

## **HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EACH OF YOU!**

As the Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5, *“the old has gone, the new has come!”* I hope and pray 2015 has ended well for each of you and that 2016 will be your best year yet.

During my time at Navy officer training, I heard the story of Horace Greasley. In case you’re not familiar with the name, Greasley was a British soldier during World War II, and he was captured by the German Wehrmacht and imprisoned in May of 1940. In telling the story of his captivity and suffering under the German SS, Greasley recalls that his vitality and endurance were sustained in large part by a clandestine love affair he enjoyed with a woman outside of the POW camp named Rosa Rauchbach. Greasley was so enamored with Rosa that, during his imprisonment, he escaped and snuck back into his POW camp over 200 times just so he could see his lover face to face. Even at the risk of torture and death, it was love – rather than fear – that motivated the young soldier to defy his enemy and pursue the object of his affection.

As the New Year begins, what or who is the object of your affection? We are called in Scripture to love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our mind, and all our strength. In Revelation 2, the Lord challenges the church in Ephesus to turn back to Him, their first love. The call and the challenge are there for us, too. Horace Greasley left no room for Rosa Rauchbach to doubt his love for her. Have you left room in your relationship with the Lord that He might doubt the sincerity of your love for Him? Or, are you pursuing Him in total defiance of every barrier and hindrance the Enemy tries to put in your path?

If Christ truly is our first love, we ought to follow the Apostle Paul’s instructions by throwing off “everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles,” so that we can live the life of love God set us free to live. Nothing in all Creation can separate us from the love He has for us in Christ.

I believe 2016 will be a great year for East Woods. I look forward to sharing the journey with you, and I pray God’s presence and blessings will surround you in rich abundance.

Happy New Year~ *Bill*

## **HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRIES!**

Looking back over the Advent season (and the entire year of 2015!), we are reminded of the great gifts that the children, youth and families of our community bring to the table. Families and children volunteered each week to lead us in the recognition and lighting of each Advent candles (Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and the Christ Candle), as well as taking time out of their Sunday School lessons to rehearse, create props and prepare for a Christmas pageant, which they shared with the congregation on December 13th. Hailey Fielding (a member of our Youth Group) and Hope Martinez (a graduate of the Youth Group) contributed to that Service by performing the ASL translation of Silent Night alongside the Children's Choir. The Sunday School Classes celebrated Jesus' birthday with a marvelous Party on December 20<sup>th</sup>, and took time to reflect during that celebration on how Jesus became human--had a mother, friends, grew up in a family just like their families.

Looking forward into the New Year, we open our arms to the possibilities and opportunities available to us as a congregation of Christ's people, and to us individually as His lights in the world. We look forward to continuing to welcome new families into our sanctuary, encouraging youth to explore their faith and use that faith as a tool in questioning and understanding the world around them. We are excited to continue teaching music and scripture, and to include our children in each service.

One way in which I'd like to continue to include the children in our community and Worship is by moving forward with the Children's Choir. We will begin preparing one piece each month to be incorporated into the 10:30 Worship Service on the second Sunday of each month. I am very excited to get moving with this, and see how far we can go, developing musical talents, and using our voices to glorify God.

Hailey Vandewiele

*Director of Family Ministries*

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### **Dates to Remember:**

- Youth group – Wednesdays from 6:30pm – 8:00pm
- Children's Choir Practice – First Sunday of each month
- Children's Choir Participation – Second Sunday of each month



**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE AT MILL PLAIN ELEMENTARY!**

Mill Plain Elementary staff and students are so grateful for the support the East Woods congregation has so graciously and generously given. It's difficult to put into words just how much your partnership means to us. We have many opportunities for volunteers at our school:

- Lunch Buddy (1 hour per week)
- Indoor Recess Monitor-- board games, puzzles, art (1 hour per week and can rotate)
- Reading Buddy (flexible)
- Office/Family Resource Center (flexible)
- Classroom helpers (flexible)
- Donating snacks or supplies to individual classrooms (flexible)
- Other—if you just want to make a difference we will find a spot for you that works with your schedule and availability

If you would like to volunteer or get more information, please contact **Brenda Armstrong** at 604-6800 or **Rebecca Bentley** at 604-6807. We would love to have you join us in whatever capacity works for you! Thank you for making a difference!

***East Woods Women's Breakfast***

Third Saturdays  
**8:30 to 10:00 AM**

*Join us on Saturday, January 16*

**LADIES OF EAST WOODS** Our annual Women's Retreat is just around the corner, **February 19-21** in Lincoln City, OR; beachfront home with a perfect ocean view. The price of the weekend will go down as the number attending goes up: 10 ladies = \$129.00 each,  
14 ladies = \$97.00 each.

Watch for sign-up information beginning in January.  
Questions? Ask **Peggy Konzek** or **Arla Olsen**.

*February Newsletter deadline—Tuesday, January 19*

**Office hours: Tuesday 1-4 PM, Wednesday & Thursday 9 AM - 3 PM**

**Church Phone: 944-5841**

**16210 NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street, Vancouver, WA 98684**

**Rev. Bill Sperry**      [pastor@eastwoodspres.org](mailto:pastor@eastwoodspres.org)  
**Hailey Vandewiele**      Director of Family Ministries, [hailey@eastwoodspres.com](mailto:hailey@eastwoodspres.com)  
**Roberta Schlechter**      Family Ministries Volunteer, [rrschlechter@gmail.com](mailto:rrschlechter@gmail.com)  
**Susie Freeman**      Church Admin, [secretary@eastwoodspres.org](mailto:secretary@eastwoodspres.org)

Please visit our website at [www.eastwoodspres.org](http://www.eastwoodspres.org)



# January 2016



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2 <i>Men's Breakfast</i> 7:30-9 am
3 <b>WORSHIP SERVICE</b> 8:45 & 10:30 AM <b>GATHERING SUNDAY</b> <i>EHPBC 2-6 pm</i>	4	5  <i>Epikos 6:30-8:30 pm</i>	6  <i>Worship Com. 6:15 pm</i>  <i>Youth Group</i> 6:30-8 pm	7  <i>Women's Bible Study</i> 10 -Noon	8	9
10 <b>WORSHIP SERVICE</b> 8:45 & 10:30 AM  <i>EHPBC 2-6 pm</i>  <i>TOC Rehearsal 6-9 pm</i>	11	12  <i>Epikos 6:30-8:30 pm</i>	13 <i>Card-Making, 3:30-4:30</i> <i>Brkdale., Van. Vllg.</i> <i>Finance. 6:00pm</i> <i>Youth Group</i> 6:30-8 pm	14  <i>Prayer Shawl</i> <i>Ministry 1 pm</i>	15	16  <i>Women's Breakfast</i> 8:30-10 am
17 <b>WORSHIP SERVICE</b> 8:45 & 10:30 AM <i>Mission Comm. 11:45</i>  <i>EHPBC 2-6 pm</i> <i>TOC Rehearsal 6-9 pm</i>	18 <b>ML KING DAY</b>  <i>Session 6 pm</i>	19 <b>February Newsletter</b> <b>Deadline</b> <i>Card-Making, evening</i> <i>at Maria Henry's</i> <i>Epikos 6:30-8:30 pm</i>	20  <i>Youth Group</i> 6:30-8 pm	21  <i>Women's Bible Study</i> 10 -Noon  <i>Shepherds 6 pm</i>	22	23
24 <b>WORSHIP SERVICE</b> 8:45 & 10:30 AM <i>Congr. Care Comm. 10 :00</i>  <i>EHPBC 2-6 pm</i> <i>TOC Rehearsal 6-9 pm</i>	25  <i>Card-Making, 1 pm at</i> <i>Brkdale., Fshrs. Lndg.</i>	26  <i>Epikos 6:30-8:30 pm</i>	27  <i>Youth Group</i> 6:30-8 pm	28  <i>Prayer Shawl</i> <i>Ministry 1 pm</i>	29	30
31 <b>WORSHIP SERVICE</b> 8:45 & 10:30 AM <b>Annual Congregational</b> <b>Meeting</b> <i>EHPBC 2-6 pm</i> <i>TOC Rehearsal 6-9 pm</i>						

### A NOTE FROM FINANCE ELDER TOM KOECHER:

In late January 2016, the East Woods Presbyterian Church membership will be asked to approve a proposed 2016 budget that has been reviewed and approved by Session. I like to think of the budget as my stewardship responsibility, it is a financial plan that has been entrusted to me, the Finance Commission which I chair and your Session.

A great deal of time and energy goes into the budget development. As your Session, we are dealing largely with estimates. Nothing new here, except with your **HELP**, we could have more “*faith*” in our estimates. “**HELP**” you ask? Yup, it’s not too late for you to **HELP**. We need your annual pledge information “**yesterday**”. EWPC is currently looking at the lowest response to the annual Stewardship/Commitment request in many years. Less than half the proposed 2016 spending plan is covered by the current pledges. Only 45 pledges have been received to date, a disappointing level.

Please, if you have not yet returned your 2016 Pledge, do so as soon as possible. “*God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed*”(2 Corinthians 9:8 NASB).

I look forward to discussing the exciting financial plans for EWPC when we meet in late January, 2016.



**SCRIP UPDATE FROM LYNNE HELMKE:** *Thank you* to everyone who purchased gift cards this December. I’m so pleased to announce that we exceeded \$1,500 in profits to the church this year! The Scrip ladies (Linda Fortney & Lynne Helmke) have decided to take the month of January off. You can place orders anytime during the month; however, cards will not be available until February 14th...just in time for Valentines Day!



### NEWS FROM MILL PLAIN ELEMENTARY

Rebecca Bentley, Outreach Specialists, from the Family and Community Resource Center at Mill Plain Elementary, thanked East Woods members for helping fill the pantries of 78 families for the Thanksgiving and Winter Breaks. Families are needing bedding for the cold weather, including pillows, quilts and blankets.

## YOUTH

Starting out with a well-attended and joyous trip to the “Winter Wonderland” lights display in North Portland, our Youth and Families have had more than a little fun celebrating the Advent and Christmas Season. Free-ice-cream coupons that were bought earlier in the year (which expired on 12/31/15) were freely given out as prizes and tokens of appreciation during the last few Youth sessions of December. They served as a great reminder to our youth that they and their contributions are very much appreciated here!

December is a busy time for families and teens, so the youth group held their last meeting for 2015 on Wednesday December 16<sup>th</sup> when they wrapped up the year with a Christmas Party and community building night. There were games, decorating, carols, and lively discussion surrounding the miracle of Christ’s birth and human life.

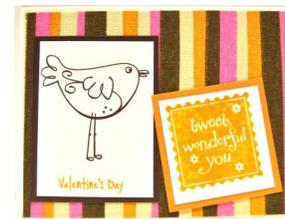
The Youth Group will kick off the New Year with their first regular meeting on Wednesday January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016 from 6:30-8PM.

Jack Bloss, a graduated member of our Youth who continued to offer his time and talents through the end of 2015, is following a call to continue his education by attending college in Bellingham, WA at Western Washington University where he will study Environmental Science. The Youth Group will very much miss the leadership and guidance he has grown into over the last several years, particularly his contributions to the youth worship music. We are all excited to see what direction he is guided in as he continues forward in life.

Jack reminds us that one of the many blessings our community has received over the course of 2015 is an incredible commitment both on the level of the congregation and individual volunteers to supporting and fostering a community in Christ for teenagers and young adults. The youth would like to extend their thanks for the provision of this space and community in Vancouver.

### CARD MAKING IN JANUARY

- Wednesday afternoon, January 13th, from 3:30 to 4:30, at Brookdale Vancouver Village, 10011 NE 118th Ave.
- Tuesday evening, January 19th, at Maria Henry’s house, 3310 NE 104th Circle, Vancouver, 98686
- Monday afternoon, January 25th, at Brookdale at Fisher’s Landing, 17171 SE 22nd Dr., in the Upstairs Library at 1 PM.



Questions? Email at [cardmaking@eastwoodspres.org](mailto:cardmaking@eastwoodspres.org)