

# December 10, 2025



## Hood River Valley Christian Church Newsletter

541-386-2608 [hrcchurch@gmail.com](mailto:hrcchurch@gmail.com)

<https://www.hoodrivervalleychristianchurch.org/> and on [Facebook](#)

### Sunday Worship Time

10:30am

### Church Administrative Assistant

Sable Duback

### Minister

Rev. Alicia Speidel 541-601-1949

[aliciaspeidel@gmail.com](mailto:aliciaspeidel@gmail.com)

Office hours 9am-12pm or as needed

## Sunday Worship

9:30 Adult Lectionary Preview

10:30 Worship

Link to Worship on December 07- [Facebook](#)

*Prayer  
Requests*



Sharon & Gordon Cook

Carol Sabins

Lee Repp

Vestena Emerson

Vicki White

Ken Hansen

Anse Hopkins

Bev Carpenter

Sheppard Family

Springer Family

James Gaffney

\*Prayers for healing for James Gaffney as he recently had emergency hip surgery to put medical pins in following a SCFE.

\*Please hold Jan Behrmann's friend, Pat Byrne's new great grandson Weston in your thoughts and prayers for healing and recovery.

\*Prayers for healing and recovery for Laurie and Linda's dad as he has been in the ICU with breathing difficulties.

Please email any prayer requests to [hrcchurch@gmail.com](mailto:hrcchurch@gmail.com) or call our office at 541-386-2608.



Kim Cantrell- 04

Diane Hayes- 08

Jason Ritoch- 12

Brenda Ritoch- 13

John Isle-21

Carla Bailey- 22

Gladys Sawyer- 23

Ellen Hopkins- 24

Katie Ramfield-24

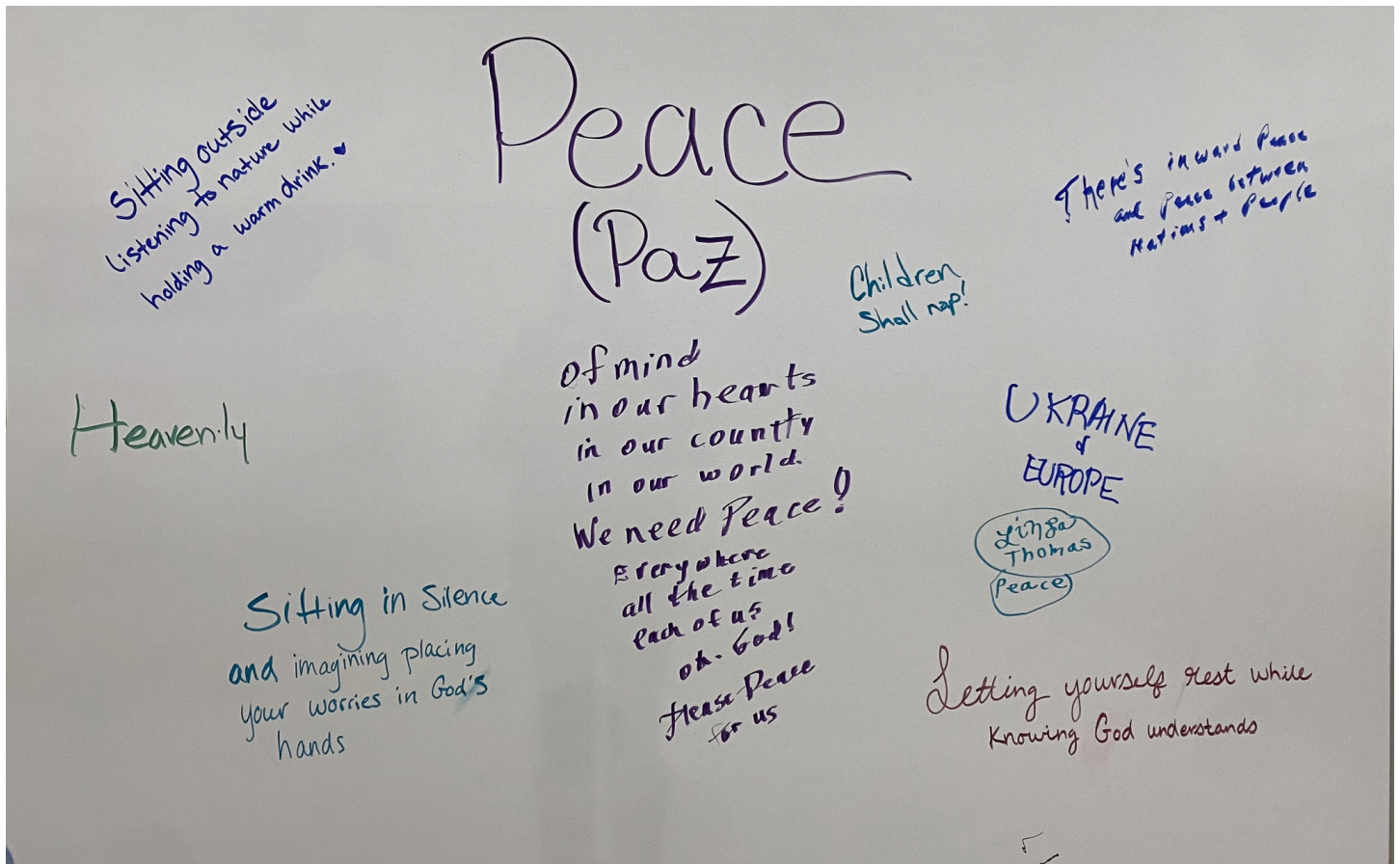
Nola Hardman- 25



**Thriving**  
Congregations

In January and February we are going to study and learn from the book "Thriving Church: What We Can Learn from Faithful Congregations" by Erin Cash and Kory Wilcoxson. We are going to do this in worship, in women's bible study and possibly in small groups. We are going to continue to thrive in our own way as we explore what that word and concept has meant for other congregations of all sizes.

If you are interested in reading this book as we go through it, please sign up or let us know. We will be ordering them soon. It is an interesting read that provides great insight into all of the possibilities out there to be a thriving church and bring the message of Jesus Christ to our communities. So make sure to sign up if you would like a book and if you are interested in joining a small group to study it more.







**Mark your calendars for a fun service! Our awesome children and youth have been working hard on a play, and we finally get to show it off on Sunday, December 14th!**

**Here's some of our kids carrying in the animals for the nativity scene last Sunday.**



## **Pastor's message**

**Breathe. I think that's what we forget to do sometimes. Breathe. To stop from stressing out or being anxious. To stop from being harried and all over the place. To stop from over analyzing and jumping to conclusions. Breathe. It's easy to skip past this simple thing. It's easy to get caught up in the worry and concern. It's easy to ignore the peace that is possible. Breathe.**

**We need more of this in our lives. When times are tough. When emotions are high. When uncertainty looms. Breathe. Be still. Look to God. Rest in the Holy Spirit. Follow the ways of Christ. Breathe. It's hard and yet, it's simple too. And it's so needed. Breathe. Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe the hope, peace, joy and love that are indicative of the Advent season and that are to be present all through the year. Breathe. We can do this.**

**~Pastor Alicia**



Supplemental  
Nutrition  
Assistance  
Program



**How can we Help our Neighbors?**

***Hood River has an outstanding, mostly volunteer staffed food bank offering food assistance to people who are hungry. FISH food bank is on the frontline fighting hunger in our community. FISH accepts non perishable food, garden and orchard produce, and cash and checks***

***which is used to purchase needed food—especially fresh foods such as eggs and dairy.***

***Our continued support of FISH is important in these troubling times. We will be donating funds from our church's Help a Neighbor fund to help FISH purchase needed food. Please give as you are able to support the food bank's work of keeping families fed in Hood River County.***

***Thank you.***

***More information:***

***—checks may be mailed. FISH mailing address is 1767 12th Street, #147, Hood River, OR 97031***

***—food items can be dropped off at FISH 1130 Tucker Road HR***

***FISH also accepts toiletries, baby items such as diapers, and pet food.***

**ADVENT SCHEDULE:**



**Friday Dec. 12- 7pm CGOA Concert here at HRVCC.**

**Saturday Dec. 13- 7pm CGOA Concert here at HRVCC.**

**Sunday Dec. 14- Third Sunday in Advent. HRVCC Youth Christmas play followed by a special visit from Santa and treats. Congregational vote on budget and nominating after worship.**

**Sunday Dec. 21- Fourth Sunday in Advent. 10:30am Worship. Longest Night service at Down Manor at 6:15pm.**

**Wednesday Dec. 24- 7pm Christmas Eve service at HRVCC.**

**Thursday Dec. 25- MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

**Sunday Dec. 28- Carols Sunday. 10:30am Worship.**

**Sunday Jan. 04- Epiphany Sunday. 10:30am Worship.**



We need official greeters to welcome people as they arrive for worship on Sunday mornings.

The responsibility of a greeter would be to stand near the front doors beginning at 10:15am with bulletins in hand to warmly greet those who enter. If you are interested in doing this, please let Pastor Alicia or Sable know.

Then a schedule will be created.  
Thank you!



### The Longest Night Service at Down Manor

On December 21st at 6:15 PM at Down Manor there will be a special Longest Night Service, also widely known as a Blue Christmas service.

This service is scheduled to coincide with the Winter Solstice—the year's longest night—and is specifically designed to offer comfort and respite for those who find the Christmas season difficult.

It is a dedicated space for those mourning the loss of a loved one, struggling with illness, feeling the strain of a difficult year, or simply experiencing a profound sense of sadness amidst the celebration.

Our former member, Anse Hopkins, is on Hospice.  
She would love to receive cards.

Anse Hopkins  
2428 San Marcos Pass  
Santa Barbara California  
93105



## **2025 Nominating Committee Worksheet**

(For 2026) Church Officers, Elders, Deacons, Trustees

Nominating Committee: **Barb Ritoch, Betty Osborne, Chrystal Akin,**  
**Jerry Sawyer, Scott Crosswhite**

*Terms are for 2 years*

Term ends 2027

Chair of the Board

Jennifer Stager

Vice Chair

Chrystal Akin

Secretary

Suze Nigl

Treasurer

Carla Bailey

### **ELDERS**

*Terms are for 2 years*

Term ends 2026

Term ends 2027

Gerald Sawyer

Jennifer Stager

Thelma Warnock

Carol Sabins

Rod Parrott

Betty Osborne

Suze Nigl

### **ELDER EMERITUS**

Dot Swyers   Judy Hiatt   Fred Duckwall

### **DIACONATE SERVERS**

*Terms are for 2 years*

Term ends 2026

Term ends 2027

Betty Osborne

Chance Cheuvront

Scott Crosswhite

Sable Duback

Laurie Crosswhite

Woody Eskildsen

Wes Bailey

Sue Eskildsen

**COMMUNION PREPARERS**

***Terms are for 2 years***

**Term ends 2026**

**Judy Hiatt**

**Term ends 2027**

**Barb Ritoch**

**Margaret Strasser**

**Joanie Logan**

**Kathy Holmson**

**TRUSTEES**

***Terms are for 3 years***

**Term 2026**

**Wes Bailey**

**Term ends 2027**

**Betty Osborne**

**Term ends 2028**

**Laurie Crosswhite**

**Chrystal Akin**

**Judy Hiatt**

**Sign our All Church Christmas Card – forms are on the table in the lobby.**

**Write: Your name & Christmas greeting and**

**put it in the basket on the table.**

**Donate: You save money for cards & postage by sending**

**Christmas greetings this way, drop a donation in the basket**

**with your greeting if you are able.**

**Donations go to: HRVCC Help A Neighbor Fund.**

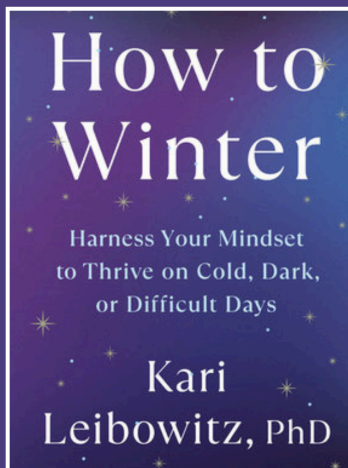


**Save your recycling for the Second Sunday Recycling on December 14! If you need a reminder of what we recycle, see a flyer on the entry table. Dry and clean, all commingled. In January an announcement of new items which qualify through the Forge Sustainability Project will be made.**  
**Thanks. Mary Anne**



HOOD RIVER COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT &  
GORGE HAPPINESS PRESENT:

# Book Club & Community Circle



Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Tuesday  
from 11:30-1:00 PM

December 2  
December 16  
January 6  
January 20  
February 3  
February 17

Attend when you can!

CONNECTION + MEDITATION + DISCUSSION

WITH EMILY MARTIN



HOOD RIVER LIBRARY READING ROOM

502 State Street  
541-386-2535

[www.hoodriverlibrary.org](http://www.hoodriverlibrary.org)



[WWW.GORGEHAPPINESS.ORG](http://WWW.GORGEHAPPINESS.ORG)

Please purchase ahead of time or get a copy of the book from the library to read along with the group (library copies will be available to borrow during our first meeting on Dec 2).

No need to read anything from the book before our first meeting. We will read and discuss a few chapters every 2 weeks.

Each circle includes:

- ~ Time for connection and reflection
- ~ Mindfulness Meditation
- ~ Time for book chapter discussion

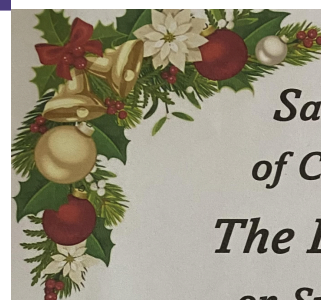
Come as you are--even if you haven't read the chapter! We want to sit in community circle with you. Attend when you can.

Questions? Contact Emily Martin

503-358-1949

On Sunday December 14, we will be joined by the wonderful Brass Quintet who will be providing special music for our Worship service.

Please join us in giving them a warm welcome that morning, and we extend our sincere thanks to these talented musicians for sharing their gift with us.

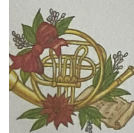


*Savor the spirit  
of Christmas with  
The Brass Quintet  
on Sunday, Dec. 14!*

*Our thanks to...*

*Anders Foster ~ Trumpet  
Kate Dougherty ~ Trumpet  
Ian Monahan ~ French Horn  
Bob Smith ~ Trombone  
Ed Price ~ Tuba*

*...for sharing their musical gifts  
with our church family!*



# Church Calendar

## Wednesday December 10

9:00am-12:00pm Thrift Shop open

9:00am-12:00pm Quilters meet

## Thursday December 11

7:00am Men's study Vista Room

1:30pm Chimes practice

## Saturday December 13

## Friday December 12

7:00pm CGOA concert

## Saturday December 13

9:00am-12:00pm Thrift shop open

11:30am Women's lunch at the Columbia Gorge Hotel

7:00pm CGOA concert

## Sunday December 14- Third Sunday of Advent.

### Recycling day. Youth Christmas Play.

9:30am Lectionary Preview

10:30am Worship

Congregational vote on budget and nominating

4:00pm Hope and Life Church worship.

## December 16-18 Pastor Alicia out of town

## Tuesday December 16

10:00am Women's Bible Study

## Wednesday December 17

9:00am-12:00pm Thriftshop open

9:00am-12:00pm Quilters meet

## Thursday December 18

7:00am Men's study Vista Room

1:30pm Chimes practice

## Saturday December 20

9:00am-12:00pm Thrift shop open

## Sunday December 21- Fourth Sunday of advent

9:30am Lectionary Preview

10:30am Worship

4:00pm Hope and Life Church worship

6:15pm Longest Night service at Down Manor

## Tuesday December 23

10:00am Women's bible study

1:30pm Chimes practice

## Wednesday December 24

9:00am-12:00pm Thrift shop open

9:00am-12:00pm Quilters meet

## Thursday December 25

### Merry Christmas!

7:00pm Christmas Eve service

## Saturday December 27

9:00am-12:00pm Thrift shop open

## Sunday December 28-Fifth Sunday of advent

9:30 Adult lectionary study

10:30am Worship

4:00pm Hope And Life Church Worship

## Scriptures for Sunday December 14, 2025

Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalm 146:5-10 or Luke 1:46b-55

James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

## Serving Sunday December 14, 2025

Elder this week

Chrystal Akin

Communion prep

Maggie Strasser

Coffee hour

Barb and friends

Deacon

Scott and Laurie

## Scriptures for Sunday December 07, 2025

Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalm 146:5=10 or Luke 1:46b-55

James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

## Serving Sunday December 07, 2025

Elder this week

Chrystal Akin

Communion prep

Maggie Strasser

Coffee hour

Barb and Friends

Deacon

Scott and Laurie

