be reviewed as the virus levels vary and government regulations and guidance change, please consult our website [www.firstpresportland.org](http://www.firstpresportland.org) for updated information.

## Pastor's Pen

As the summer starts to wane, and we look ahead to fall, we are beginning to return from what has been a time of exile, with all that the past year has held. As the pandemic, we pray, will continue to ease, our hearts are lightened by the chance to begin to travel to see loved ones, to have visits and take up pastimes that enliven our lives. For many, this includes a return to worship in the beauty of the sanctuary, while others continue to join in heart and spirit from home.

We are told in Scripture of the time when God's people returned from their sojourn of exile in Babylon. Having languished far from their home, cut off from people they loved, their ordeal was something like that which the world in our day has endured. They were called to return home, to rebuild the temple and the city.

The prophet Ezra remembers how, after their return, when they laid the foundations of the new temple,

“they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord,  
‘for God is good, for God’s steadfast love endures forever towards Israel.’  
And all the people responded with a great shout when they praised the Lord....”

It has been moving to witness our church friends and members as they’ve returned for their first [worship services](#) back in the sanctuary, sometimes moved to tears as they experience again this place that holds the echoes of the music of our faith and heartfelt prayers over long years. We give thanks to God, whose steadfast love has not failed us nor forsaken us through these days.

As we look to the fall, our church will be joining with other churches and groups in the community to do our part to help renew our city as the pandemic eases. We are partnering with Lift Urban Portland to support the residents of [Alder House](#) near the church, volunteering at the [NE Emergency Food Program](#) which has served so many during the pandemic, sending needed supplies to the women’s shelter at Rose Haven, and will continue to work with Solve and others to help restore downtown neighborhoods.

Please keep the church and our neighborhood and city in your prayers as we pray for the ending of this season of exile, and a time of restoration and healing for our lives, our church, and for the city that God has called us to love and serve.

Wishing you the blessings of summer,



Rev. Audrey Schindler

## From the Trustees

Due to pandemic relief legislation, charitable gifts to our church will yield some special advantages in the 2021 tax year.

- Taxpayers who itemize deductions can deduct the value of cash donations up to 100 percent of their adjusted gross income in 2021. (Deductions for cash donations were capped at 60 percent of AGI in the past and may return to that level soon.)
- People 70½ and older who donate their Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from an Individual Retirement Account won't be taxed on it, and married couples can both gift their RMDs. However, RMDs can't be used as itemized deductions.
- Anyone between 59½ and 70½ interested in donating from an IRA (personal or inherited) could reduce their 2021 tax liability, too, but their withdrawal is taxable. Itemizing the deduction might be better than a standard deduction, but it counts as a net loss.
- Taxpayers who itemize can still deduct securities donations of up to 30 percent of their adjusted gross income (AGI). The full market value of this donation can be deducted with no tax owed on the underlying gain by the donor or the church. Any gifts above a taxpayer's AGI limit can be carried forward and used to offset taxable income over the next five years.
- For taxpayers who do not itemize, the legislation expanded the allowance for above-the-line charitable deductions through 2021. Individuals can deduct up to \$300 of cash donations above-the-line. Married couples filing joint returns may deduct up to \$600.

For more information, please contact your [tax advisor](#).

## QR Code for the Sunday Bulletin

For those joining us in service, if you would like to go paperless, we now have a QR code available at the check-in desk to help you view the bulletin on your wireless device. To use, open your camera and hold over the QR code. A message box will pop up on your device. Click the box and it will directly take you to the weeks bulletin. No special program is required. We will continue to have paper copies available for those who prefer them.



## PWM Virtual Sale

It's not too late to donate items to the Presbyterian Women's on-line sale. Just send Ann Walsh, [ann.walsh@gmail.com](mailto:ann.walsh@gmail.com) the particulars of what you are willing to donate, how many, cost per item and when your products will be ready. Since the sale is August to the end of November, there is still plenty of time to donate to our sale. Proceeds will benefit PWM operating and mission projects for the coming year. Please help to make this a success.

## Ladies Book Club Thanks

### Marilyn And Resumes This Fall

All of us wish to send many many thanks to Marilyn Weber who has served as book club chair par excellence for the past six years. She has poured her heart into this responsibility and made this such a loving group with lively discussions of well-chosen books. She has loved serving us, but feels that now is the time for someone else to take on this role. Thank you, Marilyn, over and over for leading our book club for many years. It will take a legion to replace you. We invite everyone who loves to read or participate in book discussions to join us! Our book club meetings will resume on September 7th. Time and place to be determined closer to the event, so watch your emails. If you would like to serve on the book club leadership team or be included in our emails, please contact Jan Mittelstaedt at [janmitt@gmail.com](mailto:janmitt@gmail.com) or Kelly Farrell-Oliverson at [krfopdx@gmail.com](mailto:krfopdx@gmail.com) We look forward to seeing everyone again this fall and welcoming new friends!.



Theme for the year: every one of us has a part to play in God's story

September 12th- Kick-off Sunday  
September 19th- Sunday School  
September 26th- Arts and Music Sunday

October 3rd- Family Sunday  
October 10th- Sunday School  
October 17th- Sunday School  
October 24th- Sunday School  
October 31st- Arts and Music Sunday



November 7th- Family Sunday  
November 14th- Sunday School  
November 21st- Sunday School  
November 28th- Arts and Music Sunday

December 5th- Family Sunday  
December 12th- Sunday School  
December 19th- Sunday School  
December 26th- No Sunday School (day after Christmas)

## The Fales Choral Music Fund

— Greg Homza, Director of Music Ministries

Long-time choir member Don Fales finished the race on February 8th of this year, and we all miss him greatly. He was a gentle and steady presence, and will not soon be forgotten. Actually, he will never be forgotten at FPC, because his loving wife Norma has established the Fales Choral Music Fund in his memory, which will support the ministry of the adult choir at FPC in perpetuity. I am grateful to Norma for her foresight and generosity in establishing this fund, and to the many donors who have already contributed. If you would like to make a gift, please contact [me](#), Pastor Audrey, or Marc Lavender in the church office.



Following worship on July 11, members of the Trustees presented Norma Fales with a framed print of a watercolor painting of the Jaekel pipe organ made by local artist Kalina Wilson, with members of the Chancel Choir looking on. (Photo credit: Marilyn Howe)

## Children's Sunday School

Looking forward to welcoming children and families back to church on Sunday mornings in the fall. If you have any questions about any of the Sunday school classes, please reach out to Pastor Carmen at [cgoetschius@firstpresportland.org](mailto:cgoetschius@firstpresportland.org)

## Children's Ministry Schedule

### September 2021

**September 12th: Kick-off Sunday**

**September 19th: Sunday School**

**September 26th - Arts & Music Sunday**

**CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**NURSERY**  
BIRTH TO  
AGE 3

**BIBLE CREW**  
3RD &  
4TH  
GRADE

**JR. HIGH**  
5TH-7TH  
GRADE

**GODLY PLAY**  
PRE-K  
THROUGH  
2ND  
GRADE

*Theme:*  
**WE ARE ALL A PART OF GOD'S STORY**

SUNDAYS AT  
FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
PORTLAND  
@10:45 AM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN PORTLAND PRESENTS

**ART & MUSIC SUNDAYS**

LAST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH

CHILDREN GET TO EXPERIMENT WITH MUSIC, INSTRUMENTS, AND VARIOUS MEDIUMS OF ART TAUGHT BY GUEST TEACHERS EACH MONTH  
*EXPLORING FAITH THROUGH EXPRESSION & PLAY!*



# Columbarium Dedication on Sunday September 26th

— Continued from front.

The Columbarium Committee was appointed in late 2017 and tasked with deciding whether to go forward with creating a contemplative garden with columbarium as originally envisioned when the Plaza was built in 2006. The Committee began by surveying the members of the congregation in January 2018 and, after determining that there was sufficient interest to proceed, by researching costs and construction issues. The Committee presented their findings to the Session in April 2018. With Session approval granted, the Committee raised funds by selling niches in the

If you would like to visit the Memorial Garden, please request a key to the locked gate from the Church Office during regular office hours. If you are interested in purchasing a niche, contact the Church Business Administrator, Marc Lavender, at (503) 228-7331 or [cba@firstpresportland.org](mailto:cba@firstpresportland.org). The price for a single urn in a niche is \$3500 which includes engraving the granite face plate at the appropriate time. A second urn may be added to the same niche for an additional \$1500. The Columbarium is reserved for all current and former members and clergy of First Presbyterian Church, and their immediate family.



Photo: FPC Columbarium by Laurna Shively

proposed Columbarium. Construction began in the summer of 2019. By June 2020 the first plinth was completed; construction of the second plinth was made possible by FPC member Kathy Withycombe.

The Committee also supervised the reconfiguration of the Memorial Garden by removing old concrete and repaving with a smooth new concrete surface. Volunteer Karen Halvorsen worked tirelessly through the spring and summer of 2021 to remove old overgrown bushes and create lovely new plantings. Building Committee Chair Steve Snodderly answered a myriad of questions as they arose and supervised the construction. Grateful thanks are given for all of the many people who have kept the project moving forward toward its completion.



Photo: FPC Columbarium by Laurna Shively

— Thank you, Columbarium Team! Joyce Evans, Jon Bates, Laurna Shively, and Ann van Bever

**Please save the date for Tom Withycombe's inurnment service on Sunday, August 1st at 12 (noon)** which will be in the contemplative garden area where the beautiful columbarium is located on the Plaza. All are welcome!

# All Church Labor Day Retreat aka Church Family Reunion

– Continued from front

We don't want the price to keep anyone from coming. This year we're using a new 3-tier system and you choose what you pay.

1. "Pay a little more" adds 25% to the cost.
2. Actual cost to attend
3. "Pay a little less" subtracts 25% from the cost.

Scholarships are also available. If the "pay a little less" cost is still difficult, please contact Pastor Spencer at (503) 695-2243 and we will work something out. (That's what scholarship funds are there for!) Conversely, if you are weathering the pandemic well and are able to pay more, you can be a blessing to others.

Please go to [menucha.org/labordayretreat](http://menucha.org/labordayretreat) for information on prices, lodging, weekend schedule and to register. If you have questions, please contact retreat registrar Laura Merrill at [merrill.laura@gmail.com](mailto:merrill.laura@gmail.com) Labor Day Retreat Planning Team: Cathy Chang-Lowe, Rebekah Coles, Lauren Deming, Sarah Schwab and Amy Wood.

## Renegade Opera on the Plaza

Maddy Ross, Chancel Choir Soprano and Celebration Works administrator, is excited to announce that Renegade Opera, Portland's unconventional opera company, transforming our plaza into an opera stage! 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 Lafolette. Stage Direction by Joellen Sweeney and Music Direction by Danielle Jagelski with all 4 members of the Salem String Quartet, Philip Kettler on Cello, and Rebecca Stager on Piano. Costumes by Ophir El-Boher, puppet design by Arcadia Trueheart, theatre-masks by Elliot Menard.

Performance dates are **July 29, 30, 31, and August 1 at 7:30 pm.** Get your tickets here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/orfeo-in-underland-tickets-156582728155>

Find more information at [www.renegadeopera.org](http://www.renegadeopera.org)

## Rose Haven & E-Recycling PDX Event

Rose Haven, our community neighbor offering services for women and children, has an opportunity to receive free technology devices for their new space for their clients' use. Members and friends of FPC can help by donating our used electronics through their partner "GetLagosNow" at the Second Annual E-Recycling PDX event on **Thursday, August 5th from 10 am to 3 pm** located at Lexicon Solutions, 4605 SW Poplar Lane, Portland. Over a dozen event speakers will be presenting valuable information on all aspects of 2021 technology, and you'll be able to learn more about the numerous community groups who are benefiting from your donations.

The following electronic devices are being accepted: printers, laptops, desktops, cellphones, I-Pads, (please remember to include cords, chargers, etc. if available). All devices will be professionally cleared of data and refurbished by Lexicon Employees. Follow this link to learn more: [getlagosnow.com/e-recycling](http://getlagosnow.com/e-recycling) Please contact Cindy Finch if you have no devices to donate, and still want to help Rose Haven with their ongoing needs: [cindylooufinch@yahoo.com](mailto:cindylooufinch@yahoo.com)



## Civil Rights Pilgrimage

Join this 9-day pilgrimage, **November 5 - 13**, 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 include the King Center in Atlanta; Montgomery and Selma, AL; Jackson and Money, MS; the Lorraine Motel in Memphis; and more. Group size is limited to 26 participants. Visit <https://progressivepilgrimage.com/> or contact [heather@progressivepilgrimage.com](mailto:heather@progressivepilgrimage.com)



## EarthCare Update

The summer is early, the heat is on, and the subsequent devastation from the recent “heat dome” caught most of us by surprise. The Earth Care team at FPC believes the church can take an active role in helping our members, church, neighbors, and greater Portland community adapt and react to these events that climate change is making far more frequent. We’re forming a group to brainstorm practical action our congregation can undertake to weather these new storms on short notice. (Roof garden? Plaza fountain?) We plan to have recommendations by year end. To volunteer your ideas and/or critique ours, please contact Jenny Holmes, Chris Nilson, Roberta Badger-Cain or Bill Resley.



## Volunteers for the Emergency

### Food Closet:

The Emergency Food Closet (located in Julia West) for the Alder House residents continues to grow! We are also seeking to grow our group of volunteers, to sign up please follow this link: <https://tinyurl.com/jk64rmev> or contact Brenna at [bdkman@firstpresportland.org](mailto:bdkman@firstpresportland.org) We are also in need of dish soap, full size shampoo & conditioner and small bags of dry dog food. Thank you for your support!

### Northeast Emergency Food Program: How We Can Help!

From A’Jay Scipio, NEFP Program Manager, “the impact of the time and work our volunteers shared with us between March 2020 and May 2021 cannot be understated and it’s because of their efforts we still endure.”

Learn more about NEFP: <https://www.facebook.com/NEFPpx/>

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!

## Menucha Homecoming Picnic, Saturday, August 7, 2021

### Please come!

Menucha is a place where you’ll always be welcome—it’s time to come “home”! **Saturday, August 7 from 11 am – 2 pm.** Bring a picnic lunch, maybe a chair or blanket. No pets but we welcome specifically trained ADA service animals. Menucha will provide: lemonade, iced tea, popsicles and ice cream bars. Enjoy: Live music, old fashioned outdoor games, tours of the Wright Hall renovations, and more important—familiar faces, a warm welcome, and a chance to re-connect with this sacred space. Free. This is not a fundraiser. Thank you for passing this invitation to any friends who would enjoy spending time at Menucha.



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



## Menucha Summer Update



Photo: Camp Abenteur (German immersion) kids enjoying Menucha’s pool

By the time this newsletter reaches you, Menucha will have hosted at least 16 groups since Governor Brown lifted statewide Covid-19 restrictions.

It feels GREAT to be fully open for in-person guests again! Registration for upcoming programs is humming along as well. August’s Creative Arts Community Art Camp is almost sold out; October’s Blues in the Gorge just opened registration and still has space; and November’s Scrap & Sew is already full with a waiting list. Please visit our website [menucha.org/programs](https://menucha.org/programs) for much more information on these and the rest of our programs. As always, if you know of a group who would benefit from time at Menucha, we would appreciate it if you would recommend us. Our mission is to enrich lives through hospitality, learning, reflection and renewal. Please contact us at (503) 695-2243.



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## **FPC Visual Arts - Seeking Beauty: Photography by Joanna Ceciliani & Maureen Love | 7 x 7 Gallery Group - Interview with Emma Berger**



"Holding up Venice" Photography by Maureen Love

The Chapel Gallery walls are now filled with images from Northwest Photographer and Harpist Maureen Love and Northwest Photographer and Singer Joanna Ceciliani. Photos from around the world and from local settings as close as Portland's waterfront welcome visitors back to the Gallery after a long year's absence, next time you attend worship, be sure to make time for a viewing!

The [Visual Arts](https://tinyurl.com/536rkt5v) program of First Presbyterian Church is partnering with six other downtown churches as part of the 7x7 Gallery Group to cooperate on a series of art events highlighting issues of our time. In this video <https://tinyurl.com/536rkt5v> artist Emma Berger describes



Photo: George Floyd mural detail by artist Emma Berger

her process for creating the downtown Portland's Apple Store Mural. In the early days of what became a summer of protest, her mural appeared on the boarded-up Apple Store near Pioneer Square. That mural became a local touchstone and a national symbol. In this video, Emma talks about her inspiration, artistic process, and the evolution of the street art movement last summer.