

Leaving the old behind, seeking the new for our church in 2016

As we enter into 2016, we are leaving behind former attitudes and claiming the changes God is working in our midst. In the past year, I have seen you firm up your relationships with one another. It is fun to see you interact – chatting, listening, laughing and caring. I see you practicing the skills for healthy communication taught to us by Dr. Karen McClintock, and finding that we still need to hold one another accountable for only positive gossip about our church.

God turned Mary's world upside down, and we incinerated what held us back, so we may enter new ways of being the body of Christ together.

In the new year we will re-up the promises made in our baptisms, recommitting to Jesus and the church for another year – on Jan. 10.

If you haven't already, I encourage you to also complete an estimate of giving (pledge) for your support of your church this year. Your estimate helps the elders to plan and budget for the year.

The first Lent/Easter Planning and Program Team has been preparing to lead you beginning in February. That means that your work begins now, too, for the Team needs your prayerful support. The Team is discussing and discovering ways to organize worship,



education, mission and fellowship without the structure on which you leaned for generations. There is energy and passion among the members. I hope you will encourage them (and volunteer to help when asked). Part of our responsibility is to participate with enthusiasm and

grace as they lead us to try new things. We know that some of what we try will excite us while other attempts may fall flat, but it is our task to pray for and encourage the team through it all!

As 2015 was ending, the Self-Study Team presented its report to the Session, who accepted it unanimously. The congregation's Nominating Committee has been asked to develop a slate for the Pastor Nominating Committee, and I expect that we will soon be calling a congregational meeting to elect them and commission them for the important and holy task of seeking the pastor God is preparing for FPC.

This is an exciting and rewarding time to be part of this faith community!

Praying for New Year's Blessings!
Kathy Keener

January worship and events

- 1/3** Celebrate Epiphany (12th day of Christmas) — stars and Communion
- 1/10** Jesus' Baptism and Renewal of our Baptisms; "Talk About It" Adult Ed. at 9 and 11:30 to discuss SST final report
- 1/17** Race Relations Sunday
- 1/18** M. L. King, Jr. birthday (watch for Clergy Interfaith Circle co-sponsoring event with SOU)
- 1/31** Installation of Deacons (Ruth Ralls, Debbie Miller, Gail Johnson) during morning worship.

The Session has issued a call for the Annual Meeting of the congregation and corporation on Sunday, Jan. 31 at 11:30 a.m. in Calvin Hall. A potluck lunch will precede the meeting.

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News from the church office



By Kathy Keener

Office -- In December, our office manager Susan Coghill was relocated to the small meeting room while we investigated possible mold in the office. It has been inconvenient for Susan and me, and it may have felt awkward for you, but we needed to take precautions to keep our staff and visitors safe. The lab reported that the mold level is low and we will return to the main office as the year begins.

Leaks and wires -- For many years, the ceiling of the main office has leaked several times a year. Buildings and Grounds Committee has investigated, determining that the leak is caused when leaves block our gutters and water dams up high

enough to find an entrance through the roof flashing. Unattractive wires have been hanging inside the office window to keep the internet electronics away from the leak. A shelf for the electronics is being crafted to keep them high and dry.

Wi-Fi is now accessible in all three buildings on our campus. We encourage you and our guests to use the *Calvin Hall Guest* Wi-Fi, which does not require a password. It also has a strong signal in the Fireside Room. The passwords to the church administrative accounts are being changed and cannot be accessed from the guest Wi-Fi.

Fresh paint and thank you -- SookJa and Doug Hansen spent a week preparing and repainting the

women's restroom in the Administration Building as part of a planned Buildings and Grounds Committee update. We are awaiting the arrival of a new towel and soap dispenser. The room is clean and sparkling! Drop in and take a look – and thank SookJa and Doug!

2016 Prayer Chain, contact the office. We respect the privacy of others by sharing the information only with God. We commit to pray for what is asked, even when we may not know a name or details.

Annual Reports -- With the annual meeting scheduled for the end of January, all committees (and former committees), teams, staff and groups of the church need to designate someone to write the report of what was done in 2015 and by whom. Please get reports to the church office as soon as possible and no later than Jan. 15. If you have photos of your group's activities, please forward those to the office for our end-of-year slide show.

Session notes for December meeting

By Marjorie Bulkley

At the Dec. 8 Session meeting Treasurer Carolyn Moeglein reported an income for November of \$22,008 and expenses of \$16,252. She also presented a 2016 preliminary budget, and Session is working on it.

On Jan. 31 new deacons, Debbie Miller, Ruth Ralls and Gail Johnson, will be installed during the 10 o'clock worship service with the Annual Meeting of the congregation and a potluck lunch after worship.

The first Worship and Planning Team is making plans for the 2016 Lent/Easter quarter. The members of this team are Convener Amy Patton, RuthAnn Almquist, Joanne Costantino, Al Jaeger, Wendy McAninich, John Wren, Carolyn Moeglein, and Shirley Patton.

Recognizing that the Lent/Easter team's duties don't start until Feb. 10, Session will set communion on our regular schedule, the first Sundays for the 10 o'clock service and every Sunday for the 8 o'clock. Session will authorize renewal of baptism for the new year.

The Dialogue

Thanks to all who have contributed to the Dialogue. Articles are welcome for the February issue. Please submit by Thursday, Jan. 21. Email (preferred) to huntermarcia@gmail.com.

Marcia Hunter, editor

New member class to be offered in 2016

By Amy Patton

A New Member Class will be held after the first of the year for those wishing to explore what it means to be a Presbyterian and to deepen their relationship with the church. We welcome anyone with interest to participate in two afternoons of discussion and study. Please contact Kathy Keener, Amy Patton, or the church office if you are interested.

Lenten small groups forming

By Amy Patton

Lenten Small Groups are a great way to meet others in the congregation, break bread together, and reflect on relevant Bible verses. Sign up now!

Brian McLaren is a leading figure in the emerging church movement and a major figure in post-evangelical thought. His book *We Make the Road by Walking* offers short (2-3



page) chapters with engaging questions for each week of the church

year. McLaren suggests that "faith was never intended to be a destination . . . instead it was to be a road, a path, a way out of old and destructive patterns into new and creative ones. As a road, or way, it is always being extended into the future. If a spiritual community only points back to where it has been, it is a dead end or parking lot, not a way. To be a living tradition, a living way, it must forever open itself forward and forever remain unfinished . . . even as it forever cherishes and learns from the growing treasury of its past."

The Lenten groups will focus on the five chapters related to Lent – for five meetings in five weeks – or your group could continue to meet for Palm Sunday and Easter conversations, or even choose to continue for the rest of the year (the book has a chapter for every week of the year)!

Groups will be determined by when you would like to meet. Please indicate whether you prefer to meet



By Jill Turner

Our stewardship time "Celebrate What's Right with God's World" is based on a film by Dewitt Jones, a former photographer for *National Geographic*. In this film he encouraged each of us to find our own vision, not through a lens, but with a new attitude or perspective inside ourselves, celebrating what is right with the world. If you missed it at church, I would encourage you to watch this incredible film from the comfort of your own computer at www.celebratewhatsright.com/film. If we are able to incorporate this vision into our lives, we have the potential to radically improve our individual lives, our church, our Ashland community, and the world.

Several of the 2015 accomplishments and new 2016 goals that we celebrate are:

- During the fall conversations, with almost 90 people participating, our dedicated members identified worship and mission as our top two priorities.
- The Self Study Team delivered, and Session accepted, their final Self Study Report.
- The Pastor Nominating Committee is being formed and will call a new pastor in 2016.

Our stewardship pledge goal is \$211,000, and, as of Dec. 18, we have received a total of \$148,190 in 57 pledges. Last year we received 69 pledges for a total of \$180,062. If you have not yet completed your pledge card, please do so as soon as possible. You can still pledge by completing a card found in the narthex or by calling (541-482-3536) or emailing (presbyashland@yahoo.com) the church office.

For those who have pledged, please accept a BIG THANKS!

on a weekday morning, noon, or evening, or on a Saturday or Sunday. Please contact Amy Patton or the church office to sign up, indicate your preferred meeting time, and let us know if you would be willing to lead discussions and/or host meetings at your home. Once groups are formed, each group can communicate to determine specific dates and times and whether you will share a meal when you meet or just have

coffee or tea.

A copy of the book is not needed for each person. However, if you would like your own copy, the church office can order one for you (\$10 per copy).

We hope you will take this opportunity for increased fellowship and discussion. Meetings will take place between Feb. 10 and March 19.

SST shares final report with congregation

By Marcia Hunter

At a special Session meeting on Dec. 17 the Session approved the final SST Report as an accurate and complete reflection of this congregation. The Self Study Team (SST) was officially dismissed with thanks. The SST Report and addenda have been forwarded to the Cascade Presbytery Commission on Ministry-South and distributed to our congregation (by email, posting on our webpage, and handing out at church).

Everyone is invited to come and

"Talk About It" on Sunday, Jan. 10 at 9 a.m. in the Fireside Room during the Adult Education hour OR at 11:30 a.m. during coffee hour in Calvin Hall. It's another chance for us to practice our communication skills (see box below).

The SST appreciates the input, the support and the prayers from all of you as we worked our way through this important step toward calling a new pastor. You can see from the photo how happy the team was to have completed this task!



SST: Kathy Keener, Jim Holloway, Carolyn Moeglein, Elaine Morgan, Carolyn Johnson, Marcia Hunter

Tips for speaking the truth in love

- Tell your own truth, rather than someone else's.
- Avoid words like "always," "never," and "but" . . .
- You don't need to speak for God, or anyone else, because your opinion is valuable in its own right!
- "Why" questions make the hearer defensive; "tell me more" works best.

McClintock 2015



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

2 – Gail Johnson
 3 – Gene Morris
 6 – Bruce Johnson
 11 – Kathy Keener
 11 – Jim Holloway
 11 – Bob Brugger
 20 – Kent Patton
 23 – Barbara Evans
 25 – Bernie Binder
 25 – Debbie Miller
 27 – Rhoda Abrahams
 27 – Esther Merriman
 28 – June Hall

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

1 – Gene and Marilyn Wright
 28 – Mary and Gene Morris
 30 – Howard and Debbie Miller

Financial statement through November

YTD Income 213,517.01

YTD Expenses 205,680.98

Net Income 7,836.03

Our thanks to the members and friends who fulfilled their 2015 pledges. This high level of support from our community speaks of the commitment you have for this congregation.

Carolyn Moeglein, treasurer

Winter shelter fills need in our community

By Karen Amarotico

Thank you all for what you do for our community's poorest members! It's hard to believe that we are only a month or so into the season because we have hosted eight nights already (three additional due to very cold temperatures).

Clearly the need for what we do is increasing. We've had as many as 38 guests on one night! We are the first shelter of the week, and most of our guests come in cold and tired from three days sleeping on the streets. They are thrilled to get a bowl of soup and a warm place to lay their heads.

Last Tuesday as I was helping the guests in the morning, a man told me that he slept for 9 1/2 hours the night before. It was more sleep than he had had the whole week

before! We also received thanks from the many grateful guests who received socks, gloves, hats and other gifts from the Christmas tree in Calvin Hall. Thank you all for your generous gifts!

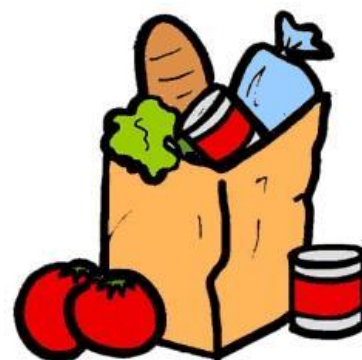
For my part, I try to gather food for the evening meal and line up "helpers" for the shelter hosts.

Helpers serve the soup, make coffee, and clean up the kitchen after the meal. Having helpers frees up the hosts to meet the guests and assist them as necessary.

If you feel moved to help with this mission, here is the link to the sign-up sheet: <http://tinyurl.com/homeless-sign-up>

Thank you all so much for everything you do.

Happy New Year!



Food Bank seeks volunteers for January, February

By Judi Quiett

The months of January and February provide an opportunity for us at First Presbyterian Church to serve our community by helping at the Ashland Emergency Food Bank (AEFB). This mission requires only a little of our time but the results are enormous: smiling, thankful faces and cupboards stocked with healthy food in families who find it difficult to make provisions last the month.

Presbyterian helpers staff the food bank Friday mornings for two months. Our primary role is to accompany a client through the food stacks, assisting them in finding their provisions. Most clients are pleasant individuals who converse easily, so it is a fun way to contribute to our community.

Two people are needed each Friday. Or, if you prefer, you can be a substitute, if you are willing to step in at the last minute to fill the place of someone who can't make it. If you have an interest in helping with this worthwhile mission, please sign up in the narthex or contact Judi Quiett. Thank you.



The shoe boxes, filled with Christmas cheer, sat ready in Calvin Hall to be picked up by the folks from the Maslow Project. The staff members who came to pick them up were overwhelmed. Thanks to all who brought things for the boxes (especially Kathy Keener, who provided a huge number of toys), to all who wrapped, and especially to Kathy Keener and Bill Sager for their big wrapping push at the end.



Women's Fellowship

Book Club to choose 2016 book titles at January meeting

By Marcia Hunter

The Women's Book Club will meet Monday, Jan. 25 at 7 p.m. at Sue Sager's house to choose books for 2016. To nominate a book for the list, please email the title, author, # of pages, and a short summary to Cheryl Therkelsen (cheryltherkelsen@gmail.com) by Jan. 15.

If you can't make the meeting but would like to vote on the books, there will be an online option available. Watch your email the week before the book club meets.

Please bring a snack to share. It will be a festive evening, celebrating another year together (our 13th year!) and getting ready for more great reading and interesting discussions. If you have questions or need directions to Sue's house, contact either Cheryl Therkelsen or Marcia Hunter.

Sharon Johnson to speak on healthy aging: "Age-Friendly Innovators -- Seeking Options"

Presbyterian Women
Thursday, Jan. 7 at 1 p.m.
in Calvin Hall

Excellent presenter, TV and newspaper columnist
Everyone welcome:
Men! Women who don't usually attend PW!
Neighbors/friends!
Dessert included

Westminster Circle news

By Barbara Marsh

Westminster Circle members are eagerly looking forward to the Presbyterian Women's Jan. 7 meeting and having the privilege of hearing well-known speaker Sharon Johnson tell us all about creative solutions for independent living as we age. We are inviting all friends (and all genders) to come and share this special opportunity with us at 1 p.m. in Calvin Hall. We think this is a meeting no one will

want to miss!

Then on Thursday, Jan. 18 Westminster Circle will meet at the home of Gayle Vincent at 10 a.m. for fellowship, refreshments and Bible Study. We will discuss Lesson Five, "Stormy Water – Faith" based on Matthew 14:22-33. Newcomers are most welcome. Just contact Sue Sager or Barbara Marsh for a ride or to answer your questions.

Happy New Year, everyone!

Elsie Nelson Circle studying lesson 5: "Stormy Water Faith"

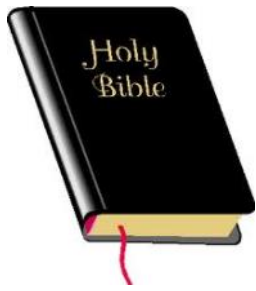
By Anne Sklensky

The Elsie Nelson Circle will meet on Monday, Jan. 11, at 1 p.m. at Elaine Morgan's home. We will be studying lesson 5, "Stormy Water – Faith" in our book, *Come to the Waters*.

Please read Matthew 14:22-33.

After sending the disciples away in a boat and going to pray, Jesus realized that a storm had blown the boat far out on the water. So he hurried to save them by walking on the water. The disciples had panicked until they saw Jesus walking toward them. Jesus

called to Peter, who climbed out of the boat and started walking on the water to get to Jesus. But when Peter realized he was really walking on the water, he began to sink. He called to Jesus, who rescued him and asked him why he had so little faith.



Jeremiah 8:18-22, 9:1-3

My sorrow cannot be healed;
I am sick at heart.

Listen! Throughout the land
I hear my people crying out,
“Is the Lord no longer in Zion?
Is Zion's king no longer there?”
The Lord, their king, replies,
“Why have you made me angry by
worshipping your idols
and by bowing down to your use-
less foreign gods?”
The people cry out,
“The summer is gone,
the harvest is over,
but we have not been saved.”

My heart has been crushed
because my people are crushed;
I mourn; I am completely dismayed.
Is there no medicine in Gilead?
Are there no doctors there?
Why, then, have my people not
been healed?

Jeremiah 9

I wish my head were
a well of water,
and my eyes a fountain of tears,
so that I could cry day and night
for my people who have been killed.
I wish I had a place to stay
in the desert
Where I could get away from my people.
They are unfaithful, a mob of traitors.
They are always ready to tell lies;
dishonesty instead of truth rules the land.



Longtime members of First Presbyterian Church – Beryl Ricken, Marie Prescott, Alice Phillips, Lucy Hill, and Imogene McCoy – sitting on bales of hay. Anyone recognize the place, time or situation?

Posted by Tom Nichols, submitted by Sharon Laskos

Lying by the curb,
beautiful in bygone days,
used-up Christmas tree.

-- "Poet Robb" Grover



*Good News Translation
(Today's English Version, Second Edition)
Submitted by Debbie Miller*



First Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 626
Ashland, OR 97520
Return service requested
Dated material



First Presbyterian Church

Siskiyou and Walker Ashland, OR 97520 541-482-3536

A welcoming and affirming congregation

Interim Pastor: Rev. Kathy Keener momrev1kk@gmail.com / **Office Manager:** Susan Coghill presbyashland@yahoo.com

Director of Music: Laurie Anne Hunter lahunter@mind.net / **Parish Visitor:** Wendy McAninch

Treasurer: Carolyn Moeglein cmoeglein@yahoo.com / **Bookkeeper:** Lynn Godsey

Ruling Elders on Session: Amy Patton, Jill Turner, Marjorie Bulkley, Elaine Morgan, Linnea Gettman, Linda Purdom, Howdy Miller,

Clerk of Session: Marjorie Bulkley

Deacons: Sue and Bill Sager, Shirley Patton, Gail Johnson, Kathy Oyler, Marilyn Mobley, Marilyn Wright, Darlene Saunders, Pat Gaulke, Anne Sklensky, **Deacon Moderator:** Wendy Ray

Ministers: the whole congregation

Our Mission

We are a faith community centered in Christ, doing justice,
loving kindness and walking humbly with God.

Our Vision

Open Minds, Open Hearts, Open Hands, Open Table



Visit the church website at www.firstpresashland.org
"Like" us on Facebook at fb.com/firstpresashland
Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/1stPresAshland



Regular Sunday Schedule

8am Chapel Worship

w/communion

9am Coffe @Pony Express

10am Sanctuary Worship

with Harmony Ensemble

11:15am Fellowship

SECOND SUNDAY Schedule

January 10, 2016

Renewal of Baptism

8am Chapel Worship w/communion

9am Kids' Sunday School

Adult Ed: Talk About It -

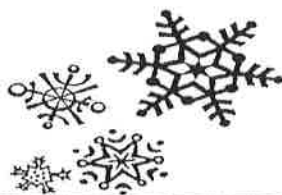
Self-Study Report

10am Sanctuary Worship

with Harmony Ensemble

11:15am Fellowship

11:30am Talk About It repeat



JANUARY 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 New Year's Day <i>Office Closed</i>	2
3 11:30am Planning Team AYC @ Episcopal	4 4:30pm B&G 7:30pm Homeless Shelter	5 AYC Fund Raiser NW Pizza 4pm Session Budget Mtg	6 EPIPHANY 6pm Personnel 7:30 Ensemble Practice	7 1pm Presbyterian Women Speaker: Sharon Johnson Elder Planning	8	9
10 SECOND SUNDAY Birthday Sunday 11:30am Planning Team AYC @ Episcopal	11 9am Fin & Admin 7:30pm Homeless Shelter	12 4pm Session	13 5:30pm SEA Oregon (FR) 7pm Oak Knoll HOA (CH) 7:30 Ensemble Practice	14 12pm Red Cross Blood Drive	15	16 9-2 PEO (CH)
17 11:30am Planning Team AYC @ Episcopal	18 MLK Day (<i>Office Closed</i>) 7:30pm Homeless Shelter	19	20 3pm Deacons 7:30 Ensemble Practice	21 Dialogue Entries Due	22	23
24 11:30am Planning Team AYC @ Episcopal	25 7:30pm Homeless Shelter	26	27 5:30pm Community Dinner 7:30 Ensemble Practice	28 10am Dialogue Folding	29	30
31 Installation of Deacons 11:30 potluck and annual meeting AYC @ Episcopal Kathy to Menucha-afternoon						

Weekly Building Schedule

AA	Fireside Room	7am - 8am	M-Sat	HOW	CCC	8am - 9am	Sat
AA	Fireside Room	9am - 10am	M-Sat	Preschool	CCC	9am - 12pm	M-F
Alanon	Fireside Room	7pm - 8:15pm	Mon	Realtors	Calvin Hall	8:30am - 9:30am	Thurs
Alanon	Fireside Room	7pm - 8:30pm	Fri				