



Hood River Valley Christian Church Newsletter

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www.hoodrivervalleychristianchurch.com

and on Face book

February 22, 2023

Sunday Worship Time

10:30am Worship

Minister

Rev. Alicia Speidel 541 601-1949

aliciaspeidel@gmail.com

Church Administrative Assistant

Kathy Holmson office hours as needed

hrcchurch@gmail.com

Website: www.hoodrivervalleychristianchurch.com

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

February 22

11:15am at Down Manor (in the banquet room)

5:30pm at the Church (in the sanctuary)

Special music February 26 piano duet

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

9:30am Adult Sunday school classes, nursery available

10:30am Sunday Worship with Children Worship & Wonder

Links:

Sunday Feb 19 <https://www.facebook.com/100064940580441/videos/905962893927187>

Monday Feb 20 <https://www.facebook.com/100064940580441/videos/723233696118141>



Week of Compassion Special Offering February 19-26

Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. For nearly 80 years, Week of Compassion has pursued its mission, working with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world, toward the vision of a world where God's people transform suffering into hope.

Each year in February, congregations across the United States and Canada collect a **Special Offering** for **Week of Compassion**. While many congregations choose to collect their offering during this designated week, the offering truly fuels Week of Compassion's work and witness throughout the whole year!

Funds received through the offering enable Disciples to respond to disaster when it occurs, because Week of Compassion works with partners to immediately provide grants for urgent needs like emergency supplies, water, shelter, and food. The February Special Offering is set aside for congregations to lift up and celebrate this important work that we do together - not just in domestic and international disaster response, but in refugee and immigrant response, and sustainable development funding around the world.

About Church Giving

Online Giving To donate online to Hood River Valley Christian Church, go to <http://www.hoodrivervalleychristianchurch.com/donate/> and make a donation

Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement App

on your Smartphone or tablet. A onetime gift can be made or you can set up online giving on a regular basis. **USPS Mail** You can also give to Hood River Valley Christian Church by mailing a check to: HRVCC 975 Indian Creek Road, Hood River, OR 97031

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Bonnie McCollister Layla Gaffney
Vicki White Bev Thomas
David Nash Mary Patterson
Earthquake victims in Turkey & Syria

Sharon & Gordon Cook
Thelma Warnock
Katy White
People of Ukraine & Russia

Lauree Winfield
Linda Meyers
Stacey Jubitz

Mary Patterson is under the care of hospice. Please keep her and her family in your prayers.

A BABY SHOWER!

To welcome Sebastian and Vincent Lupoli
Sunday March 5 after worship

These are some items Mom and Dad can use for the boys: a diaper genie and bags, size 2 diapers and up, wipes, bath basin, bottle brushes, bamboo unscented diaper liners, 3-6 month clothes.



The Pastor's COLUMN

And so Lent begins. I'm not sure where the time went from Christmas until now, however here we are. The palms from last year will be burned in time for the Ash Wednesday services on Wednesday. The paraments in the sanctuary will be changed from green to purple. The trunk from the tree that was in the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas will be transformed into a bare cross. The pieces will be set. The space will look different. Lent will begin.

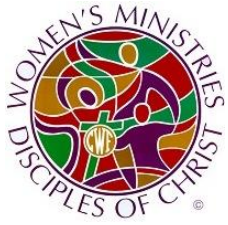
What do we do during Lent? What's the purpose? What is to be our focus? It's a time of preparation for Holy Week, for Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem, his journey to the cross and his resurrection. It is the time when we do our best to intentionally travel with Jesus, learning about his ministry, hearing his teachings and seeing the changes he brought. It is about reflecting and drawing closer to God.

We do this by calling to mind how we have moved away from God in different aspects of our lives, how we need to repair our spiritual relationship and how we need to seek forgiveness. These are the challenging aspects of Lent, the pieces we would sometimes like to overlook and yet the pieces that are critical for the journey, for our journey. Let us then walk with intention and with deliberation as Lent is upon us and as the journey to the cross and the resurrection has begun. *Alicia*

Sunday Morning Door Greeters

Would you be willing to be a greeter on Sunday mornings before worship near the front doors? We would love to have a rotation of a few people to fill this ministry role. Thanks to Margaret Marshall for greeting at the front door last Sunday. This is one way to create a warm and inviting environment for those who enter the church building for worship. If you'd like to be a greeter on Sundays, just station yourself at the table at the main doors and tell Kathy or Alicia if you are interested.

Women's Ministries News



Want to help? The reorganization of Women's Ministries is nearly complete. We rejoice that Leslie Hidle has volunteered as treasurer. There are a couple of roles yet to fill, and if you can help, contact Mary Anne Parrott, now coordinator. In addition, other women who do not wish to serve in leadership positions but would like to help in one or more areas of service, please sign up on the sheet outside Alicia's office. These areas are: special events, outreach to shut-ins, excursions, relationship development, receptions/potluck dinners, and short-term outreach projects.

Thriftshop News – New Women's Clothes in Large Sizes

The Thriftshop recently received women's clothing in sizes XL, 1X, 2X, and 3X. Most of the items have never been worn. If you know someone who would be interested in the clothes please let them know. Suze Nigl has details.



Laundry Love Needs Donations

Laundry Love needs funds to pay for the laundry needs of people in the Hood River community who are houseless.

How does it work? In supporting the Hood River Warming Shelter's program assisting houseless people in the community, Hood River Valley Christian Church has committed to being at the Laundromat on certain designated days to aid Shelter guests in doing their laundry. We show up with quarters and detergent, meet with folks in need, get their laundry loads started and watch as their lives are changed and ours are changed even more. This is an ongoing ministry for our church and helpers are needed year round. If you would like to participate in Laundry Love ministry, or for more information about Laundry Love, talk to Pastor Alicia.

Make donations through your church offering—indicate "Laundry Love" on checks. Thank you.

Pastor Alicia's sermon from February 19, 2023

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23 & Lamentations 3:21-23

Last Sunday after church Rod jokingly asked if I was going to preach on the Super Bowl commercials this week. I laughed and said probably not. Later I jokingly commented to Geoff what Rod had said. Then we watched the Super Bowl, enjoying the game, some of the commercials and the halftime show. I was not watching the commercials for sermon material at all. That is until one particular organization aired two different commercials. As soon as the first one began I knew who was sponsoring it based on seeing ones similar to it in the past. After it was over, I turned to Geoff and said, "I'm thinking that might just make it into my sermon." So Rod, yes, apparently I am going to preach about a Super Bowl commercial after all or at least reference it briefly. Thank you very much.

The two commercials sponsored by the same non profit highlight a message about Jesus done with black and white images, catchy music and short taglines. Maybe you have seen these commercials or ones like it or the billboards they have on your way to Portland. Maybe you have been intrigued by them. Maybe you have agreed with them. Maybe you have disagreed with them.

This organization, whom I'm not going to name, is trying to rebrand Jesus, making him more accessible to the public. The first commercial showed images of children coming together and

playing, with the message to be childlike. The second was images of people yelling at each other and in strict opposition to one another with the tagline, Jesus loved the people we hate. Both made me cringe. Why? There's the millions of dollars that were spent simply on advertising and I mean many, many millions of dollars. There's the trying to make it catchy that completely defeats the purpose of Jesus and the message he brought. There's the research into who is financially backing this organization and the hate groups they support. There are so many layers and so many conversations I have seen my colleagues having on social media since last Sunday about these two ads, which doesn't even include the multiple news articles about them.

Trying to brand Jesus and get his message out in a way that is catchy is not the way to go in my opinion. And I'm not sure Jesus would jump on this bandwagon either. It's not a coming together. It's not challenging the status quo. It's not a widening of the margins. It's not getting to the root of who Jesus was, what he did, the life he lived or the lessons he taught. It's not any of this. It's gimmicky, surface level and not effective in my opinion. This is not how you get people to turn to Jesus, to follow Jesus and to live as Jesus instructed.

So how do we do all of that? Because that's a question that needs to be answered. And truly it's a question that we need to answer for our own lives first. It comes down to the foundation that was established by Jesus and then reinforced by his followers, by Paul, for example, when we look at today's scripture passage.

This is our final Sunday looking at the first few chapters of 1 Corinthians. Next week we begin the season of Lent, shifting our focus to passages from the Gospels. So today is our last adventure with Paul and the reminders he was giving the church in Corinth. His mission to get them to return to their commitment to Jesus Christ and the reason they had established their church in the first place. To end the quarreling and division. To see the gifts of the Spirit they all possessed. To rely upon God for their growth. To build up the body of Christ. To recognize Christ in their midst. And now today to see God's temple as holy, to see themselves as holy. To become wise in God's wisdom. To ultimately belong to Christ. To build upon that foundation that was originally established.

Paul was calling upon them to live in these ways because he cared for them. He saw their potential. He saw the need. He still believed in them. So he desired for this to be true for their lives, for the deep connection with Christ and for a relationship with God. It wasn't gimmicky. It wasn't rebranding. And it definitely wasn't surface level. It was honest, to the point, in your face, look at this.

Because as Reverend Kate Foster Connors explains, "Paul is urging intentionality, with a deep awareness that we build on the foundation of Jesus Christ. A foundation gives the footprint to the building. Paul asks the church to consider the question, What kind of footprint did Jesus leave for us to build upon? Paul's metaphor implores the church to carry that footprint through to every aspect of its life together." And listen carefully to these next questions that she raises. "Is our congregation being intentional in showing God's love and justice as revealed in Jesus Christ in every way it can? Are we living God's love and justice in our worship life together? Are we demonstrating it in the way we govern our congregation? In the way we govern our denomination? Are we living God's love and justice in the way we include our youngest children and our oldest adults in the life of the congregation? In the way we welcome the stranger?"

These questions get to the heart of the matter, for the Corinthians and for us so many years later. They force us to be honest, to look deep and to make adjustments as needed. Because adjustments are always needed, deepening is always possible and honesty is always a good place to begin.

So building upon that footprint that Jesus left, the love and justice, the demonstrating it and living it. We are able to see that happening in the very real work that Week of Compassion is doing and has

been doing for nearly 80 years. I'm highlighting this very important organization and naming them because this is the week when we lift up their ministry. The week we share about the amazing work they do. The ways they have changed lives and continue to change lives. The ways in which they build upon the footprint Jesus created. Love and justice is wrapped into absolutely everything they do. Their theme this year is "Rise Up Anew," centered around the passage from Lamentations.

And listen to this message from Executive Director Reverend Vy Nguyen. "This past year has continued to witness the ravages of Covid-19 across the globe. War in Ukraine persists, and recovery for that nation's people will be extensive and long-lasting. Communities from Kentucky to Puerto Rico to Newfoundland are in the throes of long-term recovery from tornadoes, massive floods, and hurricanes. Wildfires continue to imperil western U.S. states and Canadian provinces, and drought affects the world's farmers, ranchers, and tribal communities alike. Unfathomable floods in Pakistan and the Philippines have left indelible images of destruction and tragedy, while the simplest needs—nutrition, shelter, work—seem out of reach for far too many people in far too many places. In the middle of it all, Week of Compassion calls on God's mercy and speaks boldly of the Divine goodness made new each day. When it seems that tragedy and hardship is all that rises up, the people of God trust in a holy word, and proclaim with their work, their witness, and their generous giving, that God's faithfulness will rise up anew, too. Because God's compassion never fails, we have seen an abundance of compassion in the face of fatigue. Because God's compassion never fails, we have seen partnerships forged, communities strengthened, and opportunities blossoming—concrete and tangible ways that Week of Compassion, serving with and on behalf of the whole Disciples church, is part of what God is doing to make things new."

Yes, yes, yes! Week of Compassion is doing all of this. Week of Compassion needs us to rise up anew to continue to make it so, to build upon the footprint Jesus left. There is no doubt about that.

We have the opportunity to join this partnership, to enhance it and to keep it a vital ministry in our world. Today with our financial contributions and always. It is the love and justice that needs to be proclaimed, professed and lived in every way imaginable. It connects to Paul's message, to the church in Corinth, to Reverend Connors words and to what Jesus was doing to begin with.

It widens the circle. It challenges the status quo. It pushes the boundaries. It is a coming together, getting to the root of who Jesus was, what he did, the life he lived and the lessons he taught. Week of Compassion is engaging in all of these ways.

Are we? Will we? Is that the path we will travel and claim in our journey with God, in our faith lives, in this congregation's life? Because it isn't about only talking about how others are or are not living in these ways. It's actually living in these ways, ourselves, our congregation, what we teach and demonstrate to others.

That is what it comes down to. Who are we? What building upon the footprint are we doing? What compassion are we living? What foundation are we standing upon? In simple and complex ways. With our money and the use of our building and property. With the organizations we support and lift up. With the ways we spend our time and energy. With how we speak to people of all ages, the little ones and the older ones. With how we treat our neighbors, literal and figurative. With what we do in worship. With what we do after worship. It all combines together.

And it all needs to be taken into consideration as we rise up anew. As we trust in God's faithfulness. As we have hope. As we bask in God's compassion. As we keep Jesus' footprint alive. Not with some kitschy commercial. Just saying. There are millions of other ways to make this happen instead. Where Jesus' message truly is the forefront and the foundation.



FISH Food Bank Coordinators Newsletter

February 2023

It is already February and we are off to a fast start with the new year. There are changes coming next month with the SNAP (old food stamp program) benefits that may affect our clients. There was a temporary boost to SNAP benefits put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic, known as emergency allotments. This allotment will end nationwide after the February 2023 issuance. In addition, households that receive SNAP and Social Security benefits will see a decrease in their SNAP benefits because of the significant cost of living increase to Social Security benefits that took effect on Jan. 1, 2023. We are seeing the affects at FISH, in January at the Hood River site the client numbers were up 25% and county wide 19% over last year.

Last week on one night we talked to 4 different families that were sleeping in their car because they had nowhere else to go. One family felt OK because they had a full tank of gas, so they could keep warm. Another client belongs to a 24 hour fitness businesses and she says she goes in at midnight, works out, takes a sauna and sleeps a little during the really cold times. While our goal is to provide food, we have been able to help a little outside of the FISH mission. Hector ran into one of these families at a local store and bought them a blanket to help them keep warm. One of these clients had just a thin coat. The Next Door Inc., volunteer heard our conversation about warm clothing and was able to take him to her office and give him a warm coat and sweaters. It appears that many families are not having a great start of the year.

As we shop with the families, we often hear the stories of how they are navigating through life. Some of the stories are positive and some break your heart. Ann had an interesting encounter with a young man, this was her experience: "A young fellow, mid-twentyish with a family of two came to the food bank. We chatted, he picked out the stuff, I packed it...everything was going smooth. Until, after the pasta and soup isle, he got some Mac'N'Cheese and then froze. I was rounding the corner and noticed he wasn't following. He was standing still and immobile looking at the diaper display. He is a young guy with snowboard boots on, and not moving. So, I asked, "do you need diapers?" Finally, he said yes, in two months he will need some diapers. Newborn size. So, I encouraged him to get a package and start stocking up. He said he almost fainted, the blood ran away from him...this is the first time he ever thought about diapers. He picked out a package and then we were looking at the baby food. He froze again. Diapers and baby food had never ever occurred to him. No doubt the baby food will not be needed for a while but he got practice. After we made it past that kiosk we did a high five."

Not all conversations are as positive. One young woman, who is also pregnant but with twins, continues to struggle. Her family had no money in the bank, their rent was due, their car insurance was due, they have a storage unit with items from her late Mom and that payment was due. Her oldest son is in middle school and on the wrestling team. She asked me if I knew how much a young teen can eat? She said as a family they are out picking up bottles to try and get a little extra money. The best we could do is fill her basket with food but hopefully that takes a little burden off her shoulders.

Another example was a young lady was sharing how she had to choose between food and paying her electric bill. So, I assured her she could get food at the food bank, pay the electric bill.

On the lighter side, I was shopping with a young couple who just moved here from the Philippines. As we were shopping it became obvious, they were not familiar with some of our foods. For example, they picked peanut butter, then I asked if they would like some jelly. The wife said, "how would I use it?" I explained people often put it on their peanut butter to make PBJ's, so she decided to try it.

While the start of the new year is should be a new beginning, for many of our families it appears they continue to struggle. Thanks for helping them through these hard times.

Billie Stevens
FISH Food Bank
541-490-5109

What Did 2022 Look Like at FISH Food Bank?

It is always interesting to look back, so here are a few quick snap shots of 2022:

- *After almost two years of greeting clients at the car, the Hood River FISH siite finally opened back up to Client Shopping, in May.
- *Last year FISH Food Bank served 1785 different families at least once.
- *FISH provided food 4787 times to families. Some families only need our help once other families need our help more often.
- *FISH currently has registered 1293 clients registered in the Link2Feed program.
- *In 2022 there were 420 different individuals who volunteered at FISH.
- *In 2022 volunteers donated 10,590 hours to FISH Food Bank, which equates to about 62 full time employees. One report states each volunteer hour is worth \$29.95. So, using this figure, the value of the volunteer time given to FISH in 2022 was \$314,744.55. This may be a little high but each volunteer is an important resource.
- *The average number of volunteer hours donated during the month in 2022 was 883 hours.
- *The average number of volunteers working each month in 2022 was 113.
- *Every volunteer is valued and every hour donated is a benefit to FISH. Some individuals have given an extra number of hours. Many individuals have donated hundreds of hours to FISH. Here are a couple of volunteers who deserve to receive an extra thank you for all the time given to FISH:
 - Becky Bugge donated 719 hours to FISH
 - Nick Kirby donated 660 hours to FISH
 - Vicki Kelsey donated 430 hours to FISH
 - Marianne Durkan donated hundreds of hours which she never records.
- *We should also thank the different business that have volunteered during the year: First Interstate Bank, Insitu, Dutch Bros, Pacific Source and TCC Verizon. Special thanks to the many High School student who have given time. Plus, a very special thank you to Next Door Inc., who have been sending volunteer to assist with Spanish language since July.

A Little Extra Help??

There are a few volunteer spots where FISH could use a little extra help, if it is something you might be interested in please contact me and let me know.

***Hood River Monday Night Distribution—Car Greeter**

This position works as a team member to greet the cars and give them a number to mark their place in line and then to keep the flow of the clients coming into the food bank. Requirements: Enjoy talking with people and do not mind working outside. (You can come inside and get warm or cool.) Time requirement: 2:45 PM to 5:00 PM. This is a team position and having two people work this position assures the position is covered when one of the team members has to be gone.

***Hood River Monday or Friday Night—Registration Desk**

This position works at the registration desk as a team member (most of the times.) You will help with the registration of the clients and entering into Link2Feed, if you desire to learn the program. Requirements: Enjoy talking with people, enjoy paperwork and knowing Spanish is a plus but not required if comfortable working with Spanish speakers. Time requirement: 2:45 PM to 5:00PM.

***Helping Unload Oregon Food Bank Truck**

This position works as a team member with about 10 individuals, where you help put the food from the Oregon Food Bank truck away on the shelves or in the freezer/refrigerator. Requirements: Able to lift about 30 pounds and enjoy being with a great team of workers. Time requirements: 7:30 AM for about 1 hour, every other Thursday AM.

Church Calendar

Wednesday Ash Wednesday February 22

9:00am-Noon Quilters meet
9:00am-12:00pm Thriftshop
5:30-8:30pm Master Gardeners, fellowship hall
5:30pm Ash Wednesday service at church

Thursday February 23

7:00am Men's Study
1:30pm Chime Choir

Saturday February 25

9:00am-Noon Thriftshop open
9:00am-Noon Master Gardeners, fellowship hall

Sunday February 26

9:30am Gospel of Matthew Study, vista room
9:45am Sunday Adult book study
10:30am Worship
3:30pm Hope and Life church worship

Tuesday February 28

10:00am Women's Bible Study
3:00pm TOPS Group

Wednesday March 1

9:00am-Noon Quilters meet
9:00am-12:00pm Thriftshop
5:30-8:30pm Master Gardeners, fellowship hall

Thursday March 2

7:00am Men's Study
1:30pm Chime Choir

Saturday March 4

9:00am-Noon Thriftshop open
9:00am-Noon Master Gardeners, fellowship hall

Sunday March 5

9:30am Gospel of Matthew Study, vista room
9:45am Sunday Adult book study
10:30am Worship
11:30am Baby Shower for Lupolis
3:30pm Hope and Life church worship

Tuesday March 7

10:00am Women's Bible Study
3:00pm TOPS Group

Wednesday March 8

9:00am-Noon Quilters meet
9:00am-12:00pm Thriftshop
5:30-8:30pm Master Gardeners, fellowship hall

SERVING Sunday February 26, 2023

Elder this Week	Jerry Sawyer
Communion Preparer	Kathy Holmson
Coffee Hour	Carol & friends
Deacons	Serving Team #1 Woody, Sue, Owen, Ayden

Scriptures for Sunday February 26, 2023

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Psalm 32
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11

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