



St. Andrew's
Presbyterian Church

eNews

November 25, 2020

Mailing address: 3228 SW Sunset Blvd, Portland, OR 97239

Staff is working from home. Please call (503) 293-1048 to speak to our Office Administrator during office hours (9 am - 3 pm, M - TH) or in case of an emergency. admin@standrewspdx.com

Dear Kindred in Christ,

Thanksgiving tomorrow. A new church year begins on Sunday. Shaking my head. It's hard to wrap my head around this insane year and to believe that already it is coming to a close. And sad to think that our Advent and Christmas worship, much like our Easter and Pentecost worship will be virtual. But I am drawing strength from the focal theme your creative worship team discerned for this Advent season-- "No Matter What: Reflecting Faithfulness." No matter what, my friends, God has been faithful to us all throughout this year and, I promise you, I have witnessed you reflecting the faithfulness of God through your own acts of worship, service, and love. If you are feeling weary as the calendar year draws to a close and the Christian year dawns anew, worship with us Sundays at 10 and renew yourself for continued reflective faithfulness.

Your focal image each week will be a heart shaped mirror surrounded by a representation of some of the hardest parts of this year. But in the mirror will be a reflection of human faithfulness in the midst of those struggles. To this, of course, we add the growing light of our Advent wreath, a reminder of the light our faithful God brings into our dark world.

Might you take up some practices this month that will strengthen your reflective faithfulness? Participation in mid-week prayer? Or perhaps for our families, use of the Advent materials we'll be sending your way this weekend, for weekly family devotions, daily reflections/actions, the creation of a shadowbox? Maybe you could write a card each day of Advent and send it someone you know to be lonely or struggling. Or perhaps you'll want to help us create a memorable Christmas on-line by participating in a virtual Christmas pageant will be preparing this month-- if you're interested in that please let me know! There are so many ways for us to reflect the great faithfulness of God. And whenever we do, it helps to lift our spirits and the spirits of those around us. May it be so.

I wish you a most blessed Thanksgiving. I give thanks for all of you.
Peace be with you,
Pastor Sarah

SCRIPTURE

November 29: Daniel 6:6-27

December 6: Joel 2:12-13, 28-29

The St. Andrew's Staff wishes you all a blessed Thanksgiving.

The church office is closed Thursday, November 26 to allow all to observe a day of thanks and rest.

EVENING PRAYER ON ZOOM Every Wednesday at 6:30 P.M. we gather for evening prayer. We had hoped to do this in person and on-line in November, but the rise of COVID cases has led us to return to an entirely on-line format. Please join us every and any Wednesday on Zoom.

ENNEAGRAM DISCUSSION GROUP On the fourth Saturday (this week! November 28) at 1 PM we will gather on Zoom to learn more about the Enneagram and about ourselves. Having completed our basic introduction, we are turning our attention for the next several months to the Enneagram and relationships. In October we began reading *The Path Between Us*, by Suzanne Stabile. Participants are encouraged to read all of *The Path Between Us* before our November gathering. If you haven't been able to attend for the past several months this is a great opportunity to reconnect. Even if you've never joined us, but want to get involved, you're welcome! Join us on zoom. Contact Pastor Sarah with questions.

GOOD NEWS OF A NEW MISSION PARTNER - SHOW YOUR GRATITUDE! As a recent letter from Chenoa Stock, mission co-worker in Peru, reminds us, the church is not the building. We have shown that to be so true at St. Andrew's through much outreach, including the hygiene bags we have been filling for six months. Now we have an exciting new opportunity to partner with Providence to share these kits. Providence Behavioral Health's outreach to unhoused or those struggling with mental health will include a bag distribution in early December.

We are thinking BIG and want to provide a generous number of these bags to Providence AS WELL AS the 80 we have been giving out to unhoused neighbors and to VOZ. We need help to do this! Donations of specific items included in the bags, or of cash to purchase the items, will be gratefully received up to Friday, December 4, at the Friday night donation drop off, in the Chapel. Further questions? Contact Marilyn. To paraphrase Chenoa, now is the time to hear God's call and to share God's love through our actions.

CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERING Christmas Joy is one of the four special offerings sponsored by Presbyterian Church (USA). It is collected during December. Half of the offering supports current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial need. The other half makes it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. So, Christmas Joy supports our current, former and future church leaders. You can contribute for Christmas Joy by sending a check through the mail (with Christmas Joy in the memo line) or by donating online thru Kindrid to the Christmas Joy fund.

VIRTUAL GIVING TREE

Just because we don't have a tree doesn't mean our neighbors can't have a Merry Christmas.

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE is asking for \$5-\$20 gift cards from stores that carry food, clothing, and gifts, such as Fred Meyer, Target, and Wal-Mart.

OUTSIDE IN can always use items for newly-housed clients in small apartments, such as small appliances, linens, and cleaning supplies.

Please return wrapped and/or clearly marked gifts to St. Andrew's (Friday In-person Donation Drop-off) by Friday, December 11. Please contact the church office if you have any questions. Thank you for your generosity!

THANK YOU FROM WEST WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S SHELTER The West Women's and Children's Shelter sends a big "thank you" to St. A's generosity in delivering 24 Thanksgiving dinner boxes, along with a check for them to purchase turkeys to go with the boxes. These items will provide a holiday meal for families who have transitioned from the shelter into permanent housing. To see how you can be a part of our continuing support for the shelter visit the West Women's and Children's Shelter web-site.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENTS Thanks to everyone who made commitments in advance of our dedication of those commitments this past Sunday. If you haven't done so already, please don't hesitate to do so at your earliest convenience. You can fill out a commitment card and drop it in the mail or to make a commitment on-line.

Thank you for all you do to help us strengthen our connections in Christ with God, with each other, and with neighbors in need.

If you have questions about pledging, St. A's Finances, or the ministries of St. A's, please don't hesitate to reach out to Pastor Sarah or Brad Van Allen, Stewardship elder and chair.

AN INVITATION TO ST. A'S FAMILIES A small number of adults will be decorating the church for Christmas to extend a hopeful message to our neighbors. We'll have a station set up outside the front entrance where children can make a peanut butter/bird seed pine cone to hang on our outside tree. You may also make one or two to take home. Everything will be set up to provide for social distancing and safe completion of the project. We hope you will drop by on November 28th between 10 am and 12 noon to help your children participate in spreading some joy (and peanut butter!) to our neighbors.

ANTI-RACISM STUDY GROUPS There are actually two groups; they meet on the second Saturday at 1 pm and the third Thursday at 7 pm. The same material is covered in both sessions. In December we are discussing chapters 14 and 15 of *How to Be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi. Please transcribe one quote from each chapter that you think best answers the question in the title of the book - *How to Be an Anti-Racist*. This is the zoom link for our gatherings (the same link works for both gatherings). If you want to join in, please contact Pastor Sarah so she can catch you up.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY Several St. Andrew's men meet twice a month (facilitated by Charles Duncombe, often accompanied by Pastor Sarah and/or Pastor Tom) for an early Wednesday morning Bible Study. They have shifted their in-person gathering to Bridgeport Village, to the covered outdoor area across from Peet's Coffee. There is wifi and heat and light here... they still are willing and able to zoom in any who wish to connect remotely. They meet the first and third Wednesday of every month. Let us know if you want to get connected. We are currently making our way through the Book of Exodus and have arrived at the long journey of Israel in the wilderness.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S 2021 CHURCHWIDE GATHERING The 2021 gathering will be held August 5th - 8th in St. Louis, Missouri. The theme is "Rejoice in Hope" based on Romans 12:12-13, "Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers."

FALL FOOD DRIVE - SUPPORT YOUR TEAM! UPDATE: PLATYPUS TEAM PULLS AHEAD! Ducks and Beavers, it's not too late to catch up! So many things have changed this year, even the name of the famous football tourney! What has not changed: our neighbors experiencing hunger. The best way to donate this year is to send a check to the church. Fans can still note their team in the memo line! Donations to the barrels or to Friday Evening Donation Drop-off are also welcome! Now more than ever, the Neighborhood House Food Pantry needs our support.

CARE PACKAGES FOR OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED With just one more event this year on December 5, this important ministry needs your support! Help us provide essential hygiene and basic sustenance on the streets of Portland and at Voz. Drop off donations or pick up bags to distribute at the Friday Donation Drop. We also have many packages prepared 10.31 available for pick up in the chapel. If you would like to distribute care packages to neighbors in need, come on a Friday evening to pick up care packages or make arrangements with Cynthia or Marilyn to pick them up at another time. Contact Marilyn Palumbo with questions.

IN-PERSON DONATION DROP OFF Our Mission Team Chair, Marilyn Palumbo, will be in the chapel every Friday evening from 5 - 7 pm to receive donations for St. Andrew's ministries: Coats for Kids, the Fall Food Drive, our Care Packages, and our Virtual Giving Tree. Please dial the church phone number (503-246-4276) once you have arrived to drop off your donation to arrange how it will be received in keeping with the church's COVID-19 policies.

URGENT NEED FOR FOOD DONATIONS Due to increased demand, the Oregon Food Bank (OFB) and other essential food suppliers of the Neighborhood House Food Pantry are experiencing food shortages. As a result, our Food Pantry is unable to purchase specific foods that our clients rely on. In particular, the Pantry currently needs: Rice Beans (canned and dried) Pasta Canned Meats Canned/Dry Fruit Flour/Baking Mix Cereal/Oats Fresh produce Meat (fresh or frozen as long as it is wrapped and labelled) The Food Pantry relies entirely on the generosity of community members. If you are able, please donate these food items to the Pantry at 3445 SW Moss St during donation hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 9-4 Tuesdays, 9-12 Thursdays, 9-5 Closed Fridays

FACE MASK MINISTRY Please consider making masks for one or more of the following situations:

1. Masks for the West Women's and Children's Shelter in both adult and child sizes in any style.
2. Fabric and purchased paper masks for the St Andrew's Service Project the last Saturday of each month when we assemble 50-75 hygiene bags for the houseless.
3. Inventory of fabric masks for use at St Andrew's. Hopefully most people will wear their own masks, but we want to have some available to use and keep if they need to.

Fabric and materials are available. Please contact me if you can help with masks and/or quilts for children in hospitals and foster care.

Blessings, Connie Jo Blumthal

WEST WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S SHELTER Each month on the first Saturday St. Andrew's delivers casseroles for a weekend meal at the shelter. You can join the effort by signing up to bake casseroles.

You may also sign-up to provide supplies. Here are the most pressing needs: Toilet Paper Toddler diapers (size 4) Paper towels Disinfectant Washcloths Laundry detergent

Thanking God for this opportunity to serve,
St. Andrew's Mission Team

ST. ANDREW'S YARD WORK If you and your family are craving fresh air and exercise, please consider working on the St. Andrew's grounds, getting them ready for winter! Contact Steve Ihrig for assignments and scheduling. Thank you!

Every Sunday

10:00 am - Worship on Zoom & Facebook

Every Wednesday

6:30 pm - Evening Prayer on Zoom

Every Friday

10:00 am - Noon Coffee Chat on Zoom

Saturday, November 28

1:00 pm- Enneagram Study Group on Zoom

SESSION UPDATE Your Session (board of elders) met on Tuesday, November 17, at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Here are a few highlights from that meeting. We were visited by Janet Cruz, our Committee on Ministry Liaison from the Presbytery of the Cascades. Janet is a ruling elder at our neighboring church, Southminster Presbyterian

Church and has visited our sister church in Santa Clara, Cuba. She was simply with us in an observational capacity hoping to strengthen her awareness of our ministry and her relationship with us. We concluded our point by point study of the "Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love" guidelines. We noted that our clerk, Steve Planck, upon the advice of the stated clerk of the Presbytery and, after consulting with other congregations and the elders of our congregation, filed a contingency proof of claim in the Boy Scouts of America Bankruptcy case. This is a protective measure should any charges be brought against any of the troops we have hosted or sponsored over the years. We spent a good deal of time listening to one another reflect on what it means to us to publicly affirm that Black Lives Matter. We noted that these words can represent at least three things: 1) a moral statement, 2) a movement, 3) an not-for-profit organization. Though the Session has a wide range of thoughts and feelings about the statement "Black Lives Matter," all are agreed that they understand it to be a moral statement in support of the current movement for racial justice in our nation. It is not an explicit endorsement of the official Black Lives Matter organization, though some elders are comfortable with such an endorsement that is not what the elders as a whole understood themselves to be supporting when they voted, twice, unanimously, to publicly assert Black Lives Matter. The Session hopes that any who have questions or concerns about our support for Black Lives Matter will approach any of the elders or Pastor Sarah, our moderator, for honest conversation. Our Session meetings are also open and any would be welcome to come speak with the Session as a whole. We learned that the Foundation agreed to cover the cost of improvements to our sanctuary sound system and installation of a new hearing support system so this work can be completed before the end of year, ideally. The promised bequest money for this project will be transferred to the capital building fund when it arrives (this is where the Foundation funds remaining to be distributed this year are heading.) We decided to suspend in person evening prayer and to strictly limit gatherings at the church in light of the troubling developments with COVID. We authorized Steve Ihrig, buildings and grounds elder, to set the rent for Vermont Hills based on the enrollment formula we've been using all year, month by month, as their enrollment continues to vacillate in the midst of this pandemic.

ROAD CONSTRUCTION ALERT St. Andrew's has received notice of construction that will be ongoing from August 2020 to August 2021. The City of Portland will be repairing sewer pipes all along Dosch Road and around Hillsdale Crest. Please be aware of street closures, flagging, and delays. For more information, including street closures and scheduling, please visit the City's website here.

For on-line giving please visit www.standrewspdx.com/give

Thank you for continuing to support the ministries of St. Andrew's through your online donations and checks sent by mail.