



**First
Presbyterian**
CHURCH OF PORTLAND

1200 SW Alder St, Portland, OR 97205
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 885
PORTLAND OR



**First
Presbyterian**
CHURCH OF PORTLAND

Spire
MARCH 2022



Help save a life.
March 8, 2022
12:00-5:30 pm
Geneva Hall

Celebration Works Updates

by Greg Homza, Director of Music Ministry

Thanks to everyone who gave in support of Celebration Works' 2022-2023 20th Anniversary season! Maddy and I have some wonderful ideas for concerts, and are eager to get to work planning.

Our next concert will be on Sunday, March 27, at 2:00 pm, and will feature the a cappella vocal ensemble In the Pocket, with FPC's own Madeline Ross and her colleagues Laura Chase, Arielle Sazima, Alec Chase, Matt Faunt, and Rick Jones. This talented group of young singers exudes energy and joy (see for yourself at <https://www.youtube.com/c/InThePocketPDX>), and this is sure to be a marvelous event.

Entitled "Calling Home," the concert will explore what it means to find your home, whether that be in the people you surround yourself with, in the places you live, in the memories you cherish, or in the hope for brighter days to come. The diverse program will feature unaccompanied classical and popular choral music by Danielle Jagelski, Ysaye Barnwell, Bobby McFerrin, Billy Joel, and more.



Session to Work on new Vision Statement

This month, our Session (the governing board of the church made up of 17 Elders elected by the congregation) will be having its annual retreat at Menucha in the Gorge on March 11 and 12. We are looking forward to meeting in person this year, as last year's retreat was held by Zoom during the pandemic. The Session will be focused on working on the Vision Statement and Guiding Principles for the church that our Strategic Planning Team has been putting together.

The church's new mission statement, *Love God. Love Our Neighbors.* was presented to the congregation at our annual meeting this past fall. The Vision Statement draft includes this language, which may take further shape at the retreat:

We commit to be a church that is:

- *Engaged.* A forward-thinking and involved congregation committed to each other and to the wider community.
- *Inclusive.* A faith community that affirms and welcomes all people.
- *Compassionate.* A congregation that advances the well-being and dignity of all people, works toward a just and equitable society, and cares for all creation.
- *Faithful.* Living our faith with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love while expanding the circle where God's love is known.

Becoming a Beloved Community

In this Lenten season, adult education will be hosting a series that looks beyond personal disciplines (me) and commits to creating beloved communities in our own backyards (we) – communities reflecting the inclusive and healing love that Jesus modeled as he made his way to the cross. Join us each Sunday during Lent, beginning March 6, from 12:00 to 1:00 pm, as we together reflect upon how to become a beloved community.

There are several options for you to take part in this journey:

1. Join us following worship for an in-person class each Sunday
2. Join us from your home for a virtual class each Sunday from 12:00 - 1:00 pm:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81652694626>

3. Pursue these devotions on your own or with a group of friends.

To sign up and receive a copy of the book or an electronic PDF, please e-mail Pastor Brenna at bdkman@firstpresportland.org or call the church office (503) 228-7331.



Pastor's Pen

This month the church season of Lent begins, a season of sacred time that invites us to a journey deeper than the passing days. In this season of preparation for Easter, **we are invited to give thought to what it means to live as a person of faith in such complex and challenging times as we are given.**

Traditionally in Lent, people have given up something they enjoy as a practice of penance. But **this year, it seems we've already been long in a kind of Lenten season, having had, for the sake of the pandemic and its restrictions, to give up many of the things we enjoy,** getting to see friends and family, going out for meals.

So during this Lent, you might **take up or strengthen a spiritual practice** like morning prayer or journaling, meditation, or reading Scripture. These are some of the resources of faith that God would give us to see us through these days.

You're invited to attend the church's Ash Wednesday service on March 2 at 7:00 pm, either in person or by streaming as we begin to mark the season of Lent.

Jan Richardson calls us to the deep reflection of Lent, in her poem, "Rend Your Heart," drawing on a Scripture from the book of Joel:

*Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
rend not your clothing, but your hearts.*

To receive this blessing, all you have to do is let your heart break...

Let it fall apart so you can see its secret chambers,
the hidden spaces where you have hesitated to go.

Your entire life is here, inscribed whole upon your heart's walls:

every path taken or left behind

every face you turned toward or turned away,

every word spoken in love or in rage,

every line of your life you would prefer to leave in shadow...

It could take you days to wander these rooms. Forty days, at least.

And so let this be a season for wandering, for trusting the breaking,

for tracing the rupture that will return you

to the One who waits, who watches, who works within the rending

to make your heart whole.

It has been so good to have worship back in person (as well as by streaming) in recent weeks, and to begin to see those who've been able to attend!

I'm very thankful to the congregation and Session for the gift of sabbatical leave in January, which was renewing, and glad to be back with you!

Wishing you God's peace to keep you through this season,



Save the Date to Support Our Friends in Uganda

Come walk with us! Saturday, August 13, 2022, is Walk the Wildwood, a fundraising event hosted and organized by FPC to benefit Partners in Mission-Africa. Participants will choose among guided routes on the Wildwood Trail in Washington and Forest Parks and then enjoy lunch together in the pavilion at Hoyt Arboretum.

We're walking to support Partners in Mission (PIM), which shares the love of Jesus by helping children and refugees through two schools in rural Kamwenge, Uganda. They currently enroll over 800 students from kindergarten through high school. Students can also take vocational classes in carpentry; masonry; culinary/hospitality; and machine knitting and sewing. The school has a health clinic and offers room and board for many.

FPC has an ongoing relationship with Partners in Mission. In 2015, 2017, and 2019, thirteen members traveled to Kamwenge on mission trips. Other members are sponsoring children there. By joining this walk – or sponsoring someone who is walking – you can help raise funds and awareness for this meaningful ministry.

- Thanks to event underwriters, 100% of the walk's proceeds will go to constructing a new carpentry shop for the vocational school.
- Uganda's Kamwenge District is home to returning refugees who fled in the 1970s during the brutal reign of dictator Idi Amin. PIM's support has given the community hope and the tools they need to lift themselves up both spiritually and economically. While most parents are subsistence farmers, the children who become educated have opportunities for success in a wide variety of careers.
- PIM is led by Ugandans, who set the organization's goals and direction. The emphasis is on teaching solid Christian values in the tradition of the East African Revival.

You are encouraged to invite friends from all walks of your life to join you for this event.

Questions? Want to volunteer? Contact event chair Kathryn Hill (hillka@teleport.com) For more info about the school, visit <https://pim-africa.org/>.



Gallery Exhibition: Hilarie Couture

March 6-April 24, 2022



Our Chapel Gallery exhibition space welcomes artist Hilarie Couture from March 6 to April 24. Hilarie has always been an artist but only recently been able to concentrate on her art full-time. All of her life experiences have translated to her canvases as she is self-taught but attends workshops from many artists she admires. She has featured solo shows, participated in various local and national group shows, and in 2016, curated her own traveling show in Vancouver, Washington, called "Founding Mothers Portraits of Progress," painting fifty-five portraits of women in her community who made contributions. The show traveled throughout the city for almost two years as a community outreach, and held time at the Historic Museum and the Fort Vancouver Gallery as a tribute to these remarkable women during Women's History month.

Hilarie teaches specialized workshops in her studio, and is a popular instructor for various art guilds, retirement facilities, and community colleges. Besides painting her romantic narratives, Hilarie offers portrait and other commissions at her studio/gallery now in Fort Wayne, Indiana, or on location. She also creates wedding and special event paintings attending the venues to paint live as an option. More information can be found at: www.hcouturearts.com

A Julia West Update

The Julia West House building adjacent to the church is presently being used for our Food Closet, to benefit the residents of Alder House, who live across the street. Used in the past to host Night Watch and other programs of support to those seeking housing, the church continues (through its Julia West committee) to apply for funding to enact our vision of rebuilding Julia West as a single room occupancy facility with supportive social services on sight. We have applied for several rounds of funding at the local and state level, but have not yet been granted approval to go ahead with this project. We are working with Community Development Partners. This spring, we are planning to apply for a round of state funding from OHCS (Oregon Housing and Community Services). You'll find background on this program at this link: <https://bit.ly/3Jp8ISA> We continue to be hopeful that this project, with the housing so much needed in our city, will come to pass.

Observe Lent with One Great Hour of Sharing



Each year through the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering, we are given the opportunity to live out the call to become the beloved community of Jesus Christ. Traditionally, the weeks of Lent between Ash Wednesday and Easter are a period of prayer and sacrifice for Christians. You can join believers around the world at this sacred time by remembering our sisters and brothers who are in need through gifts to the annual One Great Hour of Sharing special offering. These past two years have been particularly challenging.

OGHS reaches out with projects that share God's love by providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed. Many programs have a long-term focus, partnering with communities to address root causes as well. Our donations will be dedicated in worship on Palm Sunday, April 10.

Caring for Creation – Options for Hard-to-Recycle Items

Stewardship of God's wondrous Earth includes using less, and recycling the rest whenever possible. While there are many recyclable items that are not picked up curbside (See RecycleOrNot.org), thankfully, there are two companies in the Portland area that provide a way to recycle non-curbside items for motivated recyclers—Ridwell and James Recycling.

- Ridwell picks up used batteries, plastic film, light bulbs, fabrics and a special item at your doorstep and reuses or recycles 97.5% of it, saving 2.8 million pounds from landfills. Plastic film is into composite decking materials. Fabrics may be turned into carpet padding. Find out more at www.ridwell.com.
- James Recycling was started by a young man with Asperger's syndrome who applies his unique abilities to recycling. James offers pick-up of hard-to-recycle items as well as having pick-up days. The next one is March 12 from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm at 13979 SW Millikan Way in Beaverton. Check them out at jshrecycling.com or call (971) 217-7444.

Send your ideas and resources for reuse and recycling to the Earth Care Team at jehrestore@gmail.com.

Tuesday Women's Book Group

The Tuesday Women's Book Group will discuss "Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent" on Tuesday, March 1, from 11:00 am to noon, using Zoom. Isabel Wilkerson's 2020 nonfiction book explores the three resonant caste systems in history: the Indian caste system against the "untouchables," the Nazi caste system against Jews, and the American caste system against Blacks and People of Color. She examines the eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, and the debilitating effects that this system creates on all aspects of health, culture, and politics. Jean Meihoff will lead the discussion. If you wish to have your name added to this group or to attend this month's discussion, please email Jan Mittlestadt at janmitt@gmail.com -- and she will send you the Zoom link.



Youth Mission Trip Fundraiser

During the month of March, our youth will be raising funds for this year's mission trip to the Yakama Reservation with SLAM (Students Learning About Mission). There are two ways to help support our youth. First, the youth will be collecting clean, laundered men's & women's clothing, clothing accessories, and bedding to be resold/recycled in our FUNDrive where our youth will receive monetary compensation for each pound collected. Stop by the Chapel narthex to donate soft goods or to pick up a small or large bag to fill and bring it back any day in March. You're welcome to take extra bags and pass them along to friends as well! If you don't have soft goods to donate and still want to support our youth, we have mini-bags you can fill with a monetary gift: change, cash, or checks to the church. We are so grateful for all ways our congregation cares for and supports our youth.

Capital Campaign Updates on Friendly House

First Presbyterian Church's \$25,000 Capital Campaign Mission Giving gifts have made a significant contribution to meeting the needs of Northwest Portland, which is part of the church's immediate neighborhood. Given in two separate gifts, these funds were used to support critical efforts of Friendly House. The larger gift went to their capital campaign for a major building renovation. The second was given during the depths of the pandemic in mid-2020 for emergency relief. The initial \$20,000 funding was used as part of the renovation efforts of the Crawford Building. This redevelopment allows Friendly House to expand their programs to serve people locally across generations and life circumstances. Specifically, the monies were used to jump start the capital campaign process to modernize and make an older building safer and compliant with ADA requirements.

The second gift of \$5,000 was an unrestricted gift to address the emergency situation of the Covid-19 pandemic on Friendly House. This was made in late spring 2020, at a time when organizations and businesses were struggling to determine how to serve clients and customers at the time that most traditional activities had ceased.

Two such programs included:

- COVID-19 Information and Support – Wrap-around supports for people impacted by COVID-19, such as food, housing, and utility assistance, in addition to information about testing sites, vaccination and more.
- Complete Student Support – Virtual academic and social support for school-age children and their families. Families experiencing hardship are provided with assistance and resources. This program is free for all families.

As a reminder, one goal of the CCMG funds is to fund mission-related activities that are local, national and international in scope. Another goal is to fund projects and organizations that are likely to encourage greater involvement by FPC. Friendly House fits well into the local mission category. Likewise, it has significant involvement by FPC members who are helping the Friendly House community and Northwest Portland.

Members Anne Birnie, Amy Wood and Dr. John Evans serve on the Friendly House Board.

If you have any specific questions about the CCMG gifts, please contact any of the committee members below: Greg Aldrich, Rev. Brenna Dykman, Kathryn Hill, Linda Killen and Steve Primack

Refugee Restart Kits



While the refugee crises are no longer headlining news, the numbers of people seeking safe haven continues to be staggering. Oftentimes, the people who are fleeing leave their homes with nothing more than the clothing on their backs. The FPC Mission Committee is teaming up with the Refugee Care Collective, who works with the major resettling agencies in Oregon, to help welcome our new neighbors. Starting March 1, we will be collecting new items to put together "Restart Kits." You are invited to visit <https://bit.ly/RefugeeRestart> to see what is needed and then bring those items to the church any day in March. If you would like to donate and need help to sign up to bring items, contact Pastor Brenna bdykman@firstpresportland.org or call the church office.