



Newsletter December 2016

Dear East Woods Family and Friends,

As we enter another Advent season, we enter another annual cycle of the most-recognized holiday celebrations memorializing the birth (Christmas), passion (Maundy Thursday/Good Friday), resurrection (Easter), and Spirit-sending (Pentecost) of our Lord. Though the circumstances of our world change, these wonderful and rich traditions offer us an unchanging rhythm. Found within that rhythm is the reminder that we Christians are called to be a peculiar people – in the world but not of the world; holy but not holier-than-thou; humble slaves who are both royal and free.

When the world is lost in hopelessness, we recall that we have set our hope on the one who has overcome this world. When our nations and communities seem lost to division, we find ourselves in the name of him who has reconciled all things, both on earth and in heaven. When fear leads to hate and to the closing of minds and doors and hearts, we find comfort and strength to love in the love of the one who opened his arms on the cross and opened the way to eternal life. In our Christ-centered peculiarities are the possibilities of a brighter way and a better world.

On that first Christmas, God gave the world one small, humble life who powerfully changed the world – one person, one touch, one conversation, one relationship at a time. That life is still alive, by his Spirit and in his church. I see it every day in my role as pastor. The light of the world shines through the loving words, selfless work, and faithful ways of so many within our congregation.

So, be of good cheer. When things in our world seem way beyond your reach or way too big to control, remember that, on Christmas, God got close and started small. And, he has come to you. If you are in Christ, his Spirit lives in you and works through you. Be who God made you to be. Do what you can where you are with what you've been given. Nations and presidents, movement and years – these will pass. The glorious eternal grows from the grassroots beneath the footprints of the one who has blazed the trail before us. As C.T. Studd wrote in his timeless poem, "Only One Life":

*Give me Father, a purpose deep,
In joy or sorrow Thy word to keep;
Faithful and true what e'er the strife,
Pleasing Thee in my daily life;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

With joy at Christmas time ~ *Bill*



Christian Education – "The Advent Conspiracy" is back! For four Sundays until **December 11**, Cynthia Younger will host a discussion group focused on the worldwide movement called "The Advent Conspiracy," which encourages us to experience the Christmas season as God intended it. The themes are Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, and Love All. The Advent Conspiracy gatherings will **not** take place on **December 4** because of the Gathering Sunday brunch.

Fellowship Gathering – meeting with Keith Bloss at Starbucks across the street will resume on **Sunday, December 11**.

Children's Choir and Activity – Children age 4-grade 5 preparing for the Lessons and Carols service in December; practicing music for the "Children's Choir." Also offered are activities that encourage their journey to knowing Jesus better.

Youth Gathering – Middle school and high school students are invited to the Redwood/Youth Room for relationship-building and discussions on faith-centered and Bible-oriented topics.

Mission Time – December 11—Wrapping Christmas Presents

December 18—Life Pax: Life Pax is designed to effect social change and present the reality of Jesus Christ to panhandlers, homeless and hungry individuals in our community and across the nation by replacing monetary handouts with a single meal, a message of encouragement, and practical social service resource information— "Feeding the body, nourishing the soul."



Christmas Eve Services at East Woods—5 PM and 8 PM

Christmas Day Service at 10:45

FAMILY MINISTRIES

SUNDAY SCHOOL

In November Hailey will begin working and rehearsing with the Children for our Lesson & Carols that is December 11th during 2nd service. They will rehearse a part of every Sunday during Sunday School time. Plus, the Children's Choir will continue to rehearse during Connecting Time, it's not too late to come join them at 9:45!

We are searching for some volunteers to help out in the classrooms: as a Teacher, Teacher's helper, or a Nursery helper.

I would like to share a Thanksgiving Prayer for Children I came across many years ago.

*Dear God,
Thank You for our children.
Bless them with your Love and Peace,
Protect them with your truth and strength,
Engage them with your hope and vision.
Thank you for our children.
Amen.*

Blessings,
Cathy Roeper
Elder, Children & Family Ministry



YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group welcomes students from middle school and high school to our regular meetings on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8 PM in the Redwood Room, and at 9:45 AM on Sundays during Connecting Time.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- Wednesday, Dec. 7 Youth Group—Advent Conspiracy—"Love All"
- Thursday, Dec. 8 Night Strike in Portland
- Sunday, Dec. 11 Youth Sunday School, 9:45-10:30
- Wednesday, Dec. 14 Youth Group
- Friday, Dec. 16 Youth Christmas Party and Half-Lock-In
- Sunday, Dec. 18 Youth Sunday School
- Wednesday, Dec. 21 NO Youth Group
- Saturday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Services, 5 PM and 8 PM
- Sunday, Dec. 25 Christmas Day Service, 10:45 AM



THE DEACONS' CORNER
Deacons Moderator Lynne Helmke

Nancy has the distinct honor of being baptized by Pastor Scott Phillips when she became a member of East Woods in 2006. We were all very happy that Nancy agreed to transition from her role as Shepherd (a role she served for approx. four years) to Deacon earlier this year...her commitment and knowledge have been of particular help to me. In addition, Nancy served as Clerk of Session for three years and is currently active on both the Hospitality committee and Prayer Shawl ministry. Nancy enjoys family activities (she is the proud mom of two children, six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren!), reading, crocheting and traveling.



Nancy Dean

Nancy is Deacon to the following members: Vie Banfield, Beverly Meager, Joyce Buckingham, Christina Burden, Jackie Carr, Robert & Gretchen Collins, Judy England, Joanne Flentke, Ran & Priscilla Darakjian-Kurup, Tom & Peggy (McNees) Koecher, Glyne, Shirley & Chris Lashley, Al & Grace Reichenberger, Carol Scovil & Mary Helen Johnson.



NOVEMBER 2016 SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- Session approved the addition of three new members to East Woods – Janice Byram, Jerry Motil, and Renee Motil. These new members will be welcomed during the Gathering Sunday brunch on Sunday, December 4.
- Session brainstormed ideas for next year’s Super Bowl Party. The Super Bowl gathering will be held in conjunction with the annual Souper Bowl of Caring fundraiser, which raises money to fight hunger and food insecurity. The Super Bowl will be broadcast in the sanctuary, and the event will feature food, games, competitions, and a tribute to a special, local group.
- Session reviewed child protection policies in an effort to establish a congregation-specific model. A policy will likely be approved and in place during the early part of 2017.



EWPC FUNDRAISER – DECEMBER 4 & 11

Hazlenuts are back, along with delicious pepper jellies, God’s Spice Cabinet mixes and handmade driftwood crosses. All items are locally produced (some made by the women at EW), and money raised supports EW and our missions. Thank you!

GIFT CARDS FOR THE HOLIDAYS:

Grab a Scrip order form and purchase gift cards for groceries, holiday gifts, for everything!

**Order by December 4, Pick up on December 11-
Just in time for Christmas.**



STAFFING TRANSITIONS

Two of our valued staff members will conclude their ministry with East Woods in December – **Hailey Vandewiele** and **Priscila Darakjian-Kurup**.

Hailey became our Director of Family Ministries in October of 2015. Since then, she has formed a kids’ choir, delighted us with her spirit and music, faithfully coordinated and helped lead our Sunday School ministry, helped guide our first mission-focused Vacation Bible School, served as a Mill Plain Lunch Buddy, facilitated family-oriented outings and events, and brought joy and smiles to all of us. Hailey will now transition to a full-time job teaching music to kids in a location much closer to her home. Though we’ll miss her, we celebrate a good career fit for Hailey and for the kids she’ll continue working with.

Priscila has been with East Woods since before our chartering. And, thank the Lord, she plans to continue as a worshiping member of the congregation. But, circumstances in this season of Priscila’s life have made it increasingly difficult for her to give her full focus to playing the piano on Sunday mornings. Considering that Ian is one of those circumstances, we love and support the circumstances! Priscila’s music and presence have been bedrocks of the life and worship of our congregation, so we praise God for her years of faithful service. And, we look forward to the years ahead of sharing life and worship together.



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE It's time once again to take a tag from the **EWPC Giving Tree** in Evergreen Hall (Narthex) and buy a gift for someone less fortunate. The process is the same as last year. The gifts go to Habitat for Humanity families and every member of each family receives two gifts. Working with Habitat families provides an opportunity for EW members/families to have a more personal connection by participating in the delivery of gifts. Here is how it works:

- Pick one or more tag(s) from the tree.
- Put your name and phone number on the list, located on the table by the tree, opposite the number that matches your tag(s). i.e. 1A or 1B, 2A or 2B etc. (Note there are 2 tags with the same name but each with a different gift) **Signing up in the right spot is very important!**
- Purchase the gift requested, wrap it and put the tag on the package. **It is also important that the same tag is back on the gift!**
- Put your wrapped gift under the tree by **Sunday, Dec. 11th**! (Preferably earlier.)

If you wish to participate in the delivery of gifts between **Dec. 19th and 24th**, there is a separate sign-up sheet on the table. You will sign up for a specific family. The number in the family, including children's ages and the address will be listed, but the family names and contact information will only be given to EW members who have signed up to deliver. Any questions? Contact **Katey Sandy**, 885-0824 or **Judy England**, 601-7567.



CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING



As some of you may know, East Woods participated in helping to build an **Evergreen Habitat for Humanity** home along with the other Presbyterian churches in the area in 2014. If you attended our CIP Thanksgiving Eve Service November 22, you would have heard their plans to build another home in two years. The Mission Commission has decided that the Christmas Joy offering would be allocated for this future build. The lack of affordable housing in this area is one of the major causes contributing to homelessness. East Woods is proud to partner with Habitat for Humanity in addressing this concern and the desire that everyone deserves decent and affordable housing. If you have any questions, please see **Rich Helmke**.

Thank you for your support of this mission project!

EAST WOODS ACTIVITIES -- SAVE THE DATE:

December 4 & 11	Holiday Market
December 11	Touch of Class Holiday Concert, 2 PM
December 17	Women's Breakfast at Mickie Drummond's
December 24	Christmas Eve Services, 5 & 8 PM
December 25	Christmas Day Service, 10:45 AM
January 15	Lunch at Round Table Pizza
February 5	Super Bowl Party
February 19	Lunch at McMenamins
February 24-26	Women's Retreat 2017
March 19	Lunch at Elmer's Pancake House
April 16	Easter Sunday
May 21	Lunch at Olive Garden

EAST WOODS WOMEN'S BREAKFAST

Saturday, December 17

We will gather at Mickie Drummond's home at 9 AM
16500 SE 1st Street, Unit #156
882-1342



MEN'S BREAKFAST will not meet in December—
We will resume in January.



RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH

There will not be a gathering at a restaurant for the month
of December.

LOOKING AHEAD: WOMEN'S RETREAT – 2017

Lincoln City · **February 24, 25, 26**

Join us for a weekend of fellowship
and spiritual renewal.

Cost: \$95 · Sign up at the Opportunity Table
in Evergreen Hall.



January Newsletter deadline—Tuesday, December 13

Office hours: Tuesday 1-3 PM, Wednesday & Thursday 9 AM - 3 PM

Church Phone: 944-5841

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Please visit our website at www.eastwoodspres.org



EAST WOODS
Presbyterian Church

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