

JANUARY 2025



Newberg First Presbyterian Church

# THE PREZ

A message from Pastor Chris

One thing I ponder as we begin another year is how we as a church community are called to follow Jesus in this season. There are some Christians that tend to look backwards longingly and remember past church experiences with fondness. The church of the past seems better than the present or future. There is nothing wrong with appreciating the past, but I personally find myself hungry for a new form of Christianity that will hold some good experiences from the past but will also change and adapt with time.

During January and February, we will be exploring images of Jesus that will help us be faithful followers of Jesus in 2025. We will explore Jesus as our Lord, Peacemaker, Friend, Healer, and Savior.

Hebrews 13 verse 8 says that “Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” Although this is very true, Jesus also adapts himself to reach new generations with the Gospel. I wonder how Christ might relate to people today. What might he wish could change about present day Christianity?

One type of Christianity that worries me is the one that tends to approach the world with judgment and



## Following Jesus in 2025

anxiety. It is easy to look for the bad in the world and to call it sin and evil. Evil is certainly active in our world, but what if Christians spent more time looking for the good in the world and where Jesus is actively bringing about healing and change? What if we optimistically focused on the values that might improve the world like greater inclusion of all people, greater care for nature, celebration of the Arts, improving education, proper nutrition and exercise, deepening our prayer lives, kind and compassionate forms of peacemaking and justice work?

Maybe the world is better than we often think because God is active in the world. Maybe from

a positive view of God and God’s creation, we may have the proper perspective to address the injustices and suffering that also is active in the world. In my experience hope is necessary to motivate healing and wholeness. It is normal to have painful emotions or to feel overwhelmed by the negative things happening in our world, but as we process our sorrows in light of God’s love and grace, new hope can emerge. This is the deeper truth of God’s activity in the world.

I look forward to joining you in following Jesus in 2025. Let us have hope together that the future even with its challenges can lead to a deeper relationship with Jesus and a greater experience of justice, compassion, and love for all of God’s creation.



The church has recently purchased a new automated external defibrillator (AED) for use by our congregation. An AED is a portable medical device used to treat sudden cardiac arrest, where a person's heart suddenly stops beating, by delivering an electric shock to re-start the heart rhythm; and having an AED readily available can significantly increase the chance of survival by allowing immediate intervention from trained individuals on-site. **We are looking for abled body volunteers who are willing to be trained for it's use.** Please contact the office for details.



**Session Meeting**  
Dec 10, 2024

Gary Buck provided a thoughtful devotional.

Audrey Schindler and Amy Dee were present for their triennial visit. They are the liaisons for the Committee on Ministry. A highlight of the discussion was that being a genuinely welcoming church is important to us and one concern is having enough volunteers and not overloading them.

COLA (Cost of Living Increase) of 4% was approved for 2025 for Pastor Chris Murphy.

Session approved Mindi Hynes to serve in 2025 as our Youth and Family Ministries leader. She will organize and lead a Youth and Family gathering, one time per month. We are grateful to have Mindi serve in this capacity.

Liam Hynes is doing a great job as the new church cleaner. We thank Cate Murphy for the service she has provided.



Please join us after worship on **Sunday, January 26th**, for our **Annual Congregational Meeting**. This is a time for to celebrate the previous year, look towards the future and vote on important business matters of the church. See you there!



**Happy New Year from all of us at Love INC Newberg! As we step into 2025, we want you to know we're here for you!**

If you're a woman in need of a safe, supportive environment to rebuild your life, our Hased House - Women's Transitional Living Program is here to provide a fresh start. Or, if you're ready to dive deeper into your journey of transformation, check out our Transformational Ministry Classes, designed to empower you with the tools to thrive.

Stay tuned for updates on our programs, workshops, and ways we can work together to transform lives.

Let's make 2025 a year of hope, growth, and change—together!



*If you are in need of prayer or know someone who is, please contact the office so that you can be added to our prayer list.*



Please keep Southern California in your prayers during these times of devastating fires.



Please pray for Justice Sandoz and all of the courageous firefighters.



Please continue to pray for peace throughout the world,



Thank you to all who brought toys for the TVF&R Toy and Joy Toy Drive!! We collected so many toys and the Fire Departments were so grateful!! So many children will receive these great toys!!

Thank you!!  
*The Deacons*



## An Update From Erik and Maureen York

### Compassion in Action

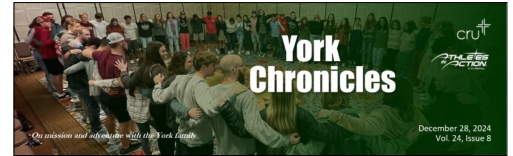


Kathryn is a new staff woman who was part of the Introduction to Mission group I (M) coached virtually this fall (new missionaries take 3 of 11 Bible classes Cru requires), who reported to her team in Asheville, NC just before the two big hurricanes hit, which cut their town off from access. The Lord gave their team tangible and gospel opportunities in their community in

ways, soon helped by Cru campus teams and Unto (Cru's humanitarian aid ministry) with both cleanup crews and supplies. This did not come without sacrifice for Kathryn, who was just getting settled, then being thrown into chaos with no permanent place to live. Despite it all, she kept up with her coursework and was encouraged by seeing how God has faithfully provided for his people as they trust and obey him. We rejoiced with her as God answered prayer and provided a home and roommate for her. Praise God for our new missionaries and their willingness to say "yes" to the Lord.

### Leaders Refresh

As our executive team identified needs of staff in different seasons, our team responded with Leaders Refresh for both primary caregivers who are entering back into mission after a season invested primarily with family, and staff who are in support roles who hadn't had the opportunity for field training. This short, six week training made a big difference for this group of 22, helping them feel seen and invested in, both in their personal spiritual growth, and discovering how they can best contribute who God has made them in the missional community. They are also better appreciating those who bring expertise and skills behind the scenes in ways we can help each other as we go after the great commission together.



*On a personal note:*

Please be praying for the jump start in January: Maureen is helping host a youth basketball group from Zimbabwe for Total Athlete camp. Pray the spiritual content will sink in as they are integrated into training. I will be leading some of the Bible content and Natasia will help lead a small group. Erik is helping lead a kickoff retreat for campus team building and discipleship training, a two year journey for teams. Erik has been asked to give input in a Cru national leadership development think tank, pray that his doctoral work would bring weight and wisdom.

Praying the Lord brings you into the new year with thankfulness and hope to overflowing into lives around you,



## 15th Annual Yamhill County Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration Monday, January 20, 2025 at 6pm

*At the Table with Dr. King: A one-hour dramatic presentation - using live music, spoken word, and multimedia to bring to life Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Knock at Midnight" and portions of America's Civil Rights Movement. Challenging audiences to listen for and respond to the unique call upon their lives to serve others for the betterment of their communities. Featuring Newberg students and community leaders.*

Being offered by Cascades Presbytery.....

**NAVIGATING AS WE AGE**  
with Michele Cook, RN

An 11-week course covering:

- Maintaining Health
- Emergency Planning
- Legal Decisions
- Financial Decisions
- Social Connection & Aid
- Planning a Graceful Exit
- Levels of Care
- Hospice
- Creating a Life Plan for Peace of Mind

Tuesdays, 11:00am-12:30 pm • January 21 - April 1  
3516 NE 71st Avenue, Portland OR 97213  
Registration is required. \$50 fee for full course.

Please contact  
calvaryprespdx@gmail.com

California Wildfire  
**RESPONSE**

An important project our congregation supports



Orthodox Churches (Armenian, Greek, Russian and Ethiopian for example) celebrate Christmas on January 7th, what European-calendar churches call Epiphany, or the 12th day of Christmas.

The Roman church, speaking Latin, and the Byzantine church (centered in Constantinople and speaking Greek) split over language, geography, theology, and power in 1054. In Ethiopia, Santa Claus and gifts are invading the culture. But still, many people attend church and focus on sharing food and time with family. Neighbors visit, coffee is brewed and drunk with a snack of popcorn.

MDC greets you -- መልካም ገና (melkam genna!)

Caroline Kurtz



For many of us, the images of the fires in Southern California have been difficult to watch. Our theology as Presbyterians reminds us that we are “The Connectional Church” and that what happens to one part of our church body touches us all. Many of us can relate to the feelings of angst and worry from our wildfire outbreaks in 2020 throughout this presbytery. I know that Cascades is a praying and generous presbytery, and this is yet another moment where we are being called to respond in kind. Let us live out the call of Galatians 6:2, to carry each other’s burdens as we seek to fulfill the law of Christ, through mutual prayer and support, both as individuals, and more importantly, as church families. -Rev. Dr. Brian Craker, Transitional Executive Presbyter

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is actively working to meet the needs of those affected by these fires. <https://www.pcusa.org/donate/dr000165-us-wildfires>

# Our Church Life



*This was the second year our church presented a Living Nativity to the Newberg community. Many thanks to all who planned, participated and put so much labor and talent into this beautiful event.*



*Starting the season off right! Tom, Angela, and the kids (and many others) joined together to make our sanctuary festive and beautiful!*



*(Above) The Youth Group had a wonderful Halloween party with food, music, and fun!*



*In November, pastor Chris attended the Moderators' Conference, which was held in Louisville, KY. He is pictured with the National Co-Moderators, the Rev. Tony Larson and the Rev. C.C. Armstrong.*



*(Above) Our church hosted the International Rotary Group in our Peace Garden this fall. Rotarians from throughout the world toured the garden.*



## Our Church Community: Get Involved!



### Sunday Morning Adult Study

Adult Spiritual Formation class is held every Sunday morning at 9:00 am in the Fellowship Hall.

Come gather with us as we learn together, sharing life and building relationships, while we discuss life from a spiritual perspective. It's a great way to deepen your spiritual journey...and make some great friends!



**Men's Fellowship** is held on the first and third Thursdays of each month at 9:00 am at the Cherry Street Bistro. To learn more, please contact Gary Buck

[gbuck41108@mindspring.com](mailto:gbuck41108@mindspring.com) or give him a call at 503-250-1163. He'll give you all the information you need to join up with new friends and old!



### Bike Ministry *In partnership with Love INC*

First Presbyterian Church partners with Love INC in providing bikes to eligible clients. Clients are screened by Love INC to determine need and eligibility. Many times people who are getting back on their feet need to have more reliable transportation than those feet.

First Presbyterian's Bike Ministry takes in donated bikes, delivers them to the Retired Recyclers for repair and rehab, and once the bikes are returned all fixed up, serves as a distribution point for Love INC clients to choose the bike best suited to them.

If you would like to help out with this ministry, you may contact Nancy Backes at 509-432-9335.



### Friday Prayer Retreat

Join us on the first Friday of each month as we gather together at church from 9:00 am to 1:00 with a small luncheon after. Together we will make First Presbyterian a house of prayer for Newberg.



**Calling all who love to sing!** Our choir, led by Pat Goodman, is always looking for new voices to praise God. Our choir sings two times a month but practices every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm.

Consider this your invitation to join one of the liveliest, most fun-loving and welcoming groups you'll ever run into. Contact Pat Goodman ([pat88g@frontier.com](mailto:pat88g@frontier.com)) for more information. All are welcome!



### Men's Team gets together the

**1st Saturday of every month from 8:00-10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Good breakfast, Good friends.**

**Questions? Contact Jeff McNeal at 503-476-4621**



### Join the Youth Group

We are excited to announce that Mindi Hynes has agreed to be our Youth and Family Ministries Leader. She will organize and lead a Youth and Family gathering, one time per month. We are grateful to have Mindi serve in this capacity.



### Space 4 Grace

### Space 4 Grace Women's Fellowship

Space for Grace meets the 2nd and 4th Friday of every month at 11:00 am. Our times together include practical reflections on scripture, sharing of life, and prayer. All women are invited to join this group to enjoy the fellowship and friendship of women in a safe and supportive place. For more information call Mary Kalesse (503-709-3292.) We're looking forward to meeting you!



**The Newberg Peace Garden** is always looking for volunteers to plant, water, weed, and give our garden the TLC it needs.

If you would like to volunteer, or make a donation to the NPG, please contact Sylvia Burns ([secondwindsb@hotmail.com](mailto:secondwindsb@hotmail.com)) or Ciarán Hynes ([chynes@georgefox.edu](mailto:chynes@georgefox.edu).)

# January 2025



Taking Down the Greens After Worship

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 	2 9:00 am- Men's Fellowship	3 9:00 am- First Friday Prayer Retreat 	4  8:00 am- Men's Team
5 10:30 am- In-Person and Livestream Worship Service 	6	7 11:00- Worship Comte	8 10:00 am- Deacon's meeting  7:00 pm- Choir Practice	9	10	11
12 10:30 am- In-Person and Livestream Worship Service 	13 	14 6:30 pm- Session meeting	15 9:30 am -Bike Ministry  7:00 pm- Choir Practice	16 9:00 am- Men's Fellowship	17	18
19 10:30 am- In-Person and Livestream Worship Service  	20 10:00 am-Hand in Hand Walk  6:00 pm- MLK Day Celebration @ Cultural Center	21	22 7:00 pm- Choir Practice	23	24 11:00 am- Space 4 Grace Women's Fellowship	25
26 10:30 am- In-Person and Livestream Worship Service  <i>Congregational Meeting</i>	27	28	29 7:00 pm- Choir Practice	30	31	

## CELEBRATE



### Birthdays

- 4- Chuck Zickefoose
- 6- Joe Samacki
- 10- Mary Kalesse
- 26- Eric Swehla
- 27- David Chris
- 31- Bob Andrews

### Anniversaries

- 6- Bob & Libbi Hamilton
- 25- Bob & Sylvia Burns

### Upcoming Events

**1-5-25:** Join us after service as we take down the Christmas decorations and prepare our Sanctuary for the new year. Many hands make light work...and sometime a lot of laughter!

**1-20-25:** There will be a celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. day at the Chehalem Cultural Center, beginning at 6:00

**1-26-25:** Our annual Congregational Meeting will be held after worship.

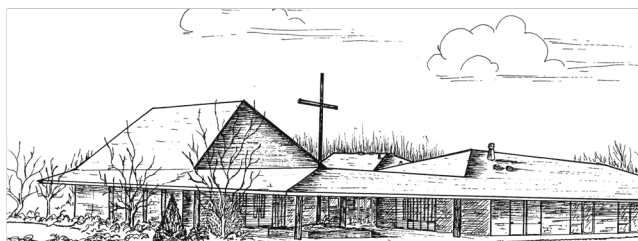
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Pastor Chris Murphy may be reached at his email:  
chrism@newbergfpc.org  
or by calling the church office at 503-538-3313

Our website address is : **newbergfpc.org**



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GRACE. HOPE. PEACE. LOVE.