



## *Pastor's Pen*

In the first chapter of the book of Genesis, God enters the chaos of creation, hovering over the churning waters and bringing order. Times of transition can sometimes feel chaotic, uncertain, and frightening. Sitting in the unknown and mystery of what God may be doing in the next chapter for our church can be anxiety-producing, yet it can also be exciting. The liminal space between seasons means, with sadness, we say goodbye, but with anticipation, we look ahead expectantly for what will come next.

As I get older, I learn more about myself and what God is calling me to do in this world. After much time of reflection and discernment, I have noticed God has a sneaky way of calling me to spaces and seasons of transition or uncertainty. My first official call was just months before the world shut down in a global pandemic. Learning to navigate an ever-changing landscape and meet new challenges each day provided an exciting season of growth.

As we enter into another season of transition, I am both honored and excited to serve as FPC's bridge pastor from the end of May until an Interim Pastor is appointed. I look forward to seeing how God will move in this faith community.

After more than four years of service at FPC, this community has grown incredibly dear to me. I am delighted to partner with our session and leaders to cultivate not just stability but to maintain a posture of curiosity and excitement about how God will be working in the life of this church in the days ahead.

In hope,

Pastor Brenna



## SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, May 19, 2024

## Pastor Audrey's Farewell Reception

You may already have May 19 on your calendar because of Pentecost, but please add that the Farewell Reception for Pastor Audrey will follow the worship service on that day. Join us until about 1:00 pm in Geneva Hall and Calvin Library and enjoy refreshments, decorations, and a wonderful celebration of her time as our head pastor. A letter with more details will come out soon; you'll learn when and where to sign up to attend, what you can bring/donate, and how you can help. Please plan to attend and express your gratitude for her vision, leadership, and service throughout these at-times challenging years.



## First Presbyterian Church Recertified as a PC(USA) Earth Care Congregation

Our church has been recertified as an Earth Care Congregation by the Presbyterian Hunger Program. This certification recognizes churches that commit to taking seriously God's charge to "till and keep" the garden. To become an Earth Care Congregation, we affirmed an Earth Care Pledge to integrate environmental practices and thinking into our worship, education, facilities, and outreach. To join the Earth Care Team or contribute ideas, contact Jenny Holmes at [jehrestore@gmail.com](mailto:jehrestore@gmail.com).

First Presbyterian Church of Portland is just one of the 331 churches in our denomination that dedicated ourselves to the intentional care of God's earth this year. For more information on the Earth Care Congregations program, visit [www.pcusa.org/earthcarecongregations](http://www.pcusa.org/earthcarecongregations).



### Mark Your Calendar For Earth Day

On Sunday, April 28, from 11:30 am to 12:45 pm, FPC's Earth Care Team will host its second annual "All Hands on Deck" Earth Day Fair with a low-waste coffee hour and organic snacks in Geneva Hall.

Enjoy interactive demonstrations and informative displays offering tips on minimizing plastic usage, conserving energy, promoting renewable energy, cultivating gardens for sustainability, helping pollinators and wildlife, and becoming an advocate for God's creation. Now, more than ever, our collective efforts are crucial in nurturing and safeguarding the awe-inspiring wonders of creation.

Visit our book exhibit in Calvin Library. Feel free to bring along clean, used glass containers for repurposing, as well as pill or vitamin bottles, along with their caps and lids, which are often challenging to recycle. Additionally, receive complimentary vegetable and native plant seedlings, and participate in a raffle for eco-friendly products. We look forward to seeing you there!



### Women's Book Club

The Women's Book Club will meet on Tuesday, April 2 at noon in the Heritage Room. You may also join us via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81233316517>. Come at 11:30 am with your brown bag lunch. The book, "A Fever in the Heartland" by Timothy Egan will be presented by Jane Van Boskirk. Delving into the historical events surrounding the Ku Klux Klan during the 1920s, this story reveals a chilling portrayal of a group cloaked in white sheets and adorned with pointed hoods. Under the cover of darkness, they embarked on night rides across the Heartland and the West, igniting crosses as symbols of intimidation and hatred. This notorious white supremacist group, directed its hostility towards African Americans, Catholics, Jews, and immigrants, unearthing one of the most harrowing chapters in American history.

Additional Book Club Dates: May 7 and June 4.



**Kristine Olson Presents**  
**Images of Easter**  
**An Adult Education Class**  
**April 7, 2024 - 11:30 AM In Calvin Library**

On April 7, join new member and Elder Kristine Olson for an adult education class that will explore images of Easter, focusing on the painting “Holy Women at the Tomb” (1894) by French artist Maurice Denis (1870-1943).

Known as a decorative artist, Denis was committed to religious art and sacred imagery throughout his life and career. At the time he painted “Holy Women at the Tomb”, Denis was involved in a collective of avant-garde artists known as Les Nabis (a Hebrew word meaning “prophets”) who celebrated pattern and ornament in painting. Inspired by fellow French painter Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), the Nabis committed themselves to using form and color to express emotions and spirituality rather than portray subject matter in a realistic style. By rejecting the Renaissance tradition of one-point perspective, the Nabis abandoned the illusion of depth, linear perspective, and modeling in favor of flat surfaces, broad planes of color, thick outlines, and bold patterns.

Through the visual analysis of Maurice Denis’ painting “Holy Women at the Tomb” in its art historical context, this talk will explore how Denis and his contemporaries re-envisioned painting and the visual depiction of the Easter story. By looking closely at how women are portrayed in images of Easter, the talk will also consider the significant role women play in the life and resurrection of Christ, the Church, and the history of art.

## **What is a Stephen Minister?**

A Stephen Minister is a lay person trained to be a confidential, trustworthy listener, partnered in a faith-based, one-on-one relationship with someone who is negotiating a challenging transition in life, often meeting weekly with them for a year.

We are ready to walk alongside you to provide comfort and understanding without any judgment or offers of advice.

Stephen Ministers are the After people:

- After the Memorial Service is over and friends and family have gone home...
- After your relationship falls apart and the bottom falls out of your life...
- After the doctor says, “I’m sorry. There’s nothing more that we can do.”
- After you get a pink slip with your last paycheck...
- After your sister tells you, “Why can’t you just move on with your life?”
- After you say, “How did a loving God allow this to happen?”

If you would like to explore more about being assigned a Stephen Minister, please contact one of our pastors.



## Celebration Works Concert Choose Your Own Recital!



Soprano  
Madeline Ross

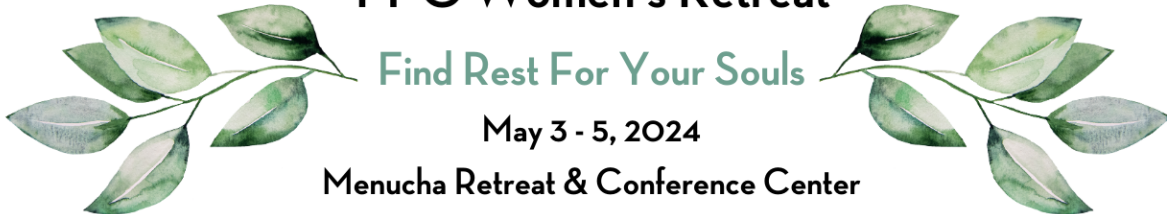
The next Celebration Works concert will be on Sunday, April 28, at 2:00 pm, and will feature soprano Madeline Ross and pianist Susan McDaniel. They recently competed in the finals of the NATSAA National Artist Awards competition in New York City, and while they didn't win, they had a blast preparing and performing a diverse program, and look forward to sharing it with the CW audience. Maddy writes, "It's really beautiful music, mostly art songs, one opera aria, and one oratorio aria, from a very diverse list of composers (part of the requirement is that they all be very different) and it makes for an eclectic and wonderful recital!" In a unique twist, the audience will choose the program order (just like judges do in a competition). The concert is presented free of charge, as a gift to the community

from FPC and generous donors. (Donations will be gratefully accepted.) Free parking is available in FPC's underground garage, and a festive reception will follow. Please plan to attend, and invite your friends!



Pianist  
Susan McDaniel

## FPC Women's Retreat



### Find Rest For Your Souls

May 3 - 5, 2024

Menucha Retreat & Conference Center

"Come to me, all who are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Matthew 11:28-30

The stories of scripture help us better understand our place in God's story and equip us to live lives of faith and joy. Through large and small group reflection on the gifts of Mary and Martha, two of Jesus' good friends, Pastor Carmen will create space for the women of First Presbyterian to reflect on what drives us to do what we do, how we relate to one another as sisters in faith, and Christ's invitation to rest and delight in time spent with him. All are welcome, so bring a friend! There will be time for meandering in the beautiful Columbia River gorge, opportunities for meaningful study and reflection, and connection with friends new and old. Laughter and good coffee are guaranteed. We hope to see you there.

To register, visit <https://firstpresportland.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/72/responses/new>. Registration closes on April 7.

For questions or additional information, please contact Lori Webb at [lorilwebb@comcast.net](mailto:lorilwebb@comcast.net) or Alexis in the church office at (503) 228-7331 or [office@firstpresportland.org](mailto:office@firstpresportland.org).



## Stewardship Campaign 2024

The First Pres Stewardship Committee sends its appreciation for your response to the 2024 Stewardship Campaign. We embraced the scripture from Psalm 31:24 as our cornerstone for this year's theme: "Be strong, take heart, all of you who hope in the Lord."

As a congregation, you responded in faith. Last year, the Session set a goal of \$775,000 for 2024 to fund the church's worship, programs, and mission. As this article went to press, we have received over 144 pledges totaling \$760,233, which is nearly 98% of the goal. The Stewardship Committee has set April 7 as the end date of this campaign. We hope the remaining 3% will be received by then to help us fully fund the church's life and work this year. If you have not pledged yet but plan to do so, please consider pledging by April 7.

Visit <https://firstpresportland.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/57/responses/new> to pledge online, or email Marc Lavender, our church business administrator, at [cba@firstpresportland.org](mailto:cba@firstpresportland.org).

In addition to the annual pledge campaign, we continue to have a monthly Moment for Stewardship to highlight some of the many diverse activities in our faith community and how the church puts to use the time, talent, and financial stewardship you share with FPC.

Thank you again for your faithful support of FPC! Your commitment is crucial in supporting our church and its outreach in our region and around the world.

Blessings from your Stewardship Committee members,

Doug, Alice, Steve, Audrey and Greg

## Consider Endowing Your Pledge

This fund was set up several years ago and is called the Endowed Pledge Fund, as it designates 4% of the principal to go to the church's operating budget to help fund the church's life and mission. With gifts donated so far, the Endowed Pledge Fund presently has about \$380,960, which will allow an annual draw of \$15,000 toward the church's needs in the coming years. Such endowments continue to yield funds for the church indefinitely.

If you'd like to ensure that your giving will help sustain the church into the years to come, you could consider giving to this fund. You can begin by endowing a portion of your annual pledge and add to that over time. Some have also chosen to endow some or all of their pledge now while continuing to make their annual pledge, which is an added help to the church.

You are invited to contact our Church Business Administrator, Marc Lavender, for further details on how to put in place this continued giving to the church's life: [cba@firstpresportland.org](mailto:cba@firstpresportland.org).



## Another moment in time from the FPC History Committee...

In 1926, FPC began a local mission project, Marshall Street Community Center, on the Marshall Street Presbyterian Church property. The goal was to alleviate poverty in low-income neighborhoods.

In 1930, the center was renamed to "Friendly House" and relocated to its present location on NW 26th and Savier. For the past 96 years, it has helped the surrounding community by providing programs and services to children, youth, the older population, and those facing homelessness.

Friendly House's Mission Statement reads: "Friendly House creates a thriving community by connecting people of all ages and backgrounds through quality educational, recreational, and other life-sustaining services."

By 1961, Friendly House became an independent non-profit organization. FPC continues to provide volunteers to serve as board members. Elder Amy Wood is currently serving on the Friendly House Board of Directors. Other current FPC members who served on their board include Cam Birnie (chair 2011, 2012), Midge Birnie (chair 1991), Doug Blomgren, Steve Chown (chair 1998), David Hawkins, David Leatherwood, Susan Miner, John Purdy and Dan Wade.

The annual Friendly House auction is on the evening of April 20 at 6:00 pm at the Multnomah Athletic Club. There is also an online auction beginning on April 15. Visit <https://fhi2024.ggo.bid> if you would like to participate. Thank you for your support of this agency and its good work!

## Julia West Housing Project

Construction has just started at the JWH location. The property sale closed on February 9, and FPC realized \$746,970 from the transaction. As required by our Presbytery Board of Trustees, "Congregations are ordinarily to use proceeds from the sale of real property, ...for non-operating purposes, i.e. to reduce existing encumbrances; to invest proceeds in other real property or new construction."

In keeping with this requirement, the first part of the proceeds from the Julia West sale have been applied to pay off the remaining loan on the church's parking garage. This will save FPC nearly \$130,000 in annual operating expenses, allowing the church to put more of its resources to mission and programs. The new building on the site will create 90 units of subsidized low-income housing with supportive services, which will be available for occupancy in 2025. Wonderful news!

As for the remainder of the sale proceeds, the Session has formed a small study team to come back with guidance on how to apply the proceeds in line with the mission purposes that had been envisioned when the JWH sale was first approved.

We're grateful for this chance to strengthen the church's work and mission, and for the contribution to low-cost housing that is so needed in our city.



## April Coffee Hour

In 2024, we are using a new volunteer system that involves more members in hosting our Sunday coffee hours, which are very important in the life of our congregation.

If your name begins with K, L, or M, April is your month! Whatever your situation may be, there are ways you can assist. If you can't help in person, you could bring food or order it online to be delivered to the church.

As soon as you can, please sign up. There are two ways to do this:

- Use SignUp Genius. To get to it, start at the FPC website, click the "Church Life" menu, then click "Fellowship." There you'll see a link to SignUp Genius.
- Alternatively, you may call Amy Hall (503-330-0377) or Alexis Crawford in the church office (503-228-7331).

Thank you! It's lovely when people can come together in support of our whole congregation.

Heads up: Last names beginning in N, O, and P will be asked to help in May.



Finally, we offer deep appreciation to those with G, H, I, and J last names who did an excellent job with our coffee hours in March. We are all grateful.

## FPC Volunteer Study

The Session is studying volunteer activities at FPC, as part of an effort to better understand the scope of those activities, discover trends and patterns, and use the information to make better decisions. To our knowledge, an organized study of volunteers hasn't been done at this church, and we're excited to see what it will tell us. This study is going to take over six months to complete. It will engage all of our committee, group, and activity leaders in helping us collect information, and it may even be that we'll call on you as a member to offer your own experiences. If you want to find out more, talk to one of the study leads, Brenda Peterson and Pete Vanden Bosch.



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**Retrospective Work of Robert Dykman:  
Between Two Places  
Art Exhibition  
April 7 - May 26  
Opening Reception:  
April 7 at 11:30 am in the Chapel Gallery**



## The Art & Life of Robert Dykman



Robert Jan Dykman was born in 1947 in Amsterdam to a Dutch working-class family. Seeking a better life for their family, they immigrated America by ship when he was a toddler. The family landed in Salt Lake City, where he spent his childhood before moving to California for art school. He eventually settled in Oregon and started a family. Throughout his life, he was drawn to painting scenes of the Dutch landscape. His earlier work featured a mix of watercolor and ink, and in later years, he switched to just watercolors and oils. Another favorite subject of Robert's

was the covered bridges that dotted his longtime home, Oregon. Pastor Brenna, the daughter of Robert, grew up immersed in the artistic environment cultivated by her father. In the Early 2000s, Robert's work was featured in the Gottlieb Gallery in downtown Portland. Join us for the opening exhibition and reception on Sunday, April 7 in the Chapel Gallery, following the worship service.