

December 17, 2025



Hood River Valley Christian Church Newsletter

541-386-2608 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

Office hours 9am-12pm or as needed

Sunday Worship

9:30 Adult Lectionary Preview

10:30 Worship

Link to Worship on December 14- [Facebook](#)

*Prayer
Requests*



Sharon & Gordon Cook

Carol Sabins

Lee Repp

Vestena Emerson

Vicki White

Ken Hansen

Hopkins Family

Bev Carpenter

Sheppard Family

Springer Family

James Gaffney

Bud Harris

*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 Bud Harris as he has been in the ICU with breathing difficulties.

*Prayers for the family of Anse Hopkins as she was recently called home to be with the Lord.

Please email any prayer requests to 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

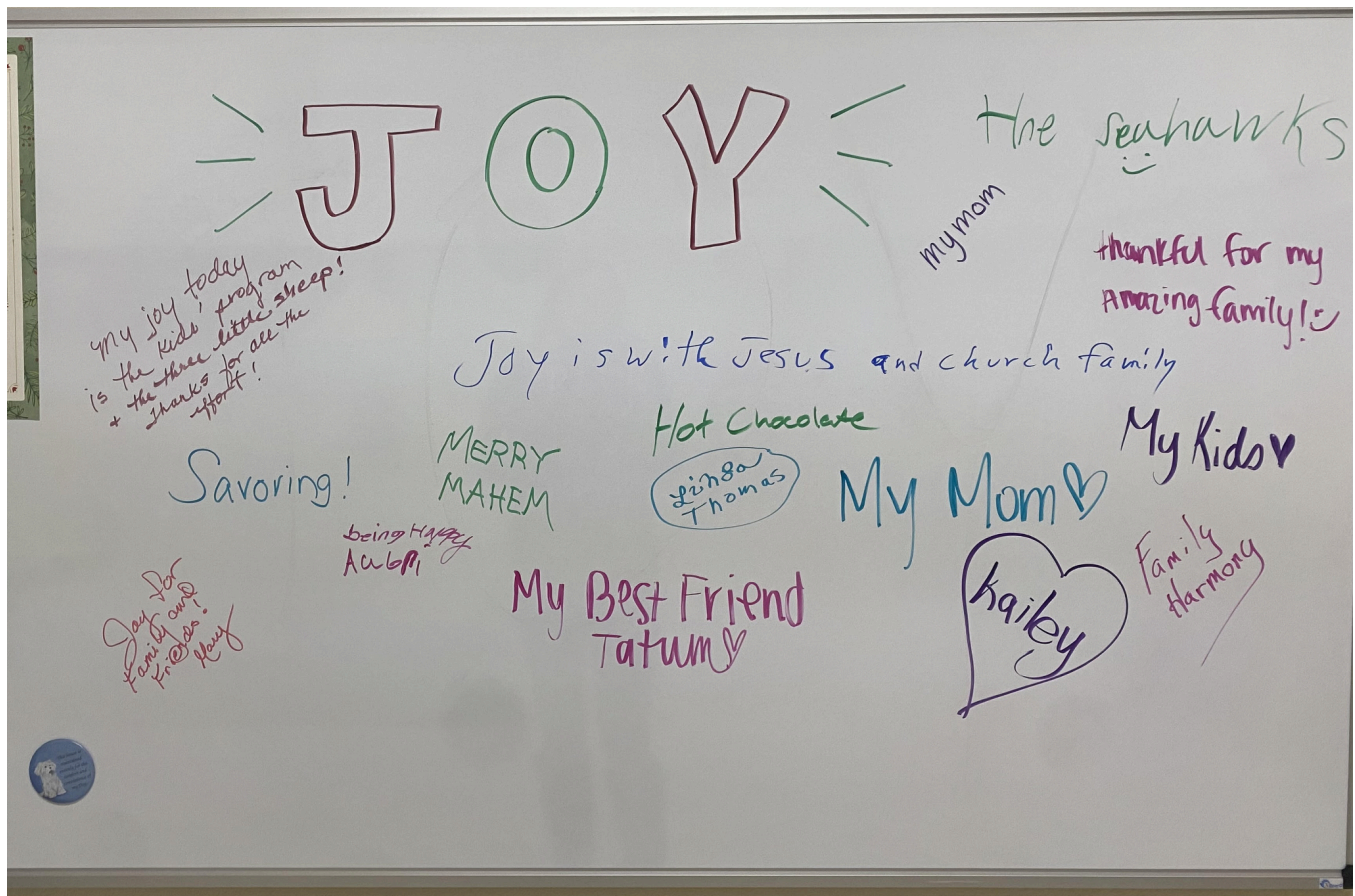


In case you missed it last week about the study we will be doing after the first of the year, we are repeating last week's article. Check it out and let us know if you're interested in receiving the book to read.

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.



Brown University and Bondi Beach. Two more tragic mass shootings. Two more instances of innocent lives lost. Two more moments seared in our minds. One as finals were occurring and one where the beginning of Hanukkah was being celebrated. Hanukkah, the festival of lights. Hanukkah, a time when Jewish individuals and families gather to remember, honor and offer blessings. Hanukkah, a time of celebration and giving thanks.



At this specific gathering faithful followers were targeted. It's beyond comprehension. It's sickening. It has to stop. We keep saying that and still these tragedies continue happening. When Oh Lord? When will you hear us? When will a new way forward be found? When?

One rabbi, when interviewed following the attack, lifted up the truth and fact that light overcomes darkness, that light is present in the world and that light is to be the focus, our focus. Hanukkah, the festival of lights. May we join with our Jewish sisters and brothers in being the light, in bringing the light and knowing light does overcome.

~ Pastor Alicia

A huge thank you to everyone involved in our festivities this past Sunday!

From the stars of our Christmas Play (our amazing children and youth!) and their supportive families, to the Women's Ministries who coordinated the Santa gifts, and those who helped with fellowship hour- your efforts made the day unforgettable. It is a blessing to see our church family come together in such a beautiful way.





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.



G.E.M Holiday Social & Potluck

Come celebrate the holidays with a potluck dinner and the sharing of what is happening in G.E.M!

Please bring a dish to share if you can.

Where: Fish Community Room. 1130 Tucker Road Hood River, OR, 97031

When: Thursday, December 18, 2025. 5:30-7:30pm



If you are able to donate to help those in the Pacific Northwest who are affected by the current floods please address your payment to Week of Compassion designated for the Northern Lights Region.



ADVENT SCHEDULE:



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.



Poinsettias have been purchased in memory of or in honor of loved ones. They are used for decorating the sanctuary during the advent season and can be taken home after the Christmas Eve service.

Name:

Joanie Logan in memory of the Lingren family.

Virginia Sheppard in memory of Bill Sheppard.

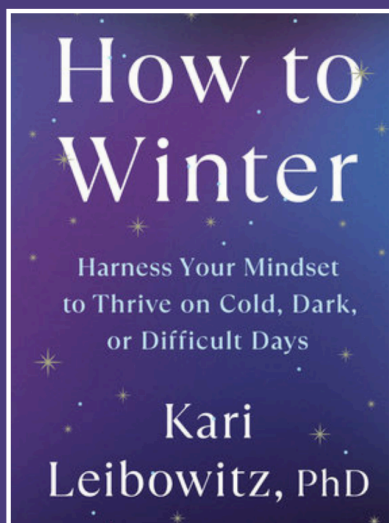
Margaret Marshall in memory of Ned Marshall.

**Rod & Mary Anne Parrott in memory of Ralph & Evelyn Helseth
and Floyd & Doris Parrot.**

**Judy Hiatt in memory of Chuck Hiatt, Lee & Minnie Hiatt, and Gladney &
Berenice Hamilton**

HOOD RIVER COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT &
GORGE HAPPINESS PRESENT:

Book Club & Community Circle



Every 1st and 3rd
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



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

A reminder: Church meetings or Thriftshop days may be cancelled if the weather causes hazardous driving conditions. If local schools have cancellations, church activities are likely cancelled as well. Call your group leader before you venture out.

Weather-Related Cancellations



Christmas messages:

Merry Christmas and good health to you in 2026
~The Holmsons

Merry Christmas to all and blessings for a joyful
new year.
~Dot Swyers

Merry Christmas to all of you- may 2026 bring you
laughter, smiles, joy and peace.
~Suze Nigl

Christmas blessings of joy, peace, hope and love.
~Rod & Mary Anne Parrott

All good wishes to my dear church family for a
wonderful year ahead. May 2026 find you in your
favorite pew every possible Sunday so he can show
life is good for you.
~Thelma Warnock

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a year filled with love, joy, peace, and hope.
~Otto & Jan Behrmann

Merry Christmas- may God's peace and love carry you into the new year.
~Jerry & Gladys Sawyer

May God bless each and every one of you as we remember the true meaning of this holiday season.
~Judy Hiatt

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! May 2026 bring you nothing but blessings.
~Chance, Sable, James, Layla, Rider



Church Calendar

December 16-18 Pastor Alicia out of town

Wednesday December 17

9:00am-12:00pm Thrift Shop 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

Thriftshop closed

Christmas Eve

Thursday December 25

Merry Christmas!

Saturday December 27

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

Sunday December 28-Fifth Sunday of advent

9:30am Lectionary Preview

10:30am Worship

4:00pm Hope and Life Church worship

Tuesday December 30

10:00am Women's bible study

1:30pm Chimes practice

Wednesday December 31

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

9:00am-12:00pm Quilters meet

Thursday January 01

Happy New Year!

Saturday January 03

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

Sunday January 04- Gathering for FISH

9:30am Lectionary Preview

10:30am Worship

4:00pm Hope and Life Church worship

Scriptures for Sunday December 21, 2025

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-25

Serving Sunday December 21, 2025

Elder this week

Jerry Sawyer

Communion prep

Leslie Hidle

Coffee hour

Judy and friends

Deacon

Betty Osborne

Scriptures for Sunday December 28, 2025

Isaiah 63:7-9

Psalms 148

Hebrews 2:10-18

Matthew 2:13-23

Serving Sunday December 28, 2025

Elder this week

Jennifer Stager

Communion prep

Judy Hiatt

Coffee hour

Carol and friends

Deacon

Otto and Jan

