



**First
Presbyterian**
CHURCH OF PORTLAND

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Spire
FEBRUARY 2022

Church Services Online Only Through Mid-February



Between the high rate of infection and steep rise in cases of the Omicron variant, COVID-19 has put an incredible strain on our healthcare systems and its workers. Following the recommendations of the Presbytery of the Cascades to do our part to help limit the spread of the virus, the Reopening Working Group has voted to move worship services to streaming exclusively. The suspension of in-person worship will begin Sunday, January 23, and stay in place for four weeks, with the possibility of an extension if the caseload stays high.

We are also suspending all in-person church gatherings including Sunday school classes. We are encouraging all groups of the church to meet over Zoom during this time. The church office will remain open during business hours. Please call

the office to arrange a time if you need to come to the church for any reason.

We are grateful for your ongoing flexibility as our church community come together to care for all of God's people including our most vulnerable and those who are tending the sick.

Welcome New Members!



Jenny Anton & Stan Anton



Geoff Bjorkedal



Anne Haverkamp



Karen Jennings



James Proctor



Al & Laura Laney



Georgina Wright

A Valentine's Cello-bration, February 13 at 2:00 pm

Celebration Works concert series is thrilled to welcome Marilyn de Oliveira and Trevor Fitzpatrick, wife/husband duo and Oregon Symphony members, to First Presbyterian Church on Sunday, February 13 at 2:00 pm for a concert of cello duets. Join us in person or online to hear works by Barrière, Popper, Pixinguinha, Piazzolla, Portland composer Kenji Bunch, and more. All concerts are offered FREE of charge as a gift to the greater Portland community from FPC and a generous group of donors, including many of you! Visit our webpage for more information and to get the live concert link:

www.firstpresportland.org/music-arts/celebration-works

Celebration Works
2021-2022 SEASON

Feb 13
Sunday, February 13, 2022 | 2 pm

A VALENTINE'S CELLO-BRATION

Celebrate Valentine's Day and your love of everyone's favorite instrument with a concert of cello duets! Wife/husband duo and Oregon Symphony members **Marilyn de Oliveira** and **Trevor Fitzpatrick** will play music of Barrière, Popper, Pixinguinha, Piazzolla, Portland composer Kenji Bunch, and more.

www.firstpresportland.org/arts-music/celebration-works/

Pastor's Pen



What do we do when a season that promises newness and a fresh start turns out to be just the next round of what has become our reality? Last January promised hope in the form of a vaccine. This January, hope was harder to find as the cases of COVID spiked once again. The Omicron variant is ripping through our communities and while, for many, the symptoms are much milder, we can no longer see our community as one set apart from this disease.

It is not just this new variant that is stealing our hope. There is a collective weariness that is the byproduct of the trauma caused by the pandemic, *and yet*. 'And yet,' is a powerful phrase that signals to the reader that the story is not over. They are powerful words of our faith. "They crucified him, and yet, on the third day he rose from the grave." *And yet* are the words of redemption, reconciliation, and restoration. We are living and languishing in dark times, and yet, goodness and love are all around. The poet, Amanda Gorman, wrote this beautiful reminder of the collective work we are called to this new year. The work of helping the world see that as hard as things are, we still have an 'and yet' for our story.

*"May this be the day
We come together.
Mourning, we come to mend,
Withered, we come to weather,
Torn, we come to tend,
Battered, we come to better.
Tethered by this year of yearning,
We are learning
That though we weren't ready for this,
We have been readied by it.
We steadily vow that no matter
How we are weighed down,
We must always pave a way forward."*

~Pastor Brenna

Stephen Ministers are trained, caring church members, who visit and support people in heavy times. If you are interested in setting up a Stephen Minister visit, or would like more information, please contact Pastor Brenna or Pastor Audrey at office@firstpresportland.org.

EXHAUSTED BY THE PANDEMIC?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO FACE IT ALONE.

A Stephen Minister can walk alongside you or a loved one to offer support and care—and it's free and confidential.

To learn more, contact one of our Stephen Leaders.



Tuesday Women's Book Group

The Tuesday Women's Book Group will meet to discuss "Anxious People" on Tuesday, February 1, from 11:00 am to noon, using Zoom. Fredrik Backman's 2019 novel, "Anxious People," is a work of adult fiction that follows the lives of various characters and demonstrates how their anxieties, hopes, and fears intertwine. Backman is a *New York Times* bestselling author, columnist, and blogger whose works have been published in over 40 countries, including his native Sweden. One of his most famous novels, "A Man Called Ove" (2012), became a feature film in 2015. Jan Mittlestadt will lead the discussion. If you wish to have your name added to this group, please email Jan Mittlestadt at janmitt@gmail.com and she will send the Zoom link.



Recycling and Reuse Options

Members of FPC's Earth Care Team have compiled a list favorite places for reuse and recycling as an act of stewardship of God's Creation. This month, we share three places that take material donations. Call or visit their websites for donation hours.

- *William Temple House Thrift Store*, 2230 NW Glisan Street, (503) 222-3328. Named after an English Anglican priest, this store sells new, second-hand and vintage clothing and accessories, art, books, CD's, electronics, furniture, housewares and more. Profits support mental health, healthy food, and emergency assistance. A truck is available to pick up heavy items.
- *Rose Haven Day Shelter*, 627 NW 18th Ave., (503) 248-6364. Housed at Immanuel Lutheran Church, it meets the needs of homeless and abused women in crisis. Donations of certain types of clothing, personal care items, backpacks, and more. Please check their website for current needs. Cindy Finch represents Open Circle for this project; cindyloufinch@yahoo.com or (216) 392-4362
- *Scrap PDX*, 1736 SW Alder Street, (503) 294-0769. Scrap store sells donated arts and crafts supplies, office supplies, new greeting cards, gift bags, ribbons, and many more creative re-use items at bargain prices. Scrap inspires creative re-use and environmentally sustainable behavior by providing educational programs and affordable materials to the community.

Celebrating 20 Years of Live Music with Celebration Works

By Madeline Ross, Celebration Works Administrator



2022 marks the 20th anniversary of the first season of Celebration Works concerts at First Presbyterian Church! For this very special season we plan to "celebrate" all the things we love about our community and our city with a slate of concerts featuring local musicians and artists, and we need your help to make it possible. February is Celebration Works' fundraising month, and we hope to raise \$8,000 in support of the 2022-2023 season. Though we are still in the midst of a pandemic, we are confident that we will be able to present concerts in-person and/or online, and we hope you'll invest in FPC's musical outreach by making a gift. There are two ways to give – 1) by check: payable to First Presbyterian Church with Celebration Works in the memo line, or 2) online: go to

www.firstpresportland.org, click on "Make a Donation" and select the "Celebration Works Contribution" designation. All donors receive a receipt for tax purposes and acknowledgment in next season's programs.

Thank you so much for your consideration, support, and prayers! It is because of you that we are able to continue sharing beautiful music and art with our church and our community.