

December 2024



**CASCADES**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# THE CHURCH BELL

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## DECEMBER

### DEACON OF THE MONTH

Joan Detrick

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.” John 1:1-2

Words are powerful. With our words we can bless or we can curse. We can sing praise or we can blaspheme. We can create life or we can destroy it. In the scripture above, the Apostle John acknowledges the power of THE WORD, the person of Jesus Christ, through whom all things were made and whose birth we celebrate this month.

As we head into the Advent Season, we are reminded of the power of words. For this reason, we are going to focus on Words from the Beginning that were spoken at the time of Jesus’ birth. Jesus’ beginning. Words that brought life, not just to him, but to us all!

So each week at worship, we will hear familiar stories that brought words of hope to a world walking in darkness. Words like those Mary heard from the Angel Gabriel, “You are a blessing.” Words spoken as Elizabeth and Mary acknowledged as they journeyed through their pregnancies, “We Can’t Go Alone.” Words exclaimed by John the Baptist as he called Israel to repentance, “Do The Good That is Yours to Do.” Words committed to as Joseph decided to take a pregnant Mary home as his wife, “Hope is Worth the Risk.” And finally on Christmas Eve as we celebrate our Savior’s birth we will hear the words, “Love Knows Your Name.” Each are different sets of words that speak truth to us at different times in our lives.

Within this newsletter are opportunities to use our words to bless those who are moving on to new seasons of life and new opportunities; to welcome new people in our midst; to celebrate when joy seems absent; and to encourage those who need to be reminded of God’s love and care in this festive season.

So I pray this season, may we find words for belovedness and hope. May we find words for beginning again. And no matter what we are facing, no matter what this new day brings, may we all remember that love is our beginning.

Merry Christmas,  
Rev. Dr. Chris Montovino, Pastor




### SOLVE THE RIDDLE

What’s red, white, & blue?

What does a candy cane say to another candy cane during a strong storm?



Stumped?  
See page 5 for the answer.

As you enjoy reading this month’s Bell, try to find the hidden cross. 

## CHANGE IN CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Beginning Dec 2nd church office hours will be 9:00am-1:00pm Monday thru Thursday.

## MICHELLE DREXLER'S RETIREMENT PARTY

Please save Sunday December 8, 2024 on your calendars as we celebrate Michelle Drexler's retirement and honor her 22 plus years of service as Cascades' office administrator and treasurer! We are so grateful for all Michelle has done for us over the years and are inviting everyone to stay for a tea luncheon following worship in the fellowship hall. Bring your stories and roasts and we'll have a grand ole time!

## LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE AT CHRISTMASTIME

It's the most wonderful time of the year! At least that is what we hear, sing, and are told. But what if it isn't? What if the holidays are marked with grief and loss? How can we joyfully sing our praises when we just don't feel it in our hearts? In our tradition, we believe that we are called to worship God in all seasons of life, both the good and the bad, through the joys and the sorrows. For that reason, the Cascades worship team is hosting a Longest Night Service at Christmastime specifically geared for those who may feel stuck in this liminal space between joy and sorrow this Advent Season. Join us on Wednesday evening December 11, 2024 from 6:00-7:00pm as we are led through a simple and reflective liturgy that aims to acknowledge our pain and sorrow while also giving us hope that Jesus will meet us right where we are.

## NURSERY CARE

We were sorry to hear that our childcare provider on Sunday mornings, Natalya Fassold, had to leave due to work and school scheduling conflicts. But we are delighted that our former childcare provider, Pam Boehning, saw our job opening post online and has decided to return to Cascades. Pam has fond memories of her time here at Cascades and looks forward to caring for our youngest once again. We certainly wish Natalya the best and warmly welcome Pam back among us.

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Join us for Christmas Eve Candle Light Services on Tuesday, December 24, 2024 at 7:00pm as we celebrate Jesus' birthday.

## CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING

This year 100% of the Christmas Eve Offering will be dedicated to New Hope Opportunities as they help families recover from the horrific floods that have recently devastated their community. For those of us who have relationships with the many families and teachers there, this tragedy hits home. Please prayerfully consider giving generously in this time of need.

## daily Devotions



### Advent Peace

Dec 1	Malachi 3:1-4
Dec 2	Malachi 3:1-4
Dec 3	Luke 1:68-79
Dec 4	Luke 1:68-79
Dec 5	Luke 3:1-6
Dec 6	Philippians 1:3-8
Dec 7	Philippians 1:9-11

### Advent Joy

Dec 8	Luke 3:7-18
Dec 9	Zephaniah 3:14-20
Dec 10	Zephaniah 3:14-20
Dec 11	Isaiah 12:2-6
Dec 12	Philippians 4:4-7
Dec 13	Philippians 4:4-7
Dec 14	Luke 3:7-18

### Advent Love

Dec 15	Luke 1:41-55
Dec 16	Luke 1:46b-55
Dec 17	Luke 1:46b-55
Dec 18	Luke 1:46b-55
Dec 19	Luke 1:46b-55
Dec 20	Luke 1:46b-55
Dec 21	Luke 1:46b-55

### Sing We Now of Christmas!

Dec 22	Isaiah 9:2-7
Dec 23	Psalms 96
Dec 24	Luke 2:1-20
Dec 25	Luke 2:1-20
Dec 26	Isaiah 52:7-10
Dec 27	Titus 3:4-7
Dec 28	Titus 2:11-14

### Growing in Faith

Dec 29	1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Dec 30	Luke 2:41-52
Dec 31	Colossians 3:12-17



## SPOTLIGHT ON OUR MEMBERS

Cascades welcomes our new church secretary, Lisa Kupfer.

Perhaps you would enjoy learning a bit about her:

Eighth in a family of four boys and four girls, born and raised in Caldwell, ID, where she graduated from high school before attending business school in Boise, she has also lived in Arizona, Virginia, Washington, and Oregon.

Lisa says, "My first job was in my Dad's lawn mower/chain saw/bike shop helping my Mom with bank deposits and helping my Dad put away parts and selling Christmas trees in the winter. I have worked as an Auditor for Circle K, a payroll clerk, as a Word Processor for the Department of the Treasury, as a Secretary for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms, for Child Evangelism Fellowship and as an Admin/Secretary in 2 previous churches before coming to Cascades Presbyterian Church."



For 26 years she lived in Vancouver, where at another church she met Bruce Kupfer. Intriguingly, she says, "We were actually strangers and before we even went on our first date, we knew we were going to be married! (There's a lot more to that story if you ever want to know!)"

Later, the Lord moved them to Bellfountain, OR, just south of Corvallis. Bruce pastored Bellfountain Community Church for almost six years until he passed away unexpectedly in September 2023. Lisa stayed another year before the Lord moved her back to Vancouver.

Lisa says that the One "who has made the most difference in my life is Jesus Christ who I accepted as my Savior when I was eight years old! On this earth, the person who made the most difference in my life is my late husband. He was a man of God who loved me unconditionally just as Jesus was his example. He taught me to be patient and give all my anxieties over to the Lord. He taught me the importance of reading God's Word every day and of making a conscious and deliberate plan for reading through the Bible on a regular basis."

Bruce and Lisa were blessed in their combined family with five children and seven grandchildren: Jennifer is married to Jamison and they have two boys: Samuel, 9, and Simon, 6. Samuel is married to Sarah and they have 3 kids: Titus, 7, Addylinn, 5, and Emelia, 2. Joseph is married to Kaila. Matthew is single. Elizabeth is married to Will and they have 2 girls: Piper, 5, and Mailee, 3.

Lisa cares for Miss B (Beatrice), her ginger cat, and enjoys gardening, studying the Bible, Christian music, and hanging out with friends. Her favorite places are the Columbia River Gorge and Hawaii, and she has also visited Brazil on a mission trip. She is a delightful addition to our church family.



## NOVEMBER SESSION NOTES

Christie Mistrot offered devotions on the importance of praying for our leaders and from Isaiah 30:21. Announced hiring Lisa Kupfer as the new office administrator/treasurer to replace Michelle Drexler on her retirement. Childcare provider Natalya also resigned and a search will start for her replacement. Approved special offering for Eternally Beloved and serving communion at the Presbyterian Churches Thanksgiving Week Service. Approved use of the church facilities by the Philadelphia Ukrainian Church to have a special Thanksgiving Day Service from 10:00am to noon. As we met on Election Day, the results of the presidential elections were certainly on everyone's mind. We prayed for peace amidst the political chaos and thanked God for the many ways God has used us over the years. We also sensed a new call to rise up and share our faith in the world.

## YEAR END PLANNED GIVING TO CASCADES

A recent year end planned giving webinar by the Presbyterian Foundation reported that the Church is typically very good about asking for and receiving cash gifts, but not as good about asking for and receiving larger gifts. Statistics showed that 37% of giving occurs in the 4th quarter (Oct-Dec) with 20% coming in December alone. Over the next 20-25 years more than \$70 trillion will be passed down to other generations with \$22 trillion going to millennials, \$31 trillion to GenXers, \$8 trillion to Boomers, and \$9 trillion to charity. Often times when people consider their annual giving, they typically consider their income streams, but not other assets like stocks, bonds, mutual funds, real estate, or crypto currency. Income streams can represent only 9% of a person's true wealth whereas other assets can be as high as 91%. Several tips that the Presbyterian Foundation recommended were:

Consider making a charitable stock in-kind gift directly transferred to Cascades. This avoids any capital gains while maximizing your charitable deduction for the full value of the security. If you need help with that, the Presbyterian Foundation or your stock broker can assist with details of the stock transfer.

Set up a Donor Advised Fund through the Presbyterian Foundation. These funds are opened with a minimum of \$2500 where the donor directs grants in minimum increments of \$100 to charities of their choice. Note that this sort of giving cannot be used to satisfy annual pledges however.

Give annual gifts to the church from your traditional IRA and NOT from your checkbook. This is especially true for people over age 73 who must take required minimum distributions (RMDs) from their IRAs. Gifts from traditional IRAs through RMDs are considered Qualified Charitable Distributions which do NOT count towards a person's taxable Adjusted Gross Income and can be given annually up to \$100,000. The Presbyterian Foundation strongly advised that giving through Qualified Charitable Distributions is the smartest way for people over 70 to give charitably.

Consider how you might like to give to Cascades through bequests such as wills, life income gifts, retirement accounts, or charitable lead trusts.

Overall, if we consider all of the assets that we have been entrusted with, we can give out of abundance and not out of scarcity. We would be happy to arrange for a representative from the Presbyterian Foundation to come and give a seminar to help answer any questions that people may have regarding their planned giving.

## ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DURING ADVENT

Advent, like much of life, is about waiting. Waiting for a baby to be born. Waiting for test results to come. Waiting for kids to come home. Waiting for grief to fade. Waiting. Waiting requires us to go slow, be watchful, and pray. But our waiting is never in vain. As Christians, we wait in hope. So this Advent during Adult Christian Education, we will be focusing on four promises from God: truth, compassion, restoration, and justice. So join us on Sunday mornings at 9:00am in the smaller fellowship hall and let us wait together for the coming of Jesus Christ, our newborn king.





**CALENDAR**

Dec 1	9:00am	Pancake Breakfast
	10:15am	Worship Service
Dec 2	12:30pm	Bowling Fellowship
Dec 2	7:00pm	Deacons Meeting
Dec 4	12:30pm	Bowling Fellowship
	6:30pm	Youth Group
Dec 5	1:30pm	Giving Hands Ministry
	6:45pm	Choir Practice
Dec 8	9:00am	Sunday School All Ages
	10:15am	Worship Service
	11:30am	Michelle Drexler's Retirement Party
Dec 9	12:30pm	Bowling Fellowship
Dec 10	7:00pm	Session Meeting
Dec 11	12:30pm	Bowling Fellowship
	6:00pm	The Longest Night Service
	6:30pm	Youth Group
Dec 12	1:30pm	Giving Hands Ministry
	6:45pm	Choir Practice
Dec 14	8:00am	Men's Breakfast/Bible Study
	7:30pm	Junior Symphony of Vancouver Concert
Dec 15	9:00am	Sunday School All Ages
	10:15am	Worship Service
Dec 16	12:30pm	Bowling Fellowship
Dec 18	12:30pm	Bowling Fellowship
	6:30pm	Youth Group
Dec 19	1:30pm	Giving Hands Ministry
	6:45pm	Choir Practice
Dec 22	9:00am	Sunday School All Ages
	10:15am	Worship Service
Dec 23	12:30pm	Bowling Fellowship
Dec 24	7:00pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Dec 24-25	Office Closed	Christmas Eve Day & Christmas Day
Dec 29	10:15am	Worship Service
Dec 31		New Year's Eve

**BIRTHDAYS**

Della Brandt  
 Jerry Divens  
 Andy Drexler  
 Margaret Kneller  
 Renetta Lindsey  
 Phyllis Myers  
 Bruce VanderPloeg  
 Carol VanderPloeg

**ANNIVERSARIES**

Jim & Judy Scovil  
 Bruce & Carol VanderPloeg

**OCTOBER FINANCES**

Income \$27,537.93  
 Expenses \$21,367.66  
 Total \$ 6,170.27

Year to Date 2024  
 \$11,510.62



*Look at the Candy Cane  
 What do you see?  
 Stripes that are red  
 Like the blood shed for me  
 White is for my Savior  
 Who's sinless and pure!  
 "J" is for Jesus My Lord,  
 that's for sure!  
 Turn it around  
 And a staff you will see  
 Jesus my Shepherd  
 Was born for Me!*



**CASCADES**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

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RETURN SERVICE  
REQUESTED

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*Merry Christmas!*

**PANCAKE BREAKFAST**  
Dec 1 @ 9:00am

**THE LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE**  
Dec 11 @ 6:00pm

**MEN'S BREAKFAST/BIBLE STUDY**  
Dec 14 @ 8:00am

**JUNIOR SYMPHONY OF  
VANCOUVER CONCERT**  
Dec 14 @ 7:30pm

**CHRISTMAS EVE  
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE**  
Dec 24 @ 7:00pm

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**  
9:00am Sunday School All Ages  
10:15am Worship

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**  
Beginning December 1st  
9:00am-1:00pm  
Mon-Thur

